THE MUTABLE MANY.

BY ROBERT BARR.

The Story of a Labor Union. A Tale of Present Day Problems. With Episodes from Real Life.

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"My position is this, Mr. Sartwell; I don't want to fight for fight's sake, and I have no revengeful desire to humiliate you or to defeat the firm for the mere glory of victory; but I am convinced the men will not get the fair share of what they make until there is a fight and a decisive victory. A few years ago the very right to combine was utopian and nonsensical in the mind of the capitalist, yet that right is one of the undisputed facts of today. The capitalist won't concede anything until he is forced to do so. Therefore, there must be a struggle, and I am bound to choose my own time and my own battle ground. We are ready to fight now, we are going to fight, and I believe we are going to win."

"Exactly. That is what I wanted to know. As to winning, we shall see. I quite agree with you that there is nothing so satisfactory in the long run as a square, stand-up fight, and let the best man win. The combatants have a mutual respect for each other afterward. The trouble is that the contest is rarely free from the side issues that affect the final result. In this case you are not sure of your backers, neither am I.

"If I were the owner of this establishment I would bring on the war instantly, carry it through with the relentlessness of a Barbary pirate, win it, of course, and have the most contented men in England in my employ ever after. As it is, the trouble is not going to be decided by either your generalship or mine, but by the relative constancy of our backers. If the men round on you before my directors get a trifle more frightened than they are now, then you will be defeated. If the directors get panic stricken first, then I shall go under. It will be a hollow victory either way, and will not be decided on the merits of the case at all. It is a toss-up, and, if we were sensible men, we two would settle it now by twirling a penny in the air; besides, if you do win, it will be a barren triumph, for you will lose everything you gain the moment there is a pinch in trade. The only reason you have a show of winning is because business is brisk, and the directors naturally wish to make hay while the sun shines. They don't wish to be crippled and have a fuss on while their trade rivals are reaping the benefit of their embarrassment. The moment trade becomes dull gain, down will go the wages, and no power on earth can prevent the fall. It is all a question of supply and demand. On the other hand, I give you fair warning that, if I win, not another union man will ever set foot in these works again. So, if you really have the interests of the men at heart, Marsten, you will reflect a bit before you bring on the fight."

"Do you doubt that I have the interests of the men at heart?"

"No, I don't. I believe you are thoroughly unselfish, but I also believe you are needlessly sacrificing yourself. You see it is difficult for us to come to an agreement, for we look out on the world from entirely different standpoints. You are at the foot of the hill, and the mists of the valley of youth are around you, distorting your vision, and destroying correct proportion. I am up toward the top of the mountain, where the air is clearer. You see men heroic and noble; I see them small and mean. You believe in the workingman; I do not. The chances are that neither of us sees with absolute accuracy, and the truth lies between the two extremes. Nevertheless, I think the day of chivalrous, unselfish action is past, and it is every man for himself in these times."

"I can't understand why you talk like that, Mr. Sartwell. I have seen heroic things done even in my short life. I saw a man come out of these works alone and unprotected, when he knew the mob outside was howling for his blood, yet there was no trace of either fear or bravado about him. The same man nearly lost his life in saving others when the factory burned, and Braunt, an unlearned workingman, did unselfishly and chivalrously go to his death in the same cause."

"Ah, Braunt was one of a thousand! Well, perhaps there is something worth preserving left in human nature after all, and maybe I am merely growing old and pessimistic.

MARSTEN TORE IT OPEN.

Anyway, the main point at present is that there must be a trial of strength; so I suppose there is nothing for us to do but shake hands like a pair of prize fighters before the performance begins. I think you are foolish, you know, not to take the submanagership."

The two men shook hands, and Marsten departed into the night. Sartwell sat in his office for some minutes thinking over the situation.

CHAPTER XXXV.

The second strike was as clean-cut as the first; that is to say, no laggards remained behind in the works; there was apparent unanimity among the men, and apparent determination on the part of the masters. To all outward seeming it was to be a straightforward, brutal trial of strength between capital and the union. Marsten care little for public sympathy, which Gibbons had considered of great importance, and Sartwell cared for it nothing at all. The public took small interest either way. It was known that the company had voluntarily advanced the wages of the men a short time before, and employers generally said that this showed the folly of sentimentality in business; that no master should advance wages until he was forced to do so. There was no gratitude on the part of the workingman, they averred, and some of the newspapers took the same tone. But even those journals favorable to the labor had qualms about the wisdom of the strike under the circumstances, although they hoped it would succeed.

Marsten, however, paid small heed to the comments of friend or foe; he knew that success or failure did not lie in what the papers said, but in perfect organization and in hitting hard. He knew that, if he won, most of the praise would go to the determination of the men and the opportuneness of the strike; while if he lost, he would have to shoulder all the censure that had to be bestowed. He picketed the works in the usual way, choosing for that duty the stanchest of his friends among the men. He asked the remainder of the employes to keep away from the gates and leave the conduct of the fight entirely to him and those he had chosen as his lieutenants.

Once the fight was on, Sartwell determined to give no quarter. He resolved to fill up the works, if possible, with men from outside, and to take back none of the old employes who did not sign a paper promising to abandon the union. In the former strike he had been anxious to get his men back in a body, and had made no real attempt to fill their places. He knew in the beginning of the second struggle that he was fighting for his life, and that if he suffered defeat he would resign, and the place that had known him for years would know him no more. He had no fear that the company would discharge him if he lost the battle—in fact, he knew they would use every effort to induce him to remain, but it was his own stubborn pride, as his wife called it, that he felt he could not overcome even if he had wished to do so. Sartwell, like certain swords of finely-tempered steel, would break but would not bend. Years of unflinching determination in what he thought was right had made him a man over whom he himself had but slight control, and he sometimes recognized with grim humor that while he could persuade all his confreres to take a devious but safe course upon any given problem, he could not induce himself to follow anything but the straight line. He worked night and day at the task of filling the factory with new men. He scoured the country for them, and his telegraph bills alone were enormous, but men were scarce—good men are always scarce—and now even indifferent workers were hard to find. Gibbons had once said that the workingman of modern times suffers from the fact that he is merely a cog in a big wheel, but this truism tells also against the employer who is trying to fill his shops. If a cog is useless by itself it must not be forgotten that the wheel is also useless until the cog is replaced. It is easy for an employer to supply the place of a single cog, but when the whole wheel is cogless, ninety-nine cogs are of no avail if the hundredth necessary to complete the circle cannot be found.

It was here that Sartwell had the first touch of his opponent's quality, and his anger was lost in admiration for the young man's shrewdness and knowledge of the business. The fight had been conducted so quietly that no one in the neighborhood would have known, from any sign of disturbance, that war was in progress. Marsten made no attempt to buy off the new men, who came and went from the works unmolested by the pickets. Marsten sometimes talked with the strangers, telling them of the strike, and asking where they came from; advising them to get work elsewhere, but never making any attempt either to coerce or to bribe them. Sartwell wondered at this, and hoped Marsten would continue such a mild and harmless warfare; nevertheless, its very mildness made him anxious, and he cautioned his new employes to give no information to the strikers, though he was well aware of the uselessness of trying to inculcate secrecy—for men will talk. In fact, Marsten kept himself well informed of what was going on inside the works and saw that the manager was quite shrewdly concentrating his attention to one branch of a department instead of trying to fill the whole factory at one time. He was gradually collecting his hundred cogs from all points of the compass, and by and by would have one big wheel and pinion, out of the many wheels and pinions, revolving. One day at noon, when the men came out, Marsten, rapidly running his eye over them, saw a new man, and at once he recognized that here at last was the hundredth cog.

"You're a new comer?" he said, accosting him.

"Yes," answered the man; "I came this morning."

"I'd like to have a word with you," said Marsten, keeping step with him.

"It's no use. I know there's a strike. I'm here to work, and I don't give a hang for the union!"

"Well, it will do no harm to talk the matter over."

"It'll do no good. I didn't come out to talk; I came out for my dinner."

"Of course. I'm on the same lay myself; come with me. We can talk and eat."

"I can pay you for my own dinner."

"Certainly; I'm not offering to pay for it. I don't suppose I get a tenth part of the wages you do; I can see by the look of you that you are a good workman. I'm secretary of the union and I get but a few shillings a week. I would tell you how few, but you probably wouldn't believe me, for I could get much more at my trade."

"The more fool you, then, for working for less."

"Perhaps. I want to raise the wages of men all over the kingdom, so I'm content to work for little if I can do that. Where do you come from?"

"I'm a Bolton man."

"Is your family here?"

"No."

"Why?"

"What's that to you, I'd like to know?"

"It's a good deal to all of us, because it shows that you are not sure of your situation."

"It shows nothing of the kind. I am guaranteed my situation."

"Guaranteed! What does a master's guarantee amount to? We're going to win this strike, and then where will you newcomers be? You know what happens when the men go back. Not one of you will be left in the shops. Suppose you do get good wages for a few weeks, what will be the benefit in the end? A permanent situation at even lower wages would be better."

"Who says it wouldn't? But I haven't the permanent situation, you see."

"Now you are talking sense. Are you a member of the union?"

"I was. I had a row with the foreman, and he gave me the sack."

"In whose shop was that?"

"At Smighden's."

"I don't know it. What wages were you getting there?"

"Thirty shillings a week."

"Do you know Markham, Sarbury & Co. of Bolton?"

"Yes."

"Would you be satisfied with thirty shillings a week there?"

"Yes; if I could be sure of getting it."

"You can be sure of it. I will telegraph to the foreman this minute, and we'll have an answer before we finish eating. He has promised to find me places for three men, and I haven't sent him one yet. But don't say a word to any one here, for I want to keep the other two places for Bolton men if they come."

"I'll not go back to this shop at all if I can be sure of a place in Bolton."

And so it came about that Sartwell lost his hundredth cog, and the cog never thought it worth his while to give his late master even a word of explanation. He left on the first train for Manchester.

This kind of thing happened several times before Sartwell fully realized the method in Marsten's action. He thought at first that Marsten had been merely lucky in buying off a man at the very time when such a purchase would block all progress. It was like pulling the linchpin from one of the axles of a wagon. The manager wrote to his fellow managers in different parts of the country and warned them that their foremen were giving places to employes from the works of Monkton & Hope, and he received answers saying they would do all they could to prevent such a transplanting; but, as it was difficult to trace where a man went, when so few of them were deported, the warning came to nothing. If a wholesale exodus had been attempted, Sartwell, with the aid of his fellow managers, might have done something to prevent its success, but the very homeopathic nature of Marsten's remedy made it difficult to cope with. By this time the feeling that he was a beaten man came over Sartwell, and, although he said nothing and sought sympathy from no one, it aged him more than years of toil had done. His daughter, now home from school, saw with helpless grief the deep lines care was ploughing in his rugged face.

Curiously enough, Marsten's quiet but effective methods, which convinced so farseeing a man as Sartwell that they were ultimately to be successful, had the very opposite effect on the strikers themselves. They did not understand the game, and they saw with increasing uneasiness that the works were apparently filling up while nothing was being done to prevent it. Marsten did not call meetings and enthusiastically show his hand with an outburst of eloquence, as had been the habit with Gibbons. The men thought he was saying nothing, and even Marsten's own friends began to feel dubious about the result. There was no sign of giving in on the part of the masters, and they saw every day an increased number of men come out of the gates. In spite of Marsten's prohibition the strikers began to gather about the gates, hooting the new employes when they came out; for hoots and groans seemed to accomplish something, and were at least a relief to the pent-up feelings of the idle men. Marsten saw these signs of revolt with uneasiness, but he thought, as the men this time were not starving, and as they all knew the union was still in ample funds, he could keep the strikers in hand until a decisive blow would show Monkton & Hope the futility of further resistance. He had quietly prepared such a blow, and he expected that when it fell the strike would triumphantly end.

A deputation of the strikers, headed by Gibbons, waited on him, and demanded that public meetings should be held—as had always been done before—so that the men might be kept informed of the progress of a struggle that vitally affected their interests.

Gibbons spoke strongly and feelingly on the subject, as one who speaks from the heart, and the deputation was correspondingly impressed. It was not right, Gibbons held, that they should grope longer in the dark; they wanted to know where they were, and what measures were being taken to bring Sartwell to terms.

"But, don't you see, protested Martsen, "that any information I give publicly to my friends at once becomes known to the enemy? I never knew anything to be accomplished by talk. There is generally too much of it in a contest of this kind."

"I quite agree with you," said the glib Gibbons, "but in the absence of talk we would like to have some evidence of action. This sort of thing cannot be kept up forever. Sartwell is gradually filling the factory, and we are all getting a little restive.

"I'M HERE TO WORK."

We must know what is going on, for it will be no consolation to be told in a week—or two—or three—that you find you have no chance of succeeding, and that we must make the best terms we can. You must remember that, although you lose no situation, we do. Will you call a meeting and explain to the men what the chances of success are?"

"I will do nothing of the sort. A general does not call his army together and explain to them what he intends to do next. I am leader of this strike, and I am going to lead it my own way or not at all. You say the factory is filling up, but I tell you that not a stroke of work has been done since the strike began. All I will promise to do is to let you know two weeks before we come to the end of our funds; then, if you do not think we will succeed, you will have time to make what arrangements you please, and depose me."

"Oh, that kind of high-handed business does not do in this age. You are not an autocrat, remember. The men have every right to demand an account of what you are doing with them and their money."

"When you were leader, Gibbons, they were at the end of their funds before you let them know anything about it. There was talk enough in those days and precious little information went into it. I won't conduct a strike with my mouth, and I won't stand any interference."

"You are our servant, I beg you to remember, and it is no interference when we simply ask to know what is being done and what you intend to do. Now, you will either call a meeting of the men at the Salvation hall or we will. Which is it to be?"

"I shall not call a meeting. If you call one, then you take the responsibility of meddling in a matter you don't understand. It is quite possible that you may be able to embarrass, or perhaps defeat me; but if you do, the time will come when the men will curse you for your intervention. I tell you we are bound to win this strike if you keep your hands off. Calling a meeting will merely show Sartwell that we are getting anxious, and his whole hope is centered in a division among us. He was frank enough to tell me so himself."

"When did he tell you that?"

"Before the strike began."

Gibbons looked significantly at the deputation, and one or two of the members nodded sadly, as much as to say they wouldn't have believed it, but it was now only too evident, from the secretary's own admission, that he had secret communications with the enemy.

"I think," said Gibbons, solemnly, "that after what you have said, there is all the more reason why you should call the men together, and explain to them how you came to be discussing with Sartwell the probable failure of the strike even before it began. You knew that was a tender point with us long since, and if Sartwell is your enemy, as you said he was, I can't see for the life of me why—"

"Oh, there is no need of any secrecy about it, Gibbons. In fact, there is little mystery about anything we do, and that is one reason I don't want to call a public meeting."

"Things are bad enough as they are. I have found that Sartwell generally knows what we are about to do before many of us know it ourselves. I went to Sartwell because he asked me to go. He knew this strike was coming on, although I had imagined it had only been discussed between myself and some of the others. He offered me the assistant managership of the works if I would resign my position as secretary. I refused, and he told me this strike was bound to fail because the men would not be true to me. You can give the men the whole particulars of my talk with Sartwell, but there is no need of calling a meeting to discuss it."

"That may all be true, but I confess it sounds rather fishy. I doubt if Sartwell is so much afraid of you as that comes to. Anyhow, there is no harm in finding out just where we stand. I will do my best to calm the apprehensions of the men, but I give you warning that if nothing more encouraging than we have had lately turns up within a week, there will be trouble. The men will call a meeting themselves if you don't."

"If nothing happens within a week, I will call a meeting and give them an account of what has been done so far; but I don't approve of meetings, and I shall call one practically under compulsion. You are forcing my hand, Gibbons, and you promised me fair play."

"It seems to me you have had a good run for your money, and I think we are very patient in consenting to wait a week when we are being led we don't know where."

The deputation then withdrew and Marsten paced up and down the room, wondering if the directors were giving Sartwell as uneasy a time as the men were giving him. As was the case during the former strike, the Salvation hall had been placed at the disposal of the men. Marsten had called no meetings except the one that had ushered in the strike. He made his headquarters, however, in a room that opened upon the platform, and which also communicated with a narrow lane that led along the outside of the hall to the street. Here his pickets reported to him, and here the work made necessary by the strike—the bookkeeping and the correspondence—was done. Here also letters and telegrams were received. It was a bare room with only two or three chairs and a rough table as its furnishing. Several religious and moral mottoes were tacked on the boards that formed the walls. "Love one another" was the sentence that met Marsten's eye whenever he looked up from his seat at the table. He sometimes smiled sadly as he gazed at it. Marsten paused in his walk, and sat down at the table on hearing a knock at the outside door. A telegraph messenger entered and handed him an envelope. Marsten tore it open and read the single word "Stopped." The word had come from the other side of the earth, traveling from Sydney, New South Wales, to London. A gleam of savage joy lit up the eyes of the young man, and, to the amazement of the messenger, he brought his fist down heavily on the deal table.

"There is no answer," he said to the waiting boy, suddenly recollecting that he was not alone; "and," he added to himself, "there will be no answer but one from Monkton & Hope."

Once more he paced the room up and down, his frame quivering with the delight of battle and the foreknowledge of victory. The motto, "Love one another," shone peacefully, but unnoticed, on the wall.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

When the two years' educational course at Eastbourne was finished Edna Sartwell returned to Wimbledon and again took up her position in her father's house. As time went on, Sartwell was quietly pleased to see that there was an absence of that friction between his womenfolk which had been his ostensible reason for sending Edna away. He had had but faint hope that the interval of two years would soften his wife's only partially concealed dislike for the girl; but, now that peace reigned over the household, he did not inquire too closely into the cause of the welcome change. He did not know his daughter now bore uncomplainingly what she had before rebelled against. Mrs. Sartwell's attitude toward education in general was one calculated to discourage the friends of learning. She looked upon a course in school as a sinful waste of time and money. The apostles, she held, had never gone to a board school, and who among present-day people were to be compared with the apostles? Education was merely a pamperer of that deplorable pride which was already too great a characteristic of this conceited nation. She had many texts at her command which went to prove that too much learning was a dangerous thing, and these quotations she frequently presented to Edna, in the hope that many repetitions of them would mitigate, in some measure, the evil that was sure to follow a period spent at a fashionable and expensive school. Overweening pride was Mrs. Sartwell's especial bugbear; it, more than anything else, was driving modern nations rapidly to perdition. She told Edna, sorrowfully, that she noticed an unwelcome change in her manner since her return from Eastbourne. The pride which aped humility was ever the most baneful variety of that detestable fault, and Edna's silence in the face of good counsel showed that her pride had assumed the sullen type which is so difficult for a good woman to deal with. It was only when Mrs. Sartwell—offended by absence of retort and cheated out of her just due of argument by the silence of her adversary—threatened to lay before her husband the appalling results of overeducation upon an already haughty nature, that some glimmer of the old rebellion flashed out between them; yet the rebelliousness, like the hauteur, had been changed by the two years' residence at Eastbourne. That Edna was angry at this proposed appeal to her father was evident; still, there was a reserve and restraint in her indignation which Mrs. Sartwell could not fathom. The girl stood for a moment looking at her, then said very quietly:

"My father has enough to worry him without being worried by our small affairs. He thinks my two years' absence has made you like me better than you did before I went away, and I wish him to continue thinking so."

"Like you better? My poor child, it is the love I have for you that causes me to endeavor in my humble way—praying that my efforts may be blessed by a higher power—to correct those faults that will be your undoing some day."

"I am speaking of what my father thinks. The moment he finds things are just as bad as they ever were, then all your hold over me is gone. I am now trying to bear patiently and uncomplainingly all I have to put up with in this house, and I do so for no other reason than to save my father unnecessary trouble. You say I am proud, resentful, stubborn and all that. I am far worse than even you have any idea of. It makes me shudder to think of the kind of woman I shall become if I am much longer under your sway.

"I feel like a hypocrite when I remain silent under your taunts, for I think such things that if I were to put them in words—well, we won't talk of that. If you imagine that I have learned meekness because I have lived in a really Christian family for two years, you are very much mistaken; but I have learned that true Christianity does not consist in nagging, with a text at the end of every exasperating sentence. Now, being a woman, I understand you very much better than my father does. You said once that, if he chose me to be mistress of this house, you would lay down your keys and depart without a murmur. You would do nothing of the kind. You would fight for your place. Therefore I want you to understand thoroughly what you may expect if you appeal to my father. The moment you complain of me in any way or lead him to think there is the least friction, I shall go to him and say that I must be mistress here. What will happen then?—you know as well as I do. So long as he is not troubled with our affairs I shall say nothing, and will try to be as dutiful and obedient as if I were your own daughter."

Mrs. Sartwell sat down, buried her face in her hands and wept softly, as one does whose tenderest feelings are wounded. It was hard that after having a lifelong contest with one stubborn person, resulting in a most uncertain and unsatisfactory victory—if it could be called a victory at all—she should be called upon to face the same problem over again. She knew that if Edna appealed to her father anything might happen. He would be brute enough to take another house somewhere and live in peace with his daughter. The man was capable of anything, in spite of all the precepts she had flung away upon him. However, there was still the consolation that she might save the girl by earnest and devoted persistence in well-doing, and she knew Edna would not protest so long as her father was unmolested; so Mrs. Sartwell agreed that her husband should not be made the referee between them, and peace once more folded her white wings over the happy home.

Edna had developed into a beautiful woman, more beautiful, indeed, than she herself had any idea of. She was more sedate and reserved than when she had left home, and more prone to sit thoughtfully, chin in hand, and ponder, with her dreamy eyes trying to peer into the future. Resolutely as she had set herself to put Marsten forever out of her thoughts, she never succeeded, and his vibrant, deep-toned voice often came back to her. Although she had been brought up in a democratic way, and theoretically held that one person was technically as good as another, yet she lived in a country where a grocer's daughter considers it quite beneath her dignity to be seen in company with a green grocer's daughter; while the daughter of a draper, from her serene social altitude, would have some difficulty in distinguishing the relative status of the other two, although she would be well aware that the adjective "green" carried comparative degredation with it. Edna was the daughter of a man who had been a workman; yet, when she thought over the proposal she had received in the school garden, she was slightly shocked to think that a workman should aspire to the hand of his master's daughter. She had conversed with Marsten, and discussed the problems that had interested them both, yet never for a moment had the thought of equality between them entered her mind. He was merely a workman, and, when that was said a gulf yawned. But love levels all ranks, as a distinguished man has sung, and, as the young woman meditated on the subject in all its bearings, the social barriers seemed to become less and less tangible. She remembered that no thought of social inequality had ever occurred to her while in his presence. She got no further in the understanding of her own feelings than the conclusion that she liked him very much indeed, and had a strong admiration for his manliness and his determination to succeed.

When the strike came on and she knew that her father and lover were opponents, her state of mind was one of great perplexity. It was hard that one or the other must be defeated, and she sighed when she thought of the relentlessness of fate in bringing into savage opposition the two men who were now dearer to her than all the world beside.

As the contest went on and she saw her father bending under the storm, ageing perceptibly day by day, becoming more and more silent, her strong affection for him grew stronger; she yearned toward him, wishing she could comfort him, yet knowing she was helpless. Sometimes a fierce resentment against Marsten would spring suddenly up in her heart. He had all the world to fight against, yet he must choose as his antagonist, out of the many millions, her father. It disconcerted her to perceive that this resentment never lasted long; that she found herself sympathizing, too, with the younger of the combatants and making excuses for him. A partisan has an easy time of it in this world compared with one who sees that all the good or all the bad rarely rests with one side solely, but is interwoven like the cotton and the wool in a piece of cloth. Sartwell and Marsten each believed he was fighting for the right; but Edna saw wrong on both sides and right on both sides, although—once the fight was started—she had not the courage to say this to her father.

But, as war goes on, the original right or wrong almost invariably sinks out of sight, and we choose our side from other considerations than those which appeal in times of peace to thinking beings. He who holds aloof is branded as a traitor; and yet man, with his marvellous capacity for self-esteem, flatters himself that he is a reasoning animal.

Sartwell generally came home late, sometimes returning by the last train. It had come to be recognized that it was Edna's privilege to sit up for him, and, although he faintly protested once or twice when he found her there after midnight, it was quite evident that her presence was a comfort to him. She had a soothing, restful way with her, moving silently about the room, anticipating a tired man's needs without unnecessary fuss, and with no irritating questions to ask; yet she was a sympathetic and receptive listener if there was anything to be told. In the wake of some women inanimate nature seems to clash; doors bang plates fall, cups and saucers clatter, and chairs upset, jangling nerves sensitive to sound, but Edna could deftly set out a supper without so much as a chink of china. She knew the value of trivialities—the setting of the armchair at just the right angle so that the light fell over the shoulder as it should, the placing of the slippers where the stockinged feet fell into them without effort; and, when her father was too much fatigued to care for the formality of sitting up to the festive board late at night, a small gipsy table, covered with spotless linen and some dainty that might tempt the appetite of a Lucullus, would appear at his right elbow as if they had come noiselessly up through the floor. All this came under the general head of "pampering" in Mrs. Sartwell's vocabulary, and the good woman, fiding that her example was of no effect in putting a stop to it, retired early to rest, so that she might not countenance such proceedings by her presence. There was a time to eat and a time to drink, and if a man presumed to be hungry at midnight, it was a sin that should be punished by dyspepsia in this world and goodness knows what in the next.

In spite of the compact between them, Sartwell told his daughter little about the progress of the strike; and she, seeing him indisposed to speak, forebore to question him, feeling that no suggestion she might have to offer could be of any value to him, contenting herself with protecting him from annoyance at home, and cheering him as much as possible whenever she had him to herself.

But it wrung her heart to see him failing perceptibly day after day, his step, which she eagerly listened for, losing more and more its self-reliant tread.

One night she sat in his armchair waiting for him, thinking deeply. She looked suddenly up with a start, and saw her father standing beside the table gazing down at her. His face was white, gaunt and haggard, and the gloom of his countenance was deepened rather than relieved by the somber smile that parted his lips as he regarded her. He seemed like a man on the verge of a serious illness, and so startled was the girl that for a moment she looked at him with wide-open eyes, fearing that an apparition stood before her.

"Father," she cried at last, springing to her feet, "what has happened?"

"Nothing, my girl, except that you have been asleep in the chair when you should have been in bed long ago."

"I don't think I have been asleep, yet I didn't hear you open the door. But you are ill."

"I'm right enough. A little tired, that's all. No, I won't have anything to eat, thank you. It's after closing hours, I know; but I'm a traveler, and I'll have something to drink, if you don't mind."

He tried to laugh a little over this attempted pleasantry, but his laugh sounded dismal and it frightened the girl still more, instead of reassuring her, as was his intention. The neck of the decanter clattered against the glass like chattering teeth, which seemed to annoy Sartwell, for he muttered something, and shot a glance at his daughter to see if she had noticed his unusual nervousness. Then he grasped the vessel more firmly, pouring the liquor with a steadier hand, but the effort made him tighten his lips. He drank off the liquid and set down the empty glass. Edna stood opposite him; he looked up at her with a wan smile on his lips.

"Well, my girl," he said, "the game's up."

"Has the strike ended, father?" she asked, her voice quivering.

"Actually, no; practically, yes. The firm will give in tomorrow, and I shall resign. Sorry?"

"I am sorry if you are, father," said Edna, kneeling beside him. "I am not sorry that the tension has ended, for I think anything is better than the anxiety you have been undergoing for the past few weeks. And you look positively ill tonight."

"Yes. A man hates to be beaten. Well, I'm farily knocked out, and if there is any comfort in a decisive beating, I have it."

"What has happened?"

"You see, Edna, in the pictures of a battle we always have the horses galloping, the men firing, or being shot, or cutting down their enemies with the sword; but we rarely get a view of the background, and so people sometimes do not know that it exists; yet the picture merely shows the front of the fight, as it were, while battles are often won by perfect arrangements in the rear—the supply of ammunition, the food and water carriers, and all that sort of thing. Well, a strike is like a battle; there are other things to consider than the actual fighting, and these things often decide the day. The direct loss in a struggle of this kind is nothing to the indirect loss. We see trade slipping away from us and going to our bitterest rivals. Some of our customers may come back; others won't. Then we are unable to fulfill contracts we have made, and, as a strike can hardly be called an act of God, we are liable to have damages awarded against us where no strike clause has been inserted in the agreement. All this I have had to fight as well as the strikers themselves. Then there is great difficulty in filling up the shops—much more than I expected. During the last week I have been slowly losing ground with the directors. They haven't said very much, but I have felt it.

"It was in the air somehow that we were fighting a losing battle, and so things have been on the balance, and the only reason the directors did not give in a week ago was that they knew I would resign if they did so. It only required a straw to turn the scales against me. Some time before the strike began a steamer sailed for Sydney, New South Wales. It had a large quantity of our goods on board. Today I received notice from the owners that the ship lay there and could not be unloaded because of our strike. They propose to hold us responsible for the delay, and that will mean an expensive lawsuit whichever way the verdict goes. This is serious enough in itself, but the fact that we have been struck from the remotest ends of the earth while being paralyzed in London will make the directors give in at once. So, my girl, I'm a beaten man."

"But, might you not have been beaten in any case?"

"No; another week would have seen the men back—I am sure of it. They are seething with discontent, and have called a meeting for tomorrow night, in spite of the protests of Marsten. There is sure to be a split, and all I need is a slight defection to set the works going again."

"Why need you resign, father? You have done your best, and the directors know it."

"Ah, my girl, you are sleepy; I can see that, or you wouldn't ask such a question. But now you know all about it, so off you go."

(To be Continued.)

MUNYON'S MARCH MEDICINES

The Learned Professor Gives a Plain Talk on

SPRING DISEASES

One Remedy Cannot Correct All the Changes in the System.

SEPARATE SPECIFICS.

Are Needed to Prevent the Development of Diseases at the End of Winter.

SEEDS OF CONSUMPTION

Catarrh, Bronchitis and Throat Disease Are Sown by the Neglect of a March Cold—Munyon's Cold Cure Breaks Up the Worst Form of a Cold at Once.

WEAK KIDNEYS

The Result of Extra Work on the Part of These Organs During Cold Weather Are Promptly Strengthened by Munyon's Kidney Cure.

IMPOVERISHED BLOOD

And Deficient Circulation Call for Munyon's Blood Cure, the Best Blood Tonic on the Market—It Enriches and Purifies the Blood, Promotes Appetite and Gives Renewed Strength and Vitality.

Professor Munyon says:—"The idea that one must take 'Spring Medicines' is a great mistake. It is true that at this season of the year many changes take place in the human body that affect the blood, liver, kidneys and nerves, but in healthy people these changes occur without the help of medicines. In fact, it is a sin against nature to take drugs of any kind into the body unless one is ill. The so-called Spring Medicines for the blood are also bad, because they pretend to cure all diseases with one combination of medicines. If your stomach is out of order it is absurd to take rheumatism medicine; if you have a cold, a kidney remedy not only does you no good, but may do harm; if your liver is sluggish, a nerve cure is useless. In fact, there is only one way to cure promptly and permanently, that is, by treating each phase of disease with the appropriate remedy. 'A separate cure for each disease' is the grand and true principle on which the Munyon system of treatment has gained its marvelous success.

"If you have a March Cold, the first thing is to cure the cold, as this is the season when Grippe and Colds have a dangerous tendency to develop into lung diseases and catarrh. The most obstinate colds yield in a few hours to Munyon's Cold Cure. Pnuemonia, catarrhal diseases and throat troubles are always prevented by this remedy. Where Colds are complicated by a Cough, the Cold Cure should be alternated with Munyon's Cough Cure.

"The debilitated condition which affects many people in the Spring season is Nature's warning that some organ is weak and often precedes serious disease. It is a condition which needs careful investigation, and which calls for treatment, not with Spring Medicines, but with the remedy that will remove the cause. If the stomach is disordered, Munyon's Dyspepsia Cure will act as a stomach tonic and bowel regulator, assisting digestion and curing such symptoms as pain or soreness in the stomach, indigestion or distress after eating, fullness in the stomach, shortness of breath, poor appetite, coated tongue, sour or bitter raisings from the stomach, heartburn, wind on the stomach, constipation, dizziness, faintness and lost energy.

"If the kidneys are affected, the languid, dragged-out feeling is accompanied by pain in the back, dark circles around the eyes, headaches, and the deposits of red sand or mucus in the urine. Munyon's Kidney Cure is guaranteed to cure 95 per cent of all forms of kidney disease.

"When the liver is disordered, the whole system feels the presence in the blood of the poisonous substances left by the defective action of this organ. In fact, the condition is one of general poisoning. There is depression of the spirits, tired, worn-out feeling all the time, bad taste in the mouth, aching and soreness in the right side, backache and aches and pains all over. Munyon's Liver Cure stimulates the liver to healthy action, and makes a perfect cure by removing the cause.

"Impoverished, thin and impure blood is the foundation from which many diseases arise in the Spring months. The poor quality of the blood results in a general low state of health, loss of energy and vitality. The patient takes cold easily, and the colds are obstinate, leading to catarrh, rheumatism and neuralgia. Munyon's Blood Cure not only purifies the blood, but makes new blood, rich in nourishment, that invigorates the whole system. It aids the healthful action of all the organs of the body, revitalizes all the tissues, promotes appetite, drives out all skin diseases, brings healthy color to the cheeks, clears the complexion and tones up the nerves, dispelling completely the dragged-out, tired feeling."

No matter what the disease, there is a Munyon specific with which you can doctor and cure yourself. Munyon's Improved Homeopathic Remedies are sold by all druggists, mostly for 25 cents a vial. There is no guess work, each remedy is plainly labeled with directions for home treatment, and the cure is absolutely certain. If you are in doubt as to the nature of your disease a personal letter to Professor Munyon, 1505 Arch street, Philadelphia, will be answered with free medical advice.

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