

The Woman Who Knew

By WILL LEVINGTON COMFORT

BILL DUDLEY, who owned the peach farm touching the western borders of the hills, peered in through the open door of Hatfield's shanty as he drove by. Hatfield was there, bending over the stove, occupied probably with a rasher of bacon and a tin cup of tea. Above the faint sizzle from the pan and the rustling grind of the wheels in the heavy sand of the road, Dudley heard the muttering of a voice. It was as if Hatfield were talking back at the sputter of the fat. Dudley pulled up in sudden pity and called. The man's murmur ceased, but a flock of geese behind the shanty whanged up a general and animated comment. Hatfield appeared at the door.

He was tall, young, black haired. His face had the yellowish whiteness of an unbleached washing. His body was bent, his long arms hanging forward like an aged farmer's.

"Tomorrow's Sunday," Dudley began, with effort. "What be you a-goin' t' do? They's partridge—slews o' partridge—in them swalls yonder on the west slopes. Then, if we want a blue-bill, or redhead, or mallard—you know Tiltman lake, an' fishin' in old Silver? Lew Gail got a 20 pounder thar yistiddy—grass pike. Come on along. Peaches all marketed. Apples are better out in the cool. Least they wor't spile. Save yer pork fur winter and hev game fur a week. Come on!"

"Thank you, Dudley, but I'd better not. I'm a poor hunter."

"Time you war learnin', then. Come on!"

"But—"

"I'll rout you 'bout three an' a half in the mornin'. We'll go to the duck cove fust, an' wait fur light to see the birds. I got two guns. Git up, Pollie! G'long!"

This invitation of Dudley's must weigh in as a virtue. He would far rather have gone hunting alone. Moreover, the day's sport would be strained because free silences and random chatter were impossible in the presence of an inscrutable fellow like Hatfield. Dudley was the happiest man in the hills just now. He turned back after Pollie had plodded on a hundred yards or so. Hatfield was still standing in his doorway, his body appearing long drawn and helpless.

Dudley smoked, chuckled to the mare, and smacked his lips at the west. He had reached the High ridge. The view was glorious, startling. The fields and lakes and forests shone through a golden haze of Indian summer haze. All the jewels of heaven seemed to have dropped into the valley, there to glow in the smoky light of the red-hot crucible sagging down west. . . . About a quarter of a mile south of Dudley's place there was a white cottage with green blinds. A handsome young woman appeared at the door of the cottage, glanced back cautiously, then waved a hurried, laughing kiss at Dudley as he passed.

Hatfield lingered at the doorway until the tea boiled over and the bacon was charred. He would, perhaps, have forgotten to eat had not the scalding bubbles aroused him. Most pitiable was his attempt. The odor of food sickened him. He drank the tea from the leaves and set the rest away, handling the dishes repugnantly. Then he rolled a cigarette, and lit it, and hurried out in the air. The dark was growing. He reflected miserably that cigarettes were always endurable.

Why did Hatfield live alone on the Hill forty? One must travel beyond the ridge district to learn this. A few suggested that weak lungs were responsible for his purchase of the little fur farm and his stanch adherence thereto; others believed that he had dissipated fortune, physique and morals in metropolitan company, and that he sought to repair all three by solitude and toil incessant. Which guess was farthest afield is not for this narrative. A few things were known; that he spoke as one having culture and understanding; that he labored from dawn to dark in the frail but ceaseless manner of a woman; that he paid for what he bought swiftly and without question; that he gladly harbored wayfarers; but avoided affiliations with his neighbors; and that he lived carelessly, bitterly, and absolutely alone.

Had you watched him that night, you would have learned that Hatfield's soul held the passion and poetry of a Greek's, the supreme fervor of a man allied with the idols of a boy. And you might have imagined without touching doubtful fabric that his mastering romance was tortured by a knowledge of physical unfitness, fanned by solitude and rendered maddening by its purposeless fruition.

It was dark before moonrise. The geese were regaling the day's events by the water trough. Hatfield paused suddenly. He had walked for an hour, walked swiftly to and fro, between the barn and the shed. He almost ran indoors, lit his lamp, placed it beside the mirror in the kitchen, and shaved with clumsy haste. Then he bathed outside at the cistern and attired himself in clothing of rare taste and quality, but which hung tragically loose. There was an irrevocable sorrow in the largeness of that suit of a year ago. The hills had not added unto his flesh. When all was done, he left the house and hurried up the road in the direction Dudley had taken.

A slip of the moon had dawned in the far southwest. The rectangular plot of shadow ahead was the white cottage with green blinds. As Hatfield approached words softly spoken reached him. He crept into the elder shrubs which obscured the roadside and made his way forward until his suffering

eyes caught a dim view of two figures at the gate, the figure of a man and of a woman (whose voices he knew) in lovers' embrace.

"What was that noise?" the woman asked, intensely, crawling quickly away from the other.

"Nothin' but a bunny in th' brush," Dudley whispered, amerciously. "We're goin' out after game to-morrer—me an' Hatfield—pore devil, looked so lonesome as I cruv by this evenin' that I just had t' ask him t' come along."

There was a long silence.

"Bill," said the woman, at last, "now that we're engaged and goin' to be married, I've got to fess up. You know this spring we all thought Hatfield was dyin' of consumption. Well, I tried to be good to him, brought him little cookin's, you know, an' tried t' tidy up his house a bit. Well, he'd look at me kinda funny all the time, sorta pitiful, an' yet I can't exactly tell how he looked. I took it jus' th' same as any nurse would a fever patient—allowin' fur him, y' know. An' one day he said he wished I could always be aroun' that little cabin o' his'n, an' the words scared him, an' he looked out at the rainy peach blossoms for a long spell, red as any lamp shade. Another time he said I was the kind of a woman that the supreme intelligence intended the breed to be—strong backed and soft handed! Or somepin' like that. An' then his cough eased up and he tuk to work, and I didn't go no more. Two or three times he came here in th' evenin', but mother tuk care of him, an' I was allus pickin' plums or cannin' peaches. An' thet's all."

Dudley laughed. "I ain't afraid of pore Hatfield a-cuttin' me out," he said. "But be nice t' him t'morrer," the woman whispered, hastily. "He's a pore, sad feller, an' harmless as—"

"Harmless as a rabbit," Dudley finished.

A few minutes before four the next morning, while it was still black night, Dudley drew up his rig at Hatfield's gate. There was neither sound nor sign of light in the shanty, so the driver made a huge noise and prepared to wait. Scarcely 30 seconds passed before Hatfield appeared in the clothes he had worn the night before. Dudley turned his lantern upon the gaunt figure.

"Go an' git yer rubber boots," he commanded, laughingly. "Can't do 'thout 'em."

Hatfield obeyed silently, and two minutes later was driven rapidly toward Tiltman lake. The horse was fastened on the high rail and Dudley led the way to the cove.

"You've got the best gun," the man of experience explained—"12-gauge hammerless. Press down that little lever on the left side an' you cock her. . . . No, don't cock her yit. She's loaded!"

They had a mile to walk. The day was gathering.

"S-sh-h!" warned Dudley. "We're purty nigh thar. Ye don't want t' skeer 'em! By cripes, but ye're a fool with a gun!"

"Did you say that you press this left lever down to cock the piece—both barrels?" Hatfield gasped.

"Sure," whispered Dudley. "The lake's yonder. D'ye see it?"

Tiltman was ahead, showing up pearl gray in the dawn, like the mist which hangs over a bog.

"S-sh-h!" warned Dudley. "Thar's a flock down in the cove—hear 'em? We'll get a bunch—fust shot!"

They crept on. Dudley turned at last, his body bent behind an artificial blind in the edge of the bluff over the cove. His arm was raised to further command silence.

Hatfield was crouched, too. The nerves of the man wrung a horrid scream from his throat, before the crash of the gun.

That instant it seemed that the whole lake rattled and clacked, but the sound was merely from the cove where the vast flock was rising. . . . Hatfield saw the other sink upon his gun, his chin and throat a blotch of deep color.

Two or three hours later Hatfield's brain assumed command of surviving faculties. He was two miles away on the far shore of old Silver. He was harboring a world of ancient passion—that of killing himself. The lake was there, but it did not appeal. The knife in his pocket horrified. He wanted one more shell. Dudley had given him two, but both barrels were empty. There were innumerable shells on Dudley's body. He started back, running.

The place was changed. Dudley was not there! Other hunters had come to the blind. Hatfield searched on his hands and knees for one dropped shell. Thus he was found by those who required him.

The twelve wise men adjudged him insane after many days, but the woman who knew most, yet who had done no wrong—remained to weep. — Chicago Tribune.

The Nile Dam. Sir Benjamin Baker, who built the Nile dam, has just given out some new figures concerning the dam and its consequences. During the critical periods for the crops—March to June—the supply of water for irrigation was doubled by the dam. The irrigation of rice, prohibited in previous years, was allowed, and the increase in value of land now converted to irrigation is calculated at over \$25,000,000.

Quick Work. Word comes from Iowa that the champion corn husker husked 208 bushels of corn in ten hours. That is what might be called moving the crop on the lightning express, remarks the Chicago News.

Must Take Their Choice. Chicago has served formal notice upon highwaymen, says the Washington Post, that they must either go to work or go into politics if they want to remain in the city.

LAWYERS OF GOTHAM

New York a Center for Men—Great Men in the Profession.

SOME OF THE NEW-COMERS

Secretary Root and John G. Milburn Are to Hang Out Their Shingles in the City—Earnings of the Big Barristers.

New York.—The drift to the city of lawyers and other professional men who have won high repute in smaller places is once more instanced by the decision of John G. Milburn, of Buffalo, to join the legal firm of Carter & Ledyard, in this city.

Circumstances have made Mr. Milburn's name familiar to the country over. He was president of the Buffalo exposition. In that capacity he was Mr. McKinley's host when the president made his ill-fated visit to the exposition, and it was in Mr. Milburn's beautiful home that the president died and that Mr. Roosevelt was sworn in as his successor. A more limited note in a legal way Milburn gained when he argued before the court of appeals the case of Roland B. Molineux, then under conviction as a murderer, now a free man.

Mr. Milburn has been suggested as an acceptable candidate for governor of New York, though the suggestion fell into innocuous desuetude when it was discovered that both his tall sons were being educated in Oxford university, where both were members of college boat crews. He is assuredly a man of mark in his community. I sometimes wonder if it quite pays such a one to come to the metropolis where, though money returns for his work may be greater, he necessarily sinks almost unnoticed into the great mass of professional talent. Thomas B. Reed, from being the ablest man in the house of representatives with a national fame, came to be in New York a highly prosperous lawyer, whose name one seldom heard mentioned and whose face was unfamiliar on the street. John G. Carlisle, a national leader in politics, a member of the cabinet, a more than possible candidate for the presidency, succeeds him as the most foremost national statesman engaged in the less advertised, but better paid practice of the law in New York.

The Old-Fashioned Lawyer. The firm which Mr. Milburn is to enter fulfills all the honorable traditions of the New York bar, of which Mr. James C. Carter, the senior member, is the "leader." The "leader of the bar" in a city of less immoderate size would be, to the general public, a conspicuous person. In New York Mr. Carter is a conspicuous person to lawyers, but not even to ten per cent of them would he be known if met upon the street. Mr. Ledyard is much more widely known to the public through his connection with yachting, and especially with the America's cup races.

One reason why New York lawyers are little known as personalities is their growing dislike of court appearance. Daniel Webster and Abraham Lincoln pleaded many cases before juries. The New York lawyer of to-day sits in his office and plans; if a case is to be presented to court he engages a special pleader. There is more than one reason for doing this. If the case is won the client is satisfied with the means. If it is lost, the distinguished lawyer says: "My dear sir, we have neglected no reasonable precaution; we engaged special counsel, etc." Responsibility for failure is thus divided. Add the fact that litigation plays a much smaller part in the greater lawyer's business than it used to do, and the reluctance to appear in court is explained. Again, the inevitable court delays are wearing upon the patience of a man who can command his juniors.

The Lawyers' Earnings. The days are not long passed when \$20,000 a year of earnings was a big sum for a New York lawyer to handle. The growth of corporation business has greatly multiplied the number of men who earn that sum or much greater ones; and the firms that go in for promoting trusts, which has nothing to do with the traditional law business, win sometimes enormous rewards. Thus Max Pam, Schwab's lawyer, was to have received \$1,000,000 in stock of the now collapsed Shipbuilding trust for his services in connection with its organiza-

tion. This stock the schemers intended to sell at about \$65 a share for preferred and \$25 a share for the common. Assuming that Pam's shares were evenly divided between the two varieties he would have netted \$450,000 for his year's work. Such an income would have been by no means unprecedented.

In the investigation of the affairs of this trust Mr. Guthrie has appeared as the chief counsel of the conspirators. He may appropriately be taken as the type of the new manner of lawyer. Mr. Guthrie is the chief counsel also of the enormous corporations owning the New York street railways. He has a place on Long Island, which is in its way the finest in the country. There are a thousand acres of it—and in the fashionable part of Long Island acres cost money. The gardening effects have been wrought with lavish care by a small army of experts headed by English artists. The transplantation of nearly full-grown trees, the grading of slopes, the planting of rare shrubs from every part of the earth, have cost vast sums of money. The whole estate is called "Meudon," after the famous French chateau so named.

Such is the country home of a modern New York lawyer. But is there not quite as much dignity and fitness in the spacious, but plain farm house at Esopus, where Judge Parker passes his leisure or in Judge Gaynor's village home in Great Barrington? Webster's house at Marshfield did not, so far as I can learn, cost millions.

Root's Return to New York. The Hon. Elihu Root, secretary of war, is not to be an immigrant when he returns to New York, about the 1st of February, to resume the practice of law. Mr. Root's entire professional career was passed in this city. He left a very lucrative practice to go to Washington; he will resume an even more lucrative one upon his return.

Mr. Root is known as one of the ablest lawyers of the metropolis. He is a middle-aged man, but it is a matter of record that he was at one time attorney for Bill Tweed in important matters, when he could hardly have been more than a slender youth. Root's office has always been a favorite one for young fellows wishing to begin practice under favorable auspices. His firm will probably rank in legal-political matters with the famous firm of Tracy, Boardman & Platt, whose senior member is a former secretary of the navy and whose junior member is a son of Senator Platt, so recently deposed from the teacher's seat at the famous "Sunday School" in the lobby of the Fifth Avenue hotel by Gov. Odell as the "new boss."

Famous too, in his way, is "Web" Davis, the pyrotechnic assistant secretary of the interior, who at the beginning of the Boer war went to South Africa and sympathized so volubly with the Boers that he lost his government job. Mr. Davis has sold his farm to the South of Kansas City, and his blocks of tenements in that city, and is going to try New York. He may yet shine in high finance, as Mr. Towne, ex-Gov. Hogg, of Texas, and others have done.

The Writers—The Orators. Nor do newspaper men less than other professional people refrain from seeking their fortunes in the metropolis. John H. O'Brien, the bright youngster, who has just begun work as McClellan's private secretary, at \$5,000 a year, which is of course not much for a reporter, has been here only two years from Buffalo. Mr. Milburn's town. Of all the men of real importance in the New York newspaper offices I cannot at this moment think of one who was born in the city.

I bar proprietors, who are naturally New Yorkers in some cases—but not in so many as one would naturally suppose. Of the greater papers James Gordon Bennett, who has just given a park to the city in his father's name, is the only New York boy. The proprietors of the Harper, Appleton and Scribner, and other long-established publishing houses, are naturally New Yorkers; their managing men are not.

From Albany, from Philadelphia, from Georgia, from Kentucky, from Chicago, from Pittsburg, men of mark in the newspaper world have come; a very large number from London, a surprising number from Springfield, Mass., where the famous Republican is such a valued school of practical journalism that it numbers its highly placed graduates by the dozens, beginning with Col. Harvey, of the Harper manager and that it can get all the college graduates it needs to work as apprentices without paying them anything for their services.

As for the aspiring politicians—the name and the number of those who have invaded New York from every quarter is legion. Martin Littleton, the eloquent young borough president of Brooklyn, is from Texas. Tammany hall is constantly recruiting fiery orators from Georgia and Kentucky. The spoils of office with which the republicans can reward service are less attractive.

OWEN LANGDON.

Root's Change of Base. The Hon. Elihu Root, secretary of war, is not to be an immigrant when he returns to New York, about the 1st of February, to resume the practice of law. Mr. Root's entire professional career was passed in this city. He left a very lucrative practice to go to Washington; he will resume an even more lucrative one upon his return.

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Can your papa make everything the way my pa can do? Does he know how to drive in nails? And does he keep the glue right in a corner of his desk just to mend things for you? When dolly's carriage lost a wheel he fixed it in a minute. And made it just as good as new. I put my babies in it. And took them out to ride that day—He said he had to pin it!

And when my dolly's hammock came, he screwed those little hooks right in the wall to hang it on—slopes, the planting of rare shrubs from every part of the earth, have cost vast sums of money. The whole estate is called "Meudon," after the famous French chateau so named.

And oh, he makes me wooden spoons to stir mud pies with, too. Can your papa do all the things that my papa can do? —Kate Whiting Patch, in Youth's Companion.

One of its Amusing Features is the Writing of Parodies on Old Mother Hubbard.

Many a Mother Goose party has been given, but this one has a few points of difference from any I have heard of before. The diagram shows the invitations. Fold the extended strip back and forth until it is hidden by the body of the goose, and the card then presents the appearance of a goose-shaped bit of paper. Write the invitation on the back of this strip. Inclose for sending in small envelopes on the corner of which a goose is sketched in red ink.

One of the features of this party was the writing of parodies on Old Mother Hubbard. A tiny doll dressed to represent Mother Hubbard was the prize for the best effort.

A stuffed goose was the principal decoration of the lunch table. For the

lunch was handed around, so a small table only was needed to hold the stacks of plates and cups. The hostess and her helpers were in costumes representing Mother Goose and some of her favorite characters.

There was a short programme, consisting of one or two nursery songs sung, several tableaux and a recitation of an original further story of the lively adventures of Jack and Jill, with characters to act it out. Then a new game was played. Everyone would be seated by one person; this person would think of some nursery rhyme, and give out the principal word in it, as, for instance, "shoe," and whoever he stopped in front of must at once repeat the rhyme, in this case: "There was an old woman who lived in a shoe." The other features were very similar to those that have been many times described.—Orange Judd Farmer.

At a country school in Ohio the teacher was giving her pupils an illustration of what an object was. Having concluded, she naturally was careful to be convinced that the class understood the lesson. She, therefore, asked them to name an object. There was silence for a moment, and then a little six-year-old, anxious for preferment, raised his hand, remarking: "Teacher, I can name one." "Well," said the teacher, "name it." "A little worm." "Correct," said the teacher; "now, who can name another object?" Another pause, and then the same hand was up again. "Ah!" exclaimed the teacher, pleasantly, "I see you are the only one who understands the lesson. Now name it." "Another little worm."

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A USEFUL PAPA.

Can your papa make everything the way my pa can do? Does he know how to drive in nails? And does he keep the glue right in a corner of his desk just to mend things for you?

When dolly's carriage lost a wheel he fixed it in a minute. And made it just as good as new. I put my babies in it. And took them out to ride that day—He