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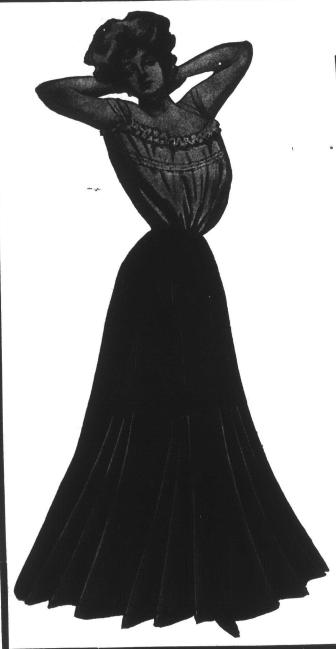
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A Romance of the West.

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CHAPTER I

"Is this your final answer, Kate?" "Yes, George, I have thought it well over and I cannot leave this dear home and all I love to go out to those terrible wilds. You will thank me some day, George, for having known my own mind before instead of after.

"You do not love me as I love you Kate; perhaps it is best as you say but I hope you may never know such pain and disappointment as you have caused me" "Good-bye then, and please say farewell to your mother and ask her to excuse my leave-taking she will understand."

George Rayson raised his hat and with a formal handshake took silent leave of the girl he loved. Kate Manners watched his retreating figure with a shade of regret and remorse.

He was a very fine fellow, this gentleman whom she had only known three months and had flirted with because she liked his good looks and good breeding, though she had never intended either to marry him or to break his heart.

She was accustomed to the homage of the other sex, for Kate Manners was a very pretty girl, the daughter of a London physician who had on that hot summer afternoon, a large press of a personality which radioff, so that she had always been able | skin in the hall; and a handsome St. | patients, poor sol rich alike. to enjoy the refinements of life with Bernard rose with a yawn and a lazy Kate had his atox eyes and deter-daughter with an expression of eager-

every prospect of making a good match of she choose.

> It was very unpleasant that the penniless younger son of a poor Baronet should take it upon himself to accept the offer of a rich Uncle to buy him a ranch somewhere out in Western Canada, then ask her to throw in her lot with his and give up civilization and live among wild beasts and Indians because he loved her with all his honest, manly, young heart. Why, there was Sir Nicholas Bull, who had already offered her his heart, his fortune and his tarnished name; and here Kate shuddered at the thought, for she was a good girl and had steadily repulsed the attentions of the profligate knight in spite of his worldly advantages. She would rather die single than marry the old reprobate; but what a pity that Dame Fortune had not seen fit to give George Rayson the fortune, and Sir Nicholas the rich uncle and the ranch. Then she could have married George and Sir Nicholas could have taken up with a squaw, who would have been quite good enough for him.

wag of his bushy tail and came and licked the hand of his young mistress. Over the old oak mantlepiece hung the portrait of a man in his prime; dark, partly grey hair, clear grey eyes, a square jaw and an expression of strength and goodness beaming from the whole countenance. This was Kate's father, "Dear Daddy" as she Mr. Rayson. Has he gone? How always had called him and as he ever strange of him never to say goodbye;

TORONTO,

mined chin, but her rose-leaf complexion and auburn hair she inherited from her pretty young mother. As she entered the drawing-room Mrs. Manners started and turned somewhat peevishly to her daughter.

"Dear me, Kate, how you startled me! I thought you were out with



ALONG THE ELBOW RIVER, CALGARY.

into the house. It was all very quiet childish memory the indelible im-

remained in her memory, a kindly, | he sent a message! as Kate delivered loving parent who had adored his his farewells, well I think he might Kate turned with a sigh and went little girl and who had left on her have come in to see me; such a prepossessing young man; I did think Kate that he would have been a good left his wife and daughter comfortably | Persian cat dozed lazily on the tiger- lated fatherlines upon wife, child and match for you!"—and Mrs. Manners looked dubiously at her handsome