



CHAPTER XVI.—Continued.

—19—
"I am all right. I'm resting, dear, and thinking. Don't fret about me. When I feel able, I will come down to you."
"As you will," he assented, unspokenly relieved; and returned to the kitchen.
Sunset interrupted his thoughts—sunset and his wife. Sounds of someone moving quietly round the kitchen, a soft clash of dishes, the rattling of the grate, drew him back to the door.
She showed him a face of calm restraint and implacable resolve.
"Hugh"—her voice had found a new, sweet level of gentleness and strength—"I just wanted to tell you how sorry I am. I've let you go without your lunch."
"Well," he admitted with a short laugh, "I'm famished!"
She paused, regarding him with her whimsical, indulgent smile. "You strange creature!" she said softly. "Are you angry with me—impatient—for this too facile descent from heroics to the commonplace? Be patient with me, dear."
But, alarmed by his expression, her words stumbled and ran out. She stepped back a pace, a little flushed and tremulous.
"Hugh! No, Hugh, no!"
"Don't be afraid of me," he said, turning away. "I don't mean to bother. Only—at times—"
"I know, dear; but it must not be." "Shall you make a fire again tonight?" she asked, when they had concluded the meal.
"In three places," he said. "We'll not stay another day for want of letting people know we're here. I'll go now. When you are ready—"
"I shan't be long," she said.
When it was quite dark, Whitaker brought a lantern to the door and called her, and they went forth together.
As he had promised, he had built up three towering pyres, widely apart. When all three were in full roaring flame, their illumination was hot and glowing over all the upland. It seemed impossible that the world should not now become cognizant of their distress.
At some distance to the north of the farm-house—they sat as on the previous night, looking out over the black and unresponsive waters, communing together in undertones.
In that hour they learned much of one another; much that had seemed strange and questionable assumed, in the understanding of each, the complexion of the normal and right. Whitaker spoke at length and in much detail of his Willful Missing years without seeking to excuse the wrong-minded reasoning which had won him his own consent to live under the mask of death. He told of the motives that had prompted his return, of all that had happened since in which she had had no part—with a single reservation. One thing he kept back; and the time for that was not yet.
A listener in his turn, he heard the history of the little girl of the Commercial House breaking her heart against the hardness of life in what at first seemed utterly futile endeavor to live by her own efforts, asking nothing more of the man who had given her his name.
He learned of the coming of Max, his interest in her, the indefatigable pains he had expended coaxing her to bring out the latent ability his own genius divined; of the initial performance of "Joan Thursday" before a meager and indifferent audience, her instant triumph and subsequent conquest of the country in half a dozen widely dissimilar roles; finally of her decision to leave the stage when she married, for reasons comprehensible, demanding neither exposition nor defence.
"It doesn't matter any longer," she commented, concluding. "I loved and I hated it. It was deadly and it was glorious. But it no longer matters. It is finished; Sara Law is no more."
"You mean never to go back to the stage?"
"Never."
"And yet—" he mused craftily.
"Never!" She fell blindly into his trap. "I promised myself long ago that if ever I became a wife—"

here." A hand strayed to rest, fluttering, above her heart. "If I should let you go . . . Oh, my dear one, don't, don't go!"
"Mary," he began hoarsely, "I tell you—"
"You're only going, Hugh, because . . . because I love you so I . . . I am afraid to let you love me. That's true, isn't it? Hugh—it's true?"
He mumbled an almost inaudible avowal of his intention.
"Hugh, you're killing me! If you love me—"
He gave a gesture of despair and capitulation.
"I've done my best, Mary. I meant to do the right thing. I—"
"Hugh, you mean you won't go?" Joy from a surcharged heart rang vibrant in every syllable uttered in that marvelous voice.
But now he dared meet her eyes. "Yes," he said, "I won't go—" nodding, with an apologetic shadow of his twisted smile. "I can't if . . . it distresses you."
"Oh, my dear, my dear!"
Whitaker started, staggered with amaze, and the burden of his wife in his arms. Her own arms clipped him close. Her fragrant, tear-gemmed face brushed his. He knew at last the warmth of her sweet mouth, the dear madness of that first caress.
Then through the magical hush of that time when the world stood still, the thin, clear vibrations of a distant hall:
"Aho-oy!"
In his embrace his wife stiffened and lifted her head to listen like a startled fawn.
"Listen!" He held up his hand.
This time it rang out more near and most unmistakable:
"Aho-oy! The house, aho-oy!"
With the frenzied leap of a madman, Whitaker flung out into the dim, silvery witchery of the night. He stood staring, while the girl stole to his side and caught his arm. He passed it round her, lifted the other hand, dumbly pointed toward the northern beach. For the moment he could not trust himself to speak.
In the sweep of the anchorage a small, white yacht hovered ghostlike.
On the beach itself a small boat was drawn up. A figure in white waited near it. Rising over the brow of the uplands moved two other figures in white and one in darker clothing, the latter leading the way at a rapid pace. As they drew together, the leader of the landing party checked his pace and called:
"Hello there! Who are you? What's the meaning of your fires—?"
Mechanically Whitaker's lips uttered the beginning of the response:
"Shipwrecked—signaling for help—"
"Whitaker!" the voice of the other interrupted with a jubilant shout. "Thank God we've found you!"
It was Ember.

CHAPTER XVII.
Disappearance.
Seldom, perhaps, has a habitation been so unceremoniously vacated as was the solitary farmhouse on that isolated island. Whitaker delayed only long enough to place a bill, borrowed from Ember, on the kitchen table, in payment for what provisions they had consumed, and to extinguish the lamps and shut the door.
Ten minutes later he occupied a chair beneath an awning on the after deck of the yacht, and, with a blessed cigar fuming in the grip of his teeth, stared back to where their rock of refuge was swiftly blending into a small dark blur upon the face of the waters.
"Ember," he demanded querulously, "what the devil is that place?"
"You didn't know?" Ember asked, amused. "It is No Man's Land."
"I'm strong for its sponsors in baptism. And the other—?"
"Martha's Vineyard. That's Gay head—the headland with the light-house. Off to the north of it, the Elizabeth Islands. If we're lucky, we'll be at anchor off East Twenty-fourth street by nine o'clock tomorrow morning. Any kick coming?"
"Not for me. You might better consult—my wife," said Whitaker with an embarrassed laugh. "Look here: I've told you how things were with us, in brief; but I'm hanged if you've disgorged a single word of explanation as to how you came to let Drummond slip through your fingers, to say nothing of how you managed to find us."
"He didn't slip through my fingers," Ember retorted. "He launched a young earthquake at my devoted head and disappeared before the dust settled. I came to some time later with a gag in my mouth, handcuffs on my wrists, behind my back, and rope round my legs. Midnight the following night, the owner happened along and let me loose."
"It was easy enough to surmise Drummond had some pal or other working with him—I was slungshot from behind, while Drummond was walking ahead. And two men had worked in the kidnaping of Mrs. Whitaker. So I went sleuthing; traced you as far as Sag Harbor. There I lost you—and there I borrowed this outfit from a friend, an old-time client of mine. We kept cruising, looking up unlikely places. And, at that, we were

on the point of throwing up the sponge when I picked up a schooner that reported signal fires on No Man's Land. . . . I think that clears everything up."
"Yes," said Whitaker sleepily.
And so strong was his need of sleep that it was not until ten o'clock the following morning, when the yacht lay at her mooring in the East river, that Ember succeeded in rousing him by main strength and good-will.
His wife had gone ashore an hour ago, after refusing to listen to a suggestion that Whitaker be disturbed. The note Ember handed him was brief, but in Whitaker's sight eminently adequate and compensating.
Dearest Boy: I won't let them wake you, but I must run away. It's early and I must do some shopping before people are about. My house here is closed; Mrs. Secretan is in Maine with the only keys aside from those at Great West Bay; and I'm a positive freight in a coat and skirt borrowed from the stewardess. I don't want even you to see me until I'm decently dressed. I shall put up at the Waldorf; come there tonight, and we will dine together. Every fiber of my being loves you.
MARY.
Whitaker took a serene and shining face to the breakfast in the saloon, under the eyes of Ember. Toward noon they parted ashore, each taking a taxicab to his lodgings. The understanding was that they were to dine together—all three, Whitaker promising for his wife upon the morrow.
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

COMBINATION SURE TO WIN
With Ideas and Industry Ninety Men Out of Every Hundred Will Achieve Success.
Some self-conceited philosopher has said that genius is nothing but an infinite capacity for untiring application. It would seem that this attempt to define genius would apply more appropriately to talent. It is also an obvious fact that many people, thoughtful otherwise, use language loosely. We would think the remark quoted above a case in point, observes the Los Angeles Times.
There is no doubt that talent, to make itself effective, requires untiring effort and unlimited application. Given talent and application, success is sure to follow in any man's career. Many of us are very much inclined to find fault with society and lay all our failure to succeed at its door. Society is not a concrete fact. It is simply an abstraction invented to represent humanity in the aggregate. Nature has been very niggardly in her gifts to many of us, and where this is so no amount of effort, no matter how continuously it is applied can lead to large success.
Those who find fault with society as the cause of their failure are wrong. Given a fair amount of talent—that is, brains—and untiring application, and success will be achieved, ninety-nine times out of every hundred. This may be proved by reference to any walk in life to which human beings apply themselves to reach success.

Deadly Mysterious Disease.
The China Mail reports that a mysterious disease which paralyzes the stomach and ascends to the heart, causing syncope, has overtaken a gang of Knowlton dock Chinese hands who have been engaged in salvaging the S. S. Wisley, which ran aground off Saigon a couple of months ago. The work was delayed through the dread epidemic, which has taken hold of the workers. The Blue Funnel S. S. Telamachus brought up from Cape Barilla a few survivors who were at once conveyed to a hospital where their condition has been watched with much concern by the medical fraternity. So far the disease has not been diagnosed. The captain of the Blue Funnel boat said when he called at Cape Barilla he was informed that a virulent disease had broken out among the Chinese salvage crew and seven of them had died. Fifty-eight were taken on board and hurried with all dispatch to Hong-Kong.

Realize the Good You Desire.
He who knows the spirit of law is not forced to stand powerless in anguish of heart before wasting sickness. Strive with all the power within you (and it is great if you but recognize it) to break down the walls of belief that any evil can dominate you. Cast out the error that stands between you and the greatest good you desire. As surely as the sunlight of day melts into the purple twilight of evening, so surely do you strike sturdy, determined blows against the prison walls of delusion and false belief. Not a pain but will vanish when the wise tongue gives it the lie. Not a misfortune but will give place to peace and joy when the wise tongue speaks truth concerning it.—Unity.

American Rice Production Felt.
About 2,000,000 natives of Siam are engaged in the cultivation of rice, but the large increase in the production of American rice is having the effect of reducing the Siam crop.

Eliminating Possibilities.
"What's the pipe of peace, Jimmy?"
"Well, from the way pa and ma fight about it, it ain't the stove pipe."

PUBLIC ROADS

WAR ROAD BUILDING POLICY

In Communication to Highway Officials, Secretary Houston Outlines Government Plan.

Secretary Houston of the department of agriculture in a communication to the American Association of State Highway Officials has set forth squarely the policy which he thinks should be followed in highway construction during the war. Secretary Houston says:
"So far as it is practicable to do so, this department will urge the maintenance of the highways already constructed; the construction and completion of those highways which are vitally important because of their bearing upon the war situation or for the movement of commodities; the postponement of all highway construction relatively less essential or not based upon important military or economic needs. The department is preparing to suggest to the state highway departments the preparation of a schedule of work for the federal aid projects for 1918 in line with this policy."
In carrying out the policy thus announced there has been sent out by the office of public roads of the department of agriculture schedule forms on which the states are requested to set forth their proposed federal aid work for their 1918 working season. These schedules call for a description of each road, the character, quantity and rail haul of the materials to be used, the probable cost, the amount of federal funds desired, the specific purpose of the improvement, its bearing upon the war situation, and what effect a delay of the work until 1919 or later would have. With the information thus assembled and classified, an efficient road construction program is assured. While it is impossible to make any definite statement regarding the transportation of road materials, the expectations are that the transportation situation will be improved and that the shipment of such materials for essential projects can be made.
Road construction and maintenance in the United States involve an annual expenditure of some \$300,000,000, and there is scarcely a section of the country that is not seriously affected by a marked disturbance in road work.

CONDEMN TYPE OF HIGHWAYS
Layman Often Errs in Passing Judgment on Type When Poor Maintenance Is to Blame.
The following is taken from a paper by E. H. Piepmeyer, maintenance engineer, highway department, state of Illinois. It touches a subject upon which every layman who uses the public roads should inform himself:
"Many different types of roads have been condemned by the public chiefly on account of the lack of proper maintenance. The proper type of road may be selected by the engineer, but if he has no means of controlling maintenance his choice may be condemned by the average layman.
"Public sentiment is molded largely by the results that are evident to the eye, regardless of the money actually expended." It is not uncommon to



Good Road in Illinois.

hear the layman say that certain roads are very expensive and unsatisfactory. He often passes judgment upon a road and condemns it without any investigation of its cost or how economical and satisfactory it might be if properly maintained.
"The average road engineer is confronted with the problem of educating the public to an appreciation of the principles of economy in road improvement as much as with technical matters, such as the selection of a type of pavement and the method of properly maintaining after construction."