Lavender Creighton's Lovers

By OLIVIA B. STROHM

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CHAPTER XIII.—CONTINUED.

And Gerald had muttered an abject apology. The sum was not trifling to him; he could not obtain it if luck should turn through the means which had lost it.

"I am very sorry, Senor, but I cannot confess a gambling debt to my father; nor has he the money to pay it. Give me more time, and the cards will win for me; my luck will turn; it must." There was a feverish light in his eye—embarrassment clogged his tongue.

Patting him cordially on the shoulder, the Spaniard said: "Excuse my reminding you, sir; it is especially unwise of me to trouble one who can be of such service to me."

At the suave manner of his creditor the youth took courage. "Service to you? How?"

"You will be at the dance to-morrow night? You will bring your sister, Miss Lavender?"

A light flashed on Gerald's mind. "Lavender? I don't believe she intended coming, but I—"

He paused, and Gonzaga assisted him with telling emphasis. "But you, perhaps, can arrange it? You will try?"

"Certainly if you—if she—perhaps she would enjoy it," stammered Gerald. "I will try to bring her with me."

"Do so, and—worry no more about that other little matter."

So it was that Gerald had urged Lavender to go to the party. He had assured her that it was her duty to mingle more with these honest village folk, and his sister, nothing loth, promised.

And to the merry-making she had come, looking in her best holiday attire, like a bit of Dresden china in this homely collection of pottery.

In the game of King William, the Spaniard chose Lavender from the circle, and together they stepped to the center. Around them, joining hands, swung the romping crowd.

"Down on this carpet you must kneel, As sure as grass grows in the field; Salute your bride and kiss her sweet, Now you may rise upon your feet."

The precedent had been established blushing cheeks had been lifted, pretty lips raised to the rough and bristling faces whose resounding smacks echoed to shouts of laughter. Or, rumpled frocks and tousled hair were the effects of resistance which, if sometimes made, was faint-hearted, and only a bit of coquetry adding flavor to the final forfeit.

Therefore, when Lavender and the Spaniard held the attention, there was a flutter of suspense, of eager curiosity on the part of the onlookers. How would this dainty maid behave? Or how this foreigner, who was evidently a suitor?

Gonzaga knelt beside her, handsomer than ever in this romantic situation, with the red blood mantling through the olive skin. He was straight and long-limbed, with the strain of the cavaliers in his haughty beauty.

And, drooping a little under his expressive gaze, Lavender hummed the tune half to herself, her heels clicking the floor in time to the violin. But at the words:

"Salute your bride and kiss her sweet," she raised her eyes to his with a proud denial. An instant the man hesitated, then, obedient to her unspoken command, he helped her to rise. As she was bowing to rejoin the circle, she caught her hand in a warm pressure and held it to his lips. A murmur of laughter greeted this, which the more favored youths present regarded as a signal defeat.

When the game was over there was a rush for seats, some for the rude benches which lined the walls, some for the more inviting nooks outside.

"Let us get a breath of fresh air," the Spaniard said, and led Lavender to the door.

Strings of popcorn and peppers red and green dangled across the doorposts, making fantastic shadows on the ground.

There was no moon, but the stars shone bright on the white-walled cabins dotting the groves, on the pawpaw bushes and cottonwood trees along the river. A pile of stones formed a ride fence, and upon this, bestowing her frippery carefully, Lavender perched, taking care to keep well within the light from the barn door. For there was that in her companion's manner which made her fear a private talk. In spite of her precaution he began: "It is hard for me to keep my promise, you are so charming to-night. This dress, with its fragrance of a delicious past, brings back all the courtliness, the stately charm of the grande dame which none has worn for me in many a long day." He pressed between his fingers the hem of her skirt that lay in folds about the stones on which she sat.

Lavender laughed and said, turning the subject from herself: "I am glad you admire the dress, Senor; it has quite a history, it was—"

But he interrupted. "The gown is only the added charm—the color of the rose its perfume, its beauty, is there, no matter in what petals. So it is not the dress, it is you. At sight of you I am transported to a rare old past, the ugly present dies. You are a jewel in a leaden setting, you are—"

"Hush, senor, or I shall begin to fancy myself a great lady indeed—or perhaps the spell will break, and I shall vanish along with the dreams and glories of that olden time. You only imagine me—I am not here," and she made a few passes of her hands, laughing lightly at the mock spell.

"Ah, Dios, yes, you are here; you are real, true! It is the dress alone that belongs to my dream maiden—you are flesh and blood." He came closer toward her, but she sprang down. "Let us peep in at the window and watch the dancers," and crossing the path, she tiptoed until, through the slit between the bars, she could plainly see the interior.

"Geraid is dancing again. I had no idea he could adapt himself with such ease to these rustic maidens."

Unseen by her, Gonzaga shrugged his shoulders with a skeptical smile as she continued: "He never talks of conquests. I think he does not care to make any." And she tiptoed again to see her brother as he swung to place or "chasseed" with the ease of a practiced gallant.

In the midst of a set a girl appeared for a moment at a door opposite Lavender's point of vantage. Quickly her eyes zigzagged about the room. Apparently their glance was rewarded, for she smiled and a contented look curved her mouth. Then she retreated as quickly as she had come, while two young men sauntering by the window began a discussion of her. Their voices reached Lavender distinctly.

"Hello; if there ain't Branch-water Sue! Too bad she wan't fowed to jine the festivities, poor thing. She's swipt 'n' purty as all creation, but that pa 'n' purty as all creation, but that pa 'n' hern he watches her closter 'n a cat."

The other youth, his articulation impeded by a mouthful of popcorn, added: "All the same, he can't keep her from midnight meetings with that city chap. Guess the smarty prefers courtin' on the sly. The rest of us don't stand no show with Sue since this spark with his hifalutin' airs—"

The gossip ceased abruptly here as the dance broke up.

Lavender turned to her companion. "Did you see that pretty, black-eyed girl, who stood for a minute like an angel peeping into Paradise?"

He interrupted her. "I think angels have only blue eyes—violet eyes," he said, looking ardently into her eyes.

To fill up the gap in the conversation where every pause was embarrassing, Lavender continued the subject. "I think we have inadvertently hit upon a romnce. Those men were discussing a girl, her 'city beau,' and an irate father. I did not suppose that there were any gallants hereabouts."

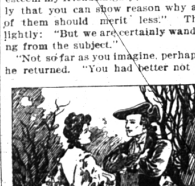
There was slight interest in her tone, and her attention, even as she spoke, seemed elsewhere. Not so Gonzaga; her question gave him a cue. With every show of wishing to change the subject hastily, he repeated: "Her 'city beau?' Never mind, let us talk of other things, fair one."

They were slowly walking down the path, but his tone and manner made Lavender stop and regard him with scrutiny. "You are mysterious," she said, abruptly. "Why?"

His reply came with apparent unwillingness. "It is nothing that I care to discuss with you, of all people. I am not a man to enjoy shattering idols."

"Nor am I one to worship them," she retorted; "it is true, however, that I esteem my friends highly; it is not likely that you can show reason why any of them should merit less." Then lightly: "But we are certainly wandering from the subject."

"Not so far as you imagine, perhaps," he returned. "You had better not try



"YOU WOULD BETTER NOT TRY ME TOO MUCH, MISS CREIGHTON."

me too much, Miss Creighton, or I may put my words to proof."

She was stung by his manner and returned with spirit: "I fear no proof you can bring."

"Not even against the admirable Winslow?"

"Least of all against him, senor."

Then, half ashamed of her strong defense of one who had never asked her championship, she continued less seriously: "We must ever think well of the absent."

"Absent?" he echoed; "then your friend is still in St. Louis?"

"Yes, and we have her promise to come and see us on his first day of freedom."

"His promise? He will keep it." Gonzaga stood quite still, facing her as he asked the question, a smiling sneer on his full, red lips.

She returned the look defiantly. "Let us go back and find Gerald," she said, ignoring the question, and swept past him.

Gonzaga followed to the dancing-room. Gerald was nowhere to be seen. The Spaniard consulted his watch; it lacked but a half hour of midnight; unless his plans had miscarried, they must be at the tavern soon. He was in a fever of impatience; would Winslow obey the note? Would he be there to-night? Would he—Gonzaga—have a chance to tumble this idol from his pedestal?

Hiding anxiety for the success of his plan under a polite concern, he said: "Perhaps you brother has preceded us to the boat. It is moored some distance down; shall we find it?"

Together, in silence, they walked the sandy road to the "Sign of the Bat."

CHAPTER XIV.

Meanwhile, around a curve in the Missouri, slipped a boat, its keel making ivory circles in the black water.

With eyes scanning the shore, the man in the stern pointed to the lights ahead. He spoke low to his companion: "See, Owatoga, the tavern is probably there; I suppose we can find a landing."

It was toward midnight of the fifth day of the voyage that Winslow, now free, may have received a mysterious letter purporting to be from the octoroon, bidding him come thither to aid some one in trouble, came in sight of the town of St. Charles. He had so timed the last few hours of the trip that he might reach the town at the moment when, according to the letter, his presence would be needed.

Beyond a bend in the river widened the bay, a half circle of darkness, with here and there a phosphorescent gleam of stolen jewels with which the river dared deck her bosom only at night. In the center of the bay, and facing the settlement, the island rose crowned with cottonwood trees that shivered in the night wind. In the distance, hills, black and ragged, formed a rampart to the north. Between bay and bluff lay the town, its mud-walled cottages showing white in the blackness. The village was asleep and dark, except for the few lights which Winslow rightfully supposed indicated the tavern. And from another building to the west came a streak of light and the sound of voices, with now and then the faint echo of a violin.

Winslow's whole being was tensely alive to these human sights and sounds. For days of the tedious journey he had heard, save for the rare speech of his guide, only the cries of wild beasts, the shrieks of water-fowl, or the sonorous melody of the forest trees. His breath came short—his heart throbbed queerly at being again in touch with his kind. Yonder lay the town which was to be his home for many future days. Yonder, too, his love awaited him—in sorrow, perhaps, or trouble, but still there. She might not be expecting him, for of his coming he had sent no word when he himself could out-journey a messenger. He was sure of but one thing—he would see her to-night, and he urged: "Row faster, Owatoga."

As they neared the shore, voices from within the tavern were plainly heard. Owatoga anchored his boat, and, leaving him to watch it, Winslow moved forward alone. This stealth was distasteful, but the woman's note had enjoined secrecy, and it was for Lavender's sake. At thought of her waiting for him, needing him, perhaps, his steps quickened. Impatient he climbed the sloping bank, crushing the may-apples that, dying bequeathed to the air a hoarded fragrance.

He gained the road at a few paces from where rose a pollard willow tree, its bare head whitened by the gleam of stars. At its base a figure stood, which, gradually from out attendant shadows, took the form of a woman. At first she gave no sign.

Winslow slowly advanced through the avenue of branches that stretched from the shady covert on either side. Once he paused to listen. A crackle of leaves, a step on the turf behind him—was Owatoga following? All was silent again, and he pressed forward.

The woman bent expectant to meet him, and put out a welcoming hand, murmuring: "Gerald, is it you? At last!"

But Winslow stood still in surprise. He could not see her face, but the voice was not Lavender's.

Then from somewhere back of him out of the gloomy forest came another sound; a low growl that was only half-human in its rage and glee. Winslow's blood curdled. Turning to see whence the voice came, he met a pair of eyes glaring in a grotesquely large head like a jack-o'-lantern light.

The figure threw itself upon him with tigerish strength. There was a woman's scream, and for a few moments no sound but the heavy breathing of the two men hugged together in a death grapple. Vain was Winslow's clumsy rifle against this unseen foe, whose hands in the darkness clutched his throat. Then was a flash of steel, but, putting forth all his strength, Winslow turned its course. The blade, swerving from its fatal errand, lodged in his shoulder, and he sank to the ground. With a cry, the woman rushed forward, but the slayer, brandishing the knife over the prostrate Winslow, waved her back. "Be off! What d'ye want with a carrion lover, anyway? Come to meet the branch-water gal, did he? Wanted that rich coal land, eh?" and he raised the knife again.

But it was never lowered. At that instant, from out the underbrush across the road, whistled an arrow, and this time the messenger of death did not fail. Without a groan the branch-water man sank to earth, already wet with the blood of his intended victim.

Motionless, the girl stood, hands clasped, eyes staring with horror, her lover dead, and by her father's hand. That father killed, but by whom? In the dense shade she had not seen the arrow fly, from the bushes opposite. Whence came it, then—the sudden death blow? A nameless fear, a superstitious dread possessed her. Here, in midnight forest, alone with the dead.

But love overcame fear, and she dashed forward to where the bodies lay—black shadows on the blacker ground.

Both faces were upturned, her father's distorted, passion-marred, the other—she recoiled in terrified surprise—mixed with a ghastly relief—the other was not Gerald.

She threw herself on her father's body and shook the stiffening shoulders, trying to rouse him. "Father, oh, speak to me, one word!" She kissed the stark face, already wet with the damp that was not the dew of night.

Then the other, the stranger, moaned. He was not dead. She must find help. Her father's murderer, yet he must not lie helpless, dying. With the speed of an awful fear she ran back to the tavern for help.

Then from out the shadow stole another shape, grim and gaunt, with a tall buzzard's plume waving above the sloping brow. With a gratified grunt of revenge, the Indian bent over the dead man. Forth he drew the arrow and threw it away. The blood followed from a wound in the neck—a wound deep and jagged.

Then he turned to the other body, and his features relaxed their sternness, and he uttered a few pitying words in the Osage tongue. Placing his hand over Winslow's heart, he heard responsive throbbing. So he was not dead. Lifting him to a position that was more comfortable, he stood over him in upright dreary sentinelship. He heard foot steps approaching, then stole back into shadow, taking care to watch—himself out of sight.

The newcomer was Gerald Creighton, who, leaving the dance, had come to the pollard willow. But, instead of a sweet heart, keeping tryst, he found—what he had left.

The Indian, watching him from the covert, saw him start back in dismay then bend ruefully above the fallen men.

Rising, he looked about. "Sue!" he called—soft, at first, then louder: "Sue!"

There was an answering hallo, as a crowd of men from the tavern reached the spot, the girl leading.

(To Be Continued.)

BIG NEW SHOE BUILDING.

It Is Dedicated by the W. L. Douglas Co. at Brockton.

The dedication a short time ago of the new administration and jobbing house building erected by the W. L. Douglas Shoe Co. as a part of its mammoth manufacturing plant at Montello was marked by the thoroughness and attention to detail characteristic of the firm in all its undertakings.

The dedicatory program included open house from 11 a. m. to 8 p. m. with concert by the Mace Gay orchestra and the presence of a Boston caterer to attend to the wishes of all. The building itself afforded a feast for the eye, especially the offices, which are marvels in many ways. Fifteen thousand invitations were sent out, including over 11,000 to the retail dealers in the United States who handle the W. L. Douglas Co. shoes, the others going to shoe manufacturers and all allied industries in Brockton and vicinity. Mr. Douglas will be glad to have anybody who is interested call and inspect the new plant, and says "the latch string is always out." All departments of the plant were open for inspection and the three factories as well as the new building, and visitors were received and escorted through the industrial maze by ex-Gov. Douglas, assisted by the heads of the various departments.

Under the present system all shoes are manufactured to order, and customers sometimes lose sales waiting for shoes to arrive. With the new jobbing house they will be enabled to have their hurry orders shipped the same day they are received.

The new building is 260 feet long and 60 feet wide and two stories in height. The jobbing department will occupy the entire lower floor, while the offices will occupy the second floor. The jobbing department will carry a complete stock of men's, boys', youths', misses' and children's shoes, slippers, rubbers and findings equal to any jobbing house in the country. Buyers are especially invited to come here to trade, and every effort possible will be made to suit their convenience. There will be a finely appointed sample room on the second floor, with an office in which both telephone and telegraph will be installed, with operators, both Western Union and Postal Telegraph wires to be used. There will also be arrangements for the receipt and despatch of mail.

PECULIAR MEANS OF DEFENSE

Small Daggers of Light Sent Out by the Centipede.

Among the peculiar powers of animals there are none harder to explain than the power of being self-luminous. It is sometimes, termed phosphorescence, but it is not now supposed to depend upon phosphorus in the animal. A correspondent of Nature describes her experience with a luminous centipede which shows the evident purpose of the luminous substance as a means of defense. Attention was first attracted by a light of brilliant bluish-green that moved forward over the gravel, leaving behind a trail of light, which, gradually separating, became a scattered mass of brilliant points. The scattered points proved to be red ants, which were pursuing the centipede. It had discharged this luminous liquid over them. The centipede was picked up and put in a tumbler where it flashed out a mass of light. When the hand was placed over the tumbler to prevent the escape of the captive, a strange prickly sensation was felt as from a slight charge of electricity. The centipede would writhe the light out of its body in blue-green flashes until it had exhausted its luminosity and ceased to shine. Defense seems certainly to be one of the uses of this secretion.

Drawing the Line.

We have followed the plow, wielded the hoe, served time on the public roads under an austere overseer, swept the backyard, worked the garden, churned the butter, washed the dishes, nursed the baby and performed other various and sundry disagreeable tasks in our times without a murmur, but when it comes to cleaning streets under three lady bosses—excuse us, please. Three women to boss you. Great Caesar's ghost! Just the thoughts of such a catastrophe is enough to give a man the "buck-ague."—Minden (La.) Signal

Intoxicants in Vegetables.

Vegetables not only contain stimulants but are capable of producing an intoxicating influence on those who depend on them exclusively for food, according to an investigator. He cites a case in which some young people of his acquaintance suffered from partial intoxication as the result of a purely vegetable meal.

A WINNING START.

A Perfectly Digested Breakfast Makes Nerve Force for the Day.

Everything goes wrong if the breakfast lies in your stomach like a mud pie. What you eat does harm if you can't digest it—it turns to poison.

A bright lady teacher found this to be true, even of an ordinary light breakfast of eggs and toast. She says:

"Two years ago I contracted a very annoying form of indigestion. My stomach was in such a condition that a simple breakfast of fruit, toast and eggs gave me great distress.

"I was slow to believe that trouble could come from such a simple diet but finally had to give it up, and found a great change upon a cup of hot Postum and Grape-Nuts with cream, for my morning meal. For more than a year I have held to this course and have not suffered except when injudiciously varying my diet.

"I have been a teacher for several years and find that my easily digested breakfast means a saving of nervous force for the entire day. My gain of ten pounds in weight also causes me to want to testify to the value of Grape-Nuts.

"Grape-Nuts holds first rank at our table."

Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

"There's a reason." Read the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs.

SORES ON HANDS.

Suffered for a Long Time Without Relief—Doctor Was Afraid to Touch Them—Cured by Cuticura.

"For a long time I suffered with sores on the hands which were itching, painful and disagreeable. I had three doctors, and derived no benefit from any of them. One doctor said he was afraid to touch my hands, so you must know how bad they were; another said I never could be cured, and the third said the sores were caused by the dipping of my hands in the water in the dye-house where I work. I saw in the papers about the wonderful cures of the Cuticura Remedies and procured some of the Cuticura Soap and Cuticura Ointment. In three days after the application of the Cuticura Ointment my hands began to peel and were better. The soreness disappeared, and they are now smooth and clean, and I am still working in the dye-house.—Mrs. A. E. Masters, 2340 State St., Chicago, Ill., July 1, 1905."

ANYTHING FOR FILTHY LUCRE

Writer's Cynical Justification of Mean Piece of Work.

A certain gifted writer of whom it was once said that he wouldn't recognize his wife if he met her on the street wrote a charming love story not so long ago, and it was printed in a popular magazine. His friends and all those of the circle in which the author moved recognized the story as an exact and recent transcript from the life of the writer, involving a very beautiful young woman, also well known in the same set. One man, coming across the author, took him to task for it.

"What in the world did you write up that affair with Miss Blank for?" he demanded.

The author looked at him unmoved and with the same exquisite calm and clearness that characterized his work, replied:

"I needed the money."

The University of Notre Dame, it appears, has some features that can not be duplicated in any other school. It is one of the old, well-established colleges, with settled traditions dating back sixty-four years, with a distinguished staff of professors and excellent library and laboratory equipment. Its discipline is of the paternal kind—strong without being oppressive; and it embraces in its scope the grammar school, high school and college work, its appeal is as broad as it is potent. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the famous Indiana University, however, is the fact that it has arrived at its present marvelous development absolutely without endowment. An announcement of the courses provided at Notre Dame appears on another page.

Rich Women Have Troubles.

The idea that fashionable women are too busy and had too many interests to feel acute sorrow over their broken crockery was disproved the other day when Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish went into the principal dry goods store in Newport with a friend who stopped to watch a man who was selling cement for cut glass and called to Mrs. Fish: "Oh, here is a cement for cut glass which not only mends it but makes it ring as clearly as if it were new." Mrs. Fish called back: "My servants break so much of my glass now that it is heartbreaking and if they knew it were possible to mend it they would break it all, so I don't care for any, thank you."

NEAR DEATH THROUGH SNAKE

Sleeper Awoke to Find Monster Coiled Around His Neck.

F. E. Feve, an employe of the Northern Electric, had a thrilling experience with a snake Tuesday morning. Feve with two companions occupies a tent made out of gunny sacks in the western portion of Oroville.

He was awakened by a feeling of strangulation. He attempted to cry out, but so tightly was his throat bound that he could make no sound. As he became fully awake he realized that something must be done or he would choke. He grabbed frantically for his throat and his hand slipped over the scales of a huge snake which had coiled itself around his neck. He frantically pulled the coils loose, the reptile resisting him and biting him in the cheek.

His two companions, awakened by the noise, came to Feve's rescue. The two pulled the snake away and threw it to the floor where it glided away while the men attended to Mr. Feve's wound. The reptile was a gopher snake.—Redding Correspondence San Francsco Call.

All creameries use butter color. Why not do as they do—use JUNE TINT BUTTER COLOR.

As a rule, a divorced woman acts as though she had been born that way.

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For children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic. 25c a bottle.

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Sir Andrew Fraser, governor of Bengal, virtual ruler of 80,000,000 people, is the active president of the Calcutta Y. M. C. A.

To Wash Velveteen.
Velveteen may be washed by shaking it about in warm Ivory Soap suds; then rinse thoroughly and let it drip dry. On no account squeeze or wring it. Be careful to hang it straight on the line, for otherwise it will be crooked when dry.
ELEANOR R. PARKER.

King Doing Equestrian Stunts.
King Edward has taken to equestrian exercise as a means of keeping his weight down. Since the rabbit hole mishap, which lamed him, his majesty has been unable to take walking exercise.

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en route to Niagara Falls, Muskoka and Kawartha Lakes, Georgian Bay and Temegami Region, St. Lawrence River and Rapids, Thousand Islands, Algonquin National Park, White Mountains and Atlantic Sea Coast resorts, via Grand Trunk Railway System. Double track Chicago to Montreal and Niagara Falls, N. Y.

For copies of tourist publications and descriptive pamphlets apply to Geo. W. Vaux, A. G. P. & T. A., 135 Adams St., Chicago.

Nicotine in Tobacco.
A scientist writes: "The essential quality for which tobacco is smoked or chewed lies not really in the leaves themselves, but is contained in thousands of hollow-knobbed hairs which cover their surface. The vital nicotine is garnered in these pearlike balls, but as it is impossible to shave off these hairs, and would be a scarcely commendable achievement if it could be undertaken, it becomes necessary to preserve the whole foliage for commercial purposes."

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Dr. E. J. Dennis, of St. Louis, Mo., says: "I have used and prescribed your Castoria in my sanitarium and outside practice for a number of years and find it to be an excellent remedy for children."

Dr. S. A. Buchanan, of Philadelphia, Pa., says: "I have used your Castoria in the case of my own baby and find it pleasant to take, and have obtained excellent results from its use."

Dr. J. E. Simpson, of Chicago, Ill., says: "I have used your Castoria in cases of colic in children and have found it the best medicine of its kind on the market."

Dr. R. L. Eskildson, of Omaha, Neb., says: "I find your Castoria to be a standard family remedy. It is the best thing for infants and children I have ever known and I recommend it."

Dr. L. R. Robinson, of Kansas City, Mo., says: "Your Castoria certainly has merit. Is not its age, its continued use by mothers through all these years, and the many attempts to imitate it, sufficient recommendation? What can a physician add? I leave it to the mothers."

Dr. Edwin P. Pardee, of New York City, says: "For several years I have recommended your Castoria and shall always continue to do so, as it has invariably produced beneficial results."

Dr. N. B. Sizer, of Brooklyn, N. Y., says: "I object to what are called patent medicines, where maker alone knows what ingredients are put in them, but I know the formula of your Castoria and advise its use."

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