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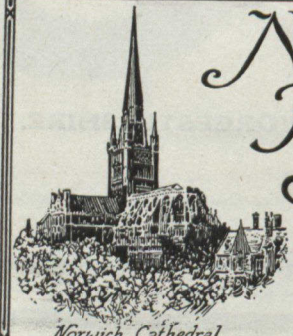
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men who courted her; if she married she would relieve her guardian of her presence, he would no longer be hampered by her. But further reflection invariably made such a step seem impossible, altogether out of the question: she shrank from the very idea of closer contact with the men who were pleasant acquaintances—even friends, and Giles' image always rose up in her mind and effectually swamped the images of all the rest of mankind.

And monsieur only looks on me as a little girl. I believe he is vexed because I am grown up, and more trouble now than I was when I was really small, she thought sadly, and still he doesn't feel about me as if I was grown up, he feels I am a little girl still—just a little girl.

This conviction of hers infused into her manner to Giles when they next met a certain want of ease, a self-consciousness never before observable in her demeanour. Her naturally spontaneous manner became restrained and stiff. She no longer showed the impulsiveness which had formed so large a part of her charm; and she was quiet, almost cold, to her guardian. He had come to London to spend the last week of their sojourn there with them, but to him, as to Sylvia, it was not a time of pleasure but of strain and discomfort, and to both of them it was a relief when they returned to Manderby Court, where each one secretly hoped that the old life would be resumed on its old lines. But in this hope they were both disappointed. The barrier that seemed to have grown up between them, the indefinable barrier which neither could have wholly explained, did not vanish when they were back in the familiar home surroundings. On the contrary, it seemed to Sylvia that in some inexplicable way the barrier grew and grew, until it became like a wall of ice between them, a wall over or through which it was impossible to penetrate.

(To be concluded.)

A Wager on the Wistassining

(Continued from page 9.)

"Say," he says, stretchin' the sickliest kind of gun-shy grin—"Say, don't you want to help me get a good one on Slimmy?"

"I said I didn't rightly know what he meant by that."

"Why," he says, "can't you see that that low-down sharp has found some place where he can just scoop them out, and he think he's got my money up against a sure thing. Now what we want to do is to fool him, see?"—and he tries to make his grin a little more natural—"What we want to do is just get together and fool him bad!"

"I stopped and thought awhile, and I tell ye now, at the first I shied at it—'You want me to help ye, eh?' I says."

"Sure!—And we'll go hunkers—I'll give you ten per cent. on the rake-off!"

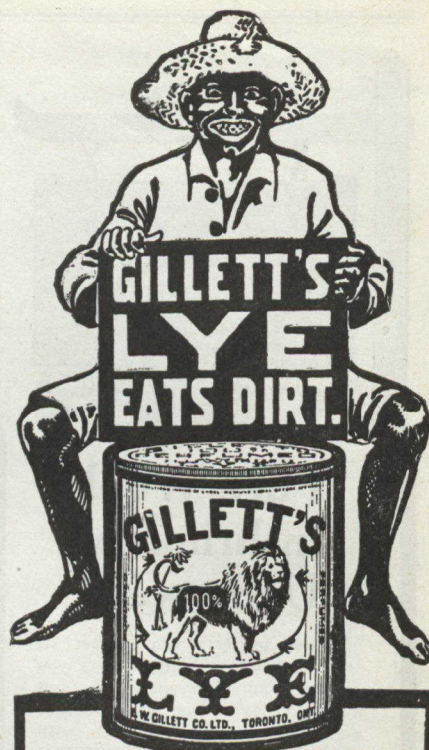
"Oh, no," I says, "Oh, no! We won't work it that way at all! If you want me to help you," I says—"after thinkin' about it some time longer—'why, all well and good. I heard your bet, and there was nothin' in it against your hirin' guidin' assistance. And I suppose if you don't hire me, you'll go and hire somebody else that knows a mighty sight less about the river. But if I take a contract like this, I take it by the number of bass I ketch for ye. And I'd want somebody else, say grandad—the wife's father, you know—to help me on the job."

"We-ell," he says, "of course I want to do the right thing by you, Mr. McCutcheon, and I guess that's a pretty fair proposition. I thought, though, I'd just hire you for the day. But—what would you want a fish?"

"I'd want twenty-five cents a bass," I says, "takin' 'em as they come. And even then, I'll most likely be breakin' the Ontario game laws for ye into the bargain. For you're pretty sure to need more than the legal dozen."

"Oh, sure!" he says, "I'll have to have a lot more'n a dozen. Slimmy caught eleven yesterday—but, Holy Cripes, now, you know, twenty-five cents is a mighty stiff price. I'd be willin' to stand it at two for a quarter, but twenty-five cents—Oh, Lord, now, you know—"

"All right," I says, reachin' my hoe down from the veranda—"if you don't



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