



The TRIFLERS

Frederick Grim Bartlett

(Copyright)

CHAPTER XXI.—(Cont'd.)

"You mean—"
He placed his hand upon her arm, and she ventured one more look into his eyes. He was frowning. She must not allow that. She must send him away in good spirits. That was the least she could do. So she forced a smile.
"All right," she promised; "if it will make you more comfortable."
"It would worry me a lot if I thought you weren't going to be happy."
"I'll go out every fair day."
"That's fine."
He took a card from his pocket and scribbled his banker's address upon it.
"If anything should come up where—where I can be of any use, you can always reach me through this address."
She took the card. Even to the end he was good—good and four-square. He was so good that her throat ached. She could not endure this very much longer. He extended his hand.
"S'long and good luck," he said.
"I—I hope your golf will be better than you think."
Then he said a peculiar thing. He seldom swore, and seldom lost his head as completely as he did that second. But, looking her full in the eyes, he ejaculated below his breath:—"Damn golf!"
The observation was utterly irrelevant. Turning, he clicked his heels together like a soldier and went out. The door closed behind him. For a second her face was illumined as with a great joy. In a sort of ecstasy, she repeated his words.
"He said," she whispered—"he said, 'Damn golf.'" Then she threw herself into a wicker chair and began to sob.
"Oh!" she choked. "If—if—"

"Good Lord!" exclaimed Peter. "There's a mistake there somewhere."
"The mistake came first," she ran on. "Oh, I don't know why I'm telling you these things, except that it is a relief to tell them to some one."
"Tell me all about it," he encouraged her. "I knew there was something on your mind."
"Peter," she said earnestly, "can you imagine a woman so selfish that she wanted to marry just to escape the responsibilities of marriage?"
"It isn't possible," he declared.
Her cheeks were a vivid scarlet. Had he been able to see them, she could not have gone on.
"A woman so selfish," she faltered ahead, "that she preferred a make-believe husband to a real husband, because—because so she thought she would be left free."
"Free for what?" he demanded.
"To live."
"When love and marriage and children are all there is to life?" he asked.
She caught her breath.
"You see, she did not know that then. She thought all those things called for the sacrifice of her freedom."
"What freedom?" he demanded again. "It's when we're alone that we're slaves—slaves to ourselves. A woman alone, a man alone, living to himself alone—what is there for him? He can only go around and around in a pitifully small circle—a circle that grows smaller and smaller with every year. Between twenty and thirty a man can exhaust all there is in life for himself alone. He has eaten and slept and travelled and played until his senses have become dull. Perhaps a woman lasts a little longer, but not much longer. Then they are locked away in themselves until they die."
"Peter!" she cried in terror.
"It's only as we live in others that we live forever," he ran on. "It is only by toiling and sacrificing and suffering and loving that we become immortal. It is so we acquire real freedom."
"Yes, Peter," she agreed, with a gasp.
"Couldn't you make her understand that?"
"She does understand. That's the pity of it."
"And Covington?"
"It's in him to understand; only—she lost the right to make him understand. She—she debased herself. So she must sacrifice herself to get clean again. She must make even greater sacrifices than any she cowed away from. She must do this without any of the compensations that comes to those who have been honest and unafraid."
"What of him?"
"He must never know. He'll go round and round his little circle, and she must watch him."
"It's terrible," he murmured. "It will be terrible for her to watch him do that. If you had told him how she felt—"
"God forbid!"
"Or if you had only told me, so that I could have told him—"
She seized Peter's arm.
"You wouldn't have dared!"
"I'd dare anything to save two people from such torment."
"You—you don't think he will worry?"
"I think he is worrying a great deal."
"Only for the moment," she broke in. "But soon—in a week or two—he will be quite himself again. He has a great many things to do. He has tennis and—and golf."
She checked herself abruptly. ("Damn golf!" Monte had said.)
"There's too much of a man in him now to be satisfied with such things," said Peter. "It's a pity—it's a pity there are not two of you, Marjory."
"Of me?"
"He thinks a great deal of you. If he had met you before he met this other—"
"What are you saying, Peter?"
"That you're the sort of woman who could have called out in him an honest love."
There, beside Peter who could not see, Marjory bent low and buried her face in her hands.
"You're the sort of woman," he went on, "who could have roused the man in him that has been waiting all this time for some one like you."
How Peter was hurting her! How he was pinching her with hot-hot irons! It hurt so much that she was glad. Here, at last, she was beginning her sacrifice for Monte. So she made neither moan nor groan, nor covered her ears, but took her punishment like a man.
"Some one else must do all that," she said.
"Yes," he answered. "Or his life will be wasted. He needs to suffer. He needs to give up. This thing we call a tragedy may be the making of him."
"For some one else," she repeated. Peter was fumbling about for her hand. Suddenly she straightened herself.
"It must be for some one else," he said hoarsely—"because I want you for myself. In time—you must be mine. With the experience of those two before us, we mustn't make the

same mistake ourselves. I—I wasn't going to tell you this until I had my eyes back. But, heart o' mine, I've held in so long. Here in the dark one gets so much alone. And being alone is what kills."
She was hiding her hand from him. "I can't find your hand," he whispered, like a child lost in the dark.
Summoning all her strength, she placed her hand within his. "It is cold!" he cried.
Yet the day was warm. They were speeding through a sunlit country of olive trees and flowers in bloom—a warm world and tender.
He drew her fingers to his lips and kissed them passionately. She suffered it, closing her eyes against the pain.
"I've wanted you so all these months!" he cried. "I shouldn't have let you go in the first place. I shouldn't have let you go."
"No, Peter," she answered.
"And now that I've found you again, you'll stay?"
He was lifting his face to hers—straining to see her. To have answered any way but as he pleaded would have been to strike that up-turned face.
"I—I'll try to stay," she faltered.
"I'll make you!" he breathed. "I'll hold you tight, soul of mine. Would you—would you kiss my eyes?"
Holding her breath, Marjory lightly brushed each of his eyes with her lips.
"It's like balm," he whispered. "I've dreamed at night of this."
"Every day I'll do it," she said. "Only—for a little while—you'll not ask for anything more, Peter?"
"Not until some day they open—in answer to that call," he replied.
"I didn't mean that, Peter," she said hurriedly. "Only I'm so mixed up myself."
"It's so new to you," he nodded. "To me it's like a day foreseen a dozen years. Long before I saw you I knew I was getting ready for you. Now—what do a few weeks matter?"
"It may be months, Peter, before I'm quite steady."
"Even if it's years," he exclaimed, "I've felt your lips."
"Only on your eyes," she cried in terror.
"I—I wouldn't dare to feel them except on my eyes—for a little while. Even there they take away my breath."
(To be continued.)

together by 1,000,000 acres. When in 1917 820,645 men were taken from industrial organizations and placed in the Army the War Office replaced them with 804,000 women, and yet the production of guns was increased 30 per cent., air craft 250 per cent., while the shipping tonnage amounted to 1,165,000 tons, additional.

The best recent illustration of what can be done in an emergency when only inexperienced men are available is that of the battle of Picardy when the fifth army under General Gough was overwhelmed and out-numbered. It looked inevitable that the Huns would break through and capture the city of Amiens, which would have meant the interruption of railway communication between Channel ports and Paris, cutting off the British from one of their chief bases of supplies. General Carey, however, saved the situation. He called upon all classes of men behind the lines, whether they were soldiers, cooks, camp followers, railway construction men, Chinese laborers, medical service men, transport men, or whatever they were and organized them to fill the breach. With these men he succeeded in doing what the 5th Army failed to do—he held the line! With no training in trench warfare, and no fighting organization before that time, General Carey gathered them together, and this nondescript gathering of troops kept the Huns back for six days and nights until re-enforcements arrived. General Carey did not say "I can't use this untrained class of men," but he set to work without a moment's hesitation to make the best of them, and he succeeded in saving the British army and its allies from a desperate crisis.

Similarly, if the Canadian farmer makes up his mind that these are war times and war measures are necessary there is absolutely no doubt he can utilize to a tremendous advantage the man power and the woman power of the towns, where people are only too willing to go to his assistance, if they are organized to do so. He must not expect them to be experienced and to know as much about the details of farm work as he does. It has taken him a life-time to acquire his information. Townspeople have spent their lives at different work, but with his knowledge of farming and his intimate acquaintance with his farm and all its needs he should have the ability to organize inexperienced help and show each helper his or her particular job and how best to accomplish it. A few hours' patient teaching in any one particular line of work will very soon enable a green-horn to "Carry on," as they say in the Army. By patience and consideration the farmers of Canada can, without question, effect an organization from green but willing help from town that will not only surprise themselves but will also be of tremendous bene-

Food Control Corner

The farmers of Canada will very shortly have to undertake the harvest work with the help of green labor. In this connection they should remember that we are at war. They should adjust the work throughout the farm to suit the new conditions, and they should begin right in their own minds. The first adjustment necessary is to change the point of view from one of criticism, discouragement, and fault-finding with labor conditions, to that of the soldier and war worker, and realize that we are going through a crisis, the most serious the world has ever witnessed—without any exaggeration whatsoever.

There used to be talk among farmers derogatory to the city man and other inexperienced laborers who sometimes sought employment temporarily on the farm. Such talk is out of place now, with the Germans sixty miles from Paris and every available man in Britain and France fighting to save not only his own country but this country as well. Such Canadian farmers forget that they themselves have been farmers all their lives and in war time they can't expect to secure men volunteering from the cities with an experience in farm work equal to their own. That is an impossibility. But it is not impossible that farm production of this country be increased, despite the shortage of experienced labor. That this is true is proven by the experience of this country in the manufacture of munitions.

When the war started Canada was absolutely inexperienced, unskilled in, and without the machinery for the manufacture of munitions. But the manufacturers got to work. They studied the problem and they solved it.

To-day Canada is turning out millions of dollars worth of shells every month from the largest to the smallest, and the most minute mechanical contrivances in connection with fuses and time charges. Canada's record in the manufacture of munitions is one of the surprises of the war. It was not made by Canada saying "Canada Can't" but by adopting the motto "Canada Can". Canada did not refuse to try because of the scarcity of labor but set to work to organize and employed men and girls who had never been inside a factory before. They accomplished the impossible! These inexperienced helpers were speedily taught their parts and the result is shown in the products of munitions from Canadian factories now known all over the world—not excepting Germany.

The result of organization and the willing wartime spirit in Great Britain is equally convincing. Great Britain last year, largely with inexperienced labor on the land, increased her cereal production by 850,000 tons, its potato production by 5,000,000 tons. The cultivated area was increased al-

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