NATIONAL CONTRACTOR CO

By MRS. ALICE B, CARRISTON

Author of "A Waif from the Sea," "Her Brightest Hope," "Wayward Winnefred," etc.

The old man started and paled guiltily.

"I haven't said a word to her about the

"Is it possible?" exclaimed the doctor,

"Of course she has! Now that you are

"Is it something about Lucian?" ah

same out upon the plazza, and announce

At last the roll of carriage wheels up

the brilliant glare that reigned around.

we shall be together before your mar-riage. First of all, I wish to thank you

"Sacrifice! Noble sentiments!" mus

"Oh, I know that devotion has become

"Love me, love me, do you say?" fal-

"His child!" muttered the girl, in a

"Listen, Claire: if it is your will, we

riage?"
"I will tell you, Claire. Lucian wor

"Yes," came the bitter respe

ships me and is passionately attached to

tered poor Claire, like one in a dream;

"he is going to marry me-

"his child?"

in hers and said:

"Conditions-what conditions?" inquir

CHAPTER XI,-(Continued.) was ed Philip Burgess in a puzzled way." The door had opened while he was speaking, and Mrs. Burgess had entered with a radiant face, bearing several sheets of manuscript in her hands. So great was her excitement that she did not heed the presence of the doctor, and hastening to her husband, she held the in wild dismay; "she's got to know about manuscript before his eyes with trem-

"Look!" she cried; "at last I know the here, why don't you tell her yourself?"
secret which is kelling our poor Claire—
I have discovered the name of the man failed to notice that Claire had been gradshe loves! Read these pages; they were ually approaching the house, with her written by her last night." o hands filled with dewy, fragrant roses; Philip Burgess seized the proffered sheets and ran his eye over their tear blurred surface. Suddenly a name arrested his attention; he uttered an inarrested his attention; he uttered his attention and he uttered his attention and he uttered his attention; he uttered his attention and he uttered his attent

rested his attention; he uttered an ticulate cry, flung the manuscript upon the table and grasped the doctor by both ed, earnestly, "Yes," answered Gresham; "we were "Yes," answered Gresham; "we were

"Gresham!" he cried, joyfully, "J. accept! It is no longer a question of acquiring a fogune at the price of my honor, at the cost of my name, but of saving my daughter's life!"

With a desperate effort that was really pitiful to behold, the father began:

"Claire, I have something to say to Claire, beyond was a silent auditor of the cost of

Claire, herself was a silent auditor of the triumphant exclamations. *She had reached the open door and paused upon to you." the threshold, hearing her father's words. In the next moment she descried her preclous manuscript, the secret of her life, lying exposed upon the table, and with a walling cry of dismay she staggered forward and flung herself upon her mother's

"Oh, mother, mother!" she sobbed, a burning flush mounting her pallid baow, coming his wife!" "what have you done!" With one despa how content I am at the prospect of be-"What have you done?"

"Pardon me, my child," replied Mrs.
Burgess soothingly, as she caressed the drooping golden head; "but I could not "I can't, I can't tell her, for it may kill

drooping golden head; "but I could not "goe you suffer and remain in ignorance her: 'Well done, . wife!" exclaimed Philip Burgess; "had you not acted thus ed that her mistress was ready to see promptly, I should have rejected the hap piness of Claire's life—for now she will "I will go with you," whispered the

"My life-my happiness!" gasped the can tell her better; women can weep toyoung girl, raising her head and glancing in dismay at her father; "oh, father, you have not read the secret of my foolish passion!" And when he nodded to her sion of dazed bewilderment upon her fair with an assuring smile, she added, in despair: "It is a relic of our past happy life which I have not had the strength to combat against. Instead of forgetting though she was scarcely conscious of the to combat against. Instead of forgetting this man whom I met by chance in that I have been so foolish as to cherish his rison upon the horizon of that perfect

"And justly, Claire," replied the old gentleman; "are you not worthy to bear proudest name in the land?" 'Ah, but if you knew his name!" sob-

"I know it, and he will be here short-

"He-here!" gasped Claire, recoiling a few steps and standing alone.

"Yes—Jucian Courtlandt! He comes to demand your hand in marriage."

Completely overcome, Claire tottered of the courtlandt took the girl in her the courtlandt took the courtlandt

A lady and gentleman to see you!"

A moment later Lucian Courtlandt ap-a rustic seat screened by dense vines, that lent an agreeable twilight against haughty mother leaning upon his arm. The young man was pallid but com-posed, while Mrs. Courtlandt's stern features were wreathed in smiles. A few words of welcome were exchanged be-

of welcome were exchanged be-Philip Burgess and his wife and you, my dear. Lucian will be here in Courtlands Chairs meanwhile sit, an hour, and this is the last time that Mrs. Courtlandt, Claire meanwhile sitting these with drooping head, apparentunconscious of her surroundings.

Presently, however, the words of Mrs. Courtlandt penetrated her dulled hearing.
"Old friends," remarked that lady,

ed it." with affable condescension, "I have the honor of demanding the hand of your flaughter Claire for my son Lucian!" At these words, Claire struggled to in the matter has been prompted by pure-her feet and throw herself into her moth-

"Poor child!" thought Lucian Courtiandt, "how beautiful she is!"
"Miss Burgess," said Mrs. Courtlandt, ently, "are you willing to be my daugh-

Poor Ciaire murmured some inerticu-late words, and her head sank lower upon ber mother's breast. .

Then Lucian advanced and took one the pendent, snowy hands, "Claire," he murmured, "will you be

But there was no reply; joy had deprived the happy victim of all sense, and more generous in giving his child a she lay unconscious in her mother's arms.

CHAPTER XII. Two short weeks had made a startling change in the circumstances of the Bur-gess family. "The lovely residence in the neighborhood of Yonkers," which Lucian Courtlandt had telegraphed Sylphide he had gone to see during those brief bappy hours that succeeded their return woman whom I hate, as you ought to to America had now been rented for the accommodation of Claire and her parents At

brain darted with lightning-like rapidity inter was to become the home of the the thought: "Oh, heaven grant me the strength to hear her to the end!" seemed incredible that the brightfaced, happy woman, who sang joyously to herself as she brushed off the spacious Then as Mrs. Courtlandt, amazed at her sudden silence, turned and looked at plazza, could be Martin Dunn; yet it her, she started up, exclaiming hysteriwas she with every line of care and anxlety smoothed from her honest face, and cally o"Ah, yes! The woman he loves—the

a smile set if its place.

It was a balmy morning in mid Jupe, see of those rare days, when gentle sephyrs rustle the dense foliage that the verdant earth. Even Claire sæmed to inhale the abundant vigor of the scene as she stepped forth upon the his child; I promise you that he is enplazza, clad all in white, with fluttering tirely reconciled to his marriage with ribbons of a delicate violet tint, to greet the morn.

A quick, light step crunched the gravel of the path, coming from the direction of low as scarcely to be audible, "he has a the stables, and a moment later the lean, noble heart!" athletic figure of Dr. Gresham swung round the corner of the mansion and I will tell him where to find you," said mounted the steps. As he reached the plazza Philip Burgess came out, radiant of one who has executed a painful duty, and cheery as the morn itself. The two "So kiss me, my dear, and I will go in men shook hands; Burger heartily,

and say good morning to your mother. Gresham with slight constraint. "Well, aren't we as fine as fine oan when left alone sat for some minutes be?" exclaimed the former, with a glance among the swaying vines. At last the thrilling with pride upon his charming burning words rose to her lips:

"Fine, very fine indeed!" was the crisp, Fool that I was to dream that I should business-like reply; "but I have some be loved in return! Why, they have been thing of the utmost importance to say speculating upon my approaching death;

to you, and as we are alone for the mo- and if he leads me to the altar to-mor ment, no time could be more opportune row, he counts upon my lying dead be'Oh, then, you need not hesitate!" fore it ere long. This inxury—this gold to old friend by the arm and led him —are but the price of my dishonor! It the farthest corner of the wide plazza, want no more of them, and only ask to out of earshot of the windows; "now return to the misery of poverty!" then," he continued, "as to-morrow is the wedding day, I should like to know how sigh of unutterable anguish, while to her Claire has accepted the conditions?" untweding ears came the best of the

horses' hoofs that bore her expectant

then and there, despite the consequences.

She sprang to her feet full of her recoive, And when a snowflake finds a tree, of voices arrested her. Her woman's
curiosity asserted itself; she parted the
veil of vines with trembling hands and
gazed out across the sunlit lawn.

Thou are so bare and louely, dear,
I'll rest and call my comrades here."

But when a snowfisked brave and me

There she saw Lucian, the man she Lights on a cosy maiden's cheek, loved with the one absorbing passion of dt starts—"How warm and soft the day! her life, standing in all his manly besu-"Tis summer!"—and it melts away. ty, in conversation with Dr. Gresham, who was about to take his leave. The two men were shaking hands and ex-changing smiling words of congratula-

The girl's heart rose in her broast as she listened, and she clung faintly to the vines for support until their thorns en-tered her delicate flesh. The physical pain and the mental anguish roused her nce again to the exigency of the mo ment, and with precipitate steps she turned and fled in at the open door.

(To be continued.) MARRIAGE IN RUSSIA.

The Spinster Has an Unpleasant Pros

pect in that Line. As a daughter the Russian woman is under the absolute sway of her parents. The coming of age makes no am expecting a friend. He was to Westminster Review. Until the day of Glancing up at her death, if she remains unmarried, the place she occupies in the family speaking of you and your approaching life is a place of dependence upon the will of her parents. When a woman With a desperate effort that was really marries she changes the authority of parents for the no less unqualified authority of husband. As the Russian statue says, no woman can reasonably be expected to fully satlafy two such unlimited powers as that of husband and parent." The "unlimited" power of the parent, than the present." As he spoke he took she exclaimed, brightening; "anything you have to say of him I shall be only her husband substituted. She cannot aren't they? On a new-fashioned womtoo happy to hear. I can never tell you to return or get it renewed. A husa witness against his wife, but a wife Jessica, you were in tears."

is not permitted to appear against her "Yes," encouragingly. Fortunately, at this moment Martha husband. A woman's evidence is regarded also as of less weight than that of a man, "When two witnesses do not "I will go with you," whispered the old man in Gresham's ear; "her mother woman."

sian Church, marriage is a sacrament says that my prophecy has been fuland is theoretically indissoluble. There filled even sooner than I expected, Jesface. One by one the fragrant roses filis no such thing as a civil marriage sica. How long has it been? Three and divorce, except in one case, is weeks?" After a moment employed practically unobtainable by a woman. in rapid mental calculation, "Three impression, it seemed as though a tiny cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, had The exception is the deprivation of weeks! And here you are, beaming civil rights and banishment of the more beautiful than I have ever seen husband. If the wife chooses she can you, and waiting for a friend." follow her husband into exile, and Rusthe evenue beyond the lawn arrested her attention, and, raising her eyes, she deslan literature is full of pathetic sto- bent toward her, ries of women, tenderly nurtured, scried the Courtlandt livery rapidly approaching the house through the trees. braving the terrors of the long Siberian "that this is not a woman friend for Friends who have talked this affair of march. All children, however, born in whom you are so impatiently watching Her heart atood still with a dizzy throb, but when the equipage frew up exile, are regarded as belonging to the the hands of the clock with whom you lowest class of society. If, on the are to dine." and the widow Courtlandt alighted alone it was with a heart heavy with disapother hand, the wife seeks, on the plea | A laugh commenced at Jessica's eyes of her husband's banishment, divorce, and finished at her lips. the church in this case relaxes her "Hardly," she replied. discipline and grants the plea. Alto the nearest chair and sank into it, and srms, and disposed a light kiss upon her though the statute recognizes adultery the door and announce:

"A lady and continuous to see cours" she led her to a retired nock, where stood to light kiss upon her though the statute recognizes adultery and wille. "And why should it be? Why and continuous to see cours" she led her to a retired nock, where stood the law is besset with such difficulties. the law is beset with such difficulties | Must yo that it is never resorted to except by while he has all the enjoyment possithat it is never resorted to except by while he has all the enjoyment possible the wealthy, who can always make the ble? He goes where he pleases. I am was like a boy's snowball, the size of a that his own lack of scruple, in any property of the course. tardy wheels revolve more swiftly. Being seated, the lady took Claire's hand

"This is just the opportunity I have been seeking; I have wanted to talk with by a different route. Laws in Russia are made not to be broken, but to be order to observe the effect. It was evaded, and both the civil and ecclesi- rather disappointing than otherwise, astical authorities have learned the art Jessica sitting under fire, composed as for the sacrifice you have made, and of evasion to perfection. Marriages a monument and quite as calm. He by may be annulled if any informality and by continued: has occurred in them, and if parties mured Claire, in astonishment; "indeed, are willing, the rest is only a question and he were never suited, you were madam, I deserve no praise. My action of money. In some parts of the em- never intended for one another. Some pire the marriage service is enacted unkind fatewith this contingency in view. The | "Fate, you call it," repeated Jessica. certificate may be left undated, or the Then, delicately defining the differsecond nature with you," replied the lady, patting Claire's cheek; "but your self-denial cannot escape our gratitude. age of the contracting parties omitted. ence: "When at is unkind, it is fate. In some parts of Little Russia a rela- When it is kind, it is Providence. And But you shall be rewarded, my child; we tive, during the ceremony, gives the you call it fate?" will woo you back to health, and, ere bride a slap, to prove in case of seed long, you will be reconciled to Lucian. Yes, yes, I hope that some day my son will love you." "What credit is there in his giving his hand?" were the next paarlyzing favor of an adjustment of the present a year, hasn't it?" stapefied way; then suddenly seizing the widow's hand, she exclaimed violently, laws.

"I've always had it in for the man who carries his umbrella around with will unite our forces, set up our batteries him as a walking stick or just in case of rain, and usually succeeds in pokwoman whom I hate, as you ought to ing it into the face of everybody with At this revelation Claire fell back whom he comes in contact; but now the lobby of a local hotel one morning last week.

"Upon reaching this city a week ago deposited my umbrella in the checkroom of the station and went off happy in the thought that I would do no damage during the day from that source, at least. Well, instead of spending the day in Washington, as I had intended, I've been here a week, and forgot all about my parachute until this morning, when I strolled down to the station to redeem it, and myself a ticket for home. At any rate, there among other checked articles I spied my old dollar umbrella, and pointed it out to the gentle-looking little woman in attendance as I put down a 'ta-ta.' dime and corresponding brass piece.

sweetly informed me, not noticing my little dime. 'Seventy cents!' I exclaimed, in Claire submitted to the caress, and

sweetly continued. 'We charge 'ten his dog, their value is only enhanced cents for every twenty-four hours an by the fact of possession. But the article is left in storage."

"Well, there was no mistaking the statement," concluded the visitor, "so I cashed in. Anyhow, I think Washington is a great old place."-Wash- tablecioth,

Just 2,300 minutes was the time taken by an ordinary cable message in going round the world from Boston, via Vancouver and Australia.

Upon the spur of the moment she de- Whenever a snowflake leaves the sky, termined to go at once to her father, inform him that she retracted her promise, and break off the unhallowed match. Then lightly travels on its way.

but ere she could take a step the sound "Good-day!" it says, "Good-day to thee!

But when a anowflakeo brave and meek, -Mary Mapes Dodge.

An Anniversary

TESSICA was sitting at a table near a window in a fashionable restaurant, waiting.

De Narville, standing at the door, saw her. He hastened to her, holding out his hand.

"Are you here alone?" he questioned, "For the moment," she answered. "I

Glancing up at a giant gilt clock, whose bands moved with annoying slowness: "It is not quite that yet," she reflected, impatiently. De Narville smiled down upon her.

"May I sit here opposite you?" he asked, drawing out the chair, "until he

"Certainly," she replied, and he took the chair. He observed her admiringly.

"You are looking beautiful to-night, Jessica," he began. "How dainty your therefore, is withdrawn and that of hat. Old-fashiened roses they are, white is, and that touch of rose in your leave him even to visit a neighboring an. And your little fingers gittering names the time she is to stay, and at the expiration of the term she is bound to return or get it renewed. A hus.

with just enough diamonds, not too many. Just enough There are some said he, "you can look back over the distinguishes the student life of the university of Virginia, and which, Virginia, which is to stay, and at the expiration of the term she is bound to return or get it renewed. monds to the knuckles, but you, never! band may appear in a court of law as Dear me! The last time I saw you,

"Yes," encouragingly. "You and he had just separated. It was very sad. I was not surprised at your tears. One must weep a little for agree," the code runs, "the testimony any husband, worthy or unworthy. If of an adult outwelghs that of a child, is in the nature of woman. But I said and the testimony of a man that of a to myself, then, 'In a couple of weeks say to him?" or three she will be over it. She will According to the tenets of the Rus- have entirely recovered.' And I must

"It is safe to say," he whispered.

Half closing his eyes quizzically, he

"I thought not," declared De Narcertain of that. In fact, I have seen While divorce is difficult to obtain people who saw him dining here, there there are other means resorted to and everywhere, with his acquaintwhich reach the same destination, only ances, man or woman, as it suits him."

Here he paused for an interval, in

"As a matter of fact, Jessica, you

"Some unkind fate," went on De that she has married under compul- Narville stolldly, "threw you together. sion. Women who succeed in obtaining You were too much alike in the first a separation from their husbands on place. Both of intensely nervous temthe ground of informality are received peraments, excitable, high-strung, it into society, are allowed to marry was not in the nature of things that again and may even be separated you could live together longer than a again without loss of position. There year. Indeed, many predicted a sepis, however, a more healthy public aration at the end of six months, or, at spirit arising, which tends strongly in the very least, seven. But it has been

"To-night," said Jessica, softly, "is the anniversary of our wedding. De Narville laughed.

"And here you are," presently, "celebrating it by dining out with a friend! You are nothing, Jessica, if not up to date. You are more. You are unique, unusual. All your friends say that. They say you are quite right in making accommodation of Claire and her parents against the seat, while through her dazed I've nothing to say," said a guest in the thing final. You are so superior to head day against the seat, while through her dazed I've nothing to say," said a guest in the thing final. You are so superior to him in every way. You have wasted a year of your life on him." Jessics shrugged her shoulders ever

so slightly. "And what do they say of him?" she question. "This. That he has wasted a year of his life on me!" De Narville frowned.

"I don't know, I am sure, what they say to him," he affirmed, "but really he was a brute, Jessica. And why live with a brute as his wife---".
When there are se many other brutes with whom one might simply

dine," finished Jessica,

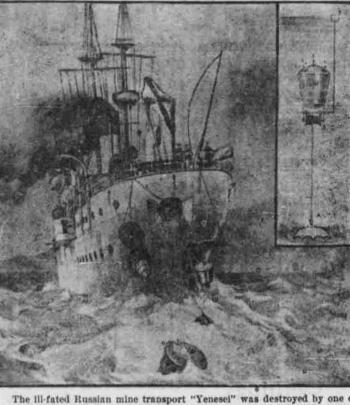
"Of course. With whom one may pass a pleasant evening, then say That is best; freedom. It is these chains that gall. It is sad, but "The charge is seventy cents," she true, I can't reason it out. Nobody can. But the fact remains. Once a woman becomes the property of a man she loses her charm. The sense of tones that suggested she was trying ownership appears to deaden his interest. He is not so with any other thing "Yes, sir: seventy cents,' she as which he appears to own. His horse,

> she is no better than a slave!" Jessica, toying with her fork, marked heiroglyphic here and therepon the

"For centuries," she ruminated, re esignedly, "we were practically slaves and sold as such. Perhaps, after all. that is what we were born to be." Again De Narville laughed.

"Now that you are out of bondage,

RUSSIAN SHIP DEPOSITING MINES.



The ill-fated Russian mine transport "Yenesei" was destroyed by one of her own mines while laying traps for Japanese warships off Dainy. The "Yenesei" had specially constructed stern ports for depositing Malinorowski mines. This ship's method of placing the mines was as follows: When the port was opened, a spar, shaped like a T girder, was made to project from it. Along the narrower part of the spar ran a sliding book to which the mine was attached and drawn out until it overhung the water. At the proper moment a cord was pulled which released the mine and let it fall into the water. The mine then moored itself automatically as follows (see small dia-When the case M, containing the charge, had sunk to a certain depth, it received some support from the float b, and thereupon the anchor A began to unwind itself from the drum D until it found its hold in the sea-floor. The mine would keep a uniform depth below the surface and would rise and fall with the tide. The moment a passing ship struck any of the studs t t the mine would explode.

mor for you. That is better than tears, ginians are apt to maintain, has per-And, sorrow is, to a certain extent, ceptibly and beneficially affected the beneficial. It sharpens the wits. Not tone of business and other affairs in that you have not always been quick- that commonwealth. Downright unwitted. On the contrary. So much scrupulousness marks the knave; a parmore so than he, it was a pity, your tial lack of scruple characterizes the friends said, to see you with him-"Yes, they said that to me," inter- as members of boards, as merchants rupted Jessica. "But what did they as taxpayers, as politicians, as voters,

She answered her own question. "The self-same thing, turned round the other way."

bright light of the glowing electrics. "Freedom becomes you, Jessica," he declared. "I am almost ready to fall in love with you myself to-night." "Almost," repeated Jessica, ruefully.

"Quite," asserted De Narville, "You look content, joyous, radiant. I wish other friends of yours, who have seen you in tears, could gaze upon you now. yours over and over-Jessica nodded assentingly.

"Yes," said she, "my friends have lost little time. They, have been nothing if not industrious." "It was you who started the ball roll-

ing," replied De Narville, with a touch of reproach, "who tendered us our first "Tene but it was such a little ball to

start with, and when it came back, it man! We didn't know it for ours." Her expectant eyes rested on the face of the clock. Apparently she had forgotten the existence of De Narville. "It is 8," she murmured, "and time for him to come."

They turned from the clock to the A light gleamed on them suddenly. The friend for whom she waited stood there. He advanced, and De Narville, ris-

ing, yacated his place at the table opposite Jessica. "Mr. De Narville," said Jessica, "my husband."

Then: "We are celebrating the anniversary of our wedding day together," she explained with a smile.-Zoe Anderson Norris, in the Valley Magazine.

WANTED, CONSCIENTIOUSNESS. Leaven Needed in Relations and Amer-

gencies of American Life. It is natural, wholesome, saving con scientiousness, applied to all the rela; tions and emergencies of private and public life, that is so sadly wanting in many American communities—a conscientnousness which results in something like that system of honor which | master in his own house.

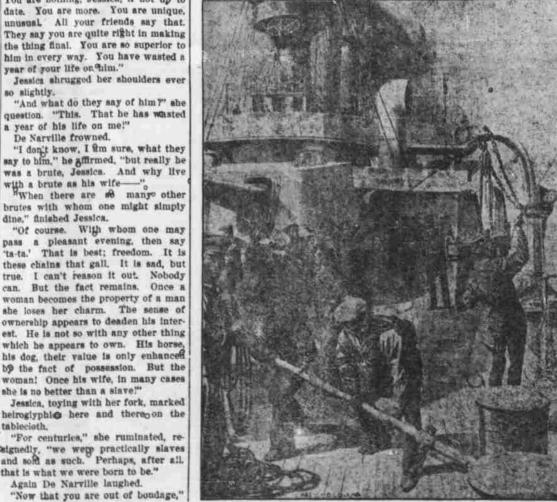
-" large numbers of respectable men who wink at evil practices in others, tim tdly avoid all opposition to official wrong, and themselves commit slight and not too conspicuous irregularities, De Narville looked hard at her in the or give support for selfish reasons to venal candidates for office. Such "re spectables" are the despair of the pat riotic men who, in our day and in a stay the tide of that political corrup- BON TON BARBER SHOP tion which, according to so good a friend of America as John Morley "for the moment obscures the great

> democratic experiment." It comes to this, that "the period of corruption" which friends of Americans abroad are called upon so often M. E. WELCH, to apologize for-a corruption which while bad enough, is not so deeply rooted as our enemies believe-can be backed by moral bravery, upon the part of individuals in the republic. It THE NEW FEED STORE, not fantastic to aver that a gift o to be virtuous. If a citizen should feel that his own lack of scruple, in any groceries, Hay, Grain and Feed at lowest direction, was a contribution to the corruption and dishonor of his country and that his personal withstanding o temptation to do wrong was not only FUREKA MEAT MARKET, an act of private virtue, but had patrietic uses as well-if he were con vinced for instance, that his refusal to vote as a truste for a contribution to a bribery fund of to a dishonest boss was a means of doing away with a national disgrace-if he had the imagination to grasp the large bearings of his individual action, it would be easier for him to take a stand for righteousness instead of weakly acquiescing in some customary wrong. Aristotle's idea of the state was association "in a life of felicity and noblenesa;" but Christianity ought not to have to look to paganism for ideals of good citizenship and the making of a righteous people.-Century.

Where a man gets up at a revival and asks all the women present to pray for him, they feel fant at last their merit and worth are meeting recognition.

There is always some one around to smile when a man boasts that he is

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