

The Middle Ground

By MARION RUBINCAM

A LETTER

Chapter 52

The mother found Amy as indifferent as Luther.

"Of course, Jane's unhappy," that young lady remarked, regarding the tip of a very pink and polished nail. "She's in love. Everyone that falls in love is unhappy."

Having made this sweeping observation, she attacked the next nail with a buffer, until it came forth as pink and perfect as the other.

"That's why I'm not going to fall in love," she went on, cheerfully mixing up philosophy and manicuring. "I'm going to have a hard enough time without getting my emotions into it. Love is a luxury, and I can't afford it. Claire and I agree on that."

"But, Amy"—the mother began to protest at once. This was a demoralizing point of view! Surely, she herself had been happy in the early days of her married life. And she was in love then!

"Look at Luther," Amy went on, putting away the manicure things and regarding her mother with a look of pride. "He's in love with Claire, and Claire won't have anything to do with him. He's miserable. She is too, for that matter. That's why she is thinking of asking for a divorce, she says it must be a complete separation—"

A bombshell dropped into the room would have had less effect upon Mrs. Talbot than this piece of information so casually thrown off by her daughter.

Divorce! Another "modern" evil. She opened her mouth to protest, words of denunciation rushing to her lips. Then she thought better. She had determined to make no comment upon anything new, except in agreement.

Besides, if she disagreed, Amy would give her no further information. How far the child had come from the point of view she held in her old home! The first disturbing factor was the visit of Luther and Claire. That began in June, this was February. Amy, a child of 17, seemed to have matured into full womanhood with her eighteenth birthday.

How calmly she sat there now, combing out her wonderful hair and piling it into the latest style of knot on top of her head. She gave more attention to the fact that each strand should be pinned just so, than to the troubles of her brother and sister; her only worry was the broken comb, which occasionally caught her hair.

Amy was in that familiar state of poverty which must spend money on outward appearances, and has none to spare for things that are not on continual display.

"What does Luther think about a divorce?" the mother ventured to ask finally.

"Oh, well, Luther hasn't any old-fashioned ideas against it anymore," Amy said. "Only he is very fond of Claire, of course, and he hates to give her up; thinks she belongs to him, the eternal cave man, all that sort of thing! Besides, he's still jealous of all the other men that come to see her, and especially of Jim. So he makes her miserable rowing about them. Anyway, there they are, tied up to each other, and perfectly unhappy."

"But if Luther still cares—and if she doesn't hate him—"

"It's no use, mother. We've all tried to be peace makers. I'd hate to see myself, he's as jealous as can be. He's the sort wants to lock up his wife in a gold cage, and not let anyone else come anywhere near her. It's the most depressing form of being in love. It's really medieval, and after all, we're living in the twentieth century."

"It's not often that a woman has such devotion from a man. Most of them—well, most women would be glad to have such an undivided love," thus Mrs. Talbot ventured her opinion.

"Yes. But there are limits to everything," Amy replied. "Luther's a dear."

Heart Problems

Dear Mrs. Thompson: In our neighborhood there is one child who is badly spoiled and very disagreeable. When she comes to play with my little girl she bosses her, breaks her toys and slaps her. All of the mothers around here feel as I do about the child. She is never punished by her parents and they think everything she does is cute.

Do you think I ought to take her in hand and punish her, or should I send her home? If I send her home I am afraid her mother will have it in for me. I like to keep peace with my neighbors. She is older than my own little girl and so you can see it is difficult for my own child to hold her own.

WORRIED MOTHER.
You might have a talk with the little girl's mother and tell her that her little girl and yours do not get along, probably because of their difference in age. Say that when there is trouble you are going to separate them by sending her home. If she understands ahead of time she probably will take what you do in the right spirit. I really believe it would be better to send her home than to punish her.

Rose Bud: The best thing you can do is to go to the Social Service bureau's office on North Eighth street, back of St. Paul's Episcopal church, and explain your family affairs to Miss Clark, the secretary, who may be able to give you proper advice.

Unsigned: You did not sign your name, but state that you are 40 years old and the mother of five children. Nothing is more distressing than the loss of a husband's love. If you would talk kindly to him, explaining that both of you owe a duty to your children, perhaps he would change his ways.

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and his devotion, as you call it, is quite touching. At the same time it's wearing. He's just the opposite from Donald. Donald wants complete freedom for himself and the woman too. Whatever love exist between them is voluntary, not forced because they are married and tied to each other. I can see his point of view, too.

"Luther wants to see Claire all the time. He doesn't even want to look at any other woman and he doesn't want any other man to look at her."

"Which way then do you think is best?" It was frankly asked to seek information.

"Neither. Donald's is ideal the."

"When Disarmament Worked"

By FREDERICK J. HASKIN

WASHINGTON, JAN. 6.—That for the best part of a century Quaker settlers in Pennsylvania conducted an unarmed government and left their doors unbolted at night "because it is safer," is recalled by Violet Oakley, a famous painter of murals, who has for 19 years been engaged in decorating the walls of the Pennsylvania state capitol, at Harrisburg, and in the course of her work has delved into the history of the state.

The notes of Pennsylvania history from which she gained inspiration for her paintings, she has placed in a portfolio, beautifully hand printed and illuminated. Color reproductions of her paintings on the capital walls accompany the notes. This valuable portfolio Miss Oakley loaned by request to the library of congress, where it has been displayed. Now she has taken it back to her studio at Philadelphia. It is of especial interest at this time because of the "holy experiment" in disarmament which William Penn made in Pennsylvania.

It has been suggested that copies of the portfolio be presented to the delegates at the conference, and this may be done. It is pointed out by advocates of disarmament that the pictures and story might serve a better purpose; they would show that America did at one time offer an honest example, not of limited armaments, but of disarmament.

Miss Oakley regards the "holy experiment" as a message to the world from Pennsylvania and a valuable contribution to the disarmament question. Quaker Pennsylvania, she says, is the keystone to the idea of disarmament.

Her paintings at the Harrisburg capitol tell vividly the old story of William Penn and Pennsylvania. There is Penn as a student at Oxford, listening for the first time to a Quaker preaching in a field. The young aristocrat is shown looking with interest toward the earnest, plainly dressed Quaker.

Penn became a Quaker and was expelled from Oxford for his opposition to the religious requirements of the university. Another painting shows Admiral Penn ordering his son out of the house for his stand with the Friends.

Penn's Principles.
When he found no peace or liberty in England for one who aligned himself with the peace-seeking Quakers, Penn began to dream of a new land, where every one should be at peace, and weapons should be barred. The trust of the colony was to be placed

oretically, but I can't see myself running in the face of public opinion and trying it. And I'd hate to be tied up the way Luther wants to tie up Claire, or the way father ties you up. He owns you, just as though you were part of the livestock on the farm.

"I don't see any way out. But I know in my case the solution is not to fall in love. I'm going to marry as a business proposition."

She broke off her talk to go to the door in answer to a ring. It was the postman, with a small package for her, and a letter postmarked "Hornbrook" for Mrs. Talbot. Amy opened her package with delight. Mrs. Talbot broke open the letter with misgiving. Jordan would not have anything pleasant to say!

Tomorrow—Understanding

in the divine spark which the Quakers believed is in every man, savage or civilized; though Penn believed in organized government, laws, reformatories and night watchmen,—armed only with constable's sticks.

In what is known as Penn's prophecy, he wrote: "There may be room there (in America) for such a holy experiment that an example may be set up to the nations and that it may be the seed of a nation, for the nations need a precedent."

The king of England wanted to be rid of Penn so that he would no longer spread his troublesome propaganda of peace and liberty in England. So when Penn proposed that the king pay a debt owed to Admiral Penn, in American land, the king agreed.

Before Penn left England, he had an amusing conversation with King Charles. The king asked Penn curiously how he was going to obtain the good will of the Indians.

"I will buy their lands," said Penn. "Buy their lands of them!" cried the king. "Why, man, you have bought them already!"

"Yes, I know I have, and at a dear rate, too; but I did it only to get my good will, not that I thought thou hadst any right to the land."

The interesting fact about Penn's experiment is that for nearly a century it actually worked. The Quakers established themselves in the land in the belief that the Indians were by nature trusting and friendly, and according to the histories they were justified.

The Indians were used to promises of justice from the white men, but they were not used to the promises being kept. Penn became known among the Indians as the one white chief who kept faith with the red men. It is recorded that the Indian tribes became so friendly with Penn's settlers that children who were lost in the woods around Philadelphia were commonly directed to their homes by the Indians.

The old story of the latchstring, told in many Quaker chronicles, is illustrated in one of Miss Oakley's mural paintings. The latchstring was left outside at night by Friends as a

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sign of welcome to anyone who might be passing. On one occasion a band of Indians on the warpath stopped at a Quaker home and finding the door unfastened and the Quaker and his wife standing with smiles and a greeting inside, they retreated quietly.

Penn's Arbitration System.

Penn settled disputes between white settlers and Indians by a jury of six settlers and six Indians, which proved satisfactory to all concerned. All through the years, when the Quaker government was in effect, there is record of only three Friends being injured in the conflicts between the white men and the Indians. It is recorded that these three a woman and two men lost their faith, and sought the protection of forts and arms.

The Quaker colonists proved equal to the high standard of peace seeking set by Penn. But outsiders who came into the settlement brought weapons and trickery. They had trouble with the Indians. Penn did not attempt to limit his peaceful community to Quakers and the number of outsiders grew. When there were more of the outsiders than Quakers, and the ideals of the Friends were no longer a dominant force in the community, the control was turned over to the majority element. Swords and guns came into

general use. The holy experiment was over.

To most of us who remember William Penn vaguely as a dignified old man who made friends with the Indians, it is interesting to recall that he was one of the most daring and far seeing pioneers of our history. To Benjamin Franklin is generally accorded the honor of being the first to suggest a union of the American colonies. But Penn's writings set forth this proposal—then a radical one.

Penn is also said to be the first to suggest a parliament of nations. Back in 1693, he described an organization which was to be something like the Hague tribunal or a modern international conference, at which men of different nations were to gather to discuss their differences and plan for their mutual advantage.

It took almost another century for the colonists to come to the idea of union. Two centuries elapsed before international conferences became popular. It may be longer before Penn's ideal of peace is achieved. That it will be achieved is steadfastly held by those who have faith in Penn as a sage and a prophet.

"The Alamo," historic Franciscan museum at San Antonio, Tex., was built in 1722.

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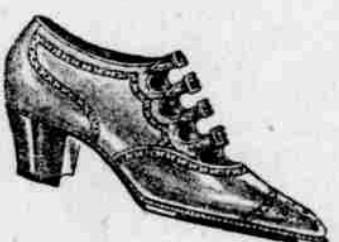
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