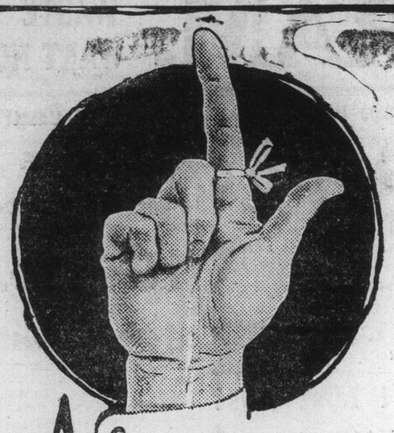

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# A Child of Sorrow.

CHAPTER XXV.

Maida laughed, but the laugh was arrested by a slight attack of coughing. Carrie glanced at Lady Glassbury meaningly, and her ladyship stirred the fire and drew Maida's cloak round her.

"I know what will happen," she said, decisively. "You'll be ill, and then where will you be?"

"In bed," replied Carrie for her, promptly. "And that is where she ought to be now. Let us go, Lady Glassbury; you might as well talk to that china image on the mantel-shelf as talk to Maida when she has made up what she calls her mind."

Maida rose, smiling sadly and pleadingly.

"I have written a violent letter to Byrne," said Lady Glassbury, "and I am going to write to him again more violently. I wish I were a man, so that I could use the language I want to use—"

"You might get Lord Glassbury to enclose a slip of paper," said Carrie.

"Will you not send a message to him, Maida?"

"Yes! why should I not?" said Maida, with a spot of color in her cheek. "Tell him, Lady Glassbury, that I am glad he has gone abroad; and that I hope he will stay away a long time."

"I shall give him no such message," responded Lady Glassbury, warmly. "Though it would serve you right if I did. Oh, Maida, don't you realise how madly he loves you, how much harm your coldness is doing him?"

The dash of color left Maida's face and she laid a quivering hand on Lady Glassbury's arm, the grey eyes growing violet with the intensity of her emotion and her effort to suppress it.

"Do you think I am so cold?" she said, in a low voice. "Ah, but you don't know, you don't know! I am trying to do the right thing and you must help me, and not make it harder for me. That is why—why—I keep away from you. I am trying to forget; and how can I help remembering when I see you, when I have to fight, not only myself, my own heart, but you."

Lady Glassbury's eyes filled with tears; but what could she say? At such moments as this her love for the girl was almost swallowed up in admiration for her staunchness. As they were going down the stairs, she held Carrie back, and whispered:

"You must take care of her, Carrie. I—I don't like the look of her."

"Oh, I'll take care of her," said Carrie. "I'd let you know how she is, but she has made me promise not to write to you, to anyone; and I've been trying all my life to break my promises to Maida, but have never yet succeeded."

Maida seemed ver ytired that night when they got home; but when she got to bed she could not sleep. Though she could not see him, the thought that Byrne had been near her and wanted to see her had been very sweet to her and almost a consolation; but now he had gone faraway, and his disappearance brought home to her more keenly than ever the fact that she had lost him. She woke in the morning, after a short sleep only, hot and feverish, and her cough was worse. Carrie nursed her up during the day, as much as Maida would permit, for Maida had to recite that night at the house of an African millionaire.

The excitement, which is part and parcel of the stock in trade of the genuine artiste, carried her through her performance; but she had to rest awhile in one of the gorgeous anterooms after she had finished; and while she was leaning back in a comfortable lounge, the hostess came to her with kindly concern. She was accompanied by a middle-aged lady, very much overdressed and all aglitter with diamonds who shone grotesquely on her fat arms and above her red, good-natured face. It was Mrs. Broseley, the wife of a man who had gone out to Australia with the proverbial half a crown and had made a million or so. Maida had recited at Mrs. Broseley's palatial house, and the good-natured woman had taken a great fancy to the beautiful girl who had made the success of one of the most crowded of Mrs. Broseley's At Homes.

"My dear, you ought never to have been here!" she said, plumping down beside Maida and taking the slim, white hands between her two red, fat ones. "If you was my gal, I'd have had you in bed an' kept you there, if I'd had to 'old you down. Why, what's your mother about?"

"I haven't any mother," said Maida.

"I'm her mother," said Carrie; "but she's a disobedient, wilful daughter."

Mrs. Broseley nodded and smiled at Carrie comprehendingly.

"Oh, that's it!" she said. "Well, I can sympathise with you. I know the sort of gal she is. I had one like her: but she's dead. Now, my dear," turning to Maida with a good-natured smile which stretched her mouth from ear to ear. "You just let your little mother take you home and put you to bed. Don't you dream of going on with this reciting of yours till you've got rid of your cough and got some more flesh on your bones."

"But I am going to you the day after to-morrow, Mrs. Broseley," said Maida.

"Then you won't!" said Mrs. Broseley, emphatically. "Oh, I know they will be all expecting you, an' there will be a rare how-de-do when you don't show up; but you're not to come. You shall come when you're better. Now, I'm goin' to send you home in my kerridge. Oh, I know you can git a cab; but you're not goin' to ride through the night air. An' that cloak is not thick enough. Here!" she called to a footman, and told him to bring her own fur wrap, and, with her own hands, notwithstanding Maida's protest, she wrapped it round the slight figure.

Maida tried to smile as she expressed her thanks, but she could scarcely speak, for she had lost her voice with the recitation; but the tears in her eyes spoke for her.

She was ill that night, and Carrie, the next morning, was trying to persuade Maida to let her send for a doctor when Sarah came up the stairs two at a time, to announce that Sir Jeremiah Jordan wanted to see Miss Maida. Maida would have refused to see the great doctor, but he was not the kind of man to take a refusal, and presently he was sitting beside the bed and talking to her and Carrie about the weather, the last play, anything and everything, as if he had known them both for years, and as if Maida's health had no place in his mind. But presently he said, cheerfully, and with a smile which had helped to make him famous:

"And now, my dear Miss Carrington, I want to enquire about that little cough of yours. It's only a little cough, of course, and everybody's got one at this time of year," he himself simulated a cough; "but they're awkward things for persons of your profession, and I'm always desirous of nipping them in the bud, so to speak. I'll just try your chest; thank you! Ye-e-s. Now, you'll remain in bed, at any rate, until I come to-morrow. That's a good girl! Always do as I tell you and you'll live to be ninety-five. Have you read Browne's last book? Awfully amusing. I'll send it to you instead of medicine: nasty thing, medicine—never take it myself: seldom prescribe it. Port wine is what you want: but the worst of it is you can't buy it: all the good wine is mopped up by dukes and lord mayors. I've got some: left me by the Duke of Omnium: I'll send you some. And mind she drinks it!" he said to Carrie, turning upon her suddenly.

Busy as he was, the great man drove back to Mrs. Broseley's.

"She's a beautiful creature, my dear lady," he said; "and I'm not at all surprised at your being interested in her. Gad, I fell in love with her myself: did so the first time I heard her recite. Most romantic history: given up a fortune for an idea, hasn't she? Well, I admire her for it. Gad, most people give up their ideas for a fortune!"

"That's meant for Broseley," said the outspoken lady, with a good-natured laugh. "Is she very ill?"

"Yes, she is very ill," said Sir Jeremiah, with sudden seriousness. "And she's going to be worse, if she doesn't take care. She has run down very low, very low, indeed. Consumption is waiting round the corner, and only wants beckoning to come in. If she doesn't beckon him, she does nothing to keep him off. Between you and me, I don't think she cares very much whether he stalks in or doesn't. A great pity, for she's a lovely creature, and as sweet as she is lovely."

Mrs. Broseley's face fell.

"I had a daughter like her—I've took to the gal. Can nothin' be done?"

"Yes; two things," replied Sir Jeremiah. "You could remove the cause of the trouble, ease her mind, and restore her to happiness, or take her abroad—to Australia, for instance."

Mrs. Broseley uttered an exclamation.

"To Australia! Why, what an odd thing you should say that! I'm goin' back to our station at the end of the month, to join Broseley. I could take her with me. I should love it."

"I knew you were going, my dear lady," said Sir Jeremiah, blandly, "and, being aware of your benevolence and good-nature, I knew that you would take her with you. Take her, by all means—by force, if necessary—for I tell you plainly it's her only chance. Good heavens! is that the right time? I've lost a whole morning!"

(To be continued.)


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## Second Reading Bill

FOR THE CONTROL OF TRADING IN THE NECESSARIES OF LIFE

"The man who takes advantage of the war is really worse than a criminal," said Premier Morris in opening criticism of the food profiteers in the country on Saturday afternoon last when the House of Assembly met to facilitate the despatch of business.

The Attorney General gave notice that he would introduce a Bill to amend the Shipbuilding Act.

The amendment of the Upper House to the Bill respecting the Exportation of Timber was read a first time.

The second readings of Bills relating to Military Pensions and the Department of Militia were deferred.

The Woollen and Knitting Mills Contract Bills received their second reading.

The Premier then moved the second reading of the Bill to control the necessaries of life. The Bill was read with appended. The Premier said that the main principle of the Bill was to control, if possible, the prices that are being charged on the necessaries of life, including coal, salt and other commodities, in addition to food. He had no doubt but that this Bill would meet with the general approval of the people of this country, and that there was a very widespread feeling to-day that prices had been maintained that were far in excess of what ought to be charged, having regard to a fair and legitimate profit. Continuing he made a severe indictment of our food profiteers and unscrupulous monopolists, pointing out that it was inconceivable how anyone, especially a British subject and a member of the British Empire should trade on the misfortunes of his fellowman. To him an individual was worse than a criminal man because the latter, he said, came out openly to fight and could be dealt with, whereas the trader was using his cloak to carry on his extortions. The fair-minded person, he said, in reading these interim reports of the Board as pointed by the Governor in Council recently cannot fail to see that enormous profits have been going on. He hoped the Board to be appointed would control and fix the prices of the necessaries of life would be competent and sufficiently strong and not hesitate to do what is necessary in the interests of the country. He said that the Board will have many difficulties to encounter because of the war in this country.

The Minister of Public Works made an attempt to congratulate the Premier. In one breath he said it was high time that such a Board of Control was appointed and in the next breath he was glad that the Government had taken the matter up at the earliest possible moment.

Following is the full text of the Bill:

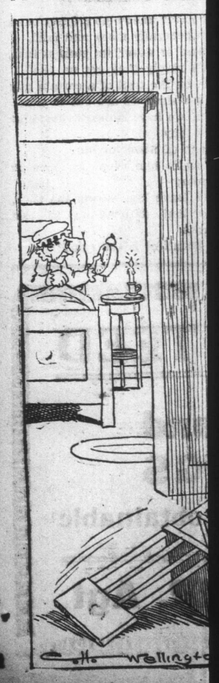
A BILL

**An Act Respecting The Control of Trading in Necessaries of Life.**

Be it enacted by the Governor, Legislative Council and House of Assembly, in Legislative Session convened, as follows:

1. The Governor in Council may appoint a Board, to be known as the Food Control Board consisting of three persons, two of whom shall be a quorum. Such Food Control Board is hereinafter called the Board.

2. It shall be within the power and shall be the duty of the Board to—

(a) to make such inquiry and investigation as it deems expedient for the purposes hereinafter set forth into the quantities, production, ownership and supply of necessaries of life

## And the Wo