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# Woman Against Woman

**or A Terrible Accusation.**

CHAPTER XIX.

With a long-drawn sigh bubbling through the happiness in his heart, Lloyd Ogden left Ailsa; but instead of going at once to his room, he threw on a heavy overcoat and went out into the night air. Lighting a cigar, he strolled leisurely down the street, thinking deeply and planning out his future.

The utter weariness and hopelessness of Ailsa's expression had decided him upon one thing: His wife could no longer continue beneath the roof of his sister!

That Ailsa loved him he had no more doubt than he had of the constancy of the stars that shone so resplendently above his head.

He would as soon as thought of doubting the word of God as the look of truth and earnestness in her eyes. He loved her with that perfect faith that casteth out fear, and it was only of her good and welfare that he thought as he wandered on.

"I can not allow her to sacrifice her life to Ethel," he mused. "She loves my poor little sister, and for her sake and mine the great-hearted girl would give up everything; but I cannot permit her to do it. How tired she looks—and sad! Heigh-ho! What a world of sorrow Ethel has brought into our lives! But how nobly Dunraven has borne it! And yet, I would bear a burden a thousand times greater for the sake of my wife that will be! My wife! And a month ago I would have sworn that there was no woman in the world whom I would ask to be my wife! Yet in that time she has crept into my heart and twined herself around my very life until it would kill me to lose her! To lose her—or to doubt her!"

There was a smile about his lips—a tender, boyish smile that would have told the most casual observer of his love, for no man smiles like that who does not love. It was radiant, ecstatic, yet in the background of it there was an undefined sadness that was touching.

He wandered about in the cold night air until he had induced a sense of drowsiness which was the sensation he was in search of, then turned again in the direction of his home.

It was late—almost twelve o'clock. He had not observed the passage of time in his absorption; but as a town clock chimed the hour, he smiled and hurried his loitering footsteps.

There were many more pedestrians upon the street at that hour than usual, but if he thought of it at all he explained it by the thought that there was a playhouse in the vicinity and that the theatre was just out. He went through them hurriedly, but was recalled to the fact that they increased as he neared home until before he had reached the corner the crowd had become so dense that he was forced to elbow his way through them.

He paused to ask the cause, aroused to the fact at last that something unusual had taken place.

"It's a fire" the man whom he addressed replied.

"Where?" inquired Ogden, with increased interest.

"They say it's the Dunraven mansion," the man answered.

"Good Heavens!"

Almost before the words had been completed Lloyd Ogden had burst through the crowd and sprung forward.

He was seized by a policeman and held backward.

"You can't pass this line!" cried the officer of the law, excitedly.

"But I must, I tell you!" gasped Ogden. "My house is burning; my—family are all there!"

Already he had shaken off the policeman's hand and had dashed forward.

The flames were leaping from the windows, lighting the scene with a fierce glow that was hideous. Great clouds of dense, black smoke occasionally choked the flame; but once more the savage crimson belched forth, licking up the sides of the house, creeping from window to window with terrific fury.

Lloyd paused only long enough to see the flame, then sprang forward.

Staggering down the stoop he saw his brother-in-law with a burden in his arms, the burden apparently lifeless; but though he recognized the form of his favorite sister, he did not pause to think even of her condition.

"Where is Ailsa?" he gasped.

The blanched face was raised to his, the inert form fell from Leslie's arms. But for the fortunate presence of a fireman Ethel would have rolled down the stoop. Both men stood there facing each other, neither speaking.

It was a moment which neither of them ever forgot.

"Is every one out?" asked the fireman, holding Ethel safely in his arms.

Desperately Lloyd turned to him.

"Who has left the building?"

"The servants and one lady. There they stand over there!"

Hastily both men threw their eyes in the direction indicated. Huddled together where the light from the fire lighted up their terrified countenances with a fiendish glare were the servants of the household and Muriel Ogden, but it only required one glance for both men to realize that Ailsa was not there.

With one bound Lloyd Ogden had sprung up the stoop and was about to enter the burning building, but a detaining hand was laid heavily upon his shoulder.

"No man could live for five minutes in there!" a fireman called hoarsely. "You dare not attempt it!"

But before the words of warning were finished, Lloyd had flung aside his hands and rushed into the flames. They closed about him, a dense volume of smoke belched out, the crimson, crackling flames leaped higher and shut him out from sight.

Stunned, dazed, Dunraven stood there, scarcely realizing what had occurred. He heard the fireman's voice, like something in a vague dream, say gruffly:

"He would take no warning. It is death as sure as that building is burning! I told him, but he would not heed!"

Some one led Dunraven away, but he seemed not to know. He had forgotten all about his wife, whose life he had saved.

"Dead!" he kept muttering mentally. "Dead! And it is Lloyd who dies with her—not I! It is Lloyd who dies in an attempt to save her! Oh, if it had but been me!"

And yet he had made no effort to go! He had saved his wife—Ethel, not Ailsa! He had forgotten the girl he loved until Lloyd had spoken her name! Forgotten her very existence until another man had mentioned her—another whose love seemed as little to him by comparison with his own as a purling stream is to th esurging ocean.

He was stunned, helpless, yet stood there like a statue.

What did Lloyd know of love? What was Lloyd's calm affection to the pasion that was tearing his heart? He was willing to resign the world—home, wife, his own good name, the honor which he had valued above all else, yet another man was perishing with her because he could not live without her.

How he envied that man! And yet he stood there looking on in stupid silence!

Meanwhile, Lloyd had sprung up the steps three or four at a time. He had slipped out of his greatcoat and wrapped it about his head, so that he was somewhat protected. There was no reason why he should see, knowing the house as he knew it.

Fortunately Ailsa's door was not locked. He flung it open and called to her:

"Ailsa! Ailsa, my darling! Are you here?"

A heavy groan answered him.

He sprang forward to the bed and lifted her, all dressed as she was.

"Don't be afraid, sweetheart," he whispered. "I will save you! Put your arms about my neck!"

She was not fully awake, and had not yet realized their terrible danger, but as they reached the hall a burst of flame told her the awful truth. Almost before she had seen it, however, he had wrapped the greatcoat about her head, whispering at the same time:

"Hold your breath, dear. It will be barely a minute until you are safe!"

She herself would have been a heavy burden to carry, but bundled as she was in the coat he had wrapped about her, a less athletic man would have failed in the undertaking he had set before himself. Even as it was, he staggered under it, but went bravely on.

He had descended the steps to the landing upon which Ailsa had stood the day before when she had seen Simonson leaving Muriel's room. Below him the flames were leaping across the hall in frantic fury, the loud crackling, coupled with the hoarse voices of the firemen issuing their orders and the play of the water upon the building, made a babble of sound and wild confusion that reminded him of nothing short of perdition.

There was only a moment in which he could think of it, however, for suddenly a terrible explosion occurred almost beneath his feet.

He staggered and fell back for a second, but only for a second.

The lights had all gone out! He could feel the heat upon his face; the smoke was well-night suffocating him; there was a pain stabbing through his eyes like the keen cut of a knife, but he did not pause to think what frightful thing it was that happened.

He could see no flame, and yet the heat was scorching him as he plunged through the door and out into the night.

There was a wild cheer from the people outside.

He heard it dimly, faintly. He knew that some one had come to him and had taken Ailsa from him, and he recognized by the voice that it was Doctor Paxton, but the pain in his eyes was so great that he felt his strength leaving him rapidly.

And then he heard the voice of the medical man whom he had known since he was a boy, exclaim:

"Good gracious, Lloyd! What has happened to you?"

He could see no light about him, the voices were becoming confused in his ears. How was it that they could see in that intense darkness?

And then the import of a hideous sentence fell upon him:

"Great Heavens! He is blind!"

He did not hear the woman's cry that rent the air, did not feel the wild clutch of arms that he thought would have recalled him from the dead, but lay where he fell, silent—insensible.

CHAPTER XX.

Some one suggested having Lloyd Ogden carried to a hospital, but Dunraven shook his head in negation.

"No," he answered, authoritatively; "we shall take him to a hotel."

And to a hotel they went, not even waiting to see what damage resulted from the fire.

Lloyd was placed in a carriage with the doctor and Dunraven in attendance, the ladies placed in another, and the order given to drive carefully, for Lloyd still remained in the death-like swoon into which he had fallen.

Eyebrows, lashes and mustache were burned from his face, his hands were blistered, even his lips scorched; but that was nothing to the terrible affliction that had so suddenly befallen him.

Blinded while playing the part of hero as few men had ever played it!

Ailsa was unhurt!

Not even a hair of her bonny head was singed to tell of the fiery ordeal through which she had passed. She lay back among the cushions of the carriage, her eyes closed, her face white as death, not a muscle of her form moving to tell that she lived.

Opposite her, Muriel sat, her uncanny, staring eyes fixed upon the girl's face, her hands crossed listlessly upon her lap. Ethel half lay, half sat beside Ailsa, trembling in every limb; yet, forgetful of self, she leaned forward and took the cold hands in both her own.

"Are you ill, dear?" she questioned, almost entreatingly. "Speak to me, won't you?"

Ailsa shivered.

"Don't!" she answered, hoarsely. "I should think you would hate me! What trouble have I not brought into this household! Heaven knows it is no fault of mine. I would have done anything, suffered anything to have saved you sorrow, and now I have added this to all the other pain I have brought upon you. I have cost your brother his sight!"

She opened her eyes as she finished speaking, but it was into Muriel's they looked, not Ethel's. She barely repressed a scream of horror. Ethel felt the sudden start and followed the direction of her eyes. She, too, seemed to have realized that presence for the first time, and sinking back into the corner of the carriage, relapsed into a silence that was heavy.

A scornful smile played about Muriel's lips, a fiery gleam came into the staring eyes, but she spoke not.

They drove in silence to the hotel that had been indicated to the driver, and found Dunraven awaiting them.

"How is Lloyd?" whispered Ailsa, feverishly, as he lifted her from the carriage.

"Still unconscious," he answered.

"May I—go to—him?"

She did not observe the drawn look of his haggard countenance, but felt the strained expression of his voice as he replied:

"Not to-night! The doctor would not wish it. If he should regain consciousness I will call you at once. I think you know that you may trust me!"

There was something so strange in his manner of uttering the words that she glanced up into his face, but looked down again when she saw the hungry eagerness of his bloodshot eyes. His expression frightened her.

It seemed to her that she could ask no more questions. Her own voice alarmed her until the sound of it caused her to start with fear. She shuddered heavily, and made no objection when Dunraven himself showed her to her room, not even inquiring where Ethel was to be placed.

She heard Dunraven's voice as in a dream as he said:

"Remain here. If we should want you we will know where to come for you. Yours will be the first name he speaks when he regains consciousness."

(To be continued.)

### Got All His Earnings.

An old miner, a bachelor, had a pretty niece who kept his house, and at his death he bequeathed all his earnings to her on condition that she married Tom J——, a nice young miner in whom he had always taken a deep interest. But the pretty niece had no wish to marry Tom, and put herself out of his reach by wedding a hard-working factory lad. The heir-at-law was not at all displeased with the niece for marrying another, as he saw that now the old miner's wealth would come to him. "That siller belongs to me now, I reckon," he said to the trustee, a white-haired old collier who had ideas of his own. "Susan's lost it by marryin' the wrong man. So you'd better hand it ower." "Not so fast, lad," replied the trustee. "You'll have to be patient for a while. Susan may marry and bury a dozen husbands, and still come doon to Tom in the end." And the heir-at-law is wondering whether this is really so.

About 79 per cent. of the population of Russia cannot read or write.

## SNAKES IN CHINA.

**Spirit of Dragon King Said to Reside In Reptile's Body.**

It is not always safe to kill a snake in China. It doesn't matter much whether the snake is of the water species or of the land variety, for within this reptile's body is supposed to reside the spirit of what the yellow man worships as the dragon king. This latter is believed by the average superstitious John to have the power of ruling over the floods. This dragon king represents one symbol in the ritual of worship of the Chinese religion called Taoism.

China practically possessed three different forms of religion until the advent of the Christian missionaries. The first of these religions was in the form of a philosophy. This still exists to some extent, and is known as Confucianism. The second form has been recognized as Buddhism, which still exists throughout China as symbolized in the worship of idols. As you travel throughout the country, here and there you will frequently run across idols of Buddha located on the hillsides or other quiet and sequestered spots conducive to reverential reflection. Plenty of worshipers yet pay their homage to these Buddhish idols, and you can see them conscientiously observing the formal ceremonies of their worship. But this form of religion is steadily dying a natural death since the advent of Christianity.

The third variety of religious observance among the Celestials is that Taoism. This was started by an old patriarch named Lao-tgu, who had surrounding him a group of eight immortals as his disciples. One of these latter was given the responsibility of representing the God of Barbers. The Taoist worshipers have temples erected in each native town. In these temples are pictures portraying the horrors of the future life. When the souls of the dead are buried across the river Styx the artist has painted a gruesome thought. Men and women are depicted as climbing towering mountains of ice, only to fall back into a gaping abyss as they nearly reach the top. As they fall their bodies are reevaled as being caught upon spears and tossed backward and forward by deft executioners. These gruesome pictures show the sufferers to be finally ground up between millstones. Some of them show sharp swords slashing to pieces the bodies which have escaped the millstone process, and little dogs are pictured as running after the sufferers, lapping up the blood. On certain occasions after a death the family will proceed in a body to these temples and will hold a public wail.

On the drum tower of the Taoist temple at Tientsin it has been common to see richly dressed native merchants kneeling to an iron pot containing incense burned in honor of his excellency the rat. Other similar disgusting procedures could be observed. It is hard to conceive that human beings can be so superstitious as deliberately to endure such empty practices of hallowed mockery. Yet this is one phase of China, the China of to-day. The few modernized Mongolians surely have their hands full in effectively combating this awful element of ignorance and bigoted superstition and in holding their newly organized republic to the main highway of progress.

### Stupid Lawyer Body.

"Well, James, how are you feeling to-day?" said the minister to one of parishioners, an old man suffering from chronic rheumatism. "You are not looking so brisk as usual." "Na, sir," replied the old fellow, sadly. "I've been gey unfortinit the day." "How, James?" "Weel, sir, I got a letter frae a Glesca lawyer body this mornin', tellin' me that ma cousin Jock was deid, an' that he had left me twa hunner poun'." "Two hundred pounds!" repeated the minister. "And you call that hard luck? Why, it is quite a fortune for you, James." "Aye," said the old man sorrowfully, "but the stupid lawyer body didna pit eneuch stamps on his letter, an' I had a hale twopence to pay for extra postage."

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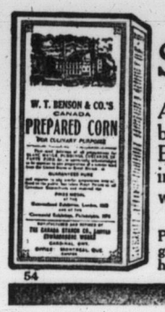


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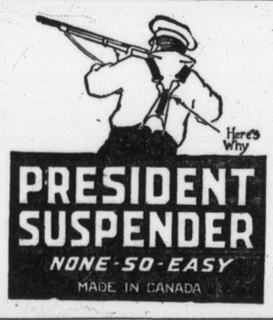

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## TO STOP SUBMARINE WAR.

**British Writer Believes Germany Will See End Soon.**

The London Times' naval correspondent discussing the German submarine blockade, says that despite the raiders' recently increased activity, Admiral von Tirpitz's threat to cut off England's food supply remain futile, and makes the following suggestion, which is of special interest in view of the American-German relations:

"That it is due to the measures for dealing with the submarine menace adopted by the British Admiralty that more ships have not suffered cannot be denied, and since those measures must increase in effectiveness with more time and experience, it may well be that Germany will find it not merely expedient, but necessary to announce a suspension of her policy in this direction.

Already there would seem to be an indication of this in the remarkable statement of Count Reventlow. This arch-advocate of ruthlessness on the part of submarines now says that it is an utter mistake for Germany to stake her hopes upon these vessels, which, while they may dispute the enemy's command of the seas, cannot exercise control. If Germany trebled the number of her submarines she could not protect her colonies with them and the Count therefore holds that Germany's real need is a dozen more battleships."

Australians receive more letters per head than the inhabitants of any other country. After Australians come inhabitants of the United States and of Canada, then inhabitants of the United Kingdom, then Swiss, Germans, French, and Argentines.

# GRIMNESS OF MODERN WAR

**MERE PRESSURE UPON AN ELECTRIC BUTTON.**

**Rows of Men Hurled Into Eternity by the Dull Roar of Explosives.**

Mr. Percy A. Brown, the war photographer, who has returned to Paris after a visit to the east of France, gave the following impressions of what he has seen and heard on the battlefields of Northern France:

"I have seen all the horrors of Belgium and the north of France," said Mr. Brown, "but I never fully realized the frightfulness of this war until the other day. I can only sum it up by saying that it seems to be resolving itself into the deaths at a decided hour of hundreds of men methodically annihilated by dynamite and melinite.

"Here is an incident which happened outside a village near which I was, and which was related to me almost immediately afterwards by a wounded officer:

"The first line of the French trenches was only two kilometres from the village, where the French headquarters were stationed, our lines of defence passing over the hills which in places dominated the German earthworks. The French had been quite unable to dislodge the enemy from one neighboring hill from which the Germans were able to observe the slightest operation and keep up continuous fire without their opponents being made to return any effective answer.

**Tunneling Under Army.**

"Time and time again efforts had been made to take this height, only to end in failure, and as a last resort it was decided to use dynamite. For more than a month tunnelling operations were carried out by the engineers under the German trenches and two thousand kilos of explosives were placed in position ready to blow the enemy and his defence works skywards.

"The final preparations," continued the officer who told the story, "were completed yesterday, and I was not surprised when a alarm sounded which, in the twinkling of an eye, united all the regiments in camp about the village. In five minutes they were on the march, followed by the mitrailleuses on the backs of mules, by the ammunition waggons, and later by a squadron of Chasseurs all the ambulance and the stretcher parties.

"I knew that the explosion was to occur at three o'clock, and it was terrible to think that at a certain moment at a spot quite near to me such a massacre was to be effected; that within a few seconds a section of the land would be converted into a cemetery, and that in consequence countless families would be plunged into mourning.

**Three Muffled Reports.**

"Never before had the war seemed so barbarous as when I waited for the sound which would tell me that the German defences were no more. With deep anxiety I awaited the shock. I heard no loud explosion. There were three muffled reports, followed by the roar of guns—and then through the field glasses I saw our infantrymen charging up the hillside with the bayonet.

"At six o'clock in the evening a dispatch rider galloping through the village stayed to tell me that the hill had been taken without any great loss on our side, but with heavy losses for the Germans.

"It was victory for us—therefore I rejoiced; but I could not help thinking of the hundreds of German dead lying under the blow-up earth, stricken down without warning by the mere pressure upon an electric button. That night I returned to my lines, and as I did so passed a procession of upwards of 200 wounded being borne to field hospitals. Before morning I myself was wounded by a piece of bursting shell."

### Never Be the Same Again.

Never had Weary Willie experienced such hard times. Two whole days without a scrap of food. At length, in despair, he presented himself at old Mrs. Babcock's house. It was indeed despair, for only the previous week he had successfully begged a mince pie, and,alas! he had partaken of it, to his everlasting regret. Mrs. B. confronted him at the door. "You're the same man who begged a mince pie last week, aren't you?" she demanded sternly, with a look of recognition in her eyes.

"No, mum," replied Weary Willie, dolefully. "I'll never be the same man again."

### What Was Coming.

A little girl, whose father was a commercial traveller, sat in the porch holding a kitten in her arms and doing her little best to entertain it with a lively string of chatter. A thoughtful pause caused her mother, who was sitting behind her to pay some attention to what was coming next. "Kitty," said the young miss, "I know all your little brothers and sisters, and I know your mamma; but I ain't never seen your pa. I 'spec' he must be a traveller."


# TRAINING DISTEMPER

Ever hear of this? Yes, of course you did, but under a different name. You have seen it in cases where the horse was "overtrained," worked a little too fast and regular. The nervous system gets the shock after the voluntary muscular system has been taxed too heavily. The trouble starts in the mucous surfaces, and the digestive apparatus, too, must then be impaired. He begins to cough when the glands are materially affected.

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