## THE EUGENE WEEKLY GUAR D. THURSDAY, FEB. 3, 1910

Emma.



EUGENE WALTER.

Author of "Paid In Full" and "The

Essiest Way"

ffer reception of his overtures hadpractically dispelled the glamour of



The word "Refused" was written across the envelope.

romance in which he had clothed her in his visions, but he resolved to make one final attempt to soften her by means of a letter, and he set about it forthwith. It was an epistle of many pages, a melodramatic jumble of contrition and despairing supplication, for he was no master in the art of writing. But he was highly satisfied with it. To make it the more impressive he blurred it here and there with drops of water, thinking this would convey the idea that he had been moved to tears as he penned it.

'If this doesn't do the trick nothperused it for the third time. "And if it doesn't I'll quit. She'll never get another chance from me."

He addressed it to her, care of Jimsy Smith, knowing the latter would mee that it reached its destination. It -came back under cover through the same medium, unopened, with the had learned to respect him and judge word "Refused" written large across him at his real value. Itis actions and the envelope in Beth's handwriting, idiosyncrasics received at last their The word was a full confirmation of true interpretation. Hensy's report of his mission

As for Williams mount that he Brooks gaashed his teeth, banished had not been deceived in her fortified his dreams of a renewal of happiness his faith and made him really happy. with his wife and clinched a resolution He was getting old. He had won his that had been forming in his mind as hard fought, lifelong battle with the an alternative-to seek relief in an- world and was as rich as he cared to other and facile love from the depres- be. The devil was disposed to turn monk. The yearning for affection, not / demonstrative, but existent, which came with the approach of life's sunset and UTUMN, chilly and wet, had which was not to be found elsewhere was gratified there. He put on slippers, smoked his pipe, had his favorite chair, expressed his views in his authoritative way and liked to be cona ters. Mrs. Harris had requisisulted But he never ceased to be impressed with the ostentatious proclivities and aristocratic airs of Mrs. Harris and Beth, though he laughed indulgently at many of the mother's folbles. To him the two women represented the beau monde and were authorities on all that pertained thereto. He deemed it a privilege to place one of his automobiles at the family's exclusive command, and it was the most luxurious been there since, except to make a vehicle money could buy. That he did not give it outright was because he knew their circumstances would not



ause he stands between her and the

that if she was to marry a man like fair pasture lands." "Why, captain," smilled Emma, "I'm Smith I'd settle \$500,000 worth of happy enough. What more could I Latin-American line stock on her for want than the peace I have?" a wedding present. I would, by Sam, "Are you sure, girl?" he answered, ma'am!

"You would do that?" asked Mrs. shaking his head doubtfully. "I don't know-I don't know." "Certainly she's happy," put in Beth. ment 'And, as for getting married again, "This minute."

I should think she's had enough of "Well!" that to last her all her life." "It's your turn now, Beth," observed about the reiteration.

But if the family were amazed Wil-Emma. "Me? Oh, I shall never marry!" ing allowed his feelings to get the bet-"It doesn't follow because I have said Emms. "It is easy to conceive he lapsed into gloomy silence and very of perfect happiness with the right soon departed abruptly. husband."

"Of course I mean I won't marry until the proper man comes along. I should never make the mistake of binding myself to such a man as-as that beast, or even Jimsy, for instance,

though I'm not comparing Jimsy with bim in any way." and with which, all unconstito -"What's the matter with Smith? Emma had had a good deal to do. He had anchored himself to the family grunted the captain. "Well, you would never think of him

as his one connection with refinement as a lover. He's so old and unromanand home life. But it had been a Besides, his education's terribly tle cautious anchoring, maintained with distrust and carrying with it no reci- defective. "And he isn't rich." added her moth procity in the shape of business or any "When Beth marries I hope it other favors. A fighter who had got er. nothing out of existence without fight. will be to a gentleman in the position his former friend's coming.

ing, ever on the alert to forestall an to keep her as she ought to be kept." expected treacherous blow, his hand | "I wonder why Jimsy doesn't come had flown to his hip pocket, so to around any more," said Beth. "He speak, at the slightest movement that hasn't been here since Christmas." "He says he's too busy," observed appeared to him to be suspicious.

As time wore on, however, his dis- Mrs. Harris. "Captain, you must be trust had vanished and Mrs. Harris and working him to death." her daughters had become a necessity | "Smith's a good man, a corking good to him. He was being civilized. He man," replied the captain thoughtfully preferred Emma to the others, which "He's doing more work than any three. is saying that she was the person he There ain't no necessity that I know

liked best on earth, but his manner of of for him to work all night, though. showing it had been repellent because if that's what he's doing." misunderstood. In the first place she Emma appeared to be absolutely inhad hated him for his supposed injus- different to the turn the conversation tice to her husband, whereas, having had taken, though in truth she was read Brooks through from the start, listening greedily to Williams' encohe despised him and would not help miums.

him even to make her lot easier. When "D' you know," went on the captain, reawakened distrust, battling with un- "I've often thought that a man like fug will," he muttered after he had willingness to believe that his high Smith would be just the right kind of you. estimate of her had been unmerited, a husband for Emma."

had caused him to try her out relent- "Like Jimsy?" Mrs. Harris laughed. lessly on the occasion of her appeal She did not know whether he was for Brooks, alone with him and at joking or not, but thought he was. his mercy in his rooms, she had seen | This time a sudden flush dyed Em

that a warm heart, full of pure re- ma's checks and deepened over her gard for her, beat beneath his forbid face to the very ears. No one noticed ding exterior. From that night she

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makes up for a lot of side wonder. The hunddered and writhed in agouy | With bowed head he went toward her with waywardness and more . and without it-what? Here's Emma, of torment, turning his pitiful, stream- the door, stopped and turned to her married for seven years, separated ing eyes upon Smith. "Oh, Jimsy, if you would only kill his eyes.

unless it's of the Dakota sort, which me and end it all." he moaned. "Oh. I'd never consent to, hasn't got a cent if I only had the courage to kill my- absolution before I die in the world and couldn't collect a cent self!" Smith, greatly agitated, looked at the

miserable man in perplexity. "No, and if he were as wealthy as "I wish I could help you, Joe," he the grand Turk I'd starve to death be said. "But this time I don't see how fore I'd touch any money or anything you can be helped."

else belonging to him," commented "It isn't possible. There's nothing you could do. I'm done for. It's my "Mrs. Harris," answered the capown fault," he sobbed. "I brought it tain, with deep feeling. "money, while all on myself. I have been weak-oh. it's a whole lot, ain't' everything, as weak-and a fool. And now it's come I've found, though it's taken me sixtyto this. No; nobody's to blame but myfive years to do it. It's no fault of self-unless it's Emma." Emma's that she's poor, and I tell you He rose to go.

"Shake hands with me, Jimsy," he begged. "It's the hand of a thief, a criminal's hand, but you were glad to take it in friendship once, when it was honest, and it's the last time I'll ever Harris, overwhelmed with astonish- ask you to do anything for me. You'll never see me agalu."

Smith grasped the hand held out to him, and his pressure was more eloquent of his feelings than mere words It was all she could find to say ould have been. He could find no phrases adequate to express them, so liams was evidently alarmed at hav. remained silent, but he slipped into the wretched man's pocket as Brooks been unfortunate that you should be," | ter of his discretion in this way, for passed out of the door a bundle of banknotes that he had taken without counting from a drawer.

Snow had begun to fall. A high wind, blowing apparently from all quarters, hardened the dates and pro-R. BROOKS would like to pelled them with stinging force into see you, sir. I told him the faces of the people in the streets. you were in, but he would Brooks had no umbrella, ner had he not come up and asked me gloves, and the wind out to the bone. to let you know he was downstairs." Yet he paid scant heed to his discom-"Tell him ft's all right. I'll see him." fort and ambled away from Smith's abode. He turned up his coat collar and pulled his hat over his eyes. More The landlady went out, gathering than once when he thought he was from the visitor's unusual request and being followed he went sick with fear. her boarder's reply that there had been Every minute he expected to feel a able between them. Jimsy pushed hand on his shoulder.

away the book he had been reading | Why should he lack the pluck to kill .nself? A fugitive from justice, and leaned back in his chair to await friendless and penniless, everything Brooks shuffled rather than walked that was worth while in life gone forn. He did not offer to shake hands, ever, what had he to hope from living? The prison door from which he had but, with a subdued "Hello, Jimsy," shrunk with such dread before now seated himself on the edge of the armchair that in former days he occupied was wide open to receive him, would receive him as inevitably as day would as his own. Then he seemed to forget follow the night. He remembered havwhere he was, sank back, shrinking nto his overcoat, and sat as though ing read that a man shot through the stupefied, twisting his hat in his hands brain never felt the messenger which snuffed out his life. In the drawer of his bureau was a loaded revolver that Smith was shocked at the change in he had long kept there for self protechis appearance. His face was white tion in case of need. A movement of and thin, and the eyes, which were almost expressionless, were deep sunk in almost of relief came with this thought. the sockets. There was stubble on his and he quickened his steps. There was hin; his formerly neatly plastered only one thing to fear now-that he would be caught before he could reach "Boy, you're ill," said Jimsy with his room. As he trudged along he "Let me get a bracer for found himself at the corner of the

street in which the Harrises lived. Emma! How different she had been whisky, but his visitor declined, this from the other! She had not taken: ime with a wan flickering smile of ap she had given. Love had not been dependent upon the bringing of gifts: "No, thanks, Jimsy. I don't feel like it had been lavished upon him. When now reached the extreme of hopeless- dead right. Nothing's worth while; it just now. I've been drinking too he had been despondent she had com- ness and desperation. Everybody, the nothing matters."

but he was out of the door and bound- all; that he was an outcast at her last kiss, besought in charity.

with outstretched arms, pleading in-

She retreated, shuddering, terrified. to take by for - what she would not give, to feel once more in his arms the little form that once had nestled there fondly

She read his purpose and shricked



Mrs. Harris, Beth and Captain Willlams were just entering, and they rushed in with the maid.

Brooks turned to escape as Emma, almost hysterical with horror and fear. uttered scream after scream. He ran right into Williams, who recognized him at once and dealt him a smashing blow that sent him to the floor. Then the captain grasped the half stunned man and, pulling him to his feet, held him while he inquired what had hap- are laid bare and bleeding. pened.

Emma, calmes by her mother and Emma, calmes by her mother and sister, tremblingly explained. Wil-liams looked at his prisoner, undecided That which is crooked cannot be made liams looked at his prisoner, undecided That which is croosed cannot be man-straight, and that which is wanting can-him if he ever dared to molest Emma again, threw him down the stairs. again, threw him down the stairs.

B over and very weak, Brooks he that increaseth knowledge increase picked himself up and made sorrow.

much of the stuff, and I haven't eaten forted him; when things were going whole world, was against him, except ince last night, I think." wrong she had encouraged him; when "For heaven's sake?" exclaimed his head ached she had rested it on for him. The only being who had had under the san? limsy. her bosom. And it had come to this-Brooks would have restrained him. that he had lost her and, with her, dread, refused him the sacrament of **a** 

He hardly knew how he got there.

ence. In the declining years of her life when she needed aid and he was a young man he had kept his earnings

"Emma, one kiss-my pardon and selfishly for himself, doling out to ber a few dollars at irregular intervals, and he was glad when she had ceased to be a burden by dying in a hospital. He followed her, desponsite, recoived He had played his cards well, ingratiated himself into the favor of Mr. Harris, his employer, and by good acting had won the love of Emma. This had been the great coup of his career, but it had availed him little. Fortune, after smilling at him, had turned her back, and life had been a failure ever since

As he summed it all up and contemplated himself as a pariah, a hunted man at bay amid the wreck of hope. love, life itself, driven to the alternative of a criminal's cell or self destruction, as he brooded over the way in which he had been spurned and cast out by those who might have loved and honored him, tears rolled from his eyes again.

"Yes," he groaned, repeating Emma's words, "yes, I have been paid in full, and I have paid in full."

Then he grasped the revolver and faced himself at the mirror again, This time his fingers were warm and supple. Once more he raised it to his temple. Once more pale fear obtained. the ascendency. There was plenty of time. Why. since he was to die that night, should he be in such a hurry? Men who were dying or who were about to be speeded into eternity for transgression of the commandment that placed a ban on murder generally prayed, or prayers were said for them. He had not prayed since he could remember. What would happen after his leap into the unfathomable void? He had always derided the idea that anything would happen. Still, he did not know. He went to the clothes closet, and from among some books, mostly novels, heaped in disorder on a shelf, he brought forth a Bible. It had belonged to his aunt, and he had kept it because it had looked well to have one in evidence in the parlor and because it was nicely bound in soft leather. He opened the book at hazard. Its pages divided at Ecclesiastes, and he began to read. Though the liquor was fast clouding his brain he became fascinated with the great im-

mortal masterpiece of pessimism, the terrible monument of negation in which humanity's everlasting wounds

I have seen all the works that are done

wisdom and knowledge.

CHAPTER XXV. RUISED and dazed, aching all wisdom and know madness and folly. I per-ceived that this also is vexation of spirit.

For in much wisdom is much grief, and his way to the street. He had "That's right," he assented, "that's

What hath man of all his labor and of

For all his days are sorrows and his



clon of his solitary existence.

brought sojourners in the country early to town, among them Mrs. Harris and her

tioned Jimsy Smith's services before •he descended from the mountains. There was a lot to do on their arrival. Would he mind attending to this and that for them, and would be meet them? Jimsy duly attended to this and that, met them in his old genial way, saw them installed in their home, dined with them, as per Mrs. Harris' schedule-and, although the winter was well advanced, had never brief call at Christmas,

At each of these visits Emma had thrilled at sight of him and at the enable them to maintain it. sound of his voice. It was with timidfty that she had extended her hand to er and sister. She never gave herself "I'd settle half a million dollars' worth him, but neither by pressure of his airs. He felt himself nearer to her, clasp nor by any sign of manner, ex- and the more intimate they grew the pression or intonation had he given more she became endeared to him. indication of remembrance that their She had changed much since she had secret was known to each other. He left Brooks. A spirituality that he had was the same quiet, kindly unchange- not, of course, known in her in the old able Jimsy. By her alone was his pro- days had increased the charm of her longed absence understood. Mrs. Har- personality, but her sensible, unaffectvis and Beth finally attributed it to a ed manner, her gentleness, were alreluctance to meet continually on an ways the same. More than once he equal footing his employer, Captain had surprised a wistful, faraway look Williams, who had taken Jimsy's place in her eyes, a fleeting expression of as exist member of the family and melancholy, and his solicitude had been usurped all his prerogatives.

an object of fear and detestation. She considerable pondering about it. knew that his affection was purely paternal, and he knew that she under- Emma isn't married to some nice felstood him as no one dead or living low worthy of her," he remarked one ever had or did. She manifested her evening, uttering his thoughts aloud. appreciation of his regard by a confi- "There are some things that no man dence which was to the old fellow a | can , understand, and this is one of comfort and huge delight. Not that 'em-that she should be handcuffed to his delight took a demonstrative form; a dirty scalawag like Brooks." that was not in his nature, and Emma | "Captain," ejaculated Mrs. Harris, would have been greatly astoalshed raising her hands, "you mustn't! You could she have known what a boon to know it is understood that the perhim her frank friendliness was. son's name is never to be men-

The fact was that his good deed to tioned." Emma had been the first striking ef- "I know," he said, "but you can't fect of a softening process that had alter facts because, being disagreeable, been going on very, very slowly, so you don't want to remember 'em. slowly as not to be noticeable to any Brooks is a disagreeable fact, a darned extent, for several years, which began disagreeable fact, and he's Emma's rich so far, and I doubt if they ever stop myself. And now I have reached please, and leave me in peace." when he had been admitted to the husband into the bargain. As such will. A man can't have everything, the mouth of the pit." family circle of his late general man- he ain't to be isnored altogether be- but monay, as I've often told my girls.

Emma was different from her mothon her for a wedding present.

it, however, unless it was the captain, but when he was leaning forward with his hands between his knees, as he was then, his bushy eyebrows bent in thought, it was impossible to tell where he was looking. "That's what I said," he emphasized, "Take Smith himself, for the sake of argument. We're taiking among ouraroused. Something caused him to re-

ves, so it don't matter, as it won't go any further. Suppose Emma 'd married him? Is his heart all right? Is he on the level? I'd bank on him, To I'mma the captain was no longer frain from questioning her, but he did and that's more'n I'd say of any other man I know. Is he capable? Brainy "What a shame it is that a girl like as they make 'em. Is he good looking?

> men's logic and give a bluff no chance. And, O God, I can't face it." He'll go far if he keeps on, for all his the man who starts off at top speed away.

that always wins the race." these qualities haven't made Jimsy the certain punishment--yet couldn't

one hand and a bowl of hot bouillon in and nothing was denied to the dying. the other. Brooks refused the sand- He retraced his steps and rang the wiches, but he took the bowl, and, holding it in both hands-which trembled-sipped its grateful contents. "Jimsy, you're awfully good," he sighed.

He rose and produced a decanter of

CHAPTER XXIV.

"You mean that he's to come up?"

'Yes, if he doesn't mind."

owly and mechanically.

hair was disheveled.

ince last night, I think."

oncern.

preciation. .

Jimsy

"Oh, no-none of that," protested ! Smith, "Tell me what brought you here. What can I do for you?" "I don't know why I came, afterafter the way I acted last time. I"-"Never mind that. Let's forget about

"No, I have no right here.] Jimsy. I'm done for." "How done for?"

"I am, and you'll kick me out, as I deserve, when you know. Jimsy, I've done it again. I'm a thief a second time, and again for a woman." Smith looked grave, but he said nothing.

"What! You don't get up and kick maid. me? Well, well! I suppose it's just

You're the only man who wouldn't. parlor. But wait till you hear. I can tell it to you because you can't help me. Nobody can. I'm beyond helping." "Better try a sandwich first," suggested Smith. "There's no hurry." "Thanks; I think I will. That beef hat in hand, stood before her. tea did me good."

He ate three sandwiches ravenously, washing them down with water.

said. "You can fill in the details for frightened eyes. yourself. I tried backing the ponles again; then I stole from the bank. to fear from me," he assured her "I'm at the bank four days ago. I didn't turn up there that day, and I haven't been there since; but, of course, the He ain't bad looking, and with that game is up. I wandered about, drinkile of his he has most good lookers ing to try to forget my troubles till all I've seen beat a mile. Beth says he my money was gone. Then I sobered ain't poetic and all that sort of thing. up, and here I am. This time there's Maybe-maybe, but what of that? no one to save me. The bank couldn't you, how"-Also she says he ain't what you'd call be fixed, even if I had the funds to educated. That may be, too, but when make my stealings good. They'd get he wants to he can bring an amount of me wherever I hid myself, that's sure. go! cold sense to bear that'll upset most They must be looking for me now Tears rained down his face-tears low ways, and let me tell you it ain't that he made no effort to hide or wipe

"What you say may be all true, but to hell-knew what I was doing-saw you in full for my freedom. Why

In a little while Smith returned, a powering, swept aside all the objecplate heaped high with sandwiches in tions of reason. He was a dying man, bell. The door opened, and he ascend-Harris' flat was on the first landing. A over,

maid who did not know him answered his ring. "Is Mrs. Brooks at home?" he asked

The girl shook her head. "Mrs. Brooks? No; no one of that

hard.

"I would like to see her." "Your card, sir, please." "Tell her Mr. Smith is calling."

the conviction that she would not receive him if he gave his own. He followed on the heels of

"You needn't bother," he said and like you, but I rather hoped you would. brushed past her at the door of the and rubbed his hands to set the blood

"Yes, Emma, it's me, or what is left of me," he said.

"What brings you here? How did

"Don't be afraid. You have nothing away.

There was an examination of the books going on a long journey-yes, a long, long journey, and I've come to say goodby. You'll never see me again I shall be no more trouble to anybody."

> "There is no need to come here. cannot receive you. You must go." "Emma, I know how bad I was to

"I cannot listen to your excuses. It "I have no wish to recall it. I ask

only your forgiveness-ask it as a dying man. You cannot refuse." "You have been dead long years to me, and I have prayed God that I

have you come to trouble me? Go. "All right," he said sorrcyfully, will go. Goodby Emma."

Brooks sank back into the chair and An insane desire to see her took pos. but he reached home without molesta- of earthly things. His bead became relapsed into his condition of hebetude. session of him. It grew, became over | tion and mounted by the stairway unperceived to his room. Once inside he locked the door and turned on the light. It was at least gratefully warm there, and he was at last safe from he clutches of the law. Escape lay at ed the well remembered stairs. Mrs. his hand. In a moment all would be

Nothing had been disturbed during his absence. The revolver was still in

the drawer where he had left it. He took it and, gazing at himself in the bureau glass, raised the firearm to his name lives here. This is Mrs. Harris | right temple. He was appalled as he apartments. Mrs. Harris and Miss looked at the ghastly, haggard face Beth have gone out. Miss Emma is before him and the eyes, fear haunted, that stared out of their dark and

Miss Emma! She had even discard- deeply sunken rims like the optics of ed his name, then! The blow was an owl. The revolver shook in his numbed hand, and he could scarce

bend his finger on the trigger. What was his hurry? Why not wait until he had warmed his hand and The name had flashed to him with make the deed surer? If the police came for him death was at his beck and would cheat them at an instant's notice. His craven spirit inspired him

with the desire to live a little longer. He laid the revolver on the table

circulating. Then he held them over Emma was arranging some orna- the heat radiator. He remembered ments on the mantelplece. For a mo- that in the clothes closet was a fall ment she did not recognize him. Then bottle of whisky. The stuff would she recoiled, with a little cry, from the soon warm him. He took off his overwild eyed, disheveled specter who, coat to hang it up in the closet and felt in a pocket for his handkerchief.

Smith had slipped in there. For a moment a gleam of hope flashed its cheer-"There isn't a whole lot to relate," he you get in?" she demanded, with ing ray as he contemplated the money, Here was enough to enable him to get

But his despondency refused the But his despondency tertain To at-comfort. What was the use? To at-All is vanity. All so unto one place; all are of the the hands of the police sleuths who dust, and all turn to dust again. must be on the lookout for him. He surmised that the weather had driven that goeth downward to the earth? the watchers to take shelter and had A knock at the door roused him from

enabled him to slip into the house unnoticed or unrecognized. No, he had bleared, bloodshot eyes. done with life and all its worries and | He staggered to his feet, smiling va-

is useless to recall the past. Please the consequences of living. He would toward the revolver. There was the how.

stuff warmed him all over. He sat inquire about the overdue rent, ran down to think, and his thoughts took shouting for help.

in when as a young boy he had lost brain.

his widowed mother, he had repaid



There was the crash of a report

41Is hand encountered the roll of bills heavy and the letters indistinct. He began to have difficulty in grasping the meaning of the words.

That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts, even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath, so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast.

Who knoweth the spirit of man that

his somnolence, and he looked up with

disappointments. Better death than cantiy, and his groping hand lurched. have to die at some time or other any- crash of a report. The apartment house manager who had seen the light He poured out a large glass of in the window, apprising him of the whisky and swallowed it. The fiery tenant's presence, and had knocked to

"I knew I was going headlong down might never see you again. I paid the shape of a review of his life. He When they forced the door they had never been any good to himself found Brooks sprawling across the taor anybody else-never. Brought up ble beside the overturned liquor bottle. by a maiden aunt, who had taken him He was dead, with a bullet in his

THE END.