

lionaire and that Rangeley, who is com-

his paid servant. Dabbs leaves the gir

CHAPTER XIV

"Take me up first," Polly instructed

She went to her room, straightened

the boy, "and have the gentleman told

her hat, powdered her nose, tucked

I will be down in a moment."

Hillsborough inn to go by.

She Faced Him.

gave a swift book about hor, and

"A trick?" she asked in a low voice.

"No." Claude answered her steadily.

Rangeley, Laren's som"

Valley, with me."

"I don't think I know him"

"I have no desire to be one of 'us'."

stared at as she came in indifferently. ity, "finish your job."

tic to contemplate about Claude Melnotte Dabbs, village groeer, unless it Were the first two-thirds of his name. When his deting parents prefixed the cognomen of Bulwer Lytton's here in the drama, "The Lady of Lyons," to his family name, it may have been an augury or at least an influence; for C. M. Dabhs, while sticking to the hard facts of life and wringing success from his career as a tradesman, nevertheless had remantic yearnings-desire to see existence through "the mists of alabaster lamps."

And his dream came true. Yes, came true to the extent that C. M. participated in a romance in real life that just been given a message to the efhad chivalry, adventure, mystery, beau- fect that a gentleman was waiting for tiful women and all sorts of interesting and delightful people and experiences mixed up in it in about as satisfying proportions as anyone could wish. Right in a little town in Pennsylvania, mirror to see if she needed powder. with its typical and lovable characters, The boy handed her a slip of paper the chief actor in a drama of life in on which was written, "To see Mrs. now. which his humdrum affairs were tinged Johnston, with a message from Mr. by that aura of enchantment existing Rangelev." in "perfumed light stealing through

the mists of alabaster lamps." Margaret Turnbull, author of this engaging story, was born in Scotland, educated in New Jersey and lives at Rockwood, New Hope, in Bucks county, Pennsylvania. She has written several successful nevels. Her "Looking After a stray lock away under her hat, sur-Sandy" is still a popular favorite. Her veyed herself carefully in the mirror, play, "Classmates." was and still is a big success. She has done a number of moving pictures for the big producers. The story, "Alabaster Lamps," was message. written at Rockwood, on a hill above the Delaware river, far removed from theaters, moving pictures or other accompaniments of city life; hence its peaceful atmosphere and fine strain of who entered from the lobby into the her." pure romance.

THE STORY

CHAPTER L-With a stranger, whom he introduces as his nephew, Ned Carter, Claude Melnotte Dabbs returns from New York to his general grocery at Peace Valley, Pa. To "Aunt Lyddy," his housekeeper, he explains that Carter is a chance acquaintance, veteran of the World war, whom he had met and taken a liking to.

CHAPTER II.—Carter tells Aunt Lyddy he has broken with his family and his sweetheart because of his resentment of their ultra pacific tendencies. With Dabbs Ned visits Clover of good-natured cranks," according to the grocer. They almost run over a dog belonging to a girl whom Carter apparently recognizes. Ned delivers a girl, Dorothy Selden, reveals that she knows him to be Ned Carter Rangeley, son of Loren Rangeley, New York

CHAPTER IIL-Next day Ned commences work as a "grocer's boy." At a residence, the "White House," he delivers an order marked "Johnston." There he meets a girl who tells him she and her mother are alone in the house, the servants having left them because of the "loneliness." He promises to try to procure household help. Meeting Dorothy Selden, his erstwhile sweetheart, he baffles her attempts to discover the reason for his presence in Peace Valley. Arrangement is made

CHAPTER IV,—The cook being unable to begin work at once, Ned visits the White House to inform Miss Johnston of the fact. Explaining the situa-tion to her mother, the girl, "Mary," is astonished by that lady's emotion at the mention of Dabbs' name. The cook arrives, and Mary, with Ned, goes to the village for groceries. They are seen by Derethy Selden. Mrs. Johnston, worried ever Anancial troubles, is bothered by Derethy, who warns her Ned Carter.

bout Mary varuely familiar to Dabbe, perturbed. He missing Ned he has

Ned a remance of his early life. He stared, then her eyes changed and the had married, white at college, and under possible streumstances, and his wife left him the day after the core- in her thoughts hately, and despite the mony. He is convinced "Mrs. Johnston" years, she knew this must be the man CHAPTER VED Mrs. Johnston tolls first long look, she actually recognized

Mary they are practically penniless, through a frustee's defalcation. She plans an appeal to Loren Rangeley, her nature of his Scottmes beward the mirl

CHAPTER VIII.—In an attempt to clear up the situation, Dabbs sends Mrs. Johnston \$500, which he had from and the two men arrange to follow the women. "Felly" informs Loren Range-ley she and Many are going to Europe.

CHAPTER IX—Mrs. Johnston tells her daughter gemething of her early life and poverty, and acknowledges that Dabbs is Mary's father. The girl is pleased, declaring she likes Dabbs.

With Mary, is everjoyed when the girl gladly acknowledges their relationship. He has for some time been convinced the girl is his daughter. She tells him she and her mether are sailing to Europe next day. Dabbs promises to meet Mary there. She tells him her mother is in financial straits but dealines him is in financial straits, but declines his offer of pecuniary assistance, believing him a comparatively poor man.

CHAPTER XI.-In Venice, Ned, after some shrewd maneuvering, meets Mary. His strenuous lovemaking some-what disconcerts the girl, and to make they are in a gondola and hidden from public view. She is of course, outwardly furious, but in her heart-

CHAPTER XII.-Mary, unknown to was at an end. Claude rose, too, but as you give me the right," Ned rether mother, takes dinner with her father and Ned. Arriving home, she tells of the dinner and of her meeting with her father in New York. Polly, who in her mind pictures Dabbs as a fat, middle-aged country grocer, is for leaving Venice at once, but Mary releaving Venice at once, but Mary releaving Venice at once, but Mary releaving to Loren Rangeley, which the girl knews means she has made up her mind to divorce Dabbs and marry Rangeley for his her mother, takes dinner with her fa- stood so that he blocked her way. Dabbs and marry Rangeley for his now. The look relieved her. The man money, Mary warms her such a move will mean their separation.

CHAPTER XIII.—Next day Mary a clown. She had not been so fatally mance. But for you, your mother and

wrong about Claude, years ago. There was "a something" about Claude Dabbs. Polly sat down.

"Make it brief as you can," she sort of thing is-tiring."

"I didn't choose it," Claude told her. "It was forced upon me, and I understand just how you feel. I'm here solely on Mary's account."

Mary out of it, as much as you can." Polly saw Claude's face change and realized that before her was a man who was keeping a tight rein on his emotions and speech, for her sake. Not thus would he choose to speak to her of Mary.

"Mary told me that you had sent for Loren," he began, and he saw Polly flinch. "You might have known she would. You might have known how she'd feel about it."

"I did know." "Well, then, you can understand when I told Mary that Loren was coming to see me, and that his coming to Paris had nothing to do with his wanting to see you but was purely a matter of business, that Mary wanted you to know at once. Mary thought she ought to rush to you right away and warn you of the true state of af-

"And for reasons of your own, you prevented her. Well, I'm waiting to know the true state of affairs." Claude drew a long breath and looked at the graven image beside him. and entered. It did not really seem worth while, but he had promised Mary. "That

Mrs. Polly Johnston, returning from an aimless walk about the piazza, was told by the elevator boy that he had great many thousands a year to Loren | pleasure." "His card," demanded Polly, wrinkling her nose a little in front of the

"For Mary—yes." share, without having to take me with outstretched hand, but somehow or it," Claude informed her coolly. "It will be much pleasanter than taking Loren's money, I can tell you that."

and sauntered back to ring for the "It's all very interesting," Polly inelevator again, wondering about the formed him, and now she was looking Dabbs." at the floor, "but still I fail to see Claude had chosen a secluded and why I should come—this afternoon." recessed corner, from which he could "For Mary," Claude told her shortobtain an unobstructed view of those ly. "Ned Rangeley's in love with lounge. He wondered about Polly,

Polly started. "And of course, after all these years. What was her "Only if Mary wants him. I'd like | Claude explained. mind toward Loren Rangeley? What changes had time wrought? He had to keep her to myself, just as much as only that momentary glimpse in the you would, but we can't." He gave her a long look.

When he saw her he forgot every-"You might think of her, Polly. Why thing else. Changes! To be sure she should our d-d blunder cloud this bit had changed, as twenty years must of her life? You've made a good job change every man or woman, but she of Mary, so far, Polly. I have to hand was Polly, and as he admitted to him- you that." self, still lovely enough to hold any "Well?" Polly flung at him. man's glances. He saw how she was "Well," Claude returned with final

> Polly looked at him now, saw what he meant and went white for a moment. Claude waited, never taking his eyes from her. It was a long minute. "I'll come. Wait till I change my

> "No time," Claude told her. "You look fine as you are." "And the red-haired devil knows it," he added to himself as he marshaled her through the lobby to the gondola

Polly studied the man who sat be- sured_" side her as the gondola carried them along the canal. It was even faintly amusing that after all these years they should be sitting side by side in a gondola in Venice. Her mind flew back to the time she had so resolutely

put behind her. It began to dawn on the Polly Jehnston of today that the Polly Johnston of yesterday had underestimated her man. She went back, though it was a disturbing thing to do, with the man himself silent beside her, to the morning she had made up her mind to leave. She did herself justice. It was not the money, entirely, that had made her decide. She remenbered deubting Claude's powers of inagination, of capability for life in a keeper in a country village. She remembered how she had tried the shibbeleth that had shaken her newly composite awakened desire to stay with him.

She began to wonder about his life. As Claude same toward her. Polly Chaude touched her arm gently. He pupils contracted. He had been much was holding out his hand to help her from the gondola, and he was deing

Mary and Ned had begun very bad-Claude's abrupt departure had found them both unprepared. Mary had risen to her feet impetuously and followed him to the door, only to realize that it looked absurd and to go back to the window, where she rough and scientific examination . stood watching her father depart. "One father gone and another father coming, makes a complicated after-

"How are you, Polly? I am here with a message about Loren Rangeley. He noon," she ventured. will be at my hotel in helf an hour Ned agreed and suggested that to may eay. while away the time between fathers they might order a peculiarly rich tea. | maures The waiter had come and gene, and DISFICULT cases. still they were in that tiresome sitfing room, which seemed to Mary to

have held them for ages. promptly, "and us are Mary and Ned "I suppose we'd better stay here?" she inquired lightly. "Much better," and Ned drew a "Yes, I think you do, but you know wicker chair to the balcony window him as Ned Carter. His name is Ned for her, and arranged himself on a Carter Rangeley. He was at Peace cushion at her feet. Mary felt grate-

ful. She did not have to meet his "Oh, the young man who drove the eyes, in this position. "Sure as we stay out of this room," "Yes." admitted Claude and waited. he told her, "my father will turn up He had not to wait long. "I don't and then Claude will accuse us of delike your idea," Polly told him, looking | serting our posts."

past him out of the window. "And," "Do you call my father 'Claude'?" she continued, still gazing past him, inquired Mary, for want of something "I'll call him 'father,' gladly, as soon She rose as though the interview

minded her, and turned to see how

before her had changed with the you'll see how hard I'm trying to years, but he was neither a boor nor keep you from spoiling Claude's ro-

Claude might be happy." Mary's hands came away from her face now. "But for me! Why, I'm all

that holds them together." "So you think, but you're quite asked, again looking past him. "This wrong. If you were safely removed from their grasp, Polly would think how lonely Claude was, and Claude would think how sad it was for Polly. Even at over forty, my dear, grownups can't make love before their chil-"Mary!" breathed Polly. "Leave dren. But if you should engage yourself to a nice, handy, lovable young man, like myself, then that lets father and mother off to attend to their own affairs, while the responsibility for making Mary happy falls on the young man's shoulders. I know a pair that fairly ache for that responsibility." He took a step nearer—and the

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waiter entered with the tea. By the time he had gone again, Polly and Claude had entered.

Even as Mary flew across the room to kiss and cling to her mother, her mind paid homage to her father's greatness. To bring Polly Johnston into this situation, with this promptness, was marvelous in his daughter's eyes. She longed to have been present to see it accomplished. Mother, of all people, sitting calmly at Claude Dabbs' tea table, drawing off her gloves and making conversation with

Claude came toward his daughter, a humorous question in his eyes. But it remained unspoken, for at that moment Loren Rangeley was announced

Ned, standing beside Mrs. Johnston-Dabbs, was the first to meet his fa-Loren would never have said-what- ther's eyes. Mary saw Loren stiffen, ever he has said to you-if he'd known and then come forward with an easy: you were Mrs. Dabbs. I'm worth a "Ah Ned. This is an unexpected

Rangeley. To him I am Dabbs of "Quite," said Ned, without showing 'SCOUREEN' the 'Dirt Destroyer.' If | that one of his pet theories had gone you haven't seen the signs on the bill- all to smash. Far from Dabbs being Loren's agent, it was Loren who bore "I have seen them. Deplorably himself as though he was Claude's ugly." But Polly was looking at him agent. Ned meant to get it out of Claude before the evening was much "Well, ugly or not, you know it older. "I'm staying with Dabbs," he spells money. There's plenty for you volunteered. He did not want to let ONE BEST WAY "Well, ugly or not, you know it older. "I'm staying with Dabbs," he his father down, either.

"I didn't know." Loren was making "You're legally entitled to your his way to Mrs. Polly with a smile and other Claude was there before him. "Think I'll have to introduce this lady to you, Mr. Rangeley," he an-

amiably. "Mrs. Claude Loren's face was a study in mixed emotions, but Polly was calm and smiling as she lifted her eyes to his.

"Mrs. Dabbs has been separated from me for some years. By mutual agreement she used her maiden name, Kent Building & Loan Co. but we've never been divorced," Loren's brows drew together, but before he could speak Claude had slipped his hand through Mary's arm and

brought her forward. "And my daughter, Mary Dabbs," Claude continued with pride. "You knew her, of course, as Mary Johnston." "Just so," Loren Rangeley's cold smile took in the whole party, as he asked: "And the reason for this little family party? You see, I only expected to meet you, Dabbs, and talk

"Naturally," Claude agreed, "but as you were coming, we thought-" Ned interrupted. "It's rather up to me to explain, Father. You see, I want to marry Claude Dabbs' daugh-

business, so I am a little-surprised.'

Polly said, quietly, "to come at once. You see, Loren, I had never met your son, and naturally I wished to be as-

(Continued Next Week)

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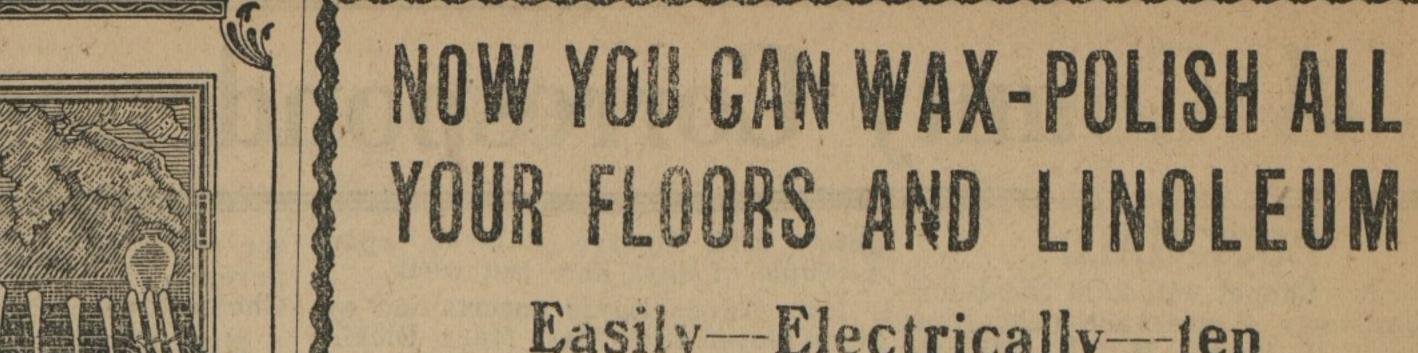
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