Said Lydia to Roy

By FANNIE HURST

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THE sun lay blanching the hills to the splendor of perfect spring and as far as the eye could reach, from the little swelling of the land where Helen stood, slanting orchards, with young trees eager to bear, reached to the horizon. Presently, very presently, they would burst into incredible blossom and a world crammed already to its perfection with beauties of one sort or another, would accomplish the impossible, and become more beautiful.

At least, that was the way Helen, eighteen, and with the love of a youth in her heart, felt as she viewed it from the rear of her father's fruit farm, that was known as Farnham's.

With that kind of youth in her heart, and added to it love, and a one-hour-old betrothal, it was natural that to Helen, at eighteen, the quieter, more adult world which contained her father, Adam Farnham, and her mother, Cora, should seem, by comparison, lusterless.

You wondered, when you were eighteen and so in love with life that the ground under your feet seemed to quiver, when it was only you yourself quivering from love of it, just what there was left for forty and forty-five; Cora and Adam.

It mattered only to have been kissed, as she, Helen, had just been kissed by the youth named Blair Beck, who had just ridden over in his brand new car from his father's farm, not twenty miles distant, and with a ring in his pocket which now sparkled on her left hand. They were to be married and live in a white house with green shutters on the Beck farm, the promised gift of the senior Beck to his son, and the blessings of all four parents had descended on the youngsters as the apple blossoms would presently descend and whiten the scene for miles around.

The only deterrent, it seemed to Helen, was to have reached the peak of life so soon. From now on, what could there be but anticlimax to the ecstasy of this; the ecstasy of the betrothal kisses that still lay singing against her lips; the strange sweet tingling of the flesh; the dream of tomorrow that could not be quick enough in coming.

"You are young and too eager for life, my lamb," her mother told her, trying to calm her excitements. "Let everything come in its turn. There are compensations for every age."

How old the mother of Helen seemed to her when she said this, seated beside her lamp in her perpetually gray gown, with her gray hair drawn in low portieres over her ears, and her hands so tranquil at their tasks of mending or sewing frocks. How sapless. What was there left for Cora? Father, of course, but they had had everything together. Adam was as relaxed now as Cora was, and there were deep braces ground in perpendicular lines on the sides of his mouth, and they seldom kissed, he and Cora, and it was nothing for him to come in dog tired of an evening, kick out of his boots and just lounge with his head sometimes on Cora's lap, if she sat at the head of the sofa. And little to say. Scarcely ever any of the tender, lovely things to say, except if Cora happened to be ailing, and then he could be tender.

But who wanted tenderness only when one was ailing? Who wanted tenderness from a tired gray man in his stockinged feet; who, in turn, and the private question to herself shocked Helen, who wanted to bestow tenderness upon a pale old lady with hair of a gray pallor? Helen did, of course. Helen wanted to bestow tenderness upon both Cora and Adam, because of the passionate love she felt for them. The love of daughter for parents. But that was different. The question still remained high in her heart. How dared once face the down side of life, after the ecstasy of a present like hers? Cora and Adam must have had that youth, too, and now look. Oh, one must live, one must live in youth—to store up against the bankruptcy of age!

They were married, Helen and Blair, when the ground was white with the apple blossoms, and the day they returned from a four months' honeymoon the last slap of green and white paint was on the cottage on the Beck place and four aged, tired, amiable and retrospective parents were there to wish them endless blessings.

There were blessings. Health, children and a farm that widened and prospered. Blair succeeded well and the children of Helen were the fine, ripe children of health, and the sorrows that came were the inevitable ones of passing life and death.

With the years, the four parents sickened and died; there were frightening illnesses among the children, drought came and pestilence among the cattle, but in the main, the good overbalanced the ill. Drought passed, pestilence lifted, the children throve and the beauty that was Helen's ripened, bore its fruit, and oh, so gently declined.

The same with Blair. His heftiest years reached their peak, his broad shoulders carried their heaviest burdens, and slowly, almost imperceptibly, the years marched down. So imperceptibly that Helen, who had not felt her body wither, awoke one day to the shock of a realization that was almost more than she could bear.

Lydia, her lovely child, her little child, her little girl, only yesterday with plaits down her back, was betrothed. There was nothing one could say, because it was right that she should be. The youth was a fine upstanding one of her position and kind. They were cleanly, rightly, in love. They were of age. Helen and Blair, gazing with amazement upon this phenomenon which had befallen them, were the older generation, looking down the years at the love of their young ones. A rather quiet Helen, with gray in her hair and eyes that smiled more often than her lips; a quiet, undemonstrative Blair who came and went without much ado, and upon whom the years had climbed, whitening his hair and bending his back a little.

Remote, a little gray, a little lusterless, they seemed to Lydia and the boy, Roy, who came asking blessing. So old, so finished, as it were, so dear, too, but pale silhouettes against the pale, unexciting, uninteresting background of age. Across this chasm, the youth of Lydia and Roy looked at Helen and Blair and back across this chasm Blair and Helen found themselves looking at their daughter.

"Blair, were we at their age ever as callow, as adorably foolish and outside the meaning of life as Lydia and Roy seem? How can two such shallow little pans contain happiness? How can they know the rich, sweet things of life that we know? How long they must wait, dear! In a way it seems sad to be so young. . . ."

Across the chasm, Helen and Roy, staring at age, held one another tightly by the hands.

"How terrible it must be to be old," said Lydia to Roy, and Roy to Lydia.

Whole World Joined in Mad Desire for Change

In the reign of Charles I, when disturbance was brewing in England, Falkland imparted to parliament the maxim: "When it is not necessary to change, it is necessary not to change!"

He was for no violent change but for medication of public affairs without it. Would he were alive to set the fashion now when change runs loose in the world! Change for no good reason, merely for the sake of change. One's first morning coffee comes in a can with a new label, a new double lid. The old label was all right, nothing the matter with it; the top of the can fitted perfectly; nothing ailed it. The new label is a shock, the double lid an impediment. One's shaving soap has a new holder, new cover, or comes in a new size every year. The same with tooth powder; new cans, no better, just new.

Do not our good friends the merchants—does not everybody now—undervalue the familiar? For the familiar does have a value. One likes to get what he got before in the same kind of a wrapper, whether it is gospel truth or English marmalade. There is a rush to translate the Bible into contemporary vernacular. Little is gained by it. It just makes unfamiliar words and sounds of what was part of the mental texture of millions of people.—Life.

First Modern English Poet

Reuben Post Halleck says: "Before Chaucer's works English was, as we have seen, a language of dialects. He wrote in the Midland dialect, and aided in making that the language of England. Lounsbury says of Chaucer's influence: 'No really national language could exist until a literature had been created which would be admired and studied by all who could read and taken as a model by all who could write. It was only a man of genius who could lift up one of these dialects into a preeminence over the rest, or could ever give to the scattered forces existing in any of them the unity and vigor of life. This was the work that Chaucer did.' For this reason he deserves to be called our first modern English poet. At first sight, his works look far harder to read than they really are, because the spelling has changed so much since Chaucer's day."

Inventor of Post Cards

It was on the suggestion of an Austrian, Doctor Herrmann, that the post card was born. He had advocated the introduction of cards about the size of an envelope, to be carried at a reduced rate, the sender to be limited to a maximum of 20 words, including signature and address. This was in 1869. The idea was quickly adopted by the Austrian post office, and other postal authorities followed suit, including Great Britain, where the post card was introduced in October, 1870. But, unknown to Doctor Herrmann, the post card was suggested, years before 1869, by Henrich von Stephan, the founder of the Universial Postal union. It was turned down, but Von Stephan was the man who thought of it first.

All-Time Holiday Time

Some employers of France are trying the experiment of spreading vacation time over the entire year. It has been suggested by some employees, who would rather have their vacation when the weather was not so hot as to prevent the full enjoyment of the time. There is much to be said for and against this scheme, but some employers argue that it is much more convenient to have a few away at one time rather than several, as has been the case heretofore. Others claim that there is not much business in the heated term, and therefore the assistants can be spared best at that time.

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DEL-MAR-VA GROUP MEETS

DISCUSS PENINSULA-WIDE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL AND MOSQUITO EXTERMINATION

At a meeting under the direction of the executive committee of the Del-Mar-Va Eastern Shore Association held at Salisbury a plan to promote interest in attracting visitors to the Del-Mar-Va Peninsula over the Memorial Day weekend with the view of making the occasion a Peninsula-wide Del-Mar-Va strawberry festival was submitted by the Secretary. The proposed plan would be in direct cooperation with the pre-Olympic Marathon Race to the held Saturday, May 28th, when large numbers of visitors are expected to come to the Peninsula from many sections of the country. Briefly, the strawberry festival feature would be to interest growers and producers in making displays and offering visitors samples of the famous Del-Mar-Va fruit.

An extremely well attended and most interesting meeting was held at two o'clock in the afternoon in the Club Room of the Wicomico Hotel when authorities from the United States Health Department and representing Delaware, Maryland and Virginia explained detailed methods of mosquito control. This meeting was called in behalf of the people by the Association and provided a three hour program featuerd by both motion pictures and slides presenting the life of mosquitoes and means of exterminating them.

Valuable and interesting statements as to procedure in overcoming mosquito annoyance and discomfort were advanced. Those who were present and participated in presenting views and ideas included officials of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, the Health Departments of Maryland, Delaware and Virginia as well as representative citizens from all parts of the Peninsula.

When the program was completed formal action was taken by the Del-Mar-Va Association directing the President and Administrative Committee to give immediate consideration in behalf of the people of Del-Mar-Va, to ascertain through the proper channels what Federal and State aid may be secured to carry out a cooperative survey as the first step in mosquito control.

The third meeting was held during the afternoon when the Special Committee on Traffic and Transportation met with a Consulting Engineer from New York City, to consider a proposed plan relative to the operation of a ferry line between Lewes, Del., and Cape May Point, N. J., The Association will gather facts and figures regarding truck movement of commodities from the Peninsula which might be considered as prospective business for the proposed line.

BABE RUTH SIGNS FOR $75,000 FOR ONE YEAR

St. Petersburg, Fla., Mar 26—Babe Ruth signed a contract here today with the New York Yankees for the season of 1932 at a salary of $75,000. The signing following a brief conference at Ruth's hotel between the home run slugger and Col. Jacob Ruppert, owner of the club.

Ruth's new salary is a compromise between Colonel Ruppert'se offer of $70,000 for one year and Ruth's demand for $80,000, the amount he has received for each of the last two years.

TOSCANINI TO GO 5,000 MILES FOR ONE CONCERT

New York, March 20 (A.P.).— Arturo Toscanini will travel the 5,000 miles from Italy, to New York to conduct one concert for the benefit of unemployed musicians. Clarence H. Backay, chairman of the Philharmonic Symphony Society, today announced receipt of a cablegram from Toscanini in which the conductor said he would sail on April 19 aboard the liner Ile De France.

Following the concert, to be given at Carnegie Hall on April 28, Toscanini will return to Europe, where he has been undergoing treatment for an affliction of the right arm.

Lack of Courageous Leadership One Cause of World Depression

Melvin A. Traylor, of Chicago Cites Human Failure in World War Crisis

"New Era" Theory a Myth

Speaking before the International Chamber of Commerce at Washington, Melvin A. Traylor, President of the First National Bank of Chicago, said in part:

Reams have been written, countless, addresses have been made, and more will follow in the search for the genesis of the present world depression; and, likely, recovery will come and the crisis be only a memory without there having been found a universally accepted cause or unanimous agreement on methods for the prevention of future defaults.



Melvin Traylor

But I cannot escape the conclusion that the dawn of the present situation broke over the world in July, 1914, and it came not from ignorance of the ultimate results of the course chosen, but because of a complete breakdown of world political sanity.

There was no lack of knowledge of the consequences, but rather of courage to face the facts, to throttle national pride, and to demand common counsel in an honest search for a basis of peace. Such a search might have failed, but, unfortunately, history does not indicate that it was honestly made.

Leadership Was Lacking

I am not a pacifist. Until enlightened understanding points us to the council table of peace rather than to the battlefield, there will be a need for armies and navies. But let us not say that we choose the latter course in ignorance of the tremendous costs of the game. Rather let us admit generally the lack of courageous leadership which dares to align itself with the right at the risk of being unpopular.

The point I would make is that, without prejudice as to guilt, the human element did fail in 1914, and the world then began its march to the tragedy of 1930-31. For it is tragedy when in a world of plenty there should be so much poverty, and when, in a nation which boasts of its riches, five million or more people willing to work should be unable to find employment.

It is a challenge to the world, and especially to American business and political leadership, which cannot be ignored and must not be shirked. Causes must be determined with some degree of accuracy and remedies discovered and applied. The task is largely that of business leadership.

We would follow almost endlessly the literature on causes and remedies for the world situation, most of them dealing with the purely economic or the semi-politco-economic side of the question. To the lay mind it is all more or less confusing, and to the man at the desk frequently beyond the realm of the practical.

Human Angle of Problem

In speaking more particularly of the character of responsible leadership in America, I am assuming that human conduct has differed little in most countries of the world. It is my purpose to talk about the human side of the problem.

If it is the responsibility of business and political leadership to promote the economic and social welfare of the community, it may be worth while to take stock of our conduct and see how we have measured up to our duty in recent years. This much, however, seems certain. The "new era" theory current in the days of our inflated prosperity was a myth, and is equally valueless in our search of relief.

The forces that have been and are at work are as old as the history of economics. Why should there be in this land of plenty, with unlimited facilities for production, abundant harvests, and a surfeit of credit, millions of hungry and unemployed? It is not the fault of those who would work, but can find no work to do. They have little or no choice in shaping their course and while it is true that society owes no one a living, society as far as humanly possible does owe everyone an opportunity to earn a living.

In that obligation we have failed, and until we know wherein we have failed and why, we will not have found that stability which is the universal desire of mankind today.

American Willow Trees Originally From Syria?

It has been told that the first weeping willow tree in this country was planted by John Curtis of Virginia during the Revolutionary war, and still stands on the Curtis estate.

The story is that "a traveler in Syria once sent to Alexander Pope, the English poet, a box of figs, in which was a twig from one of the weeping willows beside the rivers of Babylon, upon which the exiles used to hang their harps. This twig was planted alongside of the Thames, where it grew. A British officer brought a slip from this tree and gave it to John Curtis of Virginia."

Nurserymen claim that this tree is the ancestor of all the weeping willows in this country.

This awakens new interest in that tree, which is given such prominence in the Bible—"the willows of Babylon."

That's Free

"It seems to me one can't get anything in this life without trouble," says a pessimist. Except trouble.

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