



Reading for Women and all the Family



Bringing Up Father

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By McManus

Life's Problems Are Discussed

By MRS. WILSON WOODROW.

When I go through my letters I usually have a strong impression of the writer. It seems to pervade the written word; and this morning the people who are talking to me on paper are all of them sad. They write of their perplexities and difficulties, of their wounds of the heart and soul. All of them are different, and yet in the last analysis of their problems are one. All covered by the famous exclamation: "To live is difficult. Oh, my heart is tired!"

One girl who has but recently learned to write in English has sent me her pathetic history. It is told very crudely and brokenly, but this is it as I have made it out:

She lived in a small, remote village. When she was a mere child she suffered a great misfortune. In her fright and misery she turned to her father and mother, and confessed the circumstances to them.

The father, evidently a scheming, restless, villainous person, saw an opportunity to free himself from his responsibilities and home ties and to gratify some ambitious and adventurous longings which he had been holding in mind. He wanted to go to America, and he wanted to go unhampered by his family.

He was afraid to desert them openly, and so he went about through the village telling every one he met that he had discovered this circumstance in his daughter's life and that he was filled with such unbearable shame and misery that he could no longer live in the old place among his friends and companions, but was determined to leave for America.

And so he departed, leaving his little girl to face all the scorn and humiliation which ignorance and superstition and village savagery could heap upon her.

Mother's Attempt to Take the Blame

Her mother, seeing the child's anguish and moved by some maternal passion of protection, attempted to lift the ignominy from her daughter by stating that it was her wrongdoing and not the girl's that had driven her husband away. When the village people asked her why he had blamed the daughter instead of herself, she said that he had been unwilling to admit his wife had fooled him.

It is needless to say that her sacrifice was wasted. Her effort to rehabilitate her daughter at her own expense failed. The village tribunal of gossip and tongues decided that they were both bad—creatures to be set apart and tortured by abuse and mockery.

Life became so hideous to the girl that she managed to get to this country, hoping to make a fresh start and begin all over again. In the strangeness and confusion of a new land she turned to the relatives who were already settled here. But the father had seen them first, justifying his own presence with the same story he had told at home and thus poisoning their minds against her.

She was once more treated as an outcast, left to make her way alone among an alien people and unaccustomed surroundings—a scapegoat for the sins of others in the wilderness of the world.

That is the bald story, as I gathered it from her letter with some-



All's Well That Ends Well

BY JANE M'LEAN

But really I don't want to go.

"Don't be silly, Elsie, you'll have a grand time. And you just bought that new hat, too. It will be just the thing to wear."

The eyes of the first speaker brightened. After all, she was very young, and had not enough money to have many good times. It was a temptation. The remainder of the new hat acted like magic, too. Perhaps the wily temptress had known this when she made the remark.

"She's going to be a sport, girls; she really is," said one of the girls, eyeing the downcast face eagerly. "See, it isn't everyone who makes such a hit with a swell fellow the very first time he sets eyes on her."

"That's right," from one of the others.

"Oh, I'll go," said Elsie, giving in at last. "I know I oughtn't to, but I never have any good times."

"And it's all your own fault," chimed in one of the three.

"Well I don't care this time. I'll be ready on time, girls, you needn't worry."

Her First Surrender.

The other three trooped down the hall of the cheap boarding house, leaving Elsie to get into her clothes. We can't go back and live one day over again; no regrets and remorse are both useless. The one thing, the only sensible thing, to do about yesterday is to forget it. If there was yesterday, it is equally true there is always to-morrow.

At seven o'clock, attired in a simple little blue dress and the new hat and warmly wrapped in a heavy coat she followed the other three girls down and the four were bundled into a big touring car.

"This is Miss Bigelow, Mr. Palno," giggled one of the girls, making the introduction in her own way.

Elsie found herself sitting in rather cramped quarters with a very good-looking young chap who looked down into her eyes, with admiration in his own.

"Well, it's about time we met," he said audaciously. "Now that you've decided to unbend a bit we ought to have some good times."

Elsie smiled a little uncertainly.

She was used to light badinage and hardly knew how to reply flippantly as the others were doing.

"To the 'Little Inn'!"

"Well," said the youth, who was driving, "where shall it be? Down at the little inn?"

"Oh yes!" they all shouted in chorus.

"Ever been there?" questioned Elsie's cavalier, who had slipped his arm comfortably about the seat behind her.

"She shook her head.

"Great little place; you'll like it." And then he turned to one of the other girls and made a light remark which evoked shrieks of laughter.

The big car was driven rather recklessly, and long before they had reached the little inn in question Elsie had begun to feel nervous.

Once they had darted across a railroad track just in front of a train, and she had cried out. The others had only laughed.

"She's afraid," said one of them jeered.

"Well she hasn't been out much," put in another. Elsie had not replied, but she had shivered, and the youth next to her had slipped his arm around her waist.

She was glad when they finally drew up at the little inn, but by the time they were ready to go on again she was more afraid than ever. The boy who was driving had had more than he should have had to drink.

This time she was really afraid, particularly as he paid so little attention to the driving and insisted on making love to the girl who sat with him.

"Don't be frightened," said the man next to her, comfortingly. But she had drawn away from him and was sitting with tightly clasped fingers waiting for something to happen.

The Crash Comes

And it did happen. As they were driving recklessly around a curve they struck a little stone bridge. It was unexpected, and the car did not right itself. There was a dizzy moment, and then it plunged over into the ditch.

Elsie, who had been expecting it, rolled safely over and under the bridge itself. She was conscious of one thing, and that was that she was not hurt.

Something intuitive forced her to do as she did, for without stopping to think she began to run across country in the direction from which they had come. Long before she was out of earshot she looked fearfully behind her and saw a crowd collecting.

She kept saying over and over to

herself: "If I can get away, I'll never do it again." She kept running on blindly, as she gasped the words.

Luck was certainly with her, for she reached a railroad station and stumbled in. There was a train for the city in eighteen minutes.

Elsie never forgot that next morning when she anxiously pored over

the paper. Two of the men had been killed—the driver and one other. The names of all were given, and two of the girls were in a serious condition at the hospital. "One girl escaped unhurt," the account ran. "She must have run across the fields in an effort to avoid publicity. Her name was not discovered."

RELIEF WORK IN FRANCE

Paris.—Temporary repairs on buildings in certain sections of the liberated area of France sufficient to enable returned refugees to remain in their homes through the winter have been undertaken by the Bureau

of Reconstruction and Relief of the American Red Cross. Work was recently begun at Croix, near Nesle, and it is hoped to complete the task in that village, Mollignaux and Matigny within one month. The bureau is also preparing plans for relief work in other villages.

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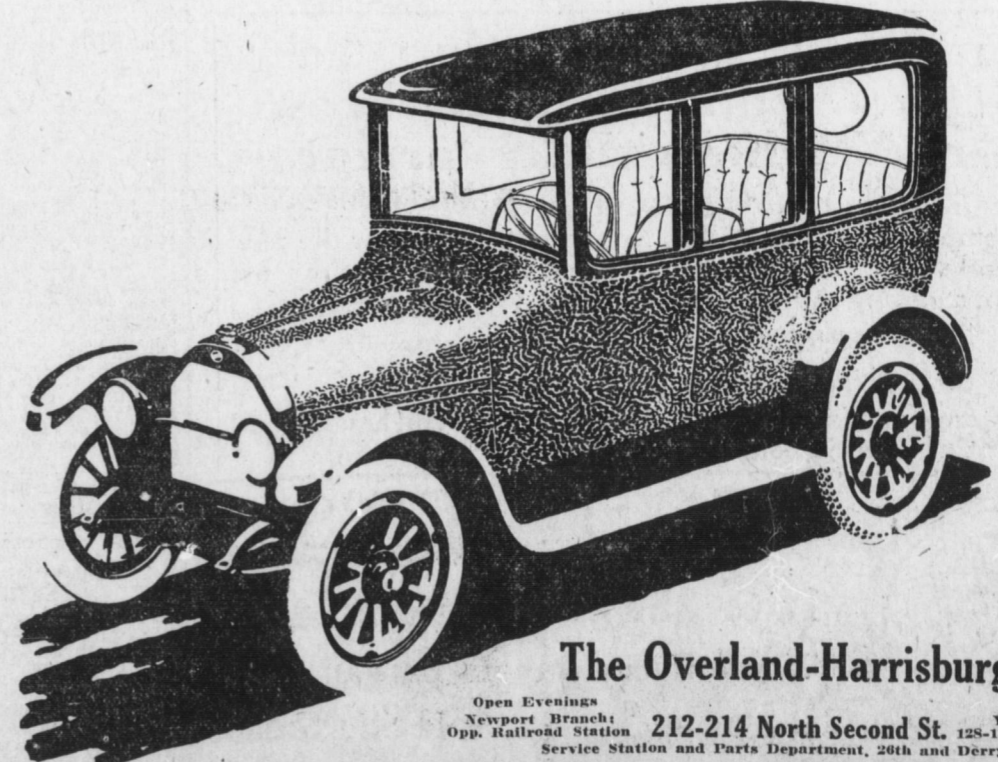
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Fashions of To-Day - By May Manton



The cape of this little frock is optional, and it can be made to be attached with snap fastenings, therefore, you can use it for a street dress and for indoor wear with equal smartness. There are a number of interesting features in the design. The cape and the surplice band, the raised waist line at the front and the tunic, all are new features. The model is charming for any material which is soft enough to be made full with success, or if you like, you could make the skirt of a different material, as charmeuse or taffeta with georgette crepe for the remainder of the dress. In the picture silk voile is trimmed with bands of satin. The color is the new one known as beet root, and the collar and cuffs are of white georgette crepe to give a very dainty effect. You will notice that the buttons are of the sort and are to be generally used in the Autumn.

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