

BRUNT

By FANNIE HURST

Annie Kineady leaves her husband because he has gone back to his former habit of drinking too much since the death of their baby. He had given it up after the baby was born, but has resumed it and will not sign a pledge. Annie goes to live with a friend in St. Louis.

CHAPTER IV

The accommodation slid rustily into the station. She found a seat in the day coach. The air in there was almost immediately, and when the train jerked over almost immediately, she sat on the seat and looked out across her knees and eyes squeezed tight against

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nausea and rising misery. Across the aisle a large party with a heavy gold chain spanning a convex waistcoat leaned to her with a queer chirping noise underneath his brush, his eyes, well imbedded in flesh, glowing across at her in quick appraisal.

Washington avenue, just above Jefferson, has been better days. Its brownstone fronts, even in bellicose times, when St. Louis showed pun- taletta, beneath her loops and trailed slaves on the courthouse steps, had not the sagging stoops or the copings sunk. Instead, there were stately sandstones, even the granite pairs of deer lions carved well into the crevices of the scrubbed manes and, too, the carriage-step whitely scoured for the footings and goings and doings and dangings of the Papius and Chouteaus, Garrisons and Chopins of those de- bariat pioneer days.

Then, because of the West-End movement and because people are constantly prospering or falling back and the street car franchise cutting through the seclusion and a new generation turning from a brown-stone to a white-stone front age, Washington avenue just above Jefferson evacuated and slipped into decay. To let it begin to stare from empty windows, doors sag- ged out of plumb, and the granite lions darkened with humiliation and smoke from the new Jefferson avenue King Quality Shoe Factory. And finally, like gloom to the corpse of yesterday, the rooming house invaded, the lodger for the night laying a furtive head beneath the high, calcimined ceiling of prouder days.

At 2595 Washington avenue, sinister looking with its front door sagging in like a toothless mouth, its indoor shut- ters closed and milk bottles and cans of the aid-hot-water-and-serve food of the lodger on the window-sills, Mrs. Lucy Beasley, to whom life consisted of two frayed ends which would not meet, conducted a rooming house—light housekeeping.

You to whom light housekeeping is but a card stuck in a murky window. Look to it well that you never know more. It is the heartstone and the family board gone to smash, and in their stead a tin can over a gas jet. Women sick with the heaviness of light housekeeping come and brush out their hair. Men in such rooms sit through the long hours of out-of-work workdays, oftentimes planning no good. Children cry here, not knowing why.

In her third-story-back, a slit of a room overlooking a segment of alley and the roofs of the King Quality Shoe Factory, Annie Kineady brushed out her hair. She heard one such cry beat against the thin walls of her room and passed with her brush held away from her and looking back at herself in the square of a mirror.

Into the quiet of Sunday morning slow-clattered church bells rang roundly. She stood there with her head cocked to the cry, her hair flowing down and over her bare arms and more than ever brilliant in the meager room, with its cot still awry from her rising, a table spread with her poor odds and ends of toilet and a bowl and pitcher. Beside it a tin slop jar, and beside that her empty telescope.

The cry, half a cough, rose again louder, and she tossed down the brush and wound her hair in its loose coil, slid into her black dress, with her neck rising whitely out of it, squirming to button it up her back. Slipped out into the dark hall, with the melody of breakfast smells oozing from every- where, and knocked at the door adjoining hers.

walker a day or two more. Mr. Foddie, while you're getting well. You mustn't overdo right off!" "Some little bouncing ball, I am, eh? Down on Saturday night in the middle of a mill-and-ale, and up on Monday, ready as a fighting cock for the begin- ning of the semiannual clearing!" "Oh, Mr. Foddie, forgetting right away and taking all sorts of risks, when the doctor told you that excite- ment—is dangerous and—"

"Nothing is dangerous around this here joint, Miss Annie, except you." "Cut that!" "What'd I say that was wrong?" "Nothing, but cut it; that's all." "I was only fooling, Annie." "What?" "Miss Annie, I was only fooling, Miss Annie. I like to see you get mad with those great big beautiful—"

"Cut it, I said." She moved back from him into the gloom of halls and toward her open door. "Well, of all the little spitfires!" "The cry arose, thin as a quill, and she turned back toward him." "He was crouchy all night. Mr. Fod- die, I could hear him. Did you fix up the tent over his crib and burn creosote under it like I showed you?"

"Just don't know, Miss Annie, what's ailing the little fellow. Got the lamp alight; but what does mean, Miss Annie, when his little body is hot all over, not real feverish, but just hot? Dry-like." "I'll see." She was past him into the three-windowed third-floor-front and toward a small crib in its corner.

"He's the sweetest little thing, Mr. Foddie, just the sweetest little thing, and so smart for only three." "Range of his up." "He—just don't look one bit like you, Mr. Foddie." "There you go again, running me down."

"Some way when I take him down to the store. Girls from one end of the floor to the other just honey the little geezer so."

She withdrew her hand softly from the heart of the crib, but a little wail rose with it. "See, he likes my hand," and she replaced it with a tremolo of great pride in her voice: "He likes it."

Mr. Foddie scented himself in the carpet rocker and filled the ten tips of his fingers together. His mustache so suspiciously lighter than the hair brushed so painstakingly across the thinning spot, raised again in a smile, revealing a flash of teeth and cellu-loid-looking gums.

"So do I," he said. "What?" Her glance flashed to the door. It stood open.

Bolshevism Rule of Ruin, Slavery, Says Gompers

Workers Disfranchised, Funds Seized; Not Necessary to Wait Longer to Form Opinion, Writes A. F. of L. Chief

Washington, Jan. 29.—Writing in the current number of the Federationist, official organ of the American Federation of Labor, Samuel Gompers condemns bolshevism "completely, finally and for all time."

The American labor leader says he doubts whether the propaganda which emanates from the Bolshevist organiza- tion itself is more effective than that conducted by those who claim to be entirely detached from Russian influ- ence and Russian payrolls. He says that Bolshevist publications issued by Russian Bolshevist agents have great effect in America as those which like to be known as "journals of opinion," such as the Nation, the Dial and the New Republic.

Mr. Gompers makes an extended refer- ence to the argument that the Ameri- can people know little about what is going on in Russia, and the argument that it is unfair and unwise to pass judgment.

"It was not necessary," says Mr. Gompers, "for Americans to know at all times just what were the exact conditions in Germany before passing judgment on the form of government existing in Germany. It was neces- sary only to know what was the form of government and under what rules it operated. We do not have to wait for information about the form of govern- ment existing in what is called soviet Russia."

"All the information necessary to the passing of judgment on bolshevism and the system of government and as a state of society is at hand from sources that are authentic. The plea of those misguided persons in America who say 'wait for the facts before passing judg- ment' is nothing more than an excuse which it is hoped will gain time for the Russian experiment and enable it to spread to other countries."

Quoting from the new Bolshevist con- stitution, Mr. Gompers points out that while the fifth pan-Russian congress declares for a dictatorship of the pro- letariat and the poorest peasantry, a great portion of the peasantry is dis- franchised and the largest Bolshevist estimate of the proletariat calculates them as only one-fifth of the number of peasants.

Quoting from Bolshevist official docu- ments to show the extent of massed terror by the Bolshevists, Mr. Gompers declares that "the economic condi- tion in internal Russia at the present time has absolutely nothing to do with the merits or demerits of the Bolshe- vist philosophy of government" and adds that it should have no influence in determining the judgment of any person upon it as such.

He quotes as the most direct informa- tion a dispatch from Russian trade unionists to W. A. Appleton, presi- dent of the International Federation of Trades Unions, which declares that Bolshevists have split up the reserve funds of trades unions, throttled the labor press, killed labor organizations, split up trades unions as a class and put down strikes by "force of arms and plentiful executions."

"In all concepts of freedom within the American nation," says Mr. Gompers, "one fundamental principle is that any involuntary servitude, that is, com- pulsory labor, shall not be enforced upon the working people." He quotes the amendment to the federal constitu- tion and adds:

"The conception and the spirit of that amendment have been entirely re- versed by the constitution of Bolshevist Russia which provides for and enforces compulsory labor."

The plea to withhold judgment is a last desperate attempt to win favor from the American people for a system of govern- ment which by the confession of its own advocates and defenders is foreign to every concept of the American republic. We know about Russia. We know about bolshevism. We know the pitiful story of cruelty and intolerance and we know the autocratic concept that underlies the minority dictatorship which is hailed to the world by its dupes and advocates as the most perfect state of society yet devised. We know about it and we con- demn it completely, finally, and for all time."

CHILD DECIDES OWN FUTURE

Sticks to Foster-Parents When Actress Mother Claims Her

Baltimore, Jan. 29.—Eleven-year-old Marjorie Easton decided her own future yesterday. With her real mother, Damaris Easton, New York actress and dancer, on one side, and her foster-parents, Mr. and Mrs. James O. King, of Cedar Grove, on the other, and Judge Gorter sitting in judgment on the pleas of the two sides for the little girl, it was left her to make her choice.

She will go back to the quiet, sim- ple life of Cedar Grove in preference to the life of travel and education that Miss Easton and her fiancé, Jacques Easton, offer her. But Miss Easton, who has been searching for nine years for the girl that was born to her when she was fifteen years old, will be allowed to visit her as often as she pleases.

"I want you to come to see me and I will write to you," little Marjorie said, a smile on her tear-stained face, "but I don't want to leave my mamma and papa."

Miss Easton was promptly invited by the Kings to go to Cedar Grove to visit her daughter.

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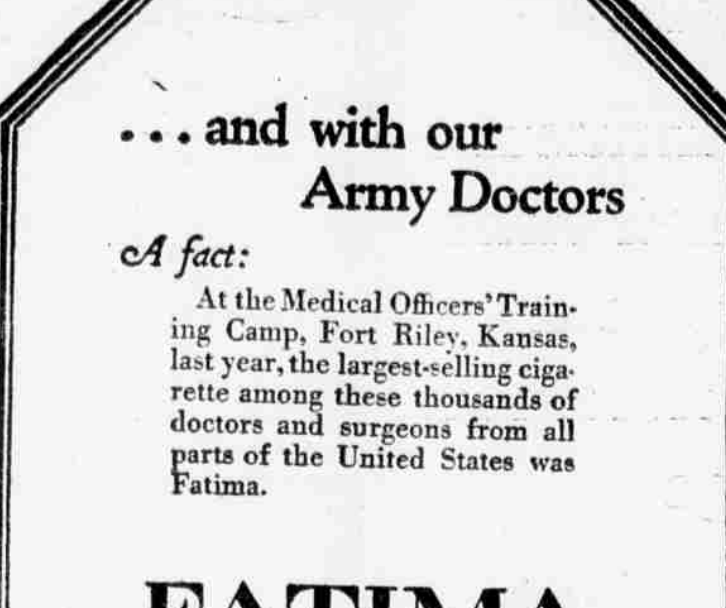
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ASIA

The American MAGAZINE on the Orient

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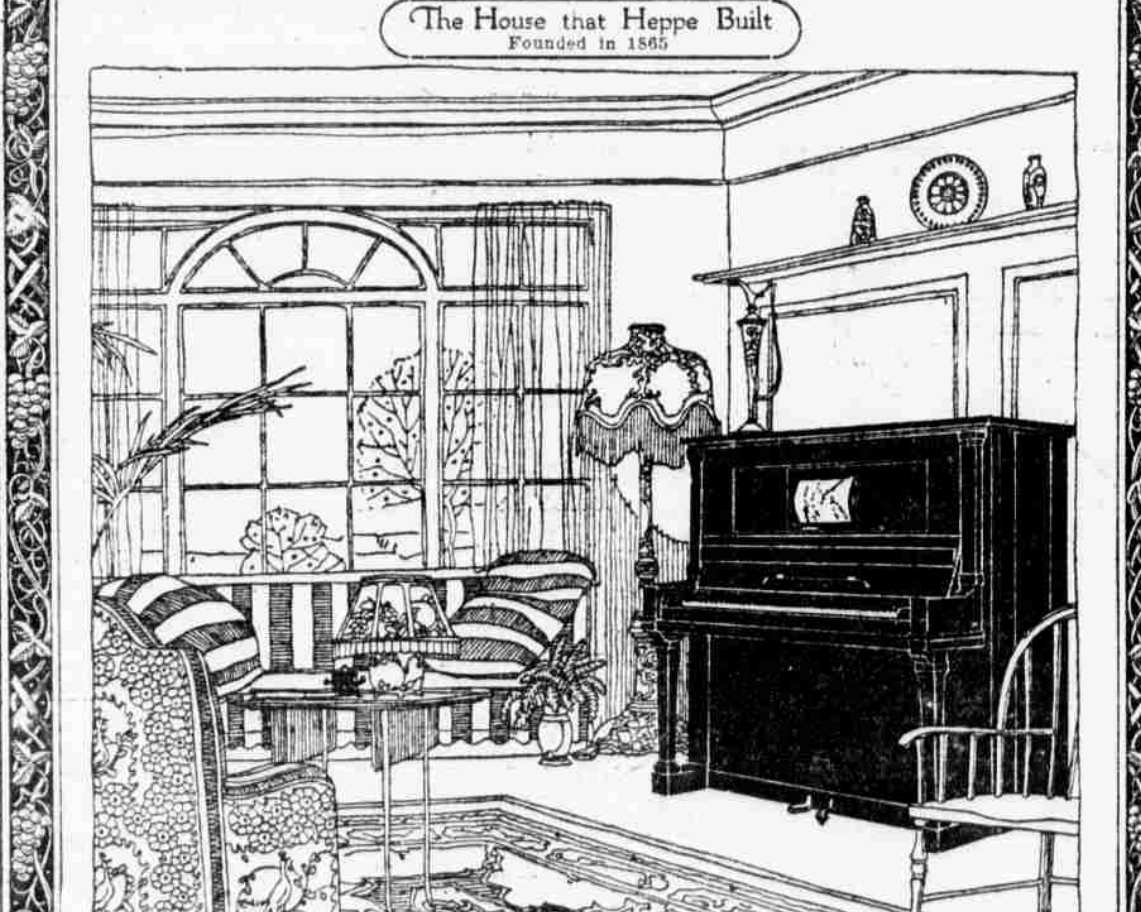
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