

CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE

MALCOLM STUART YEARNs FOR LOVE, HE WRITES IN LETTER TO MARGIE

I slept last night, little book, lulled by lapping waters.

Eliene, the children and I, came on board yesterday and we quietly steamed out to sea on Malcolm Stuart's yacht.

The yacht was in gala attire when we arrived. I rather expected to see Malcolm Stuart, and I am sure Dick, who went down with us, did, too.

His absence was explained by the captain who said: "Mr. Stuart was detained by an important message from Dr. Virlet."

I think Dick was rather disappointed at not seeing Mr. Stuart, but it seems fate was playing a queer little joke on both of them by keeping them apart.

I know that Dick is very prejudiced against Malcolm, but I am sure if he could meet him once he would like him.

I, of course, am the guest of Eliene. No one but you, little book, knows that Malcolm Stuart has been my constant friend ever since I met him two years ago. And I am sure I know more about him—his real self—than many of his friends who see him constantly, and I have never seen him but twice in my life.

In a letter that I received yesterday, just before I started for the yacht, he said:

"Tomorrow, my dear lady Salvia, I shall be very happy, for I shall wake with the knowledge that you and Eliene are enjoying my yacht. I want the sea air to mend your body and Eliene's soul.

"Of course, I do not know anything about your mind, but I do know from my dear friend, Dr. Virlet, that you are mending physically.

"I am afraid that after the old yacht has known the soft rhythm of Eliene's and your voices, and the tinkling laughter of the children, that it will be inexpressibly lone-

some ever after.

"I have about decided to make it an auxiliary to my hospital, a kind of convalescent home as it were for the sick little bodies that my good friend is trying to mend.

"Margie—please let me call you, Margie—it may sound banal to say that only since I knew you and Eliene and Mollie and Mary and your kind have I realized that there were such women in the world.

"The terrible experience I had in my marriage made me an incorrigible pessimist as far as your sex was concerned and for many years woman to me was only a plaything to be bought like other pleasures.

"If you should despise me for telling you this I would still have to tell you all.

"You are my conscience. I am afraid I have been long without one, for until you and your sweet friendship came into my life I, like the sea, was blown into great passion by every passing wind.

"I hope you will read my books. I am glad that you will recline in my hammocks and rest on my chairs, and, Margie, I think that every man when he gets as old as I feel lost without the responsibility of children. When he begins to think of the journey to the Great Beyond he wants to leave behind something or someone that will perpetuate his memory.

"Will I ever have this great joy? I do not know—

"Do you think, Margie, that anywhere on this earth there is a dear good woman who could love

"Your friend, Malcolm Stuart."

(To Be Continued)

THESE DEAR GIRLS

Miss Wellalong—This has been a resort, you know, ever since 1860.

Miss Young — Where did you go before that?