

"K."

(Continued from page 6, column 4.)

marries her. But he'll not be true to her; I know the type now."

K. leaned back with a flicker of pain in his eyes.

"What can I do about it?"

As true as he was, he did not suspect that Christine was using this method to fathom his feeling for Sidney. Perhaps she hardly knew it herself.

"You might marry her yourself, K."

But he had himself in hand by this time, and she learned nothing from either his voice or his eyes.

"On twenty dollars a week? And without so much as asking her consent?" He dropped his light tone. "I'm not in a position to marry anybody. Even if Sidney cared for me, which she doesn't, of course."

"Then you don't intend to interfere? You're going to let the Street see another failure?"

"I think you can understand," said K. rather wearily, "that if I cared less, Christine, it would be easier to interfere."

After all, Christine had known this, or surmised it, for weeks. But it hurt like a fresh stab in an old wound. It was K. who spoke again after a pause: "The deadly hard thing, of course, is to sit by and see things happening that one—that one would naturally try to prevent."

"I don't believe that you have always been of those who only stand and wait," said Christine. "Sometimes, K., when you know me better and like me better, I want you to tell me about it, will you?"

"There's very little to tell. I held a trust. When I discovered that I was unfit to hold that trust any longer, I quit. That's all."

His tone of finality closed the discussion. But Christine's eyes were on him often that evening, puzzled, rather sad.

They talked of books, of music—Christine played well in a dashing way. K. had brought her soft, tender little things, and had stood over her until her noisy touch became gentle. She played for him a little, while he sat back in the big chair with his hand screening his eyes.

When, at last, he rose and picked up his cap, it was nine o'clock.

"I've taken your whole evening," he said remorsefully. "Why don't you tell me I am a nuisance and send me off?"

Christine was still at the piano, her hands on the keys. She spoke without looking at him.

"You're never a nuisance, K., and—"

Something in her tone caught his attention.

"I forgot to tell you," she went on. "Father has given Palmer five thousand dollars. He's going to buy a share in a business."

"That's fine."

"Possibly. I don't believe much in Palmer's business ventures."

Her flat tone still held him. Underneath it he divined strain and repression.

"I hate to go and leave you alone," he said at last from the door. "Have you any idea when Palmer will be back?"

"Not the slightest. K., will you come here a moment? Stand behind me; I don't want to see you, and I want to tell you something."

He did as she bade him, rather puzzled.

"Here I am."

"I think I am a fool for saying this. Perhaps I am spoiling the only chance I have to get any happiness out of life. But I was terribly unhappy, K., and then you came into my life, and I—now I listen for your step in the hall, I can't be a hypocrite any longer, K."

When he stood behind her, silent and not moving, she turned slowly about and faced him. He towered there in the little room, grave eyes on hers.

"It's a long time since I have had a woman friend, Christine," he said soberly. "Your friendship has meant a good deal. In a good many ways, I'd not care to look ahead if it were not for you. I value our friendship so much that I—"

"That you don't want to spoil it," she finished for him. "I know you don't care for me, K., not the way I—But I wanted you to know. It doesn't hurt a good man to know such a thing. And it— isn't going to stop your coming here, is it?"

"Of course not," said K. heartily. "But tomorrow, when we are both clear-headed, we will talk this over. You are mistaken about this thing, Christine; I am sure of that. Things have not been going well, and just because I am always around, and all that sort of thing, you think things that aren't really so. I'm only a reaction, Christine."

He tried to make her smile up at him. But just then she could not smile.

If she had cried, things might have been different for everyone; for perhaps K. would have taken her in his arms. He was heart-hungry enough, those days, for anything. And perhaps, too, being intuitive, Christine felt this. But she had no mind to force him into a situation against his will.

"It is because you are good," she said, and held out her hand. "Good-night."

Le Moyne took it and bent over and kissed it lightly. There was in the kiss all that he could not say of respect, of affection and understanding.

"Good-night, Christine," he said, and went into the hall and upstairs. The lamp was not lighted in his room, but the street light glowed through the windows. Once again the waving fronds of the allanhus tree flung ghostly shadows on the walls. There was a faint sweet odor of blossoms, so soon to become rank and heavy.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Sidney went into the operating room late in the spring as the result of a conversation between the younger Wilson and the Head.

"When are you going to put my protégé into the operating room?" asked Wilson, meeting Miss Gregg in a corridor one bright spring afternoon.

"That, usually comes in the second year, Doctor Wilson."

He smiled down at her. "That isn't a rule, is it?"

"Not exactly. Miss Page is very young, and of course there are other girls who have not yet had the experience."

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But her new theory of acceptance did not comprehend everything. She was in a state of wild revolt, for instance, as to Johnny Rosenfeld, and more remotely but not less deeply concerned over Grace Irving. Soon she was to learn of Tille's predicament, and to take up the cudgels valiantly for her.

But her revolt was to be for herself too. On the day after her appointment to the operating room, she had her half-holiday, and when, after a restless night, she went to her new station, it

was to learn that Wilson had been called out of the city in consultation and would not operate that day. O'Hara would take advantage of the free afternoon to run in some odds and ends of cases.

The operating room made gauze that morning, and small packets of tampons: absorbent cotton covered with sterilized gauze, and fastened together—twelve, by careful count, in each bundle.

Miss Grange, who had been kind to Sidney in her probation months, taught her the method.

"Used instead of sponges," she explained. "If you noticed yesterday, they were counted before and after each operation. One of these missing is worse than a bank clerk out a dollar at the end of the day. There's no closing up until it's found!"

Sidney eyed the small packet before her anxiously.

"What a hideous responsibility!" she said.

From that time she handled the small gauze sponges almost reverently.

The operating room—all glass, white enamel, and shining nickel plate—first frightened, then thrilled her. It was as if, having loved a great actor, she now trod the enchanted boards on which he achieved his triumphs. She was glad that it was her afternoon off, and that she would not see some lesser star—O'Hara, to wit—usurping his place. But Max had not sent her any word. That hurt.

The operating room was a hive of industry, and tongues kept pace with fingers. What news of the world came in through the great doors was translated at once into hospital terms. What the city forgot the hospital remembered. It took up life where the town left it at its gates, and carried it on or saw it ended, as the case might be. So these young women knew the ending of many stories, the beginning of some; but of none did they know both the first and last, the beginning and the end.

(Continued next week.)

—For high class Job Work come to the "Watchman" Office.

Many Seedlings for Centre County Forests.

Centre county's allotment of seedlings for reforesting operations on the state forests this spring amounts to over 850,000, according to a statement given out Wednesday by the Commissioner of Forestry. The trees to be planted on the million acres of state forests total about 3,800,000. This number, although probably greater than that to be planted by any other State in the Union, is almost 2,000,000 under the record set last year by Pennsylvania. The reasons are shortage of labor, and shrinkage of the labor appropriation of the Department of Forestry to almost microscopic size.

Centre county will plant more trees than any other county in the State, and will also have the largest single plantation to be made in the State this year. Centre's allotment is divided among the state forests in the county as follows:

- Nittany forest, L. G. Barnes, forester:—44,000 white pine, 22,000 Scotch pine, 16,000 pitch pine, 6,000 Norway spruce, and 63,500 willow cuttings; total, 151,500.
 - Penn forest, C. R. Meek, forester:—200,000 white pine and 200,000 pitch pine; total, 400,000.
 - Bear Meadows forest, J. W. Keller, forester:—20,000 Scotch pine.
 - Seven Mountains forest, W. E. Montgomery, forester:—40,160 white pine, 20,000 Scotch pine, 240 pitch pine, 60 Norway spruce, 25 European larch; total, 60,485.
 - Snow Shoe forest, G. W. Sheeler, forester:—15,000 white pine, 15,000 Scotch pine, 11,700 Norway spruce, and 6,700 European larch; total, 48,400.
 - Tea Springs forest, H. S. Metzger, forester:—4,000 white pine.
 - Buffalo forest, A. C. Silvis, forester:—106,500 white pine, 45,000 Scotch pine, 20,000 Norway spruce, 10,000 willow cuttings; total, 181,500.
- Total for Centre county, 865,885.

If you pick honeysuckle, arrange it in a hanging basket in which there is a dish of water for the stems. Almost any vine flower looks better hanging than standing on a table.



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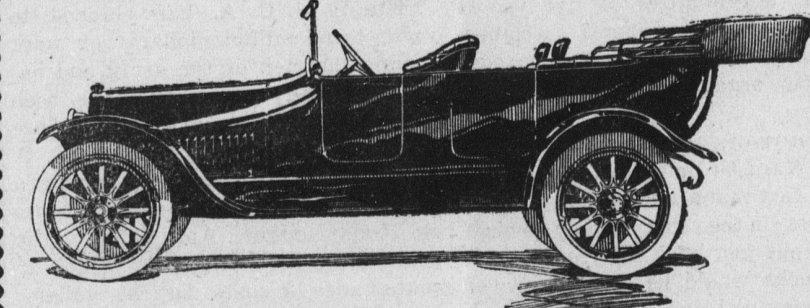
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Chassis	850.00 " 885.00	Chassis	1,090.00 " 1,150.00
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