

CHAPTER I.

The Loneliness of Mr. Gormly. To his great surprise, George Gorm ly sometimes found himself feeling lonely, and the oftener so as he grew older. Every man who has a natural liking for women,-and what true man has not?-yet who has no intimate friendships with or relations to the other sex, is likely to find himself is that state of mind sooner or later. Gormly was sufficiently aged; he was forty-four although he looked much younger. He was sufficiently expe rienced; he had dealt with women for a straight quarter of a century al though he had neither loved nor mar ried one. He was sufficiently self re liant; he had built up by his own up aided efforts the greatest retail mer chandise business of his day and gen eration. He was sufficiently independent-for he had done it alone-to have been above the ordinary feeling of loneliness. Nevertheless, he was temperamentally lonesome, and at this particular moment desperately so.

He had drifted into New York some 25 years before, utterly unheralded unnoticed. He had begun by filling a small clerkship in a little dry goods store. He kept at it until he owned the store, and after that a larger store on a better street. He had developed a genius for trade, and an executive ability in accord, until the original little shop had expanded into a 15 story building covering a block on the principal thoroughfare of New York city, and its owner had become a power in finance,-a merchant prince Such was George Gormly.

He was, too, a scrupulously honest man. He sold good goods, without deceit. Things were as he represent ed them. He established principles of accommodation in his dealings that were unique when they were first in stituted in New York. He made no dishonest dollars. His money was good everywhere because it was un tainted. He prospered exceedingly one expansion following another. Eschewing speculation of any kind and devoting himself strictly to the business, he found himself in middle life the head, the foot, the sole owner,

acter and determination, that most impressed him, or whether his instant subjugation was due to the influence of all three, Gormly could not tell.

He was given to self-analysis, as tonely people usually are. By analyzing himself he learned to analyze others. Introspection and observation had been great factors in his success. Here again his experience was at fault; for Miss Haldane defied analysis, as the breath of summer compounded of a thousand balmy scents cannot be resolved into its elements, save by the hard scientist who is insensible to its fragrance.

He actually gave her \$200,000 to start that great institution for young working women which was the pride of her heart, and he promised her that as the work developed, as he had no doubt it would develop on the foundations she was planning, he would follow up the first gift by others even larger. He told her that he was willing to devote a million or perhaps more to the enterprise, if it proved worth while, especially as so many of his own employees would be benefited by it.

Miss Haldane did not intend to live in the social settlement herself. She might perhaps have enjoyed such a life; but her social duties at the other end of society were of so exacting a character, and her family were so opposed to her undertaking such work, that she contented herself with furthering from afar the efforts of certain of her college mates in that direction.

One thing possibly that induced Gormly to promise this great sum of money, which he could very well spare, was the knowledge imparted to him by Miss Haldane that she herself, through her father and friends, would give a like amount.

Gormly had exacted a pledge from the young woman that she would not betray him as a benefactor in her institution. He had actually made out the check to her for the amount in question and turned it over without hesitation after an interview lasting less than half an hour, in which Miss Haldane had set forth her plans, her hopes, and her ambitions with all her charm of manner. He was not certain that he could have refused her the store if she had demanded it!

When Miss Haldane left his business office, check in hand, she felt that she had indeed accomplished much. She was quite satisfied with perself.

Cormly was equally satisfied with himself. Then and there he determined to marry Miss Haldane. It takes the cool headed, prudent man of pusiness to make the most extraordlnary plunges into wild endeavors at ilmes. He felt as a man with the Wall street germ in his blood might feel who was suddenly, after a quarer of a century of restraint, launched on the sea of speculation. What Gormly determined was usually brought about sooner or later. In this instance, however, there was no as surance of success. Matrimony is theoretically regarded as a contract between two equals into which neither enters upon constraint. That was Gormly's view of it. He could buy and sell merchandise. He would not buy or sell a woman. Nor had George Gormly a particular knowledge to enable him to play the game he had entered upon with such impetuous indiscretion. He could hand cut a million dollars or so on occasion without feeling it; but cynical though he had become about womankind in general. Gormly instinctively realized that such means would be entirely inadequate to do more than arrest temporary attention and excite a passing interest in such a woman as Miss Haldane. Indeed, too freely resorted to, such practise would inevitably disgust her. Meanwhile he must keep in touch with her. At intervals, therefore, he won himself a sight of her and maintained a speaking acquaintance by further remittances toward her project; which had already started with a tremendous flourish of trumpets and great interest on the part of the public. Miss Haldane, for all her other qualities, was human and a woman. There was something rather alluring in a secret even to her. She enjoyed being the means of disbursing for good ends millions that remained anonymous to the general public. She was quite willing to call at Gormly's business office on occasion for the purpose of relieving him of further donations. Naturally she confided more and more of her plans and sometimes her difficulties to the same astute man. She found Gormly remarkably intelligent on such matters and able to give her the very best possible advice. Sometimes she even came to him of her own motion to re-

deeply involved, Miss Haldane unconsame tangled web

Fortune was further kind to him, however, for concurrently with his decision she presented him with an opening. Gormly's business was sufficiently great to have enabled him to extend it in several directions. He brought Ireland, England, France, Germany, Holland, Spain, Italy, and the Orient into New York bay and unloaded them in his great institution. He had conceived, some dozen years before after paying tremendous freight charges, the propriety of establishing his own live of freight steamers. It had amused him to combine the practise of the ancient merchant prince with the customs of the modern one. He had bought the controlling interest in a freight line of half a dozen large steamers, which he found no difficulty in using as cargo carriers for other people when they were not supplying his own needs.

The purchase of the freight line had with it a lease of one of the piers in the North river. The lease had run out the year before. He had thereafter availed himself of what he conceived to be an excellent opportunity of subleasing another pier in the East river. The city had just completed an elaborate railroad, surface and subway, for the transportation of heavy freight from the water front to the great mercantile establishments inland. This system had been leased to the Gotham Freight Traction company, a vast corporation with a full set of ostensible promoters and directors, but which had back of it powers and persons unknown to the general public, carefully concealed from it in fact.

The corporation had not been formed to promote the health of its mem-Therefore when Gormly ap bers. plied to the authorities for permission to construct a switch from his pier on the one hand and his ware house near the river front on the other to connect both with this subway, the permission was instantly granted, but coupled with an expense demand upon him for something like a million dol lars.

Gormly could give Miss Haldane a million dollars to play with; he would not spend ten cents for bribery. He saw instantly that the demand upon him was a mere attempt to hold him up. To build the switch would cost perhaps forty or fifty thousand dollars; the privilege might be worth as much more; but inasmuch as he streets were crossed, no overhead traf fic hindered, he was doubtful even at to that. The road had been built by private capital-subscribed by the people-on a public franchise. The in terests of the public were supposed te be paramount. A reasonable return upon their investment was all that the promoters had a right to expect.

Gormly had consulted his attorneys had appealed to the city council, and had done everything that he could to settle the matter short of publishing the whole affair. He had failed ab

maine it was anousing, to safeguara to consciously becoming more and more people in their rights in any further grants, was certainly an object suffisciously interweaving herself in the clently high and sufficiently vast to attract the attention, and, should he succeed, to awaken the admiration of

any being. And Gormly himself without losing sight of Miss Haldane began to look at the possibilities from a high and noble point of view, in which self-interest took a secondary position.

Therefore, late in November he came boldly out in the open, and over his own name vigorously attacked the Gotham Freight Traction company. He did it in a unique way, too. Instead of the full page advertisement of Gormly's store which appeared simultaneously in all the great dailies, there was presented one morning in clear, direct, businesslike English a statement of the whole situation exactly as it was. There were no threats, no menaces, no intimations of any future plan or purpose; just a blunt statement of facts printed in large double-leaded type, and signed with the familiar facsimile of his now famous autograph.

The thing was an instant sensation. The newspapers took it up. Other merchants, freighters, and shippers were interviewed, and a case was instantly made out against the Gotham Freight Traction company which would have shaken a less ponderous. less thick-skinned, less indifferent organization to pieces. Even the authorities were interviewed, and they shed hypocritical tears over the unfortunate trickery by which the public had been buncoed out of its legitimate rights, but they took occasion at the same time to point out that there was noth ing whatever to be done about it.

The party in power was one that had long dominated the metropolis To be sure it gave the metropolis a fairly good government; but the people paid over and over again. They were robbed shamelessly right and left, on every hand, and while something was tendered them, what they got was no quid pro quo for the frightful extravagance of the administration. Graft abounded everywhere. The party out of power, which had been out of power so long that it had perforce become virtuous, did not hesttate to point out the dreadful state of affairs to all who would listen; but its efforts had so far been unavailing, and the party in power remained there be cause of its so doing.

Now the Gotham Freight Traction company had its weak point. Things that depend upon the collusion of sc many unscrupulous men, not to say villains, usually have a weak point It is a wise man, indeed a genius, who finds out these things and assails the organization thereat. The first prin ciple of good soldiering is to oppose to your adversary's weak point your own strongest. The weak point in the enterprise of the Gotham Freight Traction company lay in a certain link vital to the continuance of the care fully devised system: the franchise o' which was about to run out.

Few people knew that the franchise was to expire, and in the ordinary course nothing would have happened

waple accuracy, and indeed there was if little of it that was not discovered and disclosed to the eager public. He was quite willing to talk about the Gotham Freight Traction company or any matter of public moment, but for the rest he was unshakably silent. His early past, therefore, was a mystery;



"Tell Them to Come Up by All Means at Once." Sald Gormly.

but the interest in a mystery that has no special bearing upon the present soon dies out.

Then Gormly did an unusual thing for him. He purchased a country place on Long Island. This received no mention in the public press, be cause the whole matter had been handled by the invaluable Chaloner, and Gormly's name had not appeared at all. The place was desirab! , in that it was not far-five or six miles-from the country place of the Haldane family. It was bought completely fur nished, and the staff of servants previ ously employed was retained.

Gormly knew from the clipping bu reau that it was the custom of the Haldanes to pass the Christmas holfdays at their country place. He had seen Miss Haldane rather less fre quently of late, because the work at the settlement house was now so far advanced that it was merely a matter of carrying out the plans decided upon and spending the money so generously background for the fun and music else-on the Long Island shore.

his arrival the day before Christman Maidens" in addition to telling a had bitter memories intermingled really funny and consistent story will with a storm, and the sight of the court comparisons concerning everywhite, Ice covered, snow clad fields thing that tends towards actual greatfilled him with unpleasant reminis ness, and will aim to set the pact for cences.



The Gayety Continues Its Policy of "Always a Good Show"

Three laughs a minute throughout the performance is what is promised amusement seekers at the popular Gayety, Omaha, next week, when the merry extravaganza, "The Midnight Maldens," will be presented by a company headed by such favorite players as Harry A. Emerson, Ted Evans, Barto and McCue, Creighton Brothers, Amanda Scott, Gladys Searls, Grace Celest, Mabel Morgan. and the handsomest chorus in the show business. Travesty of big proportions is a sign of the times and there appears to be a fierce struggle for supremacy going on all the while the majority of theatre-goers keep in a receptive mood for entertainment of that character. Few managers have given much thought towards the necessity of a plot, or at least some

sort of comprehensive story as a



placed in her hands by him, which features that come in for a great did not need much consultation. So share of the favors accorded, and it on the vain hope that chance might is therefore noteworthy to record an throw him in touch with her, Gormly decided also to occupy for the Christ mas season his lonely cottage-it was ens," which has earned the right of called a cottage, although it was more way as much for its solidity of plot like a baronial mansion than anything purpose as is due to the liberality. that is said to characterize its other It was snowing hard the evening of novel features. "The Midnight cleverness and originality and make

Since he had bought the estate an honest attempt in the direction of through the faithful Chaloner, he had picturesqueness. The scenery was the excellent dinner which had beet painted by such well known artists was specially written by Lee Orean Smith. Secure your seats early to "It's from the keeper of the lodge avoid the rush. Starting Monday, stage.

of the greatest enterprise of the kind mat the world had ever seen.

This had not been achieved lightly He had brought it about because, with absolute singleness of heart, he had put every ounce of strength and time and talent, which in him amounted to genius, at the service of his affairs Time, talent, and genius do not always produce such results; fortune still must be considered in the game. Op portunity had favored Gormly. He had succeeded in everything beyond his own or anyone's wildest dreams.

He might have gone on indefinitely in his mercantile operations without attracting special attention to himself personally, had it not been for one fact. That momentous happening was his meeting with Miss Haldane.

It had come about in a commonplace way enough. Miss Haldane, deeply interested in social settlement work and being brought in contact thereby with some of the poorer employees of the great Gormly establishment, had concluded to call on the proprietor thereof to see if she could not induce him to make some adequate contribution to the work she had so much at heart. Like every other business man in New York, Gormly was overwhelmed by charitable demands. His business was one thing; his charity another. He employed a special secretary to look aft. er the eleemosynary end of his affairs.

There were two reasons why the secretary felt himself unequal to deal with Miss Haldane and her demands. The first reason was Miss Haldane herself. She was a member of the oldest and most exclusive circle in New York society. Her family was one of the richest and most esteemed in that hive of multi-millionaries, would-be-sos, also-rans, and other people. The second was the magnitude of Miss Haldane's demand. She wanted something like a million dollars. This amount appalled the secretary. She realized that a man like Gormly, indeed most men if they had the power, would much rather give a million than a dime to an undertaking that appealed to them. Still, Gormly, having devoted his attention so exclusively to his business heretofore, was rather staggered by the magnitude of the amount. He would have been more staggered by it had he been less so by Miss Haldane herself.

Miss Haldane had beauty. Thousands of people-women, that is, and some few men-have that. She had more; she had presence and personality. Hundreds of men, and some few women, have these

Those who have all three in either sex are rare and come to view infrequently. Whether it was Miss Haldane's undoubted beauty, or Miss Haldane's exquisite breeding and manner, or Miss Haldane's force of char-

ceive something else than signed bits of paper good at the bank, and to discuss vexing questions and problems that arose from time to time. She grew to respect him and then to like him. Fortune as usual favored him.

Miss Haldane was twenty-two. Naturally she regarded a man of fortyfour as a possible father, and she had no hesitation in approaching Gormly with much more familiarity than she would have dreamed of allowing herself had he been younger. And yet Gormiy himself was a young looking man for forty-four. He was still as tall and slender, not to say spare, as he had been when a boy. He was smooth shaven, and the flecks of gray

in his blond hair were scarcely noticeable. If Miss Haldane had ever given thought of his age, she would have supposed him ten years younger than he was: that is, on appearance. When she thought of his business, she would have considered him sixty. Ever since she could remember, she had dealt at the great shop, and Gormly himself unconsciously took on to her the as pect of ancient history. So the little affair ran on: Gormly

solutely everywhere. The members of the transportation committee of the board of aldermen were very sorry but they did not see what could be done. A gentle hint that Gormly might prefer to indemnify the alder men for their trouble in case they should give him permission was me with pained silence or explosive wrath It was furthermore pointed out to him that the board had no power, the rights of the people having been vest ed in the corporation for a ninety-nine year period. It was too bad that the innocent aldermen had allowed them selves to be placed in such an unfor tunate position; but so it was-and there you were. There was no helt for the matter, and Gormly's only re source was to pay the money, unless he wanted to unload his goods inte truck wagons and vans and cart them all over the city. Of course he could do this; but it would be much easier more profitable and more desirable in every way if he had the right to run cars out on the pier alongside of the vessels of his fleet and transport the merchandise in bulk in that way.

He was in a very desperate situa tion. Here he was saddled with a twenty-five-year lease of one of the most expensive piers in New York; here he had a great warchouse siz blocks or more away from the pier; here he had also a vast store several mlles from the warehouse; here was a railroad that practically connected all three, provided one or two little spurs or switches could be built from pier to railroad, and from warehouse to railroad. It was perhaps the one mistake that he had made in his busi ness career not to have arranged mat ters before all this came to a climax The railroad people meant to make him pay. They were resolved that he should; he was equally determined that he would not.

He was not alone in his position, however; for it was found on all sides -he discovered it by making quiet in quiries-that other shippers and merchants seeking similar privileger were being held up in the same way The road had proved enormously ex pensive to build; the stock had beer watered unmercifully. Contracts which had been entered into for the construction of switches were found to be of little value; means were avail able to break them and evade them. and the whole water front of New York found itself practically helpless in the grasp of this octopus of a corporation.

There had been no clamor in the papers over this matter; but there was a tremendous undercurrent of resentment and dissatisfaction, and Gormly thought he saw an opportunity of turning it to his own account. To expose the iniquitous methods of procedure of the Gotham Freight Traction company, to bring about its ruin or its downfall by depriving it of the fran-

An ordinance renewing it would have been slipped through the board of aldermen, signed by the mayor, and that would have been all. So sure did the company feel of its

ground, so confident were its members that Gormly and his fellow victime would see the necessity of paying without delay, that they had never contemplated this publicity and never imagined they would have to face this bitter and, determined attack upor their franchises and upon their meth ods. They knew, of course, that they held the aldermen in their hands, that in their close alliance with the Sachem society, the organization that ran things, they could pass anything they wanted in defiance of any public sentiment whatsoever.

Gormly had made one blunder; but like a brilliant soldier he had suc ceeded in turning it to his advantage One advertisement was succeeded by another. The Gotham Freight Trac tion company was made the subject of scathing criticism and bitter attack of which the Sachom society and the party in power came in for a large share. And men everywhere began

asking what was to be done about it In previous campaigns the party out of power had been led by a series of forlorn hopes, men enthusiastic in their devotion to the cause of reform and not noted for much of anything else. The leaders of the outs took no tice of Gormly. Inquiries began to be made about him; his business methods were investigated; his resources were discussed; his character was analyzed; his career made the subject of study. From being merely a name attached to a familiar institu tion, he became within one month one of the great personalities of New York. The situation was intoxicating. Incidentally, he did not lose in the

estimation of Miss Haldane by this exploitation of himself, which he had so cleverly managed that no one dreamed it was due to his own motion. Even in those exclusive circles in which Miss Haldane moved, which are ordinarily indifferent to any happenings on this side of the terrestrial sphere, some account of Gormly and his foings, penetrated. That he was rich and a bachelor were the most interesting facts which appealed to this set. Men and women there began to inquire as to who he was. It was Miss Haldane's privilege and pleasure to enlighten them so far as she could, without betraying the nature of their confidential relation. There were several papers on the

side of the administration, which were owned and controlled by the party in power, that would have been glad indeed to have discredited Gormly; but the closest scrutiny revealed nothing in his life that could be used for that purpose. Where he had come from was not known; but for the last quarter of a century at least his course had been traced with consid-

provided by his new chef and serves as Ernest Albert and C. W. Valenby his new butler, he determined upor tine and Gates and Morange, and the a careful inspection of his residence costumes were designed by Will H. They had advanced as rar as the B Barnes and executed by Frank Haybrary when the familiar tinkle of the den. The music is very catchy and telephone made them pause.

"See who it is, Beals," said the mas ter of the house.

gate, sir," he said, turning and look there will be a ladies' dime matines ing toward his master. "He says that daily. Tuesday night complete electhere's a party down there stalled is tion returns will be read from the an automobile. They can't get on in the snow. They'd like to come up te the house. There are ladies in the party. and-"

"Tell them to come up by all means at once," said Gormly.

"Beg pardon, sir," returned the but

for the ladies in such weather at this. 'Quite so," returned Gormly. "What does the stable afford?"

are all that are there." "Yes, I remember. That's all I told Chaloner to send down, not expecting to- Well, have that hitched up and telephone them that a conveyance will be at the lodge in a few moments; City Daily Press, republican. that I should be glad to have them come to the house at once."

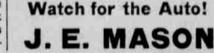
"By the way," he asked, "did you find out the names of the people?" "Yes, sir," answered the butler, "it same we will most assuredly do so. was Mr. Haldane and his party."

To be continued

For Sale! A number of Duroc boars with pedigree. L. H. Oldham.



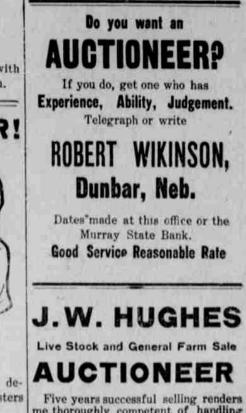
will on Thursday of every week de liver Ice Cream, Fruit at Fresh Oysters at your very door.



## Many Thanks.

Colonel Missouri A. Bates, editor of the Plattsmouth Journal and a ler, "but you know it's half a mile by candidate on the democratic ticket the road, and it'll be terrible walkins for the lower house, was in the city yesterday, black slouch hat, cane and all. The colonel is surely a foxy one when it comes to satorial adornment. "There's the station wagon and the and dazzles the yoters, to say the pair that brought you over, sir. Those least. It is said of him that he is the Beau Brummel of Cass county. The colonel is a good old sport and we regret that he is running on the wrong side of the fence,-Nebraska

> Bro. Sweet will please accept our thanks for this compliment, and if we ever have the opportunity to repay



me thoroughly competent of handling your sale. Reference from those I have sold for. Graduate from Missouri Auction School. See me at Perkins Hotel.

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