Democratic Watchman.

Bellefonte, Pa., December 7, 1928.

CHOICE

Ask and it shall be given
Ask—ask.
And if you ask a stone
Expect not bread;
And if the stone glitter like a caught star,
And shine on a warm, soft breast,
And you have tossed your soul away
To see it in that nest,
Yet is it still a stone—not bread.

Seek and you shall find.
Seek—seek.
And if you go to the crowded street
Look not to find the hills;
And if the shops sit gay along the way,
And laughter fills the air,
Still—you have lost the hills.

Knock and the door shall open.
Knock—knock.
Two doors are there, beware!
Think well before you knock;
Your tapping finger will unlock
Your heaven or hell.

—The Christian Century

NANCY CHOOSES

(Concluded from last week.)

This committed her to a program; presently she might have been seen following it. Anyway, a sheet of paper was before her with the words "Dear Mother" inscribed thereon—and no more.

The truth was that she retained a residue of femininity after all. Enough to make any woman regret such a gesture as that with which she had surrendered to Tommy.

Eventually she gave up the pretense of letter-writing and joined the optimists on Ski Hill. She did better to-day. Upsets still, but the thrill of growing mastery. Yet though she went back again after dinner, she found herself returning to the club long before dusk, nebulously discontented.

"The play instinct must have been left out of me," she mused by way of self-diagnosis.

Anyway she was tired. She decided to have supper served in her room and then go to bed. And she was abed—though not asleep—by eight.

"Oh, well, second days are apt to be less exciting than the first," was the explanation she contrived to fit her mood.

The next morning she awoke to find it snowing. She had no plans for the day. Tommy, she chose to believe, hed been definitely relinquished to the little blonde. And yet, when he bore down upon her after breakfast, something that no woman ever can hope wholly to discipline, no matter how long she lives, quickened in her.

"They're making up a party to go to Bear Cub on skis and have dinner there," he announced. "It's fourteen miles——"

"Fourteen miles!" she echoed, feeling unaccountably dashed.

"You can make it—easy!" he encouraged.

"On skis? Not possibly." Yet even as she spoke she knew that she was going.

They started at ten. Two in a party of thirty that at the end of the first half-hour was straggled out with a mile separation leaders and trailers.

The thermometer was not far above zero yet she found it astonishingly warm work. After the first mile her cap had been tucked in her belt.

When she finally achieved Bear Cub the melted snow glistened on her tousled hair, her eyes were luminous and her color miraculous.

The earliest arrivals were dancing to a phonograph; the little deb with a tall young man with a skinned nose and the unmistakable earmarks of Harvard. She—the little deb—was contriving to suggest vivacious interest in her partner and at the same time a cold disdain for Tommy and his taste.

"Cats!" thought Nancy.

And, presently, she yielded to Tommy's persuasiveness and danced herself.

They started back at three. And except for the fact that she wasn't quite sure which leg was which—"They've twisted around so I'm not sure I'll ever get them properly disentangled and labeled again," she told Tommy—she returned to the club intact. They were among the last in.

"No need to hurry!' Tommy had pointed out.

He was truly a very nice child. More than that, occasional questions and comments—he had drawn her into talking about her business experiences, if rather more lightly and impersonally than her wont—had revealed flashes of insight and greater depth than she had before credited him with.

Even so, she had been struck by the incongruity of discussing business with him. 'It can't nterest you in the least,' she had told him.

"It does," he had assured her. And had added thoughtfully: "I think you have it in you to become a very successful business woman."

"Really?" she had mocked. "What do you know about business women?"

He grinned. "I've seen quite a few of them—first and last!"

Nancy refused to be impressed.

"And the trouble with those who really want business success more than anything else is that they lose all sense of proportion," he had elaborated. "They eat, drink and sleep business. They forget that play and recreation is a part of any well-ordered existence. Suggest to them that they are getting overtired, absolutely neurotic, and that it's time they took time out, and they consider it an insult, almost. The result is——"

"Gracious—who told you all this?" she had cut in.

"Well—do you deny it?" he persisted.

Nancy's skis had slipped along for a second before she answered. "Men wear themselves out the same way, don't they? To be successful one must be ruthless with one's self."

"Men used to. Most of them—the ladies—know better nowadays. And if they didn't, they're apt to be pulled up by their directors. Why, I know one woman that employs a physician since her condition of its executive shows signs of strain, he's shipped off for a rest—as he ought to be!"

"As I was," Nancy had suggested.

"If it wasn't just a sop."

"A sop?"

She did not explain. That he, whose knowledge of business must be as slight as his experience, should be instructing her with her ten years of considered effort toward a definite goal, struck her as deliciously mas:uline—and very funny.

"You aren't here on a physician's advice by any chance?" she had evaded impishly.

"I don't wait for such advice—I write my own."

"Frequently, I suspect."

"Rather," he had grinned. And after a second had added, "To tell you the truth, the minute I find a job no longer interests me I chuck it up."

"A luxury few of us can afford," she had commented.

"You," he had countered, "don't think it a luxury at all. You think it's a cardinal sin!"

And Nancy did! Yet she did not excommunicate him for it. She was at the Lake Placid Club to play and he made a nice playmate. If more than that was sometimes imputed to her—as it sometimes was by the little deb's smoldering glance—she could afford to smile.

And had she been asked to explain what he got out of his now accepted role of daily companion—they skied, went to the movies, danced, ski-jored behind galloping horses on Mirror Lake, and even flew over Lake Placid in the airplane that could be hired for long or short trips—she would have had an explanation ready for that, too.

"He must, with is money, live the life of the hunted," she would have said. "And it's probably a relief to be able to talk man-fashion with a woman who, though older, hasn't lost all her looks. I haven't quite, I suppose."

Nor had she unless her mirror was an unmitigated liar. She looked better than she ever had before—and she knew it. And was subtly glad of it! Even when she and Tommy were talking man-fashion.

"You can be an amusing child at times," she assured him on the sixth day of her stay at Placid.

They were both on skis, which no longer acted as if all nature were greased for the occasion when she put them on.

"You're coming on fine," he had teased the day before. "Your face automatically sets in a mask of delicate superiority whenever any out-and-out beginner appears on your horizon."

She had merely made a face at him.

Now they stood at the top of what he had warned her was to be a mile of continuous descent with hairpin turns and roller-coaster features. But it was not that which had occasioned her comment.

"How much longer do you expect to stay?" he had asked.

"Why, I go tomorrow night," she had replied. "Didn't I tell you I planned to stay only a week?"

"But that was several days ago. I had hoped you might change your mind—a woman does sometimes, I am told."

"Not a business woman," she had reminded him.

They were both bareheaded, their breath hanging visibly on the clean crisp air. He still seemed very young to her; she had yet to guess how young she seemed to him

"And that's the trouble with them," he had assured her. "Yes—I mean you, too. A week has put you back on your feet, you begin to feel fit again. And so you think it's time you went back to work. Can't you see that if you would only take two weeks, or even three—"

It was then that she had assured him that he was an amusing child.

"I should protest that," he remarked, "if I didn't have a hunch that all men are amusing children in your eyes—when they aren't annoying ones, that is. You do rather scorn men, don't you?"

"You mean that I refuse to prostrate myself before them, feminine fashion," she corrected coolly.

"You would," he commented, as coolly. "But just the same, why don't you consider prolonging this vacation of yours?"

"I can't. Absolutely! We can't all do what we please, you know."

"Meaning me? You're wrong. I'm leaving myself tomorrow night. I've already stayed longer than I intended to!"

It took her unawares. "But you never told me!" she protested without thought.

"You never bothered to ask," he reminded her. And added, quickly, "Wait a second——"

But Nancy's skis were in motion. Plunging downward. Swiftly, blindly.

From the first she had considered this week at Lake Placid but an interlude, definitely tagged as such. Tommy had played his part in it, added to it. But when she said good-by to him, at its end, it was to be good-by and not au revoir. Their normal paths would not cross. Even if he should suggest seeing her again in New York—and the possibility of his so suggesting had occurred to her—she would make it good-by just the same. In New York she had precious little time to play and she had been prepared to tell him so if necessary.

What she had not been prepared for was a casualness to match hers. Instead, she had had a purely feminine suspicion—none the less potent for all that it remained as unrecognized as it was unauthorized—that he had not been wholly altruistic in urging her to stay longer.

And after all, he had been.

The path her skis followed was narrow, twisting and turning between trees. She hardly saw it. Something had blurred her vision.

Unfortunately, because there was need of a clear eye. The roller-coaster effect Tommy had spoken of was due to bumps in the trail; the very first of these shot her into the air.

She came down headlong with an impact that shook her every fiber. And with the breath stunned out of her, lay with skis tangled as Tommy, shooting over the same bump, jumped sidewise and stopped just beyond her. The next second he was bending over her, one arm half under her.

"Nancy!" he besought, agonizedly, his head so close to hers that she could feel his warm breath on her cheek. "Are you hurt?"

She did not answer. She kept her eyes closed. But her heart should have answered him. It was beating like mad. A long moment she lay so. Then abruptly, almost vehemently, she struggled to her feet.

"I'm all right," she told him. "I must have been stunned for a second."

"You took a wicked toss," he said, still deeply concerned. "Do you think you feel up to going on to Connery?"

This had been their plan—Connery and griddle-cakes at the camp there.

"Perhaps," she replied without meeting his eyes, "it might be better if we went back. I feel as if I had had enough for one day."

"Sure you're right?" he asked again, after removing her skis, back at the club. "Wouldn't it be wise to see the doctor?"

She told him she was perfectly all right. But that was not what she told herself when she reached her room.

"Oh, you—you priceless idiot!" she blazed, with sick self-contempt. "It's certainly time you went back to business."

She began to pack at once. And at nine o'clock that same night—twenty-four hours ahead of her original schedule—she was on her way to New York. She had dined in her room, paid her bill and departed without even the most casual farewell to anyone.

Tommy might wonder at that—might not. She didn't care. She never, never wanted to see him again! Even to think of him was torture now. Because she had for a pregnant moment lain in his arms that afternoon—languished was the savage word that occurred to her—willing for him to kiss her.

"I suppose it's what they call love," she soliloquized scornfully. "At my age—for him!"

Of course women of all ages fell in love. But she had certainly believed herself immune. Now she felt as a doctor might who, having moved through a fever-stricken world for years in perfect immunity, suddenly finds himself laid prostrate.

"Oh, well," she philosophized finally as the train moved on through the night, "it was. at least, only a mild attack."

And that she believed. The residue of femininity in her might for an electric moment, have betrayed her but the mental habit of years was dominant in her now. Nature had set a trap for her, but had not baited it well enough. Her swift reaction proved that.

Lie awake she might. But not to think of Tommy. She was a business woman returning to business, preparing an ultimatum.

From the Grand Central, in the morning, she phoned her mother and then taxied to the office. New York, with its sky-scrapers soaring into the January sunlight, was going about its business; she was back in her orbit.

"You certainly look fit," her immediate superior assured her. "But what made you come back so soon? We expected—"

"I came back because I feel fit," Nancy assured him. And added coolly, "Besides—how could I be sure you weren't appointing a new advertising manager in my absence?"

He gave her a swift, searching glance that puzzled her. It was as if he posed a question to which she should have had the answer—but didn't.

"Did you meet a Mr. Stirling at Lake Placid?" he asked then, directly.

"Stirling?" echoed Nancy. She turned scarlet. "You—you don't mean Tommy Stirling?"

Preposterous question, she realized. Yet:

"I don't know him quite well enough to call him Tommy," he observed dryly. "You—did you see much of him?"

"Good gracious!" gasped Nancy. "What has he to do with the question I asked?"

"About the advertising managership? Quite a lot. You know we have secured new capital. He is supplying it. He's also going to take charge of the development of——"

"Tommy Strling!" protested Nancy. "Not that infant!"

Not that she really doubted it. It had all been done before. They wanted Tommy's money so much that they were willing to take Tommy in too. Give him an executive position even, let him persuade himself he was something more than a figurehead, inflate his ego. No wonder he had offered her business advice! Bitterness swept her like a flame; she rose swiftly.

"In that case," she announced passionately, "there is no sense in our discussing anything. I'm quitting, here and now."

"Good Lord!" he remonstrated. "Why go off the handle that way? We all want you to have the job—honestly. But Mr. Strling has the final say so. He is particularly interested in the advertising end himself and told us, frankly, that he distrusted women in executive positions but——"

"He would!" commented Nancy.

"But that he wasn't inclined to be pig-headed about it. It was his suggestion that we send you to the Lake Placid Club and let him look you over. Without saying anything to you, of course——"

Nancy bit her lip to still its quivering. She had definitely excommunicated Tommy and yet somehow it hurt, this discovery that his interest in her had been all a matter of business.

"I imagine," her immediate superior was adding nervously, "that I should not have told you this until things were definitely settled, but I thought——"

"Things are settled—very definitely," she retorted. And struggled for a second with foolish feminine tears. "If a pampered, inexperienced boy who is more interested in play than anything else is to have final decision on such a matter, I——"

"Pampered, inexperienced boy," he echoed. "Good Lord—whom are you talking about?"

"Your precious Mr. Stirling," she flung at him.

He gasped incredulously. Then: "There must be some mistake," he said. "Wait a minute."

From a drawer in his desk he produced a magazine, thumbed its pages and then thrust it at her, pages spread.

"This issue isn't on the stands yet," he explained. "We got advance copies because of the article on Mr. Stirling and——"

Nancy heard no more. A portrait, full-page rotigravure, held her wide eyes. Tommy, unmistakably. More mature than he had seemed at Placid but still incredibly young. With his eyes half amused—as if at the world and himself—and his mouth looking as if it might break into the grin she remembered.

Besde it was the article the portrait illustrated. Headed:

This Executive Fires Himself Frequently.

Beneath, set into the page, was what is known typographically as a box, a hook for the reader's interest. She read it swiftly.

PLAY AS YOU WORK—OR YOU PAY

Thomas Wentworth Stirling began his career at the age of ten as a Chicago newsboy. His life since then has been varied and extremely interesting. He has headed several remarkably successful organizations, yet at thirty-three he is in his own phrase "fired again—by myself. Because a man ought to be fired," he says, "when he loses interest in what he is doing."

Mr. Stirling is the personification of restless energy. The harder a job, the more problems it presents, the more joyously he tackles it. But the moment the job threatens to become "soft" his interest flags. Then he fires himself, looks for something else. In the interim he is apt to play as hard as he ever worked. He is keen for and adept at many sports. He believes that the executive who can't play, who lets business occupy his whole horizon—

To Nancy, it was as if every word was a hard little pebble flung at her wincing self. But she was to have respite. Or so she thought. The office door opened and she raised her eyes. Respite? Her eyes widened, her lips parted.

"How—how did you get here?" she heard herself babble inanely.

"Flew," answered Tommy laconically, but her eyes fell before his.

The airplane that they had soared above Placid in and which could be hired for trips anywhere flashed into mind. Then, panic-stricken, she realized that the rightful occupant of the office was withdrawing. He had met Tommy's eyes and was murmuring something about a matter he must attend to.

"Well?' demanded Tommy as the door closed behind him.

She tried to force her eyes to meet his and failed signally. "I've resigned," she informed him, in a voice she tried to make chill and impersonal, but which sounded, instead, curiously frightened and defiant.

"I hoped you would," he replied evenly.

Her eyes outraged, flashed at him for a second. "To save you the trouble of firing me?" she demanded passionately. "Oh, of course, I realize you wouldn't have given me what I wanted more than anything——"

"More than anything?" he put in quickly.

In spite of herself the treacherous color flooded her face. She knew it and was furious with herself. And with him.

"And all the time you were having such a lovely time," she flamed. "A sort of little King Copheuta incognito, condescending to a beggar maid ——" She checked herself; the analogy was not what she wanted, exactly.

"But think of the beggar maid's revenge," he suggested steadily, yet with a curious vibrancy running through his voice.

"I'm not interested in such revenges," she retorted too quickly.

"Are you sure?' he persisted, his eyes seeking hers.

They still evaded. Her heart was beating tempestuously. He took a swift, impetuous step toward her. She backed off then—and bumped into a desk. She was afraid of him, terribly, thrillingly afraid. And even more of herself.

"I don't want to be in love—not with anybody,' she proclaimed passionately. "I——"

"Neither do I—but I suspect I am," he said softly.

And the next second she was in his arms. And she who had meant to resist him, clung to him instead. She could feel his rapid heartbeats against her, each a delicious shock that ran through her. The years that she believed had rendered her fire-proof to the most consuming of conflagrations had, after all, but left her as tinder.

He placed his hands under her chin, tilted her face up. "I don't know," he said huskily, "if being just general manager of me is much of a job to offer you, but——"

"But you never acted the least bit in love with me," she broke in. "You just——"

"I didn't dare to. But from the moment I saw you—I was at the desk when you registered, remember—I felt that——"

"You say that now. But it can't be true. How could you, so soon——"

"You took me unawares. I had been prepared for some middle-aged, neurotic business vestal. I might have made myself known to you then, if you had been. Instead—well, I took your masurements with my eyes and had them send you a carnival costume. Had the firm wire you money for sports things——"

"Then it was you—that did all that," she gasped. "But—but why?" In her the irreducible residue of femininity was again rising like yeast.

"Because," he said huskily, "I wanted to meet you—not the business woman. I had an idea it might be hard to dig the real you out. You had it so deeply buried."

"And the harder a job is, the more joyously you tackle it," she remembered. "But the moment it's accomulished you lose interest and——"

"You forget that marriage is a real job these days," he reminded her. "And I suspect you're going to present problems a plenty. Enough to last a lifetime. I'm going to have my hands full, I know, but——"

He did not finish. But he certainly had his arms full as his lips found hers and received from them her acceptance of what, after all, she wanted more than anything else.

The job as general manager—of him. —Hearst's International Cosmopolitan.

525 Chickens for Mental Patients Thanksgiving Day.

Five hundred and twenty-five stuffed roast chickens for their Thanksgiving Day dinner.

Over 450 mince pies, 500 stalks of celery, 40 bushels of mashed potatoes, 75 gallons of home made chow chow, barrels of giblet gravy, baskets of bread and all sorts of trimmin's and fixin's!

This was the menu for the 2,000 patients at the Danville State hospital for Mental Diseases, where Thanksgiving is always observed as a big day and looked forward to for many weeks.

And the dinner is served as scientifically as other functions of the hospital are performed. H. B. Chultz, director of the Fiscal Department, has charge of the distributions. Forty different distributions are made to the 2,000 patients.

To the wards for the men who do farm work or other manual labor go large dinners. To the infirmaries, where a heavy meal would detract from the patients' general health, smaller portions are sent. To the sick wards, where properly balanced diet aids in restoration of health, go portions adjusted to the needs of the patients.

The many bushels of "filling" for the chickens are made Tuesday, the chickens are stuffed Wednesday, cooked Thursday morning and served at noon. They go into a huge revolving oven, capable of holding 400 chickens, and come out at the other end—brown and tasty.

Rewiring and building operations at the hospital prevented the holding of the regular Thanksgiving dance and other activities which feature the season, and they will be held later.

Fifty-cent Toy Led to Planes.

Five dimes started the Wright brothers on the road that lead to the invention of the airplane!

When Wilbur was eleven and Orville seven years old, their father, a minister went away on a church trip. "Boughten" gifts were somewhat rare in that frugal home at Dayton, Ohio. Yet he liked to bring home a few knick-knacks for the family. On this trip an odd top caught his eye in the city store.

When he returned home, the father walked into the living room of the Hawthorn street house with an air mysterious, his hands covering some object.

"Now watch!" he said to the boys.

"Oh-h-h!" gasped the awe-stricken youngsters as the father opened his hands and a shiny thing leaped into the air. It rose whirling and smote the ceiling, fluttered a moment as if undecided upon its next course and then sank slowly on the floor.

"It's a bat!" shrieked the ecstatic lads.

"No," said the father, "it is not alive. It is a machine. You see it has two little fans that whirl about because of the pull of this twisted rubber band. This is a scientific top. I don't ask you boys to spell its name. It is called a helicopter."

For the next few days the flying bat was put through its paces within the house and out in the back yard. The boys were at it morning and night. They subjected the motive power to a cruel strain, writes John R. McMahon, beginning the story of Orville and Wilbur Wright, the fathers of flight, in the January Popular Science Monthly. They racked and tore the fragile device with eager fingers, loudly warning each other against violence.