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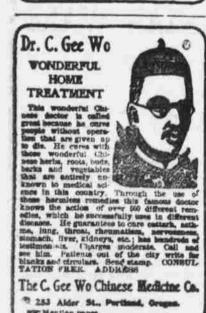
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## A Few Precious Jepanese|Swords

FOR SALEWAT

Yokahoma - Bazar. given up trying to make him.

## townsommer to the state of the The Man and the Hour

By KEITH GORDON

Copyright, 1904, by Prances Wilson Elinor for the first time in her life was looking the future squarely in the eye. Hitherto she had been content to nibble at life, munching away contentedly enough, satisfied with the joy of the moment. And she might have gone on so for an indefinite time had it not been for the occurrence of the 3d at-

New Year's day is significant only because then, by common consent, time moves up a number. This particular June 3 made an indelible impression on Elinor's mind because on that day she began to be thirty-two-began things. at the very beginning, of course, but still she began.

"I shall say I'm thirty-one all this year anyway," she announced defiantly to that other self that receives our dearest confidences, "It's such bad form to say you're thirty-one years and two months old, or whatever it may happen to be. And if I have to write it I'll make it thirty-one in round numbers not even thirty-one plus." All of of the pattern of the carpet. which, as the reader can see, was very unscrupulous.

However, as she found, by far the worst thing about beginning to be thirty-two was the fact that you couldn't forget it. The harder you tried the better you remembered it.

"Well, what if I am?"

This was the remark that our heroine slung into space when, after a week of torment, she sat down with her chin resting on her hands to have the thing dredth time now. She wanted to tell out. "What if I am? So are plenty of him; she always wanted to tell him evother gir-women, I mean. Alice is thirty, Mary thirty-one, Mabel twenty-

She paused in her enumeration, struck by the thought that all these friends were married. Matrimony was a subject to which she had given the minimum of thought. She supposed she'd come to it some time, but she was ir all at once I realized that I'm an old no hurry to enter that narrow pasture maid. It's so unexpected. Why haven't so long as there was pleasant browsing I married? That's what I don't underto be had outside.

When she had thought of it at all it secretly determined to avoid as long as possible. But now that she was be-

Could it be, she asked herself, that she had made a mistake after all and that those three incisive lines were as much of an honor as an officer's bars? Could it be that there was a point when one began to be thirty-two-for instance, when becomingness demanded that one should lay aside "Miss" just as it required that one should stop wearing pink?

a number of men-the mischlevous dimto stop her in what she now recognized was successful. At bedtime when she with a certain royal carelessness that recked not of possible dark hours to come. When did any woman born to the belief in the divine right of queens ever foresee dethronement?

She had inadvertently "lived over," as she had once heard it quaintly phrased. There was no doubt about it, she was an old maid! She repeated it aloud in all its brutal truth, scorning such euphemisms as "spinster" and "bachelor woman."

"You're an old maid-just a plain old maid:" she said audibly. But it sounded like a joke-like one of those things too bad to be true. She would probably wake up after a bit to find that she had been married since her eighteenth year and had a son ready to enter college and a daughter about to make her debut.

No such happy awakening came however, and with desperate philosophy she decided that since she was an old maid she would enter into the role for all it was worth. At least she would avoid the error of being kittenish.

Little by little her plainest gowns were brought into requisition. Certain little graces and frivolities of the toilet were one by one abandoned. She timidly asked Alice, her closest friend, to teach the children to call her "auntie." a thing which she had hitherto forbidden under the penalty of a sudden death to the cherub that should first be guilty of it.

"What is the matter with you?" gasped Alice, with a stare of amazement. 'And what have you been doing with your hair, and why are you wearing that ugly old dress, with all the hand-

some things that you have?" "I'm just wearing the things suit able to my age before the dear friends have a chance to point them out to me," was the answer, and that night her friend confided to her husband. with thoughtful regret, that Elinor was

becoming a regular old maid. Another of her friends and comrades, Max Anderson, glso noticed the subtle change. Theirs had been a sort of brother and sister friendship of long standing. For years he had scolded and criticised and bullied her. The one thing that he hadn't done was to make love, and Elinor had long since

"Haven't you ever been in love, be consumed in the voyage must al-Max?" she had asked him once, with ways be made, else the bananas will be genuine curiosity in the gray eyes that spoiled. Fruit steamers carry steam had been more than one man's un-

doing. A dull flush came up into his face, and he looked at her strangely. "Yes," he answered shortly, "I have." "Beautiful night, isn't it?" he went on after a moment, and there was a touch of mockery in his voice that made the questioner wince. After that

she asked him no more. "What's up?" he demanded, surveying her cynically as she came down to receive him one evening, with renunclation speaking from every line of her plain gown and her smooth, parted hair. "Is it some sort of lay sackcloth and ashes? What particular sin are you mourning?"

"The great sin of omission!" she answered demurely as they sat down opposite each other. But he looked incredulous. He had not known her fifteen years for nothing.

"Commission, you mean," he said dryly, with an air of remembering

"No; omission! I'd tell you about it, only you're never any comfort to a person. You're just like a stone, Max. I don't know how I've endured you so He turned his eyes lazily upon her with a look long, steady, inscrutable

Neither spoke, but after a moment Elinor, with a beautifully assumed air of perfect ease, sought refuge in a study "Possibly I may tell you some time,"

he said, with a nonchalant laugh, "but go on; let me hear what's the trouble You always tell me eventually."

And so, in fact, she did. It was the beauty of Max that he made you like and hate him simultaneously. But no matter what you felt you wanted him, and you usually confided in him. That at least had been Ellnor's experience, and it was being repeated for the hunerything. She leaned forward suddenly, with a childish bid for sympathy in her eves.

"You see, Max, I've omitted to get married. And now I'm thirty-one"-"Plus," he corrected gravely.

"Thirty-one," she continued firmly, "and, though it's been great fun-well, stand."

There was a pause in which it seemhad seemed to mean chiefly a tiresome ed to her that she suddenly heard the three perpendicular lines just over the fully realized what had happened her nose, a memorandum of worry that she hands were held close and Max was

"Look at me, Ellnor, and see if you ginning to be thirty-two the thing was can't find out. I've walted years for you to finish sowing your wild oats."

Unnatural.

which she was devotedly attached. It Oregon City, Ore. could open and shut its eyes, and every night Nancy took it to bed with her. carefully closing its eyes before the light was turned out. One day the doll, as dolls from time immemorial have been known to do, met with an acci-She faced her plight with a stiff up dent which placed the eye shutting per lip, realizing that she had no one mechanism out of business and left it but herself to blame. There had been with not only widely and permanently opened optics, but badly damaged ones le at the corner of her mouth danced as well. At intervals during the reinto sight for a second at the thought mainder of the day Nancy pleaded to of how many-who had done their best have her dolly "cured," but nothing for the first time her mad career. She had donned her nightdress and started had declined their offers kindly, but for her little hed her mother saw she had forgotten her adored doll and reminded her of it, saying: "But, Nannie, you've forgotten your

baby. She won't be able to sleep unless you take her to bed with you, as usual."

To her mother's amused astonishment Nancy threw a half contemptuous look over her shoulder at the doll, recumbent on a chair, and said:

"Oh, what's the use? She can't sleep anyway. Who ever heard of anybody sleeping with their eyes wide open?"-New York Times.

Crushed by His Wife.

"My wife is not always as considerate of my feelings as she might be," says the man who invariably means well. "I went home the other night, and I could see that I was not more than deuce high with her on account of-well, no matter what. I was full up of a new theory a man had been imparting to me, and as I always believe in a man's regarding his wife as his intellectual equal I told her about

it. The man told me that it is the brain that really nourishes the hair. He even went so far as to say that if you pull a hair out you pull out a bit of brain with it. It interested me ex-

ceedingly. My wife just sniffed. " 'That's not new,' she said. 'I found that out long ago. It doesn't matter either whether the hair is pulled out or falls out naturally."

"That's what I get for trying to be good to that woman. Stung by my

Here he raised his hat. He was as bald as a newly plucked egg.-Washington Post.

Timing Bananas.

It is generally known that bananas are shipped while yet green and unripe, but few persons are aware of the careful and elaborate time calculations required in setting out the plants and cutting off the fruit in order to insure the arrival of the bananas in proper condition at their destination. When a plantation is begun the young plants are set out at certain intervals, so that they will produce at regular prefixed times during the year. A certain numer of days before the arrival of a steamer the green fruit is cut, and a in a calculation of the time that will

heating apparatus to insure a uniform temperature throughout the voyage. The ripening is calculated to occur only after the fruit has reached the retail

Do Not Boil Coffee Too Long. There is only one mistake that car be made in making coffee, and that is to cook it too much. When subjected to a momentary boiling and then removed from the fire it is a drink for the gods, but if it is kept at a high degree of heat for thirty minutes its character is entirely changed, and it becomes almost poisonous. Of the peo ple who overcook coffee in this way some do it through ignorance, but the greater part of them through greed in order to make it go further and produce a larger profit. What we need is a law making it a capital offense to boil coffee more than three minutes .-Chicago Chronicle.

Child Pension In France.

At all times it has been an object with French parents to teach a child to be provident and economical. A child of three can become a member of the Mutualite by giving only 2 cents a week. One cent will entitle it to getting 10 cents a day when it is ill, and the other goes toward getting a pension when it is at a certain age. No one knows how long a child can live, but what does the contribution amount to? There is hardly a child in the world who does not spend that for candy, Now, a boy of eighteen giving 34 cents a month to the society will when he is sixty have a pension of \$72 a year.

The Coffee Plant's Friend. In the republic of Colombia there is a tree highly esteemed as a shade for the coffee plant. It is found also in tropical Brazil and possesses qualities that make it peculiarly suited for this particular use. It will live on a stony, poor soil, and a tree only eightsen months old will shade 144 square yards of ground, while, when full grown, it may be fifty feet high and have a spread of fifty feet on every side.

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