

Underneath the High-Cut Vest

A Business Adventure of Emma McChesney

By EDNA FERBER

Author of "Dawn O'Hara," "Battered Side Down," etc.

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We all carry with us into the one-night-stand country called Sleepland, a practical working nightmare that we use again and again, no matter how varied the theme or setting of our dream-drama. Your surgeon, tossing uneasily on his bed, sees himself cutting to remove an appendix, only to discover that that unpopular portion of his patient's anatomy already bobs in alcoholic glee in a bottle on the top shelf of the laboratory of a more alert professional brother. Your civil engineer constructs imaginary bridges which slump and fall as quickly as they are completed. Your stage favorite, in the throes of a post-lobster nightmare, has a horrid vision of herself "resting" in January. But when he who sells goods on the road groans and tosses in the clutches of a dreadful dream, it is, strangely enough, never of canceled orders, maniacal train schedules, lumpy mattresses, or vilely cooked food. These everyday things he accepts with a philosopher's cheerfulness. No—his nightmare is always a vision of himself, sick on the road, at a country hotel in the middle of the spring season.

On the third day that she looked with more than ordinary indifference upon hotel and dining car food, Mrs. Emma McChesney, representing the T. A. Buck Featherloom Petticoat company, wondered if, perhaps, she did not need a bottle of bitter tonic. On the fifth day she noticed that there were chills chattering up and down her spine, and back and forth from legs to shoulder blades when other people were wiping their chins and foreheads with bedraggled-looking handkerchiefs, and demanding how long this heat was going to last, anyway. On the sixth day she lost all interest in T. A. Buck's featherloom petticoats. And then she knew that something was seriously wrong. On the seventh day, when the blonde and nasal waitress approached her in the dining room of the little hotel at Glen Rock, Minn., Emma McChesney's mind somehow failed to grasp the meaning of the all too obvious string of questions ending in the inevitable "tea, coffee 'r milk?" At that juncture Emma McChesney had looked up into the girl's face in a puzzled, uncomprehending way, had passed one hand dazedly over her forehead and replied, with great earnestness:

"Yours of the twelfth at hand and contents noted . . . the greatest little skirt on the market . . . he's going to be a son to be proud of, God bless him . . . want to leave a call for seven sharp."

The lank waitress' face took on an added blankness. One of the two traveling men at the same table started to laugh, but the other put out his hand quickly, rose, and said, "Shut up, you blamed fool! Can't you see the lady's sick?" And started in the direction of her chair.

Even then there came into Emma McChesney's ordinarily well-ordered, alert mind the uncomfortable thought that she was talking nonsense. She made a last effort to order her brain into its usual sane clearness, failed, and saw the coarse white table cloth rising swiftly and slanting to meet her head.

It speaks well for Emma McChesney's balance that when she found herself in bed, two strange women, and one strange man, and an all-too-familiar bell-boy in the room, she did not say, "Where am I? What happened?" Instead she told herself that the amazingly and unbelievably handsome young man bending over her with a stethoscope was a doctor; that the plump, bleached blonde in the white shirtwaist was the hotel housekeeper; that the lank ditto was a waitress; and that the expression on the face of each was that of apprehension, tinged with a pleasurable excitement. So she sat up, dislodging the stethoscope, and ignoring the purpose of the thermometer which had reposed under her tongue.

"Look here!" she said, addressing the doctor in a high, queer voice. "I can't be sick, young man. Haven't time. Not just now. Put it off until August and I'll be as sick as you like. Why, man, this is the middle of June, and I'm due in Minneapolis now."

"Lie down, please," said the handsome young doctor, "and don't dare remove this thermometer again until I tell you to. This can't be put off until August. You're sick right now."

Mrs. McChesney shut her lips over the little glass tube, and watched the young doctor's impassive face (it takes her no time to learn that trick) and, womanwise, jumped to her own conclusion.

"How sick?" she demanded, the thermometer read.

"Oh, it won't be so bad," said the very young doctor, with a professionally cheerful smile.

Emma McChesney sat up in bed with a jerk. "You mean—sick! Not ill, or grippy, or run down, but sick? Trained-nurse sick! Hospital sick! Doctor-twice-a-day sick! Table-by-the-bedside-with-bottles-on-it sick!"

ma McChesney, her eyes glowing with something other than fever. "I've something to say. It's just this. If I'm going to be sick I'd prefer to be sick right here, unless it's something catching. No hospital. Don't ask me why. I don't know. We people on the road are all alike. Wire T. A. Buck, Jr., of the Featherloom Petticoat company, New York. You'll find plenty of clean nightgowns in the left-hand tray of my trunk, covered with white tissue paper. Get a nurse that doesn't sniffle, or talk about the palace she nursed in last, where they treated her like a queen and waited on her hand and foot. For goodness' sake, put my switch where nothing will happen to it, and if I die and they run my picture in the Dry Goods Review under the caption, 'Veteran Traveling Saleswoman Succumbs at Glen Rock,' I'll haunt the editor." She paused a moment.

"Everything will be all right," said the housekeeper, soothingly. "You'll think you're right at home, it'll be so comfortable. Was there anything else, no?"

"Yes," said Emma McChesney. "The most important of all. My son, Jock McChesney, is fishing up in the Canadian woods. A telegram may not reach him for three weeks. They're shifting about from camp to camp. Try to get him, but don't scare him too much. You'll find the address under J. in my address book in my handbag. Poor kid. Perhaps it's just as well he doesn't know."

Perhaps it was. At any rate it was true that had the tribe of McChesney been as the leaves of the trees, and had it held a family reunion in Emma McChesney's little hotel bedroom, it would have mattered not at all to her. For she was sick—doctor-three-times-a-day-trained-nurse—bottles-by-the-bed-side sick, her head, with its bright hair rumpled and dry with the fever, tossing from side to side on the lumpy hotel pillow, or lying terribly silent and inert against the gray-white of the bed linen. She never quite knew how narrowly she escaped that picture in the Dry Goods Review.

Then one day the fever began to recede, slowly, whence fevers come, and the indefinable air of suspense and repression that lingers about a sick-room at such a crisis began to lift imperceptibly. There came a time when Emma McChesney asked in a weak but sane voice:

"Did Jock come? Did they cut off my hair?"

"Not yet, dear," the nurse had answered to the first, "but we'll hear in a day or so, I'm sure." And, "Your lovely hair! Well, not if I know it!" to the second.

The spirit of small-town kindness took Emma McChesney in its arms. The dingy little hotel room glowed with flowers. The story of the sick woman fighting there alone in the terrors of delirium had gone up and down about the town. Housewives with a fine contempt for hotel soup sent broths of chicken and beef. The local members of the U. C. T. sent roses enough to tax every vase and wash-pitcher that the hotel could muster, and asked their wives to call at the hotel and see what they could do. The wives came, obediently, but with suspicion and distrust in their eyes, and remained to pat Emma McChesney's arm, ask to read aloud to her, and to indulge generally in that process known as "cheering her up." Every traveling man who stopped at the little hotel on his way to Minneapolis added to the heaped-up offerings at Emma McChesney's shrine. Books and magazines assumed the proportions of a library. One could see the hand of T. A. Buck, Jr., in the cases of mineral water, quarts of wine, curling cordials and tiny bottles of liqueur that stood in convivial rows on the closet shelf and floor. There came letters, too, and telegrams with such phrases as "let nothing be left undone" and "spare no expense" under T. A. Buck, Jr.'s signature.

So Emma McChesney climbed the long, weary hill of illness and pain, reached the top, panting and almost spent, rested there, and began the easy descent on the other side that led to recovery and strength. But something was lacking. That sunny optimism that had been Emma McChesney's most valuable asset was absent. The blue eyes had lost their brave laughter. A despondent droop lingered on the corners of the mouth that had been such a rare mixture of firmness and tenderness. Even the advent of Fat Ed Meyers, her keenest competitor, and representative of the Strauss Sansuk company, failed to awaken in her the proper spirit of antagonism. Fat Ed Meyers sent a bunch of violets that devastated the violet beds at the local greenhouse. Emma McChesney regarded them listlessly when the nurse lifted them out of their tissue wrappings. But the name on the card brought a tiny smile to her lips.

"He says he'd like to see you, if you feel able," said Miss Haney, the nurse, when she came up from dinner.

Emma McChesney thought a minute. "Better tell him it's catching," she said.

"He knows it isn't," returned Miss Haney. "But if you don't want him, why—"

"Tell him to come up," interrupted Emma McChesney, suddenly.

A faint gleam of the old humor lighted up her face when Fat Ed Meyers painfully tip-toed in, brown derby in hand, his red face properly doleful, brown shoes squeaking. His figure loomed mountainous in a light-brown summer suit.

"Ain't you ashamed of yourself?" he began, heavily humorous. "Couldn't you find anything better to do in the

middle of the season? Say, on the square, girlie, I'm dead sorry. Hard luck, by gosh! Young T. A. himself went out with a line in your territory, didn't he? I didn't think that guy had it in him, darned if I did."

"It was sweet of you to send all those violets, Mr. Meyers. I hope you're not disappointed that they couldn't have been worked in the form of a pillow, with 'At Rest' done in white curlycuts."

"Mrs. McChesney!" Ed Meyers' round face expressed righteous grief, pain, and surprise. "You and I may have had a word, now and then, and I will say that you dealt me a couple of low-down tricks on the road, but that's all in the game. I never held it up against you. Say, nobody ever admired you or appreciated you more than I did—"

"Look out!" said Emma McChesney. "You're speaking in the past tense. Please don't. It makes me nervous."

Ed Meyers laughed uncomfortably, and glanced yearningly toward the door. He seemed at a loss to account for something he failed to find in the manner and conversation of Mrs. McChesney.

"Son here with you, I suppose," he asked, cheerily, sure that he was on safe ground at last.

Emma McChesney closed her eyes. The little room became very still. In a panic Ed Meyers looked helplessly from the white face, with its hollow cheeks and closed eyelids to the nurse who sat at the window. That discreet damsel put her finger swiftly to her lips, and shook her head. Ed Meyers rose, hastily, his face a shade redder than usual.

"Well, I guess I gotta be running along. I'm tickled to death to find you looking so fat andassy. I got an idea you were just stalling for a rest, that's all. Say, Mrs. McChesney, there's a swell little dame in the house named Riordon. She's on the road, too. I don't know what her line is, but she's a friendly kid, with a bunch of talk. A woman always likes to have another woman fussin' around when she's sick. I told her about you, and how I'd bet you'd be crazy to get a chance to talk shop and Featherlooms again. I guess you ain't lost your interest in Featherlooms, eh, what?"

Emma McChesney's face indicated not the faintest knowledge of Featherloom petticoats. Ed Meyers stared, aghast. And as he stared there came a little knock at the door—a series of staccato raps, with feminine knuckles back of them. The nurse went to the door, disapproval on her face. At the turning of the knob there bounced into the room a vision in an Alice-blue suit, plumes to match, pearl earrings, elaborate coiffure of reddish-gold and a complexion that showed an unbelievable trust in the credulity of mankind.

"How do, dearie!" exclaimed the vision. "You poor kid, you! I heard you was sick, and I says, 'I'm going up to cheer her up if I have to miss my train out to do it.' Say, I was laid up two years ago in Idaho Falls, Idaho, and believe me, I'll never forget it. I don't know how sick I was, but I don't even want to remember how lonesome I was. I just clung to the chambermaid like she was my own sister. If your nurse wants to go out for an airing I'll sit with you. Glad to."

"That's a grand little idea," agreed Ed Meyers. "I told 'em you'd brighten things up. Well, I'll be going. You'll be as good as new in a week, Mrs. Mc-

Chesney, don't you worry. So long." And he closed the door after himself with apparent relief.

Miss Haney, the nurse, was already preparing to go out. It was her regular hour for exercise. Mrs. McChesney watched her go with a sinking heart.

"Now!" said Miss Riordon, comfortably. "we girls can have a real, old-fashioned talk. A nurse isn't human. The one I had in Idaho Falls was strictly prophylactic, and antiseptic, and she certainly could give the swell alcohol rubs, but you can't get chummy with a human disinfectant. Your line's skirts, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"Land, I've heard an awful lot about you. The boys on the road certainly speak something grand of you. I'm really jealous. Say, I'd love to show you some of my samples for this season. They're just great. I'll just run down the hall to my room—"

She was gone. Emma McChesney shut her eyes, wearily. Her nerves were twitching. Her thoughts were far, far away from samples and sample cases. So he had turned out to be his worthless father's son after all! He must have got some news of her by now. And he ignored it. He was content to amuse himself up there in the Canadian woods, while his mother—

Miss Riordon, flushed, and panting a little, burst into the room again, sample case in hand.

"Lordy, that's heavy! It's a wonder I haven't killed myself before now,

wrestling with those blamed things."

Mrs. McChesney sat up on one elbow as Miss Riordon tugged at the sample-case cover. Then she leaned forward, interested in spite of herself at sight of the pile of sheer, white, exquisitely embroidered and lacy garments that lay disclosed as the cover fell back.

"Oh, lingo! That's an ideal line for a woman. Let's see the yoke in that first nightgown. It's a really wonderful design."

Miss Riordon laughed and shook out the folds of the topmost garment. "Nightgown!" she said, and laughed again. "Take another look."

"Why what—" began Emma McChesney.

"Shrouds!" announced Miss Riordon, complacently.

"Shrouds!" shrieked Mrs. McChesney, and her elbow gave way. She fell back on the pillow.

"Beautiful, ain't they?" Miss Riordon twirled the white garment in her hand. "They're the very newest thing. You'll notice they're made up slightly hobbly, with a French back, and high waist line in the front. Last season kimono sleeves was all the go, but they're not used this season. This one—"

"Take them away!" screamed Emma McChesney, hysterically. "Take them away! Take them away!" And buried her face in her trembling white hands.

Miss Riordon stared. Then she slammed the cover of the case, rose, and started toward the door. But before she reached it, and while the sick woman's sobs were still sounding hysterically the door flew open to admit a tall, slim, miraculously well-dressed young man. The next instant Emma McChesney's lace nightgown was crushed against the top of a correctly high-cut vest, and her tears coursed, unmolested, down the folds of an exquisitely shaded lavender silk necktie.

"Jock!" cried Emma McChesney; and then, "Oh, my son, my son, my beautiful boy!" like a woman in a play.

Jock was holding her tight, and patting her shoulder, and pressing his healthy, glowing cheek close to hers that was so gaunt and pale.

"I got seven wires, all at the same time. They'd been chasing me for days, up there in the woods. I thought I'd never get here."

And at that a wonderful thing happened to Emma McChesney. She lifted her face, and showed dimples where lines had been, smiles where tears had coursed, a glow where there had been a grayish pallor. She leaned back a bit to survey this son of hers.

"Ugh! how black you are!" It was the old Emma McChesney that spoke. "You young devil, you're actually growing a mustache! There's something hard in your left-hand vest pocket. If it's your fountain pen you'd better rescue it, because I'm going to hug you again."

But Jock McChesney was not smiling. He glanced around the stuffy little hotel room. It looked stuffer and drearier than ever in contrast with his radiant youth, his glowing freshness, his outdoor tan, his immaculate attire. He looked at the astonished Miss Riordon. At his gaze that lady muttered something, and fled, sample-case banging at her knees. At the look in his eyes his mother hastened, womanwise, to reassure him.

"It wasn't so bad, Jock. Now that



"Shrouds!" shrieked Mrs. McChesney.

thrust deep in his pockets, he announced his life plans, thus:

"I'm eighteen years old. And I look twenty-three, and act twenty-five—when I'm with twenty-five-year-olds. I've been as much help and comfort to you as a pet alligator. You've always said that I was to go to college, and I've sort of trained myself to believe I was. Well, I'm not. I want to get into business, with a capital B. And I want to jump in now. This minute. I've started out to be a first-class slob, with you keeping me in pocket money, and clothes, and the Lord knows what all. Why, I—"

"Jock McChesney," said that young man's bewildered mother, "just what did T. A. Buck, Jr., say to you, anyway?"

"Plenty. Enough to make me see things. I used to think that I wanted to get into one of the professions. Professors! You talk about the romance of a civil engineer's life! Why, to be a successful business man these days you've got to be a buccaneer, and a diplomat, and a detective, and a clairvoyant, and an expert mathematician, and a wizard. Business—just plain, everyday business—is the gamiest, chancier, most thrilling line there is today, and I'm for it. Let the other guy hang out his shingle and wait for 'em. I'm going out and get mine."

"Any particular line, or just planning to corner the business market generally?" came a cool, not too amused voice from the bed.

"Advertising," replied Jock, crisply. "Magazine advertising, to start with. I met a fellow up in the woods—named O'Rourke. He was a star football man at Yale. He's bucking the advertising line now for the Mastodon magazine. He's crazy about it, and says it's the greatest game ever. I want to get into it now—not four years from now."

He stopped abruptly. Emma McChesney regarded him, eyes glowing. Then she gave a happy little laugh, reached for her kimono at the foot of the bed, and prepared to kick off the bedclothes.

"Just run into the hall a second, son," she announced. "I'm going to get up."

"Up! No, you're not!" shouted Jock, making a rush at her. Then, in the exuberance of his splendid young strength, he picked her up, swathed snugly in a roll of sheeting and light blanket, carried her to the big chair by the window, and seated himself, with his surprised and laughing mother in his arms.

But Mrs. McChesney was serious again in a moment. She lay with her head against her boy's breast for a while. Then she spoke what was in her sane, far-seeing mind.

"Jock, if I've ever wished you were a girl, I take it all back now. I'd rather have heard what you just said than any piece of unbelievable good fortune in the world. God bless you for it, dear. But, Jock, you're going to college. No—wait a minute. You'll have

a chance to prove the things you just said by getting through in three years instead of the usual four. If you're earnest you can do it. I want my boy to start into this business war equipped with every means of defense. You called it a game. It's more than that—it's a battle. Compared to the successful business man of today the Revolutionary minutemen were as keen and alert as the Seven Sleepers. I know that there are more noncollege men driving street cars than there are college men. But that doesn't influence me. You could get a job now. Not much of a position, perhaps, but something self-respecting and fairly well-paying. It would teach you many things. You might get a knowledge of human nature that no college could give you. But there's something—poise—self-confidence—assurance—that nothing but college can give you. You will find yourself in those three years. After you finish college you'll have difficulty in fitting into your proper niche, perhaps, and you'll want to curse the day on which you heeded my advice. It'll look as though you had simply wasted those three precious years. But in five or six years after, when your character has jelled, and you've hit your pace, you'll bless me for it. As for a knowledge of humanity, and of business tricks—well, your mother is fairly familiar with the busy marts of trade. If you want to learn folks you can spend your summers selling Featherlooms for me."

"But, mother, you don't understand just why—"

"Yes, dear 'un, I do. After all, remember you're only eighteen. You'll probably spend part of your time rushing around at class proms with a red ribbon in your coat lapel to show you're on the floor committee. And you'll be girl-fussing, too. But you'd be attracted to girls, in or out of college, and I'd rather, just now, that it would be some pretty, nice-thinking college girl in a white sweater and a blue serge skirt, whose worst thought was wondering if you could be cajoled into taking her to the freshman-sophomore basketball game, than some red-lipped, black-jet-eared siren gazing at you across the table in some basement cafe. And goodness knows, Jock, you wear your clothes so beautifully that even the haberdashers' salesmen eye you with respect. I've seen 'em. That's one course you needn't take at college."

Jock sat silent, his face grave with thought. "But when I'm earning money—real money—it's off the road for you," he said, at last. "I don't want this to sound like a scene from East Lynne, but, mother—"

"Um-m-m—ye-ee-es," assented Emma McChesney, with no alarming enthusiasm. "Jock, dear, carry me back to bed again, will you? And then open the closet door and pull out that big sample case to the side of my bed. The newest fall Featherlooms are in it, and somehow, I've just a whimsy notion that I'd like to look 'em over."

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Strenuous School Life.

School life at Shrewsbury, England, in the sixteenth century was a strenuous affair. Mr. Percy Adleshaw, in his "Life of Sir Philip Sidney," has an interesting account of the school at that time. "The school year," he writes, "was divided into halves. From Lady day to All Saints' day the hours of attendance were from six o'clock in the morning till eleven, the dinner hour. In the afternoon the boys studied from 12:45 till five o'clock. Prayers were recited at the beginning and close of the day. If a holy day occurred in the week it was a play day; but usually the weekly day for games was Thursday. One custom then begun is still observed . . . At the earnest request and great entreaty of some men of honor, of great worship, credit, or authority, an extra holiday was granted to the boys. The judges of assize, when visiting Shrewsbury, are still accustomed to ask for, and obtain, this boon."

Keeping Up an Old Custom.

Lammas, as August 1 is sometimes styled, remains an important anniversary not only in Scotland, where it is quarter day, but throughout rural England, the Pall Mall Gazette observes. In many parishes the pasture of Lammas lands "belongs from this date until Lady day to all parishioners who draw smoke," not through pipes, but chimneys. The mysterious word Lammas is merely loaf mass, so called, because this was anciently our national harvest festival. A loaf made from the new corn was formerly presented at church on this date, which fell nearly a fortnight later under the unreformed calendar. Farmers around Chichester seem to have some subconscious reminiscence of this old custom, for they always try to get a loaf baked from the new wheat before the end of Goodwood week.

Historic Parisian Square.

Before the Revolution the Place de la Concorde in Paris was but a piece of waste ground. It was often used for public festivals and demonstrations, and in this manner its baptism of blood was begun as early as 1770. In May of that year an exhibition of fireworks was being given to celebrate the nuptials of the Dauphin and Marie Antoinette (note the irony of fate: 23 years later, as the deposed king and queen of France, both were beheaded upon this very spot!) when a panic was occasioned by an accidental discharge of rockets and more than twelve hundred persons were crushed to death.

Too Much.

"Don't go into the courtroom now. The judge is charging the jury."

"Holy smoke! Is a man dragged away from his business to serve on the jury and then charged for it?"

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Acting Director Sunday School Course, Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.)

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 6

CHRIST RISEN FROM THE DEAD.

LESSON TEXT—Mark 16:1-8; Matt. 28:1-15.

GOLDEN TEXT—Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen.—Luke 24:5.

The death of Christ made a profound impression, Luke 23:48. Joseph, who had been a secret disciple, obtained the body and gave it burial, Mark 15:42-47. In the lesson selected for today we have, first, Mark's record of the discovery of the resurrection by the women, and, second, Matthew's record of how his enemies dealt with that fact.

I. The Resurrection Morn, Mark 16:1-8. The Sabbath ended at sundown and the shops were then opened. Mary Magdalene then purchased spices that they might anoint the dead body of Jesus. They may have paid the tomb a visit late on Saturday, see Matt. 28:1. R. V. Starting the next morn, "while it was yet dark," John 20:1, they came to the tomb to perform their last service of gratitude and love. He had no need of this service, Matt. 16:21; 20:19; however, it was acceptable and they were rewarded by receiving the first glimpse of the risen Lord.

Women's Love Genuine.

The reason they did not expect to see a risen Jesus was in their failure to listen to and to ponder on his words. The men also failed to comprehend the note of his resurrection which he so frequently sounded. Indeed, the report of these same women is by these men considered "as idle tales," Luke 24:11. The women appear in a better light than the men in this story. The women, especially Mary Magdalene, loved much because he had done so much for them. The extent and the genuineness of their affection is found in that they went to the tomb to serve Jesus when apparently hope had fled and faith was blighted, I Cor. 13:8. R. V. Their visit was the fulfillment of their ministry of love, yet it reveals the darkness of their minds. This was common to all of his followers as we have already indicated.

Approaching the tomb they are confronted by a new difficulty—"Who shall roll away the stone?" The words of verse four are significant—"Looking up, ye see that the stone is rolled back," Am. R. V. This undoubtedly refers to the situation of the tomb and their approach thereto, yet the remains that "looking up" most of the difficulties are removed. Let us constantly "look unto him." It has been suggested that God rolled away the stone, not that Jesus might get out, but rather that the women might get in. Mary found two angels sitting, one at the head and one at the foot, where the body had lain, John 20:11, 12, and the two disciples to whom she reported found the linen cloth and the napkin and "believed," John 20:29. The women were overwhelmed with perplexity and, like Peter and John, "knew not the Scripture that he must rise again from the dead." The angelic message, "He is risen; he is not here," was the sounding forth of a message as great and as glorious as that sounded by the angels on the night of his birth. To add impression to the message, they are bidden to "behold the place where they laid him," v. 6.

Such experience and such knowledge entails a definite burden of responsibility, therefore the logical message and command of verse seven. This is also in accord with the Savior's last earthly message, Mark 16:15; Matt. 28:18-20. It is natural for us to get in silent meditation at the close of our greatest revelation or of our deepest soul experiences, but the women are urged to "go quickly." The message of salvation is too important to brook any delay, and "the king's business requireth haste." There is a tender touch in Mark's record of the allusion to Peter in particular when we recall that Mark received his gospel chiefly from that source. It adds light to that dark place we saw in the palace of the high priest when Peter so miserably failed. What a blessed privilege is entrusted to these women, to proclaim to the sorrowing, hopeless disciples a risen Lord, and to a backslider that this risen one belonged to him as much as to any of the others. Such an experience and such a message filled the women with awe, and they "fled" to the disciples and on the way "they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid," v. 8. R. V.

Spread False Tale.