Winnipeg, October, 1909.

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The Western Home Monthly

The Blizzard Banquet. By JULIA P. DEANE.



"HELLO, CENTRAL."

5683. Robert Duncombe's office and may I -I beg pardon? Oh! is it you, Rob? discomfort to await the answer. It didn't sound like your voice. Yes, girl in the blue zibelline, with eyes I received your note, and I am call-ing you up to tell you I shall not be listened with an interest quite out of home this evening. The firm is proportion to the occasion. sending me to Hamilton. I leave at 4.30 this afternoon. What? Now, Rob, dear, you must not say that— It was the portly gentleman whom he addressed. He has ceased his uneasy pacing back and forth, and to say that. But, Rob, dear, you must present feelings the remuneration, admit it is a perfectly honorable wouldn't be a stingy one. I'm down-No, indeed I haven't forcalling. Your father-on the same train-to working lawyer-well you know, Jillyou. Good-bye, dear. The express-man is here for my baggage. Yes, I'll consider—but don't expect me to change my mind unless—Good-bye." For a half-hour the passengers on the Chirage Hamilton Electric line

the Chicago-Hamilton Electric I'll advertise this interesting apprehensively I'll advertise this interesting away through the frosty windows, as the May be some provisions stored away under the seats." He turned smilingthe Chicago-Hamilton Electric line ed its slow way against the storm. ly towards the passengers. "Here's Apprehension was changed to dis- the chance of a lifetime, ladies and opened the door with a vicious jerk, any of his possessions, real, personal announcing: "You might as well all try to make yourselves as comfort-furnish him a square meal. The try to make yourselves as comfort- furnish him a square meal. less than a blizzard, and it's getting worse every minute. The rails are all ice, the electric current is cut off, and even if it wasn't, the snow's piled up in such drifts right here that we couldn't pull through." "Where are we?" inquired a pas-

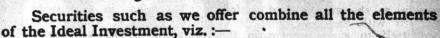
and sullen, fell upon the occupants of the car. For five minutes the blizhad it all to itself. Like a wild beast seeking its prey, it growled and raged. It crept beneath the car and tried to lift it bodily. It sought for cracks and crevices through which it might gain an entrance for its icy fingers. It dashed against the glass as if it would shatter it into fragments, and shrieked its direful prophecies of the night that lay before the marooned travelers.

"Now, Judge Duncombe, just how much would you give for a good square meal?"

The question, asked in a distinct, "Hello, Central. Please give me cheerful voice audible throughout the 83. Yes, that's right. It this Mr. car, had the desired effect of arousing every passenger from his lethargy of The

Rob, dear, you must not say that— the firm is very kind to me. You say I was not made for such a life" The telephone registered a girlish sigh. "Well, I sometimes wonder what I was made for—Oh dear, no, I didn't mean to give you a chance the set of the telephone registered a girlish were dwith some spirit, "with my present feelings the remuneration right hungry. I hurried down-town wish I could give you the answer you want, Rob-but while your fa-to keep an engagement, and so was cut short on breakfast. I was enter-tained at luncheon by one of my ther and mother disapprove I can-not. You're their only son, Rob. ably picturesque affairs that may do Yes, on the electric. What's that? for a canary, but for a hungry, hard-Hamilton? Please, Central, don't cut us off. Are you sure, Robert? On the 4.30? I am certain to know and getting even on the dininghim because of his resemblance to car on the way out, but I missed it

His companion laughed. "I think agreeable certainty as the conductor gentlemen. Judge Duncombe offers able as you can, for we're up against judge is a man of his word, and a hard proposition-nothing more nor abundantly able to keep his promise." "He ain't risking anything much by that offer," volunteered a gaunt individual savagely. The figure in the blue zibelline had been quietly studying the face of the judge. Now she rose with nervous haste and flushed cheeks, and moved towards the front of the car. She lifted a heavy suit case from the seat, unlocked it, took from it sundry articles and packages. The eyes of her a masculine voice. "In sight?" answered the conductor every movement. Placing the case improvisupon two empty seats, she improvised a table, and on it arranged a chafing dish. A quiet word with the watchful conductor secured matches and a panful of spotless snow. By the time the melted snow was boiling cheerfully over the blaze, the blizzard had become a secondary attraction. Guesses were hazarded through thescar as to the meaning of the preparations "Looks as if she had taken you at your word, Judge," the jovial man suggested. "Wields that spoon as gracefully as if it were a violin bow," commented another man. Her audience had not long to GOOD BYE."



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"Ten miles from nowhere, more or less," replied the official gruffly. "Any farmhouses in sight?" asked

"Just you stick your scornfully. head outside that door and see what's in sight. If there was a fifteen-story sky-scraper a foot away a body couldn't see it. It's a blizzard, I say. a reg'lar Dakota blizzard that's onto its business and has learned a few dožen tricks from a Kansas cyclone to help it along."

The passengers nestled uncomfortably in their seats. Hear it !" exclaimed the conduc-

tor, as a particularly vindictive blast shook the car. With various expressions of dismay and resignation

the little company listened. "This means freezing and starving until morning at least," commented a portly gentleman in a dejected tone, as he strode up and down the aisle. A child whimpered fretfully that it was hungry. Passengers indulged in grumbling criticism of the road. A woman began to recount in a dismal tone the blizzard fatalities of the season. Then silence heavy

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