Romance Near a Throne

BY T. C. DEAN,

Author of "A Pilgrimage to Eden," "That Lossing Gal," "The Death of Summer," "A Canadian Heroine," "Gold Beneath Dross," Etc., Etc.

intered According to Act of Parliament of Canada in the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and One, by T. C. Dean, Drayton, Ont., at the Department of Agriculture, Ottawa.

CHAPTER XI.

TOBER 24th, 1901.

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emotions as he listened to ords of Princess Maud. The ability she had exhibited in g her shadowers off the trail admiration for her intellect before in their lives, and ed his belief in her that she an extremely bright as well as t levely woman. As she sat him now, her recital finished, looking if anything more beauthan he had ever seen her look it required all his control to him giving voice to the senthat surged in his breast. waited a little while, however, umand his tones the better, be-

do not know how I can properise you for your demonstrated wence. Though knowing you to proficient in mental fore-I would not have thought you have coped so successfully with hest skill in the Dominion, which decertainly be employed on this I have been very lonesome here I am amply repaid by seeing you Woodville then related had done to elude pursuit, sked the princess what plans ad formed for the future.

None," she said, "I thought we best talk such matters over toyou not think I am perfectly

here?" inquired Woodville. No. I know from what my cousin me of the London police t sooner or later the detectives discover that you escaped detion in Toronto by assuming the sguise of a photographic agent. will then turn their attention photographic studios in Canada here. I think the time is at for you to make a change." "How best could that be done?"

"You are a good artist. I think a od idea to follow would be for us go to some obscure village, and to teach painting, and I to take te character of your sister and ach music. When we have lived as safely for a time the ultimate stination I have in view for you n then be journeyed to."

"Where is that?" "In the Canadian Northwest, bend Manitoba, where as an emistection for a lifetime. Once safe

angements, and in settling the deils to their liking they agreed to by different routes to a small vilnamed Lincoln, in the State of kota, which was isolated from meral traffic and back northward on. It was decided that Woodville uld leave for Lincoln the next , going quite a distance on foot ore he purchased a railway ticket. month afterwards. Both were to sume the name of O'Leary, and de to pass for brother and sister. hese plans were successfully

hear the princess, to take part grains and for vegetables. ideas of household arrangetalk over with her the of the vanished hours, to are with her the interest of their on surroundings was a bliss to could not be described. It all was a sham, this life of theirs, the incidents therewere intensely real. The human s moulded by the hand of enment and locality exercises a mant influence on the minds of People. Though, as I have said, in many of the details was intensely real. Nowas ever finer than Woodville's inder these conditions, and the ence thereof reached and swayed woman who under the character a sister was sharing it with him. were general favorites in the and they in turn had made friends of their neighbors and Only one thing marred the mony of the whole to Woodville,

His heaven was to watch her in the evening hours as she assisted the toodville was touched by many girl to clear away the record of the blood would suddenly turn to ice at his heart when he thought that this could not go on forever, that its ending might even then be near at hand; that a time would come when he could no longer watch that perfect face, nor even hear the of the stream even when the bre th

sound of that voice, but like the joy of winter touches its breast in December, his heart could not re ist the rapture that fate had laid at his door of life, though cloud was designed to soon obscure his sun, When that came he was willing welcome oblivion, until then would drink of the nectar at his

CHAPTER XII.

Thus the winter slowly passed with common in the little village of Lin- Her marriage to Lord Saxray had was still warm, but he could not feel been the impelling power that had coln, but when the spring was at its full they associated themselves with a party of six from two separate families who were about to bid farewell to the environments of Lincoln, to "try their luck," as they expressed it, in the Canadian Northwest. Woodville and the Princess both thought that by joining a party they would be less likely to be singled out for discovery. This party of eight persons was known as the Hurst party, and their journey from Lincoln to Winnipeg was without incident. Woodville's previous knowledge of this region, before its later settlement, was of not much value to him now, the complexion of the country had changed so rapidly with the marvelous influx of squat-

At Winnipeg the party separated, Woodville and his companion going to the extreme northern point of trail travel. Here they squatted on land in a very lonesome location, near to where has since risen a very flourishing Northwestern city. Both went to work with a will

and bravely endured the hardships of pioneer life. Woodville planned to put up a larger cabin than the regulation size, but the princess demurred, offering the unanswerable logic that it would be best to do must farmer you would be safe from nothing that would bring attention out of the ordinary upon them. here I could leave you without fear They boarded with a Mennonite neighbor (who had preceded them Woodville assented to her proposi- in the wilderness a few months) union, as he always assented to her til the completion of their cabin, and the Mennonite, whose name was Schmaus, aided Woodville in the building of the new home. Schmaus proved a valuable neighbor to Woodville and a strong friendship grew up between the two men. When the weral miles from a railroad sta- new cabin was completed Woodville turned his attention to the sowing of some grain. He soon learned to drive his oxen, which he had purchased from Schmaus, and formed a nd that the Princess should follow strong attachment for the docile brutes which werked for him so ed to Woodville by Schmaus, was to "I think you might have found she opened her eyes to consciousness difference was there to him, she askfaithfully and contentedly. method of sowing wheat, as explain- and he spoke hurriedly: plow the prairie to a depth of three time to have visited the traps." was Woodville bending over her cd herself, whether she left him teir life in Lincoln, apart from or four inches with a plow made for His companion said nothing in rethat purpose, which is called "break- ply, but he saw the color mount her was fugitives, was a very pleasant ing" the soil. This is done in the face until it reached the roots of her spring, then in the fall it is re- hair then die away leaving her very ge class, to which he gave lessons plowed, which is called "back-sell- pale. Afterwards a coolness fell being" the soil. In the following tween them which was not dispelled lesson per person. Princess Maud, spring wheat to the amount of one when Woodville went with the bushel and a half to the acre is Schmaus boys to cut scrub timber "broadcasted" over the ground, and the next day. On the night of this class at a fee of 10 cents per if the stalks escape the autumn latter day when Woodville reached per pupil, and in this way frosts, a crop of from 20 to 30 his own cabin, he not only found no passed the winter, the spring bushels to the acre is assured. The supper prepared for him, but he ing them still safe from detection location of the Noecker homestead found the cabin empty and the fire the law officers who were con- (Wm. Noecker being the new name out. A terrible blizzard was raging | Woodville had assumed) was a very | without which he had braved lightey lived in a pretty villa on a favorable one. Of course it consist- heartedly, feeling that he would soon ded street, and employed a ser- ed of only the regulation 80 acres. be welcomed by food and warmth. girl, named Laura O'Boyle, who but it comprised some 25 acres of He searched the frosty cabin for a the profoundly attached to both bush land, which here formed a moment in feverish expectancy but ridge to the prairie. Woodville, un- there was no written word of odville in this villa life tasted der the direction of Schmaus, pre- where the companion of his privafirst real bread of heaven that pared 40 acres for the wheat crop tions had gone to. Suddenly it

> was a good shot their table did not | there where the path had been prolack for such delicacies.

all Woodville's labor, and insisted in of a woman's fine shoe, then where aiding him in his outdoor work, as the wind swept in the terror of its well as performing in an unneglected uncontrolled might across the way her household duties. She had prairie trail, all trace of the footlearned much from the girl in her print was lost. Suddenly a terrible employ at Lincoln, and to her knowl- fear touched his heart with a chill edge thus gained, had been added like death. Rushing onward through many lessons on pioneer housekeep- the fury of the blinding gale he calllife was all a sham, it seemed ing given gratis to her by Mrs. ed out "Sister," "Sister!" at the Schmaus, so that in a remarkably | top of his voice, but the moan of the short space of time after their settle- tempest as it caught and bent the ment in the Northwest, she was able | challenging . scrub, floated onward to perform the duties of the position and onward in the direction of the she had voluntarily taken upon herself in a very perfect manner. She only return he received to his cries. also learned to love the oxen, their After plunging about in the blizzard dog, Prince, and a tame jack rabbit,

which was a pet of her own. Maud never took part in made comfortable in the interior by tem in which he must exhibit coolpleasure—that is with the avow- the deft hands of Woodville's com- ness as well as daring. Taking care-Sha with the avow panion. She pasted illustrations She would accompany him to which she tore out of her books, village store to assist in his over the bare walls, and hung the the se company him ceiling with cambric square sewn to- his wits about him, and with great thurch as an act of worship, she gether from discarded dress material. care pursued a direction which accompany him to his pupil's When she left Woodville, never to reand would even assist turn to him, the time of which she in his tasks of tuition, but she felt was rapidly drawing near, she h him go out for a sleigh ride wished him to be as comfortable as him, heither would she go to a possible and to be in a position to

panion near him, but with the spectre of his great crime ever before him, and so she wished, before she bid him the last farewell, to make his bodily comfort as near perfect as it was possible to make it with the opportunities at her disposal. Woodville's mornings were passed

alone in cultivating his land, cutting down wood, or making implements to better accomplish the necessary labor of his new calling. While he was thus engaged his companion busied herself in decorating, as best she could, their rude dwelling and in preparing the noonday meal. In the afternoon they rambled together over their homestead range and exchanged suggestions as to the possibili is of their immediate future. One thing pleased Woodville until he had made the round again. beyond description, while it greatly mystified him-it was the small ef- bin light for the second time, his fect on both her appearance and spir- dispair had reached full flood, and ed her greatly, and she had learned tion of its splendor.

ed her up, and rendered her cheerful still warm. As he reached down to attached to them she never compre-

been set to take place when she her heart or pulse beat. How vividwould be 21 years of age, by special ly Will Carleton's poem came to him arrangement of Princess Wrexford, then, and how similar seemed the and, dating from the summer of their circumstances. Through his trem- they had passed the days together in Northwest residence, that time was bling lips came the words in sobbing distant in the future less than a rhythm: "Yes, she had come score of months.

in the following year to prepare for ed ... him into instant Woodville set snares and traps, and stupor. neglected the duty.

annoyed or pleased over the most down his thin checks. trifling circumstances, the same as It turned out that the princess had her will into operation on the first the Schmaus family.

way to the slight annoyance he felt Her recovery, therefore, after she in his face on the night when she The at the traps not having been visited was once well warmed, was very had nearly died in the snow her us-

and yet tasted on earth. To be and the balance he used for other dawned upon him that the dog, Prince, was also missing, and re-Jack rabbits and prairie chickens lighting his lantern, he went outwere abundant, and as Woodville side in search of tracks. Here and tected by stumps or "scrub" from The princess took great interest in the drifting snow, he saw the imprint maddened storm, and this was the sometime, he found himself back again near his own hut, then he re-The cabin, which had been built of alized that whatever chance he had rough boards, lined with clay, and of rescuing the woman he was thatched with prairie grass, was searching for, would be by some sys-

ful observation of the direction the wind and lighting another lantern, he sallied forth again with all thought would take him to his traps. Ever and anon he called in a depairing voice to the woman and the dog, but received no answering signal of sound. After a long time had to give up physically, he found himto a minimum. She knew his day:

They were in a going was a search for did not so much or pleasure. But Wood
To going was a search for did not so much or pleasure. But Wood
To give up physically, he found himto give up physical passed, and he felt drowsy and ready did not so much care for that. would be lonely enough, there in the | sheltered spot, and the footprints in | the blizzard's drifts.

that they had been visited that day. Woodville left one of his lanterns here to mark the spot, and plunged onward in the direction, as near as he could judge, of where the returning trail ought to be. But he found nothing and still no answer came to his cries. After what seemed to be to him an age, he found himself back to a spot near his cabin, which he recognized by the lamp burning in the window. In a desperate hope that she might have found her way back, he entered his cheerless domicile again, but she was not there. He Woodville, though she knew a power went forth once more, knowing that if he found her not, or found her dead, his own life would cease with the night, yet sick and faint he their pioneer home. The sequestered struggled on battling with the storm,

As he came within view of his ca-

its this life of hardship had on the his exhaustion was keeping pace with to love them with a deep, undefin-Princess Maud. She was ever cheer- it. What could be do, he mentally able affection. The daily events of ful in going about her laborious du- queried, staggering as he paused. their rude, retired existence she had tics of the day, singing snatches of Here his foot struck some hidden ob- become attached to because they her childhood songs, or holding ban- ject in the snow, which caused him tering converse with the dumb pets to fall prone forward. The lantern been the used realities of her own around her, and though her hands | went out as he fell and slipped from were larger than they had been in his grasp, and it was while he was terior of the twin-roomed cabin, the years gone by, and lined with mechanically searching for it in the hard ridges that betokened continual drift, trying to decide what was the things afield, and the endeavor to physical labor, the superlative love- next thing he should do, that his apply as much art as possible in the liness of her face suffered no diminu- hand touched something warm. It cramped possibilities of her housewas his dog Prince, unconscious from keeping duties had all interested her, The mysterious exilar that buoy- long exposure to the tempest but but to what extent she had become through it all, was beyond Wood- clasp the faithful animal in his arms hended until the time arrived for her ville's comprehension, and was as lit- his hand came in contact with the to cast them all aside. Woodville's tle understood by him as it was by garments of a woman. Then Wood- courage and intelligence in his un-Princess Maud herself, though in his ville knew that when the dog's misefforts to solve the problem, he con- tress had been lost. Prince had nes- little short of a revelation to her. cluded she was sustained in her tled beside her to keep her warm. Out of the most discouraging circheerfulness by the thought that she Very tenderly he lifted the prostrate cumstances he had made things rewould soon again be in her native woman out of her shroud of snow, markably comfortable for himself and carried her into the hut. She and gone again." Would that The mental plans, therefore, of the tragic ending be duplicated princess were to return to England here. The mental question rousher wedding, her duty to Woodville tivity. In a few minutes he

often in his feelings by his surround- him, and suffered for his sake, his better cultivation of his prairie soil, ings, the same as if their life of remorse for his ungrateful words to and the building of a larger housebrother and sister had been based on her, that had resulted in her narrow a large amount of sawn lumber and the events of truth. Woodville often escape from a snow-formed grave. a team of young horses having been wondered at this himself, though he was so keen that the tears, which purchased from Schmaus. made no effort to counteract its et- no danger or personal pain could When the day came on which the fects. He often found himself being ever make him shed, fell silently princess had decided she must leave

if their life's purposes had been sim- not been frozen by the cold, though attempt and she made excuses to ilar in the abstract to the lives of chilled to the bone through lying so herself that it would probably be long where she had fallen, with the better to wait until the spring was Consequently on the evening re- rabbits in her hands, within sight a week or two older. When she referred to above. Woodville gave of the rude cabin where she dwelt. membered the horror she had seen rapid. The first thing she saw when ual courage almost failed her. What

you do that foolish thing?" "Did you not censure me for past him in life, so that if he had suffer-

traying his deep regret. "But I must snow, what would be his suffering have been crazy. Had I been in my when she had left him alone to the proper senses I could not have been terror of his merciless isolation and so ungrateful. You must try to for- the retributive memory of his fear-

"and thought I could reach it. But she must go. She waited, putting the blizzard made me so sleepy. I off the hour of her departure until did not know that I was giving up. she had scant time for nuptial pre-Such a sweet sensation of sleep came paration, and then she left him. over me. I thought I would rest stronger effort to reach home, but Subscribe for the Watchman-Warder. for a moment, and then make a that is all I remember. Did have much trouble in finding me?"

But looking up into his face again she was answered. In the look of horror that came there she realized the nameless torture that must have assailed him as he hunted for her

As he chafed her hands and made hot spiced drinks for her he told her of his search which ended in his stumbling over her near the cabin. "I lived a lifetime in that hour or two, he declared. "I have been justly punished for my ungrateful words." In the days that followed the wo-(whom Woodville called sister, by her own request,) realized more clearly by daily circumstances all that Woodville had suffered in that despairing search. A few white marks, like threads, could be traced in several places in his hair, and a new nervousness, which he tried in vain to disguise, seized him whenever he parted from her in the early hours of the day. Added to this was a new tenderness which ruled his acts and words whenever he was in her presence. Perhaps a new reciprocal kindness, unknown to her governing consciousness, touched also this woman of refinement by birth and instinct, for a new bond birth and instinct, for a new bond of gentleness seemed to have been knitted between them after the blizzard episode in which she had had Organist and Choirmaster of Cambridge-st. such a narrow escape.

Thus the winter passed, and the voice of the resurrection angel called the earth with its promise.

Beyond a severe cold no perma-

With the coming of spring the princess knew that she would return to civilization to pay her vows to Lord Saxray, so she had counted the days the winter passed. Not in the joyous expectancy of reaching a promised ecstacy as one would have supposed, for this beautiful and refined young creature, on the foundation bed of pure gold, possessed many mystifying traits of character, and her counting of the days to keep in touch with the passing of time, was because she felt sorry to leave as changeless as the sea, would compel her to do so. She had taken great interest in the incidents o peace, truth and grandeur of her surroundings therein, in contrast to the shams and mockery of fashionable life, had touched her and affecthad been a part of herself, and had designs. The improving of the in-

the planning for the progress of propitious environment had been Kent-st. and for her, though her welfare had cident in which he had chided her for not attending to the rabbit traps, the most harmonious manner, and she had always been glad that that incident had occurred, it had drawn them so much nearer together afterwards. Though ostensibly making ac- herself believe that she was interested in all Woodville's work and her having been accomplished to the full. had a fire roaring in the stove, and own, because when she left Wood-When the winter came to these had placed blankets thereon which, ville she would like to know that he two persons in their Northwest home when they were smoking with heat. was comfortable, she had allowed they were conscious that the hard- he wrapped around her arms and herself to become attached to it all, ships of their position were increased breast. Anon he was rewarded by in a very different manner to what by the change. The cold was in- seeing a faint sigh struggle through she had believed. Excepting at the tense, they knew that, though they her blue lips. Soon after this he periods when she thought of his had no modern means to enable them | felt her heart beat faintly. Leaving | great crime she looked upon Woodto apply the mercury test. Their her for a moment or two encased in ville as a hero, bearing the blunt of food allowance, too, was necessarily the warm flannel, he returned for the hardships of such a life with incurtailed, though Woodville found it the faithful dog, and placed him describable courage and cheerfulness, possible to purchase a constant sup- tenderly beside the stove. Then he truth and nobility being the diply of flour from Schmaus, paying redoubled his exertions to bring the rectors of all his impulses. To the him in labor. In his bush land benumbed woman out of her deep Schmaus girls (who were fair and most intelligent young women) the was thus enabled to obtain an occa- As he looked upon her lying there princess was sure Woodville was a sional rabbit or bird. It was the her hands ill-shapen by the toil of hero too and that either of them custom for the princess to visit these her life, her garments patched and would have been only too glad to traps while Woodville labored mended beyond the compass, almost, have shared with her the superinfor Schmans, but one day feel- of a servant's attire, her shoes worn tendence of their crude home as ing more than usually fatigued she beyond the limits od respectability, Woodville's wife, had Woodville but her beautiful silken hair disheveiled spoken the word. As the spring In the design of human life time and neglected, and her whole tout came their position had proven so sebrings custom to everything. This ensemble, bearing the unmistakable cure from discovery that all fear of is an immutable law, and so Wood- stamp of "shabbiness." When he arrest was now discarded, and ville, though the concomitant cir- looked upon her thus and realized all Woodville with new cheerfulness in cumstances of his life with the prin- that she was by birth and position his heart prepared for a large cess was ever before him, was ruled and all that she had done for amount of work which included the

> Woodville, she was unable to put "Oh!" he said, at sight of her re- presence of the western storm, or turn to understanding, "why did went out of his life via prairie schooner and C. P. R. train. Once "Foolish!" she answered weakly, gone now she must never return to ed the tortures of lost souls, as he "I did," he replied, his tone be sought for her through gale and ful crime. From the depths of her "I saw the cabin," she murmured, soul she pitied him and yet she knew (To be Continued)

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