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## The Road to Understanding

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CHAPTER VII.

Mrs. Burke Denby was a little surprised at the number of letters directed to her husband in the morning mail that first day of November, until she noticed the familiar names in the upper left-hand corners of several of the envelopes.

"Oh, it's the bills," she murmured, drawing in her breath a little uncertainly. "To-day's the first, and they said they'd send them then. But I didn't think there'd be such a lot of them. Still, I've had things at all those places. Well, anyway, he'll be glad to pay them all at once, without my teasing for money all the time," she finished with resolute insistence, as she turned back to her work.

If, now that the time had come, and the bills lay before her in all their fearsome reality, Helen was beginning to doubt the wisdom of her financial system, she would not admit it, even to herself. And she still wore a determinedly cheerful face when her husband came home to dinner that night. She went into the kitchen as he began to open his mail—she was reminded of a sudden something that needed her attention. Two minutes later she nearly dropped the dish of potato salad she was carrying, at the sound of his voice from the doorway.

"Helen, what in Heaven's name is the meaning of these bills?" He was in the kitchen now, holding out a sheaf of tightly clutched papers in each hand.

Helen set the potato salad down hastily.

"Why, Burke, don't—don't look at me!"

"But what does this mean? What are these things?"

"Why, they—they're just bills, I suppose. They said they'd be."

"Bills! Great Caesar, Helen! You don't mean to say that you do know about them—that you bought all this stuff?"

Helen's lip began to quiver.

"Burke, don't please don't look like that. You frighten me."

"Frighten you! What do you think of me?—springing a thing like this!"

"Why, Burke, I—I thought you'd like it!"

"Yes—that I didn't have to ask you for money all the time. And you'd have to pay 'em some time, anyhow. We had to eat, you know."

"But, great Scott, Helen! We aren't a hotel! Look at that 'salad'—'salad'—'salad'—'salad'!" he exploded, pointing a shaking finger at a series of items on the uppermost bill in his left hand. "There's tons of the stuff there, and I always did abhorminate it!"

"Why, Burke, I—I— And the food—"

"Oh, thunderation! Helen, Helen, don't—please don't!"

"But I thought I was going to please you, and you called me a hotel, and you said you abominated it!" she wailed, stumbling away blindly.

With a despairing ejaculation Burke flung the bills to the floor, and caught the sob-shaken little figure of his wife in his arms.

"There, there, it was a brute, and I didn't mean it—not a word of it. Sweetheart, don't, please don't," he begged. "Why, girlie, all the bills in Christendom aren't worth a tear from your dear eyes. Come, won't you stop?"

But Helen did not stop at once. The storm was short, but tempestuous. At the end of ten minutes, however, together they went into the dining room. Helen carried the potato salad (which Burke declared he was really hungry for to-day), and Burke carried the bills crumpled in one hand behind his back, his other arm around his wife's waist.

There were to be no more charge accounts. For the weekly expenses Helen was to have every cent that could possibly be spared, but what she could not pay cash for, they must go without, if they starved. In a pretty little book she must put down one side the money she received. On the other, the money spent. She was a dear, good little wife, and he loved her most to death; but he couldn't let her run up bills when he had not a red cent to pay them with. He would borrow, of course, for these—he was not going to have any dirty little tradesmen pestering him with bills all the time! But this must be the last. Never again!

And Helen said yes, yes, indeed.

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**The Housewife's Corner**

How Tom Whitney Won First Place.

"I'm going to make a go of the old place, Nell. For years that farm has been a hand-to-mouth struggle; but if you want to make money, you've got to have modern machinery."

"But it costs so much, Ned."

"I know it does. I'll have to borrow a lot, but I can see the way to pay it off in a few years. Then we'll be on Easy Street. We shall have to be careful for a while, but isn't that better than having your nose to the grindstone all your life?"

Ned got out his list of modern farm conveniences and they put them together. It almost took Nell's breath when she realized all that would mean to pay such a sum of money.

"Don't you think we could wait a little for some of these things?" she asked.

Ned frowned. "Every one is a money-maker. The trouble is we've been brought up to be afraid of risk anything, that we never have anything to risk."

Once more Ned glanced over the list and she thought of the shabby old house Ned had asked her to share with him. In three months they were to be married. She admired this big, practical fellow and had great faith in his success. She had felt that it would be a fine thing to help make that success. But in this list of conveniences she saw no mention of anything for the house. Ned's mother had spent a weary life unaided by any of the woman-savers, and had gone early to what must have been a welcome rest. Strangely enough, Ned had not alluded to that side of the question. But now they never could undertake anything more than he had already outlined. It seemed pretty clear what her part was to be.

Something else was troubling Ned. Last evening Tom Whitney had met her and they had strolled much farther than she had intended. He didn't know of her engagement to Ned and had asked her to marry him. Tom was so different from Ned. He was a thoughtful look in his eyes made a woman trust him. She had noticed his fondly children hovering around him, and he had a real affection for animals—Nelly wished that Ned hadn't kicked old Sport out of the way the other night.

Tom's quiet plea came back to her now. "I want to make things easier for you, Nelly. I haven't got very much, but we can fix up the old place so you won't have to slave the way that the girls are here. I can have a plant put in that will give us water and light, and we'll have a furnace. Some day I'll see that you get the other things that will help to make the work easy. I love you, Nelly—won't you let me try to show you how much?"

As Ned went on with his figuring Ned had been looking deep into her heart. What was it she thought she was in this fine-looking fellow? Was it his good looks, his efficiency? Sometimes she had felt that his manners were not very gentle, but she had hushed the thought as unworthy, trying to remember that "a man's a man for a' that."

Presently he looked up from the papers he had spread over the table. "Two cents for your thoughts, Nell."

"Don't be extravagant," laughed Nelly. "If you really want to know, I was wondering about my side-heat and water and light, and the household machinery. A plant can be kept up unless all the parts are looked after. Don't you think that's true?"

Ned flushed. "But, Nell," he protested, "you just said that you were afraid we were getting in deeper than we could pull out. These things will come in time. I've been thinking about 'em—but you don't get the returns there that you do from these machines that increase your output. A washing machine does not send any more wheat to the market, nor increase the bank account. Ned was never very observant. What he said generally settled matters, and now he was so filled with his own schemes that he didn't notice the strange look in Nelly's eyes. Even when he said good-night he was not conscious of any lack of response on her part.

When Nelly went upstairs she opened the little "hope chest" she had been filling with so much pride. She picked up the last napkin she had hemmed. While she was working on it Ned had told her of his scheme for getting Blake's pasture lot, and how it would go a long way toward paying for the big red barn he intended to have. As she laid down the napkin she noticed a towel she had hemstitched not long before. She had been sitting out under the grape arbor and Tom Whitney had come up the little path.

"I couldn't go by when I saw the sun shining on your hair like that. It made me think of a robin in the early spring—only robins don't look so homey." And then he touched her work. "I like these pretty things, they look just like you."

She had at once put him on a safer topic, making him tell her

**Concerning Certain Domestic Affairs.**

Take your boy or girl along when you go to buy him or her a new suit. Remember how irritating it was to have some one pick your clothes without giving you a choice in the matter. Consult the children's tastes somewhat; do not let them select anything unsuitable, but give them a choice of several sensible selections. It will give them a feeling of responsibility and make them more self-reliant, besides putting it out of the question for them to grumble over your choice of their apparel.

One of the sternest tasks that falls to the lot of the house-mother is the oversight of the family underwear in the changeable weather of spring and fall. I am not very strong on making children mind, but when it comes to underwear to fit the season I claim police powers. The warm days of spring, especially when spring comes early, make the winter clothing uncomfortable and it is right to change; but when the mercury drops it is best to go back to warmer clothing. Sometimes I have to coax, and if that does not work I try threats. I have one threat that works splendidly on the older rebels. "You will not get any dinner until the clothes he wears are changed!"

The outlook of our young soldiers have been broadened by their experiences, the suffering for higher aims than they have ever known before, besides the wider views given by the glimpses they have had of life in foreign countries. They will need and demand a newer and deeper companionship from their womenkind in home, a quickening of intelligence and comradeship. The genuine home girl may be quite sure of the old-time affection, but the girl whose character remains petty can not hope for full companionship with those whose outlook on life has been changed. The girls, too, will need to brush up on their geography to keep up with the boys who return from overseas familiar with places that to the girls are mere specks on the map. We will all find such knowledge broadening.

### Penny Savers.

The whey left from cottage cheese can be used instead of milk for making bread sponge.

For polishing lamp chimneys and table glassware use the better parts of cast-off bath towels.

Empty the burnt match receptacles into paper bags and use the match sticks for kindling fire.

Apply peroxide of hydrogen to a cut or scratch by means of a medicine dropper and none will be wasted.

Plan your machine sewing so that you can run from one piece of work to another without cutting and wasting thread.

Paste strips of velvet around the inside of the heels of children's shoes and you will have fewer holes to darn in their stockings.

Oilcloth on kitchen table or cabinets can be made to last longer if a padding of soft paper is placed under it. The life of oilcloth can almost be doubled when this is done.

Pancakes left from breakfast, if soaked in milk until soft, then beaten with a spoon, may be added to the next sponge for bread or biscuit.

Can any housekeeper puts the pocket on the under side of her apron. She learned to do this after she had torn out many pockets by catching them on chair arms, door-knobs and similar projections.

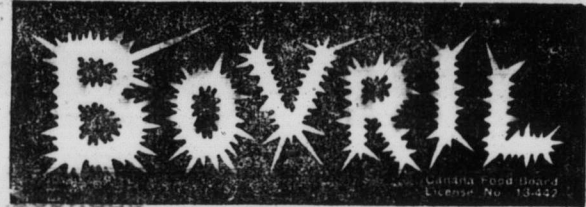
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Make the unworn corners of sheets into pillow cases. The better portions of an old white bedspread might be converted into bath towels, and wash cloths, or used under the tablecloth as a "silence" cloth.

Candle ends can be made to do further duty by paring off the ends of two short pieces perfectly smooth and even until the tip of the wick can be seen in each. Heat these two smooth ends and stick them firmly together. The top half will burn down and fuse with the lower half, burning clear through.

### Young Camouflage Artist.

Bessie is a bright one. The other day her teacher set her and her school-mates to drawing, letting them choose their own subjects. After the teacher had examined what the other children had drawn, she took up Bessie's sheet.

"Why, what's this?" she said. "You haven't drawn anything at all, child."

"Please, teacher, yes, I have," returned Bessie. "It's a war-picture—a long line of ammunition wagons at the front. You can't see 'em 'cause they're camouflaged."

The County Council, of Middlesex county, Ont., has passed a by-law protecting all birds and game in the county for a period of five years. This action was taken on account of the unscrupulous slaughter of birds and game, and the consequent increase of insect pests.

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## SOME FAMOUS WELCOMES

GREAT BRITAIN GREETED HER RETURNING WARRIORS

### Scenes in London and Other Cities When Soldiers Arrived From Wars of Past Twenty Years.

The informal, but none the less enthusiastic welcome given to the Scots Guards on their return from the front recently, will doubtless be repeated in the near future on many similar occasions, says a London magazine.

The Britons are keen to greet their returning heroes after this fashion. Nor will they be denied. When, for instance, the Brigade of Guards returned to London after Omdurman in November, 1898, the public gave them such a welcome as took the authorities completely by surprise.

Their coming had been little heralded in advance, and no attempt had been made officially to receive them. Nevertheless the citizens of London cheered themselves hoarse all along the line of route taken by the khaki-clad columns, which in places were hardly able to force a way for themselves through the densely-packed throngs.

Much the same thing, too, happened when the C.I.V.'s returned from South Africa two years later. In this case, however, the authorities, warned by their previous experience, made elaborate preparations to keep a passage clear for the soldiers.

Welcomed by 2,000,000.

Vain effort! So great was the enthusiasm of the welcoming crowds in the Strand and Fleet street that many of the companies had almost literally to fight their way through, and were consequently somewhat late for the banquet prepared in their honor by the city fathers at the Guildhall.

Yet another historic homecoming of the kind was that in which Lord Wolseley figured in October 1882, when he led his victorious troops, fresh from their triumph in Egypt, through London to Whitehall. On this occasion the streets were superbly decorated, and over two million people, it was estimated, were present to do honor to the hero of Tel-el-Kehir.

Eight thousand excursion trains were run to London from all parts of the country in May, 1856, laden with people desirous of being present at the homecoming of the troops who had fought in the Crimean War. The scenes in the streets on May 26th, when the regiments marched to St. James' Park, where they were reviewed and personally thanked by Queen Victoria, were unprecedented, while at night the whole metropolis was a blaze of illuminations and fireworks, the first rocket being sent up by the Queen herself from the roof of Buckingham Palace.

### FAMILY WAR RECORD.

Ten Sons of English Mother Served in the War.

Ten of the eleven sons of Mrs. White, of Southview Cottage, Crossways, near Ryde, Isle of Wight, England, served in the fighting forces. The one who did not serve was an old volunteer, and attested, but being in railway work was not called up. These are the names:

Sergt. W. B. White (1914)—Mentioned in despatches and awarded French Croix de Guerre and bar.

Gunner J. S. White, Royal Marine Artillery, R.M.S. Natal—Killed in explosion, December, 1915.

Bombardier Septimus White, R.F.A. (1914), in France from beginning—unwounded.

Sergt. Reginald F. White, R.G.A. (1914), was with Kut relief force—unwounded.

Private Charles White, 12th Norfolk, went to Egypt February, 1917, still serving in Palestine—unwounded.

Rifeman Alfred White, Hantz Regiment, badly wounded at battle of Gaza.

Rifeman Alfred White, Hantz Regiment, served with his brother on eastern fronts—unwounded.

Gunner R. Q. White, R.A.F., still in Mesopotamia—unwounded.

Gunner Harold White, R.G.A.; killed in action on the Somme, aged 21.

Ernest G. White, Lancashire Fusiliers.

### About Appearances.

Appearances are often deceptive. The poorly dressed individual we sometimes see on the street may not be a vagrant, but a gentleman in hard luck. Similarly, the house that is badly in need of painting may not be the home of slovenly people, but of a family which is financially embarrassed. Nevertheless, it is true, that "the apparel oft proclaims the man." Likewise a man often either makes his own environment or his environment makes him. Paintless, weather-beaten houses, whether in town or country, have a most depressing effect on those who must live in them, or near them. In addition, wood and metal materials rapidly deteriorate if not given a protective covering of some sort. Even whitewash, or a coat of good ochre and oil is better than nothing, but for better service and a wide variety of artistic effects paints are essential.