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THE SPRINGFIELD NEWS

the surface

He filled the woodshed to the eaves

Another rainy day found him chink-

ing the logs of the cabin with mud

from the banks of the creek. It did

not really need it. But restlessness

was devouring him, and the demand

for liquor was rising like a prairie

fire. The intensity of the passion

frightened him. Back home, in

normal surroundings and with a re-

gular occupation, he had been able

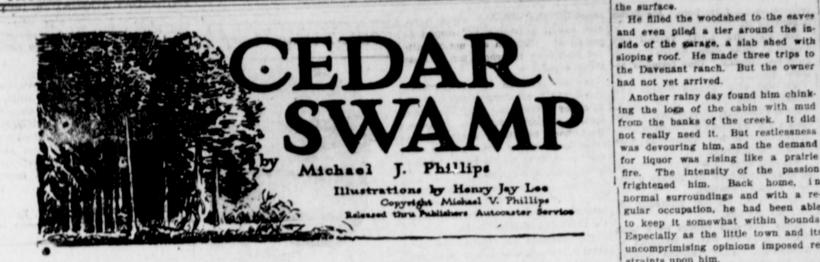
to keep it somewhat within bounds.

Especially as the little town and its uncomprimising opinions imposed re-

But here, the frontier still, where

(Continued on Page 8)

straints upon him.



THE LEADING CHARACTERS - run the booze-trucks day and night property nicely. I could run stock on Edison Forbes, a young resident of up here. But as they got down where it after it was fenced. You consider Scottdale with an inherent craving there are more towns they must lay an offer?"

for liquor, is held for the death of a up days." woman who has been killed by a boot- He took the bottle out again. His did not reveal her thoughts, but he gay and sparkling in sunshine, invited legging truck. circumstantial evi- potations had reduced the contents knew that beneath the surface, she dence points to Forbes and rather considerably. The stuff was begin disapproved. The idea of selling was There were few to see and to comthan tell the truth of the episode ning to take effect. "Well, another repugnant. "I'll listen," he said, nonwhich would clear him but cast an- little drink won't do us any harm," he other friend in a bad light, he stands said aloud with a reckless laugh. "And trial and is sentenced to a long term I guess it's time to hit homeward then. It's a long, long ways to little in prison. The governor of the state, old Tipperary down there by the an old friend of Eddic's father, believes him innocent and pardons him creek. "It's a long, long way to Tipper-

mallet.

shortly after his arrival at the jail. Scoots Libbey, a worthless charac- ary," he sang, unsteadiness creeping into his footsteps. ter, who has smashed his machine in-Darkness had fallen when he to another car, killing its lone occuslumped against the door of the cabin. pant, a woman. Forbes' companien The raincoat had impeded him. Someand Libbey quit the scene hurridly, where back along the trail he had leaving the former alone to face a thrown it away. So that it was a

constable who reasons that Eddie. with the scent of whiskey about him must be connected in some way with the accident. Accordingly, Forbes is arrested. Patsy Jane, Eddle's pretty wife, was inert as a log. He slept the

agrees that public sentiment runs too high against him. Accordingly they migrate up north to some land that has been in the family for years. his senses of a shrewdly-swung Settled in their log cabin

Isalah Sealman, a neighbor, pays the Forbes a visit and intimates that sense of failure and remorse and ment. "That's a good price, Mr. there are some back taxes for the worthlessness, but physically ill as Forbes, a big price. You won't get young couple to pay. Sealman offers well. The exposure in the cold rain another such offer." to give Eddie a job after he goes down itself was a venomous drug. The to Long Portage, a nearby town, and adulterants which had been added to learns about the taxes.

The next day while walking about handlers bordered on deadly poisons their property they discover a mys- and they clawed and tore at stomach terious mound that contains outcrops and intestinal linings. similar to salt. At the tax office It was not until the second morn- ter that the refusal was behind him. Forbes learns that the back taxes ing, after he had eaten breakfast in months to pay. A few days later he ignoring the fretful repinings and selfhelps a booze truck out of the mud scourgins. ing over to interview Sealman.

CHAPTER IX. An Offer

Sealman was not at home a woman does for you. You know where it Eddie's for an instant. "Anyone else of middle age who answered his knock brought you-where you'd be if it been making you an offer?" told Eddie. He was downtown. She weren't for the governor. Eddie, I looked at him with the curiosity of won't stand any more. I can't stand soul about it. By the way, how about people, one who sees few strangers, any more. This is the last time. If that job? Does it look as though you He could feel her eyes boring into you get drunk again I'll leave you." | could take me on as a farmhand?" his back from the small-paned win- He searched the sad, piquant little dows after he had turned away and face. The gray eyes were steady, the turned, his hand on the latch. "I've was retracing his steps. Now what to do? he thought dis- her words struck a chill in his heart. I don't see how I can use you. Good satisfiedly. There was plenty of wood "But, Patsy! What would I do if you day." cut. He didn't want to coop up and left me?" he burst forth, involuntarily, read. There wan nothing else, except and then flushed at the childish Eddie. "What's gotten into him? Is an exploratory tramp. That was it: selfishness of the remark. "I don't know, Eddie. It might cure what?" He would follow the road north, to find out where the booze-truck came you. I can't seem to cure you by staying." There was not bitterness in n't," returned Patsy Jane stoutly. "I from. He stopped at the house to tell her words; only sadness. Pat and then turned into the sinuous He lened forward to take her Eddie. I'm glad you're not to work double track, along which the broad hands. "You won't have to go, Pat," for him. What did he mean when he tires had left their impress. When he assured her, his voice trembling asked if anyone else tried to buy the he was opposite the point where the with eagerness. "I'm through with place?" liquor was hidden, he turned to the booze! Oh, I know I've said it before. jutting rock and thrust his arm into but this time I mean it. You'll see, ous to get it. We haven't heard the He withdrew the flask and thrust He meant it. He was sure of himself, jump in and pull it out of the fire. the hole. it into his pocket without looking at The chains were broken. The con- If he wants it and Brower wants it, it. He swung northward for a mile viction that he was his own man there must be more to it than we realwithout pausing. Then he stopped shone in his eyes. She thrilled with ized. I can get a job, easy, I know." abruptly snatching out the bottle, re- faith and conviction. She squeezed moved the cork with feverish haste his hands joyfully. There was a knock at the door, little good land, and that was illyand took a long drink. Te liquor was potent. He caughed Sealman, the sleek, stood in a back- cultivated. They preferred hunting and shuddered, but the effect of the ground of brilliant sunshine when and fishing and getting out posts to stimulant was immediate. A genial Patsy Jane opened it. "What's the farming for which they had neither glow coursed through his veins. He matter, Mr. Forbes-sick?" 'he asked capital nor equipment. became optimistic. He whistled light- his keen blue eyes roving as he took

life was much more open and simple, the restraints were fewer. The wild-Eddie looked at his wife. Her face erness, grim and unfriendly in storm, one to live his own life, uncaring. ment. It was, he fancied, like the early days in the west. Some of the

committally. "Well, the actual value is perhaps settlers here were failures who had a thousand dollars. It might bring come to the jackpine country to forthat if you had time to search for a get the past. They did not ask toobuyer and interest the right party. Not personal questions. Because they a cent more. And it might take a would resent such questions from year to find your man. Suppose I others. Just after noon, while he was at the advance the money to satisfy the taxes, and give you a thousand dollars besides?"

A thousand dollars- The offer was surprisingly generous. It meant that Sealman considered the place worth particularly twice what the average drenched figure that toppled to the person would pay. Well, if it was floor when Patsy Jane lifted the latch. worth more than eighteen hundred She got him undressed and to bed, dollars to Sealman, it must be worth somehow, lips compressed, eyes glowthat to them. ing with resentful inner fires. He

"I don't believe I care to sell," he night through, without moving. Real- said, Patsy Jane's eyes telegraphed

> CHAPTER X. Another Truck

Sealman showed his disappoint-

"You've admitted that there's a

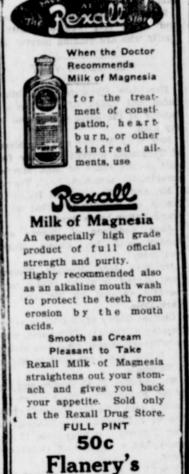
"That's a chance I mean to take," returned Eddie, smiling. He felt bet-

amount to over eight hundred dollars a dressing gown, that Patsy steeled time. "I'm not justified Mr. Forbes, and that the certificates are held by herself against the pity which kept not justified at all. In fact, I'm proba Chicago capitalist who is eager to swelling up at sight of the pale face. ably foolish for doing it. But I might obtain the property. Eddie has five She had tended his uncomplainingly, raise it to twelve hundred." "No, thank you."

Sealman rose. Displeasure was and is presented with a bottle of "Now, Eddie." she said gravely, struggling to show through the sleekwhiskey which he hides before walk- across the breakfast table, "We'll have ness of his manner. . "Fifteen huna little talk. I'm not going to say dred! That's positively the last word, much. Nagging won't do any good. Forbes.'

"No, Mr. Sealman. I think I can But we must have an understanding." She hesitated before going on; "I make it worth that by keeping it." The roving blue eyes encountered don't need to tell you what liquor

> "No, I haven't talked with another Sealman pausced at the door and



Drug Store

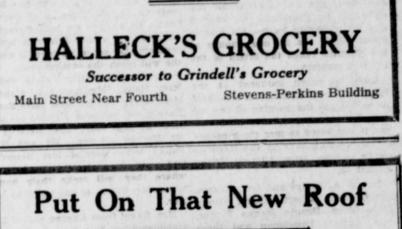
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WRIGHT & SON

ly it was more of a stupor that of approval. sleep, for the liquor had the effect on He was sick next day, sick with a

"Maybe not."

give bite and volume by the various chance you can't raise the taxes. You may lose everything."

"Hum." Sealman digested this for a

heartedly as he fell into a distance- a chair.

pine covering. He stopped occassionally to drink man." again. The exercise kept the effects Sealman considered, his hands fold- to wait even a week. He went to

past mid-afternoon, Lake Huron, cold pursed beneath his glossy beard. flowing with labor. The married men and gray, under the assualt of the "Rather a lot of money," he said, who had been in the woods all winter rain, broke in his vision. The lake meditatively. "Have you ever con- were trooping back. Their summer filled the entire horizon ahead. The sidered selling?"

road ended at a dock which thrust itself into the shallows. Fretful wave- plied Eddie. "But I don't suppose it long-established claims. lets broke upon the white sand. Pines would bring much more than the The week passed dully. He dug and of good sizs fringed the shores of the taxes-the whole thing."

"They lighter is from out there a Sealman. "That is, it isn't forth any firewood. The hard labor of sawing cove. ways," was Eddle's thought. "The more to anyone except possibly my- and chopping smothered his homesicksteamers shoot right across the lake self. I wouldn't mind owning this ness and drowned in fatigue the cravfrom the Georgian Bay country. They quarter-section. I would round out my ing for liquor which was ever near

tender mouth firm. The finality of changed my plans somewhat, Forbes.

"Why, the old hoptoad!" ejaculated he sore because we wouldn't sell, or

"I don't know, but I'm glad we did-

don't like him any better than you do,

"He meant that he's mighty anxi-Never another drop as long as I live." last of him, Pat. Well, We'll have to His optimism was not justified. Most of the settlers in the vicinity had

When he crossed the creek, however, there was a ray of hope. The

eating stride that took him due north. "A little under the weather," return- Davenant ranch, plaything of a Mile after mile was reeled off, for ed Eddie, shortly. "I was over to see wealthy Detroiter, had a resident forehe was determined to find the end of you the other day, but you were out." man. He told Eddie that the owner the road. The soil was so poor that "Yes. You have looked up the had ambitious plans for the year in there were no settlers, no human habi- taxes, I suppose. What did you find?" the way of heavy planting and much tation-nothing but the track, dipping ""Well, I have better than eight clearing. He might need several men. into the hollow and surmounting the hundred dollars to raise in five When Mr. Davenant came up in a long sandy knolls with sparce jack- months. That job you talked about week or so, and made final decision, begins to look pretty good, Mr, Seal- he had better be on hand.

Eddie felt that he could not afford

of the whiskey down. At last, long ed over his rounded stomach, his lips town. But Long Portage was overjobs were kept for them. There was no "O, yes, we've talked it some," re- chance for an outsider against the

> chopped out pine stumps, for their "It isn't worth any more," agreed roots and pitchy knots made excellent

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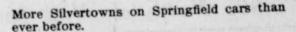
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