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THE CARLETON PLACE HERALD.

7

GRAFT

LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE

Each Episode Suggested by a Prominent Author
 Serialization by HUGH WEIR and JOE BRANDT
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SECOND EPISODE

The Tenement House Evil
 Suggested by LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE
 Author of "The Lone Wolf"
 And "Nobody"

SYNOPSIS.

Dudley Larnigan, district attorney of New York, attacks the liquor and vice trusts. He is killed by an agent of a secret society, the committee of fifteen. His son, Bruce Larnigan, is elected district attorney and takes up the fight. Bruce is in love with Dorothy Maxwell, whose father is head of the insurance trust.

BRUCE LARNIGAN had won the first battle in his fight against the fifteen, a mysterious graft syndicate which, composed not of cheap politicians, but of great business men, had strangled New York in its nefarious grip and was planning to spread its activities to cover the whole country. But Bruce had no illusions. A final and despairing attempt to beat him on election day itself by attempting to prove that he had accepted a bribe from the liquor interests to secure lax enforcement of the law had failed, thanks partly to his own cleverness and partly to the help of Dorothy Maxwell, his fiancée.

But Bruce knew that the real fight was only just beginning. The graft syndicate was entrenched in power. It had warned his father, Dudley Larnigan, that death would be his reward if he did not desist from his efforts to expose its corruption. It had made good the warning, and Bruce had sworn not only to finish his father's uncompleted work, but to avenge his death as well. To Bruce, Stanford Stone appeared to be a great capitalist, a distinguished financier, a man justly honored by the community and worthy of respect and confidence. Yet Stanford Stone was the head of the graft syndicate. It was Stanford Stone who had decreed Dudley Larnigan's death and Stanford Stone who had led the assault upon Bruce himself. Moreover—and this Bruce did not suspect, either—a personal motive lay behind Stone's enmity for him, for Stone was in love with Dorothy Maxwell.

Bruce had determined that his first move must be to strike at the evils of the tenement house district, which his father had been planning to take up. "I want the man higher up," he told his mother. "I know there is one, and



"Look at this," said Bruce, showing Stone the letter.

It is he that I must get. I don't know yet who he is, but I'm going to find out!"

He was at home when he said that, leaning over his mother's chair. And even as he spoke a tiny dart whistled by his ear and was buried in the back of his mother's chair. So faint was the sound, so tiny the missile, that his mother knew nothing of it. Bruce got it out and found that around the dart was wrapped a note. He read it. It was brief:

"Warning: Stop investigating the tenements. The fifteen."

Bruce smiled grimly; there was a drawing of a skull on the note. He stepped to the window, hoping that whoever had thrown the dart might be within sight. But no suspicious character of any sort rewarded his searching glance; instead he saw Dorothy Maxwell and Stanford Stone approaching the house. They looked up and waved to him.

"I certainly didn't expect to see either of you!" said Bruce, laughing. "Have you seen any suspicious looking character around?"

"No one except you—you look pretty suspicious!" laughed Stone. "Why?"

"Nothing—no matter," said Bruce. "Come in and see my mother, won't you?"

"I'll tell you why I asked you that question, Mr. Stone," said Bruce when they were alone. "Look at this."

He handed him the note, first drawing a line through "The fifteen."

"Only fourteen now," he said. "I got rid of Murphy! I'll run them down and get even with my father's murderers!"

Outside they separated, Bruce and Dorothy to go downtown, Stone to hurry to his office, his face set in lines of grim determination. He strode rapidly toward his office. And there he called a meeting of the fifteen. Anton Dow, head of the tenement house trust, appeared, angry because of newspaper stories about Bruce's determination to get the man higher up in the tenement evils. Dow knew, as Bruce did not, that he himself was the man higher up, and his nervousness was uncontrolled.

"We've got to strike at him before he can hit us," said Stone angrily. "Our whole position is menaced by this one man. Dow, you are the one chiefly interested. You own some property in the tenement district of a—well, a questionable sort?"

"I suppose I do," said Dow. "I'm not responsible for my tenants."

"Well, trap Larnigan with a woman in one of your houses."

"Yes—that can be done," agreed Dow, after a moment's thought. "We'll plan the details later, Stone."

There was more talk, and then Dow had to hurry home to lunch. He was a model father and husband. He was devoted to his wife, and his love for his two children, Harold and Lillian, knew no bounds.

And meanwhile, even while Dow played with his own children in his luxurious home, Bruce and Dorothy were seeing other children in a house that was also owned by Dow. But this house was a tenement that disregarded law and decency alike. There were no fire escapes; the heating system was out of order, and there was running water from only one tap on each floor. Dorothy and the woman's two children went to look over the building. Bruce, sickened, went to the street. Other children came to talk with him, and he sat down on the stoop and played with them. Across the street was a saloon, and from this emerged a burly, ill-favored man, at the sight of whom the children shuddered.

"Key, youse! Beat it! We don't want no duds reformers down this way—see?" said the fellow, whom Bruce recognized as a cheap ward politician named Black.

Bruce smiled, took out a pad and made a note. Black shook his fist in his face and, turning, made a signal that set several roughs across the street in motion. Bruce started to rise; Black knocked him down, and the gang came tearing over.

"Kick him till he's a stiff!" yelled Black.

But a sudden and remarkable intervention came to Bruce's aid. As if by instinct the children flung themselves upon him, covering him with their soft bodies. The gang stopped; even their brutality shrank from attacking the children. Bruce had time to draw his revolver and rose, the weapon in his hand. Black turned and ran; the gangsters drew guns and looked for shelter. But the children's screams had brought the police, and Bruce was safe for the time.

From that moment Bruce went to work with redoubled energy. And Dorothy, painfully impressed by what she had seen, had helped by trying to do what she could for the tenement children. She knew she could not do much for the whole city, but in that one house she improved conditions vastly. One night she was visiting the Dows, old friends of her family, and described the class she had established for the children of the tenement house.

"And tonight," said Dorothy—"tonight we're going to have a Christmas tree for them down there. I'm going down now to give out the little presents."

"Mother, can't we go and see?" cried Lillian.

"Oh, yes—please!" echoed Harold. Mrs. Dow hesitated. But they pleaded so eagerly that she gave in at last, and Dorothy took them with her. On the way she stopped and telephoned to tell Bruce and ask him to join her. His voice as he answered was excited.

"I'll come if I can—as soon as I can," he said. "Dorothy, I'm on the trail at last, I do believe! Tonight I've got a chance to get the evidence I need."

What had happened was that that afternoon a woman had come to Bruce in his office, a woman whose profession no one could mistake.

"Say," she said, when she was with him alone. "You want to get the goods on all this tenement stuff, don't you?"

Well, you come down to my place to-night, and I'll see that you get it. You've got to come to the house."

Bruce laughed at her.

"Do I look as easy as all that?" he said. "Do you suppose I can't recognize as obvious a trap as that?"

"Aw, I know it wasn't any use!" she said. "I told them you wouldn't come. But I'll get the devil—the main guy's going to be there!"

"What?" said Bruce sharply. "He is, eh? Well, that might make a difference!"

He hesitated, questioned her sharply. But in the end he decided to go—taking certain precautions.

The time came, and Bruce, still hesitating a little but determined to face the risk that he saw could not be avoided, went with the woman to her house. The whole thing filled him with disgust; the woman herself and the girls he saw in her house revolted him.

"You see, you can find out what's going on here," said the woman. "It's plain enough—my God, what's that?"

There was a thunderous knocking at the door. Heavy blows fell against it, and it came crashing in. A squad of police followed.

"They double crossed me—the joint's pinched!" screamed the woman.

Abruptly Bruce saw what had been planned and went white. But just as a policeman stepped up to him another man in plain clothes appeared.

"Officer, leave Mr. Larnigan alone," he said. "He's here to get evidence. Arrest the woman—no one else."

"Yes, Mr. Commissioner," said the man, saluting.

This was Bruce's counterstroke. He had arranged for the police commis-



"There's one of your houses—burning up!" he cried.

sioner to accompany any raiding party and had told him his plans in advance. His reputation was safe.

But now a new factor came into sight. Anton Dow, furious at the frustration of his plans, suddenly appeared. "Arrest both those men!" he cried. "I demand it!"

"Anton Dow!" cried Bruce. "So you are the main guy here! You are one of the fifteen—one of my father's murderers!"

Dow realized his mistake. But he tried desperately to secure Bruce's arrest. Only a sudden commotion outside the house checked him.

"Fire!" yelled some one at a window. "In the house across the street!"

Bruce rose to look. Flames were pouring from the door and the lower windows of the house, which had no fire escapes! He understood the full horror of it in a moment. Dorothy was there! He turned frantically to Dow.

"There's one of your houses—burning up!" he cried. "No fire escapes! Dorothy Maxwell is there, trying to help the children you oppress! And with her are your own children!"

Dow, stricken, never doubting, collapsed. Bruce raced to the street. The policemen followed. Firemen were arriving. Ladders were going up. Bruce knew the window where Dorothy must be. He was up the first ladder and found her with the two Dow children. He brought them to safety and then helped in the work of rescue. Dow, stampeding, incoherent, came to Bruce.

"I've been wrong—I've been a sinful man!" he said. "But I see my wickedness. I will reform every building I own. And tomorrow morning I will give you the evidence against the rest!"

"Come to my office at 9 o'clock," said Bruce.

Neither saw that Black, lurking near by, heard. Neither knew that Black got word to Stanford Stone.

Bruce was up all night. On Christmas morning, when he had done all he could for the fire sufferers, he went to his office to wait for Dow. He looked at the clock—8:30. His mother called him up. She begged him to come to her at once—said that she must see him. He hesitated, then scribbled a note. "Dow," it read, "I will be back at 9:30. Wait."

Outside his office he met Dorothy. "I was afraid," she said. "I wanted you to come home."

"Come with me," he said with a laugh. "I must hurry back, but I'll have breakfast at home with you and mother."

Dow came, found the note and sat down to wait. He had gone to pieces. The escape of his children had unnerved him. He glanced at the clock. Nine o'clock.

In his own office Stanford Stone, too, looked at his clock. He watched the minutes pass slowly till five had gone. And at the fifth minute, when, as Stone supposed, Dow would just be beginning his revelations to Bruce, an explosion shattered Bruce's room. A bomb connected with the clock was set off, and Dow was instantly killed. Only an accident had saved Bruce from sharing his fate.

SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Lesson V.—Second Quarter, April 30, 1916.

THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

Text of the Lesson, Acts xii, 1-11. Memory Verse, 11—Golden Text, Ps. xxxiv, 7—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

If the words "about that time" of verse 1 refer to the last four verses of the previous chapter, then it was about the time that Barnabas and Saul were in Jerusalem with the financial help from the believers at Antioch for the saints at Jerusalem. This would appear to be so from the last verse of our lesson chapter, so that we may think of Barnabas and Saul being at the prayer meeting in the house of Mary, who was sister to Barnabas (verse 12; Col. iv, 10). How often the first words of Gen. iii, 1, come to us as we read the Bible story or the story of the world in the daily papers or our own life story? "Now the serpent," for we are reminded by Peter that our adversary, the devil, walketh about seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. v, 8; Satan himself confessed to the Lord that it was his custom to go to and fro in the earth and walk up and down in it (Job i, 7; ii, 2). Paul tells us that our conflict is not so much with what we see as with the invisible powers of darkness, and therefore we need the whole armor of God (Eph. vi, 10-18).

Herod was a good servant of the devil and did quite a bit of work for him when he killed James and put Peter in prison (verses 1-3). On that last night ere our Lord was crucified, He told His followers that they might expect to be put out of the synagogue and even killed for His sake and would surely have tribulation (John xvi, 1, 2, 33). From heaven He sent word, after He had been some time there, that the devil would cast some of them into prison, but being faithful, even if they died for it, there would be a great reward (Rev. ii, 10). James, being killed, had the gain, the far better, absent from the body present with the Lord, the rest from labor, while Peter, being only imprisoned remained still where the devil could reach him if the Lord should permit. Many, however, would prefer the prison to being killed. As far as soldiers were concerned, Peter seemed to be well guarded, with no possibility of escape, but how often He that sitteth in the heavens laughs at the schemes of men when they take counsel against Him! (Ps. ii, 1-4).

The believers prayed without ceasing to God for Peter, but there seemed to be no answer until the very night before Peter was to be brought forth, probably for execution. The Lord may seem to delay, but when He purposes to do a thing He is never too late. Heaven heard, and the angel came. Peter was asleep chained to two soldiers, and how two kept the door of the prison. How perfectly fascinating to see an angel work! Soldiers and doors and prison walls are no hindrance. The prison is entered; the angel awakens Peter; the chains fall off. Peter puts on some clothing by the aid of the light from the angel and follows his guide, gates and doors opening before them of their own accord, until Peter is at least one street away from the prison, thinking it all a beautiful dream or vision.

The angel, having fulfilled his commission, went back to heaven. Blessed ed ministry and, oh, how wonderful! The God of Israel doeth wondrously. Peter soon came to himself and knew that he had been in very deed delivered by a messenger from heaven who never waited to be even thanked for his great kindness. They serve generally unseen and always unthanked.

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to get better and am now well, am stout and able to do my own housework. I can recommend the Vegetable Compound to any woman who is sick and run down as a wonderful strength and health restorer. My husband says I would have been in my grave ere this if it had not been for your Vegetable Compound."—Mrs. BLANCHE JEFFERSON, 703 Lyon St., Des Moines, Iowa.

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What ailed the soldiers? Was it a sleep from the Lord, as in I Sam. xxi, 12, or a special blindness, as in II Kings vi, 18? Well, it was a deliverance from the Lord, and nothing is too hard or wonderful for Him. (Jer. xxxii, 17.) When Peter realized that he was really free and that it was neither dream nor vision he went at once to where he knew they would be praying for him. But the damsel who came to the door as he knocked, recognizing Peter's voice, was so glad that she ran in without opening the door and said that Peter was at the gate.

Instead of thanking God for answered prayer they told her that she was mad or beside herself. It looked as if they were asking without expecting, as we so often do. She continued to affirm that she was right, and Peter continued knocking, and when finally they did open the door there he was in very deed.

What a hubbub they did make! How they did talk! Did they ever hear anything like it after prayer meeting? When they got real social, even though many of them could not speak in the meeting—could not say a word for Him who died for them. When Peter got them quiet he told what had happened and bade them tell the brethren while he went to Caesarea, perhaps to abide with Philip or Cornelius and to tell there of this wonderful deliverance. The chapter ends with the death of the keepers and also the death of Herod. An angel delivered Peter and an angel smote Herod. They are ready for errands of mercy or of judgment. They delight to do the will of God. The word of God grew and multiplied, and so it will till the kingdom comes, for His word will always accomplish His pleasure. He will watch over His word to perform it, and every purpose of the Lord shall be performed (Isa. lv, 11; Jer. i, 12; R. V.; ii, 29). He cannot fail (Isa. xlii, 4).

Canada's Rennet Supply.

Prof. Dean of the O. A. C. says there is no longer any danger of a shortage in the rennet supply for Canadian cheesemakers. A manufacturer has assured him of readiness to establish a branch factory in Canada for the purpose of making the material if necessary. At the same time cheesemakers are advised to conserve all rennets in their localities; it is not advised that the home-made be used in preference to the commercial extract, but this is better than none. Calves' stomachs are worth 12 cents each, and it is urged that all these be saved.

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Cuts Off Aide's Fingers.

The heroism of two British air men was demonstrated recently when one of them amputated the fingers of another while under fire.

Lieutenant S. and Captain C. D. were being chased by a German aeroplane. The British aeroplane began to descend, and the Germans fired, wounding the captain in the right arm and smashing two of his fingers. While the captain steered with his left hand Lieutenant S. amputated the two fingers.

The air men came down to safety, but as they had no more gasoline in their tank they were unable to set fire to their machine, which fell into the hands of the Germans.

Steel Houses.

The Allied Powers, it is said, intend to erect vast numbers of portable steel dwelling-houses for the use of soldiers at the front, and also as homes for the inhabitants of territory which has been devastated by the war. France plans to build 100,000 such dwellings.

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