

A Springtime Thaw

By ANNA REDFERN

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Big Bill Sheldon was decidedly not a Westerner. One could have guessed that fact by his air of reserve—a refined, courteous, but nevertheless clearly obvious I-am-sufficient-for-myself manner. The manner, however, was not of Bill's own choosing; rather was it a product of environment. Moreover, it was a source of deep grievance to him, for try as hard as he might he could not make friends, with a reserve as impenetrable as the Rock of Gibraltar rising between himself and every one he met. Even the glad spontaneity of a merry Western city, where friendliness was the rule, rather than the reverse, seemed not to melt the ice. How could his new-found acquaintances divine for themselves that within his six feet bulk of calm, blond nonchalance lay a desire for adventure as keen as that of some twelve-year-old devotee of Nick Carter; or that the wistful look showing forth every now and then from his deep gray eyes betokened only the strong desire that somewhere, sooner or later, some one would notice him and really like him in spite of himself. No wonder he moped; and no wonder Aunt Della stood at her wit's end to entertain him. She had fed him to the fattening point; she had introduced him in turn to every one she knew; she had waited on him more tenderly than his own mother would have done, and still he looked bored.

"I think, auntie," he said after the first week of agony, "that I shall have to be starting for home. Father can scarcely run the shop without me—much as I would like to stay," he added as a polite afterthought.

There was no doubt that Bill was homesick. And whether 6 feet 200 pounds suffers proportionately more than does 5 feet 100 pounds, even Bill had no heart to answer. Blue to the bottom of his No. 8 boots, he paced gloomily around Aunt Della's sunny, comfortable living room, impatiently bumping against knock-knocks and chairs. Fourteen times without stopping he paced. On the fifteenth round he stopped by the long French window with a jerk. He pulled aside the blue cretonne curtains, and drawing himself erect in the soft spring sunshine he drank in the pleasing sight through eyes and nose and mouth.

The morning was clear and fair and radiant; the clouds were blue and soft and fleecy; the lawns were lush and green with young grass; the trees were newly in leaf. But a fairer sight than all this caught and held his attention. In a neighboring yard, scarcely two rods away, there flashed a maiden back and forth with movements as graceful and dainty as those of some wood nymph.

With a few deft movements she drew up the sagging white-string net and fastened it taut across the tennis court. She tried out her balls and rackets with a bubbling, boylike exultancy, as if the tonic of springtime had found affinity with her feet. "Yough," gasped Bill, and "Yough!" "Oh, auntie, who's the young lady next door?"

Aunt Della carefully set her pie crust in the yellow mixing bowl, wiped her hands and came at her young nephew's excited call.

"That's no young lady," she corrected. "That is Irene Roberts. Why, I've known that child ever since she was born."

"How long is that, auntie?" Bob persisted.

"Well, now, let me see. It must be twenty years or thereabouts." Bob raised his eyebrows quizzically, but Aunt Della rattled on. "Yes, and just as you see her now she's always been—jumping, running, playing tennis, riding horseback. She's a regular tomboy."

To Aunt Della Irene was just the same madcap little girl that she had always known from childhood up. Not so to Bill! He stood by the window and watched his lively young neighbor's gyrations with distinct approval. "She is flame and action," he mused as her red-brown bobbed curls flashed in the sunshine. Altogether he approved of her—of her trim white flannel dress and high-cut russet boots, of her well-knit, graceful figure swaying in the sheer delight of motion, and her frank boyish activity. So much did he approve that the wistful look came back into his deep brown eyes, and the homesick feeling formed a hard lump and settled in his throat.

That she had no companion in her game seemed not to bother Irene at all. Back and forth she scintillated, her tennis ball now on one side of the net, now on the other.

Suddenly she threw down her ball and started toward Bill's point of observance. "Auntie Bascom," she called. "I'm coming in to see you."

Bill's experience of twenty-two years, did not include instruction in chain-lightning action. Of course, he wanted to meet the girl. For what else had he been planning during the last fifteen minutes but for this? However, this was sudden action. As Irene called he hastily drew back from the window and began measuring with his eyes the distance from his window to the kitchen where Aunt Della kept busily at work. In the open he could have covered it with three leaps, but here there was furniture to intervene. Too, Irene had seen him at her first

glance. There seemed no graceful way of escape. So Bill threw back the long French window and stood bravely waiting for events to happen.

"Irene, this is my nephew, Bill Sheldon, from the East," called Auntie Bascom from the other room.

Bill gravely acknowledged the introduction with a bow, striving meantime to down the rising reserve which was always intensified by a meeting with a stranger.

"I'm pleased to meet you." Irene's full-throated voice rang out pleasantly as she extended her firm white hand and raised her blue, blue eyes to his. She waited for no reserve to melt. In fact, she neither felt nor noticed any such thing.

"Do you play tennis?" she inquired, with a glance toward the racket in her hand.

Then Bill surprised himself. "Just try me," he answered, "when you finish your errand."

Auntie Bascom heaved a sigh of relief as they walked off together. "Irene'll keep him amused for a little while," she ejaculated, "although I know he won't approve of her romping ways."

Somehow there was not any more talk of going home, and somehow Bill began to take an interest in his visit. Never did Aunt Della attribute this change to the lively Irene, for there was always a crowd of young people together. Her enlightenment came suddenly and unintentionally.

Bill had gone away for the evening. The dishes had been carefully washed and dried. The soft evening breeze blew by the open door with a pulling force. Throwing a shawl about her shoulders, Aunt Della started across the garden path to her neighbor's, Mrs. Roberts, for a chat. It was a walk that she loved. The moonlight was soft and scented. Her thoughts turned fondly back to the time when she had not walked this path alone. Passing slowly along, she stopped for a moment by the summer house. Her attention was caught by a familiar voice:

"But, Irene, are you sure that you can put up with an old stupid like me?"

Then a tremulously happy voice replied:

"Oh, Bill, are you sure you will never call me a tomboy?"

Aunt Della wanted to pass quietly along, but her astonishment held her rooted to the spot. Bill sensing the presence of an outsider discovered her. He drew the gentle Irene out into the soft glow of the moonlight.

"You may kiss Irene, auntie," he generously offered in bold confidence.

"You may have known her ever since she was a baby, but I shall even that up, for I expect to know and love her for the rest of her lifetime."

Murderer's Oversight.

Perhaps the smallest creature that ever unrolled the curtain from before an unsuspected murder was that which convicted the murderer of Mr. and Mrs. Newtown in 1898. A stationmaster sold a ticket at a small station and received a silver coin dated 1820, rather oddly marked. He put the coin in his pocket and placed another in the till, and that afternoon showed it to some of his friends. A man recognized it immediately as one that Newtown had kept for some time as a pocketpiece and lucky coin, and this was the first hint gained by the detectives as to where they should look for the murderer, who was subsequently apprehended and convicted. It was a minute trifle, this handing over a coin, but it brought the murderer to the just punishment which his crime deserved. Had he chanced on any other piece of money in his pocket—and it was afterwards known that he had a pocketful of money—he would in all probability have remained undiscovered.—London Mail.

If Your Eyes Are Tired.

Seat yourself on one side of the room, facing the wall opposite. Hold the head still and raise the eyes slowly until you are looking as nearly as possible at the ceiling above you. Now lower the eyes, looking at the floor before you. Take care, when looking down, not to focus the eyes on the nose, but on the floor at your feet. Repeat this ten times, but take care not to over-weary the eyes.

Now look as far to the right as possible, then slowly shift the gaze to the left. Repeat as before.

For a final exercise, imagine a huge circle in the air before you, and without moving the head, follow the outlines of this circle with your eyes, beginning at the left, and going to the right for ten times, then beginning at the right and moving toward the left.

When your exercises are over, bathe the eyes in warm water to which you have added a pinch of boracic acid, then close them and rest for five minutes.

Telling Fortunes With Oil.

Among the Kherrias of India a very curious marriage ceremony is reported. Taking a portion of the hair of the bride and bridegroom in turn from the center of the forehead, the priest draws it down onto the bridge of the nose. Then pouring oil on the head, he watches it carefully as it trickles down the portion of hair. If the oil runs straight onto the tip of their nose their future will be fortunate, but if it spreads over the forehead or trickles off on either side of the nose, ill luck is sure to follow. Their fortunes told, generally to their own satisfaction, the final part of the ceremony takes place. Standing up side by side, but with faces strictly averted, the bride and bridegroom mark each other's forehead with "sindur" (vermillion).

WOOL SET FOR WINTER WEAR



"Great" for fall and winter days when one loves to feel the "bite" of the crisp air yet wants to be properly protected from treacherous chills and drafts. It is in tan and brown. The little cap is made in much the same style as the United States overseas cap.

UP-TO-DATE TABLE SERVICE

More Favorable Comment From Daintiness Than From Amount of Solid Food.

The hostess who would be smart and modern must keep up with all the latest notions anent table service and food garnishing. A square meal well cooked is well enough in its way; more important—vastly more important—is the service thereof, and a few light edibles perfectly served will give that hostess a higher reputation among her women friends, at least, than any amount of good solid food minus the little touches that bespeak up-to-dateness.

For instance, the butter knife is an obsolete affair; almost as obsolete as the ancient soup ladle no more seen on the modern dinner table. Soup is served in plates by the maid—no tureen or ladle are in evidence.

As for butter, the little squares or cubes—now much smarter than roly-poly butter balls—are taken up with a dainty silver two-pronged fork, or "butter pick." The same little fork may be used at tea hour for picking up lemon slices for the tencups.

Small silver butter spreaders are still correct at the individual places and the smartest butter plates now are of silver, plain and rather flat, about the size of a saucer and engraved with a monogram in the center.

No housewife now is completely happy until she has coaxed a set of silver vegetable dishes from her better half. And if her cup of happiness is to be full he will provide also one of those stunning silver plate meat platters with a gravy "tree" grooved out in the center, like the old Sheffield plate meat platters.

In solid silver these table belongings are rather costly; but silver plate is not to be despised and meat and vegetable dishes of good plate are found in many well-appointed homes.

Dinner napkins are not the mammoth affairs that they were—perhaps because linen became so scarce and precious during the war. But the really handsome napkin, of moderate size, has an inch-wide hemstitched hem and a beautifully hand-embroidered monogram or initial across one corner. Sometimes the embroidered motif is in the exact center of the napkin, which is folded by the laundress so that the monogram comes in the center of a square.

HEAD-DRESS MORE ORNATE

French Milliners Inaugurate Style Hailed as Omen of Lavish Season of Old.

French milliners have shown the effect of the dawn of peace more in the creation of their elaborate and ornate head-dresses than in anything else, for these ornaments are so essentially a luxury and intended to be worn only with the most sumptuous of gowns.

The most costly fabrics have been employed in their making, and French pearls are used in large quantities. Paradise branches finish the ends of many of these pearl bandeaux, and heavy cloths of gold and silver are bound about the heads, hardly showing the hair.

Many of these head-dresses or bandeaux were worn showing the elaborate use of paradise. Some bandeaux of silver or gold braid supported a coronet of unfringed pastel-tinted ostrich banding standing high about the hair and allowing a knot of it to come through the crownless top.

This item in particular called forth much comment for the reason that every one hailed it as the omen of a lavish season and the return to the old-time seasons when dress hats were so much in demand.

DAIRY



GROOMING COWS IS FAVORED

Animal is Naturally Clean and it is Dairymen's Duty to Keep Her So—Means More Milk.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Sightliness and attractiveness are feminine assets which extend even to the dairy cow. Naturally she is a clean and tidy beast. Unfortunately man has been obliged to confine the dairy cow closely in stables during certain periods of the year, with the consequence that unless he daily brushes and grooms the dairy matrons, their sleek, seemly coats soon lose their gloss and luster and become densely matted with dirt and litter. For the same reasons that it pays to groom horses—greater efficiency from neat, spick-span coats—it also proves invaluable to "doll up" the dairy cow daily by vigorous application of brush and curry comb. Cow comfort—that inexplorable condition of well-being which means animal satisfaction and the economical production of the maximum flow of milk—is fostered by careful and persistent grooming during the season when the cows need such extra attention, as ordinarily during the pasture period the animals of their own accord keep themselves clean.

The enthusiastic use of the brush and currycomb, supplemented by a moist cloth, as siege guns against dust and dirt, are good mediums for increased production, according to the opinions of progressive dairymen reported to the United States department of agriculture. They maintain that the clean coats and luxurious feelings of contentment induce increased production of milk. If you doubt the profits from grooming dairy cows, put it up to Bossie and her stable mates via the referendum-vote method.

From a sanitary standpoint, the densely matted, filthy and caked coat of the dirty cow is one of the main sources of contamination in milk. Filth dries on the body of the animal, and, unless it is removed previous to milking, a portion of it is likely to fall into the milk pail and carry undesirable bacteria with it. Hence,



Grooming Increases Cow Comfort and Makes for Clean Milk.

grooming cows is a fundamental safeguard against inferior, germ-laden milk. Where cows are groomed daily during their period of close confinement an attendant requires only about two or three minutes a cow to prepare and gloss up the animals as though for a banquet. On the other hand, it is difficult and time-consuming to clean off cows which have been kept without grooming in a dirty stable.

The commendable practice is to groom and clean the cows daily at such a time between the milking periods that there will be abundant opportunity for the dust put into circulation to settle so that it will not contaminate the milk as it is drawn from the cows. It is necessary for best results to wipe off the udder and flanks of each cow with a moist, clean cloth just before milking, in order to remove all the surface dust and dirt which has escaped the previous clean-up processes. It is recommended that dairymen exercise special care to provide plenty of material so that at all times they may use clean cloths in preparing the cows for milking, as too commonly the wiping cloth, unless carefully handled, becomes a source of contamination. It is also advisable to clip off the long hairs from udder and flanks of each cow.

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THAT CHANGE IN WOMAN'S LIFE

Mrs. Godden Tells How It May be Passed in Safety and Comfort.

Fremont, O.—"I was passing through the critical period of life, being forty-six years of age and had all the symptoms incident to that change—heat flashes, nervousness, and was in a general run down condition, so it was hard for me to do my work. Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound was recommended to me as the best remedy for my troubles, which it surely proved to be. I feel better and stronger in every way since taking it, and the annoying symptoms have disappeared."—Mrs. M. GODDEN, 925 Napoleon St., Fremont, Ohio.

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It's a queer world. If you don't think so try to count all the good friends who have been away on vacations that you haven't missed.

Governor Sends Troops.

Seattle, Wash.—Company F of the Third Washington Infantry was ordered to Contralia Tuesday. The company was said to be about 75 strong. At the office of Brigadier-General Moss, adjutant-general of the state, here, it was said by General Moss that whether further troops would be sent would depend upon the situation at Contralia after the arrival of Company F.

Locusts in Algeria have found a dangerous enemy in a fly which follows them and lays its eggs where they lay theirs.

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Sixth and Everett Sts., Portland, Ore. Four blocks from Union Depot. Two blocks from New Postoffice. Modern and fireproof. Over 100 outside rooms. Rates 75c to \$2.00. P. G. MORGAN, Manager.

Patent Pie Pan.

An inventor has patented a pie pan in two sections that can be taken apart without danger of breaking its contents.

We can all do good work, for all that is required is to follow directions laid down by other people who have done good work before us. It may be that we can improve on what other people have done, and after a while it may be that we can strike out a line for ourselves. Most of us will find that if we do the best we can, even in the most plodding way, we shall find ourselves improving and rising, step by step, in our chosen task.—New York Evening Telegraph.

Fish Live in Ice.

During several months of each year some of the great rivers of Siberia are frozen solid to the bottom, but the fishes imprisoned in the ice maintain their vitality and resume their active life when the ice melts in the spring.

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