

MARCHING MEN

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TO
AMERICAN WORKINGMEN

MARCHING MEN

BOOK I

CHAPTER I

UNCLE CHARLIE WHEELER stamped on the steps before Nance McGregor's bake-shop on the Main Street of the town of Coal Creek Pennsylvania and then went quickly inside. Something pleased him and as he stood before the counter in the shop he laughed and whistled softly. With a wink at the Reverend Minot Weeks who stood by the door leading to the street, he tapped with his knuckles on the showcase.

"It has," he said, waving attention to the boy, who was making a mess of the effort to arrange Uncle Charlie's loaf into a neat package, "a pretty name. They call it Norman—Norman McGregor." Uncle Charlie laughed heartily and again stamped upon the floor. Putting his finger to his forehead to suggest deep thought, he turned to the minister. "I am going to change all that," he said. "Norman indeed! I shall give him a name that will stick! Norman! Too soft, too soft and delicate for Coal Creek, eh? It shall be rechristened. You and I will be Adam and Eve in the garden naming things. We will call it Beaut—Our Beautiful One—Beaut McGregor."

The Reverend Minot Weeks also laughed. He thrust four fingers of each hand into the pockets of his trousers, letting the extended thumbs lie along the swelling waist line. From the front the thumbs looked like two tiny boats on the horizon of a troubled sea. They bobbed and jumped about on the rolling shaking paunch, appearing and disappearing as laughter shook him. The Reverend Minot Weeks went out at the door ahead of Uncle Charlie, still laughing. One fancied that he would go along the street from store to store telling the tale of the christening and laughing again. The tall boy could imagine the details of the story.

It was an ill day for births in Coal Creek, even for the birth of one of Uncle Charlie's inspirations. Snow lay piled along the sidewalks and in the gutters of Main Street—black snow, sordid with the gathered grime of human endeavour that went on day and night in the bowels of the hills. Through the soiled snow walked miners, stumbling along silently and with blackened faces. In their bare hands they carried dinner pails.

The McGregor boy, tall and awkward, and with a towering nose, great hippopotamus-like mouth and fiery red hair, followed Uncle Charlie, Republican politician, postmaster and village wit to the door and looked after him as with the loaf of bread under his arm he hurried along the street. Behind the politician went the minister still en-

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boy's plaything. Keep away from it."

McGregor sat in the corner of the saloon and looked about. Men came in and went out at the door. A child carried a pail down the short flight of steps from the street and ran across the sawdust floor. Her voice, thin and sharp, pierced through the babble of men's voices. "Ten cents' worth—give me plenty," she pleaded, raising the pail above her head and putting it on the bar.

The confident smiling face of Finley the lawyer came back into McGregor's mind. Like David Ormsby the successful maker of ploughs the lawyer looked upon men as pawns in a great game and like the plough-maker his intentions were honourable and his purpose clear. He was intent upon making much of his life, being successful. If he played the game on the side of the criminal that was but a chance. Things had fallen out so. In his mind was something else—the expression of his own purpose.

McGregor rose and went out of the saloon. In the street men stood about in groups. At Thirty-ninth Street a crowd of youths scuffling on the sidewalk pushed against the tall muttering man who passed with his hat in his hand. He began to feel that he was in the midst of something too vast to be moved by the efforts of any one man. The pitiful insignificance of the individual was apparent. As in a long procession the figures of the individuals who had tried to rise out of the ruck of American life passed before him. With a shudder he realised that for the most part the men whose names filled the pages of American history meant nothing. The children who read of their deeds were unmoved. Perhaps they had only increased the disorder. Like the men passing in the street they went across the face of things and disappeared into the darkness.

"Perhaps Finley and Ormsby are right," he whispered. "They get what they can, they have the good sense to know that life runs quickly like a flying bird passing an open window. They know that if a man thinks of anything else he is likely to become another sentimentalist and spend his life being hypnotised by the wagging of his own jaw."

* * *

In his wanderings McGregor came to an out-of-door restaurant and garden far out on the south side. The garden had been built for the amusement of the rich and successful. Upon a little platform a band played. Although the garden was walled about it was open to the sky and above the laughing people seated at the tables shone the stars.

McGregor sat alone at a little table on a balcony beneath a shaded light. Below him along a terrace were other tables occupied by men and women. On a platform in the centre of the garden dancers appeared.

McGregor who had ordered a dinner left it untouched. A tall graceful girl, strongly suggestive of Margaret Ormsby, danced upon

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the platform. With infinite grace her body gave expression to the movements of the dance and like a thing blown by the wind she moved here and there in the arms of her partner, a slender youth with long black hair. In the figure of the dancing woman there was expressed much of the idealism man has sought to materialise in women and McGregor was thrilled by it. A sensualism so delicate that it did not appear to be sensualism began to invade him. With a new hunger he looked forward to the time when he would again see Margaret.

Upon the platform in the garden appeared other dancers. The lights at the tables were turned low. From the darkness laughter arose. McGregor stared about. The people seated at the tables on the terrace caught and held his attention and he began looking sharply at the faces of the men. How cunning they were, these men who had been successful in life. Were they not after all the wise men? Behind the flesh that had grown so thick upon their bones what cunning eyes. There was a game of life and they had played it. The garden was a part of the game. It was beautiful and did not all that was beautiful in the world end by serving them? The arts of men, the thoughts of men, the impulses toward loveliness that came into the minds of men and women, did not all these things work solely to lighten the hours of the successful? The eyes of the men at the tables as they looked at the women who danced were not too greedy. They were filled with assurance. Was it not for them that the dancers turned here and there revealing their grace? If life was a struggle had they not been successful in the struggle?

McGregor arose from the table and left his food untouched. Near the entrance to the gardens he stopped and leaning against a pillar looked again at the scene before him. Upon the platform appeared a whole troupe of women-dancers. They were dressed in many-coloured garments and danced a folk dance. As McGregor watched a light began to creep back into his eyes. The women who now danced were unlike her who had reminded him of Margaret Ormsby. They were short of stature and there was something rugged in their faces. Back and forth across the platform they moved in masses. By their dancing they were striving to convey a message. A thought came to McGregor. "It is the dance of labour," he muttered. "Here in this garden it is corrupted but the note of labour is not lost. There is a hint of it left in these figures who toil even as they dance."

McGregor moved away from the shadows of the pillar and stood, hat in hand, beneath the garden lights waiting as though for a call out of the ranks of the dancers. How furiously they worked. How the bodies twisted and squirmed. Out of sympathy with their efforts sweat appeared on the face of the man who stood watching. "What a storm must be going on just below the surface of labour," he muttered. "Everywhere dumb brutalised men and women must be waiting for something, not knowing what they want. I will stick to my purpose but I will not give up Margaret," he said aloud, turning and half running out of

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at night dreaming of taking her in my arms and pouring kisses on her lips," he whispered.

* * *

In the door of her house Mrs. Ormsby had stood watching McGregor and Margaret. She had seen them stop at the end of the walk. The figure of the man was lost in shadows and that of Margaret stood alone, outlined against a distant light. She saw Margaret's hand thrust out—was she clutching his sleeve—and heard the murmur of voices. And then the man precipitating himself into the street. His hat catapulted ahead of him and a quick outburst of half-hysterical laughter broke the stillness.

Laura Ormsby was furious. Although she hated McGregor she could not bear the thought that laughter should break the spell of romance. "She is just like her father," she muttered. "At least she might show some spirit and not be like a wooden thing, ending her first talk with a lover with a laugh like that."

As for Margaret she stood in the darkness trembling with happiness. She imagined herself going up the dark stairway to McGregor's office in Van Buren Street where once she had gone to take him news of the murder case—laying her hand upon his shoulder and saying, "Take me in your arms and kiss me. I am your woman. I want to live with you. I am ready to renounce my people and my world and to live your life for your sake." Margaret, standing in the darkness before the huge old house in Drexel Boulevard, imagined herself with Beaut McGregor—living with him as his wife in a small apartment over a fish market on a West Side street. Why a fish market she could not have said.

CHAPTER V

EDITH CARSON was six years older than McGregor and lived entirely within herself. Hers was one of those natures that do not express themselves in words. Although at his coming into the shop her heart beat high no colour came to her cheeks and her pale eyes did not flash back into his a message. Day after day she sat in her shop at work, quiet, strong in her own kind of faith, ready to give her money, her reputation, and if need be her life to the working out of her own dream of womanhood. She did not see in McGregor the making of a man of genius as did Margaret and did not hope to express through him a secret desire for power. She was a working woman and to her he represented all men. In her secret heart she thought of him merely as the man—her man.

And to McGregor Edith was companion and friend. He saw her

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sitting year after year in her shop, putting money into the savings bank, keeping a cheerful front before the world, never assertive, kindly, in her own way sure of herself. "We could go on forever as we are now and she be none the less pleased," he told himself.

One afternoon after a particularly hard week of work he went out to her place to sit in her little workroom and think out the matter of marrying Margaret Ormsby. It was a quiet season in Edith's trade and she was alone in the shop serving a customer. McGregor lay down upon the little couch in the workroom. For a week he had been speaking to gatherings of workmen night after night and later had sat in his own room thinking of Margaret. Now on the couch with the murmur of voices in his ears he fell asleep.

When he awoke it was late in the night and on the floor by the side of the couch sat Edith with her fingers in his hair.

McGregor opened his eyes quietly and looked at her. He could see a tear running down her cheek. She was staring straight ahead at the wall of the room and by the dim light that came through a window he could see the drawn cords of her little neck and the knot of mouse coloured hair on her head.

McGregor closed his eyes quickly. He felt like one who has been aroused out of sleep by a dash of cold water across his breast. It came over him with a rush that Edith Carson had been expecting something from him—something he was not prepared to give.

She got up after a time and crept quietly away into the shop and with a great clatter and bustle he arose also and began calling loudly. He demanded the time and complained about a missed appointment. Turning up the gas, Edith walked with him to the door. On her face sat the old placid smile. McGregor hurried away into the darkness and spent the rest of the night walking in the streets.

The next day he went to Margaret Ormsby at the settlement house. With her he used no art. Driving straight to the point he told her of the undertaker's daughter sitting beside him on the eminence above Coal Creek, of the barber and his talk of women on the park bench and how that had led him to that other woman kneeling on the floor in the little frame house, his fists in her hair and of Edith Carson whose companionship had saved him from all of these.

"If you can't hear all of this and still want life with me," he said, "there is no future for us together. I want you. I'm afraid of you and afraid of my love for you but still I want you. I've been seeing your face floating above the audiences in the halls where I've been at work. I've looked at babies in the arms of workingmen's wives and wanted to see my babe in your arms. I care more for what I am doing than I do for you but I love you."

McGregor arose and stood over her. "I love you with my arms aching to close about you, with my brain planning the triumph of the workers, with all of the old perplexing human love that I had almost thought I would never want.

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"I can't bear this waiting. I can't bear this not knowing so that I can tell Edith. I can't have my mind filled with the need of you just as men are beginning to catch the infection of an idea and are looking to me for clear-headed leadership. Take me or let me go and live my life."

Margaret Ormsby looked at McGregor. When she spoke her voice was as quiet as the voice of her father telling a workman in the shop what to do with a broken machine.

"I am going to marry you," she said simply. "I am full of the thought of it. I want you, want you so blindly that I think you can't understand."

She stood up facing him and looked into his eyes.

"You must wait," she said. "I must see Edith, I myself must do that. All these years she has served you—she has had that privilege."

McGregor looked across the table into the beautiful eyes of the woman he loved.

"You belong to me even if I do belong to Edith," he said.

"I will see Edith," Margaret answered again.

CHAPTER VI

MCGREGOR left the telling of the story of his love to Margaret. Edith Carson who knew defeat so well and who had in her the courage of defeat was to meet defeat at his hands through the undefeated woman and he let himself forget the whole matter. For a month he had been trying to get workingmen to take up the idea of the Marching Men without success and after the talk with Margaret he kept doggedly at the work.

And then one evening something happened that aroused him. The Marching Men idea that had become more than half intellectualised became again a burning passion and the matter of his life with women got itself cleared up swiftly and finally.

It was night and McGregor stood upon the platform of the Elevated Railroad at State and Van Buren Streets. He had been feeling guilty concerning Edith and had been intending to go out to her place but the scene in the street below fascinated him and he remained standing, looking along the lighted thoroughfare.

For a week there had been a strike of teamsters in the city and that afternoon there had been a riot. Windows had been smashed and several men injured. Now the evening crowds gathered and speakers climbed upon boxes to talk. Everywhere there was a great wagging of jaws and waving of arms. McGregor grew reminiscent. Into his mind came the little mining town and he saw himself again a boy sitting in the darkness on the steps before his mother's bake shop and trying to think. Again in fancy he saw the disorganised miners tumbling out of the saloon to stand on the street swearing and threatening and again

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he was filled with contempt for them.

And then in the heart of the great western city the same thing happened that had happened when he was a boy in Pennsylvania. The officials of the city, having decided to startle the striking teamsters by a display of force, sent a regiment of state troops marching through the streets. The soldiers were dressed in brown uniforms. They were silent. As McGregor looked down they turned out of Polk Street and came with swinging measured tread up State Street past the disorderly mobs on the sidewalk and the equally disorderly speakers on the curb.

McGregor's heart beat so that he nearly choked. The men in the uniforms, each in himself meaning nothing, had become by their marching together all alive with meaning. Again he wanted to shout, to run down into the street and embrace them. The strength in them seemed to kiss, as with the kiss of a lover, the strength within himself and when they had passed and the disorderly jangle of voices broke out again he got on a car and went out to Edith's with his heart afire with resolution.

Edith Carson's millinery shop was in the hands of a new owner. She had sold out and fled. McGregor stood in the show room looking about him at the cases filled with their feathery finery and at the hats along the wall. The light, from a street lamp that came in at the window started millions of tiny motes dancing before his eyes.

Out of the room at the back of the shop—the room where he had seen the tears of suffering in Edith's eyes—came a woman who told him of Edith's having sold the business. She was excited by the message she had to deliver and walked past the waiting man, going to the screen door to stand with her back to him and look up the street.

Out of the corners of her eyes the woman looked at him. She was a small black-haired woman with two gleaming gold teeth and with glasses on her nose. "There has been a lovers' quarrel here," she told herself.

"I have bought the store," she said aloud. "She told me to tell you that she had gone."

McGregor did not wait for more but hurried past the woman into the street. In his heart was a feeling of dumb aching loss. On an impulse he turned and ran back.

Standing in the street by the screen door he shouted hoarsely. "Where did she go?" he demanded.

The woman laughed merrily. She felt that she was getting with the shop a flavour of romance and adventure very attractive to her. Then she walked to the door and smiled through the screen. "She has only just left," she said. "She went to the Burlington station. I think she has gone West. I heard her tell the man about her trunk. She has been around here for two days since I bought the shop. I think she has been waiting for you to come. You did not come and now she has gone and perhaps you won't find her. She did not look like one who

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would quarrel with a lover.”

The woman in the shop laughed softly as McGregor hurried away. “Now who would think that quiet little woman would have such a lover?” she asked herself.

Down the street ran McGregor and raising his hand stopped a passing automobile. The woman saw him seated in the automobile talking to a grey-haired man at the wheel and then the machine turned and disappeared up the street at a law-breaking pace.

McGregor had again a new light on the character of Edith Carson. “I can see her doing it,” he told himself—“cheerfully telling Margaret that it didn’t matter and all the time planning this in the back of her head. Here all of these years she has been leading a life of her own. The secret longings, the desires and the old human hunger for love and happiness and expression have been going on under her placid exterior as they have under my own.”

McGregor thought of the busy days behind him and realised with shame how little Edith had seen of him. It was in the days when his big movement of *The Marching Men* was just coming into the light and on the night before he had been in a conference of labour men who had wanted him to make a public demonstration of the power he had secretly been building up. Every day his office was filled with newspaper men who asked questions and demanded explanations. And in the meantime Edith had been selling her shop to that woman and getting ready to disappear.

In the railroad station McGregor found Edith sitting in a corner with her face buried in the crook of her arm. Gone was the placid exterior. Her shoulders seemed narrower. Her hand, hanging over the back of the seat in front of her, was white and lifeless.

McGregor said nothing but snatched up the brown leather bag that sat beside her on the floor and taking her by the arm led her up a flight of stone steps to the street.

CHAPTER VII

IN the Ormsby household father and daughter sat in the darkness on the veranda. After Laura Ormsby’s encounter with McGregor there had been another talk between her and David. Now she had gone on a visit to her home-town in Wisconsin and father and daughter sat together.

To his wife David had talked pointedly of Margaret’s affair. “It is not a matter of good sense,” he had said; “one can not pretend there is a prospect of happiness in such an affair. The man is no fool and may some day be a big man but it will not be the kind of bigness that will bring either happiness or contentment to a woman like Margaret. He may end his life in jail.”

McGregor and Edith walked up the gravel walk and stood by the

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front door of the Ormsby house. From the darkness on the veranda came the hearty voice of David. "Come and sit out here," he said.

McGregor stood silently waiting. Edith clung to his arm. Margaret got up and coming forward stood looking at them. With a jump at her heart she sensed the crisis suggested by the presence of these two people. Her voice trembled with alarm. "Come in," she said, turning and leading the way into the house.

The man and woman followed Margaret. At the door McGregor stopped and called to David. "We want you in here with us," he said harshly.

In the drawing room the four people waited. The great chandelier threw its light down upon them. In her chair Edith sat and looked at the floor.

"I've made a mistake," said McGregor. "I've been going on and on making a mistake." He turned to Margaret. "We didn't count on something here. There is Edith. She isn't what we thought."

Edith said nothing. The weary stoop stayed in her shoulders. She felt that if McGregor had brought her to the house and to this woman he loved to seal their parting she would sit quietly until that was over and then go on to the loneliness she believed must be her portion.

To Margaret the coming of the man and woman was a portent of evil. She also was silent, expecting a shock. When her lover spoke she also looked at the floor. To herself she was saying, "He is going to take himself away and marry this other woman. I must be prepared to hear him say that."

In the doorway stood David. "He is going to give me back Margaret," he thought, and his heart danced with happiness.

McGregor walked across the room and stood looking at the two women. His blue eyes were cold and filled with intense curiosity concerning them and himself. He wanted to test them and to test himself. "If I am clear-headed now I shall go on with the dream," he thought. "If I fail in this I shall fail in everything." Turning he took hold of the sleeve of David's coat and pulled him across the room so that the two men, stood together. Then he looked hard at Margaret. As he talked to her he continued to stand thus with his hand on her father's arm. The action caught David's fancy and a thrill of admiration ran through him. "Here is a man," he told himself.

"You thought Edith was ready to see us get married. Well she was. She is now and you see what it has done to her," said McGregor.

The daughter of the plough-maker started to speak. Her face was chalky white. McGregor threw up his hands.

"Wait," he said, "a man and woman can't live together for years and then part like two men friends. Something gets into them to prevent. They find they love each other. I've found out that though I want you, I love Edith. She loves me. Look at her."

Margaret half arose from her chair. McGregor went on. Into his

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voice came the harsh quality that made men fear and follow him. "Oh, we'll be married, Margaret and I," he said; "her beauty has won me. I follow beauty. I want beautiful children. That is my right."

He turned to Edith and stood staring at her.

"You and I could never have the feeling Margaret and I had when we looked into each other's eyes. We ached with it—each wanting the other. You are made to endure. You would get over anything and be cheerful after a while. You know that—don't you?"

The eyes of Edith came up level with his own.

"Yes I know," she said.

Margaret Ormsby jumped up from her chair, her eyes swimming.

"Stop," she cried. "I do not want you. I would never marry you now. You belong to her. You are Edith's."

McGregor's voice became soft and quiet.

"Oh, I know," he said; "I know! I know! But I want children. Look at Edith. Do you think she could bear children to me?"

A change came over Edith Carson. Her eyes hardened and her shoulders straightened.

"That's for me to say," she cried, springing forward and clutching his arm. "That is between me and God. If you intend to marry me come now and do it. I was not afraid to give you up and I'm not afraid that I shall die bearing children."

Dropping McGregor's arm Edith ran across the room and stood before Margaret. "How do you know you are more beautiful or can bear more beautiful children?" she demanded. "What do you mean by beauty anyway? I deny your beauty." She turned to McGregor. "Look," she cried, "she does not stand the test."

Pride swept over the woman that had come to life within the body of the little milliner. With calm eyes she stared at the people in the room and when she looked again toward Margaret there was a challenge in her voice.

"Beauty has to endure," she said swiftly. "It has to be daring. It has to outlive long years of life and many defeats." A hard look came into her eyes as she challenged the daughter of wealth. "I had the courage to be defeated and I have the courage to take what I want," she said. "Have you that courage? If you have take this man. You want him and so do I. Take his arm and walk away with him. Do it now, here before my eyes."

Margaret shook her head. Her body trembled and her eyes looked wildly about. She turned to David Ormsby. "I did not know that life could be like this," she said. "Why didn't you tell me? She is right. I am afraid."

A light came into McGregor's eyes and he turned quickly about. "I see," he said, looking sharply at Edith, "you have also your purpose." Turning again he looked into the eyes of David.

"There is something to be decided here. It is perhaps the supreme test of a man's life. One struggles to keep a thought in mind,

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to be impersonal, to see that life has a purpose outside his own purpose. You have perhaps made that struggle. You see I'm making it now. I'm going to take Edith and go back to work."

At the door McGregor stopped and put out his hand to David who took it and looked at the big lawyer respectfully.

"I'm glad to see you go," said the plough-maker briefly.

"I'm glad to be going," said McGregor, understanding that there was nothing but relief and honest antagonism in the voice and in the mind of David Ormsby.

BOOK VI

CHAPTER I

THE Marching Men Movement was never a thing to intellectualise. For years McGregor tried to get it under way by talking. He did not succeed. The rhythm and swing that was at the heart of the movement hung fire. The man passed through long periods of depression and had to drive himself forward. And then after the scene with Margaret and Edith in the Ormsby house came action.

There was a man named Mosby about whose figure the action for a time revolved. He was bartender for Neil Hunt, a notorious character of South State Street, and had once been a lieutenant in the army. Mosby was what in modern society is called a rascal. After West Point and a few years at some isolated army post he began to drink and one night during a debauch and when half crazed by the dullness of his life he shot a private through the shoulder. He was arrested and put on his honour not to escape but did escape. For years he drifted about the world a haggard cynical figure who got drunk whenever money came his way and who would do anything to break the monotony of existence.

Mosby was enthusiastic about the Marching Men idea. He saw in it an opportunity to worry and alarm his fellow men. He talked a union of bartenders and waiters to which he belonged into giving the idea a trial and in the morning they began to march up and down in the strip of parkland that faced the lake at the edge of the First Ward. "Keep your mouths shut," commanded Mosby. "We can worry the officials of this town like the devil if we work this right. When you are asked questions say nothing. If the police try to arrest us we will swear we are only doing it for the sake of exercise."

Mosby's plan worked. Within a week crowds began to gather in the morning to watch the Marching Men and the police started to make inquiry. Mosby was delighted. He threw up his job as bartender and recruited a motley company of young roughs whom he induced

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to practise the march step during the afternoons. When he was arrested and dragged into court McGregor acted as his lawyer and he was discharged. "I want to get these men out into the open," Mosby declared, looking very innocent and guileless. "You can see for yourself that waiters and bartenders get pale and stoop-shouldered at their work and as for these young roughs isn't it better for society to have them out there marching about than idling in bar rooms and planning God knows what mischief?"

A grin appeared over the face of the First Ward. McGregor and Mosby organised another company of marchers and a young man who had been a sergeant in a company of regulars was induced to help with the drilling. To the men themselves it was all a joke, a game that appealed to the mischievous boy in them. Everybody was curious and that gave the thing tang. They grinned as they marched up and down. For a while they exchanged gibes with the spectators but McGregor put a stop to that. "Be silent," he said, going about among the men during the rest periods. "That's the best thing to do. Be silent and attend to business and your marching will be ten times as effective."

The Marching Men Movement grew. A young Jewish newspaper man, half rascal, half poet, wrote a scare-head story for one of the Sunday papers announcing the birth of the Republic of Labour. The story was illustrated by a drawing showing McGregor leading a vast horde of men across an open plain toward a city whose tall chimneys belched forth clouds of smoke. Beside McGregor in the picture and arrayed in a gaudy uniform was Mosby the ex-army officer. In the article he was called the war lord of "The secret republic growing up within a great capitalistic empire."

It had begun to take form—the movement of the Marching Men. Rumours began to run here and there. There was a question in men's eyes. Slowly at first it began to rumble through their minds. There was the tap of feet clicking sharply on pavements. Groups formed, men laughed, the groups disappeared only to again reappear. In the sun before factory doors men stood talking, half understanding, beginning to sense the fact that there was something big in the wind.

At first the movement did not get anywhere with the ranks of labour. There would be a meeting, perhaps a series of meetings in one of the little halls where labourers gather to attend to the affairs of their unions. McGregor would speak. His voice harsh and commanding could be heard in the streets below. Merchants came out of the stores and stood in the doorways listening. Young fellows who smoked cigarettes stopped looking at passing girls and gathered in crowds below the open windows. The slow working brain of labour was being aroused.

After a time a few young men, fellows who worked at the saws in a box factory and others who ran machines in a factory where bicycles were made, volunteered to follow the lead of the men of the First

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Ward. On summer evenings they gathered in vacant lots and marched back and forth looking at their feet and laughing.

McGregor insisted upon the training. He never had any intention of letting his Marching Men Movement become merely a disorganised band of walkers such as we have all seen in many a labour parade. He meant that they should learn to march rhythmically, swinging along like veterans. He was determined that the thresh of feet should come finally to sing a great song, carrying the message of a powerful brotherhood into the hearts and brains of the marchers.

McGregor gave all of his time to the movement. He made a scant living by the practice of his profession but gave it no thought. The murder case had brought him other cases and he had taken a partner, a ferret-eyed little man who worked out the details of what cases came to the firm and collected the fees, half of which he gave to the partner who was intent upon something else. Day after day, week after week, month after month, McGregor went up and down the city, talking to workers, learning to talk, striving to make his idea understood.

One evening in September he stood in the shadow of a factory wall watching a group of men who marched in a vacant lot. The movement had become by that time really big. A flame burned in his heart at the thought of what it might become. It was growing dark and the clouds of dust raised by the feet of the men swept across the face of the departing sun. In the field before him marched some two hundred men, the largest company he had been able to get together. For a week they had stayed at the marching evening after evening and were beginning a little to understand the spirit of it. Their leader on the field, a tall square shouldered man, had once been a captain in the State Militia and now worked as engineer in a factory where soap was made. His commands rang out sharp and crisp on the evening air. "Fours right into line," he cried. The words were barked forth. The men straightened their shoulders and swung out vigorously. They had begun to enjoy the marching.

In the shadow of the factory wall McGregor moved uneasily about. He felt that this was the beginning, the real birth of his movement, that these men had really come out of the ranks of labour and that in the breasts of the marching figures there in the open space understanding was growing.

He muttered and walked back and forth. A young man, a reporter on one of the city's great daily papers, leaped from a passing street car and came to stand near him. "What's up here? What's this going on? What's it all about? You better tell me," he said.

In the dim light McGregor raised his fists above his head and talked aloud. "It's creeping in among them," he said. "The thing that can't be put into words is getting itself expressed. Something is being done here in this field. A new force is coming into the world."

Half beside himself McGregor ran up and down swinging his arms. Again turning to the reporter who stood by a factory wall—a

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rather dandified figure he was with a tiny moustache—he shouted:

“Don’t you see?” he cried. His voice was harsh. “See how they march! They are finding out what I mean. They have caught the spirit of it!”

McGregor began to explain. He talked hurriedly, his words coming forth in short broken sentences. “For ages there has been talk of brotherhood. Always men have babbled of brotherhood. The words have meant nothing. The words and the talking have but bred a loose-jawed race. The jaws of men wabble about but the legs of these men do not wobble.”

He again walked up and down, dragging the half-frightened man along the deepening shadow of the factory wall.

“You see it begins—now in this field it begins. The legs and the feet of men, hundreds of legs and feet make a kind of music. Presently there will be thousands, hundreds of thousands. For a time men will cease to be individuals. They will become a mass, a moving all-powerful mass. They will not put their thoughts into words but nevertheless there will be a thought growing up in them. They will of a sudden begin to realise that they are a part of something vast and mighty, a thing that moves, that is seeking new expression. They have been told of the power of labour but now, you see, they will become the power of labour.”

Swept along by his own words and perhaps by something rhythmical in the moving mass of men McGregor became feverishly anxious that the dapper young man should understand. “Do you remember—when you were a boy—some man who had been a soldier telling you that the men who marched had to break step and go in a disorderly mob across a bridge because their orderly stride would have shaken the bridge to pieces?”

A shiver ran over the body of the young man. In his off hours he was a writer of plays and stories and his trained dramatic sense caught quickly the import of McGregor’s words. Into his mind came a scene on a village street of his own place in Ohio. In fancy he saw the village fife and drum corps marching past. His mind recalled the swing and the cadence of the tune and again as when he was a boy his legs ached to run out among the men and go marching away.

Filled with excitement he began also to talk. “I see,” he cried; “you think there is a thought in that, a big thought that men have not understood?”

On the field the men, becoming bolder as they became less self-conscious, came sweeping by, their bodies falling into a long swinging stride.

The young man pondered. “I see. I see. Every one who stood watching as I did when the fife and drum corps went past felt what I felt. They were hiding behind a mask. Their legs also tingled and the same wild militant thumping went on in their hearts. You have found that out, eh? You mean to lead labour that way?”

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With open mouth the young man stared at the field and at the moving mass of men. He became oratorical in his thoughts. "Here is a big man," he muttered. "Here is a Napoleon, a Caesar of labour come to Chicago. He is not like the little leaders. His mind is not sicklied over with the pale cast of thought. He does not think that the big natural impulses of men are foolish and absurd. He has got hold of something here that will work. The world had better watch this man."

Half beside himself he walked up and down at the edge of the field, his body trembling.

Out of the ranks of the marching men came a workman. In the field words arose. A petulant quality came into the voice of the captain who gave commands. The newspaper man listened anxiously. "That's what will spoil everything. The men will begin to lose heart and will quit," he thought, leaning forward and waiting.

"I've worked all day and I can't march up and down here all night," complained the voice of the workman.

Past the shoulder of the young man went a shadow. Before his eyes on the field, fronting the waiting ranks of men, stood McGregor. His fist shot out and the complaining workman crumpled to the ground.

"This is no time for words," said the harsh voice. "Get back in there. This is not a game. It's the beginning of men's realisation of themselves. Get in there and say nothing. If you can't march with us get out. The movement we have started can pay no attention to whimperers."

Among the ranks of men a cheer arose. By the factory wall the excited newspaper man danced up and down. At a word of command from the captain the line of marching men again swept down the field and he watched them with tears standing in his eyes. "It's going to work," he cried. "It's bound to work. At last a man has come to lead the men of labor."

CHAPTER II

JOHN VAN MOORE a young Chicago advertising man went one afternoon to the offices of the Wheelright Bicycle Company. The company had both its factory and offices far out on the west side. The factory was a huge brick affair fronted by a broad cement sidewalk and a narrow green lawn spotted with flower beds. The building used for offices was smaller and had a veranda facing the street. Up the sides of the office building vines grew.

Like the reporter who had watched the Marching Men in the field by the factory wall John Van Moore was a dapper young man with a moustache. In his leisure hours he played a clarinet. "It gives a man

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something to cling to," he explained to his friends. "One sees life going past and feels that he is not a mere drifting log in the stream of things. Although as a musician I amount to nothing, it at least makes me dream."

Among the men in the advertising office where he worked Van Moore was known as something of a fool, redeemed by his ability to string words together. He wore a heavy black braided watch chain and carried a cane and he had a wife who after marriage had studied medicine and with whom he did not live. Sometimes on a Saturday evening the two met at some restaurant and sat for hours drinking and laughing. When the wife had gone to her own place the advertising man continued the fun, going from saloon to saloon and making long speeches setting forth his philosophy of life. "I am an individualist," he declared, strutting up and down and swinging the cane about. "I am a dabbler, an experimenter if you will. Before I die it is my dream that I will discover a new quality in existence."

For the bicycle company the advertising man was to write a booklet telling in romantic and readable form the history of the company. When finished the booklet would be sent out to those who had answered advertisements put into magazines and newspapers. The company had a process of manufacture peculiar to Wheelright bicycles and in the booklet this was to be much emphasised.

The manufacturing process in regard to which John Van Moore was to wax eloquent had been conceived in the brain of a workman and was responsible for the company's success. Now the workman was dead and the president of the company had decided that he would take credit for the idea. He had thought a good deal of the matter and had decided that in truth the notion must have been more than a little his own. "It must have been so," he told himself, "otherwise it would not have worked out so well."

In the offices of the bicycle company the president, a grey gross man with tiny eyes, walked up and down a long room heavily carpeted. In reply to questions asked by the advertising man, who sat at a table with a pad of paper before him, he raised himself on his toes, put a thumb in the armhole of his vest and told a long rambling tale of which he was the hero.

The tale concerned a purely imaginary young workman who spent all of the earlier years of his life labouring terribly. At evening he ran quickly from the shop where he was employed and going without sleep toiled for long hours in a little garret. When the workman had discovered the secret that made successful the Wheelright bicycle he opened a shop and began to reap the reward of his efforts.

"That was me. I was that fellow," cried the fat man who in reality had bought his interest in the bicycle company after the age of forty. Tapping himself on the breast he paused as though overcome with feeling. Tears came into his eyes. The young workman had become a reality to him. "All day I ran about the little shop crying 'Quality!

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Quality!' I do that now. It is a fetish with me. I do not make bicycles for money but because I am a workman with pride in my work. You may put that in the book. You may quote me as saying that. A big point should be made of my pride in my work."

The advertising man nodded his head and scribbled upon the pad of paper. Almost he could have written the story without the visit to the factory. When the fat man was not looking he turned his face to one side and listened attentively. With a whole heart he wished the president would go away and leave him alone to wander in the factory.

On the evening before, John Van Moore had taken part in an adventure. With a companion, a fellow who drew cartoons for the daily papers, he had gone into a saloon and there had met another man of the newspapers.

In the saloon the three men had sat until late into the night drinking and talking. The second newspaper man—that same dapper fellow who had watched the marchers by the factory wall—had told over and over the story of McGregor and his Marchers. "I tell you there is something growing up here," he had said. "I have seen this McGregor and I know. You may believe me or not but the fact is that he has found out something. There is an element in men that up to now has not been understood—there is a thought hidden away within the breast of labour, a big unspoken thought—it is a part of men's bodies as well as their minds. Suppose this fellow has figured that out and understands it, eh!"

Becoming more and more excited as he continued to drink the newspaper man had been half wild in his conjectures as to what was to happen in the world. Thumping with his fist upon a table wet with beer he had addressed the writer of advertisements. "There are things that animals know that have not been understood by men," he cried. "Consider the bees. Have you thought that man has not tried to work out a collective intellect? Why should man not try to work that out?"

The newspaper man's voice became low and tense. "When you go into a factory I want you to keep your eyes and your ears open," he said. "Go into one of the great rooms where many men are at work. Stand perfectly still. Don't try to think. Wait."

Jumping out of his seat the excited man had walked up and down before his companions. A group of men standing before the bar listened, their glasses held half way to their lips.

"I tell you there is already a song of labour. It has not got itself expressed and understood but it is in every shop, in every field where men work. In a dim way the men who work are conscious of the song although if you talk of the matter they only laugh. The song is low harsh rhythmical. I tell you it comes out of the very soul of labour. It is akin to the thing that artists understand and that is called form. This McGregor understands something of that. He is the first leader of labour that has understood. The world shall hear from him. One of these days the world shall ring with his name."

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In the bicycle factory John Van Moore looked at the pad of paper before him and thought of the words of the half drunken man in the saloon. In the great shop at his back there was the steady grinding roar of many machines. The fat man, hypnotised by his own words, continued to walk up and down telling of the hardship that had once confronted the imaginary young workman and above which he had risen triumphant. "We hear much of the power of labour but there has been a mistake made," he said. "Such men as myself—we are the power. Do you see we have come out of the mass? We stand forth."

Stopping before the advertising man and looking down the fat man winked. "You do not need to say that in the book. There is no need of quoting me there. Our bicycles are being bought by workingmen and it would be foolish to offend them but what I say is nevertheless true. Do not such men as I, with our cunning brains and our power of patience build these great modern organisations?"

The fat man waved his arm toward the shops from which the roar of machinery came. The advertising man absentmindedly nodded his head. He was trying to hear the song of labour talked of by the drunken man. It was quitting time and there was the sound of many feet moving about the floor of the factory. The roar of the machinery stopped.

Again the fat man walked up and down talking of the career of the labourer who had come forth from the ranks of labour. From the factory the men began filing out into the open. There was the sound of feet scuffling along the wide cement sidewalk past the flowerbeds.

Of a sudden the fat man stopped. The advertising man sat with pencil suspended above the paper. From the walk below sharp commands rang out. Again the sound of men moving about came in through the windows.

The president of the bicycle company and the advertising man ran to the window. There on the cement sidewalk stood the men of the company formed into columns of fours and separated into companies. At the head of each company stood a captain. The captains swung the men about. "Forward ! March!" they shouted.

The fat man stood with his mouth open and looked at the men. "What's going on down there? What do you mean? Quit that!" he bawled.

A derisive laugh floated up through the window.

"Attention! Forward, guide right!" shouted a captain.

The men went swinging down the broad cement sidewalk past the window and the advertising man. In their faces was something determined and grim. A sickly smile flitted across the face of the grey-haired man and then faded. The advertising man, without knowing just what was going on felt that the older man was afraid. He sensed the terror in his face. In his heart he was glad to see it.

The manufacturer began to talk excitedly. "Now what's this?" he demanded. "What's going on? What kind of a volcano are we men

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of affairs walking over? Haven't we had enough trouble with labour? What are they doing now?" Again he walked up and down past the table where the advertising man sat looking at him. "We'll let the book go," he said. "Come to-morrow. Come any time. I want to look into this. I want to find out what's going on."

Leaving the office of the bicycle company John Van Moore ran along the street past stores and houses. He did not try to follow the Marching Men but ran forward blindly, filled with excitement. He remembered the words of the newspaper man about the song of labour, and was drunk with the thought that he had caught the swing of it. A hundred times he had seen men pouring out of factory doors at the end of the day. Always before they had been just a mass of individuals. Each had been thinking of his own affairs and each man had shuffled off into his own street and had been lost in the dim alleyways between the tall grimy buildings. Now all of this was changed. The men did not shuffle off alone but marched along the street shoulder to shoulder.

A lump came also into the throat of this man and he like that other by the factory wall began to say words. "The song of labour is here. It has begun to get itself sung!" he cried.

John Van Moore was beside himself. The face of the fat man pale with terror came back into his mind. On the sidewalk before a grocery store he stopped and shouted with delight. Then he began dancing wildly about, startling a group of children who with fingers in their mouths stood with staring eyes watching.

CHAPTER III

ALL through the early months of that year in Chicago, rumours of a new and not understandable movement among labourers ran about among men of affairs. In a way the labourers understood the undercurrent of terror their marching together had inspired and like the advertising man dancing on the sidewalk before the grocery were made happy by it. Grim satisfaction dwelt in their hearts. Remembering their boyhoods and the creeping terror that invaded their fathers' houses in times of depression they were glad to spread terror among the homes of the rich and the well-to-do. For years they had been going through life blindly, striving to forget age and poverty. Now they felt that life had a purpose, that they were marching toward some end. When in the past they had been told that power dwelt in them they had not believed. "He is not to be trusted," thought the man at the machine looking at the man at work at the next machine. "I have heard him talk and at bottom he is a fool."

Now the man at the machine did not think of his brother at the next machine. In his dreams at night he was beginning to have a new vision. Power had breathed its message into his brain. Of a sudden

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he saw himself as a part of a giant walking in the world. "I am like a drop of blood running through the veins of labour," he whispered to himself. "In my own way I am adding strength to the heart and the brain of labour. I have become a part of this thing that has begun to move. I will not talk but will wait. If this marching is the thing then I will march. Though I am weary at the end of the day that shall not stop me. Many times I have been weary and was alone. Now I am a part of something vast. This I know, that a consciousness of power has crept into my brain and although I be persecuted I shall not surrender what I have gained."

In the offices of the plough trust a meeting of men of affairs was called. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the movement going on among the workers. At the plough works it had broken out. No more at evening did the men shuffle along, like a disorderly mob but marched in companies along the brick-paved street that ran by the factory door.

At the meeting David Ormsby had been as always quiet and self-possessed. A halo of kindly intent hung over him and when a banker, one of the directors of the company, had finished a speech he arose and walked up and down, his hands thrust into his trousers pockets. The banker was a fat man with thin brown hair and delicate hands. As he talked he held a pair of yellow gloves and beat with them on a long table at the centre of the room. The soft thump of the gloves upon the table made a chorus to the things he had to say. David motioned for him to be seated. "I will myself go to see this McGregor," he said, walking across the room and putting an arm about the shoulder of the banker. "Perhaps there is as you say a new and terrible danger here but I do not think so. For thousands, no doubt for millions of years, the world has gone on its way and I do not think it is to be stopped now.

"It has been my fortune to see and to know this McGregor," added David smiling at the others in the room. "He is a man and not a Joshua to make the sun stand still."

In the office in Van Buren Street, David, the grey and confident, stood before the desk at which sat McGregor. "We will get out of here if you do not mind," he said. "I want to talk to you and I would not like being interrupted. I have a fancy that we talk out of doors."

The two men went in a street car to Jackson Park and, forgetting to dine, walked for an hour along the paths under the trees. The wind from the lake had chilled the air and the park was deserted.

They went to stand on a pier that ran out into the lake. On the pier David tried to begin the talk that was the object of their being together but felt that the wind and the water that beat against the piling of the pier made talk too difficult. Although he could not have told why, he was relieved by the necessity of delay. Into the park they went again and found a seat upon a bench facing a lagoon.

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In the presence of the silent McGregor David felt suddenly embarrassed and awkward. "By what right do I question him?" he asked himself and in his mind could find no answer. A half dozen times he started to say what he had come to say but stopped and his talk ran off into trivialities. "There are men in the world you have not taken into consideration," he said finally, forcing himself to begin. With a laugh he went on, relieved that the silence had been broken. "You see the very inner secret of strong men has been missed by you and others."

David Ormsby looked sharply at McGregor. "I do not believe that you believe we are after money, we men of affairs. I trust you see beyond that. We have our purpose and we keep to our purpose quietly and doggedly."

Again David looked at the silent figure sitting in the dim light and again his mind ran out, striving to penetrate the silence. "I am not a fool and perhaps I know that the movement you have started among the workers is something new. There is power in it as in all great ideas. Perhaps I think there is power in you. Why else should I be here?"

Again David laughed uncertainly. "In a way I am in sympathy with you," he said. "Although all through my life I have served money I have not been owned by it. You are not to suppose that men like me have not something beyond money in mind."

The old plough maker looked away over McGregor's shoulder to where the leaves of the trees shook in the wind from the lake. "There have been men and great leaders who have understood the silent competent servants of wealth," he said half petulantly. "I want you to understand these men. I should like to see you become such a one yourself—not for the wealth it would bring but because in the end you would thus serve all men. You would get at truth thus. The power that is in you would be conserved and used more intelligently."

"To be sure, history has taken little or no account of the men of whom I speak. They have passed through life unnoticed, doing great work quietly."

The plough maker paused. Although McGregor had said nothing the older man felt that the interview was not going as it should. "I should like to know what you have in mind, what in the end you hope to gain for yourself or for these men," he said somewhat sharply. "There is after all no point to our beating about the bush."

McGregor said nothing. Arising from the bench he began again to walk along the path with Ormsby at his side.

"The really strong men of the world have had no place in history," declared Ormsby bitterly. "They have not asked that. They were in Rome and in Germany in the time of Martin Luther but nothing is said of them. Although they do not mind the silence of history they would like other strong men to understand. The march of the world is a greater thing than the dust raised by the heels of some few workers walking through the streets and these men are responsible for the

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march of the world. You are making a mistake. I invite you to become one of us. If you plan to upset things you may get yourself into history but you will not really count. What you are trying to do will not work. You will come to a bad end."

When the two men emerged from the park the older man had again the feeling that the interview had not been a success. He was sorry. The evening he felt had marked for him a failure and he was not accustomed to failures. "There is a wall here that I cannot penetrate," he thought.

Along the front of the park beneath a grove of trees they walked in silence. McGregor seemed not to have heard the words addressed to him. When they came to where a long row of vacant lots faced the park he stopped and stood leaning against a tree to look away into the park, lost in thought.

David Ormsby also became silent. He thought of his youth in the little village plough factory, of his efforts to get on in the world, of the long evenings spent reading books and trying to understand the movements of men.

"Is there an element in nature and in youth that we do not understand or that we lose sight of?" he asked. "Are the efforts of the patient workers of the world always to be abortive? Can some new phase of life arise suddenly upsetting all of our plans? Do you, can you, think of men like me as but part of a vast whole? Do you deny to us individuality, the right to stand forth, the right to work things out and to control?"

The plough-maker looked at the huge figure standing beside the tree. Again he was irritated and kept lighting cigars which after two or three puffs he threw away. In the bushes at the back of the bench insects began to sing. The wind coming now in gentle gusts swayed slowly the branches of the trees overhead.

"Is there an eternal youth in the world, a state out of which men pass unknowingly, a youth that forever destroys, tearing down what has been built?" he asked. "Are the mature lives of strong men of so little account? Have you like the empty fields that bask in the sun in the summer the right to remain silent in the presence of men who have had thoughts and have tried to put their thoughts into deeds?"

Still saying nothing McGregor pointed with his finger along the road that faced the park. From a side street a body of men swung about a corner, coming with long strides toward the two. As they passed beneath a street lamp that swung gently in the wind their faces flashing in and out of the light seemed to be mocking David Ormsby. For a moment anger burned in him and then something, perhaps the rhythm of the moving mass of men, brought a gentler mood. The men swinging past turned another corner and disappeared beneath the structure of an elevated railroad.

The plough-maker walked away from McGregor. Something in

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the interview, terminating thus with the presence of the marching figures had he felt unmanned him. "After all there is youth and the hope of youth. What he has in mind may work," he thought as he climbed aboard a street car.

In the car David put his head out at the window and looked at the long line of apartment buildings that lined the streets. He thought again of his own youth and of the evenings in the Wisconsin village when, himself a youth, he went with other young men singing and marching in the moonlight.

In a vacant lot he again saw a body of the Marching Men moving back and forth and responding quickly to the commands given by a slender young man who stood on the sidewalk beneath a street lamp and held a stick in his hand.

In the car the grey-haired man of affairs put his head down upon the back of the seat in front. Half unconscious of his own thoughts his mind began to dwell upon the figure of his daughter. "Had I been Margaret I should not have let him go. No matter what the cost I should have clung to the man," he muttered.

CHAPTER IV

IT is difficult not to be of two minds about the manifestation now called, and perhaps rightly, "The Madness of the Marching Men." In one mood it comes back to the mind as something unspeakably big and inspiring. We go each of us through the treadmill of our lives caught and caged like little animals in some vast menagerie. In turn we love, marry, breed children, have our moments of blind futile passion and then something happens. All unconsciously a change creeps over us. Youth passes. We become shrewd, careful, submerged in little things. Life, art, great passions, dreams, all of these pass. Under the night sky the suburbanite stands in the moonlight. He is hoeing his radishes and worrying because the laundry has torn one of his white collars. The railroad is to put on an extra morning train. He remembers that fact heard at the store. For him the night becomes more beautiful. For ten minutes longer he can stay with the radishes each morning. There is much of man's life in the figure of the suburbanite standing absorbed in his own thoughts in the midst of his radishes.

And so about the business of our lives we go and then of a sudden there comes again the feeling that crept over us all in the year of the Marching Men. In a moment we are again a part of the moving mass. The old religious exaltation, strange emanation from the man McGregor, returns. In fancy we feel the earth tremble under the feet of the men—the marchers. With a conscious straining of the mind we strive to grasp the processes of the mind of the leader during that year when men sensed his meaning, when they saw as he saw the workers—

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saw them massed and moving through the world.

My own mind, striving feebly to follow that greater and simpler mind, gropes about. I remember sharply the words of a writer who said that men make their own gods and realise that I myself saw something of the birth of such a god. For he was near to being a god then—our McGregor. The thing he did rumbles in the minds of men yet. His long shadow will fall across men's thoughts for ages. The tantalising effort to understand his meaning will tempt us always into endless speculation.

Only last week I met a man—he was a steward in a club and lingered talking to me by a cigar case in an empty billiard-room—who suddenly turned away to conceal from me two large tears that had jumped into his eyes because of a kind of tenderness in my voice at the mention of the Marching Men.

Another mood comes. It may be the right mood. I see sparrows jumping about in an ordinary roadway as I walk to my office. From the maple trees the little winged seeds come fluttering down before my eyes. A boy goes past sitting in a grocery wagon and over-driving a rather bony horse. As I walk I overtake two workmen shuffling along. They remind me of those other workers and I say to myself that thus men have always shuffled, that never did they swing forward into that world-wide rhythmical march of the workers.

“You were drunk with youth and a kind of world madness,” says my normal self as I go forward again, striving to think things out.

Chicago is still here—Chicago after McGregor and the Marching Men. The elevated trains still clatter over the frogs at the turning into Wabash Avenue; the surface cars clang their bells; the crowds pour up in the morning from the runway leading to the Illinois Central trains; life goes on. And men in their offices sit in their chairs and say that the thing that happened was abortive, a brain storm, a wild outbreak of the rebellious the disorderly and the hunger in the minds of men.

What begging of the question. The very soul of the Marching Men was a sense of order. That was the message of it, the thing that the world has not come up to yet. Men have not learned that we must come to understand the impulse toward order, have that burned into our consciousness, before we move on to other things. There is in us this madness for individual expression. For each, of us the little moment of running forward and lifting our thin childish voices in the midst of the great silence. We have not learned that out of us all, walking shoulder to shoulder, there might arise a greater voice, something to make the waters of the very seas to tremble.

McGregor knew. He had a mind not sick with much thinking of trifles. When he had a great idea he thought it would work and he meant to see that it did work.

Mightily was he equipped. I have seen the man in halls talking, his huge body swaying back and forth, his great fists in the air, his

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voice harsh, persistent, insistent—with something of the quality of the drums in it—beating down into the upturned faces of the men crowded into the stuffy little places.

I remember that newspaper men used to sit in their little holes and write saying of him that the times made McGregor. I do not know about that. The city caught fire from the man at the time of that terrible speech of his in the court room when Polk Street Mary grew afraid and told the truth. There he stood, the raw untried red-haired miner from the mines and the Tenderloin, facing an angry court and a swarm of protesting lawyers and uttering that city-shaking philippic against the old rotten first ward and the creeping cowardice in men that lets vice and disease go on and pervade all modern life. It was in a way another “J’Accuse!” from the lips of another Zola. Men who heard it have told me that when he had finished in the whole court no man spoke and no man dared feel guiltless. “For the moment something—a section, a cell, a figment, of men’s brains opened—and in that terrible illuminating instant they saw themselves as they were and what they had let life become.”

They saw something else, or thought they did, saw McGregor a new force for Chicago to reckon with. After the trial one young newspaper man returned to his office and running from desk to desk yelled in the faces of his brother reporters: “Hell’s out for noon. We’ve got a big red-haired Scotch lawyer up here on Van Buren Street that is a kind of a new scourge of the world. Watch the First Ward get it.”

But McGregor never looked at the First Ward. That wasn’t bothering him. From the court room he went to march with men in a new field.

Followed the time of waiting and of patient quiet work. In the evenings McGregor worked at the law cases in the bare room in Van Buren Street. That queer bird Henry Hunt still stayed with him, collecting tithes for the gang and going to his respectable home at night—a strange triumph of the small that had escaped the tongue of McGregor on that day in court when so many men had their names bruited to the world in McGregor’s roll call—the roll call of the men who were but merchants, brothers of vice, the men who should have been masters in the city.

And then the movement of the Marching Men began to come to the surface. It got into the blood of men. That harsh drumming voice began to shake their hearts and their legs.

Everywhere men began to see and hear of the Marchers. From lip to lip ran the question, “What’s going on?”

“What’s going on?” How that cry ran over Chicago. Every newspaper man in town got assignments on the story. The papers were loaded with it every day. All over the city they appeared, everywhere—the Marching Men.

There were leaders enough! The Cuban War and the State Militia

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had taught too many men the swing of the march step for there not to be at least two or three competent drill masters in every little company of men.

And there was the marching song the Russian wrote for McGregor. Who could forget it? Its high pitched harsh feminine strain rang in the brain. How it went pitching and tumbling along in that wailing calling endless high note. It had strange breaks and intervals in the rendering. The men did not sing it. They chanted it. There was in it just the weird haunting something the Russians know how to put into their songs and into the books they write. It isn't the quality of the soil. Some of our own music has that. But in this Russian song there was something else, something world-wide and religious—a soul, a spirit. Perhaps it is just the spirit that broods over that strange land and people. There was something of Russia in McGregor himself.

Anyway the marching song was the most persistently penetrating thing Americans had ever heard. It was in the streets, the shops, the offices, the alleys and in the air overhead—the wail—half shout. No noise could drown it. It swung and pitched and rioted through the air.

And there was the fellow who wrote the music down for McGregor. He was the real thing and he bore the marks of the shackles on his legs. He had remembered the march from hearing the men sing it as they went over the Steppes to Siberia, the men who were going up out of misery to more misery. "It would come out of the air," he explained. "The guards would run down the line of men to shout and strike out with their short whips. 'stop it!' they cried. And still it went on for hours, defying everything, there on the cold cheerless plains."

And he had brought it to America and put it to music for McGregor's marchers.

Of course the police tried to stop the marchers. Into a street they would run crying "Disperse!" The men did disperse only to appear again on some vacant lot working away at the perfection of the marching. Once an excited squad of police captured a company of them. The same men were back in line the next evening. The police could not arrest a hundred thousand men because they marched shoulder to shoulder along the streets and chanted a weird march song as they went.

The whole thing was not an outbreak of labour. It was something different from anything that had come into the world before. The unions were in it but besides the unions there were the Poles, the Russian Jews, the Hunks from the stockyards and the steel works in South Chicago. They had their own leaders, speaking their own languages. And how they could throw their legs into the march! The armies of the old world had for years been training men for the strange demonstration that had broken out in Chicago.

The thing was hypnotic. It was big. It is absurd to sit writing of it now in such majestic terms but you have to go back to the newspapers

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of that day to realise how the imagination of men was caught and held.

Every train brought writers tumbling into Chicago. In the evening fifty of them would gather in the back room at Weingardner's restaurant where such men congregate.

And then the thing broke out all over the country, in steel towns like Pittsburgh and Johnstown and Lorain and McKeesport and men working in little independent factories in towns down in Indiana began drilling and chanting the march song on summer evenings on the village baseball ground.

How the people, the comfortable well-fed middle class people were afraid! It swept over the country like a religious revival, the creeping dread.

The writing men got to McGregor, the brain back of it all, fast enough. Everywhere his influence appeared. In the afternoon there would be a hundred newspaper men standing on the stairway leading up to the big bare office in Van Buren Street. At his desk he sat, big and red and silent. He looked like a man half asleep. I suppose the thing that was in their minds had something to do with the way men looked at him but in any case the crowd in Weingardner's agreed that there was in the man something of the same fear-inspiring bigness there was in the movement he had started and was guiding.

It seems absurdly simple now. There he sat at his desk. The police might have walked in and arrested him. But if you begin figuring that way the whole thing was absurd. What differs it if men march coming from work, swinging along shoulder to shoulder or shuffle aimlessly along, and what harm can come out of the singing of a song?

You see McGregor understood something that all of us had not counted on. He knew that every one has an imagination. He was at war with men's minds. He challenged something in us that we hardly realised was there. He had been sitting there for years thinking it out. He had watched Dr. Dowie and Mrs. Eddy. He knew what he was doing.

A crowd of newspaper men went one night to hear McGregor at a big outdoor meeting up on the North Side. Dr. Cowell was with them—the big English statesman and writer who later was drowned on the *Titanic*. He was a big man, physically and mentally, and was in Chicago to see McGregor and try to understand what he was doing.

And McGregor got him as he had all men. Out there under the sky the men stood silent, Cowell's head sticking up above the sea of faces, and McGregor talked. The newspaper men declared he could not talk. They were wrong about that. McGregor had a way of throwing up his arms and straining and shouting out his sentences, that got to the souls of men.

He was a kind of crude artist drawing pictures on the mind.

That night he talked about labour as always—labour personified—huge crude old Labour. How he made the men before him see and feel the blind giant who has lived in the world since time began and

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who still goes stumbling blindly about, rubbing his eyes and lying down to sleep away centuries in the dust of the fields and the factories.

A man arose in the audience and climbed upon the platform beside McGregor. It was a daring thing to do and men's knees trembled. While the man was crawling up to the platform shouts arose. One has in mind a picture of a bustling little fellow going into the house and into the upper room where Jesus and his followers were having the last supper together, going in there to wrangle about the price to be paid for the wine.

The man who got on the platform with McGregor was a socialist. He wanted to argue.

But McGregor did not argue with him. He sprang forward, it was a quick tiger-like movement, and spun the socialist about, making him stand small and blinking and comical before the crowd.

Then McGregor began to talk. He made of the little stuttering arguing socialist a figure representing all labour, made him the personification of the old weary struggle of the world. And the socialist who went to argue stood with tears in his eyes, proud of his position in men's eyes.

All over the city McGregor talked of old Labour and how he was to be built up and put before men's eyes by the movement of the Marching Men. How our legs tingled to fall in step and go marching away with him.

Out of the crowds there came the note of that wailing march. Some one always started that

That night on the North Side Doctor Cowell got hold of the shoulder of a newspaper man and led him to a car. He who knew Bismarck and who had sat in council with kings went walking and babbling half the night through the empty streets.

It is amusing now to think of the things men said under the influence of McGregor. Like old Doctor Johnson and his friend Savage they walked half drunk through the streets swearing that whatever happened they would stick to the movement. Doctor Cowell himself said things just as absurd as that.

And all over the country men were getting the idea—the Marching Men—old Labour in one mass marching before the eyes of men—old Labour that was going to make the world see—see and feel its bigness at last. Men were to come to the end of strife—men united—Marching! Marching! Marching!

CHAPTER V

IN all of the time of The Marching Men there was but one bit of written matter from the leader McGregor. It had a circulation running into the millions and was printed in every tongue spoken in America. A copy of the little circular lies before me now.

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THE MARCHERS

“They ask us what we mean.
Well, here is our answer.
We mean to go on marching.
We mean to march in the morning and in the evening when the sun goes down.
On Sundays they may sit on their porches or shout at men playing ball in a field
But we will march.
On the hard cobblestones of the city streets and through the dust of country roads
we will march.
Our legs may be weary and our throats hot and dry, But still we will march, shoulder
to shoulder.
We will march until the ground shakes and tall buildings tremble.
Shoulder to shoulder we will go—all of us—On and on forever.
We will not talk nor listen to talk.
We will march and we will teach our sons and our daughters to march.
Their minds are troubled. Our minds are clear.
We do not think and banter words.
We march.
Our faces are coarse and there is dust in our hair and beards.
See, the inner parts of our hands are rough.
And still we march—we the workers.”

CHAPTER VI

WHO will ever forget that Labour Day in Chicago? How they marched!—thousands and thousands and more thousands! They filled the streets. The cars stopped. Men trembled with the import of the impending hour.

Here they come! How the ground trembles! The chant chant chant of that song! It must have been thus that Grant felt at the great review of the veterans in Washington when all day long they marched past him, the men of the Civil War, the whites of their eyes showing in the tan of their faces. McGregor stood on the stone curbing above the tracks in Grant Park. As the men marched they massed in there about him, thousands of them, steel workers and iron workers and great red-necked butchers and teamsters.

And in the air wailed the marching song of the workers.

All of the world that was not marching jammed into the buildings facing Michigan Boulevard and waited. Margaret Ormsby was there. She sat with her father in a carriage near where Van Buren Street ends at the Boulevard. As the men kept crowding in about them she clutched nervously at the sleeve of David Ormsby's coat. “He is going to speak,” she whispered and pointed. Her tense air of expectancy expressed much of the feeling of the crowd. “See, listen, he is going to speak out.”

It must have been five in the afternoon when the men got through marching. They were massed in there clear down to the Twelfth

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Street Station of the Illinois Central. McGregor lifted his hands. In the hush his harsh voice carried far. "We are at the beginning," he shouted and silence fell upon the people. In the stillness one standing near her might have heard Margaret Ormsby weeping softly. There was the gentle murmur that always prevails where many people stand at attention. The weeping of the woman was scarcely audible but it persisted like the sound of little waves on a beach at the end of the day.

BOOK VII

CHAPTER I

THE idea prevalent among men that the woman to be beautiful must be hedged about and protected from the facts of life has done something more than produce a race of women not physically vigorous. It has made them deficient in strength of soul also. After the evening when she stood facing Edith and when she had been unable to arise to the challenge flung at her by the little milliner Margaret Ormsby was forced to stand facing her own soul and there was no strength in her for the test. Her mind insisted on justifying her failure. A woman of the people placed in such a position would have been able to face it calmly. She would have gone soberly and steadily about her work and after a few months of pulling weeds in a field, trimming hats in a shop or instructing children in a schoolroom would have been ready to thrust out again, making another trial at life. Having met many defeats she would have been armed and ready for defeat. Like a little animal in a forest inhabited by other and larger animals she would have known the effectiveness of lying perfectly still for a long period, making her patience a part of her equipment for living.

Margaret had decided that she hated McGregor. After the scene in her house she gave up her work in the settlement house and for a long time went about nursing her hatred. In the street as she walked about her mind kept bringing accusations against him and in her room at night she sat by the window looking at the stars and said strong words. "He is a brute," she declared hotly, "a mere animal untouched by the culture that makes for gentleness. There is something animal-like and horrible in my nature that has made me care for him. I shall pluck it out. In the future I shall make it my business to forget the man and all of the dreadful lower strata of life that he represents."

Filled with this idea Margaret went about among her own people and tried to become interested in the men and women she met at dinners and receptions. It did not work and when, after a few evenings spent in the company of men absorbed in the getting of money, she

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found them only dull creatures whose mouths were filled with meaningless words, her irritation grew and she blamed McGregor for that also. "He had no right to come into my consciousness and then take himself off," she declared bitterly. "The man is more of a brute than I thought. He no doubt preys upon everyone as he has preyed upon me. He is without tenderness, knows nothing of the meaning of tenderness. The colourless creature he has married will serve his body. That is what he wants. He does not want beauty. He is a coward who dare not stand up to beauty and is afraid of me."

When the Marching Men Movement began to make a stir in Chicago Margaret went on a visit to New York. For a month she lived with two women friends at a big hotel near the sea and then hurried home. "I will see the man and hear him talk," she told herself. "I cannot cure myself of the consciousness of him by running away. Perhaps I am myself a coward. I shall go into his presence. When I hear his brutal words and see again the hard gleam that sometimes comes into his eyes I shall be cured."

Margaret went to hear McGregor talk to a gathering of workingmen in a West Side hall and came away more alive to him than ever. In the hall she sat concealed in deep shadows by the door and waited with trembling eagerness.

On all sides of her were men crowded together. Their faces were washed but the grime of the shops was not quite effaced. Men from the steel mills with the cooked look that follows long exposure to intense artificial heat, men of the building trades with their broad hands, big men and small men, misshapen and straight, labouring men, all sat at attention, waiting.

Margaret noticed that as McGregor talked the lips of the workingmen moved. Fists were clenched. Applause came quick and sharp like the report of guns.

In the shadows at the further side of the hall the black coats of the workers made a blot out of which intense faces looked and across which the flickering gas jets in the centre of the hall threw dancing lights.

The words of the speaker were shot forth. The sentences seemed broken and disconnected. As he talked giant pictures flashed through the minds of the hearers. Men felt themselves big and exalted. A little steel worker sitting near Margaret, who earlier in the evening had been abused by his wife because he wanted to come to the meeting instead of helping with the dishes at home, stared fiercely about. He thought he would like to fight hand in hand with a wild animal in a forest.

Standing on the narrow stage McGregor seemed a giant seeking expression. His mouth worked, the sweat stood upon his forehead and he moved restlessly up and down. At times, with his hands advanced and with the eager forward crouch of his body, he was like a wrestler waiting to grapple with an opponent.

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Margaret was deeply moved. Her years of training and of refinement were stripped off and she felt that, like the women of the French Revolution, she would like to go out into the streets and march screaming and fighting in feminine rage for the things of this man's mind.

McGregor had scarcely begun to talk. His personality, the big eager something in him, had caught and held this audience as it had caught and held other audiences in other halls and was to hold them night after night for months.

McGregor was something the men to whom he talked understood. He was themselves become expressive and he moved them as no other leader had ever moved them before. His very lack of glibness, the things in him wanting expression and not getting expressed, made him seem like one of them. He did not confuse their minds but drew for them great scrawling pictures and to them he cried, "March!" and for marching he promised them realisation of themselves.

"I have heard men in colleges and speakers in halls talk of the brotherhood of man," he cried. "They do not want such a brotherhood. They would flee before it. But we will make by our marching such a brotherhood that they will tremble and say to one another, 'see, Old Labour is awake. He has found his strength.' They will hide themselves and eat their words of brotherhood.

"A clamour of voices will arise, many voices, crying out, 'Disperse! Cease marching! I am afraid!'

"This talk of brotherhood. The words mean nothing. Man cannot love man. We do not know what they mean by such love. They hurt us and underpay us. Sometimes one of us gets an arm torn off. Are we to lie in our beds loving the man who gets rich from the iron machine that ripped the arm from the shoulder?"

"On our knees and in our arms we have borne their children. On the streets we see them—the petted children of our madness. See we have let them run about misbehaving. We have given them automobiles and wives with soft clinging dresses. When they have cried we have cared for them.

"And they being children with the minds of children are confused. The noise of affairs alarms them. They run about shaking their fingers and commanding. They speak with pity of us—Labour—their father.

"And now we will show them their father in his might. The little machines they have in their factories are toys we have given them and that for the time we leave in their hands. We do not think of the toys nor the soft-bodied women. We make of ourselves a mighty army, a marching army going along shoulder to shoulder. We can love that.

"When they see us, hundreds of thousands of us, marching into their minds and into their consciousness, then will they be afraid. And at the little meetings they have when three or four of them sit talking, daring to decide what things we shall have from life, there will be in their minds a picture. We will stamp it there.

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“They have forgotten our power. Let us reawaken it. See, I shake Old Labour by the shoulder. He arouses. He sits up. He thrusts his huge form up from where he was asleep in the dust and the smoke of the mills. They look at him and are afraid. See, they tremble and run away, falling over each other. The did not know Old Labour was so big.

“But you workers are not afraid. You are the arms and the legs and the hands and the eyes of Labour. You have thought yourself small. You have not got yourself into one mass so that I could shake and arouse you.

“You must get that way. You must march shoulder to shoulder. You must march so that you yourselves shall come to know what a giant you are. If one of your number whines or complains or stands upon a box throwing words about knock him down and keep marching.

“When you have marched until you are one giant body then will happen a miracle. A brain will grow in the giant you have made.

“Will you march with me?”

Like a volley from a battery of guns came the sharp reply from the eager upturned faces of the audience. “We will! Let us march!” they shouted.

Margaret Ormsby went out at the door and into the crowds on Madison Street. As she walked in the press she lifted her head in pride that a man possessed of such a brain and of the simple courage to try to express such magnificent ideas through human beings had ever shown favour toward her. Humbleness swept over her and she blamed herself for the petty thoughts concerning him that had been in her mind. “It does not matter,” she whispered to herself. “Now I know that nothing matters, nothing but his success. He must do this thing he has set out to do. He must not be denied. I would give the blood out of my body or expose my body to shame if that could bring him success.”

Margaret became exalted in her humbleness. When her carriage had taken her to her house she ran quickly upstairs to her own room and knelt by her bed. She started to pray but presently stopped and sprang to her feet. Running to the window she looked off across the city. “He must succeed,” she cried again. “I shall myself be one of his marchers. I will do anything for him. He is tearing the veil from my eyes, from all men’s eyes. We are children in the hands of this giant and he must not meet defeat at the hands of children.”

CHAPTER II

ON the day of the great demonstration, when McGregor’s power over the minds and the bodies of the men of labour sent hundreds of thousands marching and singing in the streets, there was one man who

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was untouched by the song of labour expressed in the threshing of feet. David Ormsby had in his quiet way thought things out. He expected that the new impetus given to solidity in the ranks of labour would make trouble for him and his kind, that it would express itself finally in strikes and in wide-spread industrial disturbance. He was not worried. In the end he thought that the silent patient power of money would bring his people the victory. On that day he did not go to his office but in the morning stayed in his own room thinking of McGregor and of his daughter. Laura Ormsby was out of the city but Margaret was at home. David believed he had measured accurately the power of McGregor over her mind but occasional doubts came to him. "Well the time has come to have it out with her," he decided. "I must reassert my ascendancy over her mind. The thing that is going on here is really a struggle of minds. McGregor differs from other leaders of labour as I differ from most leaders of the forces of money. He has brains. Very well. I shall meet him on that level. Then, when I have made Margaret think as I think, she will return to me."

When he was still a small manufacturer in the Wisconsin town David had been in the habit of driving out in the evening with his daughter. During the drives he had been almost a lover in his attentions to the child and now when he thought of the forces at work within her he was convinced that she was still a child. Early in the afternoon he had a carriage brought to the door and drove off with her to the city. "She will want to see the man in the height of his power. If I am right in thinking that she is still under the influence of his personality there will be a romantic desire for that.

"I will give her the chance," he thought proudly. "In this struggle I ask no quarter from him and shall not make the common mistake of parents in such cases. She is fascinated by the figure he has made of himself. Showy men who stand out from the crowd have that power. She is still under his influence. Why else her constant distraction and her want of interest in other things? Now I will be with her when the man is most powerful, when he shows to the greatest advantage, and then I will make my fight for her. I will point out to her another road, the road along which the real victors in life must learn to travel."

Together David the quiet efficient representative of wealth and his woman child sat in the carriage on the day of McGregor's triumph. For the moment an impassable gulf seemed to separate them and with intense eyes each watched the hordes of men who massed themselves about the labour leader. At the moment McGregor seemed to have caught all men in the sweep of his movement. Business men had closed their desks, labour was exultant, writers and men given to speculation in thought walked about dreaming of the realisation of the brotherhood of man. In the long narrow treeless park the music made by the steady never-ending thresh of feet arose to something vast and

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rhythmical. It was like a mighty chorus come up out of the hearts of men. David was unmoved. Occasionally he spoke to the horses and looked from the faces of the men massed about him to his daughter's face. In the coarse faces of the men he thought he saw only a crude sort of intoxication, the result of a new kind of emotionalism. "It will not outlast thirty days of ordinary living in their squalid surroundings," he thought grimly. "It is not the kind of exaltation for Margaret. I can sing her a more wonderful song. I must get myself ready for that."

When McGregor arose to speak Margaret was overcome with emotions. Dropping to her knees in the carriage she put her head down upon her father's arm. For days she had been telling herself that in the future of the man she loved there was no place for failure. Now again she whispered to herself that this great sturdy figure must not be denied the fulfilment of its purpose. When in the hush that followed the massing of the labourers about him the harsh booming voice floated over the heads of the people her body shook as with a chill. Extravagant fancies invaded her mind and she wished it were possible for her to do something heroic, something that would make her live again in the mind of McGregor. She wanted to serve him, to give him something out of herself, and thought wildly that there might yet come a time and a way by which the beauty of her body could be laid like a gift before him. The half mythical figure of Mary the lover of Jesus came into her mind and she aspired to be such another. With her body shaken with emotions she pulled at the sleeve of her father's coat "Listen! It is going to come now," she murmured. "The brain of labour is going to express the dream of labour. An impulse sweet and lasting is going to come into the world."

* * *

David Ormsby said nothing. When McGregor had begun to speak he touched the horses with the whip and drove slowly along Van Buren Street past the silent attentive ranks of men. When he had got into one of the streets near the river a vast cheer arose. It seemed to shake the city and the horses reared and leaped forward over the rough cobblestones. With one hand David quieted them while with the other he gripped the hand of his daughter. They drove over a bridge and into the West Side and as they went the marching song of the workers rising up out of thousands of throats rang in their ears. For a time the air seemed to pulsate with it but as they went westward it grew continually less and less distinct. At last when they had turned into a street lined by tall factories it died out altogether. "That is the end of him for me and mine," thought David and again set himself for the task he had to perform.

Through street after street David let the horses wander while he clung to his daughter's hand and thought of what he wanted to say. Not all of the streets were lined with factories. Some, and these in the

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evening light were the most hideous, were bordered by the homes of workers. The houses of the workers, jammed closely together and black with grime, were filled with noisy life. Women sat in the doorways and children ran screaming and shouting in the road. Dogs barked and howled. Everywhere was dirt and disorder, the terrible evidence of men's failure in the difficult and delicate art of living. In one of the streets a little girl child who sat on the post of a fence made a ludicrous figure. As David and Margaret drove past she beat with her heels against the sides of the post and screamed. Tears ran down her cheeks and her dishevelled hair was black with dirt "I want a banana! I want a banana!" she howled, staring at the blank walls of one of the houses. In spite of herself Margaret was touched and her mind left the figure of McGregor. By an odd chance the child on the post was the daughter of that socialist orator who one night on the North Side had climbed upon a platform to confront McGregor with the propaganda of the Socialist Party.

David turned the horses into a wide boulevard that ran south through the factory district of the west. As they came out into the boulevard they saw sitting on the sidewalk before a saloon a drunkard with a drum in his hand. The drunkard beat upon the drum and tried to sing the marching song of the workers but succeeded only in making a queer grunting noise like a distressed animal. The sight brought a smile to David's lips. "Already it has begun to disintegrate," he muttered. "I brought you into this part of town on purpose," he said to Margaret "I wanted you to see with your own eyes how much the world needs the thing he is trying to do. The man is terribly right about the need for discipline and order. He is a big man doing a big thing and I admire his courage. He would be a really big man had he the greater courage."

On the boulevard into which they had turned all was quiet. The summer sun was setting and over the roofs of buildings the west was ablaze with light. They passed a factory surrounded by little patches of garden. Some employer of labour had tried thus feebly to bring beauty into the neighbourhood of the place where his men worked. David pointed with the whip. "Life is a husk," he said, "and we men of affairs who take ourselves so seriously because the fates have been good to us have odd silly little fancies. See what this fellow has been at, patching away, striving to create beauty on the shell of things. He is like McGregor you see. I wonder if the man has made himself beautiful, if either he or McGregor has seen to it that there is something lovely inside the husk he wears around and that he calls his body, if he has seen through life to the spirit of life. I do not believe in patching nor do I believe in disturbing the shell of things as McGregor has dared to do. I have my own beliefs and they are the beliefs of my kind. This man here, this maker of little gardens, is like McGregor. He might better let men find their own beauty. That is my way. I have, I want to think, kept myself for the sweeter and more daring effort."

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David turned and looked hard at Margaret who had begun to be influenced by his mood. She waited, looking with averted face at the sky over the roofs of buildings. David began to talk of himself in relation to her and her mother. A note of impatience came into his voice.

“How far you have been carried away, haven’t you?” he said sharply. “Listen. I am not talking to you now as your father nor as Laura’s daughter. Let us be clear about that. I love you and am in a contest to win your love. I am McGregor’s rival. I accept the handicap of fatherhood. I love you. You see I have let something within myself alight upon you. McGregor has not done that. He refused what you had to offer but I do not. I have centred my life upon you and have done it quite knowingly and after much thought. The feeling I have is something quite special. I am an individualist but believe in the oneness of man and woman. I would dare venture into but one other life beyond my own and that the life of a woman. I have chosen to ask you to let me venture so into your life. We will talk of it”

Margaret turned and looked at her father. Later she thought that some strange phenomena must have happened at the moment. Something like a film was torn from her eyes and she saw the man David, not as a shrewd and calculating man of affairs, but as something magnificently young. Not only was he strong and solid but in his face there was at the moment the deep lines of thought and suffering she had seen on the countenance of McGregor. “It is strange,” she thought. “They are so unlike and yet the two men are both beautiful.”

“I married your mother when I was a child as you are a child now,” David went on. “To be sure I had a passion for her and she had one for me. It passed but it was beautiful enough while it lasted. It did not have depth or meaning. I want to tell you why. Then I am going to make you understand McGregor so that you may take your measure of the man. I am coming to that. I have to begin at the beginning.

“My factory began to grow and as an employer of labour I became concerned in the lives of a good many men.”

His voice again became sharp. “I have been impatient with you,” he said. “Do you think this McGregor is the only man who has seen and thought of other men in the mass? I have done that and have been tempted. I also might have become sentimental and destroyed myself. I did not. Loving a woman saved me. Laura did that for me although when it came to the real test of our love, understanding, she failed. I am nevertheless grateful to her that she was once the object of my love. I believe in the beauty of that.”

Again David paused and began to tell his story in a new way. The figure of McGregor came back into Margaret’s mind and her father began to feel that to take it entirely away would be an accomplishment full of significance. “If I can take her from him, I and my kind can take the world from him also,” he thought. “It will be another victory for the aristocracy in the never-ending battle with the mob.”

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“I came to a turning point,” he said aloud. “All men come to that point. To be sure the great mass of people drift quite stupidly but we are not now talking of people in general There is you and me and there is the thing McGregor might be. We are each in our way something special. We come, people like us, to a place where there are two roads to take. I took one and McGregor has taken another. I know why and perhaps he knows why. I concede to him knowledge of what he has done. But now it is time for you to decide which road you will take. You have seen the crowds moving along the broad way he has chosen and now you will set out on your own way. I want you to look down my road with me.”

They came to a bridge over a canal and David stopped the horses. A body of McGregor’s marchers passed and Margaret’s pulse began to beat high again. When she looked at her father however he was unmoved and she was a little ashamed of her emotions. For a moment David waited, as though for inspiration, and when the horses started on again he began to talk. “A labour leader came to my factory, a miniature McGregor with a crooked twist to him. He was a rascal but the things he said to my men were all true enough. I was making money for my investors, a lot of it. They might have won in a fight with me. One evening I went out into the country to walk alone under the trees and think it over.”

David’s voice became harsh and Margaret thought it had become strangely like the voice of McGregor talking to workingmen. “I bought the man off,” David said. “I used the cruel weapon men like me have to use. I gave him money and told him to get out, to let me alone. I did it because I had to win. My kind of men always have to win. During the walk I took alone I got hold of my dream, my belief. I have the same dream now. It means more to me than the welfare of a million men. For it I would crush whatever opposed me. I am going to tell you of the dream.

“It is too bad one has to talk. Talk kills dreams and talk will also kill all such men as McGregor. Now that he has begun to talk we will get the best of him. I do not worry about McGregor. Time and talk will bring about his destruction.”

David’s mind ran off in a new direction. “I do not think a man’s life is of much importance,” he said. “No man is big enough to grasp all of life. That is the foolish fancy of children. The grown man knows he cannot see life at one great sweep. It cannot be comprehended so. One has to realise that he lives in a patchwork of many lives and many impulses.

“The man must strike at beauty. That is the realisation maturity brings and that is where the woman comes in. That is what McGregor was not wise enough to understand. He is a child you see in a land of excitable children.”

The quality of David’s voice changed. Putting his arm about his daughter he drew her face down beside his own. Night descended

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upon them. The woman who was tired from much thinking began to feel grateful for the touch of the strong hand on her shoulder. David had accomplished his purpose. He had for the moment made his daughter forget that she was his daughter. There was something hypnotic in the quiet strength of his mood.

"I come now to women, to your part," he said. "We will talk of the thing I want to make you understand. Laura failed as the woman. She never saw the point. As I grew she did not grow with me. Because I did not talk of love she did not understand me as a lover, did not know what I wanted, what I demanded of her.

"I wanted to fit my love down upon her figure as one puts a glove on his hand. You see I was the adventurer, the man mussed and moiled by life and its problems. The struggle to exist, to get money, could not be avoided. I had to make that struggle. She did not. Why could she not understand that I did not want to come into her presence to rest or to say empty words. I wanted her to help me create beauty. We should have been partners in that. Together we should have undertaken the most delicate and difficult of all struggles, the struggle for living beauty in our everyday affairs."

Bitterness swept over the old plough-maker and he used strong words. "The whole point is in what I am now saying. That was my cry to the woman. It came out of my soul. It was the only cry to another I have ever made. Laura was a little fool. Her mind flitted away to little things. I do not know what she wanted me to be and now I do not care. Perhaps she wanted me to be a poet, a stringer together of words, one to write shrill little songs about her eyes and lips. It does not matter now what she wanted.

"But you matter."

David's voice cut through the fog of new thoughts that were confusing his daughter's mind and she could feel his body stiffen. A thrill ran through her own body and she forgot McGregor. With all the strength of her spirit she was absorbed in what David was saying. In the challenge that was coming from the lips of her father she began to feel there would be born in her own life a definite purpose.

"Women want to push out into life, to share with men the disorder and mussiness of little things. What a desire! Let them try it if they wish. They will sicken of the attempt. They lose sight of something bigger they might undertake. They have forgotten the old things, Ruth in the corn and Mary with the jar of precious ointment, they have forgotten the beauty they were meant to help men create.

"Let them share only in man's attempt to create beauty. That is the big, the delicate task to which they should consecrate themselves. Why attempt instead the cheaper, the secondary task? They are like this McGregor."

The plough-maker became silent. Taking up the whip he drove the horses rapidly along. He thought that his point was made and was satisfied to let the imagination of his daughter do the rest. They turned

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off the boulevard and passed through a street of small stores. Before a saloon a troop of street urchins led by a drunken man without a hat gave a grotesque imitation of McGregor's Marchers before a crowd of laughing idlers. With a sinking heart Margaret realised that even at the height of his power the forces that would eventually destroy the impulses back of McGregor's Marchers were at work. She crept closer to David. "I love you," she said. "Some day I may have a lover but always I shall love you. I shall try to be what you want of me."

It was past two o'clock that night when David arose from the chair where he had been for several hours quietly reading. With a smile on his face he went to a window facing north toward the city. All through the evening groups of men had been passing the house. Some had gone scuffling along, a mere disorderly mob, some had gone shoulder to shoulder chanting the marching song of the workers and a few, under the influence of drink, had stopped before the house to roar out threats. Now all was quiet David lighted a cigar and stood for a long time looking out over the city. He was thinking of McGregor and wondering what excited dream of power the day had brought into the man's head. Then he thought of his daughter and of her escape. A soft light came into his eyes. He was happy but when he had partially undressed a new mood came and he turned out the lights in the room and went again to the window. In the room above Margaret had been unable to sleep and had also crept to the window. She was thinking again of McGregor and was ashamed of her thoughts. By chance both father and daughter began at the same moment to doubt the truth of what David had said during the drive along the boulevard. Margaret could not express her doubts in words but tears came into her eyes.

As for David, he put his hand on the sill of the window and for just a moment his body trembled as with age and weariness. "I wonder," he muttered—"if I had youth—perhaps McGregor knew he would fail and yet had the courage of failure. I wonder if both Margaret and myself lack the greater courage, if that evening long ago when I walked under the trees I made a mistake? What if after all this McGregor and his woman knew both roads. What if they, after looking deliberately along the road toward success in life, went without regret along the road to failure? What if McGregor and not myself knew the road to beauty?"

END