

THE GIRL HE LEFT BEHIND

CHAPTER I

"SO PERFECTLY CAPABLE"

ETHEL CLAYTON gathered the several letters with their accompanying checks in a neat sheaf and rose from her desk, which was placed nearest the door of the manager's office. With the papers in her left hand she went to the door on which was stenciled "Mr. Barton" and opened it without waiting for a reply to her knock. She knew only Jim Mayberry was in the room with the manager of the Hapwood-Diller Company.

As she pushed the door inward she heard Frank Barton saying:

"I am puzzled what answer to make them, Jim."

The manager was at his desk. Mayberry, leaning back in his chair, nodded understandingly and in agreement. The general manager was not in the habit of taking the superintendent of the factory into his confidence in particular instances and Mayberry was alive to that fact. He listened. Listening, and keeping one's mouth shut, never hurt a man yet.

The girl at the door of the office waited, too. Her business with the manager was important, if not imperative.