

An Impossible Story

By BESS PLAIN

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—And the foggy wind blew the spray of the waves about these two as they stood together on the rocky shore. Suddenly she turned to him and grasped his hand in hers, small, cold and damp with the breath of the sea.

"Do you remember," she said, "it was here, years ago, when we were, oh, so young, you—you once said you loved me?"

"Yes," he answered with quiet tenderness, "I remember."

"Tell me," she said quickly, "tell me! Do you still? I want you to—oh, how I want you to?"

"Dearest, dearest of all, you know I do."

"Then kiss me," she whispered.

He bent his head to hers, and their souls seemed to meet, trembling, upon their lips.

The waves beat their rhythmic thunder upon the rugged shore, spraying high over the rocks, as though attempting to liberate themselves from the eternal bondage of the sea, and dash into the mists, free as the air that whirled about the two indistinct figures.

The End—

As the sound of his voice ceased he closed the book softly, and there was a moment of silence. She stood up languidly and gazed wistfully out over the black sea.

"Not a bad story, I'll say," he ventured. "In fact, I rather liked it. Especially good for a week-end swimming party, when it's too cold to swim and everybody sticks indoors."

"Everybody?" she questioned archly. "Thanks!"

"Well everybody except a girl you've known so long that she'd be insulted if you tried any romance."

"So you take her out on the veranda in the fog and read an impossible story to her?"

"Impossible story! I think it's a mighty good one; true to life, and real."

"That's where you're wrong. It isn't true to life or natural at all," flashing a look of literary superiority at him. "Of course I like the way you read and all that; but I do hate these booky-books, with the things that never happen except in some starving author's brain. Imagine a woman asking a man if he still cared for her," she continued, scornfully. "I'd never ask a man that—not if I was dying to know. And then, on top of that, without waiting for an answer, she not only admits she wants him to, but practically begs him to. Pooh! It's too ridiculous!" she finished with unexpected heat, and, stepping from the veranda, started to walk toward the leaping breakers.

A look of mild surprise came over his face. But as he watched her slender figure retreating through the gray fog a deep tenderness filled his eyes, unhidden now that she was not there to see. He thought for a moment reminiscently, and then grim determination, like an habitual mask, lined his features as he made a slight, unconscious gesture, as though casting away something futile.

Coming to himself, he tossed the book to the wicker taboret, and strode after. In a few steps he was up to her, and linked his arm in hers in a familiar way. She made no sign, but continued slowly along the shore.

The mist, billowing in from the remote mystery of the ocean, soon hid the house they had just left and isolated them from the conventionalizing touch of its presence, the touch that builds up walls and barriers and keeps people from one another. The trees, farther in from the shore, rose in dark outline, and moved in the wind like vaguely gestulating phantoms, arousing a sensation of strangeness and distance from the present, like blurred figures surging out of the past.

"I don't suppose they'll worry about our being unchaperoned," he jested.

"No one ever worries about chaperoning us," she answered, with perhaps the faintest hint of irritation.

"They all know I'm platonic and harmless."

"Do they? That's why Mrs. Hostess appeared on the veranda last night with some totally superfluous refreshment when you were sitting out a dance with that new girl."

"Oh, you mean the wonderful brunette, with the lovely—"

"You needn't describe her," she cut in quickly. "I remember how she looks. No one could help noticing how you singled her out. The refreshment was probably to prevent a premature proposal—or something of the sort. You danced six dances with her."

"Was it really six?" he asked innocently.

"Six."

"And the only other one I danced, was with you."

"That was self-sacrificing."

"More so than you think."

"Please elucidate."

"What's the use—Oh, well! It's just this. I never danced with anyone else after having danced with you; I make you my last partner. When I have one with you, I want more—but I don't ask; so my evening is through."

Her eyes admitted her surprise at this. Her cheeks flushed, a little passing wave of rose, as though his had made her heart beat sud-

denly faster. But only for a moment. Then she asked with apparently indifferent interest:

"Why don't you ask me for another?"

"I don't want to pester you, especially when your tall, young blond friend, who dances so divinely, is around."

"Oh, I hate him!"

"What?"

"I said I hate him."

"That's queer," he said in surprise. "Then why favor him so often during the evening?"

"Sometimes, you know, when you can't have what you want most, you take what you want least, just out of self-spite."

This somewhat puzzling answer passed unchallenged. His mind had gone quickly to something else. Suddenly he spoke with apparent irrelevance, on dangerous ground.

"You know, you once called me—an idiot. It's pretty easy to see that you still feel that way; that's why everybody knows we'd be safe at the end of the world without any intrusive matrons around to offer refreshment at the proper moment."

She seemed to wince a little at that. At least, he felt her arm tighten on his; but the way was becoming rougher, and he noticed how difficult it was for her to walk over the sharp, uneven stones in her delicate pumps. Here and there, her graceful, fragile ankle would bend as her foot slipped, and he felt that she needed more aid. He knew he should put his arm around her—he wanted to do so intensely, yet he had made up his mind. Should he do it, with her entrancing presence close to him, her lovely head against his shoulder, he knew he would fall in what he had once promised himself. Pride had helped him keep that promise for a long time, and he would not tempt failure now.

They were far out on the rocky point; the wild waters leaped about them on both sides of the narrow land; waves coming in from the mid-ocean shattered themselves at their feet in an instant. Everything seemed big and elemental; sea, rocks, and gray mists.

He wanted to tell her things; things that were with him day and night. He wanted to crush her frail little figure against him, and lift her up over these sharp stones. Pride, after all, was out of place here; a puny thing.

But she had once called him an idiot when he was telling her these things, long ago, and she had laughed. She still thought so, no doubt. He would never let her laugh again.

He looked at her and saw that she had been watching him. He thought he caught a strange, far-away gleam in her eyes. But she looked down instantly.

And then they saw that they were standing where they had stood years before, in the rocks at the farthest point, with the sea all about; once before, when the sun had leaped from crest to crest, and the view had terminated only with the horizon. One could afford to have laughed then. Now they were shut in by the heavy, gray world; alone, terribly alone.

With a grim laugh, he said, "Well, I might start being romantic now, if you wouldn't be insulted. I could say the regular thing. I'm just crazy about your ways; your eyes have so much soul, and there's such a thrill in your voice for me. May I caress your hair, it's so—"

Not until then he saw, quite started, how deeply he was hurting her.

"Don't; please, please don't," she said in a low, strangely suppressed tone.

And the foggy wind blew the spray of the waves about these two as they stood together on the rocky shore. Suddenly she turned to him and grasped his hand in hers, small, cold, and damp with the breath of the sea.

"Do you remember," she said, "it was here, years ago, when we were, oh! so young, you—you once said you loved me?"

"Yes," he answered with quiet tenderness. "I remember."

She pressed closer to him, and turned her face up to his.

"Tell me," she said quickly, "tell me! Do you still? I want you to—oh! how I want you to!"

"Dearest, dearest of all, you know I do."

"Then, kiss me," she whispered.

He bent his head to hers, and their souls seemed to meet, trembling, upon their lips.

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Interesting Engineering Work.

Some interesting engineering work was performed in Indianapolis in the rebuilding of the union station, where it was necessary to raise the tracks and erect a new station while maintaining 165 passenger trains per day, 70 of which were through trains, with some 60 freight trains. Fortunately the station was to be widened on the south side, which made it possible to build two new track sections on the elevated grade, and after these tracks were built they were put in service while two of the old tracks were elevated to the new grade.

Could Not Resist.

Irate Profiteer—What do you mean, sir, by forcing two pennies at once in my chewing gum machine?

Customer—Pardon me. You see I've been so used lately to paying double for everything I buy that it has become force of habit.—Judge.

KILLS TREE PESTS

Doctor Woodpecker Is Nature's Chief Wood Surgeon.

In Everlasting Conflict With Millions of Dangerous Enemies That Would Destroy the Life of the Sturdy Forest Monarchs.

If half a thousand disease germs should suddenly begin eating into the life tissues of your body, you would surely need a doctor, writes F. E. Brimmer in the Farm Journal. Yet more than 500 species of insects prey upon the oak tree, and still we wonder at its strength and vigor. So much, indeed, that "sturdy as an oak" has become an advertising slogan.

The sturdy oak owes much of its long life to Doctor Woodpecker, nature's skilled wood surgeon. One borer would kill a tree single-handed if left at his deadly work long enough; so will a few beetles. A single mother beetle will produce nearly 500,000 young destroyers in a summer of uninterrupted activity. Weevil only stunt the growth of the tree and leave it full of holes, an easy victim to other destroyers. Saw flies, caterpillars, ants and moths are among the hosts of tree pests that damage the outer part of the trees. Against all these the tree is defenseless, except for the busy surgeon. A hungry bird of any other kind cannot help the tree, for the pests are hidden beneath the bark or far under the surface.

Just as plagues and epidemics wiped out whole villages of people in the middle ages, so if left to their enemies it would be only a few decades before all forests would be murdered—nothing but dead, grub-bored stubs and fallen trunks left. To prevent this terrible condition nature sends a physician regularly to each patient. Sometimes Doctor Woodpecker has been known to spend as many as three days operating on one very bad case, constantly using to advantage his tree-surgery tools. Generally his incision is only as deep as the thickness of the bark. Often he slides his spearbill between seams or crevices and draws out the worm, leaving no mark or scar on the bark to show where he did it. At other times his cuttings may be deep galleries tunnels or caverns.

A great deal of the drumming that we hear is only for sounding purposes—much like a man taps the wall with a hammer to find a studding. When Doctor Woodpecker has discovered a diseased part he directs a rapid fire of rattling beats upon the spot with his pickax bill, raining his hammer-like blows with automatic and astonishing precision, until his prey is brought to light. Then he thrusts in his barbed bill and, with a sudden backward jerk, brings forth the deadly grub.

Early Aviation Flight.

One may be reasonably surprised that interest in aviation has not sooner revived, as a curiosity of the past, the legend of Alexander the Great and his youthful ascent in a small car drawn by gryphons. The legend was widely current in the middle ages, and many who heard it doubtless believed that Alexander's "gryphane," as a modern headline writer cheerfully calls it, had attained an altitude which would make the record ascension of modern aviation seem like a childish experiment. Gryphons, as those who know their "Alice in Wonderland" will remember, "were odd birds, and Alexander, an adventurous boy of twelve, was said to have harnessed two of them to a basket of rushes and been carried to a height of 917,654 feet, returning to meet a protesting parent, who asked him "how long he expected to keep up his infantile tricks."—Christian Science Monitor.

Signing Treaties.

Signatures on treaties have become easy to arrange now that the system of alphabetical order is followed, but formerly the fight for precedence was a cause of grievous difficulty. The order in which names appeared on treaties used to be determined by the status of the realm concerned. But this device involved such interminable disputes that other systems were suggested, and as long ago as 1718, at the signature of the quadruple alliance, each Power signed first the copy which was to remain in its possession. At Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748, the contracting parties each signed one copy for each of the others. Finally the present plan of alphabetical order (according to the French alphabet) was adopted.

Steel Pipe Industry.

Very few persons realize the varied applications of the prosaic steel or iron pipe. It has been used for many years as a conduit for water, sewage, steam or gas, but at the present time pipe enters into the construction of such varied products as agricultural implements, automobiles, architectural ironwork and grill work, building columns, refrigerating machinery, dry-kiln apparatus, elevator cars, wheelbarrows, work benches, ornamental gates, elevator grain spouts, safety ladders, warship masts, lighting and high-tension poles, electric wiring railway signal apparatus, sprinkler systems and signal towers.

As the variety of uses for tubular products increased and the cost of making steel diminished, there has been a change also in material. Fifty years ago nearly all the screw-joint pipe was made of wrought iron.

MAKE THEIR WORK DRUDGERY

Colonel Roosevelt Had Little Sympathy for Those Who Find No Enjoyment in Their Occupation.

One day Colonel Roosevelt told me what a good time he was having working with all of us (in the office of the Metropolitan Magazine), writes Sonya Levien in the Woman's Home Companion. He told me that he felt radicals laid too much stress upon the drudgery of the day laborer's work. That the details of most kinds of work—the director's, the artist's, the writer's—were drudgery. That very often it was a spiritual sluggishness and a consequent failure to discover the human aspects of one's job.

Urged on by an old belief that Colonel Roosevelt's viewpoint on economics was not sufficiently radical, I grew warm about the vast throngs of people who drag themselves every morning at 7 to the factories, work at some trifling job for eight, ten hours, day in, day out, year after year, without respite, without hope of ultimate release except through death. The unpleasant memory of my own similar beginning keeps ever alive for me the sordidness of such an existence. My deep resentment against an industrial order that extorts so unscrupulous a toll from its masses did not meet with the sympathy I had expected.

I suddenly found myself driven to an issue by that implacable will of his which gave no quarter to any socialistic problem that did not lend itself to practical solution. He had a sane and temperate appreciation of the workingman's difficulties, but my sensibilities about their sordid existence did not touch his sympathy.

I agreed that the toiler in most cases has received less than his due and must be more protected and more respected for his share in the world work, that he must get shorter hours and more healthful conditions to labor and live in, opportunity to better himself and enjoy his leisure, but he felt that ultimately any man's success or failure depended upon the man's own character.

"There is enjoyment in every kind of work that has usefulness, but there are people that enjoy nothing, that have not the capacity for fun and contentment—no matter in what status of life they happen to be."

Milestones.

One of the many curious effects of the war was the way it put news into cold storage. Almost every day that passes, in England as elsewhere, some story or other is gaining publicity, and is being eagerly read and discussed, which, if peace had reigned instead of war during the past five years, would have, long since, been forgotten in the back files of the newspapers. Thus Major Hesketh-Pritchard, one-time famous as a cricketer, and now famous as a soldier, has been pouring out news as to the many ingenious devices resorted to at the front in establishing an observation post. This is for instance the case of the milestone. It stood on the summit of a little ridge at the cross roads, between the two front line trenches. The French photographed the milestone, had a facsimile made of it in thin steel with a gauze-covered observation hole, and successfully changed the real thing for the dummy by night; in this way gaining a perfect observation post in the center of no-man's land. Thus some milestones even have greatness thrust upon them.

Rowboats Carried in One Hand.

Many a vacationist during a summer in the north woods has watched his brawny guide balance the canoe upon his shoulders and carry it thus over a trail of several miles. For the sportsman intent on only a few days' pleasure, however, such a feat is distasteful when not impossible. For his benefit have now been built two small boats that he can carry 12 hours a day without exhaustion, says Popular Mechanics Magazine in an illustrated article. One is the invention of an Englishman. It weighs but 15 pounds and collapses to the size of a small handbag, yet its canvas bottom easily holds a heavy occupant. Each of the four sides is formed of an air-tight bag which is inflated by a hand pump. The second featherweight boat is more complex in construction but easier to paddle. When collapsed it fits into a wooden box, about the size of the case that is used to hold the popular croquet mallets.

City's Heat and Warm Water.

An engineering account of a new system for supplying heat and warm water to public buildings of Berlin states that the distribution area is to have a radius of a mile and a half, and to include some tenement houses. The warm water is to be derived from the exhaust steam of the Berlin electricity works and from some coke-heated boilers. It is to start on its way superheated to 120 degrees C., and it will pass through pipes laid in concrete conduits along the streets, with sections welded together and provided with stuffing boxes and sliding bearings.

The Harpist's Fingers.

Two hundred members of the Professional Musicians' association of New South Wales—a fifth of the total membership—served at the front in the great war. Returned men tell with much relish the story of a distinguished harpist who in peace times devoted a great deal of time daily to the care and preparation of his fingers. "The last time we heard about him he was mixing cement in a tunnel in France," was the report which they gave at a welcome home in Sydney.

MADE FAST FRIEND

How Dr. Lyman Beecher Won Over Bitter Enemy.

Personal Contact Converted Old Neighbor, Who Had Been Violently Opposed to Him, into One of His Enthusiastic Admirers.

The surprising effect personal contact sometimes has in our estimation of persons against whom we had previously maintained a prejudice is well illustrated in the following humorous story of Lyman Beecher, the preacher.

"While Mr. Beecher was settled in Boston he had as a neighbor an old wood Sawyer, a rough, shrewd man, the member of a rival sect, who, although he had never seen the doctor, was violently bitter against him. Mr. Beecher himself had formed a habit of sawing a great deal of wood as an exercise for maintaining his health. He was as fastidious in the care of his saw as a musician in the care of his Cremona. No moments were happier with the famous clergyman than those spent in the careful filing of its teeth.

"Looking out of his study window one day, when his own woodpile was reduced to a discouraging state of order, Mr. Beecher saw with envy the pile of the before-mentioned neighbor. Forthwith he seized his saw and soon the Sawyer of the street opposite became a man without cravat and in his shirt sleeves issuing from Brother Beecher's house, who came briskly up and asked if he wanted a hand at the pile. The doctor felt to work and soon proved to his brother Sawyer that he was no mean hand at the craft.

"Nodding his head significantly at the opposite house, the old Sawyer said: 'You live there?'

"B—Yes.

"S—Work for the old man?

"B—Yes.

"S—What sort of an old fellow is he?

"B—Oh, pretty much like the rest of us. Good man enough to work for.

"S—Tough old chap, ain't he?

"B—Guess so, to them that try to chew him up.

"S—First rate saw, that of your'n?

"S—This touched the doctor in a tender point. He had set that saw as carefully as the articles of his creed; every tooth was critically adjusted, and so he gave a smile of triumph.

"I say," said the old Sawyer, 'where can I get a saw like that?'

"B—I don't know unless you buy mine.

"S—Will you trade? What do you ask?

"B—I don't know; I'll think about it. Call at the house tomorrow and I'll tell you.

"The next day the old man knocked and met the doctor at the door, fresh from the hands of his wife, with his coat brushed and cravat tied, going out to pastoral duty. The Sawyer gave a start of surprise.

"Oh," said the doctor, 'you're the man that wanted to buy my saw. Well, you shall have it for nothing; only let me have some of your wood to saw when you work on my street.'

"Be hanged," said the old Sawyer, when he afterward told the story, 'if I didn't want to crawl into an auger hole when I found it was old Beecher himself I had been talking with so frank the day before.'

"It need scarcely be said that from that time the Sawyer was one of the doctor's staunchest and most enthusiastic advocates; not a word would he hear against him. He affirmed that 'Old Beecher is a right glorious old fellow, and the only man in these parts that can saw wood faster than I can.'

Why Frieda Stayed.

"I've changed my mind; I'm not going to quit," announced the cook to the mistress of a Sheridan road household the other day. Mrs. Sheridan Road tried to hide her elation. No maid would leave such a well ordered home, she chuckled.

"Why, Frieda?" she asked.

"Well, ma'am, you see I just bought a new suit. At that swell tailor's on Michigan street. Fur trimmings, and latest Paris style, too. It cost me \$165—so I guess I'll stay a few weeks more to pay for the suit."

The mistress of the household choked. Why, she couldn't afford such a suit herself! Anyway, she was glad the cook stayed. And it would be such a delicious story to tell at the Thursday bridge. Gracious, the airs of servants nowadays.—Chicago News.

Decorated Gloves.

We are told that decorated gloves are to be one of the extravagances of the coming season, and that turns the thoughts very far back to when gloves were a most elaborate and important part of a costume. Queen Elizabeth, that lover of fine raiment, had several wonderful pairs embroidered in gold and even precious stones, while hawking gloves were miniature works of art. The sterner times of Cromwell banished such frivolities, but introduced the leather fringed gauntlet, which had a revival last winter. The dainty dames of the Georgian period had embroidery on their gloves and carrying the idea yet further, had those coquetish lace mittens which lasted well into Victorian times.

Quick Cure.

"How did you break your son of trying to be a poet?"

"Refused to supply him with postage stamps."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

LED IN "ART PRESERVATIVE"

Conclusive Proof That the Koreans Were the First to Perceive Value of Movable Type.

Fifty pieces of movable type bearing the Chinese characters, being part of the first font of movable type ever made, were shown in the last week in the Museum of Natural History, in New York. England has the other half of the font, which was cast in Seoul, Korea, in 1403, some years before the discoveries of Forster, Gutenberg and the other early typemakers in Europe. It seems, thus, that to the Koreans belongs the distinction of having invented and first produced separate type characters in metal.

Each type is cylindrically concave on the under side, in order to make it cling more firmly to the bed of beeswax which constituted the "form." When the type had been firmly and evenly embedded in the wax the printer, sitting cross-legged before the form, covered the type with ink applied with a soft brush. The paper was laid lightly on the form and a piece of felt was brushed gently over the paper with one hand, after which the other removed the printed page. It was possible to strike off as many as 1,500 impressions a day in this way.

Through aside as useless, the font lay as rubbish on the floor of the government printing office at Seoul during the Japanese invasion of 1902-07, and so lay unnoticed and escaped being carried off into Japan. Later, however, the types were collected and the font again made up and used for printing.

Although this font was the first to be made of movable metal type, various methods of printing had already been in vogue for centuries. Dr. Bernhard Laufer, anthropologist and orientalist, has recently drawn up an excellent reference summary of the important dates in the history of printing. As early as 175 A. D. texts of the Chinese classics were engraved on stone tablets, and impressions were taken on paper by rubbing. In 593 classical books were printed by means of wooden blocks, block-printing on a smaller scale having already been practiced. In 764 Japan adopted block-printing, and in the tenth century there were discovered in Fayoum, Egypt, block-printed books in Arabic.

To Explore Earth's Interior.

Our knowledge of the earth from actual contact is confined to a thin layer of only a few hundred feet, and what exists deeper down is a subject for speculation. The idea of exploring further by a bore-hole some ten times as deep as any yet attempted was again brought up in the late presidential address of Hon. Sir Charles A. Parsons to the British association. He proposed in 1904 the sinking of such a shaft to a depth of 12 miles, and estimated that it would require eighty-five years of time and cost \$25,000,000—an outlay about equal to that for one first-class battleship. Since then Prof. F. D. Adams has concluded that a depth of 15 miles could be reached in limestone before the rock would give trouble by being crushed, and in granite about 30 miles could be reached. Such a shaft might throw much light on the earth's internal constitution—especially as related to very heavy minerals. In Italy, bore-holes sunk to moderate depths in a volcanic district discharge great volumes of high pressure steam, and this is being utilized to generate about 10,000 horsepower by turbines.

Differing Types of Marble.

In its tests of 52 different types of marbles, the United States bureau of standards has found the compressive strength of the dry material to range between 7,850 and 50,250 pounds per square inch. Wet specimens were usually somewhat weaker, and in a few instances loss of strength from soaking was as great as 25 per cent. As the specimens were much weakened, although some were little affected, while a few were actually strengthened, the electrical resistance varies so greatly that care is necessary in selecting material for switchboards. Marbles expand irregularly on heating, and part of the increase is permanent.

Belated Profitier.

In Montana there is an old Indian brave who appears each year with quantities of a certain luscious berry which grows wild in great profusion, and which is highly esteemed by thrifty housewives for jamming. For many years his price has been five cents per quart. This season the same Indian came with the same berries which had been growing wild in the same profusion, but he calmly announced his price as 25 cents a quart. Asked why the increase, he shrugged his shoulders and said: "Heap big war, some place." Then he added: "I just hear about um," as though to apologize for not having increased his price sooner.

"So-and-So and Daughter."

It is a welcome sight to see the words "and daughter" as the suffix to the name over a shop, says the London News. It is a sign of the times women's interest in business and the recognition as responsible helpmates. In the west end there is more than one emporium of feminine attire under the ownership of So-and-So and Daughter—or daughters—and I know of another which belongs officially to father and daughter; but I have never yet come across a shop under the joint ownership of husband and wife, yet we know of countless small businesses in which the wife of the owner does a goodly share of the work.

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electrical
resistance
varies so
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is necessary
in selecting
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for switchboards.
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on heating,
and part
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increase
is permanent.
Belated
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berry which
grows wild
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profusion,
and which
is highly
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by thrifty
housewives
for jamming.
For many
years his
price has
been five
cents per
quart. This
season the
same
Indian
came with
the same
berries
which had
been
growing
wild in the
same
profusion,
but he
calmly
announced
his price
as 25 cents
a quart.
Asked
why the
increase,
he shrugged
his
shoulders
and said:
"Heap
big war,
some
place." Then
he added:
"I just
hear about
um," as
though
to
apologize
for not
having
increased
his price
sooner.
"So-and-So
and Daughter."
It is a
welcome
sight to
see the
words
"and
daughter"
as the
suffix to
the name
over a
shop, says
the London
News. It
is a sign
of the
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In the
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daughters—
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