

is like a wild pattern in oil-cloth. Note that woman contorting in the moon-shine—she is like all the seven deadly sins in one. The composition—how chaotic! The anatomy—how independent! The lightning—how wilfully perverse! Oh, it is all so new, so different, so vivid, so vital, so stimulating!

They left with reluctance these halls through which the winds of freedom were circulating in such a tornado. On the outside steps Miss Grahame said:

"And now, I suppose, I must go up to Oliver Dent's and look at his portrait of John M. Woodward and see if I can get a photograph of it for a half-tone."

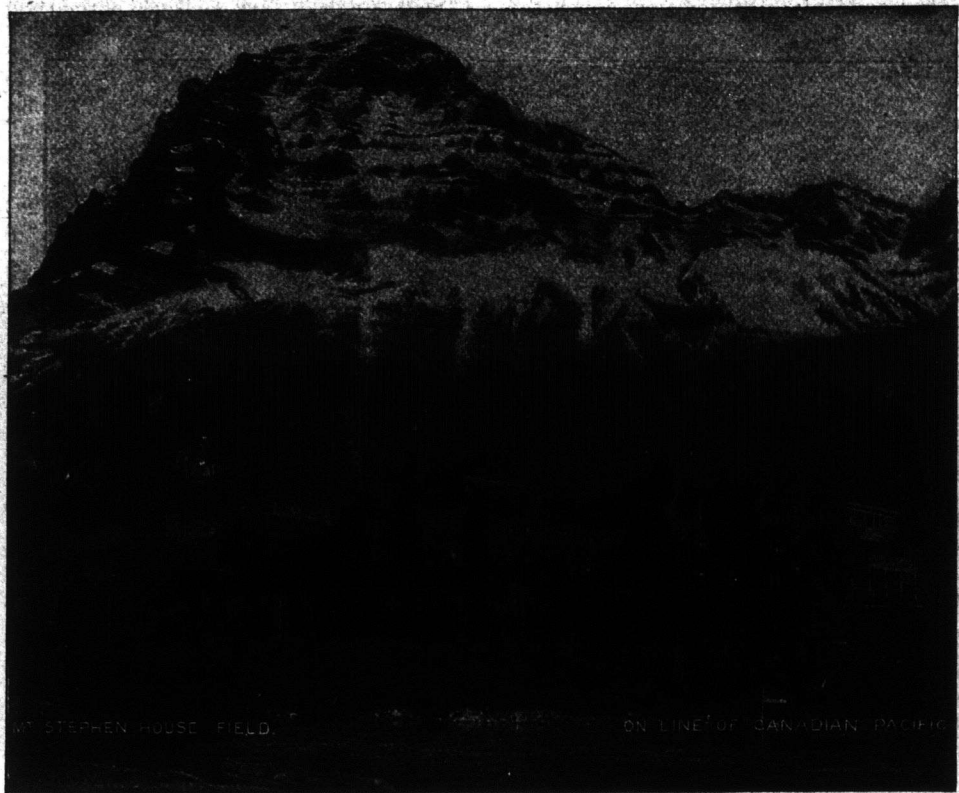
Leopold Golson had never been in the habit of regarding himself as likely to become the subject of a tender passion—he led a life too starkly intellectual. Nor was he likely to extend consciousness, on this point, to another man's heart and mind unless that other offered himself with the completest unmistakableness. Frank Parlow now "offered"—if the consensus of the composing room was any guide: it was generally assumed that, in his own peculiar fashion and according to his own peculiar lights, he was paying court to Myrtle Race. Golson set aside his own "ideas" and resolved to speak.

He caught the young fellow in the corridor late one afternoon and talked with him about mending his ways. Par-

Myrtle Race. She was some twelve or fifteen years the girl's senior and felt she might make the venture. There had been hours, of late, when Avis had allowed herself to open a little under the influence of one or two advanced writers who were inclined to maintain that the single woman of thirty-five might be justified in taking matters into her own hands. Yet many women, after all, would have to take such a course before she could agree to follow it. The rule for the advanced was still the same as for the young—and about that rule there was no matter of doubt.

But her chief support in addressing Miss Myrtle came from the fact that, during the last vacations, she had done the "Answers for the Anxious." The "tone" still clung; and it was now employed with Myrtle, as with her predecessors.

In answering her correspondents, Avis Grahame had made the assumption, common to the office, that all her young women stood alike on one social plane. That plane was her own, and she made them gentlewomen without exception. In a few cases she may have done harm; but in most, doubtless, she worked only good. The young female of the middle sort was brought face to face with the ladylike ideal. The girl must never descend to the young man; the young man must always rise to her. No weak concessions; no lowering of standards. "He will think all the better of you for



low, who was conscious enough of being a peg above himself, and who enjoyed the universal appreciation of his nerve, listened with unexpected docility. He had listened on previous occasions to some of Golson's tempestuous theorizings, and did not quite understand how a man could be so loose in the abstract yet so exigent in the concrete; but he patiently gave ear.

"Come, Frank," said the mentor; "get in line behind Falstaff: 'purge and live cleanly.' If you are meaning to marry, search your heart and scrub your morals. Different hours, with different company, in different places. Fewer young fellows about you, and those of higher aims. Fewer young women, and those of—well, you understand me"—as Frank blinked rapidly, once or twice—"of less dubious character. Set a higher mark for yourself—and keep to it. Raise the general average; don't lower it."

"Oh, say now," replied the young man with a gulp; "if a fellow's going to live in this world, he's got to know it. If a man's to stand between the world and a family, let him begin by understanding the thing he's got to face. I can't say I looked for a sermon from you. Thanks, just the same, though. I hope to come out all right, pretty soon—more so than many other fellows have."

Golson moved on in some little confusion, but trust you will, too," was all he had to say.

About the same time Avis Grahame was about to address a few words to

it in the end," Miss Grahame had often added.

Myrtle Race, when this method came to be applied to her case, was piqued and almost saucy. But she saw that the motive was of the best, and she kept her temper. After the first minute or so she was listening quietly and with the deepest deference, as to one who was immensely older and possessed of all the wisdom of the ages.

"Thank you, my kind friend, for your deep interest"—this, with a little reverence, was all her retort; and Avis Grahame came away feeling for wrinkles in her face and almost prepared to find her first gray hair.

But the passage of a few weeks seemed to show these efforts as all in vain. One forenoon Golson's galley-proofs came to him queried in a new hand, and he soon learned that Myrtle had forsaken the Semicolon. Closer inquiries disclosed her return to her native town. Her father had lapsed into invalidism, and if his paper was to continue publication, his daughter must lend her help. So Myrtle had removed her covetous eye from the position of art editor, and leaving Avis Mathilde Grahame in undisturbed possession had gone back to Central City.

A fortnight later another familiar face was missing; Frank Parlow had left the Semicolon, too. During his last few days his expansive and communicative manner had quite failed, and nobody un-



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