

NO MAN'S LAND A ROMANCE

By LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE
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SYNOPSIS.

Garrett Coast, a young man of New York City, meets Douglas Blackstock, who invites him to a card party. He accepts, although he dislikes Blackstock, the reason being that both are in love with Katherine Thaxter. Coast fails to convince her that Blackstock is unworthy of her friendship. At the party Coast meets two men, Dundas and Van Tuyl.

CHAPTER II.—(Continued.)

Blackstock interposed hastily "That fourth-best spade of yours certainly did lead him up to slaughter." He reached over and took up the deck at Trux's elbow, spreading the cards with a dextrous sweep of his strong, blunt fingers. "New game. Cut, you fellows."

"The invitation tempts; but there are some skins too thick . . ." Van Tuyl pursued.

Trux pushed back his chair, nodding cheerfully to Coast. But for a heightened tint of color he showed no trace of being aware of Van Tuyl's insolence. "Cut in, Garrett; it's your turn. . . Unless," he added, "you-all want to quit. It's pretty late. I think I'll drop, for one."

"Drop," said Van Tuyl sweetly, "and be damned."

"What do you mean by that?" Trux, on his feet, turned upon his tormentor with an imperceptible tremor in his voice.

Prudence is the better part of bridge," Van Tuyl explained carefully. "He's a prudent man who becomes conscious of chilled extremities when ahead of the game."

Crimson with resentment, Trux hesitated, the retort on the tip of his tongue only withheld because of Coast's appealing and sympathetic look. Then with a lift of his plump shoulders he turned away, nodding to his host, Dundas and Coast.

"Good-night," he said brusquely, and so betrayed the effort his self-control cost him. "You-all can send your checks if I am anything ahead."

"We'll try not to forget, thanks." A satiric smile on Van Tuyl's thin lips winged the Partisan dart.

Trux did not reply, but left the room abruptly, Blackstock accompanying him to the door. In his absence Coast cut in as Van Tuyl's partner and took the chair Trux had just vacated.

"Deal?" he inquired.

"Yours," Dundas told him.

"And," Van Tuyl interjected as Coast took up the cards, "let us trust you've more bridge sense than that professional dummy." He nodded to indicate the departing Trux. "I carefully told him, early in the evening, that when I doubled I wanted not his highest hand, but the highest card of his weakest suit. Do you think you can remember that?"

"Yes," said Coast shortly, annoyed by the other's offensive manner.

"I sincerely trust so. I didn't come here to be rooked by everybody, by incompetent partners included."

Coast quietly put down the cards without completing the deal. "Aren't you spraining something in your attempts to be insolent, Van?" he inquired as Blackstock reappeared. "It happens I've been your partner this evening more frequently than anybody else."

"Precisely."

"And you think yourself justified in suggesting that I've played against you?"

Van Tuyl's dark eyes met his steadily in a sardonic stare. "I'm the heaviest loser here," he said. "You've played like a raw amateur every time you've played with me. Interpret that to your liking."

"I shall," Coast got up, white to the lips. "It spells good-night to me." Blackstock struck in with a heavy note of insincere suavity. "Oh, come now! It's early yet. Van doesn't know what he's saying."

Blackstock—the contents of Van Tuyl's glass.

Half-blinded and choking, he stepped back, groping for his handkerchief. The alcohol burned his eyes like liquid fire, and the fumes of it in his throat and nostrils almost strangled him for a moment, preventing his clear understanding of what was taking place. Dimly he heard Van Tuyl raving in his curiously clear and incisive accents, heard him stigmatize Blackstock, heard him and blackguard. More vaguely he heard his name Katherine Thaxter—in what connection he did not know. On the heels of that something barked hideously; Dundas screamed like a rat; Van Tuyl said: "Oh, God!" thickly.

Dazed with horror, Coast managed to clear his vision.

Blackstock had moved to the other side of the room, where he stood at a small table, the drawer of which he had evidently jerked open the instant before he fired. His feet were well apart and he leaned a little forward, his large head lowered upon his heavy neck. His lips were compressed to the loss of their sensual fullness; his eyes blazed beneath knotted, intent brows. One hand was clenched by his side; the other held an automatic pistol from whose muzzle a faint vapor lifted in the still air.

In a corner little Dundas was huddled with a face of parchment, mouth gaping, eyes astare.

Both men were watching Van Tuyl. Coast saw the tall, graceful figure sway like a pendulum gathering momentum.

An expression of strained surprise clouded the man's face. He lurched a step forward and caught himself with a hand on the card-table, and so held steady for an instant while his blank gaze, falling, comprehended the neat black puncture with its widening stain upon the bosom of his shirt.

"God . . ." he said again in a voice of pitiful inquiry.

Then he fell, dragging the table over with him.

On the sound of that, Blackstock moved for the first time. He drew himself up, relaxed, and dropped the weapon upon the table beside him. His glance encountered Coast's, wavered and turned away. He moistened his lips nervously.

Coast, with a little cry, dropped to his knees beside Van Tuyl. Already the man's eyes were glazing, the movements of the hand that tore at his breast were becoming feebly convulsive. While Coast watched he shuddered and died.

"Well!" Blackstock's voice boomed in his ears as the man's hand gripped his shoulder. Coast shook off the grasp and rose.

"You've done for him," he said, wondering at the steadiness of his own voice.

Blackstock shook his head, blinking like a man waking from evil dreams.

"Why . . ." he said huskily. He turned away as if to lose sight of the figure huddled at his feet.

Dundas in his corner whimpered. Blackstock swung to him with an oath. "Shut up, damn you! D'you want—?" He clicked his strong white teeth, jumping as the bell of the house telephone interrupted. Then he went heavily to the instrument in the short hallway that led to the entrance to the apartment. Coast heard him jerk down the receiver.

"Well?" he demanded savagely.

"Yes. An accident."

"One of my guests. Yes, badly. You'd better call up police headquarters and tell them to send an ambulance."

"And don't let anybody up here until they come. Understand?"

He hung up the receiver with a bang and tramped back into the dining-room. "That damn halibut!"

They heard the ratchet in the flat below and called him up.

I have made a pretty mess of things!" He went to the buffet, carefully avoiding the body, and poured himself a stiff drink, which he swallowed at a gulp.

to the other end of the room and threw himself, a dead weight, into a chair, facing the wall. In the silence that followed Coast could hear his deep and regular respirations, unburied, unchecked. After a moment, however, he swung round, dug his elbows into his knees and buried his face in his hands.

"Good God!" he said. "Why did I do that?"

Dundas coughed nervously and moved toward the door. Blackstock looked up with the face of a thundercloud.

"Where are you going?" Dundas stammered an incoherent excuse.

"Well, you stop where you are. Get back to that window-seat—and try to keep your miserable teeth still, can't you? D'you think I'm going to let you desert me now, after all I've done for you, you ungrateful rat?"

Without a protest Dundas sidled fearfully between him and what had been Van Tuyl, and returned to the window-seat. Blackstock's gloowering gaze fell upon Coast. A sour grimace twisted his mouth.

"You're not a bad fellow, Coast," he said—"to stick by me. . . ."

Exerting himself, Coast tried to master his aversion and contempt for the man as well as his blind horror of the crime.

"What are you going to do?" "Do?" Blackstock jumped up and began to pace to and fro. "What the hell can I do but give myself up?"

"You mean that?"

The question was involuntarily on Coast's part, wrung from him by surprise, so difficult he found it to credit the man's sincerity.

"Of course," Blackstock explained, simply; "it's too late now to make a get-away. . . . If it hadn't been for that racket . . . They'd cop me before I could get out of town." He paused, questioning Coast with his intent stare. "You wouldn't let me off, would you? You'd tell the police, of course?"

"Of course."

What Is It to Be a Christian?

By Dr. H. T. MUSSELLMAN, of Philadelphia

TEXT—How often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him?—Matt. XVIII, 21.

What is it to be a Christian? It is to possess the spirit of Jesus. Jesus was greater than the things he did. Every Christian must be greater than the things he does. I am a Christian in so far as I possess the spirit of Christ. I do not possess it completely. If I did, I would be a second Christ. I cannot possess the spirit of Christ completely. But I am a Christian in so far as I possess this spirit of Christ.

What was the spirit of Christ? I must seek to have the mind of Jesus. In the first place, Jesus Christ possessed the spirit of trust. He never was afraid. Then the first thing in Christian spirit is trust. There were nights when he lay out under the eastern stars and gazed up at the cerulean blue and talked to God in prayer. Yet even in the garden of Gethsemane as he prayed, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from my lips," he was not afraid. It was his heavenly Father's world. A man is a Christian in so far as he possesses the spirit of trust. Why should we be afraid in this world, when "the heavens declare the glory of God?" It is God's world. When calamities come they should not dismay. I am not sure that even God could develop us into the kind of characters he wants us to be without the aid of trouble.

Jesus Christ also possessed the spirit of trust in men. He felt that people are worth while. "Let him who has not sinned cast the first stone." This petty jealousy, this croaking the finger of scorn, this lack of trust and faith in men, is almost as bad as the lack of trust in God.

Christ possessed the spirit of infinite pity, and I, too, if I am to be a Christian, must possess the spirit of pity. He came to save the lost and his great heart went out in yearning pity for all humanity. Even as he sat and looked at Jerusalem, the city which was to crucify him, he said, "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her brood, but you would not," even then overcome with compassion. Without pity Christianity is defective. You may get to heaven. I am not bothering so much about heaven. It is the now I am concerned about. God will take care of heaven.

I am a Christian and you are a Christian in so far as we possess the spirit of forgiveness. Every man who is worth anything makes some enemies. We have ample opportunity to display the spirit of forgiveness. Look how injustice came to Jesus. They said he performed his works because he was a devil, and see how he met it. With the great spirit of forgiveness, and when he had "lost out," as the world said, but had succeeded in a greater manner, he offered up the prayer of forgiveness on the cross, saying, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." His great heart broke with compassion and forgiveness. I don't care how much you have been sinning against, you cannot afford to have any other but the spirit of forgiveness.

If I am a Christian I possess the spirit of love. The very climax of the acts that make up human life is the touch of affection. Only as I love men can I have the power over men. If a man finds that his heart beats true with him he opens his heart to me. As we possess the spirit of love we are Christians. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I have become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." In my humble judgment, much of the talk that comes from pulpits and platforms fails to inspire the hearers with the determination to live nobler because there is not that current of love.

A Christian is one who renders the humble service of Christ and possesses the spirit of Jesus. Are there perfect Christians? No. If there were there would be so many Christs. There are no perfect Christians. We are all simply partial Christians, and for this reason we ought to be kindly disposed to the shortcomings of others.

When the Kaiser condemned beer guzzling he did not enter the debatable field where scientists and physicians disagree, but remained out where there can be no argument. Whether or not a temperate use can be made of beer by adults without physical injury is another matter. What the emperor said was that beer drinking by boys and university students was a menace to the German nation, and that danger for its determination does not require any scientific study of the effect of small quantities of alcohol on the human machine.

Some physicians prescribe beer and others prescribe it or any drink containing alcohol, terming it a drug, poisonous to the system in proportion to the quantity of alcohol it contains. The Kaiser kept his hands out of that dispute. His lecture went to the student corps which admires a great beer capacity as a manly virtue. There can be no debate over his admonition.

Proper Living. Religion does not consist of jumping out of hell to get into heaven. Some folks say that being good to the family, square in business, courteous in social intercourse, is the proper life. I agree with them. I agree with all socialistic movements that have for their object the betterment of man, but they generally make the great mistake of not taking the right step first. You must be born again. Sign your name. Put yourself on record. Salvation. That is first and then the code of good and proper living comes.—Rev. J. W. Chapman, Evangelist, Buffalo, N. Y.

Co-Workers With God. Every one of us can do something for humanity—rich, poor, young, old. When God made this world he did it without any of us. You did not dig a trench in the Atlantic or put any stones into the Alps. The rainbow owes nothing to your paint pot. God did it all. But this time he is building a new humanity, grander than any son or star, and he permits you to be co-workers with himself. "And thou mayest add thereto." Put in your contribution; put it in.—Rev. W. L. Wilkinson, D. D.

Christ the Light and Life. It is said that the sweetest side of any fruit is the side which grows toward the sun. There is no doubt that the sun has a great deal to do with the beauty and flavor of the fruits which are the delight of man. In this casual observation, as in so many facts from nature, rests a beautiful spiritual lesson for us all. What the sun is to the natural world, that, and much more, is Christ to the world of spiritual things. As the sun influences the fruits of the earth, giving them beauty and lusciousness, so Christ sheds an influence over the lives of many and gives them beauty of character and purity of heart. And as the sweetest side of a fruit is the side toward the sun, so the best side of man is the side toward Christ.

The Craze for the Weird. The artistic craving today is for novelty—for new expressions of form and combinations of color, the more strange and weird the better; hence the passing fashion for post-impresionism and other kindred cults, in which neither truth nor beauty is the inspiring motive.—Connoisseur.

Temperance

BARROOM SERMON BY TRAMP

Pathetic Incident Occurs in New Orleans Saloon When Poor Thirsty Hobo Is Given Drink.

A tramp asked for a drink in a saloon. The request was granted, when, in the act of drinking the proffered beverage, one of the young men present exclaimed:

"Stop, make us a speech. It is poor liquor that doesn't loosen a man's tongue."

The tramp hastily swallowed down the drink, and as the liquor coursed through his veins he straightened himself and stood before them with a grace and dignity that all his rags and dirt could not obscure, says the New Orleans Picayune.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I look to night at you and myself, and it seems to me I look upon the picture of my lost manhood. This bloated face was once as young and handsome as yours. This shambling figure once walked as proudly as yours, a man in the world of men. I, too, once had a home and friends and position. I had a wife as beautiful as an artist's dream, and I dropped the priceless pearl of her honor and self-respect in the wine cup, and, Cleopatra-like, saw it dissolve and quaffed it down in the brimming draught. I had children as sweet and lovely as the flowers of spring, and saw them fade and die under the blighting curse of a drunkard father. I had a home where love lit the flame upon the altar and ministered before it, and I put out the holy fire, and darkness and desolation reigned in its stead. I had aspirations and ambitions that soared as high as the morning star and broke and brushed their beautiful wings, and at last strangled them that I might be tortured with their cries no more. Today I am a husband without a wife, a father without a child, a tramp with no home to call his own, a man in whom every good impulse is dead. And all swallowed up in the maelstrom of drink."

The tramp ceased speaking. The glass fell from his nerveless fingers and shattered into a thousand fragments on the floor. The swinging doors pushed open and shut again, and when the little group about the bar looked up the tramp was gone.

MANY CHILDREN ARE KILLED

British House of Commons to Hold Punishable Parents Who Cause Death of Young Infants.

So many cases have been reported in Great Britain of children being smothered to death by drunken parents rolling over on them during the night that it was decided lately in the House of Commons to class these fatalities among punishable offenses and to hold the drunken parents responsible. The member who reported the bill said that in Great Britain every year there were 1,600 deaths of babies caused in this way.

In Germany a few years ago when the attention of the authorities had been called to the large death rate there for the same cause, parents were made responsible and the percentage of fatal cases began at once to decrease.

Under the new laws, when it can be proven that the person having charge of a child was drunk when he or she went to bed and death or injury came to the child, the drunken person can be brought up for trial upon the charge of criminal neglect. Hitherto these cases have been regarded as highly regrettable incidents; now, however, they compel the drunkard to know that the helpless child must not be put in peril.

Beer Guzzling.

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BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST AND FATE

Sunday School Lesson for Nov. 12, 1911
Specially Arranged for This Paper

LESSON TEXT—Daniel 5.
MEMORY VERSES—25, 28.
GOLDEN TEXT—"God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."—Eccles. 12:14.

TIME—The event described belongs to the last years of the exile, B. C. 522, when Babylon was taken by Cyrus and his generals.

The decree of return, and the first return, occurred a year or two later. PLACE—Babylon the capital, enlarged, beautified and fortified by Nebuchadnezzar.

Under the great Nebuchadnezzar Babylon rose in grandeur, power and extent, till it became the most magnificent and beautiful city of antiquity. In those days Babylon was the metropolis of the world, the center of commerce, art and wisdom. The wealth of the world poured into its coffers. Babylon was the strongest fortress in all the world. Belshazzar was the acting king of Babylon at the time of this lesson, while his father Nabonidus was the nominal and reigning king who lived and warred outside of the city.

Cyrus had been advancing toward Babylon. He gained a decisive victory over Nabonidus, on his way to the capital, and his army entered the city without fighting, and peace was proclaimed. A portion of the city, being occupied by the army of Belshazzar as a rallying place. Two or three weeks later Cyrus made his triumphant entry into the city. Seven days later, the general of Cyrus stormed that part of Babylon which had held out against his army, and on that night Belshazzar was slain. It was during this week that Belshazzar made a magnificent banquet to encourage his generals and princes in their struggle with the Medo-Persian foe.

At his feast, therefore, Belshazzar sought to remind his warriors of the old campaigns their forefathers had fought. He had in his possession the treasures which these forefathers had carried from Jerusalem when they conquered Israel and, as it seemed to them, Israel's Jehovah. His conduct thus was merely that of a drunkard on a debauch, but partly of a cool politician, when amid the applause of a thousand courtiers and army commanders he ordered the sacred vessels of the Temple of Jerusalem to be brought into the hall of feasting. Such a scene would fill the hearts of the wine-inflamed warriors and nobles to overflowing with daring, and also bring a worthy occasion for the divine interference to encourage his people on the eve of their deliverance.

In the midst of the carousal, the king saw the fingers of a man's hand writing strange words, "letters of fate and characters of fear," on the wall in the full blaze of the candlestick, perhaps the great golden candlestick taken from the temple. There is something blood-curdling in the visibility of but a part of the hand and its busy writing. No wonder if the riotous mirth was frozen into awe, and the wine lost flavor.

Belshazzar, in his terror and horror, summoned his wise men to declare what the strange apparition and the blazing letters meant, and promised great rewards to the one who should interpret them; but all failed. Either they could not make sense of the letters, or could not perceive what meaning they had. Even if they had understood it is not likely that one of them would dare to speak it out before the king.

Then the queen mother, mother of Belshazzar, came in and spoke of Daniel as one who had shown great gifts at interpretation to his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar. It took place before this boy king was born, and he, naturally, knew nothing about the story. Daniel was sent for, and came into the festival hall. He heard the king's offer, and spurning it, spoke brave and true words which might easily cost him his life. He told the story of Nebuchadnezzar's fall from the height of pride, and accused him of dishonoring the true God. Then he interpreted the message written on the palace walls: "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting."

The want of religious restraints and motives, exposes one undefended to the powers of temptation. Belshazzar would enrich the splendor of his feast by the sacred goblets and dishes of gold that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple at Jerusalem. They were brought, and made to be instruments for drunken revelry and lust, and worship of idols, thus declaring that the idols had given them the victory over the God of the Jews. He little realized the power of the God whom he was defying, nor the reason why he had permitted the Jews to be disciplined by exile, and the victory of Cyrus over Babylon was one of the means by which the exiles should be able to return home, and carry those very golden vessels back to Jerusalem. The church in the wilderness was like the burning bush that Moses saw; and like the three heroic men in Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace, unconsumed because God was with them. The true religion, the principles of the kingdom of heaven, and the laws of God, are certain to triumph at last over intemperance and all its evils.

The social power of the wine cup's connection with feasting, comradeship, hospitality, good cheer, is one of its most dangerous attractions. And one of the chief defenses against its power lies in showing that good cheer, fellowship, sociability, eating together may be enjoyed in the highest degree where men "eat and drink and in communion sweetly quaff immortality and joy," without the fascination of the wine cup.

Belshazzar lost his city and his kingdom. So still by intemperance are men continually throwing away the kingdom God has prepared for them the kingdom of manhood, the kingdom of self-control, the kingdom of the world in which we live and of its law which we can compel to aid us in it that is good.

Stops Lameness

Sloan's Liniment is a reliable remedy for any kind of horse lameness. Will kill the growth of spavin, curb or splint, absorb enlargements, and is excellent for swellings, fistula and thrush.

Here's Proof. "I used Sloan's Liniment on a mule for a high lameness, and cured her. I am never without a bottle of your liniment; have bought more of it than any other remedy for pain." Daily News, Canada, Ky.

"Sloan's Liniment is the best made. I have removed very large swellings of a horse with it. I have killed a quarter crack on a mare that was awfully bad. I have also healed raw, sore necks on three horses. I have healed grease heel on a mare that could barely walk." Farm News, Ontario, Pa.

SLOAN'S LINIMENT is good for all farm stock. "My horse had hog cholera three days before we got your liniment, which I was advised to try. I have used it now for three days and my horse is almost well. One leg did before I got the liniment, but I have not had any more since." Farm News, Ontario, Pa.

Sold by all Dealers. Price 50c & \$1.00

Sloan's Book on Horses, Cattle, Hogs and Poultry sent free. Address Dr. Earl S. Sloan, Boston, Mass.

Shipwreck Up to Date. "Captain, is there much danger?" "Not a particle. A moving picture outfit will soon be along and rescue us after they have taken a few films."

Important to Mothers. Examine carefully every bottle of CASTORIA, a safe and sure remedy for infants and children, and see that it bears the Signature of *Chas. H. Fletcher* in Use For Over 30 Years. Children Cry for Fletcher's Castoria.

If They All Knew. A woman speaker told a New York suffrage meeting that "we women haven't concentration. Our minds just go flitting around and don't get anywhere." Considering which, is it not superfluous for mere man to mull about in women's affairs when they know themselves so well?—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Scared Out. The guides had a pretty story to tell as often as they were asked why the cliffs gave back no sound. A beautiful Echo (so the story ran) formerly dwelt in the valley, and had great fun mocking people who, chancing that way, in any manner broke the sylvan silence. But once upon a time a party of smart women, prompted by the guides knew not what caprice, sat down in the immediate neighborhood to enjoy a game of progressive whist. "Gee, I give it up!" cried the Echo thereupon, and in consternation fled the place, nevermore to return.—Puck.

Appetite Not a Necessity. Dr. John H. Murlin of New York, assistant professor of physiology at the Cornell university medical college, in an article in the October number of the Journal of the Outdoor Life, compares the food we eat to the fuel used in furnishing steam and power for an engine. In selecting our food he says that we should eat enough to furnish energy for the day's work, but that much more than this is not needed. He holds that the appetite is not a necessity for good digestion. "There is no fallacy of nutrition," he says, "greater than that which supposes that a food cannot be digested and utilized without appetite." Most of the food we eat, fully four-fifths, goes to supply energy for our every day tasks, while less than one-fifth goes to supply building material.

R.E.D. It's the Red Blood Corpuscles That Proper Food Makes. An Ohio woman says Grape-Nuts good gave her good red blood and restored the roses of youth to a complexion that had been muddy and sallow. She says: "For 10 years I had stomach trouble which produced a breaking out on my face. The doctors gave it a long Latin name, but their medicines failed to cure it. Along with this I had frequent headaches, nervousness and usually pain in my stomach after meals. I got disgusted with the drugs, stopped them and coffee off short, and quit eating everything but fruit and Grape-Nuts, with Postum for my table beverage. "The headaches, stomach trouble, and nervous weakness disappeared almost like magic, which showed that when the cause was removed and good food and drink used nature was ready to help. "My blood was purified and my complexion became like a young girl's, while my weight was increased from 90 to 120 pounds in a few months—good, solid firm flesh, which it used to be soft and flabby. "I recommended Grape-Nuts and Postum to one of my friends, who was afflicted as I had been. She followed my advice and in a short time was restored to complete health and in about 8 months her weight increased from 100 to 145 pounds. "Our doctor, observing the effect of Grape-Nuts and Postum in our cases, declared, the other day, that he would hereafter prescribe these food products for gastritis." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Read the Little Book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a reason." Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are accurate, true, and full of human interest.