



ALABASTER LAMPS by Margaret Turnbull.

There was nothing especially romantic to contemplate about Claude Melnotte Dabbs, village grocer, unless it were his dotting parents prefigured the cognomen of Bulwer Lytton's hero in the drama, "The Lady of Lyons," to his family name, it may have been an augury or at least an inducement for C. M. Dabbs, while sticking to the hard facts of life and wringing success from his career as a traveling salesman, to lead a less than romantic life—desires to exist through "the mistle of alabaster lamps."

THE STORY

CHAPTER I.—With a stranger, whom he introduces as his nephew Ned Carter, Claude Melnotte Dabbs returns from New York to Peace Valley, Pa. To "Aunt Lydia," his housekeeper, he explains that Carter is a chance acquaintance, a veteran of the World War, whom he had met and taken a liking to.

Polly's routine was much the same, save that she spent more time in bed reading feverishly and without discrimination. They talked in the usual jolly, casual way at night. But certain subjects were avoided—Claude Hollow, Claude Dabbs, Ned Carter and Loren Rangleley.



About Your Health Things You Should Know

YOUR FRETFUL CHILD The peevish, fretful baby is known to most parents. Given a new toy, or a piece of candy, he accepts it for the moment—to eat or play with, and resumes his ill-temperament.

Ned Even Accused Claude of Being Too Popular. covered that others found Claude attractive, and Ned even accused Claude of being too popular. "Polishing up for Mary," was his explanation and excuse.

golden horses. It was so narrow here that quite naturally she recovered her hand. As they stepped out into the sunshine, and the cool sea breeze, Mary felt herself able to face Ned.

"Yes, I came here with C. M. Dabbs, and I know where he is, but I'm not to meet him for half an hour yet. Surely you can listen to me for that length of time. If you don't," he threatened, "I won't tell you where to find him. If you're kind to me, I'll find you to him."

"Mr. Carter, aren't you a little sudden in your methods?" "I'm anything you like except 'Mr. Carter.' And if I seem sudden, look at the provocation. At a certain shop your father is waiting, and once he gets within hailing distance I'll be pushed, shoved, ignored or kicked into the background. So, Mary—No you don't, my dear. There's absolutely no use in our roaming around looking at things in shop windows. Down this alley-way, there's a flight of stone steps leading to the canal. If you come that way, we could wait in the shade for a gondola."

she might look at him and make him understand. As she turned, the lips so close to her ear brushed her cheek, met her mouth and clung there.

It was the first time for Mary. Other men had tried to kiss her mouth, just as other men had asked her to marry them, but none had succeeded.

When the gondola shot from under the bridge into the sunlight, the gondolier, who of course must have suspected, if he had not seen, burst out into one of his cries of warning that precede a turning. Ned involuntarily straightened up, came out of his dream and looked guiltily at Mary.

Before Mary could reply, her hand was crushed in his, his shoulder was against her own and his lips close to her ear were murmuring, so that she alone could hear all that he longed to tell her. It was extremely jerky and incoherent. In fact, there was very little sense in it. It was rather like what every man does with his preconceived idea of how he is going to conduct his love scene. Ned, being very much in love, made a bad bet of it. In fact, the astonished Mary could not distinguish anything except that she was disturbing the even tenor of his life considerably, that she was adorable, and—though everything was implied that should have been implied there was not a single word about marriage or engagement.

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