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They are welcome to eat salt with me if they are nice. That is the condition of your forgiveness."

"It is easy for you to forgive, mummy," the elder sister objected. "He hasn't stolen your hairpin."

"Well," retorted the Little Girl—they called her that—"he hasn't stolen yours!" She nodded her head several times.

"That is right," I agreed. "I am in your hands, little lady."

She sat down again and looked at me with her head on one side.

"Will you give me back the hairpin?" she suggested.

"No," I replied decidedly.

"Do you really want it for your pipe?"

"Not a bit!"

"Then," she said, "you have eaten my salt!"

"Amen!" I assented. God knows I never meant to break faith with my little hostess.

We grew friends very quickly, all five of us. Reeves and Ethel flirted for a fortnight. Then she drifted off to a Naval officer, and he to the daughter of an Army doctor, who is his wife now. The mother made friends with some people who played bridge every night, and drifted off to them. The Little Girl and I did not drift apart. Her mother trusted her to me, and I used to amuse

ined at leaving. I knew that it was at leaving my little companion, but that was all.

"To-morrow," I said, "I shall be walking up and down the deck of the Arabia, with no nice Little Girl."

Then the thought struck me, like a fierce blow, that no way in life was worth walking henceforth—without the Little Girl.

Our eyes met suddenly. I had not thought enough of love-making even to avoid her eyes.

"And I," she said, with a little shake in her voice, "shall be walking here, with no nice you!"

I saw her hands grip together, and I knew. . . . How the deuce do we know things? . . . Well, I did.

The silence that followed was hissing with danger. I realised well enough that I ought to break it, and turn the subject; but I could find no words; and I have always been ready with my tongue.

Presently she looked at me for just a moment, and dropped her eyes again; and again I tried to find words and couldn't. I was numbed with hurt—stunned! I could have borne my own trouble, but to hurt her! I tried to find the way of hurting her the least, but I couldn't think, even.

Sometimes I fancy that it would have been best to tell her everything, but

Another Reader's Appreciation.

Aylesbury, Sask., Dec. 26, 1910.

The Western Home Monthly,
Winnipeg.

Dear Sir,

I cannot lay down the December number without writing to express my appreciation of your magazine. It is worth many times the price and fully deserves its reputation of being one of the cleanest, strongest and most up-to-date magazines in Canada. It is a magazine in every sense and not merely a monthly story book. During the five or six years I have been reading it it has been symbolical of Western Canada in at least one way—progress.

Yours faithfully,

J. A. MENZIES.

her in the evenings, when the others were playing at bridge—or at love.

Sometimes we sat in the garden and talked. Sometimes we walked along the Line Wall, or through the queer narrow streets. Sometimes when it was moonlight we walked along the Europa Main Road, above the Alameda. I have been all over the world, and I know no road to match it in the moonlight. The road beyond Sea Point at Cape Town comes nearest. . . . I know of no company on any road to match the Little Girl's; and your comes next. . . . I always treated her as a child, you will understand; teased her and let her talk; played draughts and let her win; taught her card tricks and puzzles; got her to sew on buttons for me, and rewarded her with a Mabrish bag—the best I could buy at Benoliel's—to keep her needles and cottons in. I gave her a bangle from Tangier, too. I called that a doctor's fee, because I had "the dumps," after a nasty letter from England, and she laughed them away.

I never flirted with her for a moment. I want you to be clear about that. I never held her hand a second too long when we said good-night, never gave her my arm when we walked. I didn't even think of anything of the sort till the last night, or dream that she did. What a fool a man is!

We were walking up and down the Line Wall together after dinner. I felt more depressed than I could have imag-

then I judged that silence was kindest. Afterwards I thought that the knife would have been more merciful. She would have had more to get over; but she would have got over it quicker. And I might have comforted her for a moment.

Anyhow, I said nothing. She evidently thought that I feared my fate too much; considered myself too old or her too young; and she tried to help me! She was sure beyond doubt that I loved her, or she wouldn't have done that.

"You have been so very kind to me," she said, with a grave, unfaltering voice. "I should like you to know that—that I am not too much of a child to appreciate it. You think that you are dreadfully old, and I am dreadfully young, but—I do not think you are old, and—I am quite grown up in—some things."

She laughed her little laugh—oh, blessed little laugh!—so differently. If ever a man suffered hell on earth I suffered it then. . . . I couldn't tell her after that. Our hearts would have run away with us for a moment. I thought she would be glad afterwards that she had been spared from open confession.

I don't know. . . . I don't know. . . . Well, I spared her the pain; and the comfort. . . . The rest of the evening—I can't talk about it.

I left next morning. She was very brave. I could see that she had been crying, but she laughed then. I wonder

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