THE NEW GENERATION

By Jane Phelps

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

Margaret Confides in Craig.

Margaret could not easily give up arguing with Joan. The child never had known what an empty purse meant. While she herself had only vague ideas on the subject, Margaret knew it was decidedly uncomfortable, to say the least.

"You see, dear, it isn't as though you had been accustomed to economizing. You have been extravagant in little ways—always. Even if you live very simply it will cost quite a little. I shall worry myself sick for fear you aren't eating what you should."

"Now see here, Mumsie!" a bit of the old impudent tone creeping in. "I have decided to do this, so what's the use making yourself and me miserable about it? If I starve in a garret I'll starve. But after this month's allowance is gone I take no more money from anyone unless I earn it—unless I give value received."

"You don't care if I worry?"

"Of course I do! But if you will just be sensible, you'll see there is nothing to worry about."

"You'll come up and have dinners with me?"

"That's another thing, Mumsie! I haven't time now for any gay parties—not often. I'll have Sunday night dinner with you, and once during the week. I planned that all out before I told you."

"But that will be only two good meals a week. You'll surely get sick." Margaret was almost weeping.

Joan laughed uproariously.

"What an idea of my talents you have! I surely cannot feel flattered by your faith in me. Why, Mumsie! I expect to live on the fat of the land. I shall be a regular female Irving Cobb, see if I don't, but without his avoirdupois, I hope." Then: "I'm determined, Mumsie, so please don't use yourself up trying to dissuade me."

Margaret left, turning over in her mind all sorts of plans by which she could relieve the distress she was sure would follow this Quixotic scheme of Joan's.

"Why couldn't she try first, then if she succeeded give up her allowance?" she asked Craig Forrester, in whom she had confided.

"You asked her that question I presume. What was her answer?"

"That she lacked concentration; that she needed something to push her to give the best there was in her; that she read one book a little while and then if she laid it down picked up and read another instead of sticking to the first until she had finished it. Oh, Craig, what shall I do with her. I just know she will make herself ill."

"No, I scarcely think that. That crowd she runs with are always sharing with each other. But what a girl she is!" He used Margaret's very words. "Most girls are reaching out for more these days. Whoever heard of one giving up a fat allowance to show she had ability to earn her living? But now she won't have time for you, so she told you, so you'll have to marry me."

"That's further off than ever. Do you think I would even consider my own happiness while that poor child is struggling away without a maid—I'll send Hannah down once a week—and earning her own living, or trying to?"

"So I'm to be put off again?"

"You certainly are! It would break her heart if I should get married, and now that she has to work so hard it would be an awful thing for me to do." Then: "Don't wait for me any longer, Craig," her voice trembled. "I shall never be able to marry you."

"Oh, yes, you will! I'll take Joan and drown her, as they do young kittens, before I'll lose you. Really, Margaret, what right have you to let that young girl spoil both our lives? I know you care for me, and you know how I feel toward you."

"I am to blame for anything and everything Joan does. It is my fault she is not the usual conventional girl of 18 who hasn't a single thought. If I went too far with her, allowed her too much freedom, it is my duty to see her through. So far she has come through all right. Now there is this new phase—so new to her that she has no conception of what it will mean. She may not be successful, although I believe she will. But should she fail, she will need me more than ever before. Perhaps she will let me be her pal then."

"Still thinking of that?"

"Yes, and always shall until it comes true."

Tomorrow—Margaret Discovers a Way to Help.

Craig County Pupils Counted.

Special to The World.

VINITA, Feb. 21.—The scholastic census of Craig county has just been completed by county superintendent Wammack and shows the following totals: White males, 3,163; white females, 2,834 total, 5,997; colored males, 140; females, 145; total, 285; aggregate white and colored, 6,282. The total last year was 6,151, so there has been a gain of 131.

CAFE CASHIER IS HELD UP

Taxi Drivers Flourish Shooting Irons and Get $200.

Special to The World.

BARTLESVILLE, Feb. 21.—Two men employed as taxi drivers are being held for investigation in connection with the robbery of the Manhattan cafe here at 2:30 o'clock Saturday morning.

When Hallie Saliba, night cashier of the cafe, was summoned to the telephone he heard a curt command, "stick 'em up, Hallie," and felt the muzzle of a revolver against his ribs. Two men had him covered with their pistols and commanded him to open the cash register. The cashier obeyed the command and the visitors took $200 in cash and ran from the cafe.

A police officer saw the two men enter a taxicab driven by "Mac" McMahon that was standing near the cafe, but he did not know at the time that a robbery had been committed. When the officer heard of the robbery a short time later he recalled the incident and McMahon was taken into custody pending an investigation. It was also found that the telephone call was sent in from a taxi garage and James Allen, an employe of the garage, was also taken into custody.

Saliba told the police that one of the holdup men was masked, while the other, stranger to him, wore a glasses.