JACKSON COUNTY JOURNAL, SYLVA, N. C.

during one of the brief pauses in the

conversation, "have you ever tried

to analyze this interest of yours in

human beings and crowded cities, this

hatred of solitude and empty spaces?"

Oliver Hilditch smiled thoughtfully,

and gazed at a salted almond which

he was just balancing between the tips

"I think," he said simply, "it is be-

The three diners lingered for only

a short time over their dessert. After-

wards, they passed together into a

very delightful library. Hilditch ex-

into the room. His hostess, who had

subsided into an easychair and was

holding a screen between her face and

the fire, motioned him to seat himself

opposite. He did so without words.

tongue-tled. He fell to studying the

woman instead of attempting the ba-

nality of pointless speech. From the

smooth gloss of her burnished hair,

to the gaintiness of her low, black

brocaded shoes, she represented, so

far as her physical and outward self

were concerned, absolute perfection.

No ornament was amiss, no line or

curve of her figure other than perfect-

ly graceful. Yet even the fire's glow

which she had seemed to dread brought

no flush of color to her cheeks. Her

appearance of complete lifelessness

remained. It was as though some sort

of crust had formed about her being,

a condition which her very physical

perfection seemed to render the more

"You are surprised to see me here

living with my husband, after what

I told you yesterday afternoon?" she

said calmly, breaking at last the si-

lence which had reigned between them.

of his fingers.

cause I have no soul."

cused himself for a moment.

The Evil Shepherd

"NO, REMORSE"

SYNOPSIS .- Francis Ledsam defends Oliver Hilditch, a business man, in a murder case and succeeds in getting him off, only to be told by a young, prepossessing woman, who says that she is Oliver Hilditch's wife, that Hilditch is an arch-criminal and that Ledsam has turned loose a dangerous man to resume his preying upon society. Ledsam dines with his best friend. Andrew Wilmore meets Hilditch and his wife.

CHAPTER II-Continued. -2-

Wilmore was puzzled.

"But she passed you just now without even a glance of recognition, and I thought you told me at the club this afternoon that all your knowledge of his evil ways came from her. Besides, she looks at least twenty years younger than he does."

"I can only tell you what I know, Andrew," he said, as he set down his empty glass. "The woman who is with him now is the woman who spoke to me outside the Old Bailey this after-



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E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

the other reminded gently. "In your case, my presence there proves how well it was done. I wish to present you to my wife, who shares my gratitude."

Francis bowed to the woman, who now, at her husband's words, raised her eyes. For the first time he saw her smile. It seemed to him that the effort made her less beautiful.

"Your pleading was very wonderful, Mr. Ledsam," she said, a very subtle note of mockery faintly apparent in her tone. "We poor mortals find it difficult to understand that with you all that show of passionate earnestness is merely-what did you call it -a chapter in your day's work? It is a great gift to be able to argue from the brain and plead as though from the heart."

"We will not detain Mr. Ledsam," Oliver Hilditch interposed, a little hastily. "He perhaps does not care to be addressed in public by a client who still carries with him the atmosphere of the prison. My wife and I wondered, Mr. Ledsam, whether you would be good enough to dine with us one night. I think I could interest you by telling you more about my case than you know at present, and it would give us a further opportunity. and a more seemly one, for expressing wise to go, Francis?" our gratitude."

Francis had recovered himself by this time. He knew very well that the idea of that dinner would be horrible to him. He also knew that he would willingly cancel every engagement he had rather than miss it.

"You are very kind," he murmured. "Are we fortunate enough to find you disengaged," Hilditch suggested, 'tomorrow evening?"

"I am quite free," was the ready esponse.

"That suits you, Margaret?" Hilditch asked, turning courteously to his wife. For a single moment her eyes were

"That work can be well done or ill," | 10 b, Hill Street, regretting his inability to dine that night, and each time he destroyed it. He carried the first message around Richmond golf course with him, intending to dispatch his caddy with it immediately on the conclusion of the round. The fresh air. however, and the concentration required by the game, seemed to dispel the nervous apprehensions with which he had anticipated his visit, and over an aperitif in the club bar he tore the telegram into small pieces and found himself even able to derive a cetrain half-fearful pleasure from the thought of meeting again the woman who, together with her terrible story, had never for one moment been out of his thoughts. Andrew Wilmore, who had observed his action, spoke of it as they settled down to lunch,

"So you are going to keep your engagement tonight, Francis?" he observed.

The latter nodded.

"After all, why not?" he asked, a little defiantly. "It ought to be interesting."

"Well, there's nothing of the sordid criminal, at any rate, about Oliver Hilditch," Wilmore declared. "Neither, if one comes to think of it, does his wife appear to be the prototype of suffering virtue. I wonder if you are

"Why not?" the man who had asked himself that question a dozen times already, demanded.

"Because," Wilmore replied coolly, "underneath that steely hardness of manner for which your profession is responsible, you have a vein of sentiment, of chivalrous sentiment, I should say, which some day or other is bound to get you into trouble. The woman is beautiful enough to turn any one's head. As a matter of fact, I believe that you are more than half in love with her already."

Francis Ledsam sat where the sunlight fell upon his strong, forceful fixed upon those of her prospective face, shone, too, upon the table with guest. He read their message which its simple but pleasant appointments, pleaded for his refusal, and he denied upon the tankard of beer by his side, upon the plate of roast beef to which "Tomorrow evening will sult me as he was already doing ample justice. He laughed with the easy confidence of a man awakened from some haunting nightmare, relieved to find his feet once more firm upon the ground. "I have been a fool to take the whole matter so seriously, Andrew," he declared. "I expect to walk back to Clarges street tonight, disillusioned. The man will probably present me with a gold pencil case. and the woman-" "Well, what about the woman?" Wilmore asked, after a brief pause. "Oh, I don't know!" Francis declared, a little impatiently. "The woman is the mystery, of course Probably my brain was a little over-excited when I came out of court, and what I imagined to be an epic was nothing more than a tissue of exaggerations from a disappointed wife. However, I'm sure I'm doing the right thing to go there." The two men returned to town together afterwards, Wilmore to the club and Francis to his rooms in Clarges street to prepare for dinner. At a few minutes to eight he rang the bell of number 10 b, Hill street, and found his host and hostess awaiting him in the small drawing-room into which he was ushered. It seemed to him that the woman, still colorless, again marvelously gowned, greeted him coldly. His host, however, was almost too effusive. There was no other guest, but the prompt announcement of dinner dispelled what might have been a few moments of embarrassment after Oliver Hilditch's almost too cordial greeting. The woman laid her fingers upon her guest's coat sleeve. The trio crossed the little hall almost in silence. Dinner was served in a small white Georgian dining room, with every appurtenance of almost sybaritic luxury. The only light in the room was thrown upon the table by two purple-shaded electric lamps, and the servants who waited seemed to pass backwards and forwards like shadows in some mysterious twilight-even the faces of the three diners themselves were out of the little pool of light until they leaned forward. The dinner was chosen with taste and restraint, the wines were not only costly but rare. A watchful butler, attended now and then by a trim parlor maid, superintended the service. Only once, when she ordered a bowl of flowers removed from the table, did their mistress address either of them. Conversation after the first few amenities speedily became almost a monologue. One man talked whilst the others listened, and the man who talked was Oliver Hilditch. He possessed the rare gift of imparting color and actuality in a few phrases to the strange places of which he spoke, of bringing the very thrill of strange hapis a relief to me to come into contact with a man who is free from that bourgeols incubus to modern enterprisea conscience."

"Is that your estimate of me?" Francis asked.

"Why not? You practice your profession in the criminal courts, do you not?"

"That is well-known," was the brief reply.

"What measure of conscience can a man have," Oliver Hilditch argued blandly, "who pleads for the innocent and guilty alike with the same simulated fervor? Confess, now, Mr. Ledsam-there is no object in being hypocritical in this matter-have you not often pleaded for the guilty as though you believed them innocent?"

"That has sometimes been my duty," Francis acknowledged.

Hilditch laughed scornfully. "It is all part of the great hypocrisy of society," he proclaimed. "You have an extra glass of champagne for dinner at night-and are congratulated by

"I have some cigars which I keep your friends because you have helped some poor devil to cheat the law, while in my dressing room," he explained, all the time you know perfectly well, "and which I am anxious for you to and so do your high-minded friends, try. There is an electric stove there that your whole attitude during those and I can regulate the temperature." two hours of eloquence has been a lie. He departed, closing the door behind That is what first attracted me to him. Francis came a little further

you, Mr. Ledsam." "I am sorry to hear it," Francis commented coldly. "The ethics of my profession-"

His host stopped him with a little wave of the hand. He felt curiously and ridiculously

"Spare me that," he begged. "While we are on the subject, though, I have a question to ask you. My lawyer told me, directly after he had retained you, that, although it would make no real difference to your pleading, it would be just as well for me to keep up my bluff of being innocent, even in private conversation with you. Why was that?"

"For the very obvious reason," Francis told him, "that we are not all such rogues and vagabonds as you seem to think. There is more satisfaction to me, at any rate, in saving an innocent man's life than a guilty one's." Hilditch laughed as though amused.

"Come," he threatened, "I am going to be ill-natured. You have shown signs of smugness, a quality which I detest. I am going to rob you of some part of your self-satisfaction. Of course I killed Jordan. I killed him in the very chair in which you are now sitting."

There was a moment's intense si-"It seems unnatural to you, I suplence. The woman was still fanning herself lazily. Francis leaned forward in his place.

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Gei Rid of It by Taking Cheney's Before It Turns Into Something Worse

"I Have Never Listened to So Horrible a Recital in My Life."

noon. We went to a tea-shop together. She told me the story of his career. I have never listened to so horrible a recital in my life."

"And yet they are here together, dining tete-a-tete, on a night when it must have needed more than ordinary courage for either of them to have been seen in public at all," Wilmore pointed out.

"It is as astounding to me as it is to you," Francis confessed. "From the way she spoke, I should never have the subject of discussion, as indeed dreamed that they were living together."

bring some cigarettes, "I should never, have imagined that he was anything else save a high-principled, well-born. straightforward sort of chap. I never saw a less criminal type of face."

They each in turn glanced at the subject of their discussion. Oliver Hil ditch's good looks had been the subject of many press comments during the last few days. They were certainly undeniable. His face was a little lined. but his hair was thick and brown. His features were regular, his forehead high and thoughtful, his mouth a trifle had already hastened forward. thin but straight and shapely. Francis gazed at him like a man entranced. The hours seemed to have slipped away. He was back in the tea-shop. listening to the woman who spoke of terrible things. He felt again his shivering abhorrence of her cold, clearly narrated story. Again he shrank from the horrors from which with merciless fingers she had stripped the coverings. He seemed to see once more the agony in her white face, to hear the eternal pain aching and throbbing in her monotonous tone. He rose suddenly to his feet.

"Andrew," he begged, "tell the fellow to bring the bill foutside. We'll have our coffee and liqueurs there."

Wilmore acquiesced willingly enough, but even as they turned towards the door Francis realized what was in store for him. Oliver Hilditch had risen to his feet. With a courteous little gesture he intercepted the passerby. Francis found himself standing side by side with the man for whose life he had pleaded that afternoon, within a few feet of the woman whose terrible story seemed to have poisoned the very atmosphere he breathed, to have shown him a new horror in life, to have temporarily, at any rate, in-

"Mr. Ledsam," Hilditch said, speak

well as any other," she acquiesced, after a brief pause.

"At eight o'clock, then-number 10 b, Hill Street," Hilditch concluded. Francis bowed and turned away with a murmured word of polite assent. Outside, he found Wilmore deep in the discussion of the merits of various old brandies with an interested maitre d'hotel.

"Any choice, Francis?" his host inguired.

"None whatever," was the prompt reply, "only, for God's sake, give me a double one quickly !"

The two men were on the point of departure when Oliver Hilditch and his wife left the restaurant. As though conscious that they had become was the case, thanks to the busy whispering of the various waiters, they "And from his appearance," Wilmore passed without lingering through the remarked, as he called the waiter to lounge into the entrance hall, where Francis and Andrew Wilmore were already waiting for a taxicab. Almost as they appeared, a new arrival was ushered through the main entrance, followed by porters carrying luggage. He brushed past Francis so closely that the latter looked into his face, half attracted and half repelled by the waxen-like complexion, the plercing eyes, and the dignified carriage of the man whose arrival seemed to be creating some stir in the hotel. A reception clerk and a deputy manager The newcomer waved them back for a moment. Bareheaded, he had taken Margaret Hilditch's hands in his and

> raised them to his lips. "I came as quickly as I could," he said. "There was the usual delay, of course, at Marseilles, and the trains on were terrible. So all has ended well."

> Oliver Hilditch, standing by, remained speechless. It seemed for a moment as though his self-control were subjected to a severe strain. "I had the good fortune," he interposed, in a low tone, "to be wonderfully defended. Mr. Ledsam here-". He glanced around. Francis, with some idea of what was coming, obeyed an imaginary summons from the head porter, touched Andrew Wilmore upon the shoulder, and hastened without a backward glance through the swing doors. Wilmore turned up his coat collar and looked doubtfully up at the rain.

"I say, old chap," he protested, "you don't really mean to walk?"

Francis thrust his hand through his friend's arm and wheeled him round into Davis street.

which is perhaps the most ingenious I desire to tender you once more my do. Andrew," he confided, "but couldn't thing of all. You touch a spring here, dermined every joy and ambition he thanks for your very brilliant efforts you see what was going to happen? and behold !" possessed. on my behalf. The very fact that I penings into the shadowy room. It Oliver Hilditch was going to introduce He pressed down two tiny supports am able to offer you hospitality at eemed that there was scarcely a coun me as his preserver to the man who which opened upon hinges about four ing with quiet dignity, "I hope that all is without a doubt due to these." try of the world which he had not vishad just arrived!" inches from the top of the handle. you will forgive the liberty I take in "I only did what I was paid to do," ited, a country, that is to say, where "Are you afflicted with modesty, all There was now a complete hilt. speaking to you here. I looked for Francis insisted, a little harshly. "You men congregate, for he admitted from of a sudden?" Wilmore grumbled. you the moment I was free this after-25¢ AND 75¢ PACKAGES EVERYWHERE must remember that these things come the first that he was a city worshiper, "No, remorse," was the terse renoon, but found that you had left the in the day's work with us." that the empty places possessed no ply. "My death is the one thing AS SURE AS DAWN BRINGS A NEW DAY court. I owe you my good name, prob-His host nodded. charm for him, in the world which would make ably my life. Thanks are poor things all "Naturally," he murmured. "There "I am not even a sportsman," he con-CHAPTER III my wife happy." but they must be spoken." was another reason, too, why. I was fessed once, half apologetically, in re-"You owe me nothing at all." Fran-Indecision had never been one of ply to a question from his guest. My anxious to meet you. Mr. Ledsam," he cis replied, in a tone which even he Francis Ledsam's faults, but four continued. "You have gathered alonly desire has been to reach the next (TO BE CONTINUED.) found harsh. "I had a brief before times during the following day he Will Break That Oold God M ready that I am something of a crank. place where men and women were. me and a cause to plead. It was a wrote out a carefully worded telegraph- Some day we will talk of them." take You Fit Tomorrow a I have a profound detestation of all So much pursuit of happiness turns chapter out of my daily work." ic message to Mrs. Oliver Hilditch, sentimentality and affected morals. It "Tell me," Francis asked his host. out to be just killing time.

you?" "I must."

"Entirely."

pose?"

incomprehensible?

"I am," he admitted.

She looked at the door and raised her head a little, as though either listening or adjudging the time before her husband would return. Then she glanced across at him once more. "Hatred," she said, "does not always drive away. Sometimes it attracts. Sometimes the person who hates can scarcely bear the other out of his sight. That is where hate and love are somewhat alike."

The room was warm, but Francis was conscious of shivering. She raised her finger warningly. It seemed typical of the woman, somehow, that the message could not be conveyed by any glance or gesture.

"He is coming," she whispered. Oliver Hilditch reappeared, carrying

cigars wrapped in a gold foil, which he had brought with him from Cuba, the tobacco of which was a revelation to



Can Scarcely Bear the Other Out of His Sight."

his guest. The two men smoked and sipped their coffee and brandy. The woman sat with half-closed eyes. It was obvious that Hildlitch was still in the mood for speech.

"I will tell you, Mr. Ledsam," he crusted blood. said, "why I am so happy to have you "There is a handle," he went on, here this evening. In the first place, "I don't care what the mischief we

"I do not wish to hear this!" exclaimed harshly.

"Don't be foolish," his host replied, rising to his feet and strolling across the room. "You know the whole trouble of the prosecution. They couldn't discover the weapon, or anything like it, with which the deed was done. Now I'll show you something ingenious.'

Francis followed the other's movements with fascinated eyes. The woman scarcely turned her head. Hilditch paused at the further end of the room, where there were a couple of gun cases, some fishing rods and a bag of golf clubs. From the latter he extracted a very ordinary-looking putter, and with it in his hands strolled back to them.

"Do you play golf, Ledsam?" he asked. "What do you think of that?" Francis took the putter into his hand, It was a very ordinary club, which had apparently seen a good deal of service, so much, indeed, that the leather wrapping at the top was commencing to unroll. The maker's name was on the back of the blade, also the name of the professional from whom it had been purchased. Francis swung the implement mechanically with his wrists.

"There seems to be nothing extraordinary about the club," he pronounced. "It is very much like a cleek I putt with myself."

"Yet it contains a secret which would most certainly have hanged me," Oliver Hilditch declared pleasantly. "See !"

He held the shaft firmly in one hand and bent the blade away from it. In a moment or two it yielded and he commenced to unscrew it. A little exclamation escaped from Francis' lips. The woman looked on with tired eyes.

"The join in the steel," Hilditch pointed out, "is so fine as to be undistinguishable by the naked eye. Yet when the blade comes off, like this, you see that although the weight is absolutely adjusted, the inside is hollow. The dagger itself is encased in this cotton wool to avoid any rattling. I put it away in rather a hurry the last time I used it, and as you see I forgot to clean it."

Francis staggered back and gripped at the mantelpiece. His eyes were filled with horror. Very slowly, and with the air of one engaged upon some interesting task, Oliver Hilditch had removed the blood-fained sheath of cotton wool from around the thin blade of a marvelous-looking stiletto, on which was also a long stain of en-

Does that hacking cough worry you because it hangs on so? Really it is cause for worry, for if you don't get rid of it you may find yourself the victim of a far more serious malady.

Thus it would be worse than foolish to let it go on, getting worse and worse, without taking the easiest and quickest method of putting an end t the trouble and so save yourself from what might turn out to be a very serious complication.

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Unfair

It is unfair that a dumb creature like a cat should have nine lives, while an intelligent pedestrian has only one.



Sometimes the Person Who Hates