ctually forgot her pres-e he pondered this most te of affairs.

I now. It's as clear as ounced finally. "You rehe went away and hasn't ge to write me since. I'me id I both regarded this ically won-all over but narch, as one might put s well confess I hustled from the mine just so f get married and light oneymoon. I figured Bill hirds with one stonereturn here in three or o relieve me, after I had peration. Poor boy, That ful song-and-dance you

d you were the matchcase. I must say I think ough to know better, Ca-

1? Well, what made you

d: "Oh, you're very oboman." hat you reveal the past he future."

ally very clumsy, Caliph. ever try to direct the des-

e sick list," he pleaded, porting of you to discuss ealthy—so let us discuss , do you figure Bill's case ly hopeless?" , Caliph."

ster had recourse to medg which, Dolores walked iss in the corner, satisfied her coffure was just so to his side, singing softly that had floated out over of Webster's room door me night:

his head and looked up at searchingly. "Is there in Bill's way?" he de-admit it's none of my

b, there is some one else." so." This rather viciousfing to gamble 100 to 1, that whoever he is, he men Bill is." replied coldly, "is a mat-

th opinion." clock is fixed for keeps?" h. And he never had a the start."

et the other man first, Ca-

you mind telling me what n does for a living?" ing man, like Billy." Has the son of a horse-mine like Bill's? That's consider, Dolores."

mine fully as go Billy, he How long have you

you're right-then go Stuart Webster warned

marry in haste and repent olores. Know your man-et him buy the wedding s a heap of difference, my a sentiment and sentimenof my man, Callph." ent again, thinking rapid-

f course," he began againhile there was the slighty of Bill winning you, I dled before saying that about to say to you now. use Bill is my friend, and the cross him. With refis other man, however, I h code to consider. convinced I'm out of the I'll give that lad a race if act of my life. He's a ne, and he isn't on the job s claim, so why shouldn't I can? But are you quite ren't making a grave missing Billy? He's quite a rs, and he'd be awfully He's kind and gentle ate, and he's not a molly-

lp it, Caliph. Please don't him any more. I know ho is kinder and nobler." She ceased abruptly. She ceased abruptly. reaking down her reserve oo much,

Bill's case is hopeless"ne groping for hers, while with his searching, wistfut vonder what mine looks s, Dolores, I-I-

ed fair with my friend," he agerly. "I'm not going to marry me, but I want to t to me you're such a very voman I can't help loving

whole heart and soul." ued on Fage Seven)

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"Fruit-a-tives" Relieved Both Dropsy and Sick Kidneys

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(Continued from Page Six)

replied gravely. "I suppose sc. I'm such an ohvious old fool. I've had my dream, and I've put it behind me, but I—I just want you to know I love you; so long as I live, I shall want to serve you. When you're married to this other man, and things do not break just right for you both-if I have something he wants, in order to make you happy, I want you to know it's yours to give to him. I-I-I-guess that's all, Dolores."

"Thank you, John. Would you like to know this man I'm going to mar-

ry?"
"Yes, I think I'd like to congratulate

the scoundrel."
"Then I'll introduce you to him, John. I first met him on a train in Death valley, California. He was a shaggy old dear, all whiskers and rags, but his whiskers couldn't hide his smile, and his rags couldn't hide his manhood, and when he thrashed a drum-mer because the man annoyed me, I just couldn't help falling in love with him. Even when he fibbed to me and disputed my assertion that we had met

"Good land of love-and the calves get loose!" he almost shouted as he held up his one sound arm to her. "My dear, my dear-"

"Oh, sweetheart," she whispered laying her hot cheek against his, "it's taken you so long to say it, but I love you all the more for the dear thoughts that made you hesitate."

He was silent a few moments, digesting his amazement, speechless with the great happiness that was his—and then Dolores was kissing the back of the hand of that helpless, bandaged arm lying across his breast. He had a tightening in his throat, for he had not expected love; and that sweet, be-nignant, humble little kiss spelled adoration and eternal surrender; when she looked at him again the mists of

joy were in his eyes.
"Dear old Caliph John!" she
crooned. "He's never had a woman to understand his funny ways and appreciate them and take care of him, has he?" She patted his cheek. "And bless his simple old heart, he would rather give up his love than be false to his friend. Yes, indeed. Johnny Webster respects 'No Shooting' signs when he sees them, but he tells fibs and pretends to be very stupid when he really isn't. So you wouldn't be false to Billy—eh, dear? I'm glad to know that, because the man who cannot be false to his friend can never be false to his wife."

He crushed her down to him and held her there for a long time. "My dear," he said presently, "isn't there something you have to say to me?"
"I love you, John," she whispered,

and sealed the sweet confession with a true lover's kiss.

"All's well with the world," John Stuart Webster announced when he could use his lips once more for conersation. "And," he added, "owing to the fact that I started a trifle late in life, I believe I could stand a little more of the same.

The door opened and Ricardo looked in on them. "Killjoy!" Webster growled. "Old

Killjoy the Thirteenth, King of Sobrante. Is this a surprise to you?" "Not a bit of it, Jack. I knew it was due."

"Am I welcome in the Ruey family?" Ricardo came over and kissed his sister. "Don't be a lobster, Jack," he protested. "I dislike foolish questions." And he pressed his friend's hand with a fervor that testified to his pleasure.

"I'm sorry to crowd in at a time like this, Jack," he continued, with a hug for Dolores, "but Mr. What-you-may-call-him, the American consul, has called to pay his respects. As a fellow citizen of yours, he is vitally interested in your welfare. Would you care to receive him for a few minutes?"

"One minute will do," Webster declared with emphasis. "Show the human slug up, Rick." Mr. Lemuel Tolliver tripped breezily

in with outstretched hand. "My dear Mr. Webster," he began, but Webster cut him short with a peremptory ges-"Listen, friend Tolliver," he said.

"The only reason I received you was to tell you I'm going to remain in this country awhile and help develop it. I may even conclude to grow up with

it. I shall not, of course, renounce my American citizenship; and of course, as an American citizen, I am naturally interested in the man my country sends to Sobrante to represent it. I might as well be frank and tell you that you won't do. I called on you once to do your duty, and you weren't there; I told you then I might have something to say about your job later on, and now I'm due to say it. Mr. Tolliver, I'm the power behind the throne in this little Jim-crow country, and to quote your own elegant phraseology, you, as American consul, are nux vomica to the Sobrantean government. Moreover, as soon as the

ington, he's going to tell the president that you are, and then the president will be courteous enough to remove you. In the meantime, fare thee well,

Mr. Consul. "But, Mr. Webster-"

"Vaya!" Mr. Tolliver, appreciating the utter futility of argument, bowed and departed.

"Verily, life grows sweeter with each passing day." Webster murnured whimsically. "Rick, old man, I think you had better escort the consul to the front door. Your presence is nux vomica to me also. See that you back me up and dispose of that fellow Tolliver, or you can't come to our wed-

ding—can he, sweetheart?"

When Ricardo had taken his departure John Stuart Webster looked up quite seriously at his wife-to-be. "Can you explain to me, Dolores," he asked, "how it happened that your relatives and your father's old friends here in Sobrante, whom you met shortly after your arrival, never informed you that Ricardo was living?"

"They didn't know any more about him than I did, and he left here as a mere boy. He was scarcely acquainted with his relatives, all of whom bowed quite submissively to the Sarros yoke. Indeed, my father's half-brother, Antonio Ruey, actually accepted a portfolio under the Sarros regime and held it up to his death. Ricardo has a wholesome contempt for his relatives, and as for his father's old friends, none of them knew anything about his plans. Apparently his identity was known only to the Sarros intelligence bureau, and it did not permit the information to leak out."

"Funny mix up," he commented.
"And by the way, where did you get all the inside dope about Neddy Je-

She laughed and related to him the details of Neddy's perfidy. "And you actually agreed to deliv-r me, bog-tied and helpless, to that

old schemer, Dolores?"
"Why not, dear. I loved you; I always meant to marry you, if you'd let



"I Always Meant to Marry You."

me; and \$10,000 would have lasted me for pin money a long time.' "Well, you and Neddy have both lost out. Better send the old pelican a cable and wake him out of his day dream.' "I sent the cable yesterday, John dear.

"Extraordinary woman!" "I've just received an answer. Neddy has spent nearly \$50 telling me by cable what a fine man you are and how thankful I ought to be to the

good Lord for permitting you to marry "Dolores, you are perfectly amazing, I only proposed to you a minute age. "I know you did, slow-poke, but that is not your fault. You would have proposed to me yesterday, only I thought best not to disturb you until you were a little stronger. This eve-

ning, however, I made up my mind to settle the matter, and so I——"
"But suppose I hadn't proposed to

"Then, John, I should have proposed to you, I fear."
"But you were running an awful risk, sending that telegram to Neddy Je-

rome." She took one large red ear in each little hand and shook his head loving-ly. "Silly," she whispered, "don't be I knew you loved me; would have known it, even if Neddy Jerome hadn't told me so. So I played a safe game all the way through, and oh, dear Caliph John, I'm

so happy I could cry."
"God bless my mildewed soul," John Stuart Webster murmured helplessly. The entire matter was quite beyond his comprehension! (THE END.)

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