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No. 12. Standard Garment Co., London, Ontario.

TEN ENGLISH WEEKLY MAGAZINES sent to any address for 25 cents. Norman Peel, London, Ont.

She brought the crumpled sheet from her skirt pocket.

"You bein' the only reel friend we've got," she pleaded, "I should like to have you read it and see what you think."

The letter was awkward and incoherent, but it had a ring of sincerity. It was filled with protestations of reform. He wrote that his days and nights were filled with shame and self-reproach. If only he could get out and show what he would do to make up for the past!

"Sounds tollable like a man that has seen the error of bein' too easy and too pop'lar," sagely commented Jotham, viewing the straggling characters with head cocked sidewise to avoid the wreaths from his pipe-bowl. "I should sartainly feel encouraged about him 'f I's you. Ex-cuse me, Oleander"—he spoke with a queer hesitation and embarrassment—"but I reckon ye think only of stickin' to the Cap'n clear through, don't ye?"

"Why—why—I love him, Joe," she said, leaning forward to peer at the old man's face in the dusk.

"So do—so do!" Jotham replied, hastily. "I like a woman that don't whiffle. Ye said the same thing to me about forty year ago—forty year ago!"

He slowly dug the ashes from his pipe in silence. Then he arose and limped a few steps painfully.

"Guess I'll be gittin' in out of the damp," he said, softly. "Rheumatiz has to be humored."

yer's curt explanation. But at last he understood that a widower cousin in a distant town had died and that the only heir seemed to be himself. The property was a little farm, stocked. There would be no additional money to speak of after the debts and legal expenses were settled.

Jotham mused above the letter for a long time. Finally in answer to his thoughts a queer smile wrinkled under his beard.

"Seems as though it might be a cosy home for two plain old people like me and—"

His whimsical musings were broken upon. He heard a step on the dry moss. As he hastily stuffed the letter into his jacket he blinked up against the sun. After a time he recognized the man who stood gazing at him gloomily.

"Cap'n Lowe!" he ejaculated.

"Thought you was—"

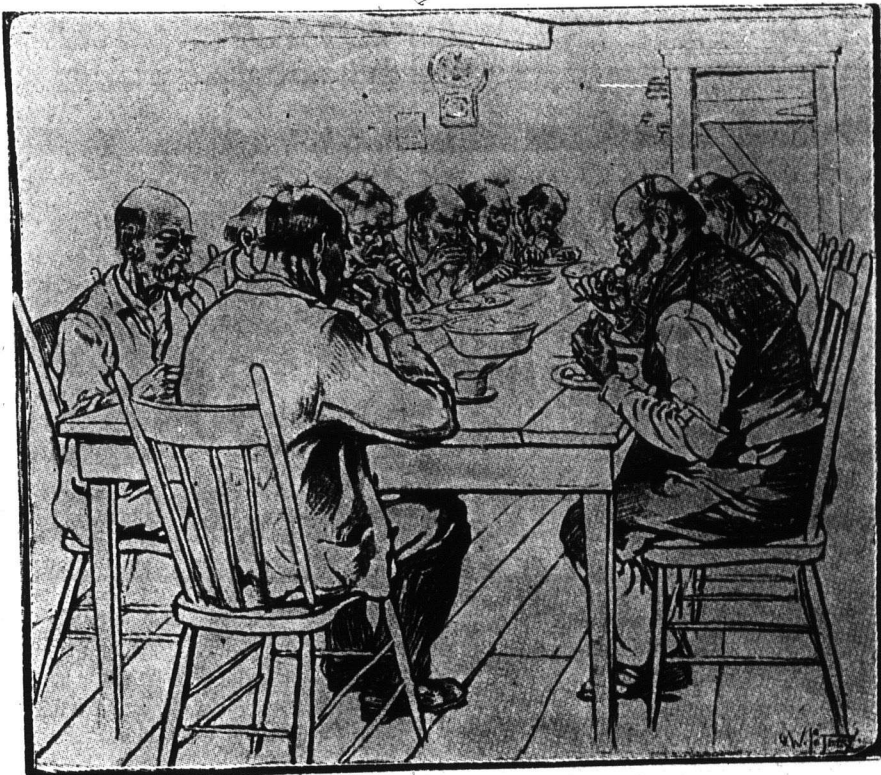
"No, I hain't in jail," the other said bitterly. "Pears like I hain't worth keepin' even in county prison. If you've got to know, the man who put me in there got tired of paying my board, and so I'm out."

His tone grew more gentle. "Wal, Jotham, it's you, is it? I heard stake-drivin', and come acrost to see who it was. I've been hangin' round here cal'clatin' I'd find some pauper who'd carry word to Oleander for me."

He choked a bit. "S'pose o' course she's at the farm still?"

"She's there, Cap'n."

"Jotham, when we was both a-courtin'—"



With Yawning Mouths and Loaded Knives.

She clutched her hands tighter in her apron.

"Joe," she called.

"Yes, little woman."

"Joe, it's—it hain't right to say it, p'raps—it may sound—it would sound light if ye didn't know me—and I'm an old woman, too. But, Joe, if it wa'n't for him who's my husband, I would jest have to love you, for you're always good and gentle to me, and I'm sorry I didn't know you through and through 'way back there."

With a sudden movement she kissed his wrinkled cheek and went her way to the women's part, sobbing.

He touched his finger to his face, then regarded the finger-tip gravely.

"It's these pop'lar men who git all the best there is goin'," he murmured.

"But I guess it's too late in life for me to begin to be pop'lar."

A few days later Jotham was sent with an axe to mend the pasture-fence that skirted the most distant wood-lot. After he had clumsily driven the stakes and nailed up the sagging wire he glanced all about him furtively, and then feeling secure in his isolation, sat down upon a cradle-knoll and pulled a letter from his worn jacket.

"Hain't dared to more'n peek at this sence I got it," he muttered. "Never know when an eye is over your shoulder up there, and if I hain't mistook, this it suthin' strictly private."

He cast one more searching glance in the direction of the poor-farm's roofs and bent over the letter. It was a long task for him to master even the law-

handsome Oleander Orr, little did he think we'd meet like this," he wailed with the sudden emotion of a weak man. "Oh, my God, Jotham, it's terrible—terrible to think what I've brought on that woman of mine. If only there was some way I could make up to her for what trouble I've visited on her."

He crouched on the moss, propped his drink-blotched face on his palm and gazed away across the pasture with the stolidity of a blind man.

"I don't know what I'm goin' to do now I'm here," he mourned. "The law is that if one of the fam'ly's on the town the rest can be put there. They'll gaffe to me as a pauper, too, if I show myself. I've got a cent and no way to git it."

Poor wife!"

The two men were silent a long time. Each picked at a moss-tuft that he had scraped into his rough hand.

"The's this, late though it is, Joe," choked Lowe at last. "Stayin' in that jail all these weeks has let me know that I don't need rum. It never was hank'r'in' for the stuff that done it all."

May God sear my throat from teeth to stomach if I ever take another drop!"

"Hope so, I vum I do!" agreed Jotham, earnestly.

"It was jest stayin' in with the crowd round here, anyway," said Lowe. "I give in too easy when they git after me."

"Dang'rous bus'ness, this bein' too pop'lar," sighed the old pauper.

There was long silence again. "I reckon ye'd be all right if ye was to start in som'ers where ye wouldn't be messin' in with the old crowd round

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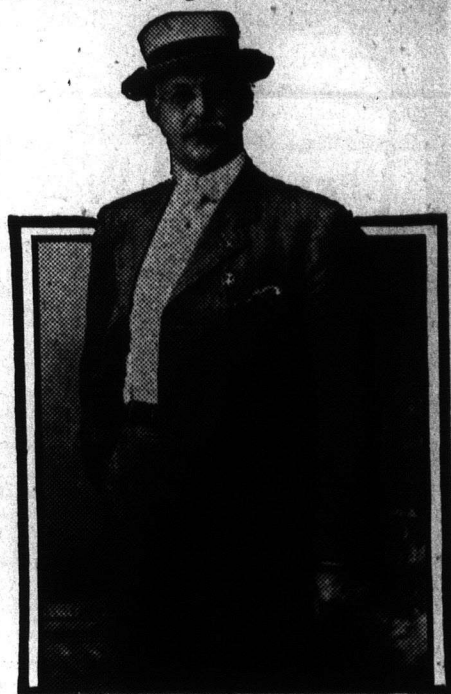
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