

Runaway Julietta

By Arthur Henry Gooden

CHAPTER V. She Leaves Business And Arrives At Another Crisis

All day had the rain dripped from a sodden sky, the warm life-giving rain of California.

Julietta sat by the blurred window, staring into the newly fallen night, depressed beyond words by the eternal grayness beyond the window, the monotonous drip-drip from the eaves, the soft patter of the rain on the roof. A rainy Saturday in the country was a tiresome affair. On Sunday one could break the monotony by going to church, at least.

Julietta yawned, glanced at a little clock on the dressing table, and yawned again. She must do something—and what was there to do? Ah, a letter to Uncle Paul, of course! She quickly left her chair, lighted the oil lamp, and sat down to a diminutive writing desk.

In the three months which had passed since that fateful morning in Paul Morrow's office much water had gone over the dam. The Truffit company was defunct, and Julietta's days and nights of remorse had finally ended in new work. Her spirit groined in the ashes of defeat, humility cried in her heart, but she could not put on sackcloth, but she could, and did, don cotton stockings—for the first time since that wonderful night when Paul Morrow had brought the blue silk stockings from the pawn-shop to the cab. She had said then that she would always wear silk stockings—a childish boast which had been made good until now, when they had become emblems of the pride which was no more.

Being what he was, Paul Morrow had not occurred in her sweeping self-condemnation. His heated defense of her had not changed Julietta's opinions of herself, but they had proved comforting in their assurance of his continued faith. He had laughed gaily at her distress when he had produced sample cases and mileage tickets.

"Cheer up!" he had cried merrily. "When it comes to selling goods your Uncle Paul is there with the push. We'll make 'em hustle in our territory, Julietta."

"But coffee is a new line. If you must travel, why not stick to shoes?" "Because I want you to forget shoes. The sooner we take a fresh grip, girl, the sooner we'll find that this old world's a pretty good sort of place after all."

"I think I'll go on the road too." "You will not!" "Very well," Julietta had assented meekly, stung by the pain in his eyes. "Then I'll teach school. I'm going to do something until—until the larger dream comes true. It will, and I know it will."

So, aided by Mrs. Drake, she secured a country school near Bakersfield. Out of her fifty dollars a month, she paid Jed Seldon twenty-five a month for board and room. It was a new experience, and kept her from overmuch self-communion.

Remembrance of these things fitted through her mind as she wrote. "And, Uncle Paul, I've moved to another house," ran her concluding lines. "My new farmer host is Jed Seldon. He has a long beard that would be a beautiful white if only he did not chew tobacco. He's a sheepman and does a lot of talking about hard times. He wants to sell his place and go to some country where there is plenty of free grazing land—but enough of Seldon. How's the coffee?"

The letter finished, sealed and addressed, Julietta went to the window. The rain had stopped, and as she flung open the sash, the soft, fresh, rain-sweet air touched her face. Through great rents in the blurred sky stars peeped joyously against a blue-black heaven.

"I'll run out to the road and leave the letter," she thought, eager for the fresh air.

The vivid breath of the rain-quickened alfalfa rose about her. Behind her the little white farmhouse loomed ghost-like against the night, with the enormous blackness of the barn lifting behind it; farther still, a row of star-sweeping Lombardy poplars stood like stately, silent sentinels. The glowing radiance of Bakersfield hung over the horizon, dimming the splendor of the newly uncovered stars.

Julietta broke into a boyishly clear whistle that cut into the night like a rapier thrust as she passed on toward the boundary fence. And that whistle represented to Beelzebub both alarms and excursions.

Beelzebub hated petticoats, as Jed Seldon's wife knew to her sorrow. Julietta had been well warned by Jed never to cross the alfalfa pasture unescorted.

"That thar ram does surely despise women-folk," had chuckled Jed. "Keep out o' the meadow if you don't want them pretty frocks all mussed up."

Having regard both for her frocks and for Beelzebub's huge curling horns, Julietta had punctiliously minded the warning until to-night—and now! The muffled thud of flying hoofs awakened her to the danger. Behind her came the old ram, a bewoaled and behorned thunderbolt of animosity.

Julietta threw one startled glance over her shoulder, made out the whirlwind of wrath behind, lifted high her skirts—and ran! Atalanta never ran more swiftly than Julietta ran for the boundary fence; she reached it and scrambled up, panting and laughing, then a stifled shriek broke from her as Beelzebub, in his headlong rush, crashed into the boards.

Beelzebub bounded to his feet like a rubber ball and stared balefully through the bars. Julietta, sitting in a slimy, sticky, oozy black puddle, returned the stare with interest.

"Oh, Beelzebub, you monster!" Beelzebub clashed his horns against the fence in reply.

"Keep your old pasture!" said Julietta bitterly.

Gingerly she rose and shook out her rubber skirt. The mud was terrible

stuff. It clung tenaciously, clammy. Fortunately, the letter had been preserved intact, and Julietta hastened on across a strip of useless, unfarmed land to the road.

Reaching the mailbox, she deposited the letter and turned homeward by the drive. Her jubilation had departed; her feet oozed mud, her soiled skirts flapped dismally about damp ankles, and she hastened to her room with vexation urging her.

Ten minutes later footsteps outside her door interrupted her rueful meditation of soiled skirts and stockings. With those same "humility stockings" in her hand she threw open the door. Jed Seldon, candle in hand, was slouching down the hall, his placid, gray-haired wife meekly in the rear. At Julietta's call he turned.

"Just goin' to bed," he announced querulously. His glance fell on the soiled stockings and skirt. "Oh, took a fall in the mud, did ye?" "Yes—in such dreadful mud. Please tell me what will take it out? It left my skirt stained a greenish-black and seems horridly slimy."

The old man approached and bent over the garments, shading the candle with one huge, gnarled hand.

"Well, I swan!" he grunted. "Ain't that there mud from the bog out in front of the big alfalfa pasture?" She told briefly of her encounter with Beelzebub, whereat he chuckled grimly and wagged his long beard.

"Thar now—what did I tell ye? Lucky ye made the fence! And ye

went and sat right in that ile bog!"

"Ile bog?" repeated Julietta, frowning.

"There's oil in it, dear," explained Mrs. Seldon. "He means oil!"

"Course I mean ile. Didn't I say it? Too bad ye got all mussed up, Miss Dore. I reckon ye can't clean them things—that pesky ile bog clear spiles everything. Well, good night to ye!"

He lumbered off, his wife following; their shadows danced grotesquely on the wall behind. Julietta closed her door and stood staring at the "humility stockings" in her hand.

"Why, of course!" she whispered, awe in her blue eyes. "It is oil, isn't it?" For a long time she stood staring down at the stockings, then, mechanically, began to undress.

At breakfast the next morning Julietta studied the old rancher discreetly, wondering how she might best approach the subject which had kept her wide-eyed through the still hours of the night—the subject which kept her heart fluttering.

"Goin' to church?" inquired Seldon. "No? That's too bad. The wife was sort of aimin' that you and her'd be goin' together. The old lady wouldn't miss church for no money."

Julietta looked at quiet little Mrs. Seldon, and laughed merrily.

"How long have you owned this ranch, Mrs. Seldon?"

"Pretty close to twenty years," was the answer, accompanied by a sigh.

"Yes, tarnation take it!" agreed Jed. "Danged fools we've been to keep it so long!"

"I was thinking," said Julietta meditatively, "that I might know someone who would buy the ranch if you really want to sell it."

(To be continued.)



WHAT WOMEN SHOULD AND SHOULD NOT DO ON THE FARM.

By Dr. F. W. St. John.

Now that the grim visage of war is frowning upon us, and thousands of the men of our Country are serving the colors, women are willingly taking up a goodly share of man's burden at home. Among the most important occupations in which they will engage will be out-of-door work on the farm.

Canadian women have not been accustomed to much of this kind of labor, so they should know what to do to conserve their health, not only for their own good but for posterity. In the matter of diet they will have to follow the increased desire for more substantial food occasioned by being more in the open air and the using of more energy. They should avoid eating too many sweets and partake more freely of the diet of the outdoor laborer.

Clothing should be free from all constricting bands and other appliances which interfere with the free use of any part of the body, thus giving the lungs and abdominal organs a chance to remain in the natural position and perform their natural functions. Corsets, if worn at all, should be short and loosely fitted. Some kind of overalls or bloomers is suitable for outer garments. The shoes should be waterproof and high enough to give good support to the ankles, and should be laced so that they may be adjusted for comfort. The undergarments should be made of material that is

light but firm, and of a kind that washes easily. Thus equipped, a woman of ordinary health and stature will be able to plant, hoe, ride the hay-rake, drive the horse when using the hay-fork, take care of pigs and chickens, pick the small and some of the larger fruits, and do a great deal to help in the outdoor work of the farm.

For obvious reason women should not pitch hay, plow, nor do any work that requires strenuous use of the abdominal muscles. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule, where a woman has been accustomed to such a life from girlhood, or is especially strong and physically well developed. While it is an old saw that "woman's work is never done," it should not apply to her farm work. She should avoid getting overtired, be sure to get plenty of rest and take sufficient time for meals and for sleep. She should avoid sitting in a draft while overheated or while perspiring profusely. She should avoid drinking cold water, milk, etc., hurriedly, or to excess.

If women use due care in the diet, live hygienic lives, including proper food, clothing and rest, and at the same time exercise good judgment as to what ought and ought not to be done, they will not only render great service but add to their store of health and happiness.

The War Garden.

Very few amateur gardeners have yet discovered the secret of ensuring the proper germination of seed. When things turn out wrong they are apt to blame the quality of the seed, when as a matter of fact, it is more likely to be their own lack of experience that accounts for it. Before the seed is put in, the soil should be loose and friable. After the seed has been sown it is always desirable to make the soil firm.

All salad crops can be induced to be more sprightly in their growth if the row or patch is covered with straw for three or four days after the seed has been sown. The crop gets a good start if this is done and the tenderness of radishes, lettuce and onions shoot up and are ready for use at least a week earlier than they would otherwise be.

Plant lice are the enemies of almost all kinds of plants. They are known as "Aphis" and "Green Fly." They make their appearance early in the season and as soon as they are noticed the plants should be sprayed either with whale-oil soap (one pound dissolved in six gallons of warm water) or commercial nicotine sulphate (40 per cent.) as sold by seedsmen and as recommended on the cans. Half a pound of laundry soap should be dissolved in every ten gallons of water. It is a mistake to assume that cultivation stops when once the seeds are in the ground. The ground needs continuous attention and after rain it should always be gone over with the Dutch hoe, rake or hand cultivator. Persistent cultivation is one of the best ways to kill weeds and to allow air into the soil. Weeds rob the soil of plant food. They afford a haven of refuge to countless numbers of insect enemies and plant diseases. They cost the country thousands of dollars a year.

In some parts of Canada the very early vegetables may now have reached the stage where it is necessary to thin them. No gardener is able to get good results unless he does some judicious thinning. Every housekeeper does not know that the tenderest and most delicious vegetables she

can have for early pickling are the young vegetables thinned out and often, through ignorance, thrown away.

Beets should be thinned until they are from four to six inches apart in the row. It is profitable to thin them out gradually. Lettuce should be four inches apart, onions three inches, peas three inches and carrots and parsnips from four to six inches.

About the hardest thing in cleaning a wagon or carriage is to get off the oil and dust that have hardened about the shoulders of the axles. If this were wiped off each time after using the wagon, it would not harden and the job would be much easier.

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SEA GULLS DETECT U-BOATS.

A Voluntary Friend of Great Britain In Her Fight With Subs.

Great Britain is being aided in hunting down the U-boats by the sea gulls. So useful have the birds shown themselves that a law has been passed which provides for severe penalties for killing a gull.

The gulls will cluster about a vessel passing through the Irish Sea, for instance. If a submarine appears anywhere in the neighborhood the birds detect it at once and fly in great numbers to the scene of the commotion on the ocean surface.

The antics of the sea gulls are observed by the navigating officers on the ship and the armed guard prepares to fight. In many cases in which the gunners have fired at the point where the gulls are dipping into the crest of the waves it has been proved that a submarine was preparing to come up and take an observation by periscope. The gulls are never attracted in great groups to any particular spot, the seamen have learned, unless there is a great run of fish. The sailors explain that the gulls are attracted to the dark blotch on the water represents a school of small fishes swimming close to the surface. The gunners, accordingly, point the guns at the section of the water over which the birds are hovering.

All along the dockyards and other waterfront places of Great Britain placards have been affixed warning fishermen "that the sea gull is a great, big voluntary friend of Britain in her fight against the U-boats."

Shrubs which bloom in the spring, such as lilac and spirea, should be pruned as soon as the flowers fade. Late blooming shrubs can be pruned in the spring.

English as She Spoke.

The following letter was written by an Indian subject to the Standard Oil Co. at Calcutta on applying for a position:

"Most Honored Sir:

"Understanding that there are several hands wanted in your honor's department, I beg to offer you my hand. As to my adjustments, I appeared for the Matric examination at Ooty but failed, the reason for which I shall describe. To begin with, my writing was illegible. This was due to climatic reasons for I having come from a warm into a cold climate found my fingers stiff and very disobedient to my wishes. Further, I had received a great shock to my mental system in the shape of the death of my only fond brother. Besides, most Honored Sir, I beg to state that I am in very uncomfortable circumstances, being the soul means of my fond brother's 7 issues consisting of three adults and four daughters, the latter being the bane of my existence owing to my having to support two of my own wives, as well as their issues, of which, by God's misfortune, the feminine gender predominates. If by wonderful good fortune these few

humble lines meet your benign kindness and favorable turn of mind the poor menial shall ever pray for your long life and prosperity of yourself as well as your honor's family branches."