Democratic Watchman.

Bellefonte, Pa., October 29, 1926.

THE LAND OF "PRETTY SOON."

I know a land where the streets are paved
With the things which we meant to achieve
It is walled with the money we meant to have saved;
And the pleasure for which we grieve
The kind words unspoken, the promises broken.
And many a coveted boon
Are stowed away there in that land somewhere—
The land of "Pretty Soon."

There are uncut jewels of possible fame
Lying about in the dust,
And many a noble and lofty aim
Covered with mold and rust.
And oh, this place, while it seems so near,
Is farther away than the moon,
Though our purpose is fair yet we never ing strand
To the land of "Pretty Soon."

The road that leads to that mystic land
Is strewn with pitiful wrecks,
And the ships that have sailed for its shinning strand
Bear skeletons on their decks.
It is farther at noon than it was at dawn,
And farther at night than at noon;
Oh let us beware of that land down there—
The land of "Pretty Soon."

—By Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

THE TYRANT.

All the way up Avery Madden had had a hard grim fight. Right out of high school she'd shouldered far more trouble and responsibility than usually falls upon a seventeen-year-older. That was when her father, Lundy Madden, sports writer and genial waster, came home one night complaining that he did not feel well. At ten o'clock he was in hideous spasms of pain. At eleven he was in the hospital and the surgeons were busy. At twelve he was dead of peritonitis. His paper paid for his funeral and gave the widow and her daughter a month's salary, six hundred dollars. It was lucky that the paper was so generous, for Lundy Madden had no life insurance and his assets amounted to five dollars and sixty cents in cash, the furniture in the apartment, and a pair of diamond cuff links that had belonged to his great-grandfather.

Mrs. Madden was a frail little blue-eyed woman who had lived only to pleasure and spoil her roistering, good-looking husband. After his death she lost every grain of sense she'd ever had and could do nothing but lie in bed and cry. So it was to Avery that the problem of her own life and her mother's was presented for solution— to Avery with all her youth, her inexperience, her ignorance, her grief and bewilderment.

Avery took hold bravely—but the next seven years of the Maddens were spent in constant shadow. Avery left high school and the weekly art class that was her greatest joy, moved herself and her mother to two cheap rooms in what Mrs. Madden rightly called a slum, and went to work in a candy factory, for that was all she could find to do.

Yet the candy factory held a bright gleam for Avery—Edna Galey, a brand-new welfare worker, a college-trained young woman with theories to burn on uplifting the working classes. Imagine with what joy Avery welcomed this new friend who told her that there was a way out from her unaccustomed nauseating drudgery. Classes! All that Avery asked of her changed world was that she might go on studying art. She didn't mind work, she didn't mind her mother's perpetual moan, she didn't mind the hole they lived in, she didn't mind anything if she need not face a future which held no paints and crayons.

Edna Galey, along with her impractical notions, had a few practical ones. She saw, to begin with, that Avery must have lighter work in better surroundings. So she went out and got her a minor job in a publishing house. The hours were shorter than in the factory and Avery had energy enough left after work to get dinner when she got home and then to dash madly out to the thing she loved, her art class.

Seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four! Seven years of the hardest kind of hard work. Only once had she interrupted her art study just long enough to learn shorthand and typing, since she could earn more money as a secretary. Then back to pencil and brush. As soon as she could she began to use what she had learned. Lamp shades, decorative boxes, hats, scarfs, Christmas and birthday and place cards, picture frames, trays—she did them all with a fantastic charm and a technique which struck just the right mean between splash and niggle. She sold some of these things to the girls at the office and they begged for more and brought her orders. Then she took a sample tray and some candle shades to a decorator. More orders. Avery was twenty-four when she saw that she could actually support herself and her mother by her painting. Her faith in herself was rewarded by commissions for two screens and an over-mantel in the first month of what her mother called tearfully her "obstinate idleness."

Other commissions followed. She found she could drop the little things, boxes and the cards and the lamp shades and oh, how thankfully she did so. Then came the order of her first room. That crazy-rich Mrs. Doerrs saw a yellow lacquer screen that Avery had sold through a decorator and she tracked the artist down.

"I want a room for bridge in my Florida house," she ordered. "Apple green with pagodas and storks and junks and foo-dogs and peonies and bamboos in gold and black and scarlet. Hurry it up; it must be done in two months or I won't pay for it. If it is done in two months, and I like it, you can name the price."

It was done in two days less than two months and Mrs. Doerrs' check was a generous four figures. "I love it," she declared. "I'm mad about it. I'll show it to everybody and everybody will want one, but you must never do another like it."

"I'll do what I please," answered Avery, "but I hope I've got ideas enough that I'll never have to use the same one twice."

Mrs. Doerrs looked at Avery, who was skinny and pale from overwork, red-haired and spunky by nature, and had on the shabbiest serge dress and the dirtiest old cotton smock. Mrs. Doerrs laughed. "You'd be rather good-looking if you had clothes worth the name," she said.

"Oh—clothes! I don't care about clothes."

"Don't say silly things. Of course you care about clothes. And if I send for you to come to Florida and paint rooms for half a dozen of my friends, don't come looking like a scarecrow."

Mrs. Doerrs kept her word about showing her bridge-room—she could hardly help it since she played practically every night and all night, and Avery found herself in Florida with orders for two more rooms to be painted directly on the walls, and while she was doing them she picked up a commission for a couple of screens and a set of overdoor panels. Mrs. Madden went south with Avery and they lived in the cheapest boarding house they could find, which wasn't so very cheap. All day long Avery worked and at night she and her mother walked out in the magical Florida nights of blue chiffon ragged out with stars far larger and brighter than stars have any business to be.

One afternoon, as she was reluctantly putting the last touches on a room designed to bring indoors the great tropical garden just outside, she heard a man's voice speaking behind her. He said—and she never forgot the words nor the voice— "It's glorious! The artist should be given a banquet of roasted flamingo, served on a dish of lapislazuli." As she turned slightly, and the speaker perceived that the one he'd spoken of was present, he added, smiling, "I beg your pardon—but it's true. This is beyond imagination."

Avery smiled a polite, stiff little smile and made the slightest half nod. Her rich patrons ignored her socially, so she had become equally remote. But this man sounded different, interesting. She watched him stealthily as he looked over the room, and the woman with him fluttered and exclaimed. He looked real, and he looked strong, and he looked proud.

He was gone in ten minutes, but he stuck in Avery's memory. She wondered if the tinkling bepearled little blonde with him was his wife. Probably. The thought was unpleasant. That man deserved something better than a piece of tin. . . . She gave her work a last critical survey—and was through. The check was already in her pocket.

Now suddenly she was discontented. She walked back to the boarding house haunted by a perception of the great gaps in her life, of warmth and beauty and human relationships she had never known, and the limitations these lacks imposed on her. She wanted something—she wasn't quite sure what it was—but she wanted it. She counted the money she had made, and the sum crystalized her vague longings into action.

"Mother," she said to Mrs. Madden as soon as she reached the boarding house, "I'm going to Paris for a year or two and study and see things. You can come along, or you can stay in New York, wherever you think you'll be most comfortable and happy."

Although Mrs. Madden promptly turned on the usual fount of tears and declared that she would now have to die in a strange place and among alien people, she wouldn't have missed going to Paris for several large blocks of Florida real estate. Rather to her chagrin she proved an excellent sailor, and didn't have the pleasure of lying in her berth and moaning with seasickness. Once in Paris she actually began to cheer up, even though she considered French coffee a personal offense and shuddered at the price of a comfortable fire. In spite of these grievances the magical city bewitched her. She began to make friends with such Americans as she counld find. Mrs. Madden was, though loath to admit it, having the time of her life.

So was Avery. She had enough money saved for two years at the modest rate she and her mother were living, so that she was not hag-ridden by poverty. Something of the natural gayety of her youth came back to her, and the cleverly dressed French women were a challenge to her dowdiness. Avery had not been in Paris two weeks before she was buying clothes, not expensive, but delightful, intelligent clothes. Avery in straight russet crepe, with a whopping gilt buckle on a shiny black leather belt, a cape of russet wool, a rowdy little shiny black hat on her red hair, was a figure to make heads turn along the boulevards. Avery in the evening in a slip of reseda green and a string of beads that pretended to be crystal but were only clear glass (but oh, how superlatively Parisian was the pretense)—this Avery was a personage.

After a little she began to study under the stiffest martinet in the whole art world of Paris, a man who believed that drawing is the backbone of all art, and who was reputed to say his prayers to Michelangelo. Though Avery had little French and M. Roulaix no English at all, he saw that here was a pupil who had the engery and the will to work, and the intelligence to guide it. With M. Roulaix her staleness vanished, her confidence returned. She began to think of murals, and to work toward them.

Avery was well established in this routine when Mrs. Doerrs descended on Paris for her season's wardrobe and her season's round of the restaurants and dancing places. Things immediately began to happen. She summoned Avery and shrieked for joy over her appearance. "I knew it! I knew it! I told you so! What a little fool you were to wait so long!" That was her frank comment. Whereupon she invited her to lunch at the Ritz, introduced her to various Americans resident in Paris, and browbeat one of them into letting Avery do the music-room in her big apartment on the Avenue Kleber.

Other commissions inevitably followed, but they did not have to be rushed and jammed and hurried over. Avery worked steadily, but she found time now to hear music, to go to the theater, to make social contacts, and she brought to it all the keenness that comes from being previously starved. Mrs. Madden had begun to hope that they were settled permanently in Paris when Crane Kiehler, the architect, chanced on some of Avery's work and urged her to come back to America and join forces with him.

"It's time you get out of here," said the great Kiehler. "If you stay too long Paris will do something queer to you, just as it has to a lot of other Americans with talent. There's no future here for you—you'll get more rooms to do, you can exhibit, and so on, but with that you're done. In America you can have the big things, the public buildings, the new sort of business buildings—you'll be in at art in the making there. Come along with me and do things. I've been hankering to get a lot more color into architecture, but I never found the person to put it over. You can.

To go back to America with the prestige of an association with Crane Kiehler was to go trailing clouds of glory. With all her reluctance to leave Paris, Avery knew that such a chance comes but once in a lifetime.

At their table on the boat Avery and her mother found a pallid little honeymooning couple from Detroit, a fat man from California and to the other chair came a man protesting to an apologetic steward that he had ordered a single table weeks before.

"But for dinner to-night, sir—"

"Every time I sail on this line the same thing happens—" began the man, but he spoke lower as he neared the table. That voice—it stirred memories in Avery. She glanced up at the speaker as he pulled out the chair beside her own. It was, surely, he of "flamingo served on lapislazuli."

And at the conventional exchange of names he said, "I'm sure I've met you, or seen you, Miss Madden."

"We've never met, I think," said Avery. She wasn't going to remind him.

Presently she was rewarded. "I knew I'd seen you. You did a room in the Palm Beach house of a cousin of mine and my sister and I went in one day, and you were working there. Afterward I asked Mary Townsend about you, and she said you'd gone. So I never had a chance to tell you what a stunning piece of work I thought it was."

His voice was more deep and delightful than she had remembered. "I'm either going to be seasick or I'm falling in love with him," she thought, and added scornfully, "I must be stark staring crazy."

In the morning when she came on deck Robert Fraser was waiting for her.

They walked. Avery was silent, and willing to listen. She learned that he had but one sister, married and not very happy. There seemed to be many cousins.

The whole fabric of his life unrolled before her. He had been everywhere, done everything that had to do with sports, hunted, flown, explored, played about with all sorts of people everywhere. He touched deliberately on these things. Avery, listening, smiled. He was telling her what he could offer her, and there was an endearing quality in his thus showing her his possessions, a sort of humility, as if he had said, "I'm not so much myself, but maybe you'll like what goes along with me."

So he was stark staring crazy, too. She had only to put her hand, only to make one least gesture of understanding. But she did not do this. She waited, content.

There was fair weather. He was with her every moment of the day.

On the last night out Avery and Robert Fraser walked the shadowy deck together.

"I can't pretend any longer, "he said. "You know what's happened, don't you?"

"Why—of course."

"I've said to myself that I was crazy—"

"You're not original; I said it too."

His arms were around her. "We're going to be married as soon as we land. Avery, tell me we are. Say you love me."

"I do love you." She hesitated. "And I've never been in love before. I can't quite believe it, even now."

"Neither can I. I've been so afraid—you're so different from all the women I know. You're so marvelous—oh, how I wish there were other words to tell you in, Avery. I say 'marvelous' and 'wonderful' and 'glorious' and all the other hackneyed old stuff because I'm not clever at the poetry and romantic sort of thing, but I feel the other words, words made of starshine and color and fragrance."

"Dear Robert, I don't want words. Just your loving me is enough."

"That—that seems nothing to offer you. You know, Avery, I've never cared about money, but now it's something to me because I can give you the things you haven't had, the things you ought to have; I can make it possible for you to stop your work—"

A pang of dismay shook her happiness.

"But I could never—" she began, weakly, and he did not hear her. He was raving on in the fashion of happy lovers the world over. She listened and forgot the phrase that had startled her.

But the next day as they were leaving the pier, he said, "My car will be here; I'll take you wherever you go. By Jove, Avery, I don't even know where you do go."

"I thought we'd stop at the old Veda House until I find an apartment. We've been there before; they know us."

"My dear, you musn't go there—it's a grubby old hole."

"I can't afford the big places."

"But just for a few days—it's not suitable, the Veda, I mean. I can't tell the family you're there."

Still she did not take alarm. "Don't be bossy," she said, smiling. "The Veda isn't elegant, but it's respectable, almost painfully so. I simply can't pay the prices at those others."

"But, Avery—" he began, and then stopped.

They had agreed that his first evening must be with his sister, but as he left Avery at the hotel, he said, "I'll be here early to-morrow. We'll have the whole day together."

This startled her into reality. "Oh, Robert—I'll have to be at Kiehler's office to-morrow early. I promised him I'd not lose a minute, and I haven't the least idea how long I'll have to stay. Let me telephone when I'm through."

His look of shocked remonstrance shocked her also. "You forgot my contract," she added. "I've got to keep it."

He hesitated, looked with distaste about the dingy lobby of the Veda. "This isn't the time or the place to discuss, well, what we must discuss. I'll phone you to-night. We must come to some sort of understanding about—certain things."

Yes, Avery was sure they must. She went on up to her rooms with the feeling of one who has been making a long and beautiful air flight and has suddenly landed on a cobbled street. It had been such a small thing, Robert's look, but the unspoken feeling behind it was so great. He did not understand, he actually resented, her work. He had said that he was glad she need not keep on working. Not keep on working! That life, the life of her former patrons, a network of trivialities exalted into duties, of strict laws as to where one lived, of what one wore, of how one spoke and smiled, of the people one knew—what had she to do with this life? Nothing, nothing at all. And yet this was Robert's life. If she became Robert's wife she'd be a Fraser, too. With a shock she realized that she had thought "if" instead of "when."

"I might have considered all this before," she told herself. She did not reflect that this was the first moment she had been out of the glamour of Robert's presence.

A great basket of flowers was at that moment delivered at her door. It brought Robert back to her with a rush. Good heavens, what was all her worrying about! What did anything matter but Robert? She glanced at the clock—it was not quite six. She would just call up Crane Kiehler's office on the chance that he'd be in so late and tell him that she'd got herself engaged, that she was going to be married very soon, and that their contract was off.

The words never left her lips. "Great Caesar, young woman, I'm glad you're here," shouted Crane Kiehler as soon as she gave her name. "Stick on your hat and hustle down here on the double quick. I've got the most interesting thing that's been in the shop for a thousand years. It's the chance of your life."

His voice brimmed and boomed with enthusiasm as infectious as laughter. And once in his office, the long tables, the shirt-sleeved, eye-shaded men stooping over them, the blue prints, the drawings, the very instruments and lights made her feel at home. This was the world she knew, this was her place. For the moment Robert Fraser simply didn't exist.

"It's a bank," announced Kiehler with no preliminary greeting. "A big bank, and when you see the chance for decoration you're going to get down on your knees and thank the Lord and Papa Kiehler."

They went over the plans, Kiehler explaining, Avery listening, studying, with such blinded interest that neither of them saw the outer office lights dimmed, the draftsmen leaving. At last the telephone on Kiehler's desk buzzed so long and so persistently that he heard it.

"Good lord!" he said, as he put it down, "I forgot all about my wife's party tonight. I've got to travel three miles uptown and dress before eight o'clock. Well—you be on hand at 10:30 to-morrow and we'll finish up and then you better rent a studio and fly to it."

Avery looked at her watch. It was twenty minutes of eight. On the way back to the hotel she realized that she had not said a word to Kiehler about her marriage. She hadn't had a chance, she assured herself—but she knew that the truth was that she had forgotten it. And in further bleak honesty she admitted that she wouldn't give up the chance to decorate that bank for anything—or—anybody.

With this she found herself back at the hotel, listening to her mother: Mr. Fraser's telephoned half a dozen times; he's afraid something's happened to you. I didn't know where you'd gone."

The telephone, ringing again, silenced her. It was Robert. "Oh, Avery, my dear, I've been frantic. If you hadn't been back when I phoned this time I was coming right down and notify the police, search the hospitals—"

His painful distress, his solicitude, tempered her answer. It was sweet to be cared for, to mean so much to him. But what a fuss about nothing, as if she were a child or a pet dog. "I'm terribly sorry. I was at Kiehler's and I forgot the time, his plans were so wonderful."

There was a strained pause, then his voice again, angry, cold. "It's beastly to say so, but I'd almost rather you'd been in an accident."

Avery took the slap slightly. "Don't be cross with me; you do like me better with all my arms and legs and teeth intact, I'm sure. You'll have to put up with my defective memory."

His voice was now very miserable: "I'll—I'll call you in the morning."

The morning brought more flowers from Robert, and then his voice, contrite and eager and anxious on the telephone. 'I'm ashamed of the way I spoke to you last night. But it seemed as if you'd gone away from me, that you'd forgotten all you said and all you promised on the boat, that there wasn't any reality in it. Tell me I'm a fool, tell me it isn't so. I want to hear you say it."

"Of course it isn't so." She had to say it, but—was it true?

He went on explaining, apologizing, excusing himself. Toward the end of it she began to feel impatience. She did not want her emotions played on.

The morning with Kiehler, a repetition of the hour of the night before, gave her a lift, restored her. It swung her away from emotional disturbance, put her on the heights of confident creation.

She snatched a sandwich and a glass of milk at the nearest lunch counter and commenced her search for a studio. She must get that first.

There were endless stairs to be climbed, endless janitors and superintendents to be waited for. From this she went back to the old Veda House at seven, tired to numb stupidity. Robert was waiting—with a bunch of orchids. Orchids, when all she wanted was a bath, a bowl of hot soup and her bed! Tired as she was, it made her want to laugh.

He was angry when he saw her drawn face, her dull eyes. "Why didn't you tell me—all this is so perfectly unnecessary. I've two people in my office who do nothing but tiresome commissions. To-morrow you must take them and after they've weeded out the impossible places, you can go and see what's left. If you'd told me!"

"I'm so unused to having anyone take care of me I never thought of it."

He set his jaw and did not answer. Avery dressed as quickly as she could, whipping up the remnants of her energy to do it, but when she got into the waiting car she sighed with fatigue. Fraser heard and was silent, only took her hand and held it gently on the way uptown. He had already ordered dinner and it was promptly served.

"I told Nancy about our engagement, Avery. She wants to come and see you as soon as you'll let her; I could hardly keep her from rushing down here to-day. What time tomorrow can she come?"

She tried to think. The remembrance of tinkling, trivial Nancy, and the prospect of her unlimited companionship, dismayed and irritated her. "It will have to be in the evening. I'll be all morning at Kiehler's, and looking for a studio again in the afternoon. If your people should find anything, you've no idea how much it would help me."

"Why can't you put off your studio until the day after and see Nancy tomorrow and have dinner with her and me in the evening?"

"Oh, but, Robert, I can't lose a second getting into that studio. If you'd see the gorgeous piece of work Kiehler's got for me."

He faced her squarely. "Do you mean that nothing else matters but your work? What am I to think? Avery, you must give it all up. Where will you find time, my dear? We've got so many things to do together. I want to take you traveling all over the world, I want to do everything all over again with you—we'll have a yacht on the Mediterranean, and play round the Riviera, we'll go camping up in the Canadian Rockies, and then there's Southampton and the farm in Virginia—you'll love it. We'll take a house in town, too, if you like. Don't you see, darling girl, what fun we'll have, and what it will mean for us to be together doing all the jolliest things in the world?"

With every word he became more alien to her. "Robert, don't you ever work?" she asked at last.

"Why, of course I look after the estate, and that's not such a small job, you know. But it's not especially exacting. I can direct everything by wire or cable just as easily as if I were on the ground. And I've very competent people."

"But my work is the sort no one can do but me. I must think it out, I must work it out, actually shape it with my hands."

"Yes, but, dearest, there isn't the slightest necessity for you to go on with it. I couldn't bear the idea of you slaving away in a smelly studio at the beck and call of any architect who's building something and wants you to decorate it. It's not suitable for my wife."

She waited again before she answered, and though she spoke to him it was as much to herself, slowly, a shaping and an expression of her deepest feeling: "We're as far apart as the poles. I love you, yes, I do love you, but we don't speak the same language. You say things that seem so monstrous to me that I know you have no conception of what they mean. You speak of my work as if it were a sort of convenient meal-ticket, as if I worked only because I have to support myself, as if I ought to be glad to get rid of it, almost as if there were something to be ashamed of in it. It wouldn't be suitable for your wife to work. There are, in your world, suitable hours for this and that, little conventional laws and rules you must live by. Oh, all very well. You're used to it, you accept it, it doesn't irk you. Only—it doesn't happen to be my world. In my world there's only one rule, one law, and that is, if you have any gift—and I have, I know I have—you must not cheat it or play with it. You must give all your strength, all your power, all your devotion to making it as honest and as great and as beautiful as you can. I think my world is a better world than yours. Robert—I can't do it. Every moment since I landed I've known I couldn't."

She was very pale and her hands trembled, but her voice did not. He was pale too.

"You mean," he said at last, "that you can't give up your work? Why, Avery, what sort of marriage will we have if you don't?"

"If conditions were reversed, if you had an exacting, jealous, hard profession you'd not think of leaving it because you married. You aren't going to give up the management of your property because you marry."

"No, of course not. That's different. You can't argue from that premise."

"Talent has no sex, Robert. And I will tell you this: I've had a poor meager life compared to yours, I suppose, but it taught me what I can do without, and what I must have. I can no more give up my work and be only a contented casual traveling companion, a hostess for your friends in your big houses, a well-dressed smiling wife, and if we have children, a thoughtful attentive mother, than—than I can see like Galli-Curci. I think it will kill me to part from you, but I know it would kill me to part from my work. It is my life, it is me."

"But, Avery, be reasonable. And don't talk about us parting, for we're not going to. I'm trying to understand you, but you give me a ridiculous part. I'm to sit at home and wait until you're through with your daily toil, and if you're not too tired we might go out, or entertain—oh, Avery, that's all so absurd. It isn't marriage, my dear."

"It isn't your idea of marriage, I know. My work isn't ridiculous, I don't see how it can make you so. But that's no matter. It's just that you want something I have not the power to give you. My work, my necessity to work—I wish I could make you see—it's as relentless as thirst, or hunger, or passion, and as strong. It's the fox that gnaws the Spartan boy—only, if it gnawed me, I'm afraid I wouldn't be very Spartan." She smiled at him wistfully, but there were tears shining behind the smile. "Oh, Robert, why didn't you fall in love with a woman who hasn't a taskmaster like mine? We'd better part right now, cut everything off clean, let it be as if we'd never seen each other. I'd rather make you—and me—a little unhappy now than a great deal, later."

"You can't mean that."

"I must mean it."

He said no more but called the waiter and paid him. They went out to the car. Once in its seclusion he spoke again: "You really mean, Avery, that when we are married, I'm to have only the scraps and edges of your time, that painting the walls of banks and courthouses and so forth means more to you than the interesting, divesting—and devoted—life I can give you? If you do mean that, I know that you don't love me."

"I do mean it, and yet I do love you. I can see you'd never be content, that it would always be a fight between my work and you. I couldn't live like that, Robert."

"Then what are we going to do?"

Avery gave a long weary sigh. She must choose, and having chosen she must hold fast to her choice. But it was very hard. "We're going to tell each other good-by," she said at last. "I've worked too long, Robert; it's in my bones, it's in my soul. I can't stop."

"But, Avery—I can't let you go—my dear—"

"Oh, don't! It isn't any use."

As the car stopped at her hotel he put his hand over hers, and the warm firm touch set her trembling. But she held her voice steady. "Good-by," she said, "thank you for—everything. Good-by."

Oh, it was hard. She did not dare look after him for fear she would call him back, he looked so proud, so angry, and yet so lonely and so hurt. She hurried in, away from him. To get away, to cry, to let her heart break in solitude, that was what she wanted. It killed her, this parting.

And yet, through all the pain, she knew an exultation. The way was clear again, there would be no more clutter and fret of emotion, no pulling back from her task, no compromising her greatest need. If she was less woman, she knew, more artist. She reached her tired arms skyward in a gesture of winged triumph.

"Now," she said, "now, I can work."

—By Sophie Kerr.—From the Woman's Home Companion.

Loss of Millions in Coal Fields.

Reasons for the loss of millions of dollars worth of business annually in the Central Pennsylvania coal fields were given in an address made by Charles O'Neill, secretary of the Coal Operators' Association, before the Altoona Rotary Club.

Mr. O'Neill gave as one of the reasons for this enormous loss of business, the lack of standardization of the freight rates in the eastern section of the country. He also stated that there is great competition from the West Virginia coal fields, operators in that district being able to ship their product to eastern markets more cheaply than those in the Clearfield or other Central Pennsylvania districts.

Statistics presented by Mr. O'Neill show that where the Central Pennsylvania coal fields once produced 60 million tons of coal a year they are now producing only between thirty-five and forty million tons. This condition is due largely to the fact that local operators cannot compete with lower prices of West Virginia coal at the markets. These lower prices are possible because it costs operators less to ship their coal to the consumer. These markets are the New York harbor and Long Island Sound. The same is true of coal shipped to Lake Erie ports for transhipment to Canada and the northwest by way of Duluth and Wisconsin.

Blame for this state of affairs is laid to the indifference of the Interstate Commerce Commission in whose power rests the solution of the whole thing. Lack of representation from this State may also be one of the causes as there has never been a member of the I. C. C. from Pennsylvania since the founding of that body.

At a hearing before the Commission, held in New York City on October 6, the Hon. David A. Reed, United States senator from Pennsylvania fought for the operators. It is hoped that some solution to the problem may then be reached.—Mountaineer Herald.

23 Accidents Every Minute.

One person in every nine in the United States meets with an accident every year, and one out of every ten deaths is chargeable to accidental causes, according to a newly completed survey just made public. The survey figures show that there are upwards of 12,000,000 accidents every year in this country, 23 every minute and 1,380,000 every hour.

Annually more than 100,000 persons lose arms, feet or hands as the result of accidents. In New York City alone there are some 36,000 cripples—half of them under 16 years of age.

The annual economic loss to the United States is estimated at more than five billions of dollars.