BOOK OF LOVE

BOOK OF
LOVE

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK MR. PUNCH'S BOOK OF LOVE: BEING THE HUMOURS OF COURTSHIP AND MATRIMONY ***

MR. PUNCH'S BOOK OF LOVE

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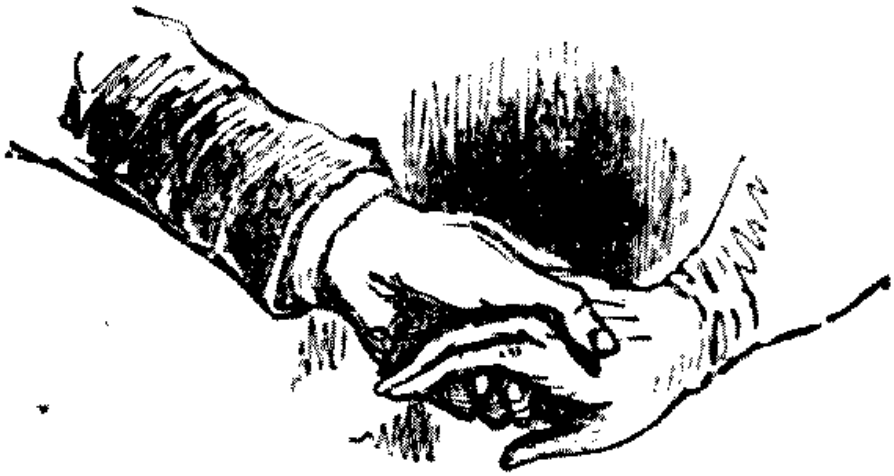
Edwin (suddenly, after a long pause). "Darling!"
Angelina. "Yes, darling?"
Edwin. "Nothing, darling. Only *darling*, darling!"
[*Bilious Old Gentleman feels quite sick.*

MR. PUNCH'S
BOOK OF LOVE

BEING

**THE HUMOURS OF COURTSHIP
AND MATRIMONY**



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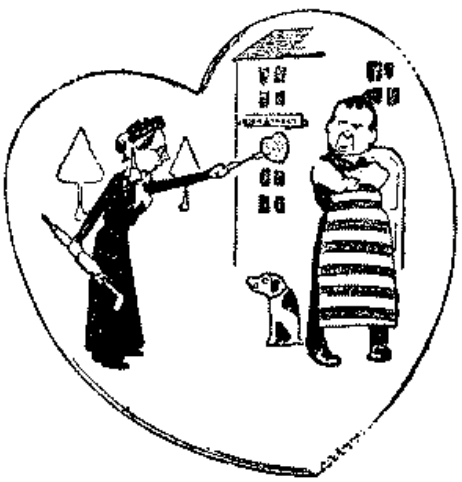


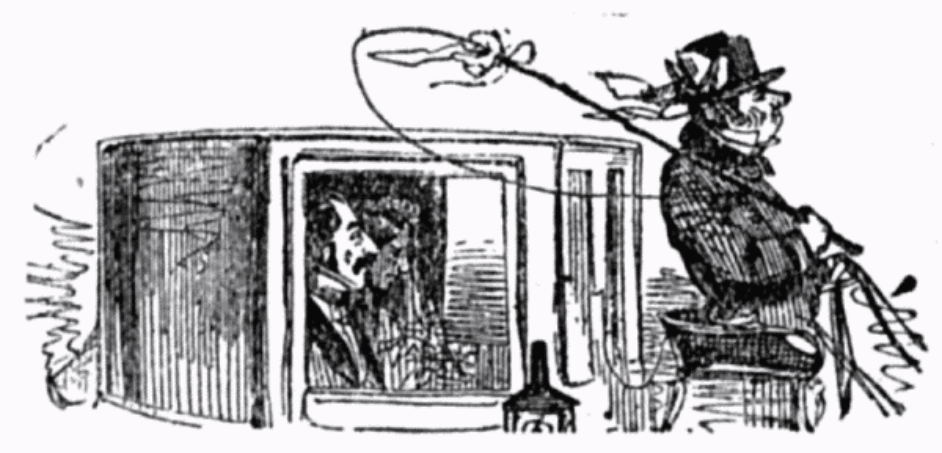
Take back the heart that you gave me.

ABOUT MATRIMONIAL JOKES, AND ONE IN PARTICULAR

f all Mr. Punch's jokes it might be fair to say that none has ever rivalled the popularity of "Advice to persons about to marry,—Don't!" unless it be that of the Scotsman who had been no more than a few hours in London, "when bang went saxpence!" Of the latter, more in its place; here, we are immediately concerned with "Punch's advice". The most preposterous stories are current among the uninformed as to the origin of some of Mr. Punch's favourite jests. Only recently we heard a gentleman telling a group of people in a hotel smoking-room that Mark Twain got a hundred pounds from Punch for writing that famous line, "I used your soap two years ago; since then I have used no other," familiar to every one by Mr. Harry Furniss's drawing of a disreputable tramp who is supposed to be writing the words quoted. As a matter of fact, the idea came to Mr. Furniss from an anonymous correspondent. Stories equally, if not more, absurd have been told as to the origin of "Punch's advice," which, thanks to the researches of Mr. Spielmann, we now know to have been the happy inspiration of Henry Mayhew, one of the founders of *Punch*. It was sixty-one years ago that Mayhew wrote the line, and how many millions of times it must have been quoted since one dare not guess!

It may be said to have struck the keynote of Mr. Punch's matrimonial policy, as an examination of his pages reveals him an incorrigible pessimist on the subject of marriage. He is very hard on the mother-in-law, but in all his life he has not made more than one or two jokes about the young wife's pastry, though he has made a good deal of fun about her general ignorance of domestic affairs. Nor has he spared the bachelor or the old maid, and the designing widow has been an especial butt for his shafts.

It might be a good thing to pass a law prohibiting young and marriageable men from reading *Punch*, in order to save many of them from being discouraged and frightened out of the thought of marriage, and it would certainly be an incentive thereto—they would be tempted to become Benedicts if only that they might qualify for the removal of the prohibition!



"DRIVEN TO DESPERATION"

MR. PUNCH'S BOOK OF LOVE

ADVICE TO PERSONS WHO HAVE "FALLEN IN LOVE."—Fall out.

ADVICE TO PERSONS ABOUT TO MARRY.—Don't.

ENCOURAGING.—*George (who has just engaged himself to the Girl of his heart) breaks the happy news to his friend Jack (who has been married some time).—Jack.* "Ah! well, my dear fellow, marriage is the best thing in the long run, and I can assure you that after a year or two a man gets used to it, and feels just as jolly as if he'd never married at all!"

A DEFINITION.—Flirtation: a spoon with nothing in it.

DOMESTIC.—It was a homely but pungent observation, on the part of a man of much experience and observation, that marriage without love was like tripe without onions.

ADAGE BY A YOUNG LADY.—Man proposes, but mamma disposes.

BY A BEASTLY OLD BACHELOR.—A married man's fate (in brief).—Hooked, booked, cooked.

DESCRIBE A HOME-CIRCLE.—The wedding ring.

HOW TO FIX THE HAPPY DAY.—*Q.* When's the best day for a wedding? *A.* Why, of course, "A *Weddin's day*."

DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

Said Stiggins to his wife one day,
"We've nothing left to eat;
If things go on in this queer way,
We shan't make *both ends meet*."

The dame replied, in words discreet,
"We're not so badly fed,
If we can make but *one* end *meat*,
And make the other *bread*."

Clergyman. "Augustus, wilt thou take this woman——"

Bride (late of Remnant & Co.'s Ribbon Department). "Lady!"

To Persons about to Marry.—Take care to choose a lady help, and not a lady encumbrance.

Accounted for at Last.—Is it not strange that the "best man" at a wedding is not the bridegroom? This must be the reason of so many unhappy marriages.

The Best Wards of a Latchkey.—Homewards!

One Great Lottery Office still Recognised by the Law.—The Marriage Register.

"There goes the *second* Mrs. Muggeray!"
"Gracious! What on earth did he marry her for?"
"Oh, he said he wanted some one to amuse the children!"

WONDERFUL WHAT AN ADJECTIVE WILL DO

Brown (newly married—to Jones, whom he entertained a few evenings previously). "Well, what did you think of us, old boy, eh?"

Jones. "Oh, pretty flat. Er—awfully pretty flat!"

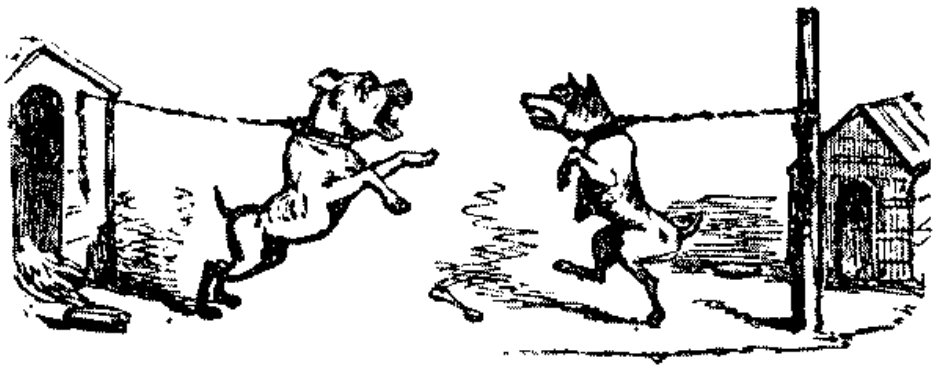
Scientific Accuracy.—"But *why* do you want to marry her?" "Because I *love* her!" "My dear fellow, that's an *excuse*—not a *reason*!"

To Persons about to Marry.—What is enough for one, is half enough for two, short commons for three, and starvation for half a dozen.

Love me, lady!
My hair is gray;

When round comes pay-day
I cannot pay.
My corns are awful,
My prospects shady,
I want a comforter:
Love me, lady!

NOTES OF ADMIRATION.—Love letters.



"THERE IS A TIE THAT BINDS US TO OUR HOMES"

He. "I can't understand Phyllis rejecting me last night."

She. "Never mind. You'll soon get over it."

He. "Oh, *I*'ve got over it right enough; but I can't help feeling so doosid sorry for *her*. I shan't ask her again!"

"A NIGHT OF IT"

Young Wife (2 A.M..). "Dinner at the Albion! the theatre! and supper and a rubber at the club! Well, Henry, I wonder you did not go to all the places of amusement in London, and (*sobbing*) not come home all night!"

Henry. "My dear, all th' other places shu' rup!!"

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

A FRAGMENT

Yes, Robert! But O! do look at the excellent evening glow on yon distant hills! How solemn!! How sublime!"

"O! stunning. Well, *then* I measured the scullery: six feet by ten ... that'll just do, won't it?"

THE EFFECT OF GETTING MARRIED.—"Poor Dick! how sadly he is altered since his marriage!" remarked one friend to another. "Why, yes, of course," replied the other; "directly a man's neck is in the nuptial noose, every one must see that he's a haltered person."

A BAD PRE-EMINENCE.—What is there beats a good wife? A bad husband.

QUESTION BY A SEWING MACHINE.—What is woman's true sphere?—The *Hem*isphere.

A MARRIAGE QUESTION.—If a man addicted to smoking marries a widow, does it follow that he must lay down his pipe, because she gives up her weeds?

A READY-MADE REJOINDER.—*He.* "You made a fool of me when I married you, ma'am!" *She.* "Lor! You always told me you were a self-made man!"

MEM. BY AN OLD MAID.—If you "look over your age," you won't find anyone else willing to do the same.

MAFEKING NIGHT

(*Or rather* 3 A.M. *the following morning*)

Voice (*from above*). "Good gracious, William! Why *don't* you come to bed?"

William (huskily). "My dear Maria, you know it's been the rule of my life to go to bed shober—and I can't posh'bly come to bed yet!"

THE NEOGAMS—A WARNING

Newly married,
Railway carried;
Sighing.
At the station
Osculation;
Crying.

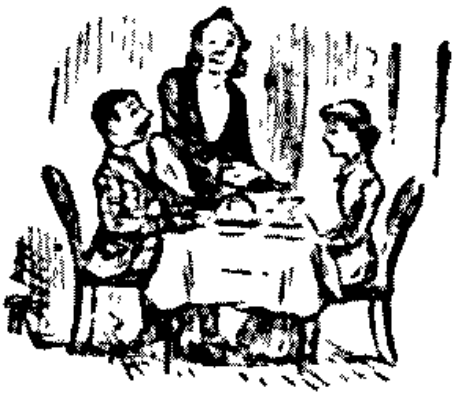
Smiling, parting;
Hands at starting
Gripping.
Cozy quarters,
Guards and porters
Tipping.

On the journey
Glances yearny,
Mooning.
Closely sitting,
As is fitting,
Spooning.

Destination;
Forced cessation.
Pity!
Porters poking
Fun, and joking,
Witty.

On arriving,
Carriage driving;
Kissing.
Lovely scenery,
Lakes and greenery,

Missing.



Hotel, *table*
d'hôte a rabble.
Shun it!
Private cover
Sooner over—
Done it.

Champagne drinking;
Waiter winking.
Curious!
People smiling;
Very riling;
Furious.

After dining,
Arms entwining,
Walking
Sipping honey—
What's there funny?—
Talking.

So time passes;
Grinning asses
Guess 'em

Newly married,
Sorely harried—
Bless 'em!

Casual Acquaintance.. "Hear you're to be married, Mr. Ribbes. Congratulate you!"

Mr. Ribbes. "Much obliged, but I dunno so much about congratulations. It's corstin' me a pretty penny, I tell yer. Mrs. Ribbes as is to be, she wants 'er *trousseau*, yer know; an' then there's the furnishin', an' the licence, an' the parson's fees; an' then I 'ave to give 'er an' 'er sister a bit o' jool'ry a-piece; an' wot with one thing an' another—she's a 'eavy woman, yer know, thirteen stun odd—well, I reckon she'll 'a corst me pretty near *two-an'-eleven a pound* afore I git 'er 'ome!"

SONGS OF THE HEARTH-RUG

THE NEGLECTED WIFE TO HER RUSHLIGHT

My rushlight, when first kindled,
  Twelve inches long wast thou;
And I behold thee dwindled
  To one, my candle, now!

How brief thy span, contrasted
  With rushlight's average life!
A happier dip had lasted
  A week a happier wife.

Where is my husband got to?
  Oh say, expiring light!
A man ought really not to
  Stay out so every night.

I'm sure that Bradshaw's press'd him
  To join his tippling lot:
That Bradshaw! I detest him;—
  The good-for-nothing sot!

Would that this piece of paper,
  Which, ere thy flame expire,
I light from thee, my taper,
  Could set that club on fire.

A Blunder-buss.—Kissing the wrong girl.

Motto for the Married.—Never dis-pair.

Mem. by "One who Married in Haste."—"The real 'Battle of Life' begins with a short engagement."

Time—3 A.M.

Voice from above. "Is that you, John? You're very late, aren't you?"

Brown (returned from celebrating the latest victory). "It's only about—er—twelve, my dear, I think——"

The Cuckoo Clock. "Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo!"

Brown (grasping situation instantly). "Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo!"

A WET NURSE

"LITERA SCRIPTA."—*Wooer.* "Oh, Miss—oh, Lavinia! may I not still hope?—or is your cruel rejection of my suit final and irrevoc——" *Spinster (firmly).* "Yes, Mr. Brown, I seriously desire you will regard it so." *Wooer.* "Then, dearest, may I ask you"—(*producing the materials from adjacent writing-table*)—"to—ah—put it on papar! I shall feel safer!"

A "NOISELESS SEWING MACHINE."—A good wife.

PAUCA VERBA.—*Robinson (after a long Whist bout at the Club).* "It's awfully late, Brown. What will you say to your wife?" *Brown (in a whisper).* "Oh, I shan't say much, you know—'Good morning, dear,' or something o' that sort. She'll say the rest!!!"

NONE BUT THE BRAVE DESERVE THE FARE

PLAYING DOWN TO HIM.—*Young couple (who expect the visit of a very miserly relative, from whom they have expectations) are clearing the room of every sign of luxury.*

Wife (earnestly). "We must do all we can to make uncle feel at home."

Husband (caustically). "Then we had better let the fire out."

Fair Widow. "Yes, I've made up my mind that when I die I shall be cremated, as my husband was."

Gallant Captain. "Dear lady, please don't talk about such dreadful things. Consider how much better it would be, in your case, to—er—*cross out the C!*"

Visitor (to Friend lately left a Widower).—"Hullo, Tom! That looks a stiffish bill you've got there!"

Tom.. "Ah, how those rascals of undertakers do fleece you! They know you can hardly help yourself! Of course, in my poor wife's case I would cheerfully have paid double. But one hates to be done.—Um!"

A WIFE'S VOCATION.—Husbandry.

A DECLARATION

"Louisa, you've stolen something."
"Go on!"
"You 'ave."
"You're a——! *What* 'ave I stole?"
"*My 'eart!*"

MARRIAGE MEMORIES

What the Father says.—Which side must I stand on when I give her away?

What the Mother says.—I am sure the ices will be late for the breakfast.

What the Sister says.—I flatter myself I am the best looking of the eight bridesmaids.

What the Brother says.—Of course, the best man is behind his time—just like him!

What the Pew-opener says.—This way, my dear young lady!

What the Beadle says.—They are sure to be in time, sir. I will motion to you the moment I see 'em a coming.

What the Clergyman says.—Have you got the ring?

What the Crowd says.—Hoorray! That's 'er! Oh, ain't 'e a guy!

What the Old Friend of the Family says.—I have known him too since he was so high. That was nigh upon forty years ago!

What the Funny Man says.—You can see from my face that I am just the man to be associated with the bridesmaids.

What the Best Man says.—Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking.

What the Bride says.—Good-bye, my own darling mamma and papa, and—Emmy dear, please *do* see the things are all right before we start.

What the Bridegroom says.—Thank goodness, it is all over.

"DECEIVERS EVER"

Goldsmith. "Would you like any name or motto engraved on it, sir?"
Customer (*who had chosen an engagement ring*). "Ye—yes—um—'Augustus to Irene.' And—ah—loo' here—don't—ah—cut 'Irene' very deep!!"

A SCIENTIFIC WOOER

"Drink to me only with thine eyes"—
    And if you happen to survive a
So curious potion, pray advise
    How it affects the conjunctiva!
This problem, which my mind absorbs,
    A veritable Gordian knot is:
How can maids swallow with their orbs?
    Where's the protecting epiglottis?

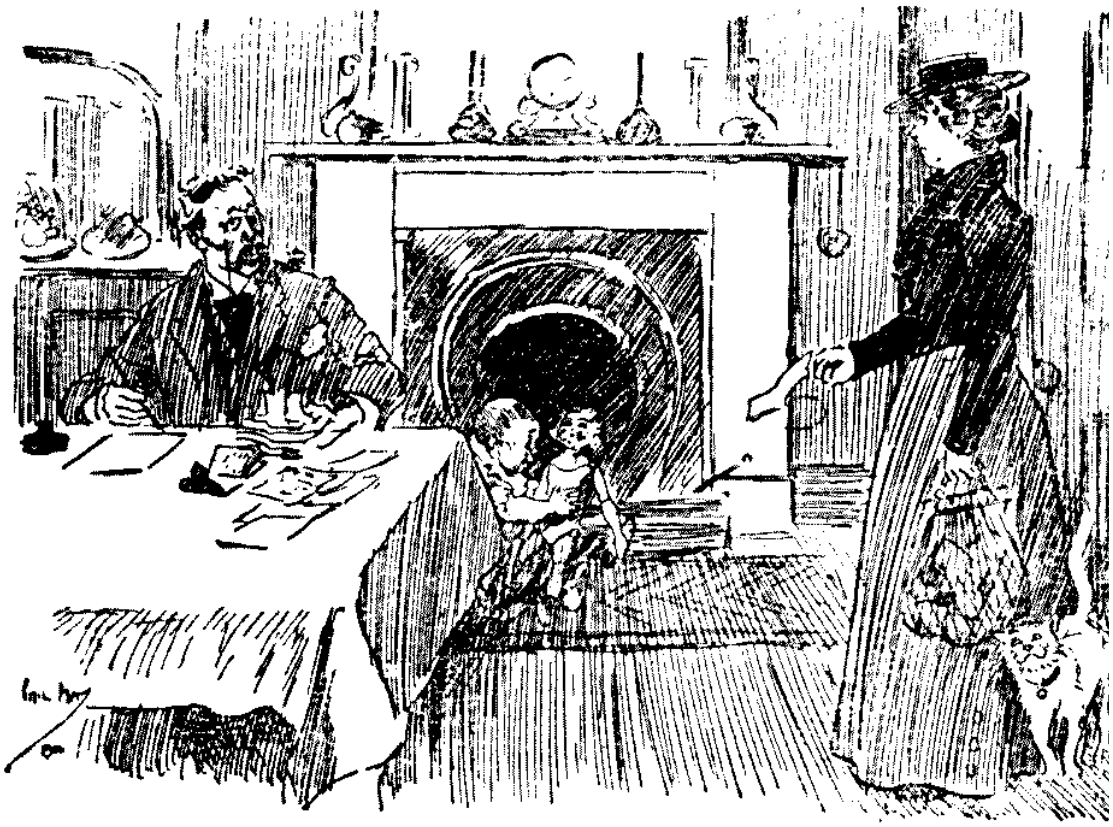
"I sent thee late a rosy wreath"—
    For Science' sake, my Angelina,
And hope you noticed underneath
    Those buds of *rosa damascena.*
No high-flown zeal my soul uplifts,
    And as for ardour, I've not got any;—
I simply send you floral gifts
    To help you forward with your botany!

THE FLIRT'S PARADISE.—Coquet Island.

SO SWEET OF HER!

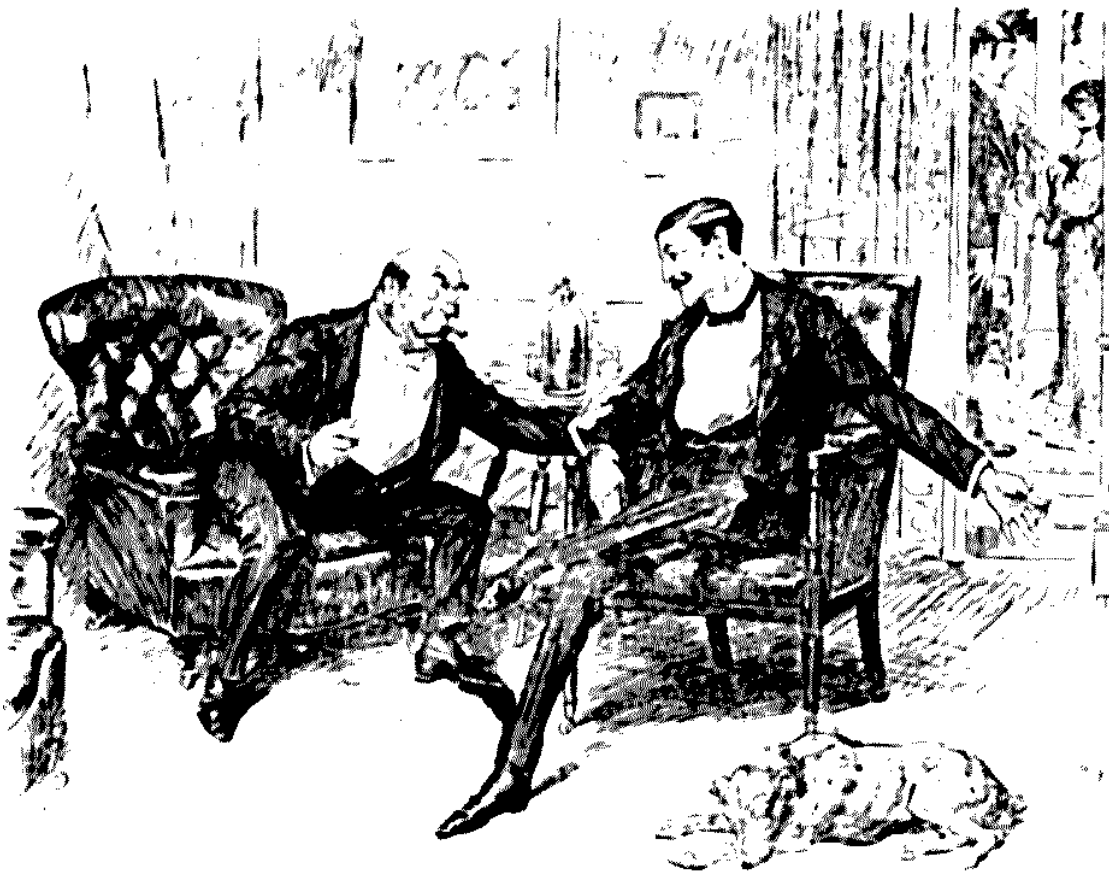
Lady (*recently married, in answer to congratulations of visiting lady friend*). "Thank you, dear. But I still find it very hard to remember my new name."

Friend. "Ah, dear, but of course you had the old one so long!"



"Oh, George dear, the landlord has raised the rent!"

"Has he? *I* can't!"



EVIDENCE OF AN EYE-WITNESS

Guest. "Why do you believe in second sight, Major?"
Major Darby (*in an impressive whisper*). "Because *I* fell in love at *first* sight!"

FULL MOON FIRST QUARTER

THIRD QUARTER NO MOON

THE BRUTE CREATION.—Husbands who beat their wives.

THE HEIGHT OF MODESTY.—The most bashful girl we ever knew was one who blushed when she was asked if she had not been courting sleep.

"*Are* you comin' 'ome?"
"I'll do ellythik you *like* in reasol, M'ria—(*hic*)—bur I *won't* come 'ome."

Harold. "And now, darling, tell me what your father said when you told him we were engaged."
Sybil. "Oh, Harold, don't ask me to repeat his language!"

TO ALL THE OTHER GIRLS

You know, I like you awfully, Jess,
    Phyllis, the same applies to you,
To Edith and to Mary no less,
    Also to others, not a few.
Yet some of you are rather "mad,"
    You choose to feel, I understand, a
Slight sense of injury, since I've had
    The glorious luck to win Amanda.

I wish, sincerely, it were not
    Impossible for me to fall
In love with *some* of you—a *lot*—
    In fact I'd gladly love you *all*!
But, when you come to think it out,
    I'm sure my reasoning will strike you,
You'll find it, I can have no doubt,
    More flattering that I should like you.

Fate sends their wives to poor and rich,
    Fate does not send them thus their friends;
Then let my final couplet (which
    I rather fancy) make amends.
This fundamental truth, I trust,
    My seeming fickleness excuses—
One simply loves because one *must*
    Whereas one likes because one *chooses*!

HIGHLY SATISFACTORY

Mistress. "I'm sorry for you, John; but if your wife has got such a dreadful temper, why did you marry her?"

Coachman (*the Fourth Husband*). "Well, mum, I had three good characters with her?"

A. "That's Jones's daughter with him. She's just about to be married."
B. "Who's the lucky man?"
A. "Jones."

A FESTIVE PROSPECT!

Husband. "Didn't I tell you not to invite your mother back in my——"
Wife. "Dear, that's the very thing she's come about! She read your letter!" [*Tableau.*

DOMESTIC TIE

VALENTINE'S DAY—THEN AND NOW

THEN—THIRTY YEARS AGO. *Family assembled.*

Paterfamilias. Post nearly two hours late! Really disgraceful!

Materfamilias. Well, dear, remember it's only once a year, and we used to enjoy it ourselves before we were married!

Eldest Daughter. I got half-a-dozen last year. I dare say I shall get twice as many this.

Second Daughter. I dare say! I believe you send them yourself!

Eldest Daughter. So probable! How can you think of such silly things! And how spiteful of you!

Son and Heir. Don't quarrel, girls! And here's the post.

Enter servant with heaps of letters, which are eagerly seized and distributed.

Chorus. What are they?

Paterfamilias (*disgusted at his budget*). Valentines!

NOW—TO-DAY. *Family assembled as before.*

Paterfamilias. The fourteenth of February. Dear me, surely this is a memorable date —somehow.

Materfamilias. To be sure, father. It's Valentine's Day.

Eldest Daughter. Is it really true, mother, that people used to receive pictures just as we do Christmas cards?

Second Daughter. Come, *you* can surely remember. It's not so very long for you.

Eldest Daughter. Don't be spiteful! Remember, miss, there's only a couple of years between us!

Second Daughter. Really! From our appearance there might be a decade!

Son and Heir. Don't quarrel, girls! And here's the post!

Enter servant with a solitary letter.

Chorus. What is it?

Paterfamilias (*perusing a bill*). Not a Valentine!

"The Act of Union."—Getting married.

That dear old Mrs. Wilkinson (*who can't always express exactly what she means to say, meeting Jones with the girl of his choice*). "And is this young lady your *fiasco*, Mr. Jones?"]

Brown. "I say, old man, who's that very plain elderly lady you were walking with—now sitting here?"

Smith (*the impecunious, who has married money*). "Oh, that's my wife."

Brown. "Your wife! But"—(*lowering his voice*)—"She has only one eye—and so awfully—I beg your pardon—but——"

Smith (*pleasantly*). "You needn't whisper, old man. She's *deaf*"

LOVE IN LACONICS

He. Love you! Have me, dear?
She. Humph! How much a year?
He. Three hundred! Expectations.
She. Tales of hope! Relations?
He. Aunt. Ten thousand pounder.
Eighty. Always found her
Liberal. Thinks me Crichton,
Seedy now at Brighton.
Made her will,—a right 'un!
She. Ah! *Aunt*-icipations,—
Like *x* in equations—
Unknown quantity?
Question! Let me see,
Love + "screw" + *x*
(Latter for expecs)
Equals Me + You!
Hardly think 'twill do!
Do not wish to vex,
But,—first find out *x*!
He. If I prove *x* ample—
She. I'll no longer trample
On your hopes.
He. Agreed!
She. Hope you may succeed!

The Result of an Imprudent Marriage (*by our own Matrimonial Adviser*).—County Court-ship.

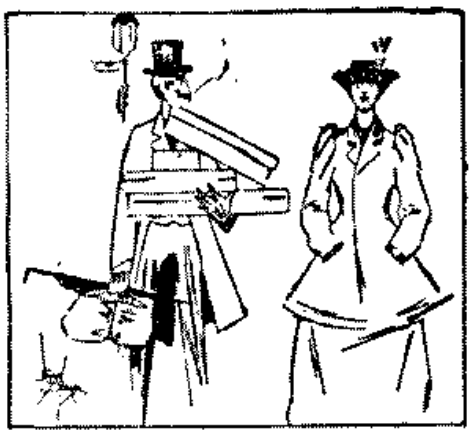
Ethel. "Why, what's the matter, Gertrude?"

Gertrude. "Oh, nothing. Only Jack and I had a quarrel the other day, and I wrote and told him never to dare to speak or write to me again,—— and the wretch hasn't even had the decency to answer my letter!"

THE IDEAL HUSBAND

My dear Ethel,—You ask me what "sort of a husband" I recommend. My dear, ask me the name of a dressmaker, of a doctor, or of a (ugh!) dentist, and I can tell you precisely. I can name the man. But what sort of a husband! Well, after sifting the matter carefully, and after looking before *you* leap, and after an experience of some few years of married life, I say, decidedly, choose a man ...

WHO LIKES TO GO SHOPPING.



You will find him very useful if managed judiciously; he will prove an immense saving to you, as if you went alone you would have to tip porters, and squabble with cabmen. Then from a certain view I should advise some of those "about to marry" to select a man who has no club. But this is an exceptional case. Finally, if you wish to be strictly economical, and to live in the suburbs, or in the country, and if your husband has no occupation or profession, then I should say, in order that you may attend assiduously to your domestic duties, which include visiting, five

o'clock teas, and so forth, then ascertain that your husband is of a maternal disposition, and one ...

WHO DOES THIS.

If I think of anything else I will let you know. But, above all, please yourself, and by so doing you will delight

Yours affectionately,

DORA.

"OUT OF THE FRYING-PAN," &c.

Parson (*to Ne'er-do-weel*). "What's this I hear, Giles—that your wife has left you! Ah! this is what I——"

Giles. "She might do worse than that, sir."

Parson (*shocked*). "Worse!"

Giles. "She might come back again!"

TO A RICH YOUNG WIDOW.

I will not ask if thou canst touch
  The tuneful ivory key?
Those silent notes of thine are such
  As quite suffice for me.

I'll make no question if thy skill
  The pencil comprehends,
Enough for me, love, if thou still
  Canst draw thy dividends!

"So Selfish?"—*Husband* (*with pride*). "My love, I've been effecting—I've insured my life to-day for ten thousand pou——"

Young Wife. "Just like the men! Always looking out for themselves! I think—you might have insured mine while you were about it!!"

By a Fashionable Young Married Woman.—The latest thing out—My husband.

Celibacy and Wedlock.—If single life is bad, then it stands to reason that double life is twice as bad.

Employment for Women.—Matchmaking.

VERY NECESSARY

Young Wife. "I'm so happy! I wonder you never married."

Elderly Spinster. "My child, I've always said I never *would* and never *could* marry until I met a man different from other men and full of courage."

Young Wife. "Of course you couldn't. How stupid of me."

THE "OFF" SEASON

Daphne, that day
   Do you remember
(Then it was May,
   Now it's November)

Plighting our troth
   Nothing should sever;
Binding us both
   Firmly, for ever?

Yes, I allow
   Strephon's more showy;—
As for me, now
   I prefer Chloe.

Yet, if men say
   "Fickle," remember
Then it was May,
   Now it's November.

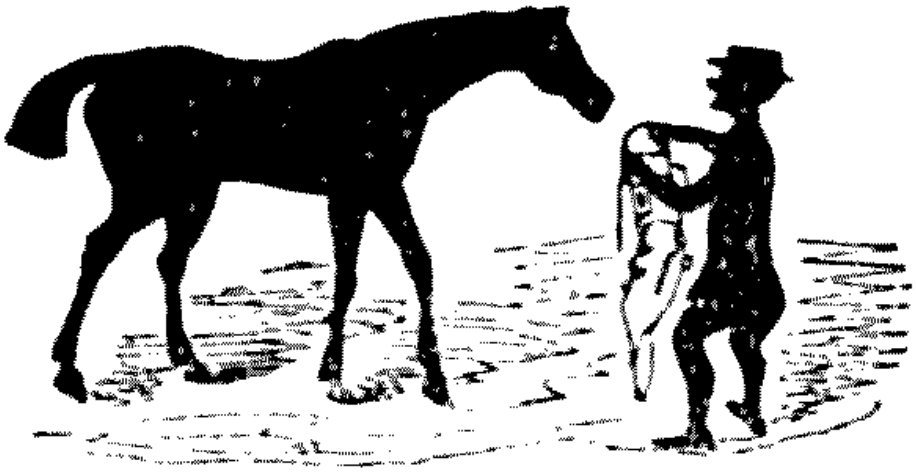
PAPER FOR THE NEWLY-MARRIED..—*The Economist.*

"À PROPOS!"—*Sententious Old Bachelor* (*in the course of conversation*). "As the 'old saw' has it, my dear madam, 'Man proposes, but——'"

Widow (*promptly*). "Yes; but that's just what he doesn't do!" (*Tableau!*)

MOTTO FOR THE DIVORCE COURT.—Marry, and come up!

She. "But, George, suppose papa settles my dowry on me in my own right?"
He. "Well, my dear girl, it's—er—nothing to me if he does!"



ABOUT TO ENTER THE BRIDAL STATE

LOVE LETTERS OF A BUSINESS MAN.

The course of true love, though beset with almost insurmountable obstacles, often rewards the faithful lovers at the last with supreme happiness. But, alas! sometimes the said true love proves naught but a toboggan-slide leading to a precipice, into which the true lovers' hopes are hurled and dashed into atomic smithereens.

We have before us a volume of a "Business Man's Love Letters," a few extracts from which we give below. Reader, if you have a tear, prepare to shed it now! The burning passion which surges in the lover's heart, though embodied in phrases habitually used by a business man, is sure to touch your soul. But presently comes the pathetic ending, when she is no longer anything to him, and he—to use the imperfect but comprehensive vernacular—is to her as "dead as a door nail." Reader, read on!

I.

August 1, 1899.

Dear Miss Smythe,—With reference to my visit last evening at the house of Mr. John Jorkins, our mutual friend, when I had the pleasure of meeting you.

Having been much charmed by your conversation and general attractiveness, I beg to inquire whether you will allow me to cultivate the acquaintanceship further.

Awaiting the favour of your esteemed reply,

Yours faithfully,

JOHN GREEN.

II.

August 3, 1899.

MY DEAR MISS SMYTHE,—I beg to acknowledge with many thanks receipt of your letter of even date, contents of which I note with much pleasure.

I hope to call this evening at 7.15 p.m., when I trust to find you at home.

With kindest regards, I beg to remain,

Yours very truly,

JOHN GREEN.

III.

August 21, 1899.

My dearest Evelina,—Referring to our conversation this evening when you consented to become my wife.

I beg to confirm the arrangement then made, and would suggest the wedding should take place within the ensuing six months. No doubt you will give the other necessary details your best consideration, and will communicate your views to me in due course.

Trusting there is every happiness before us,

I remain,

Your darling Chickabiddy,

JOHN.

IV.

August 22, 1899.

MY OWNEST TOOTSEY-WOOTSEY,—Enclosed please find 22-carat gold engagement ring, set with thirteen diamonds and three rubies, receipt of which kindly acknowledge by return.

Trusting same will give every satisfaction,

I am,

Your only lovey-dovey,

JOHNNY.

X X X X X X Kindly note kisses.

V.

November 24, 1899.

MY SWEETEST EVELINA,—I am duly in receipt of your letter of 20th inst., which I regret was not answered before owing to pressure of business.

In reply thereto I beg to state that I do love you dearly, and only you, and also no one else in all the world. Further I shall have much pleasure in continuing to love you for evermore, and no one else in all the world.

Trusting to see you this evening as usual and in good health.

I am, Your ownest own,

JOHN.

VI.

January 4, 1900.

To Miss Smythe, Madam,—In accordance with the intention expressed in my letter of yesterday, I duly forwarded addressed to you a parcel containing all letters, etc., received from you, and presume they have been safely delivered.

I have received to-day, per carrier, a parcel containing various letters which I have written to you from time to time. No doubt it was your intention to despatch the complete number written by me, but I notice one dated August 21 is not included. Will you kindly forward the letter in question by return, when I will send you a full receipt?

Yours faithfully,

John Green.

VII.

January 6, 1900.

To Miss Smythe, Madam,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of yesterday, and note your object in retaining my letter of August 21 last. As I intend to defend the issue in the case, I shall do as you request, and will leave all further communications to be made through my solicitors.

Yours, &c.,

John Green.

VIII.

15, *Peace Court, Temple, E.C.*

Messrs. Bang, Crash & Co.,

9a, Quarrel Row, E.C.

Smythe v. *Green*.

Gentlemen,—We are in receipt of your communication of yesterday's date, with which you enclose copy of letter dated August 21. We note that you state the document in question has been duly stamped at Somerset House, and are writing our client this evening with a view to offering your client terms, through you, to stay the proceedings which have been commenced.

Yours faithfully,

Blithers, Blathers, Blothers & Co.

Strange but True.—When does a husband find his wife out? When he finds her at home and she doesn't expect him.

CAUTION

Married Sister. "And of course, Laura, you will go to Rome or Florence for your honeymoon?"

Laura. "Oh dear, no! I couldn't think of going further than the Isle of Wight with a man I know little or nothing of!"

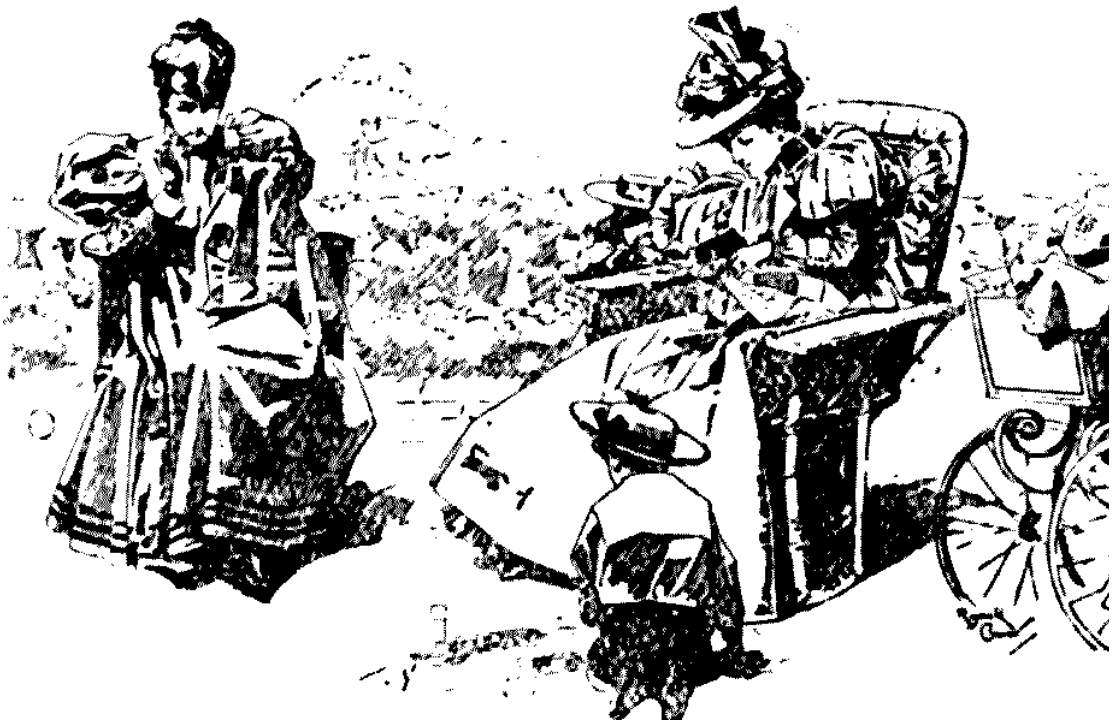
LOVE'S PROMPTINGS

Edwin (*recit*). "'There is no one beside thee, and no one above thee. Thou standest alone, as the nightingale sings!'" &c., &c.

Angelina (*amorously*). "Oh, Edwin, how *do* you think of such beautiful things?"

DIFFERENT ASPECTS

She. "Isn't it a pretty view?"
Susceptible Youth. "Awfully pretty, by Jove!"



MARRIED *v.* SINGLE

Bee (*single*). "Why do you wear a pink blouse, dear? It makes you look so yellow!"

Bella (*married*). "Does it, dear? Of course you can make *your* complexion suit *any* blouse, can't you!"

He. "My people are bothering me to marry Miss Mayford."
She. "You'd be very lucky if you did. She is very clever and very beautiful——"
He. "Oh! *I* don't want to marry brains and beauty. I want to marry *you*."

AN AMBIGUOUS COMPLIMENT

Miss Beekley. "I'm so glad *I'm* not an heiress, Mr. Soper. I should never know whether my suitors were attracted by myself or my money."

Mr. Soper. "Oh, Miss Beekley, your mirror should leave you in no doubt on that score!"

Bulkley. "Yes; her parents persuaded her, and it's all over between us."
Sympathetic Friend. "She can't have realised what a lot she was giving up."

Wife. "I hope you talked plainly to him."
Husband. "I did indeed. *I* told him he was a fool, a perfect fool!"
Wife (*approvingly*). "Dear John! How exactly like you!"

THE OLD, OLD STORY!

The Colonel. "Yes; *he* was senior wrangler of his year, and *she* took a mathematical scholarship at Girton; and now they're engaged!"

Mrs. Jones. "Dear me, how interesting! and oh, how different their conversation must be from the insipid twaddle of ordinary lovers!"

THEIR CONVERSATION

He. "And what would *dovey* do, if lovey were to *die*?"

She. "Oh, dovey would die *too*!"

NEEDLESSLY POINTED

Sympathetic Friend. "Well, my dear, I'm sure your mother will miss you sadly after your *having been with her so long*!"

ALTRUISM

Maud (*newly married*). "You look very melancholy, George; are you sorry you married me?"
George. "No, dear—of course not. I was only thinking of all the nice girls I can't marry."
Maud. "Oh, George, how horrid of you! I thought you cared for nobody but me?"
George. "No more I do. I wasn't thinking of myself, but of the disappointment for *them*.

DOMESTIC BLISS

Head of the Family. "For what we are going to receive, make us truly thankful.—Hem! Cold mutton again!"

Wife of the Bussum. "And a very good dinner too, Alexander. *Somebody* must be economical. *People* can't expect to have *Richmond* and *Greenwich* dinners out of the little housekeeping money *I* have."

"AN ENGLISH MAN'S HOUSE," ETC.

Maid (looking over wall to newly married couple just returned from their honeymoon). "Oh please'm, that dog was sent here yesterday as a wedding present; and none of us can't go near him. You'll have to go round the back way!"

Jones (*newly married*). "There's my darling playing the guitar."

(*But it wasn't. It was only the garden roller over the gravel!*)

THINGS ONE WOULD RATHER HAVE LEFT UNSAID

Jones. "I will!"

Mr. Jenks (*who likes Miss Constance*). "No, I assure you, Miss Constance, I have *never* indulged in flirtation."

Miss Constance (*who does* not *care for Mr. Jenks*). "Ah, perhaps you have never had any *encouragement*!"

THE LUXURY OF LIBERTY.

Bosom Friend. "Well, dear, now that you are a widow, tell me are you any the happier for it?"

Interesting Widow. "Oh! no. But I have my freedom, and that's a great comfort. Do you know, my dear, I had an onion yesterday for the first time these fourteen years?"

"THE SILLY SEASON."—The Honeymoon.

CONSOLATION.

Mother-in-law. "I'll be bound that Robert—I've lost all patience with him—never dined with you on Michaelmas-day, my dear?"

Daughter. "No, mamma, but he sent me home a goose."

Mother-in-law. "Psha! Done in a fit of absence, my dear."

THE HUSBAND'S REVENGE

A Warning to Wives who will keep bad Cooks

Provisions raw
Long time he bore:
Remonstrance was in vain;
To escape the scrub
He join'd a club:
Nor dined at home again.

MATRIMONY (*by our Musical Cynic*).—The common c(h)ord of two flats.

DOMESTIC BLISS

Little Foot Page (*unexpectedly*). "Here's some gentlemen, please, sir!"

"Can I go abroad to finish, ma?"
"No. It's time you were married—and men don't care how ill-educated a woman is."
"You shouldn't judge everybody by pa, ma!"

LEAVING THE PARENTAL NEST

The Bride's Father (*to Bridegroom*). "Oh, John, you'll take *care* of her, *won't* you!"

REFLECTIONS ON A BROKEN ENGAGEMENT

We parted—cheerfully! Yet now
I've fallen into disrepute
With nearly all her friends, who vow
That she's an angel, I'm a brute;
Black isn't black enough for me
My conduct will not bear inspection—
A statement which I hold to be
Fair food for critical reflection.

We parted. The consummate ease
With which "united hearts" can range
From their allegiance, if they please,
But illustrates the laws of change.
The thoughts and tastes of yester year
Fall under Father Time's correction—
This is not critical, I fear,
But platitudinous reflection!

We parted. She had quite a pack
Of friends, "nice boys," as she avowed;
She called them Bob, and Dick, and Jack,
And I was—one amongst the crowd.
I did not, people may infer,
Possess entire her young affection—
Yet, be it understood, on her
I cast no shadow of reflection!

We parted. Men cannot persist—
In playing uncongenial parts—
I was a keen philatelist,
Her hobby was collecting—hearts
A simple case. I did not pine
To add my heart to her collection,
She had no stamps to add to mine,
We parted—wisely, on reflection!

CURIOUS DISTINCTION.—The English love; the French make love.—*Madame Punch.*

Mr. Grumble. "I see by the paper that Mount Vesuvius is in eruption."
Mrs. G. "Oh, I'm *so* glad!"
Mr. G. "There you are again, Maria. Now why on earth should you be glad?"
Mrs. G. "Well, you can't blame *me* for it that's all!"

OLD FRIENDS

He. "Do you remember your old school-friend Sophy Smythe?"
She. "Yes, indeed, I do. A most absurd-looking thing. So silly too! What became of her?"
He. "Oh, nothing. Only—I married her."

IN THE SAME BOAT

"I don't think she's pretty."
"Neither do I." (*After a pause.*) "Did she refuse you too?"

GREAT EXPECTATIONS.—*Ethel* (*youngest daughter*). "Oh, pa dear, what did Geo—— what did young Mr. Brown want?" *Pa.* "Secret, my love. 'Wished to speak to me privately!" *Ethel.* "Oh, pa, but do tell me—'cause he was so very attentive to me before you came in—and then asked me to leave the room." *Pa.* "Well, my dear"—(*in a whisper*)—"he'd left his purse at the office, and wanted to borrow eighteenpence to pay his train home!"

"SHARP'S THE WORD!"—*Wife.* "Poor mamma is dreadfully low-spirited this morning, George. Only think—she has just expressed a wish to be cremated!" *Husband* (*with alacrity*). "'O'b-less my——" (*Throwing down his newspaper.*) "Tell her to put her things on, dear! I'll—I'll drive her over at once!!"

ON THE CARDS

Young Wife. "Oh, mamma, do you know I believe Alfred's going to reform, and give up gambling!"

Her Mother. "What makes you think so, dear?"

Young Wife. "Why all last night he kept talking in his sleep about his miserable, worthless heart!"

LOOKING AFTER THE CHAPS

PROFESSIONAL LOVE-LETTERS

I

From Mr. Norman Dormer, *Architect and Surveyor, to* Miss Caroline Tower.

My Precious,

Pity me who must stay and fret in London, while you are enjoying yourself at Broadstairs. How I long to be there, surveying the ocean by your side, and tracing your dear name on the sands! But fate and a father have placed a barrier between us. So I pace up and down before the old house in T———— Square, and look up at a certain dormitory on the second story—in no state of elevation you may be sure—and make plans for the future, and build castles in the air, and try to forget that my designs on your heart appear ridiculous to your papa, whose estimate of me I am aware is not in excess. For can I forget what he said that wet Saturday afternoon in the back drawing-room, when I tendered myself to him as a son-in-law, and the tender was not accepted? After telling him that it was the summit, the pinnacle of my ambition to win you as my wife, did he not answer that he considered I ought not to aspire to your hand until the statement of my pecuniary means (as he worded it) was more satisfactory, and, meanwhile, requested me to discontinue my pointed attentions? Never until *you* bid me. Only be firm, and the difficulties now in our way will but serve to cement us more closely together; only be true and I will wait patiently for that day which shall put the coping-stone to my happiness. I build upon every word, every look, every smile I can call to mind. You *will* write and assure me there is no foundation for the report of another and more fortunate competitor, but that I still fill the same niche in your affections I ever did? For, Caroline, were I to hear you were an "engaged" Tower, I could not survive the blow. I should stab myself with my compasses in the back office.

But away with such gloomy fears. Let me picture her to myself. How plumb she stands! How arch she looks! What a beam in her eye! What a graceful curve in her neck! What an exquisitely chiselled nose! What a brick of a girl altogether! I must stop in my specification, or you will think there is something wrong in my upper story, and not give credence to a word I say.

I have just been calling on your sister, and saw your little pet Poppy, who talked in her pretty *Early English* about "Tant Tarry." Aunt Sarah was there, staying the day, looking as mediæval as ever, and with her hair dressed in the usual Decorated style. She hinted that you were imperious, and that any man who married you must make up his mind (grim joke) to fetch and Carry at your bidding. And then you were so ambitious! The wiseacre! why, I will leave no stone unturned to get on in my profession if you will only be constant. I will be the architect of my own fortunes—your love the keystone of my prosperity. The columns of every newspaper shall record my success; every capital in Europe shall know my name. She did not unhinge me a bit, and the shafts of her ridicule fell harmless; although, she made an allusion to "dumpy" men, which I knew was levelled at me, and sneered at married life as very pretty for a time, but the stucco soon fell off. Poor Aunt Sarah! I left her sitting up quite perpendicular with that everlasting work which she is always

herring-boning. And now, Carry, darling—oh, dear! I am wanted about something in our designs for the new Law Courts, and have only time to sign myself,

Your own, till Domesday, NORMAN.

II

From MR. ALFRED PYE, *Professed Man Cook, to*
MISS MARTHA BROWNING.

What a stew I was in all Friday, when no letter came from my Patty! Everything went wrong. I made a hash of one of my *entrées*, and the *chef*, who guessed the cause of my confusion, roasted me so that at last I boiled over, and gave him rather a tart answer, for, as you know, I am at times a little too peppery. Thy sweet note, when it *did* arrive, made all right. I believe I was quite foolish, and went capering about with delight. And then I cooled down, and composed a new *soufflé*. So you see I do not fritter away *all* my time, whatever those malicious people who are so ready to carp at me may think.

You say you always like to know where I go in an evening. Well, I went to the Trotters last night, and Fanny played the accompaniment, and I sang—how it made me think of you!—"*Good-bye, Sweetbread, good-bye!*" (How absurd! Do you see what I have written instead of "*Sweetheart*"? All the force of habit. It will remind you of that night at Cookham, when we were the top couple in the supper quadrille, and I shouted, "Now, Side-dishes, begin!" and everybody roared except a certain young lady, who looked a trifle vexed. Don't you remember that Spring? You must, because the young potatoes were so small.)

Your *protégé*, Peter, goes on famously. He's a broth of a boy, not a pickle, like many lads of his age, and yet he won't stand being sauced, as he calls it. He and I nearly got parted at the station, for the crowd was very great after the races—in fact, a regular jam. It rained hard when we reached Sandwich, and I got dripping wet, for I had forgotten my waterproof, and there was not a cab to be had. But now the weather has changed again, and we are half baked. A broiling sun and not a puff of wind.

There was no one in the train I knew. Some small fry stuffing buns all the way, and opposite me a girl who had her hair crimped just like yours, and wore exactly the same sort of scalloped jacket. A raw young man with her, evidently quite spooney; and they larded their talk with rather too many "loves" and "dears" for my taste, for you know *we* are never tender in public. It grated *so* on my ear, that at last I made some harmless joke to try and stop it, but mademoiselle, who spoke in that mincing way you detest, turtled up, so I held my tongue all the rest of the way, and amused myself with looking at your *carte*, and concocting one of my own for our great dinner on the 29th, for the *chef* has gone to Spithead, and left all to me. And now, my duck, not to mince matters, when I have got that off my mind (if the dinner is only as well dressed as you, it will do), you must fix the day. I am quite unsettled. I cannot concentrate my thoughts on my gravies as I ought, and my desserts are anything but meritorious. All your fault, miss. You are as slippery as an eel. I must have it all arranged when I come up to the City next week. I have some business in the Poultry, but shall slip away as soon as I can, and bring your mother the potted grouse and chutney. ("Cunning man," I hear you say, "he wants to curry favour with

mamma.") And you will do what I ask? Where shall we go for our wedding trip?—Strasbourg, Turkey, Cayenne, Westphalia, Worcestershire? Perhaps, I think most of coming back to the little house which I know somebody will always keep in apple-pie order, and of covers for two; and I shall admire the pretty filbert-nails while she peels my nuts, and we will both give up our flirtations, mere *entremets*, and sit down soberly to enjoy that substantial *pièce de résistance*—Matrimony. Do you like the *menu*? Then, my lamb, say "yes" to

Your own

ALFRED.

P.S.—I know my temper is rather short, but then think of my crust! And it speaks well for me that I would rather be roasted fifty times than buttered once. I *do* hate flummery, certainly.

She. "It's no use bothering me, Jack. I shall marry whom I please."

He. "That's all I'm asking you to do, my dear. You please me well enough!"

AN UNFORESEEN MATRIMONIAL CONTINGENCY

Angelina. "Did you ever see anything so wonderful as the likeness between old Mr. and Mrs. Bellamy, Edwin? One would think they were brother and sister, instead of husband and wife!"

Edwin. "Married people always grow like each other in time, darling. It's very touching and beautiful to behold!"

Angelina (not without anxiety). "Dear me! And is it *invariably* the case, my love?"

The Widow's Intended. "Well, Tommy, has your mother told you of my good fortune."
Tommy. "No. She only said she was going to marry you!"

Young Muddleigh, who has been out buying underwear for his personal use, purchases at the same establishment some flowers for his ladye-love—leaving a note to be enclosed. Imagine Young Muddleigh's horror, on returning to dress, to discover that the underwear had been sent with the note, and the flowers to him! Muddleigh discovered, repeating slowly to himself the contents of the note:—"Please wear these this evening, for my sake!"

"IS IT A FAILURE?"

Mamma (*their last unmarried daughter having just accepted an offer*). "Well, George, now the girls are all happily settled, I think we may consider ourselves fortunate, and that marriage isn't ——"

Papa (*a pessimist*). "Um—'don't know! Four families to keep 'stead of one!"

SO FRIVOLOUS!

Wife. "Solomon, I have a bone to pick with you."
Solomon (*flippantly*) "With pleasure, my dear, so long as it's a funny bone!"

"HUSBANDS IN WAITING"

Stout Wife. "I shall never get through here, James. If you were half a man, you would lift me over!"

Husband. "If you were half a woman, my dear, it would be easier!"

"Was he very much cast down after he'd spoken to papa?"

"Yes. Three flights of stairs!"

"SCORED"

Little Wife. "Now, Fred dear, I'm ready."

Lazy Husband. "I'm awfully sorry, dear; but I *must* stay in, as I'm expecting a friend every minute."

Little Wife (*sarcastically*). "A friend every minute! Heavens, Fred! What a crowd of friends you'll have by the end of the day!"

DECIDEDLY PLEASANT

Genial Youth. "I say, Gubby, old chap, is this really true about your going to marry my sister Edie?"

Gubbins. "Yes, Tommy. It's all settled. But why do you ask?"

G. Y. "Oh! only because I shall have such a jolly slack time now! You know *I've* pulled off nearly all her engagements so far, only you're the first one who's been a *real stayer*!!"

He. "The joke was, both these girls were hopelessly in love with me, and I made them madly jealous of each other."

She. "I wonder you had the face to do it, Mr. Sparkins!"

"WE FELL OUT, MY WIFE AND I"
He. "That's absurd! Do you think I'm as big a fool as I look?"
She. "I think that if you aren't, you have a great deal to be thankful for!"

SUCH AN EXAMPLE

Wife (*to husband, who has barked his shins violently against the bed, and is muttering something to himself*). "Oh, Jack, how *can* you! Supposing baby were to hear you!"

She (*after they have walked three miles without a word being spoken*). "Aw say, John, tha'art very quoiet. Has nowt fur to say?"

He. "What mun aw say? Aw dunno know."

She. "Say that tha loves me."

He. "It's a'reet *sayin*' aw love thee, but aw dunno loike tellin' loies!"

Partner of his Joys (*who has superintended the removal*). "Well, dear, you haven't said how you like the new flat!"

WHAT TO WEAR ON YOUR WEDDING DAY.

(*By a Confirmed and Cantankerous Celibate*)

Married in white,
You have hooked him all right.
Married in grey,
He will ne'er get away.
Married in black,
He will wish himself back.
Married in red,
He will wish himself dead.
Married in green,
His true colour is seen.
Married in blue,
He will look it, not *you*.
Married in pearl,
He the distaff will twirl.
Married in yellow,
Poor fellow! Poor fellow!
Married in brown,
Down, down, derry down.
Married in pink,
To a slave he will sink.
Married in crimson,
He'll dangle your whims on.
Married in buff,
He will soon have enough.
Married in scarlet,
Poor victimised varlet!
Married in violet, purple, or puce,
It doesn't much matter, they *all* mean—the deuce!

A CASE OF GREAT INTEREST AT SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM

STUDY FROM LIFE

A ROMANCE OF ROAST DUCKS

"My darling, will you take a little of the—a—the stuffing?"
"I will, dear, if you do; but if you don't, I won't."

THE REAL FALL OF MAN.—Falling in love!

QUALIFYING A SWEEPING ASSERTION.—*Sophie* (*after hearing about Frank*). "I declare I shall not believe a word a man says to me. They're *all* liars!" *Beatrice.* "For shame, Sophie!" *Sophie* (*regretfully*). "At least all the *nice* ones are!"

INGRATITUDE

Brown. "Why doesn't Walker stop to speak? Thought he knew you!"

Smith. "Used to; but I introduced him to the girl he married. Neither of them recognises me now!"

ADVICE TO YOUNG HOUSEKEEPERS.—Put your washing out if you do not wish your husband to be put out.

CONGRUOUS COUPLES.

If there's a well-matched pair in married life
It is a horsey man and nagging wife.

APT ILLUSTRATION.—Idealism and Realism: Courtship and Marriage.

FAR FROM IT.—The woman who is bent on marrying a man because he is a lion, should remember that it does not necessarily follow that she will become a lioness.

OVER-SCRUPULOUS.—"My husband is Vicar of St. Boniface—but I don't attend his church." "Indeed! How is that?" "The fact is, I—I don't approve of married clergymen!"

"HOME RULE."—Petticoat government.

CALF-LOVE

Calf-love is a passion most people scorn,
Who've loved, and outlived, life and love's young morn;
But there *is* a calf-love too common by half,
And that's the love of the Golden Calf!

HE HAD BEEN KICKED OUT ONCE

She. "Wot time be you a-coming round to-night, Jock?"
Jock. "What time does y'r old man put 'is slippers on?"

Mrs. Naggleton's Advice to a Wife.—Defiance, not defence.

Long Odds.—Tall husband and short wife.

WORDS TO A WIFE

Love, thou'rt like yet unlike mutton,
Likewise beef, and veal, and lamb.
Do not answer that the glutton
I bespeak me that I am.
They in price, year after year, are
Rising, thou must needs allow;
Butcher's meat grows ever dearer:
So, and yet not so, dost thou.

For although my annual payment
To my butcher waxeth still,
Less and less each time for raiment,
Wanes thy linendraper's bill.
Thus by thrift expense thou meetest;
Whence thy wisdom doth appear:
Also, that I find thee, sweetest,
Cheaper still and still more dear.

Æsthetics of Dress.—*Customer* (*he has been bidden to a wedding, and can't make up his mind in the matter of trouser patterns, but at last says*). "O, there! that'll do, I sh'd think!" *Tailor.* "Pardon me, sir; if you are going to be 'best man,' the shade is hardly tender enough!"

TURTLE-DOVETAILING

["The latest development of phrenological enterprise is the establishment of a phrenological matrimonial bureau, to secure the introduction of persons desiring to be married to partners with suitable or harmonious phrenological endowments."*—Daily Paper.]*

Miss Evergreen (*who has been introduced to Mr. Slowboy*). "Well, it may be a lovely head, but ain't he got a big bump of *cautiousness*!"

THE DIVORCE SHOP

"A nation of shopkeepers!" Well, that old jeer
May fall with small sting on an Englishman's ear,
   For 'tis commerce that keeps the world going.
But *this* kind of shop? By his *bâton* and hunch,
The thought of it sickens the spirit of *Punch*,
   And sets his cheek angrily glowing.

The Philistines, Puritans, Podsnaps, and Prigs
Of Britain play up some preposterous rigs,
   And tax e'en cosmopolite charity.
But here is a business that's not to be borne;
Its mead is the flail and the vial of scorn,
   Not chaffing or Christmas hilarity.

The skunk *not* indigenous, sirs, to our Isle?
The assertion might well bring a cynical smile
   To the lips of a critical Yankee.
The vermin is here; he has set up a shop,
And seems doing a prosperous trade, which to stop
   Demands more than mere law's hanky-panky.

Poor law's tangled up in long coils of red tape,
She's the butt for each Jeremy Diddler's coarse jape,
   Every filthy Paul Pry's ghoulish giggle.
John Bull, my fine fellow, wake up, and determine
To stamp out the lives of the venomous vermin
   Who round your home-hearth writhe and wriggle.

'Ware snakes! No, *Punch* begs the ophidian's pardon!
The slimiest slug in the filthiest garden
      Is not so revolting as these are,
These ultra-reptilian rascals, who spy
Round our homes, and, for pay, would, with treacherous eye,
   Find flaws in the wife e'en of Cæsar.

Find? Well, if unable to *find* they will *make*.
No, the loathliest asp that e'er lurked in the brake
   To spring on the passer unwary,
Was not such an *anguis in herbâ* as this is,
Mean worm, which of all warning rattles and hisses
   Is so calculatingly chary.

The spy sets up shop! And what has he for sale?
False evidence meant to weight justice's scale,
   Eavesdroppings, astute fabrications,
The figments of vile keyhole varlets, the fudge
Of venal vindictiveness. Faugh! the foul sludge

Reeks rank as the swamp's exhalations.

Paul Pry, with a poison-fang, ready to bite
In the pay of home-hate or political spite,
Is a portent as mean as malignant.
The villain is vermin scarce worthy of steel,
His head should lie crushed 'neath the merciless heel
Of honesty hotly indignant.

THE DIVORCE SHOP

Private Inquiry Agent. "Want a divorce, sir? Certainly, sir,—certainly! Any evidence you may require ready at the shortest possible notice!!"

THE BEST SCHOOL OF NEEDLEWORK.—A husband's wardrobe.

A PARTING INJUNCTION.—A decree in the Divorce Court.

SIMPLE.—*Q.* When is a man tied to time? *A.* When he marries a second.

"NATURAL SELECTION."—Choosing a wife.

Small Voice from under the bed. "*No*, I will *not* come out! I tell you, once and for all, Bernesia, I *will* be master in my own house!"

THE BEST EXCUSE FOR A MAN MARRYING HIS DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.—Because he will only have one mother-in-law.

A DISTINCTION WITHOUT A DIFFERENCE

(*A Drama in two Acts illustrative of the peculiarities of the British Idiom of End-dearment*)

Act I.—*Before the Event.*

Adolphus. Won't it make its adored happy by naming the day then—a playful little puss!

Seraphina. Ah! I suppose it must have its own way—a sad young dog.

Act II.—*After the Event.*

Seraphina (*with emphasis*). O! when mamma comes you will not treat me so—you insolent puppy!

Adolphus (*with decided emphasis*). Ah! don't talk to me, you cat!!!

Curtain falls.

The Best Settlement for a Rich Wife who Elopes.—A penal one.

COLD SYMPATHY

Friend. "Hullo, old man, what's the matter?"
Gilded Youth. "Just proposed to a girl—been refused. Think I shall blow my brains out!"
Friend. "Congratulate you, old chap!"
Gilded Youth. "What do you mean?"
Friend. "Didn't know you had any!"

QUOD ERAT DEMONSTRANDUM

Gertrude. "But nobody ever dies of a broken heart."

Evelyn. "Oh, but they do. Why, I knew a man who was jilted, and he died almost immediately afterwards."

Gertrude. "Well, if he'd lived he'd have got over it."

THE SEVEN WONDERS OF A MARRIED MAN.

1. NOT going to sleep after dinner!

2. Never going anywhere in the evening, excepting "to the club!"

3. Always being good-tempered over the loss of a button, and never wreaking his vengeance on the coals if the dinner isn't ready exactly to a minute!

4. Never finding fault with his "dear little wifey," if she happens to be his partner at whist.

5. Not "wondering," regularly every week, "how the money goes!"

6. Resigning himself cheerfully, when asked to accompany his wife on "a little shopping!"

7. Insisting upon the servants sitting up, sooner than take the latchkey with him!!!

THE SEVEN WONDERS OF A MARRIED WOMAN.

1. NEVER having "a gown to put on," when invited out anywhere.

2. Always being down the first to breakfast! always being dressed in time for dinner! and never keeping the carriage (or the cab) waiting at the door a minute!

3. Not always having "delicate health," about the autumn, and being recommended by her medical man "change of air" immediately!

4. Keeping up her "playing and singing" the same after marriage as before!

5. Giving her husband the best cup of tea!

6. Never making the house uncomfortable by continually "putting it to rights!"—nor filling it choke-full with a number of things it does not want, simply because they are "bargains!"

7. Never alluding, under the strongest provocation, to "the complete sacrifice she has made of herself!"—nor regretting the "two or three good offers," which she (in common with every married woman) had before she was foolish enough to accept *him*!!—and never, by any accident, calling her husband "a brute!"

ALL FOR MONEY.—Jack Damyan and his wife have just started on their wedding tour. The lady's chief attraction is her income. In this case, Jack's friends call the usual period of seclusion the moneymoon.

THE FOURTEENTH OF FEBRUARY

Comely Housemaid. "None for you, miss."
Daughter of the House. "But—why—who are all those for, then?"
Comely Housemaid. "Me, miss!"

THE BALANCE RESTORED

Mrs. Henry Peek. "Bah! I only married you because I pitied you, when nobody else thought anything about you!"

Mr. Henry Peek (*wearily*). "Ah, well, my dear, everybody pities me now!"

She "Jests at Scars," etc.—*Aunt.* "And how's Louisa, my dear? Where is she?" *Sarcastic Younger Sister* (*fancy free*). "Oh, pretty well, but she won't be on view these two hours. She's writing to her 'Dear Fred'; at least I fancy I saw her come out of the library with Tupper's Poems and a *Dictionary*!!!"

An Old-Maidism.—Love is blind, and Hymen is the oculist that generally manages to open his eyes.

"AS MAN'S INGRATITUDE"

"Nonsense, Frank! Can't pay them! Why, before we were married you told me you were well off."

"So I was. But I didn't know it!"

Mr. Guzzle. "Ah, Jinks, I hear you are going to be married. Good thing too. You'll have some one to keep that cook of yours up to the mark. She wants it!"

Mr. Jinks. "Yes. But, you see, it's cook I'm going to marry!"

WAITING

Enchantress with the nut-brown hair,
  Bright genius of the A. B. C.,
Approach, in beauty past compare,
  And spell Love's alphabet to me!

Content no more am I each night,
  Amid a weird, dyspeptic host,
To order, with a keen delight,
  And watch thee bring, the tea and toast.

I covet more transcendent joys;
  Be mine, and come where Ocean waits
Instead of thee, and where annoys
  No tinkling clash of cups and plates.

There grant to me, beneath the stars,
  Not buttered scones, but smiles of bliss;
Not pastry, that digestion mars,
  But something sweeter still—a kiss.

* * *

Enchantress with the nut-brown hair,
  Bright genius of the A. B. C.,
Ah, heed a lover's anguished prayer,
  And be not D. E. F. to me!

Advice to Honeymooners about to Start on a Continental Trip.—The most appropriate place for "*les noces*" should be "The Hotel Marry-time, Calais."

BETWEEN SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS

Lady Binks (*a devoted widow, earnestly*). "Oh, Mr. Crichton, be careful how you marry! Sir Peter, who, as you know, rose to the highest positions, used frequently to say that more men owed their success to the beauty and social charm of their wives, than to their own energy and talents."

Mr. Crichton (*plunging on the "nil nisi bonum" principle*). "Surely, Lady Binks, none could say that of Sir Peter!"

LITERAL.—*Visitor* (*to Disconsolate One*). "Rejected you, did she? Oh, what o' that? Often do at first. Try her again. You're not pertinacious enough. You should have pressed her——" *Dejected One.* "Yes, but—confound her!—she wouldn't let me come near her!"

PARRIED

The Major (*not so young as he feels*). "Ah, Miss Muriel, in the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of——"

Miss Muriel (*who wishes to avoid a proposal*). "What a memory you have, major!"

He. "Oh, pray, Miss Dalrimple, *don't* call me Mr. Brookes."
She. "Oh, but our acquaintance has been so brief. This is so sudden——" (*Sweetly.*) "Why shouldn't I call you Mr. Brookes?"
He. "Oh—only because my name's Somerset!"

"Unequal Rating."—A big wife scolding a little husband.

The Divorce Measure.—Half and half.

Feminine Perversity.—*Aunt Betsy.* "I wonder, James, at your encouraging young Cadby to be so much with Madeline! He's a bad match, and not a good fellow, I

fear!" *Papa.* "Confound him, no! I've given him *carte-blanche* to come when he likes, and she's getting rather tired of him at last, for I'm always cracking him up!" *Aunt Betsy.* "And that nice fellow, Goodenough? He's never here now?" *Papa.* "No; I've forbidden him the house, and won't even allow his name to be mentioned. She's always thinking of him in consequence. I'm in hopes she'll marry him some day!"

VIRGINIA STOCK'S VIEW OF IT.

Is Marriage a Failure? Why, yes, to be sure.
But, oh! abolition won't furnish a cure.
Whilst thousands of spinsters in solitude tarry,
It's clearly a failure—because men *won't* marry.

AN "ELASTIC BAND."—The Marriage Tie (in the Divorce Court).

A PARTHIAN SHOT

He (*after a quarrel, bitterly*). "I *was* a fool when I married *you*!"
She (*quietly, about to leave the room*). "Yes; but I thought you would improve!"

HARMONY

Brown (*Philistine*). "I heard it was all 'off' between you and Miss Roweshett."
Wobbinson (*Æsthete*). "Ya-as. Incompatibility of complexion!—she didn't suit my furnitchar!!"

'Liza. "Wot's it feel like, bein' in love, Kytie?"
Katie. "Ow, it's prime, 'Liza. It's like 'avin' 'ot treacle runnin' daown yer back!"

SONG OF THE HIGHER SENTIMENTS

I live a mild domestic life,
Devoted dearly to my wife,
So much so, that from her extends
My fond affection to her friends;
And first of all—no spooney raw—
Oh, don't I love my mother-in-law!

My pet's old parent's rather stout;
I just might clasp her waist about:
Some three yards round, and not much more.
I've thoughts of widening my front-door,
I shouldn't mind the expense one straw.
Oh, don't I love my mother-in-law!

At times I may myself forget,
Which, if she thinks, she tells my pet;
But when I don't do all I should,
Her telling tends to make me good;
I'm pleased to have her find the flaw.
Oh, don't I love my mother-in-law!

The servants that upon her wait
A pleasure have which must be great.
And yet can we get none to stay.
I grieve so when she goes away!
Tears from my eyes her turned heels draw.
Oh, don't I love my mother-in-law!

A sweet old soul, how pleased I feel
To see her at the social meal
Of dinner sit, her mouth a chink
Ne'er opened save to meat—and drink!
And I'll ne'er grudge (I am so free)
Her gin and brandy in her tea.
I hold her in such filial awe;
Oh, don't I love my mother-in-law!

"Just look at Mr. Jones over there, flirting with that girl! I always thought he was a woman-hater?"

"So he is; but she's not here to-night!"

THE STRAIGHT TIP.—"And so now they're engaged! *Well*, Jessie, to think of *you*, with your beauty and accomplishments, and your lovely voice, being cut out by such an ignorant little fright as that Maggie Quickson! You *sang* to him, I suppose?" "Yes, mamma, by the hour! But *she* made *him* sing, you know, and played his accompaniments for him!" "Why, *can* he sing?" "No, mamma; but she made him *believe* he could!"

MOTTO FOR A "KISS."—Go it, my two lips.

CROSSED IN LOVE.—A wedding-present cheque.

Q. What is the difference between a lover asking the object of his affections to marry him, and a guest who ventures to hint to his host that the Pommery '80 is rather corked?

A. The one pops the question, the other questions the pop.

He. "How would you like to own a—er—a little puppy?"
She. "Oh, Mr. Softly, this is so sudden!"

HOW TO MAKE LIFE EMINENTLY DISAGREEABLE

(*By a strong-minded Married Woman*)

Always provide for everything beforehand. As things are sure to turn out differently from what you have arranged, this will familiarise you with disappointment.

Always go back upon a mistake or a misfortune, and so take the opportunity of proving how much better things would have been if something had been done that hasn't.

Never give way in trifles, as there is no saying how soon you may be called upon to give way in matters of more importance.

A mistress may talk *at* her servants, but should never lower herself so far as to talk *to* them.

Never dress for your husband, which will teach him to value you for your gifts of mind, not your attractions of person.

Never give expression to your affections, as there is no saying how soon they may alter, and you may thus be guilty of great inconsistency.

Never consult the taste of your husband, or he will in time come to look on his house as a club, where all is comfort and self-indulgence.

TO AN OLD FLAME—(TWENTY YEARS AFTER)

A little girl, a charming tiny tot,
   I well remember you with many a curl,
Although I recollect you said "I'm not
         A *little* girl."

We parted. Mid the worry and the whirl
   Of life, again, alas! I saw you not.
I kept you in my memory as a pearl
   Of winsome childhood. So imagine what
A shock it was this morning to unfurl
   My morning paper, there to see you've got
         A little girl!

THE POET AND HIS LOVE—(A LAPSUS LINGUÆ.)—*He.* "I see that you wear brown boots, sweetheart—a sign of the falling of the year." *She.* "Yes, it is in concord with the decadence of the leaf." *He.* "Say rather of the cutting of the corn." (*And then the match was broken off through no fault of his.*)

A SAFE MORTGAGE

Angelina. "Edwin, promise me you'll never describe me as your 'relict.'"
Edwin. "Dearest, I never will! I'd die sooner!"

Brown (*who has been dining at the club with Jones*). "Just come in a minute, old fellow, and have a night-cap."

Jones. "I'm afraid it's getting a little late. Let's see, how's the enemy."

Brown. "Oh! that's all right. *She's* in bed."

THINGS ONE WOULD RATHER HAVE LEFT UNSAID.—"Well, but if you can't bear her, whatever made you propose?" "Well, we had danced three dances, and I couldn't think of anything else to say!"

THE FIN DE SIÈCLE SUITOR.

I love you in an all-absorbing, fond, unselfish way,
I dream of you the long night thro', I think of you each day,
Whene'er I hear your voice, my dear, a spell o'er me is cast,
The rapture of your presence is (I'm certain) bound to last.

On you I'll pour the loving store and treasures of my heart,
With riches of an earthly kind I am more loth to part,
I'll sing your praise in loving ways, for are you not my queen?
You'll find the verses published in our local magazine.

So deep is my affection I would joyfully propose,
But for one great objection, which now I will disclose,
Intense is your suspense, so I'll endeavour to be short,
The fact is, that *a husband you're not able to support*.

New Dish for a Wedding Breakfast.—Curried favour.

The Best Cure for the Heartburn.—Marriage.

Young Bride. "Do you let your husband have a latchkey, Mrs. Jones?"
Mrs. Jones. "No, my dear; it would be useless. I give it to the milkman!"

PROGNOSTICATION

When Mrs. Tubbles awoke (she sleeps very soundly), the morning after that farmers' dinner, she found John by her side with his boots on and the umbrella open! His explanation was that, besides being very tired, he perhaps "fansh'd there wash 'shtorm comin' on!"

[It came!

A HUSBAND'S LAMENT

AIR—"*I once had a sweet little Doll, dears.*" (*Kingsley's words, set by A. Cecil.*)

I once saw a sweet pretty face, boys:
  Its beauty and grace were divine.
And I felt what a swell I should be, boys,
  Could I boast that such charms were all mine!
I wooed. Every man I cut out, boys,
  At my head deep anathemas hurled:—
But I said as I walked back from church, boys,
  "I'm the luckiest dog in the world!"

As doves in a cot we began, boys,
  A cosy and orthodox pair:
Till I found at my notable wife, boys,
  The world was beginning to stare.
She liked it. At first, so did I, boys,
  But, at length, when all over the place
She was sketched, hunted, photo'd and mobbed, boys,
  I cried, "Hang her sweet pretty face!"

Still, we went here and there,—right and left, boys;—
  We were asked dozens deep,—I say "we,"
Though wherever I went not a soul, boys,
  Could have pointed out Adam from me.
But we had a rare social success, boys,
  Got mixed with the noble and great,
Till one's friends, who say kind and nice things, boys,
  Talked of me as "the man come to wait!"

So, I've no more a sweet pretty wife, boys;—
  For the one that I once hoped to own,
Belongs, as I've found to my cost, boys,
  To the great British public alone.
So until they've got tired of her face, boys,
  And a rival, more touzled or curled,
Drives her home to her own proper place, boys—
  I'm the dullest dull dog in the world!

A SURE AID TO MATRIMONY.—Propingpongquity.

FROM "PUNCH'S SYNONYMS."—The Limited Male: a husband.

A VERY-MUCH MARRIED MAN.—The "hub" of the universe.

Miss Giddie. "It's awfully sweet of you, Mr. Cunius—(*coquettish pause*)—*Impey*, to ask me to marry you. Of course, I know you love me; but I hope that people won't say that you married me for my money!"

Mr. Impey Cunius (in a state of utter collapse after an elaborately forced proposal). "My dear, Miss Giddie—er—*Flossie*, I assure you that *I* shall never mention it!"

"FOR THE THIRD TIME OF ASKING"

Aunt Mary. "You heard the vicar publish the banns between Uncle George and Ellen Thompson?"

Ethel (who has never been present at this ceremony before). "Yes—it seems rather a shame to tell everybody how often he'd been refused, though!"

LOVE AND COURTSHIP

(*As they appear from certain Answers to Correspondents*)

VANITAS.—You are not bound to tell him. If the bright golden colour of your naturally dark hair is due to the excellent preparation recommended in another column, and he tells you he does not admire dark girls, why not keep on? The bottles are really quite cheap at nineteen and eleven. Of course, if it weighs upon your conscience, you might give him a hint, but he will probably talk about deceit, and behave in the brutally outspoken male manner so many readers complain of.

AMELIA.—Have you not been rather indiscreet? You should never let him see you cry before you are married. Afterwards it has its uses.

BLANCHE AMORY.—Cheer up. As you very cleverly put it, history does repeat itself. You are now once more in a position to undertake a further instalment of *Mes Larmes*. No. We are overstocked with poetry. The man, of course, is beneath contempt.

TWO STRINGS.—Your *fiancé* must be a perfect *Othello*. It is, as you justly remark, monstrous that he should object to your cousin seven times removed taking you to the theatre once or twice a week. Of course he is a relative.

SWEET-AND-TWENTY.—Your remarks about tastes in common are perfectly correct. So long as you both collect postcards you will always be able to give pleasure to each other at a distance.

BUSINESS GIRL.—If you have found out that he only gave twenty-five pounds for your engagement ring, it may be, as you shrewdly observe, that he has a contract with the tradesman for a periodical supply of such articles. The fact that his income is under a hundred a year makes it only the more probable that he would adopt such an arrangement for economy's sake. Be very careful.

PITTI-SING.—Your only course is to box his ears. Let us know how you get on.

BELLONA.—Sorry to disappoint you, but this is not the place to describe the undress uniform of the Grenadier Guards.

H'M!

Stern Father. "What an unearthly hour that young fellow stops till every night, Doris. What does your mother say about it?"

Daughter. "She says men haven't altered a bit, pa."

THE BABES IN THE WOOD

Ernest. "I see you are getting on, foreman."

Foreman. "Yes, sir; we shall have the walls plastered to-morrow."

Agatha. "Oh, Ernest, don't let's have plaster! You never see it now; everybody has wall-papers, and you can get lovely ones quite cheap!"

MY NEIGHBOUR

Next door the summer roses bloom
    And breathe their hearts out day by day
To please a gentle gardener whom
    'Twere happiness to thus obey:
For her each rose a fragrance gives
    That roses grudge to common labour,
And there, next door, among them lives
            My neighbour.

I watch her in her garden fair,
    And think what joy my life would bless
Could she and I but wander there,
    A shepherd and a shepherdess,
As blithe as those of ancient myth
    That danced and sang to pipe and tabor:
Who would not thus be happy with
            My neighbour?

Blue eyes, and hair of sunny brown,
    A form of such exceeding grace,
And features in whose smile and frown
    Such tender beauty I can trace
That here to sketch her free from flaw
    Defies the pencil of a Faber,
And yet I yearn so much to draw
            My neighbour!

I'm keeping one commandment—an
    Epitome of all the ten—
So if I, when my life began,
    Was born in sin like other men,
To innocence that shames the dove,
    I've mellowed since I was a babe, or
How could I so devoutly love
            My neighbour?

First Young Wife. "Do you find it more economical, dear, to do your own cooking?"
Second Young Wife. "Oh, certainly. My husband doesn't eat half so much as he did!"

The Snub Connubial.—*Loving Wife.* "Charles, dear, I wish you would put down that horrid novel and talk to me; I feel so dull; and—oh, Charles! my foot's asleep ——" *Charles.* "Hush—sh! my dear, you might wake it!"

The Oldest and the Shortest Drama in the World.—*He.* "Will you?" *She.* "Oh! I do not know!" (*Which "know" meant that she said "yes."*)

ADVICE TO GIRL GRADUATES

(*After Charles Kingsley—at a respectful distance*)

Dress well, sweet maid, and let who will be *clever*.
Dance, flirt, and sing!
Don't study all day long.
Or else you'll find,
When other girls get married,
You'll sing a different song!

Faults on Both Sides.—Man and wife are like a pair of scissors, so long as they are together, but they become daggers so soon as they are disunited.

Partnership without Limited Liability.—Marriage.

BRUTES!

Jones. "Did you ever see a volcano in course of eruption?"

Smith. "No—but once I remember I came home very late from the club, and my wife——"

[*They understand one another*

A MAN OF MANY WOES

READING BETWEEN THE MARRIAGE LINES

(*By a Recent Victim*)

One of the first troubles to be faced by the young wife is the difficulty of getting servants. It will be found that a cook is almost indispensable. Rather than be without one, take time by the forelock and, during the engagement, try the following advertisement (one is bound to offer additional attractions nowadays): —"Wanted, at once, a good plain cook. If necessary, *advertiser would be willing to make her a bridesmaid*. Must be able to wear blue."

Or again:—"Newly married couple require cook and parlour maid. *All china, glass, &c., in house new and unused and never been broken before.*"

In taking a house, remember that it is absolutely necessary to have an attic—in which to place some of the presents. It is all very well to say that they can be put in the servants' hall, but it must not be forgotten that it is now very difficult to keep servants, even under the most favourable circumstances.

You cannot be too careful in giving instructions for your house decoration. "In the dining-room I think I would like a dado," I said one day to the paper-man. The paper-man's face turned almost white at the suggestion. "You cannot, sir," he said in a hushed voice, "*the dado is extinct*." Then he explained that persons of taste have friezes nowadays, both in summer and winter.

To avoid a rush at the end, it will be worth the bride's while to write out beforehand a large number of letters of thanks for wedding-presents. The most handy form is, "DEAR——, We both thank you so very much for your—— present." When the present arrives you can fill in the missing word as circumstances require. On no account leave the blank.

Another happy form is, "DEAR——, Thank you so much for your charming and useful present. Please, what is it for?"

But beware of the following form, as some persons do not take it in the way in which it is meant, "DEAR——, Many thanks for your present. It is very good of you to have sent anything."

Nothing looks so solidly generous in the list of presents as the vague word, Cheque. Many mean people now send as a present a cheque for ten-and-six.

A novelty at wedding-receptions, and very *chic*, is to have in the present-room, in place of a detective, a parrot which has been trained to cry out every now and then, "Put that back! Put that back!"

Another novelty is to have a stall for the sale of duplicate articles.

The custom by which the bridegroom, on the night before the wedding, gives a farewell dinner to his bachelor friends is falling into desuetude. As a consequence one sees less frequently the announcement:—"On the —— instant, by the Rev. Mr. ——, *assisted by* the Rev. Mr. ——, &c."

SPORTING EVENT—A RECORD
SHE WON THE SWEEP!

ILLUMINISM

The Hon. Muriel. "Oh yes, I suppose I could get married, if I could find a man I simply couldn't live without."

The Hon. Maude. "My dear girl, the difficulty is to find a man you can live *with*!"

IN LEAP YEAR

Hopeless Widower. "Nothing can mend a broken heart."
Hopeful Widow. "Except re-pairing."

THE LAST CONGRATULATION

Fair Guest (who, having had a desperate flirtation with the bridegroom a short time ago, wouldn't be absent from the ceremony on any account). "Well, Algey, it's all over *now*! Aren't you pleased?"

[*Uncomfortable position of Algey.*

WAIT FOR AGE.

Seventeen. "*Is* marriage a failure? I *should* like to know!"

Seven-and-Twenty. "My dear, when as long as myself you have tarried,
You will not need much demonstration to show
That the only true failure is—not getting married!"

Female Definition of Leap Year.—Miss Understood.

A PLEASANT PROSPECT

Miss Kitty Candour (who has just accepted dear Reggie, and is now taking him fully into her confidence). "I must tell you, Reggie dear, that the great fault of my character is that after I have taken any resolution—it doesn't matter what it may be—I always bitterly repent it!"

EVOLUTION

She sketched a husband strong and brave
On whom her heart might lean;
None but a hero would she have—
This girl of 17.

Her fancy subsequently turned
From deeds of derring do;
For brainy intercourse she yearned
When she was 22.

The years sped on, ambition taught
A worldly-wise design;
A man of wealth was what she sought
When she was 29.

But Time has modified her plan;
Weak, imbecile, or poor—
She's simply looking for a *man*
Now she is 34.

OUR VILLAGE INDUSTRIAL COMPETITION.—*Husband (just home from the City).* "My angel!—crying!—whatever's the matter?" *Wife.* "They've—awarded me—prize medal"—*(sobbing)*—"f' my sponge cake!" *Husband (soothingly).* "And I'm quite sure it deserv——" *Wife (hysterically).* "Oh—but—'t said—'twas—for the best specimen—o' concrete!"

"FOR THIS RELIEF——?"

"I'm sorry to hear your wife is suffering from her throat. I hope it's nothing serious?"

"No, I don't think so. The doctor's forbidden her to talk much. It'll trouble her a good deal, I expect, and she won't be herself for some time."

AN ENGAGEMENT

(*A Page from a Diary*)

Monday.—Delightful news! My sister Nellie is engaged to be married! It came upon us all as a great surprise. I never had the slightest suspicion that Nellie cared twopence about old Goodbody St. Leger. He is such a staid, solemn old party, a regular fossilised bachelor we all thought. Not at all the sort of man to give way to emotions or to be in love. However, it's a capital match for Nellie as St. Leger's firm are about the largest accountants in the city. My wife thinks it will be a good thing in another way, too, as my other six sisters may now have a chance of going off. It seems that when once this kind of epidemic gets into a family, all the unmarried sisters go popping off like blazes one after another. Called with my wife this afternoon to congratulate Nellie. Rather a trial for the poor girl, as all sorts of female relatives had called full of enthusiasm and congratulations. Goodbody was there (Nellie calls him "Goodie") and seemed rather overwhelmed.

He went away early and didn't kiss Nellie. I thought this funny, and chaffed Nellie about it afterwards. She said she'd soon make that all right.

Tuesday.—Goodbody is getting on. We had a family dinner at home to-night. He came rather late and entered the drawing-room with an air of great determination, marched straight up to Nellie and kissed her violently. It was splendidly done and we all felt inclined to cheer. He kissed her again when he went away, and lingered so long in saying good-night to my mother that we all thought he was going to kiss her too. But he didn't. My wife said that the suspense of those moments was dreadful.

Wednesday.—He has kissed my mother—on both cheeks. I must say the old lady took it extraordinarily well, though she was not in the very least prepared for it. It happened at five o'clock tea, in an interval of complete silence, and those two sounding smacks simply reverberated through the room. Mother was quite cheerful afterwards, and spoke to Nellie about the trousseau in her usual calm and collected frame of mind. Still I can see that the incident has made a deep impression upon her. My wife told Maggie it would be her turn next.

Thursday.—It *has* been Maggie's turn. Goodbody called at home on his way from the City, and set to work as soon as he got into the drawing-room. He first kissed Nellie, then repeated the performance with my poor mother, and, finding that Maggie was close behind him, he kissed her on the forehead. Where will this end?

Friday.—He has regularly broken loose. He dined at home to-day, and, without a word of warning, kissed the whole family—my mother, Nellie, Maggie, Alice, Mabel, Polly, Maud, and little Beta. He quite forgot he had begun with my mother, and, after he had kissed Beta, got confused, and began all over again. At this moment my wife and I came in with Aunt Catherine, whom we had brought in our carriage. Both my wife and Aunt Catherine tried to escape, but it was no good. He kissed them both, and was just advancing towards me, when the butler fortunately announced dinner. Matters are getting quite desperate, and we none of us know

what ought to be done. Aunt Catherine had a violent fit of hysterics in the spare bedroom after dinner.

Saturday.—The engagement is broken off. A great relief. It has been a lesson for all of us.

THE RETORT DISCOURTEOUS

She. "Ah, it was very different before we were married. Then my word was *law!*"
He. "And a very vulgar word, too, my dear."

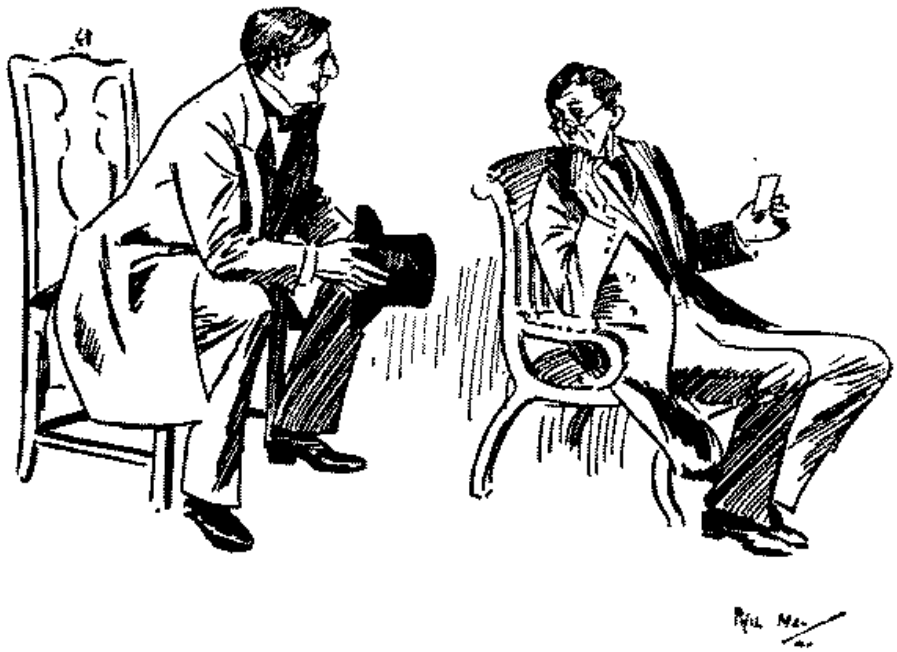
SO CONVENIENT!

Young Wife. "Where are you going, Reggie dear?"

Reggie Dear. "Only to the club, my darling."

Young Wife. "Oh, I don't mind that, because there's a telephone there, and I can talk to you through it, can't I?"

Reggie Dear. "Y-yes—but—er—you know, the confounded wires are always getting out of order!"



PAST AND PRESENT

Serious and much-Married Man. "My dear friend, I *was* astonished to hear of *your* dining at Madame Troisétoiles!—a 'woman with a past,' you know!"

The Friend (bachelor "unattached"). "Well, you see, old man, she's got a first-rate *chef*, so it isn't her 'past,' but her 're-past' that *I* care about."

"Good-bye, Alfred darling. You *have* cheered me up. If I get lonely and depressed again, I'll just look at your dear photo—that's sure to make me laugh, and laugh, and laugh!"

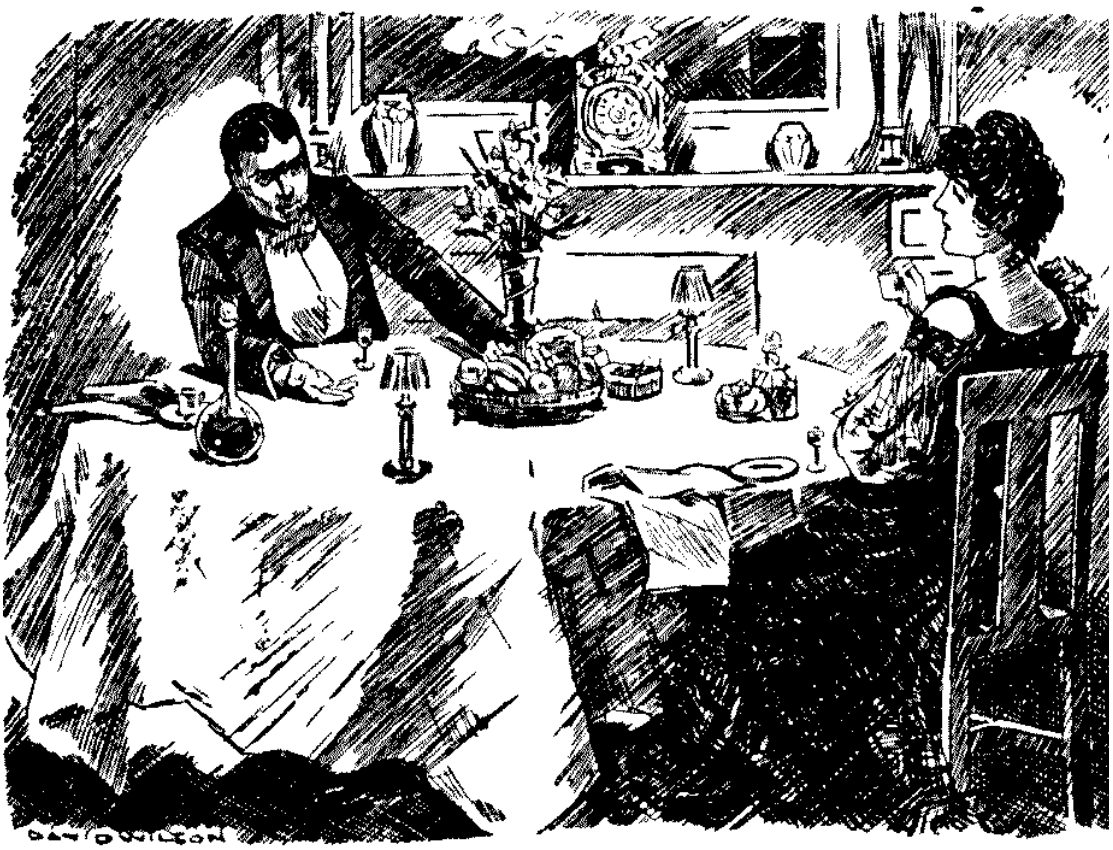
She. "I told you that your old aunt had a will of her own."
He (tired of waiting). "I know she has. I only wish she'd enable us to probate it!"

"That's Mrs. Fitz-Jones. You never see her without her husband and her Dachshund."

"Well, they make a very good pair."

A FAIR AVERAGE

Visitor. "Lady Evelyn tells me, Dan'l, that you have had four wives."
Dan'l (proudly). "Ess, zur, I 'ave—an' what's more, *two of 'em was good 'uns!*"



Adolphus (penitently). "So sorry, dearest, that I was angry with you yesterday evening, and lost my temper."

Olivia. "Pray don't mention it, Dolly. It wasn't a very good one, and I'm sure you can easily find a better."

DROP BY DROP

Nine Stages of a Love Story

First place, I dropped my eye on her,
  And she dropped hers, so blushfully!
Then I "dropped in,"—her sire sold fur,—
  Then "dropped a line," most gushfully.
I dropped a deal of ready cash
  On her and her relations,
Then dropped some hints—that course proved rash—
  About her "expectations."
She dropped on me, daring to ask
  Such questions. Here I stopped her.
Her—bankrupt—sire then dropped the mask,
    And I—well then, I dropped her!

DEFINITIONS.—Mater: One who finds *mates* for her daughters. Check Mate: A husband with money.

"THE MISSIS" WOULD OBLIGE

Philanthropist. "I'm sorry to see you in this condition, Parker. I'm afraid you'll miss the lecture to-night."

Parker. "Oh no, I shan't. I'm goin'—shtraightome."

A YOUNG HUSBAND'S LAMENT

Oh, I am weary, weary,
    Of that pretty pinky face,
Of the blank of its no meaning,
    The gush of its grimace.

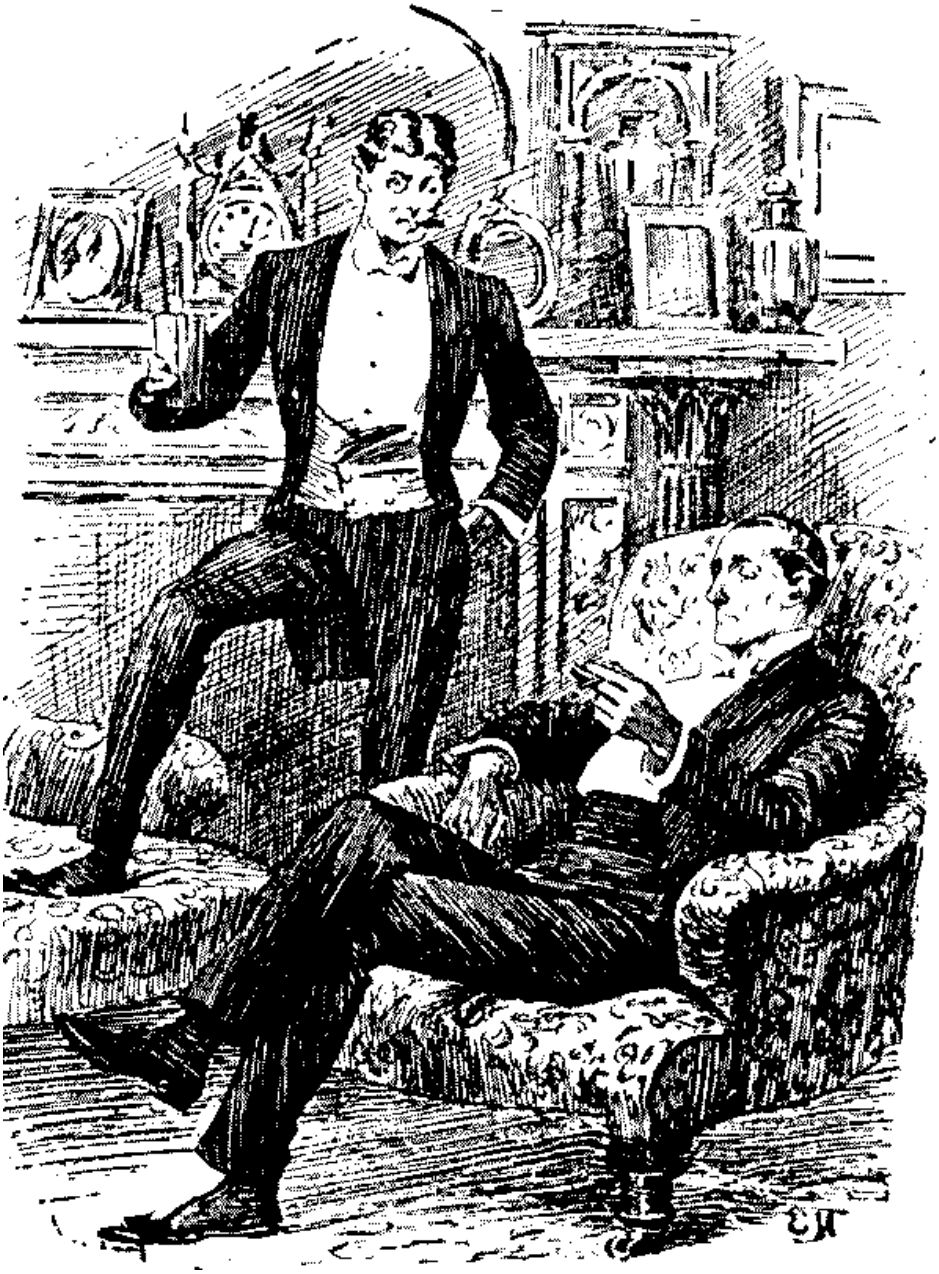
And I am weary, weary,
    Of her silly, simpering ways,
Bugles, buckles, buttons, spangles,
    Tight tiebacks, tighter stays.

And I am weary, weary,
    Of that hollow little laugh,
Of the slang that stands for humour,
    Of the chatter and the chaff.

Sick of the inch-deep feeling
    Of that hollow little heart,
Its "too lovely" latest fashions,
    Its "too exquisite" high Art.

Its Church high, higher, highest,
    Their curates and their clothes,
Their intonings, genuflections,
    Masqueradings, mops and mows.

But I must curb my temper,
    Grumbling helps not wedlock's ills.
Fashion, High Church, or Æsthetics,
    Let me grin and pay the bills!



FOREWARNED

Claude Merridew, leaderette-writer, reviewer, &c. (sentimentally). "Whenever I think of Althæa, Miss Vansittart I mean, I am irresistibly reminded of those matchless words of Steele's—'To love her was a liberal education.'"

Algy (following the idea with difficulty). "That's all right, old man, that's all right, 'course I know a lot of you writin' chaps are like that, but I think I ought to tell you that her father is one of the head johnnies in the Primrose League."

THE EDUCATION OF HUSBANDS

ow suggestive is the new year of bills; and bills of housekeeping. It is fearful to reflect how many persons rush into matrimony, totally unprepared for the awful change that awaits them. A man may take a wife at twenty-one, before he knows the difference between a chip and a Leghorn! We would no more grant a marriage licence to anybody simply because he is of age, than a licence, on that ground only, to practise as an apothecary. Husbands ought to be educated. We should like to have the following questions put to young and inexperienced "Persons about to Marry:"—

Are you aware, sir, of the price of coals and candles?

Do you know which is more economical, the aitch-bone, or the round?

How far, young man, will a leg of mutton go in a small family?

How much dearer, now, is silver than Britannia?

Please to give the average price of a four-poster.

Declare, if you can, rash youth, the sum, per annum, that chemisettes, pelerines, cardinals, bonnets, veils, caps, ribbons, flowers, gloves, cuffs, and collars, would probably come to in the lump.

If unable to answer these inquiries, we would say to him, "Go back to school."

He that would be a husband should also undergo a training, physical and moral. He should be further examined thus:—

Can you read or write amid the yells of a nursery?

Can you wait any given time for breakfast?

Can you maintain your serenity during a washing-day?

Can you cut your old friends?

Can you stand being contradicted in the face of all reason?

Can you keep your temper when you are not listened to?

Can you do what you are told without being told why?

In a word, young sir, have you the patience of Job?

If you can lay your hand upon your heart and answer "Yes," take your licence and marry—not else.

To Policemen about to Marry.—When you are about to marry, visit as many cooks as you can, so as to give you the widest possible area for your choice. Avoid housemaids, whose occupation does not admit of the accumulation of much dust to come down with; and remember that there is nothing like kitchen-stuff for greasing the wheel of fortune. When married, a policeman will be justified in living above his station—if he can get a room there for nothing.

LINES TO MY LADY-LOVE

(*By a Commonplace Person*)

To thee, were I a humble bee,
   I'd hourly wing my honeyed flight;
To thee, were I a ship at sea,
   I'd sail, tho' land were in my sight:
To thee, were I a pussy cat,
   I'd spring, as tho' 'twere on a rat!

To thee, were I a stickleback
   I'd swim as fast as fins could move;
To thee, were I a hunter's hack,
   I'd gallop on the hoofs of love:
But as I'm but a simple man,
   I'll come by train, love—if I can!

He. "Are you still living at the same address in town, Mrs. Jones?"
She. "Yes. But since I've become a widow, I've been looking for another flat!"

Miss Short. "Isn't my name an absurd misfit, Mr. Long?"

Mr. Long (thoughtlessly). "Yes, rather. If you could have mine it would be all right, wouldn't it?"

Miss Short. "Oh, Mr. Long, this is so sudden!"

THE ALTERNATIVE

The Doctor. "Well, Mrs. Barnes, I must offer you my congratulations. I hear you've married again. And have you given up your occupation of washing?"

Mrs. Barnes. "Oh, no, sir. But, you see, if I 'adn't taken '*e*, I'd 'a' 'ad to 'a' bought a donkey!"

"Now, George dear, it's your first birthday in the new century. What good resolutions are you going to make?"

"Well, for one thing, I intend to be much more regular in my habits."

"Why not *give them all up*, dear?"

FAMILY CARES

First Excursionist. "Int'restin' ruins these, sir."

Second Ditto (the bread-winner). "'Mye-es. 'Don't care for ruins m'self though." (*Pointing to his olive branches in the background.*) "Them's ruin enough for me?"

WHOM NOT TO MARRY:

Or, Diogenes the Younger

The Lady with a Mission.—She will fill your house with parsons or professors, lecture you on her pet hobby when she can get no other audience (which will be pretty often), consider all your old friends frivolous, and treat you with supreme contempt if you venture to hint that you like your dinner punctually, and properly cooked.

The Lady of Fashion.—She will regard you as an appendage, a cheque-drawing animal, a useful purveyor of equipages and dresses and diamonds and lace, a person to be ignored as much as possible in Society.

The Millionaire's Daughter.—She will persistently make you aware that it is *her* house you live in, *her* carriage you drive, that the servants are *hers*, the dinners *hers* —that, in fact, she has bought you, and given for you much more than you are really worth.

The Pious-Parochial Lady.—She will devote all her time to the distribution of tracts, the inspection of cottages, the collection of gossip, and interviews with the curate. Each curate will be a more "blessed" man than his predecessor, especially if he have the shifty eyes, aggressive teeth, narrow forehead, and shambling knees which modern curatism has developed.

The Female Novelist. She will sit up all night writing improprieties, and pass all day in town, worrying publishers, who are at present sad victims of the irrepressible petticoat.

The Horsey Woman. She will laugh at you as a muff if you don't ride across country, buy "screws" from her particular friends that you will have to sell for as many tens as she gave hundreds, and cost you a fortune in doctors' bills by breaking her collar-bone at least once every season.

The Gushing Female. She will devour you with kisses, to the injury of your shirt-front, or weep on your bosom, with much the same result. To her either is equally delightful.

The Widow. Diogenes pauses. The theme is too great for him. *Vide Mr. Weller, sen.*, in *Pickwick, passim.*

TRITE BUT TRUE

"Music's the food of love" they say,
  This is a passage every one now quotes;
The truth is clear, for in the present day,
  Young love is fed entirely *on notes.*

"Our Failures."—*Husband.* "I say, Lizzie, what on earth did you make this mint-sauce of?"

Young Wife (who has been "helping" Cook). "Parsley, to be sure!"

APPEARANCES ARE DECEPTIVE

He. "Who's that?"
She. "Jack Anstruther and his bride. He married ever so much beneath him."
He. "Doesn't look like it!"

BREAKING THE NEWS

Newly Affianced One. "May I be your new mamma, Tommy?"
Tommy. "*I* should like it, but you must ask papa."

ONE GOOD TURN DESERVES ANOTHER

She. "But if you say you can't bear the girl, why *ever* did you propose?"

He. "Well, her people have always been awfully good to me, and it's the only way I could return their hospitality."

Ethel. "Well, Jimmy didn't blow his brains out after all because you refused him. He proposed to Miss Golightly yesterday."

Maud. "Did he? Then he must have got rid of them in some other way!"

ADVICE TO MATCH-MAKING MAMMAS.—The first and only thing requisite is simply, as Mrs. Glass very wisely says, "First catch your heir."

A HAPPY HOLIDAY.—*The Bachelor.* "So you're looking after the house while your wife is taking a holiday? I hope she's enjoying the change?"

The Benedict. "I know *I* am."

"CREATURE COMFORTS."—Good wives.

How to Cure an Imprudent Attachment.—*Materfamilias.* "What *is* to be done, my dear? He positively *dotes* on her!" *Paterfamilias.* "Well, we must try to find him an *antidote*."

Divorce.—A matrimonial ticket-of-leave.

The Desire of Pleasing.—"May I be married, ma?" said a lovely girl of fifteen to her mother the other morning. "Married!" exclaimed the astonished matron, "what put such an idea into your head?" "Little Emily, here, has never seen a wedding; and I'd like to amuse the child," replied the obliging sister, with fascinating *naïveté*.

A Woman's Will.—Won't!!!

"I dunno what 'er misshus 'll shay—but any'ow 'm nor goin' to preten I'm shober"—(*hic*).

A Contradiction in Terms.—Man and wife.

Automatic Couplings.—Scotch marriages.

The Family Herald.—A monthly nurse.

The Worst Result of Vivisection.—Eve.

(*By an incorrigible Old Bachelor, who is hiding himself for fear of consequences.*)

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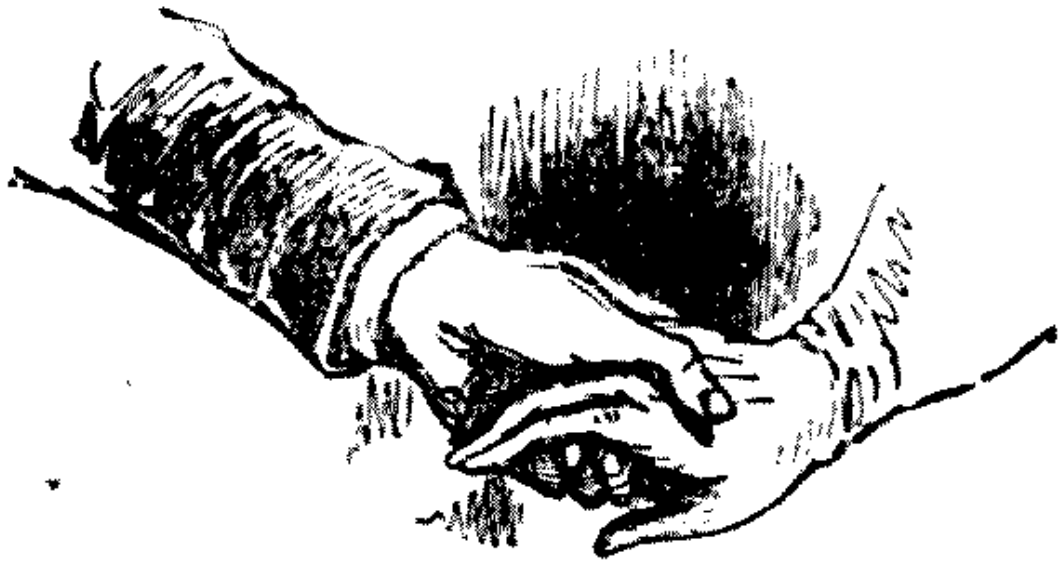

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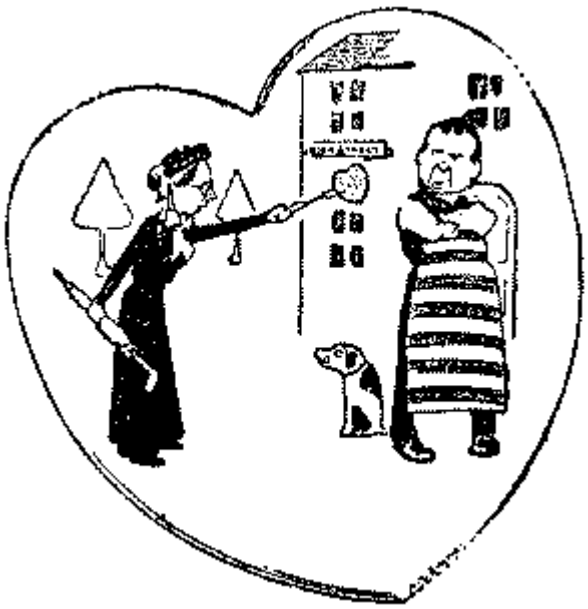

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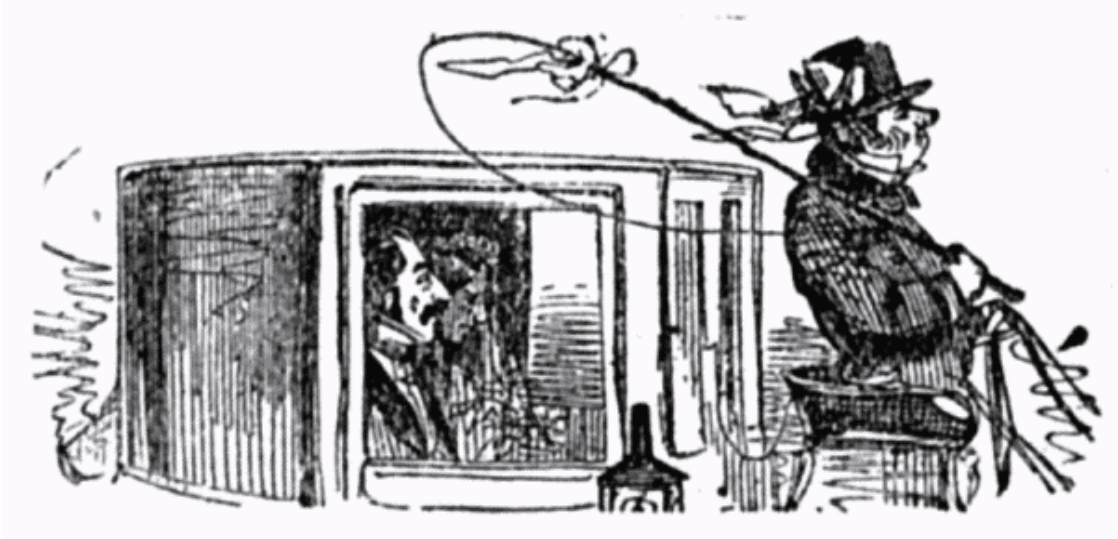

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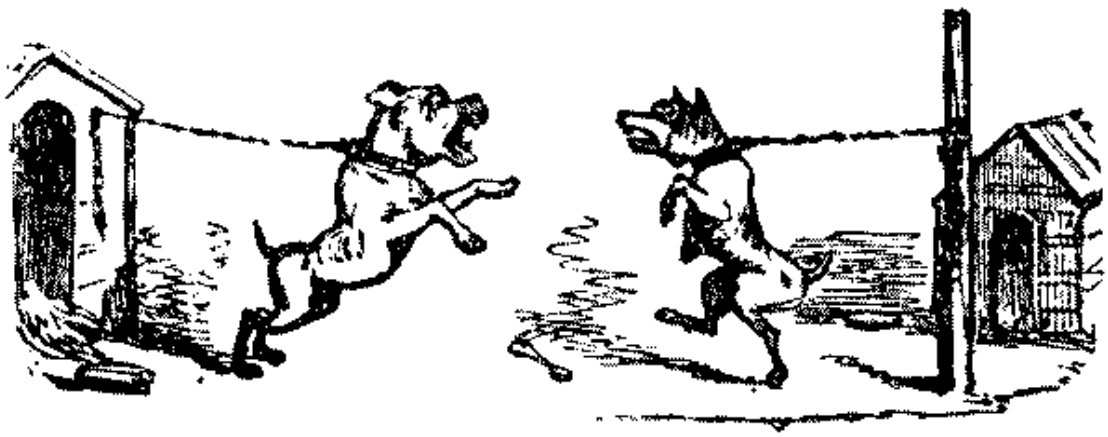

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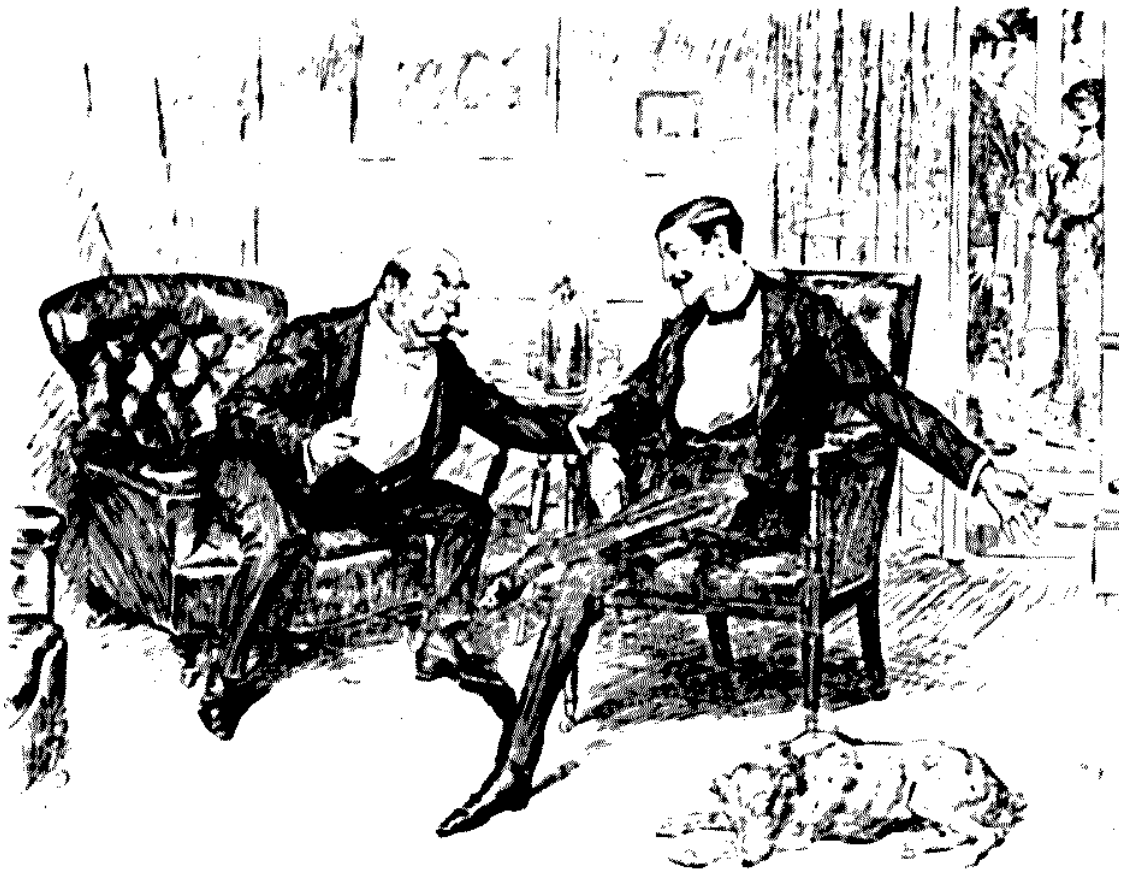

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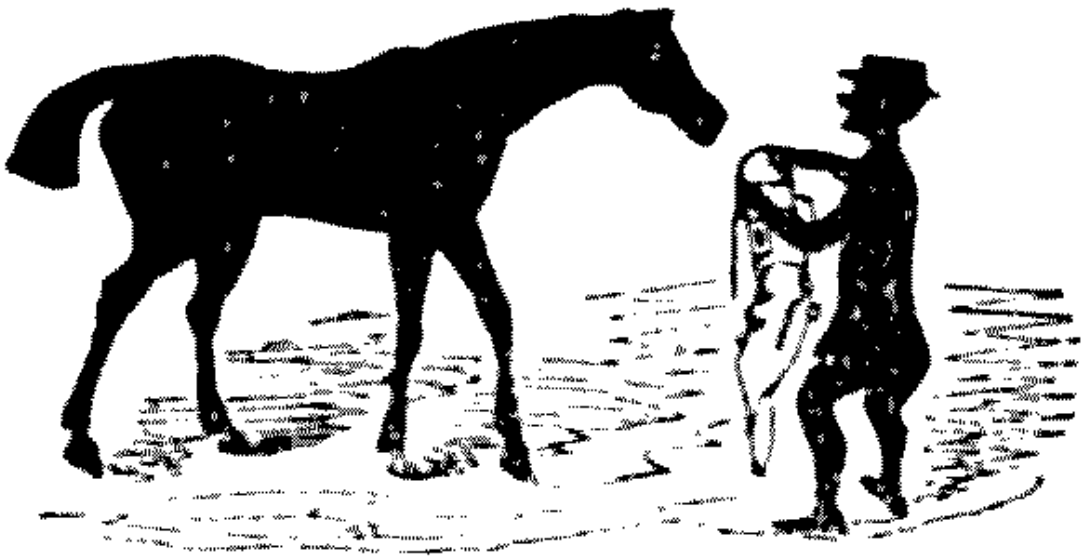

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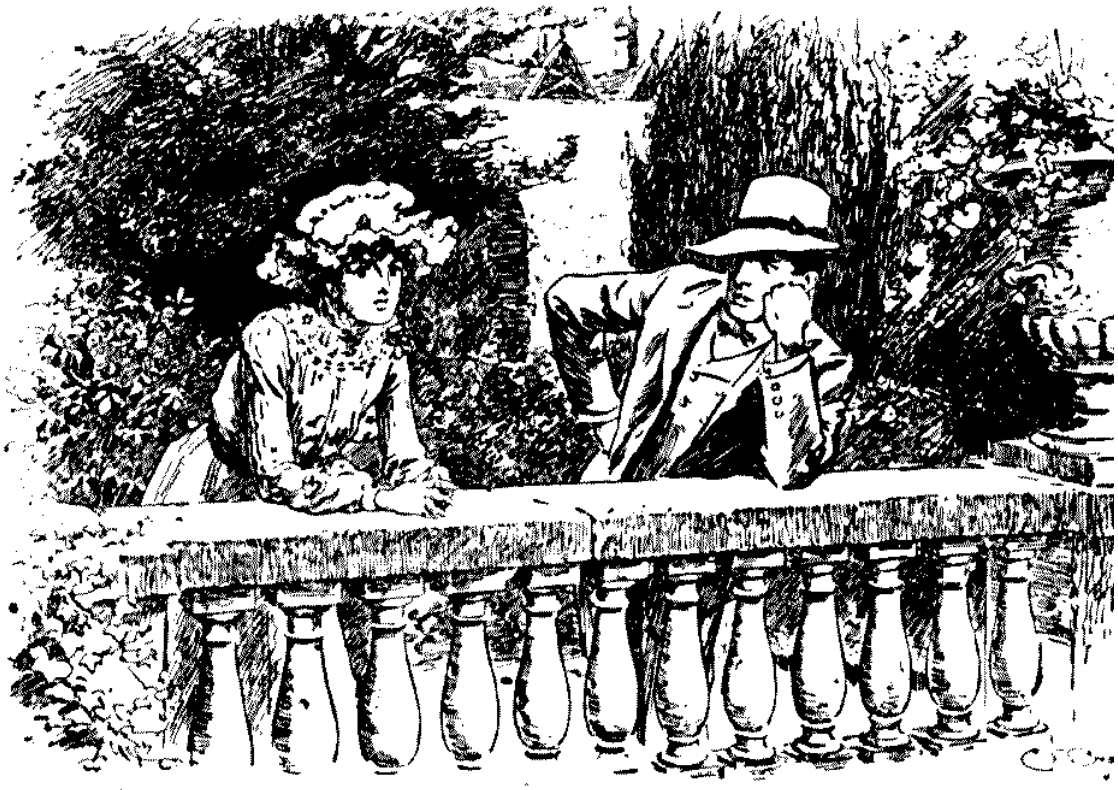

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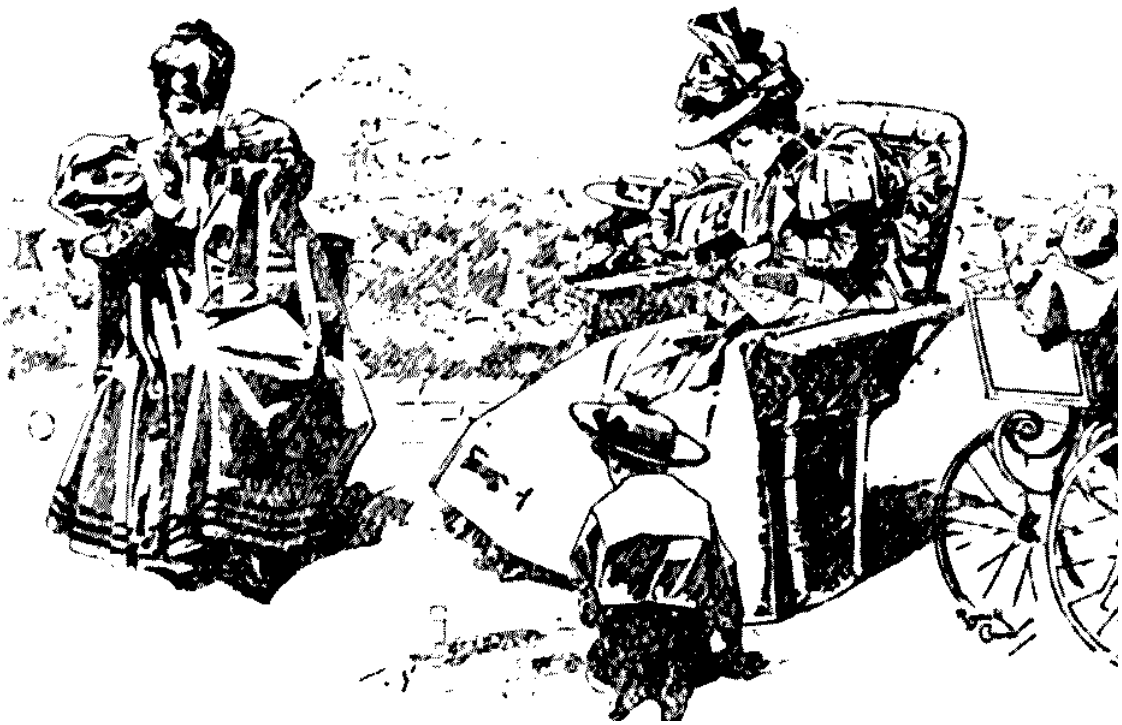

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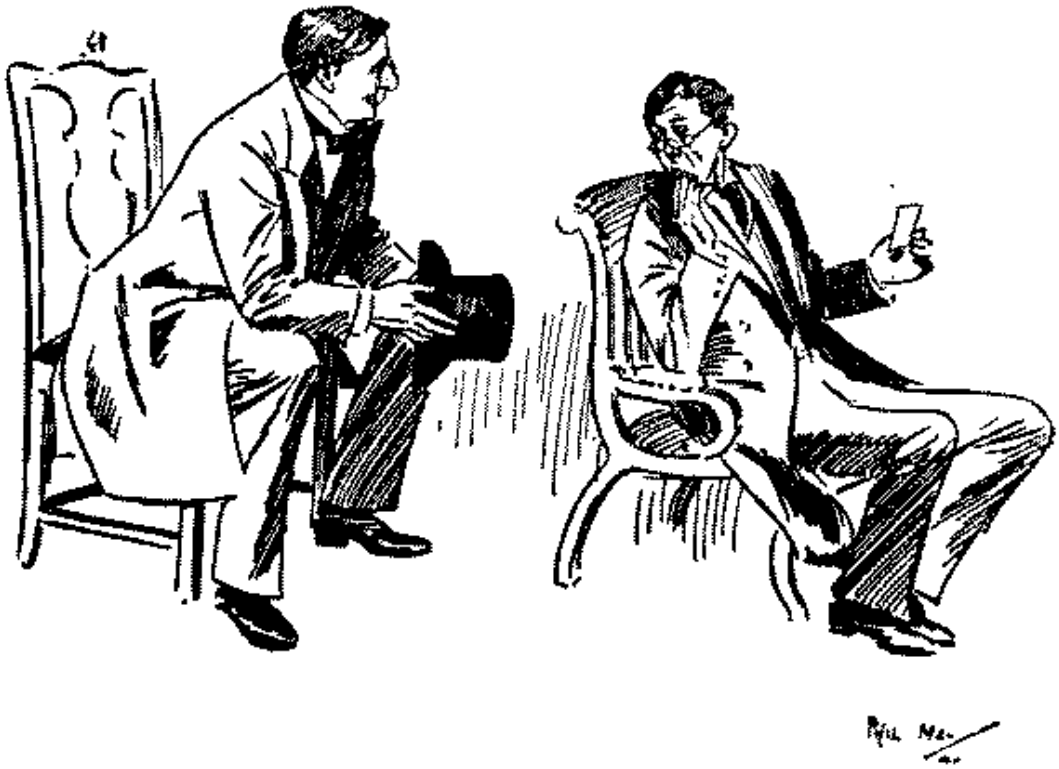

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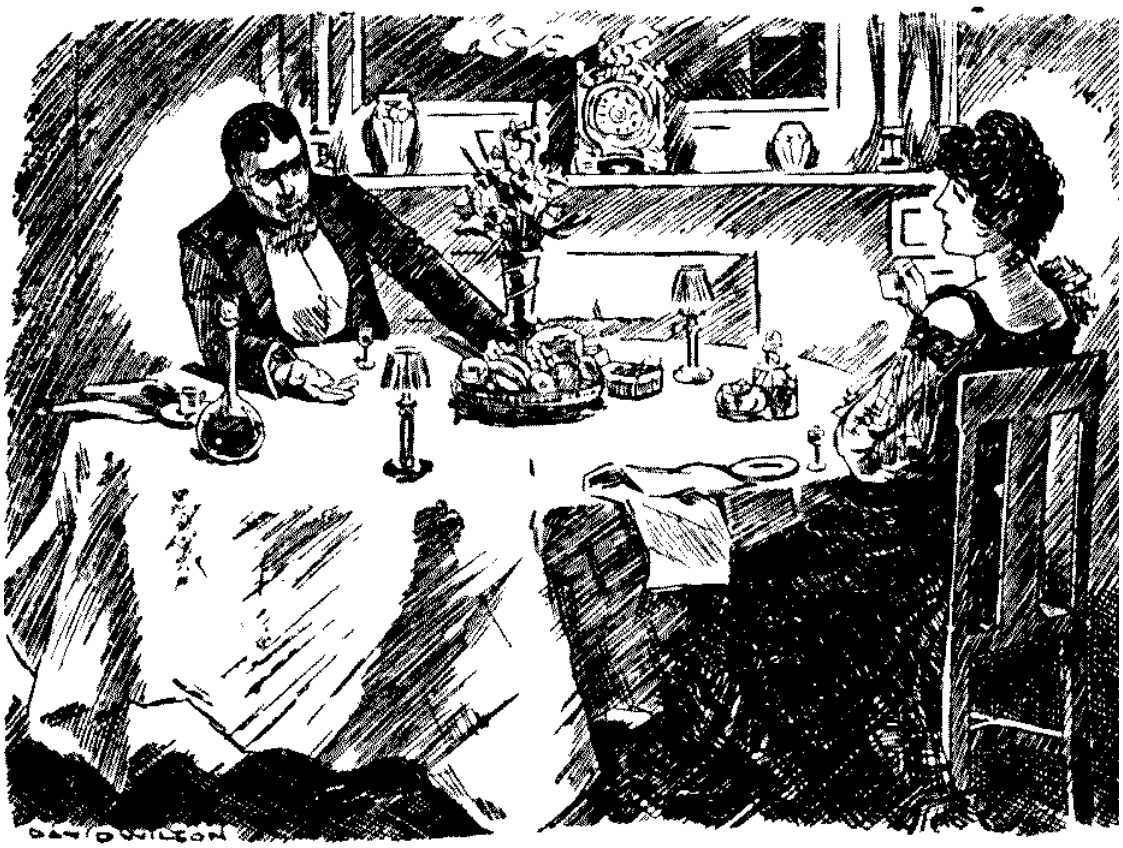

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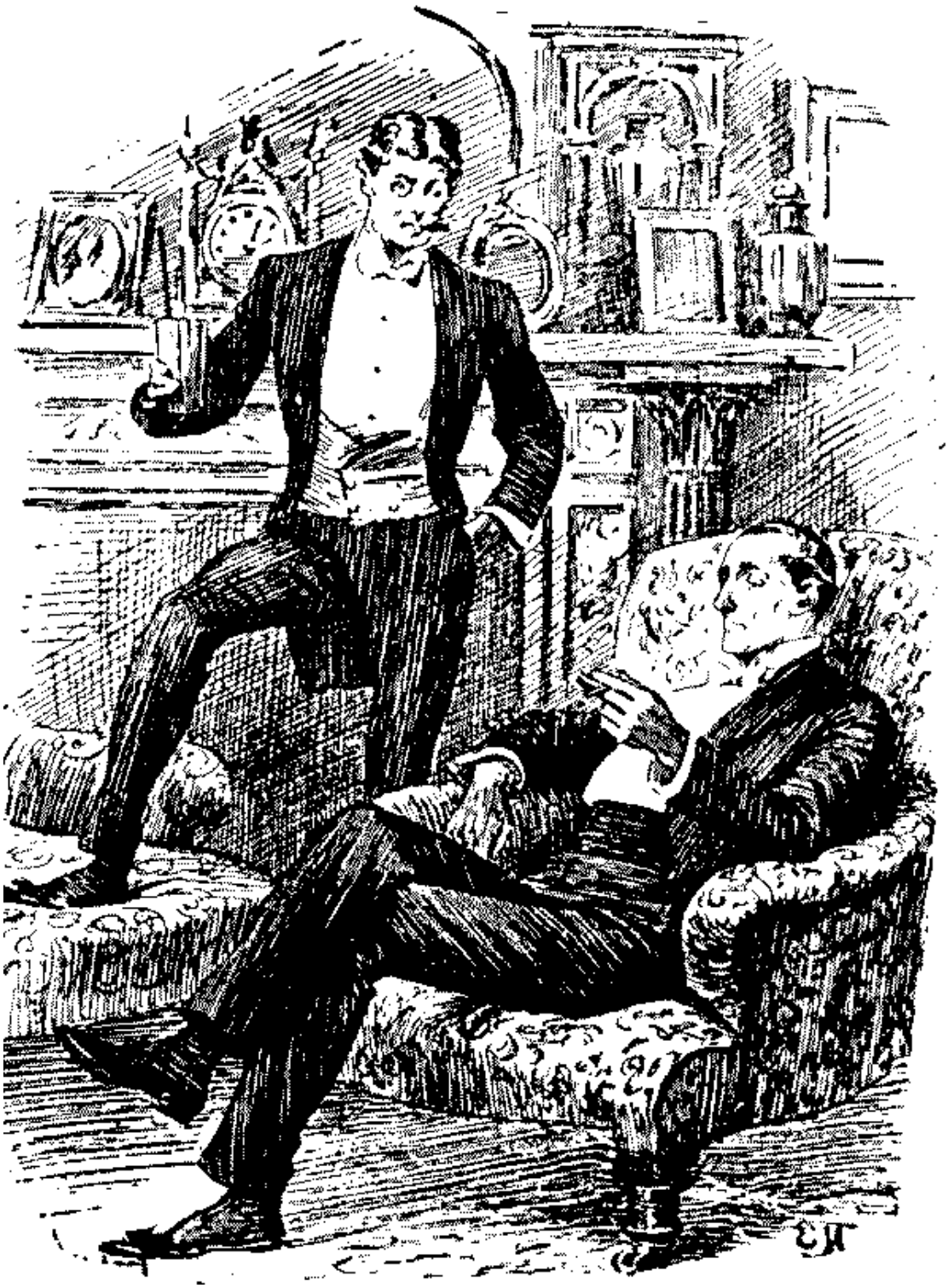

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