

The Empire's Call

By D. E. Nimmons

It was the fall of 1885. Gilbert Martin walked home through the crisp air with the tottering step of one whose nervous energy, concentrated to meet some great crisis, had suddenly collapsed. As he neared his home he looked up haggardly at its marble steps. As he entered he regarded with calculating eyes the magnificent furnishings of the hallway, and stood there for a moment gazing with the same stare into the room beyond. Then he tottered into his study, leaving the door open behind him, and slowly sank into an arm-chair.

Half an hour later Robina Martin entered the same hall, erect, trim, well-shod, radiant in the wealth of costly furs and the newest in fall hats. She hummed as she removed her gloves, revealing a diamond ring sparkling on her left hand, for she was a very happy personage these days. Looking up she glanced through the open doorway, then hastened in alarm to her father's side.

"Why, father! What is the matter? Are you sick?"

"No, not sick," replied Gilbert Martin looking up. "Just broke, plain broke, that's all."

"You've lost money. Not really bankrupt, surely," disbelieved his daughter.

"Bankrupt indeed, Robina. The business is to be sold out, this house must go. I can't meet any of my enormous obligations. You knew the crisis was on. Well, I've lost out, that's all."

"But father, you can build up a new business."

"I'm too old to start life anew with a load of debt to begin with. Don't raise any false hopes, child. To-morrow I

In a vivid way it struck home to Robina Martin. It recalled with a sharp pang the loss of one who had lived would have long ago responded to the call. It brought back to her the days when she too could have donated a princely gift to this cause. It forced upon her a keen realization of her inability to give in the only way left for her; that is, in money, for years of struggling and scrimping had terminated in nothing save wrinkles and a meagre little home, for whose shelter she was striving to pay. She did not sigh as she thought it all over, she was past that. She merely folded up the paper, carefully removed her glasses and walked through a dilapidated gateway to the entrance of a shabby green cottage.

Robina fumbled with the door-key, she fumbled to find matches, and she fumbled at the lamp. Robina had reached the stage when she fumbled at everything. You see she was only a poor, lonely old woman who had neither man nor money to offer in this crisis. She was one of those who could neither fight nor pay and she was only in the way of those who struggled, as she had been in their way for many years.

To-night, instead of getting supper, she took the lamp and went into an inner room. There she opened an old trunk, and removing the clothing on top she searched through its contents. There were not many things: a few legal documents, a portrait of her father, another picture of a younger man laid face downward. This she took up and looked at it. Then she placed it in its original position. Lastly she took out a little



Australian Light Horse Being Reviewed at the Concentration Camp at Liverpool, Sydney, Australia

shall seek some kind of a position. I've brought you up in luxury, and your struggles must begin now, as I renew mine. Go away and don't bother me. I must think this out."

That night Martin was ill in bed. A week later a hearse left the house. Some months afterwards a sale of the belongings of Gilbert Martin was held at his residence by a mortgage company.

It was the fall of 1915, the period of transformation. Strange indeed were the things that had come to pass, for suddenly sacrifice had become popular, recipients of gifts had changed to givers, rich had turned into poor in a single night, knitting had taken the place of card parties, and, alas, many of the once light-hearted had become the gravest of all. The world's cup of peace had been heated into a bubbling caldron of turmoil.

A weary looking woman with grey, grey hair walked along the street of one of the poorer sections of a city. She wore spectacles, not gold-rimmed glasses, but unbecomingly silver-encircled ones, and they fitted securely behind her ears. She read a newspaper as she walked. It explained clearly, in a business-like way, the necessity of the Canadian Patriotic Fund, the great work that it was accomplishing, the urgent need of money, the fact that if one could not fight one must pay. "Give just a little more than you can afford," urged Sir Herbert Ames in his speech. "Give until it hurts. After all, those who give their money can never measure their sacrifice beside those who give their men."

box labelled "Cough Drops." Strange receptacle for so valuable a jewel, but you see one does not always receive an engagement ring in a plush case, and the box she had found for it might better have been labelled "Tear Drops." The diamond sparkled cheerfully as she opened the box and brought it nearer to the light.

"The only thing left of the old home and—Harold," she said unconsciously aloud, as she held it up. Then she smiled, for Robina Martin was one of those rarely endowed women who can live for a moment in the past and forget the intervening years. For a moment she forgot the crumbling of wealth to dust, followed by the death of one who could alone have made up to her for its loss. She came back to the present of coal-oil lamps slowly. "Those were happy days," she said dreamily. Then—"Poor father; poor Harold. He never thought that I could deliberately give away his only gift, and indeed I thought it was impossible myself. But I haven't him to send so this representative of him shall go in his place. He would not have it different if he were here. I do not need his ring to keep alive his memory." Nevertheless she sat there with her head buried in her hands for a long, long time.

At last she carefully put her treasures back. She did look again at the picture, but carefully piled in her clothing, closed the lid thoughtfully and went out, carrying the ring.

She did not wrap it up then. She ate a meal of warmed up potatoes and similar foods that you and I know are the lot of such women; an unnecessary pen-



Mrs. Goodwife says:

"Just a few cents worth of Floglaze made this chair look like new".

Floglaze

"The Finish that Endures"

Enamels Lac-Shades

"A touch here or a coat there keeps furniture bright and the home looking comfortable and cozy."

"Do not sacrifice the comfort of the old arm chair when Floglaze Lac Shades can keep the woodwork looking new."

Renews and Finishes Furniture, Woodwork, Floors, Wickerwork. Write us for color cards. 10c. in stamps will bring a sample of any color Lac Shade.

THE IMPERIAL VARNISH & COLOR CO. LIMITED

WINNIPEG TORONTO VANCOUVER

CANADA

Flowering Bulbs

GLADIOLUS

These are most effective in the flower garden, the colors are magnificent and they are easily grown. Prices are here—we offer:

Choice Mixed—10 for 30c, 25 for 65c, \$2.00 for 100.

Groff's Hybrid Seedling Mixed—10 for 40c, 25 for 75c, \$2.50 for 100.

Bruce's White and Light Shades—10 for 50c, 25 for \$1.00, \$3.50 for 100.

Childs Mixed—10 for 60c, 25 for \$1.25, \$4.50 for 100.

Bruce's Superb Mixed—made up by ourselves from all varieties—the best, 10 for 60c, 25 for \$1.35, \$5.00 for 100.

Named Varieties—any color (see catalogue), 7c to 25c each.

If to be mailed add Postage at rate of 10c for 10, 20c for 25, and 50c for 100.

DAHLIAS

Splendid Named Sorts—all colors—20c each, 3 for 55c, \$2.00 for 1 dozen.

Ordinary Varieties—Mixed 10c. each, 3 for 30c, \$1.00 for 1 dozen.

If to be mailed add Postage at rate of 5c each, 50c dozen. Where there are Express Offices, Express is cheaper than Mail for lots of over 6 Dahlias or over 50 Gladiolus.

FREE—Our handsomely illustrated 128 page catalogue of Vegetable, Flower and Farm Seeds, Bulbs, Plants, Poultry Supplies, Garden Implements, etc. Write for it.

JOHN A. BRUCE & CO., LTD.
Established 1850 HAMILTON, ONT.



J. H. M. CARSON
Manufacturer of ARTIFICIAL LIMBS
338 Colony St., Winnipeg
Established 1900
The Latest in Slip Socket. Satisfaction Guaranteed

PATENTS

Trade Marks and Designs
Write for booklet and circular, terms, etc.

Featherstonhaugh & Co.
Fred. B. Featherstonhaugh, K.C., M.G.
Gerald S. Roxburgh, B.A., Sc.
209-10 Bank of Nova Scotia, Portage Ave
(Corner of Garry)
WINNIPEG