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Passing the Love Of Women

—BY EDWIN BLISS.

PART II.

You can't argue with women or men like Podner. His imagination was hitched to the idea of guarding my location, and anything that appealed to his imagination plumb tickled him. I finally took him to the vein, gave him my old Colts .45 on a .38 carriage and left him there—proudest little fighting cock that ever hit the mountains; feeling that he was sacrificing himself and his poem to a generous idea. That was Podner all the time.

Foolish? Of course it was. But somehow the memory of his standing guard for me, his soul crying out for the poem and his heart giving it up for me, well, it made my eyes eat up the miles between me and Ozone, made it fly under edge as the pitch. Just three days took me to town, got me outfitted and ready for the return trip.

And all the way back I was chuckling for joy at thinking of Podner's surprise. Dear soul to tell me he was a selfish little pig and an old fool and how happy to think of what Doc would say when I told him of this. It was far the end of the sixth after noon that I sighted land-marks and knew I was close.

Then I hailed who ever my head might be about up-to-date time I had with, as I rose along the ridge, Podner. I was there else as I looked all around. Then the black index of Winchester, and behind that, in the slightest, black-bearded figure I'd ever seen.

"You're wandering on my location, you're gold d." Vamoose pronto."

"Location be hell!" I cried, rocking the ground as I rose to my feet. "I've got this claim staked out and business-like, and I'll order on till I see what your game is."

The nests of nerves began to play back of my neck while the muscles along my spine, I thought a horrible thought. I saw the eyes as I looked with Podner, the little fellow when I had left in the cave and I was ready to choke the truth out of him, and the Winchester grew a rock when he saw my right.

"My God," I asked, trying to keep my voice steady; "what did you do to Podner?" I soaked this fellow, you know it. I left my pod- ner to guard my location. If you've hurt him I'll shoot you dead. Jump my claim all you want, but tell me about my pod- ner. What have you done with him?"

Suddenly he was bold when I hit," he said, showing me plain that he was telling the truth. "I hain't laid one hair of a human in there. My heart sank low as I heard him say about; the great rough country around me menacing the little fellow. Then a light lit up the eyes. "Hold on!" I started to walk off. "I did speak to a rusty, long-haired lunatic, dancing like a tarantula, down to Red Mesa. I spoke to him, but, he didn't see me. Plumb loco he was."

Sudden, as you go round the Devil's Slide, I came upon him. He was sitting as I'd seen him sit so many days, sitting as I had left him mornings and as I would find him nights—facing Red Mesa. His back was hunched over.

Soft, I slipped up behind him, hating him for sleeping—sleeping while my location was being jumped; sleeping there away from my location which he'd volunteered to guard, against my return. Worthless, a loafer, an out! Doc had told me, had seen his real nature. Doc had been right, and I was an old fool. He knew, Doc did, why the paper pad was always empty. I picked it up from the ground, sneering on the little fellow's back. But the pad wasn't white now, wasn't empty. It was covered with writing, writing which I started to read, sneering on the back of the man who slept three miles from the location he allowed to be stolen. And then I sneered no more, nor I didn't hate no more for I was reading Podner's poem.

Everybody knows it now, every one's read it; but they don't know it never have read it as I did—Podner sleeping there, worn out and happy; Red Mesa blazing at my feet, and off a ways, the black shadows folding up the mountained wilderness of burning rocks and tucking them away for the night and there was the poem in my hands that took it all—Red Mesa by day and by night and Red Mesa now, and chucked it all on a piece of paper not much bigger than a patch in my pants. All the colors of Red Mesa were on that piece of paper; every rock in Red Mesa was there; every ravine, canyon, hill, valley of Red Mesa was on it; the Lord, as he chucked Red Mesa out of heaven, was caught in the act. But that wasn't all. As I read it; I could hear the tinkle of a burro's bells, could see a burro's mane, head poking round the corner of a gorgeous ledge—and it wouldn't have been Red Mesa without that ain't half. Though there wasn't a word about woman in the poem, there wasn't a word of it all that wasn't woman, didn't make me see woman. It was Podner's woman, the woman the book store- nists in her eyes which she didn't know nor care about. For she had, which was in my hands, the woman whom he had seen in his mind and only there, the ideal woman he was calling to in the poem.

And because she was the woman he had never seen, the woman who was in his head, the woman he was calling, she was my woman, too. She was the woman I had seen, the woman who was my wife, the woman I had been calling back twenty long years. Not a word of woman in the poem, mind you, and it was all woman, my woman to me; everybody's woman to everybody—and that's why everybody likes it so. She was there all through it and I could see her, feel her near me—the woman who had run away with Joe Ellwood. I must have made a noise for Podner suddenly straightened, his startled eyes meeting mine; then his voice came out, frightened, husky:

"My God! The claim, the location! What is it? What——"

"I'm going back, Pete," he said quietly. "If your location has been jumped, I'll get it back for you. I'm no longer needed."

All the three miles I argued, pleaded with him, pointing out how nothing could be done, as how this claim jumper could not us as we came on him. And as I said before, women and men like Podner ain't reasonable. When we got in sight of the location, the fact the claim jumper had thrown, he made me stop.

"Stay here, Pete, until I call you. If the location is lost I'll get it back. You are strong and I am weak; the man could fight you and he can't fight me. Stay here until I call you."

Funny how he knew the reason he got things when I'd never been able to. He was weak, and strong men couldn't fight him so they just naturally had to like him. Stay? Of course I stayed. Podner had a way of getting what he wanted. I stayed there, my mind burning up with pictures of that black bearded pirate dancing on the little fellow's frame, my feet itching to get inside that tent. The breeze was getting a file-tip edge on it while I waited, then this claim jumper threw aside the fly of his tent and waved to me.

Don't know why, reckon it must have been the old pirate's manner, made me step soft as I looked inside. At one end of the tent was a table and on the table was a candle and beside the candle was Podner's poem. Podner was occupying the shakedown in the corner, one arm thrown across his chest, the holy sort of look on his face which I knew so well. His breath was coming and going, deep and strong as any one's, his lips smiling gentle-like.

The fellow who had stolen my claim put his fingers on his lips, tiptoeing to the shakedown and hauling the blanket higher on Podner's neck, then stepped to the table and took up the pad where Podner had written his poem.

"Reckon we'd better build a fire outside," he whispered to me. "The little feller's plumb wrastled hisself out, fightin' fer you.

"I've been making medicine with th' little feller," he said, after we'd built the fire outside and sat a long time in silence. "He's been beggin' me t' give back your location, tellin' me how it happened. Have you read it?" he asked, holding out the pad of paper with Podner's poem on it and waiting till I took it. "I ain't what you might call educated," he goes on embarrassed like, "Th' little feller read it out loud once—would you mind doin' it agin, stranger? I had a notion when I heard it that I can't seem to locate in my head."

I grinned for I thought I knew what was pestering him, and read it over once more, finding more wonders in it, forgetting the man across the fire, seeing the woman clear. He roached out and took it away when I'd finished spelling it out slowly, shaking his head as his dirty thumb traveled down the lines.

"Nary mention of her," he muttered, looking at me queer. "But, stranger, there's a woman in this thing somewhere. It puts me in mind of a woman I married once back in Cripple's old days—"

He didn't make a move as I sprang to my feet, my hand jerking by instinct toward the left arm pit where I always stashed my gun. His face was looking into mine, a curious expression on it. And, in that second, I knew him for Joe Ellwood, the one I'd prayed to meet up with for twenty years.

"Sit down, Pete," he said quietly. "We'll wrastle it out. I banked your fires dirty, Pete, but it's tough t' love a woman."

"Where is she?" That was my one thought and it came quick.

He threw his big hands in a wide gesture that might have meant anything. It riled me bad, for you don't hanker after a woman twenty years as I had, seeing her always before you, hearing her voice always close at hand, without getting shaky when you meet the man who stole her away, especially. When he makes gestures that might mean anything.

"Insinuating?" I asked, cold and deliberate.

"No—a gambler," he answered, sad-like. "He was runnin' the Green Light in Anaconda—Frenchman by name of 'Froggy' Poret, soft spoken and perlite sorta cuss."

He hauled out his pipe and, after filling her up, tosses the pouch across to me and then we smoked and studied the fire, the embers. Right over the tent where Podner slept, the long-wicked candle of a star was burning, and I felt my eyes moving away from the fire, watching it. I felt pretty good inside, somehow. Joe Ellwood was talking, slow, between puffs at his pipe.

"Pete, me and you picked a woman what naturally liked men who were soft spoken and sorta perlite. Because we wasn't them things she run away and we thought it was her fault—and the man's. Strikes me, we ought t' get along pretty fair, bein' as we're kinda alike. Shall we split this here mine three ways?" He was on his feet, walking round the fire to me, his hand out full length, palm up.

When we'd sat down again, filling up our pipes and drawing steady, Joe jerked his thumb in the direction of the tent.

"Th' little feller's too forgetful for this country, Pete," he said. "We'd better stake him back until ta' mine gets t' paying his dividends." He purred away at his briar quite a while, then laughed.

"What's wrong with Little Podner for a handle t' th' mine?" he asks.

That's about all. Podner kicked at taking a third, but it didn't do much good. Gold ain't everything but it's comfortable, and it's nice to have it turning out every minute. It got Podner well—I hear how he's making a trip around the world. He had his hour and it was a big one, picture in all the papers, name on everybody's lips, actors reciting his poetry. But it ain't spoiled him a bit—not a bite. Me and Joe each got his book, couple of years back, and right on the first page he'd written, "To my old pardner." They're lying in our desks in our Little Podner offices, right where everybody can see them. Think of his writing that to us—"To my old pardner!" He still calls me and Joe pardners—his pardners.

Famous, too—Podner is.

(The End.)

My Little Soul.

In church I sit, while all about,
Good people bow in sober prayer,
In worship earnest and devout—
And yet my little soul goes out
And seeks the ope.. air.

It wanders out among the trees,
It kisses all the grasses slim,
It whispers with the droning bees
While through the windows, on the breeze,
Come echoes of a hymn.

It flutters up among the throng
Of blossoming leaves that gayly nod
To welcome it; and while the song
Floats up from worship—glad and strong
My little soul finds God.

He—"I often sit for hours and dream of how happy we'll be when we're married."

She—"If you'll cut out the dreaming, we'll be married sooner."

Being Consistent.

A little boy wrote in his diary:

"Got up at seven, went to bed at eight."

His governess suggested that "rose at seven" was a more elegant way of putting it.

So the child erased the entry and briefly chronicled: "Rose at seven, set at eight."

The highest temperature ever registered by a human being was 148 degrees, the sufferer being a fireman who had been severely injured.

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ISSUE No. 25—'23.

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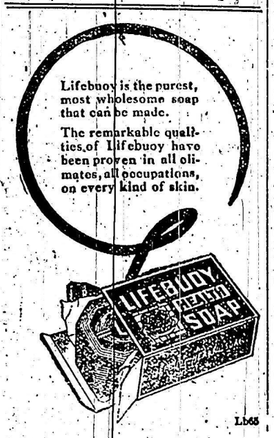


Lb65

About the House

MATERNITY BENEFITS.

A comparative study of maternal mortality rates in various countries on both sides of the Atlantic resulted in the recent discovery that our Canadian rate of maternal mortality is abnormally high. There were no fewer than eighteen nations whose rates are lower than ours, and in the majority of these cases the rate is very much lower than ours.

"Why is Canada's rate so high?" people have frequently asked. There are many different answers to the question. Some point out the fact that many of our women live in remote districts where it is difficult to secure medical or nursing service. Others lay a great deal of the blame on uncertified midwives who are often ignorant of fundamental laws of hygiene. Still others assert that the mortality rate among mothers would be lowered if more emphasis were to be placed on the study of obstetrics and gynaecology in our medical colleges, and if our nurses in training were to be given longer experience in maternity nursing than is at present the case.

There is considerable force in these and similar statements. But before arriving at any general conclusion on the subject some study should be given to the methods adopted by those countries where the maternal mortality rate is lower than in Canada.

It is interesting to note that in no fewer than seventeen countries of Europe legislation has been enacted at some time within the last fifty years providing maternity benefits for necessitous women. Another significant fact is this, that in no case has any country of Europe repealed legislation of this sort once it has been enacted, and wherever a change has been made in the original statute it has been for the purpose of extending its scope.

The advantages of schemes for maternity protection and benefit have become so apparent that the International Labor Conference two years ago devoted special attention to the subject and a Draft Convention was adopted for the purpose of guaranteeing protection to all women engaged in commercial and industrial undertakings. In the following year the International Labor Conference recommended that similar protection be given to women engaged in agricultural pursuits as well. What they arrived at as the minimum protection any nation should offer to such women was the following:

(a) Prohibition of employment for the six weeks following childbirth.

(b) The right to leave work on production of a medical certificate stating that confinement will take place within six weeks.

(c) The right to benefit sufficient for the full and healthy maintenance of herself and her child during these two periods, such benefit to be provided out of public funds or by a system of insurance.

(d) Free attendance by a doctor or certified midwife.

(e) The right to a period of half an hour twice a day during working hours for the purpose of nursing her child.

Canada was a party to the Draft Convention for the Protection of Women in Industry, but as yet only one province, British Columbia, has enacted legislation even partially covering the points given above. It is a matter for speculation as to when the other provincial legislatures will realize the need for conservation of life in some such way as that outlined by the Draft Convention.—Social Service Council of Canada.

THE OLD-FASHIONED PARLOR.

Of late years we country housewives have been rather priding ourselves upon getting farther and farther away from old-fashioned notions. Any new idea has been accepted as an improvement.

But were all the old-fashioned notions without virtue? There is the time-honored parlor. What unnumbered jokes have been dedicated to its memory. And how progressive we felt ourselves to be while we snatched open the blinds, flung up the curtains, and brought in the workbasket, the children's toys and father's catalogues. "Now," we said, "it is a living room. It looks lived-in."

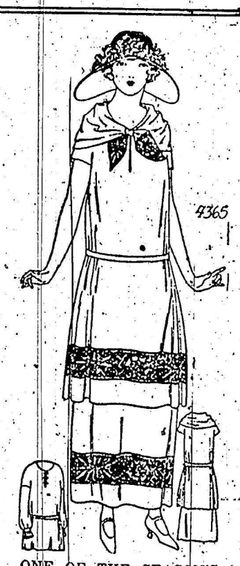
Alas, it does! Particularly if there are children in the family, and if mother is adding to her household duties those innumerable ones that most farm women assume—sewing, canning, gardening, chicken and turkey raising and what not. When a carload of acquaintances honks up to our door near the end of a trying summer week, what housewife hasn't thought with longing of the old-fashioned, dark, cool, orderly parlor which she has progressively transformed into a lived-in room.

Ideas in decoration change. We needn't have wax flowers and pampas grass in a best parlor to-day. But who hasn't longed for a half-hour rest in this dim, cool, quiet room on a bustling, blistering summer afternoon? Who hasn't longed for its freedom from dust and disorder, flies and shabbiness, when callers arrived in the busy season?

Grandmother was a busy woman with a big family. She knew what she was about when she instituted the best parlor. The children kept out because it was uninteresting and more or less unsafe. Flies kept out because it was dark and sacredly clean. Dust and heat kept out because it was closed against them. What a haven of quiet and rest and preparedness!

It is all very well to talk about ideals and methods and modern labor savers, but what busy, ambitious farm woman has sufficient time and strength to keep an ideal home during the rush season? If my experience and observations are correct, it simply "can't be did." Flies will congregate. Dust will blow in open windows. Disorder will accumulate in lived-in rooms. Crying needs such as food, fowls, garden preserving and clean clothing claim first attention and these other things have to go.

Then it is that the old-fashioned parlor is an anchor to windward.—Alice Margaret Ashton.



ONE OF THE SEASON'S SMARTEST FASHIONS.

4365. Here is a charming model, with costume blouse and two-piece flare skirt. The neck is finished with the popular "kerchief" collar. The sleeve may be finished with a wrist length "peasant" portion, or in the newest "short" length. As here shown orange color canton crepe was used, with band of black crepe embroidered in orange floss. This is a good model for linen and pongee.

The Pattern is cut in 7 Sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, and 46 inches bust measure. A 38-inch size will require 6½ yards of 36-inch material for the dress with long sleeve and the blouse in full length. In shorter sleeve and blouse length the dress will require 5¼ yards of 40-inch material. The width of the skirt at the foot is 2¼ yards.

Pattern mailed to any address on receipt of 15c in silver or stamps. Write the Wilson Publishing Co., 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto.

POLISHING MOPS.

The writer knows of a near-fire which resulted from stowing a polishing mop in a closet. This was an ordinary floor mop, oiled with a mixture of turpentine, linseed oil and wax. Two days after this was stored, opening of the closet revealed the mop handle standing, with the rag portion burned to ashes and the floor under this burned through to the subflooring. A test was made with a rag saturated in the linseed oil mixture and this placed a safe distance from the building in a metal can.

When this was reduced to ashes in a similar manner this concluded the evidence that oil-soaked rags are mighty dangerous leads to fire.

Though simple and harmless-appearing materials may be used for polishing floors and furniture, keep these in metal containers, and if possible on some tile or concrete floor, to avoid risk. A wooden box is a very unsafe method.

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Hunting Wild Boar in Honolulu.

Sportsmen who contemplate visiting Honolulu will find but very little use for a rifle, as the only big game found there are wild boars and goats.

The rifle is not used in hunting wild boar because the brush is so dense that it is almost impossible to get action with a gun, consequently sportsmen hunt the wild boar with dogs and when the animal is cornered it is shot with a revolver.

Whenever the natives get a wild boar they have what is called Luau. They dig a hole in the ground about four feet square and four feet deep, at the bottom of which is placed several rocks heated to a very hot temperature, over which are placed banana leaves and palms. The boar is carefully cleaned and then stuffed with bananas, sweet potatoes, nuts, and up with small hot rocks. The pig is inclosed in a gunny sack or burlap and leaves and palms. A blanket is thrown over the hog, and the pole is then filled with banana leaves and palms. It takes about three hours to properly prepare a genuine Luau, but it is worth all the trouble required because it is a feast fit for the gods.

Goat hunting in the Hawaiian Islands is found around Mount Haleakala, which, by the way, is the largest extinct volcano in the world.

A small one room house made of stone has been erected there and the only water one can secure is rainwater, which runs from the roof of the shack into a tank.

The goats are quite plentiful down in the valley; in fact I counted twenty-seven in one herd and several small bands could plainly be seen grazing near by.

While it only takes less than an hour to do down to the bottom of the canyon it takes six hours to climb out, which, no doubt, explains why so few hunters venture there.

Another great drawback is that there is only one place in the valley where water can be found, and then one has to be thoroughly familiar with the dim, narrow trail that leads to a natural basin which is kept filled by the rainfall.

A sportsman can get plenty of thrills out of fishing for sharks a few miles from Honolulu. As in all cases of fishing the bait plays an important part. In shark fishing a dead horse is used. The carcass is towed about in the water to attract the attention of a shark and then the big fish is easily shot or harpooned.

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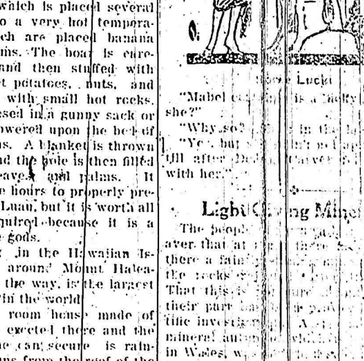

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