

The SABLE

By HORACE HAZELTINE

LORCHA

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SYNOPSIS.

Robert Cameron, capitalist, consults Philip Clyde, newspaper publisher, regarding anonymous threatening letters he has received. The first promises a sample of the writer's power on a certain day. On that day the head is mysteriously cut from a portrait of Cameron while the latter is in the room. Clyde frequently finds that the portrait was mutilated while the room was unoccupied and the head later removed by means of a string, unobserved by Cameron. Evelyn Grayson, Cameron's niece, with whom Clyde is in love, finds the head of Cameron's portrait in a tree, where it had been used as a target. Clyde pledges Evelyn to secrecy. Clyde learns that a Chinese boy, employed by Philatus Murphy, an artist living nearby, had borrowed a rifle from Cameron's lodgings. Clyde must find the cause to call on Murphy and is repulsed. He pretends to be investigating alleged infatuations of the girl, who speaks of finding the bowl of an opium pipe under the tree where Cameron's portrait was found. The Chinese boy is found dead next morning. While visiting Cameron in his dressing room a Nell Grayson mirror is mysteriously shattered. Cameron becomes seriously ill as a result of the shock. The third letter appears mysteriously on Cameron's sick room. It makes direct threats against the life of Cameron. Clyde tells Cameron the envelope was empty. He tells Evelyn everything and plans to take Cameron on a yacht trip. The yacht picks up a fisherman found drifting helplessly in a boat. He gives the name of Johnson. Cameron disappears from yacht while Clyde's back is turned. A fruitless search is made for a motor boat seen by the captain just before Cameron disappeared. Johnson is allowed to go after being closely questioned. Evelyn takes the letters to an expert in Chinese literature, who pronounces them of Chinese origin. Clyde seeks assistance from a Chinese fellow college student, who recommends to him the most prominent Chinaman in New York. The latter promises to seek information of Cameron among the Chinamen. Among Cameron's letters is found one from one Addison, who speaks of seeing Cameron in Peking. Cameron's secretary recently declared to Clyde that he had never been in China. Clyde calls on Dr. Addison. He learns that Addison and Cameron were at one time intimate friends, but had a falling out over Cameron's denial of having been seen in Peking. Clyde goes to meet Yip Sing, sees Johnson, attempts to follow him, falls into a trap, sprains his ankle while unconscious. Clyde is found by Miss Clement a missionary among the Chinese. He is sick several days at a hospital. He is treated by several Chinese doctors. A peculiarly acting anaesthetic which renders Cameron temporarily unconscious is discovered to have mysterious relations with the Chinese. Miss Clement promises to get information about Cameron.

The "great glass trust," as it was called, and with the name of its multimillionaire master, strangely enough I had never connected the Cameron I knew with this Cameron, the Captain of Industry.

"I am," he had said, in all modesty, "largely interested in a certain line of industrial enterprises." That was all I suppose I should have known; and yet, "no prophet is without honor, save in his own country."

The newspaper article I now read, however, left no room for doubt on the subject; and, incidentally in a single sentence, revealed the secret of how Cameron had succeeded in escaping that general recognition which is usually the penalty of greatness. "He has never sat for a photograph."

But, while this part of the article interested, that which followed startled and perplexed me.

"Crystal Consolidated fell to 103 today," it went on, "because of a persistent rumor that Robert Cameron is seriously ill, in a New England sanitarium. The greatest secret has been maintained as to his malady and his whereabouts by those who are in a position to know. It has been ascertained, however, that after spending a quiet summer at his country place, Cragholt, on Long Island sound, near Greenwich, he started on October 21, on his fast steam yacht Sibylla for a cruise along the New England coast. Ten days later the Sibylla returned, but Mr. Cameron was not on board."

"It is known that he has been in ill health for months, and there are those who now declare that he has sought the seclusion of an institution for the treatment of nervous diseases, near Boston, his condition being critical."

"Inquiry, today, at his Fifth avenue home in this city, and at his Connecticut country seat, was fruitless. Mr. Cameron was at neither place, and the servants expressed ignorance concerning his present address."

"At the offices of the Crystal Consolidated Manufacturing company and at those of the missing financier's brokers, Hatch & Hastings, evasion was the keynote of the answers to all questions."

"Whether Mr. Cameron is ill as is reported, or whether he is quite robust, the effect of the gossip on Crystal Consolidated was disastrous. A slump of fifteen points in two hours, this afternoon, wiped out many weakly margined accounts, and spread ruin among a number of speculators who fondly imagined this law-defying trust, of which Cameron is the supporting Atlas, as firmly entrenched as is the government itself."

"Unless something definite is forthcoming regarding Mr. Cameron's condition before the market opens tomorrow, a panic in Crystal Consolidated is predicted. It closed today at 102 1/2 bid, 103 asked; the lowest figures recorded this year."

It startled me, because it showed that at least a part of the secret we were guarding was a secret no longer; and it perplexed me because I could not fancy through what channel these somewhat distorted facts had filtered into publicity. I had no doubt that the ball, having been set rolling in this fashion, would gain both in volume and momentum unless some energetic measures were promptly taken to check it. And yet, what, under the circumstances, could we do? Subterfuge, I knew, would be useless, and the truth must prove an accelerant.

In haste and with diminished appetite I rushed through my dinner, and a moment later was speeding up the avenue as fast as a taxicab could carry me, with the Cameron mansion my destination and a consultation with Evelyn Grayson my object.

It must not be imagined that in this matter I expected any weighty assistance from a young woman of such limited experience; but she was practically alone in the great house and I could well imagine how already reporters must be vying one with another to wring from her admissions concerning her uncle.

To my infinite relief I found that she had returned the word, "Not at home," to all such callers. Inquiries from other sources had been met in similar fashion. Officers of the company had called in person or had telegraphed, and Hatch & Hastings had been almost aggressively insistent.

"But, Evelyn," I said, "this is all such a surprise to me. I had no notion your uncle was at all active in any corporation. I fancied him a director, probably, in a score or more of companies, but that he was the so-called 'Glass King,' I never for a moment suspected. Under the circumstances, he must have a private secretary somewhere, who might have been of inestimable aid to us."

"He has a private secretary, it seems," she replied, "though even I never knew it until I read it in the News this evening. I am sure he is never as tame as Cragholt. His name is Simms—Howard Simms—and he was interviewed at the Company's office. Didn't you see it?"

I confessed that I had missed every evening paper but one.

"It was he, I think," she went on, "who, becoming alarmed at Uncle Robert's long silence, mentioned it to some one, who in turn spread the damaging reports."

"Then he is a very incompetent private secretary," I commented, "if not, indeed, a dangerous one. I shall make a point of seeing Mr. Simms as early as possible tomorrow. Tonight I am going to call on Tony Hatch—I have a nodding acquaintance with him—and assure him that when I last saw Robert Cameron less than a month ago he was in perfect health, and that I am satisfied he is not in any sanita-

rum or suffering from any mental or physical disorder. If he approves of the idea I shall give out a statement to the newspapers, implying that your uncle has gone on a little journey of which his family are entirely cognizant, and that his return may be expected almost any day. I think that ought to turn the tide in Wall street tomorrow. Meanwhile, my dear Evelyn, continue to be 'not at home.'"

But neither at his home nor at any of his clubs could I find Mr. Hatch, though I searched for him diligently until long after midnight. Evidently he was intent on evading the sleuth hounds of the press, and had successfully failed to cover.

And then, on my way back down the avenue, to the Loyalton, that happened which made all subterfuge, all tact, all dissembling, unnecessary. For on the sidewalk, opposite the cathedral, I found the best of answers to all the questions raised by the rumor mongers—the animated refutation of every disturbing waif word.

CHAPTER XVII.

Opposite the Cathedral.

Fifth avenue at two o'clock in the morning is fast asleep. There are localities in New York which are more widely awake at that hour than at any other time of day, but the high way of fashion is not one of them; and in the neighborhood of Fifth street, its repose is as profound as at any point of its long, undeviatingly straight course.

For over an hour I had waited in that sumptuous white marble club edifice of the plutocrats which ostentatiously punctuates the avenue at Sixth street, and, tired of sitting, nervous and disappointed, I had chosen to walk down to my rooms, believing that the exercise in the clear, frosty air would serve to counteract, in a measure at least, all three of these vexations.

To the limit of sight there stretched away a double, converging chain of twin lights marking the curb line for endless blocks, and illuminating the nearer sidewalk and roadway, if not to effulgence, certainly with a clearly defining radiance. Now and then I met a quick-stepping pedestrian, usually in evening dress with cigar alight; and at more or less brief intervals limousined motors and taxicabs with gleaming lamps sped by me at top speed. Once a hansom passed, the hoof-beats of the hard-driven horse sounding jarringly against the night silence.

At Fifty-fourth street I cut diagonally across the avenue to the west side, and, continuing my way southward, absorbed in the problems confronting me, had been for a little while lost to encompassing objects. Then, suddenly, fearing lest in my abstraction I should pass the street on which my rooms were located, I aroused myself to get an idea of my location.

Across the way the grim facade of the Cathedral rising dark and sullen as a fortress made all clear. But, on my own side of the avenue there had been no such distinguishing mark. The brown stone dwellings, monotonously ugly, with their high stoops and balustraded areas, were no more enlightening than the stone flagging of the sidewalk or the asphalt of the roadway. Scores of blocks presented practically the same aspect as this. But as with critical gaze I measured one after another of these combinations I was all at once arrested by sight of a tall, bent figure clutching the high iron railings which guarded the avenue frontage of the house on the corner—the only really individual house in the row.

My first rough concept was that I had come upon incapacity resulting from Intemperance. At closer view, however, I tempered my judgment. The possibility of illness or injury intervened, and I paused Samaritan-like to offer succor. The wayfarer was evidently a man of middle age, if I might judge from the contour of his back, which was towards me, and I saw at once that he was struggling to keep upon his feet by sheer muscular hold of the railing's iron uprights, for his knees were bent threateningly and his arms were extended and tense.

Until I was close beside him he gave no sign of realizing my presence. Indeed I think it was not until I spoke that he half turned his head towards me, and, for the first time, I got sight of his features.

Whether or not I uttered a word, or made a sound, or stood for a long moment silent, I cannot say. I know only that I doubted my eyes and questioned my reason; for, if these were not playing me false, the profile thus revealed to me was the profile of Robert Cameron.

To try to set down in detail just what followed must be an idle effort, with fancy providing the bulk of the ingredients. Surprised, amazed, astounded even, are all too feeble terms to apply to my emotional condition. Dazedly, I was floundering in what seemed a veritable sea of unreality. When the commonplaces began to readjust themselves, I was standing at the curb, my arm wound supportingly about Cameron's waist and his arm pressing heavy on my shoulder. Drawing in to us was an empty hansom cab, provided by Providence, and hailed, I suppose, by me, though I swear I have no recollection of it. The cabman helped me to lift him in, and at this the pity of his plight smote me, tempering the joy of having found him, and quickening within me a spirit of angry retaliation against his enemies. For the man now at my side was far different from that man who had sat with me on the after deck of the Sibylla, only four weeks ago. He

was, indeed, it seemed to me little more than the husk of the Cameron I had known. In facial conformation the change was not so marked, though his expression was pathetically at variance with anything I had ever before seen him wear. The lines of his face were drawn, as with pain, and his eyes were dull to vacancy. He lolled, sleazily, in a crumpled heap in his corner, like a spineless mannikin; and though I piled him eagerly with a flood of questions, he might have been a deaf mute for all the answers he accorded me. Once I thought he shook his head in negation, but I was later forced to conclude that this was involuntary, being caused by the roll of the cab as one of its wheels encountered a depression in the roadway.

Yet in spite of his sorrowful presence and demeanor—in spite too of the tormenting mystery of his return, which was scarcely less baffling than the mystery of his departure—it was at least a relief to know that he was alive and out of the power of those that were bent upon his harm. Good nursing, coupled with skilful medical attention, had just worked wonders for me, and I was confident that it would do the same for him; and then we should have facts and not theories to aid us in our quest for the culprits, and, eventually, in the administration of justice to the guilty.

I had given the cabman the number of the Cameron house and admonished him to make all possible speed; so, with the long lash of the whip snapping sharply at brief intervals and the jaded horse, thus urged, bounding at a clumsily northward. Having given over the effort to obtain from my fellow passenger even a gestured answer to my most pertinent inquiries, I turned my mind to what lay before us. The Cameron establishment would doubtless be fast locked in slumber as well as otherwise, but I made small question of my ability to rouse some of the servants. My hope, however, was not to awaken Evelyn. It could mean only a night's rest lost for her, for she could gain nothing by seeing her uncle at this hour, considering his condition.

I was still busy planning when a mighty hand on the lines brought our horse to his haunches, and ourselves nearly out through the suddenly parted apron; and the Cameron residence loomed massive and dark on our right.

As I stepped to the sidewalk the driver descended, too, but I motioned him back.

"Never mind, thank you," I said. "I'll get some one from inside to help carry him." And in a moment my thumb was on the push-button and faintly there came back to me through heavy double doors the far-off echo of the bell, jarring against the silence of the great house.

The promptness with which chains fell and bolts were drawn surprised me. And yet, I suppose, it was merely an evidence of the perfect management of an establishment wherein every contingency is provided against.

A footman, as irreproachably liveried and groomed as though the time were midday instead of after two o'clock in the morning, greeted me with becoming imperturbability. I recognized him as one of the men from Cragholt, and called him by name.

"Stephen," I said, with an effort to disguise the excitement with which my every pulse was throbbing, "your master is outside in a cab. He is very weak and will need assistance. Get another man to aid me, and then awaken Mr. Checkbeedy and Louis. And make haste. No, I can't come in; I'll wait outside." He turned away in obedience to my directions, but I checked him. "And, Stephen," I charged, "no word to any one else, as you value your position; especially no word to Miss Grayson."

I marvelled at the man's preserved emotion. His "Very good, sir," was uttered with all the stolidity which marks a response to the commonplace; and yet I knew that he was fully conscious of the eventfulness of this late and unlooked-for home-coming. And the footman who joined me a few minutes later was not less well-trained.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

LEGISLATIVE RECORD.

Both Houses Show More Actual Work Than Their Predecessors.

Lincoln.—Statistics compiled at the close of the forty-first legislative day of the present session, show both houses considerably in advance of last year's status at the corresponding date.

As usual, the figures show the house killing more bills than the senate, proportionately to the number introduced and passed upon.

The condensed statement, showing the present position of house bills and senate files, follows:

	House, Senate.
Bills introduced.....	883 457
Passed one house.....	87 129
Killed by originating house.....	113 69
Now in standing committee.....	478 156
Now on general file.....	146 68
Now on third reading.....	46 35

Four bills have passed both houses and been signed by the governor, these being two for legislative appropriations, one for amendments to the Lincoln city charter and one for a penitentiary deficiency. One house bill has been killed by the senate and one has passed, but is yet unsigned by the governor. Three senate bills have passed the house and are unsigned. Of the killed bills, the following table shows at what parliamentary procedure they met death.

	House, Senate.
Killed in standing committee.....	86 49
Killed in committee of the whole.....	16 17
Killed on third reading.....	11 3

Bills Passed by the Senate.

Senate File No. 449, by Hoagland of Lincoln—Prevents foreign corporations from doing business in state unless they have a representative agent here upon whom service may be made.

Senate File No. 292, by Cordeal of Red Willow—Provides for the reinsurance of risks.

Senate File No. 280, by Saunders of Douglas—Provides that property shall be entered at full valuation and one-fifth for taxation purposes.

Senate File No. 279, by Macfarland of Douglas—Provides for private hearings in juvenile court proceedings.

Senate File No. 25, by Code Revision Commission—For a jury commissioner.

Senate File No. 25, by Hoagland of Lancaster—Abolishes the defense of assumption of risk for railroad employees.

Senate File No. 31, by Macfarland of Douglas—Authorizes clerks of police magistrates to administer oaths and issue warrants.

Senate File No. 32, by Macfarland of Douglas—Raises the monthly pension of retired policemen from \$40 to \$50 in Omaha.

Senate File No. 438, by Cordeal of Red Willow—Authorizes cities and villages to pay membership fees in League of Nebraska's Municipalities.

Senate File No. 413, by Hoagland, Bartling and Wink—Provides for compensation of firemen in small cities.

Senate File No. 387, by Saunders of Douglas—Pensions for Omaha city librarians.

Senate File No. 336, by Placek of Saunders—Affects procedure in probate when real estate is in issue and no county court has acquired jurisdiction.

Senate File No. 242, by Dodge of Douglas—Penalty for taking motor vehicles without consent of owners.

Senate File No. 331, by Hoagland of Lancaster—Provides for the establishment of public market houses.

Senate File No. 328, by Hoagland of Lincoln—Provides for appraisal of public service utilities, eliminating "going value."

Senate File No. 442, by Kiechel and Bartling—Requires veterinarians to renew licenses every three years.

Senate File No. 44, by Cordeal of Red Willow—Requires railroads to use headlights of a power that will outline the figure of a man 600 feet distant.

Senate File No. 69, by Reynolds of Dawes—Requires railroads to equip their switchstands with lights.

S. F. 164, by Grossmann, of Douglas—Provides for double shift for South Omaha fireman.

S. F. 3, by Ollis—Board of control oil.

S. F. 299, by Busbee, of Kimball—Provides that school land which can be irrigated may be appraised and sold by the state board.

S. F. 302, by Kiechel of Nemaha—Makes second Sunday in June pioneer memorial day.

S. F. 188, by Bartling, of Otoe—Prohibits fraudulent advertising of goods.

S. F. 322, by Cordeal, of Red Willow—Provides for submission of all franchises to a vote of the people in cities of second class.

S. F. 214 by Hoagland of Lincoln—Provides for submitting to people constitutional amendment for appellate court.

H. R. 68, by Wood, of Dixon—Permitting a maximum school levy of 35 mills on the dollar.

FREE ADVICE TO SICK WOMEN

Thousands Have Been Helped By Common Sense Suggestions.

Women suffering from any form of female ills are invited to communicate promptly with the woman's private correspondence department of the Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., Lynn, Mass. Your letter will be opened, read and answered by a woman and held in strict confidence. A woman can freely talk of her private illness to a woman; this has been established a confidential correspondence which has never been broken. Never have they published a testimonial or used a letter without the written consent of the writer, and never has the Company allowed these confidential letters to get out of their possession, as the hundreds of thousands of them in their files will attest.

Every woman ought to have Lydia E. Pinkham's 80-page Text Book. It is not a book for general distribution, as it is too expensive. It is free and only obtainable by mail. Write for it today.

STONES Home Remedy (SOD OLE) Red Stomach Souring, Send FREE Illustration Remedy Co., Dept. 468, 219 S. Dearborn St., Chicago

Pettit's FOR SORE EYE RED SALVE

Explained.
"Why am I always the goat?"
"Because you persist in butting in."

Only One "BROMO QUININE" That is LAXATIVE BROMO QUININE. Look for the signature of E. W. GROVE. Cures a Cold in One Day. Cures Grip in Two Days. See.

Red Cross Balm Blue will wash double as many clothes as any other blue. Don't put your money into any other. Adv.

Speaking of "human dynamo," there is a man who has everything charged.

Meaning the Billows.
"I understand Perdita flirted with some high rollers at the beach last summer."
"So she did, and nearly got drowned."

Were Only Bent.
She weighed only 286, so that when she trod on a banana skin she stepped very gently. A polite shopkeeper came out to assist her to rise from a box of his best new-laid eggs.
"Oh, I do hope I have not broken them!" she cried.
"Not at all, madam," said the polite one; "they are only bent."

Discouraging a Vocalist.
Why a certain parrot never learned to talk, Current Opinion tells in these words:
Kerrigan went on a trip to South America, and while there bought a pretty Spanish parrot as a present for his friend O'Brien. He shipped the bird to O'Brien at once, and when he got back home, he said:
"Dinny, did ye get the fine parrot I sint ye from Rio Janeiro?"
"I did that, Kerrigan, and I want to tell ye that I never put me teeth into a tougher bird in me life!"

A GENEROUS GIFT

Free to Readers of This Paper

Professor Munyon has just issued a most useful almanac containing a number of his best essays, including the two wonderful articles, "Don't Be a Cipher," and "The Power of Love." The almanac also contains illustrated instructions for Character Reading, gives the meaning of your birth month, the interpretation of dreams, complete weather forecasts for the Northern States, Pacific Slope and Southern States. In fact, it is a magazine almanac. It will be sent you absolutely free. With it we will include any one full-size 25c. Munyon Remedy, our Rheumatism Remedy for rheumatism, our Kidney Remedy for kidney trouble, our Dyspepsia Remedy for indigestion, our Paw Paw Pills for biliousness or constipation. Not a penny to pay. Address: The Munyon Remedy Company, Philadelphia, Pa.

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Is Growing Smaller Every Day.

CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS

are responsible—they not only give relief—they permanently cure Constipation. Millions use them for Biliousness, Indigestion, Sick Headache, Sallow Skin. SMALL PILL, SMALL DOSE, SMALL PRICE. Genuine must bear Signature.

Allen's FOOT-EASE

The Antiseptic powder shakers into the shoes—The Standard Remedy for the feet for a quarter of a century 30,000 testimonials. Sold everywhere. Price 25c. Sample FREE. Address: Allen S. Olmsted, Le Roy, N. Y.

PISO'S REMEDY

Best Cough Syrup, Tastes Good. Use in the form of a Soluble Drug.

FOR COUGHS AND COLDS

Seaman's Life a Hard One

Excessive Toil in Unsanitary Quarters Responsible for Disease That Shortens Their Days.

Ill-health, we are told, is the cause of one-fourth of the destitution in large cities. "The ratio is probably much higher among the toilers of the sea," said George McPherson Hunter of the American Seaman's Friend society in The Survey. "Below deck in the recesses of the ship, twenty feet beneath the sunlight, stokers stand on iron plates in front of open furnaces, bend their backs to fill the coal shovel, and then swing the coal into the hot furnace mouth. The roll of the ship and the swing of the bow throw an uneven strain on the lower part of the torso which causes hernia."

"Novelists tell with great gusto of the sailors killed by pirates and buccaniers, and sometimes by the 'bucko mate.' All these amiable gentlemen of fortune never killed or maimed as many men as the forecastles of the ships that sail the seas. The medical officer of the port of London submits

a table showing the minimum air space allowed for cattle in cowsheds, and for individuals in military barracks, workrooms, lodging houses and seamen's quarters. Setting these side by side, it is shown that cattle are best off in this respect and seamen worst. The reports of the surgeon general of the United States Marine hospital service, show "continuously that seamen suffer in a startling manner from diseases, most of them springing from the inadequacy of pure air and healthful places in which to eat and sleep."

Loss to Antiquarians.
One of the huge stones of the Avonbury Druidical circle, which is much larger and older than Stonehenge, has fallen, owing, doubtless, to the effects of weather—heavy rains following a dry season. Aubrey, who acted as guide to Charles II, on a visit to this district in 1663, declared that Avonbury as far surpassed Stonehenge as a cathedral does a parish church.—London Mail.

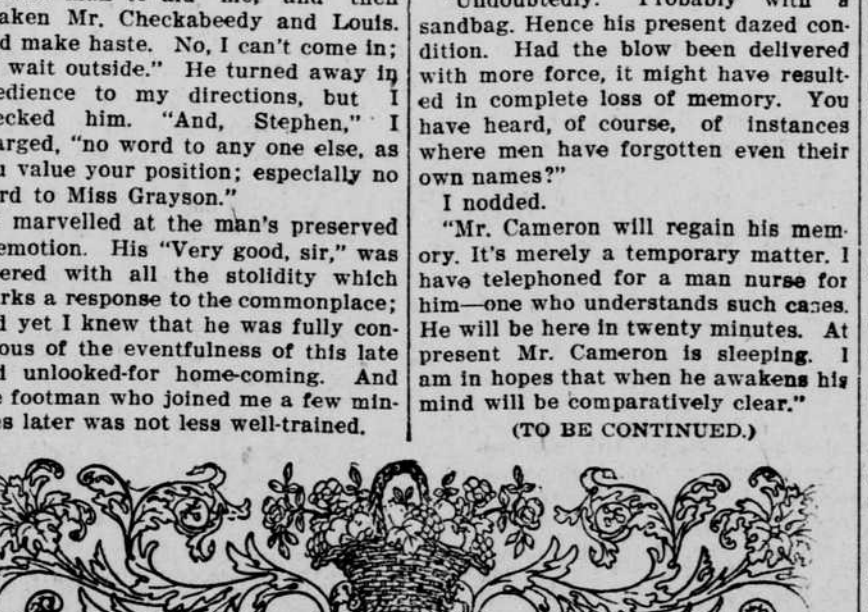


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