

**BUBBLES ON THE STREAM.**

See the bubbles as they float on the stream,  
They are men!  
You see there and moving swiftly on your way:  
I behold you pass, and then  
Find myself a peaceful sddy, and I stay  
There and dream.  
See the little bubbles bursting ere they start:  
See the bubbles that have troubles as they go.  
Each is some one's counterpart,  
Each is doomed to weal or woe.  
Some are carried with the current, some  
Are dashed  
To destruction on the shores; some are dashed  
By the water, which is Fate,  
And the bubble that is great  
Oft is whirled around forever in some dark,  
Secured pool,  
While there's many a little fool  
Of a bubble that goes floating smoothly past.  
Ah, the bubbles are but men—some are tossed  
Fiercely out against obstructions and are lost.  
Some are cast  
In the stream where all is clear,  
And at last,  
Whether justly or unjustly, it has got  
Far away from where it started forth or not.  
Each frail bubble has to burst and disappear—  
Where they sparkle now and gleam  
Others shall appear again;  
The bubbles come and go upon the stream,  
They are men.  
—S. E. Kiser, in Chicago Record-Herald.

**The Way the Stories End**

By J. A. FLYNN

"WELL?" I asked, as she laid down the gayly-covered magazine. I was sorry for the ending of the tale, when the gray eyes ceased to flash and the kind lips to quiver.

"It is a pretty story, Mr. Norton," she said. "O, no, you needn't shake your head. I'm not saying so just because it's yours. I cannot imagine how you could write it."

"Pen and ink, whisky and soda, tailor's bill as a stimulant!"

"Please don't make fun. I want to be serious." When she looks at me in her earnest way I am helpless.

"Does that mean criticism?" I inquired, leaning a little towards her.

"Criticism and inquiry—if I may?"

"Inquiry by all means. I'm rather afraid of your criticism, do you know?" She is very bright, and her remarks often help me, as a matter of fact.

She opened and shut the magazine absently.

"What I was wondering," she said, "was why you wrote so seriously, and talked so frivolously; whether one mood was the real you, and the other a sham you; and which was which?"

"I think," I protested, "I would rather have the criticism, if you don't mind."

She laughed softly. I like her laugh. "It is rather an obtrusive question. But I should very much like to know. You do mean this—she touched the book—"a little, don't you?"

"Ye-es," I said. "I suppose I do. I did when I wrote it, anyhow."

"And afterwards?"

"I keep my seriousness for serious occasions."

"Which is a rebuke for my inquisitiveness, I suppose?" She flushed a little. She is rather pale generally. Some people wouldn't call her good-looking. I do.

"I didn't mean it to be," I apologized. "I ought to be flattered at your interest—"

"In your tales," she corrected.

"In my tales, of course. I suppose the real answer is, that I do not carry my heart upon my sleeve."

"But you have one, all the same?" A touch of wistfulness makes her voice perfect.

"Try!" I caught her eyes for a moment and stopped. I had made up my mind to keep heart-whole before I met her.

"Now for the criticism," she continued, hastily.

"Or as large an installment as I can stand."

"The criticism must not be misunderstood. You will remember, please, that I like the tale—like it very much, in fact." I bowed.

"The criticism is—?"

"That it is a repetition of your other tales." I gasped.

"Why, I thought it was quite different!" She shook her head. "Fresh characters, fresh scenery, new plot, original phrases—"

"The machinery is different, but the story is really the same."

"In what way? In being about a man and a woman?"

"Yes," I laughed.

"If you can invent a third kind of person," I said. "I'll utilize it with pleasure. At present I haven't made the discovery."

"Don't be absurd. What I mean is that your men and women always do the same thing."

"Fall in love."

"Exactly."

"There are lots of ways of doing it," I suggested.

"At the present rate you will soon exhaust them. Whatever will you do then?"

I lit a cigarette with her permission

to aid reflection.

"I'm hanged if I know. I've often wondered myself. Make them fall out of love, I suppose."

"And when you've exhausted that?"

"Make them fall in again!" She stamped her foot impatiently.

"Do you absolutely refuse to be original? I cannot think you do yourself justice in keeping to such a hackneyed theme—though I admit you do it very nicely."

"I might do it better if I had more practical experience," I suggested. There is something about her big eyes and the little droop at the corners of her mouth which makes a fellow say that sort of thing, you know.

"Now, remember our compact," she warned me. We were pledged to a purely platonic friendship. I've had that sort of thing in my tales, but it always broke down.

"The keeping of a platonic compact," said I, "would be a novel theme, don't you think?"

"Would it be interesting enough?" she asked, doubtfully.

"There! What stronger defense could I have? I propose to leave out the love-making, and you say that the interest would be gone." She drummed upon the table with her fingers.

"Surely there is some other theme?" I knocked the ash deliberately off my cigarette.

"Upon my word," I confessed, "I'm not sure that there is. But I'll think over it."

Then her brothers came in and we changed the subject until I was going. It is part of the compact that she shall see me out of the door. I insisted upon it.

"When shall I communicate the result of my deliberations?" I asked in the hall. "To-morrow?"

"I'm going to Vereker's."

"And Wednesday, I'm due at a smoker, Thursday?"

"If you like."

"Thursday, then. Good night, Mary."

It is in the compact that I am not to call her Mary, but I do. Sometimes she objects, sometimes she doesn't. On this occasion she only tossed her head and half turned away from me. She is aware that she looks well in profile. I suddenly bent over her, and—

"How dare you!" she cried, hotly.

"I couldn't help it, Mary; you looked so tempting." But she ran upstairs, with her face scarlet.

"I shall not be in on Thursday," she called, as she turned the corner, "or any other day."

So I went out, feeling triumphantly foolish.

Next Thursday I called, and she wasn't out; but she received me coolly, and kept the table between us.

"Look here, Mary," I began.

"Miss Montague, if you please!"

"I don't please. It is quite natural to call a friend by her Christian name."

"Ye-es; but people might misunderstand, we agreed; and so—"

"I'm not going to pander to other people's stupidity," I said, indignantly; "and I don't consider that friendship should have to be weighed and measured in exact words." I had prepared this remark beforehand.

"No—; perhaps not." I knew it would score. "Still, there are bounds to friendship." She shut her little mouth decisively.

"If you mean last Tuesday—"

"I don't want to talk about it," she interrupted. "Have you considered about the stories?"

"Yes; I have reasoned out my position most carefully—Mary." She frowned, but passed the familiarity.

"And your conclusions?"

"Is in verse."

"O! how nice!" Women always like a fellow to run to verse. I suppose it is because he is sure to give himself away! "Let me see it."

"On condition that you read it aloud." She looked objectionable. "I want to hear if I have got the swing."

So she declaimed softly. I think I said that she had a pretty voice.

TO MARY.

I made me a tale of the tempest at sea,  
Full of thunder and lightning above,  
And the terrors that be when the storm-winds are free—  
But the end of the story was love!

I sang me a song of a raid in the glen,  
With a lit of the pipers who played,  
Strike again, strike again, and die fighting  
like men!  
And the struggle was over a maid!

I planned me a play of a monarch of fame,  
And his courtiers in silken attire,  
And his statesmen, who came like a moth to the flame—  
For a pair of bright eyes were the fire!

I peached the praise of an hero so calm,  
And so strong in the tumult to stand,  
When I found me the charm that had strengthened his arm—  
It was only the touch of a hand!

And if my heart for a moment be strong,  
If my tale for a page ring sincere,  
Or if merits belong to the play or the song—  
They are only your echoes, my dear!

When she came to the last line her voice was very soft, and just a little tearful. I put my hand on her shoulder, and we stood looking silently at the paper for a minute. Then I drew her gently to me—the way the stories end!—Black and White.

Hundreds of Plays Offered.

The reading committee of the Playgoers' club, of London, which has undertaken to supply George Alexander with a play by an author whose stories have heretofore not been staged, up to date, has read over 300 plays. Mr. Alexander's offer to produce

such a play by an unknown author was in the nature of a challenge whereby he wished to disprove the charge that managers neglected the works of unknown playwrights. The committee still has more than 100 manuscripts which have not been read.

The secretary of the committee says that so far six plays have been selected. Two of those were by well-known writers who had not written a play before. The other four were by unknown writers. Three out of the six authors were women.

What More Noble Object? "The only objection," said the stern parent, "I have against the young man, my dear child, is that he has no noble ambition—no high or worthy object in life."

"Why, papa, how can you say that? He wants me!"—Stray Stories.

Easter Said Than Done.

The French have discovered that they can invade England with ease, but it is frogs' legs to breakfast, says the Chicago Tribune, that they won't do it.

Settlers For Oregon.

The Chicago Record-Herald of Feb. 12, says "A novel plan for settling the lands in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, California and other Western States tributary to the lines of the Harriman syndicate is being worked out by officers of these railroads. The officials of the systems in the Harriman syndicate have determined to carry on a progressive campaign of competition against the Morgan-Hill lines, not only in going after traffic, but in colonizing lands that will insure future business for the companies, particularly in Washington, Idaho and Ore. It is intended to start the campaign by inducing immigrants to take land along the lines of the combination in the states named.

"A new method is to be used to influence this settlement. The Harriman syndicate, through the offices of the different roads, has engaged a corps of lecturers, who will travel over the East and Central West, giving free lectures on the subject of settlement in the West and Northwest. The lecturers will illustrate their talks with stereopticons and m. g. pictures. The photographs will show the land offered for sale, and the development of the country. They will show the products, the railroads, water facilities and everything else that will tend to induce moves from the older regions of country to the promised land.

"In addition to the lectures, the entire United States and Europe are to be flooded with tons of literature bearing on the advantages of the great Northwest. The syndicate will establish general agencies in London, Paris, Hamburg and Genoa, and other points from which to work business.

"These plans will be fortified by unusually low rates during the proper seasons for prospective settlers to visit the points along the lines."

Had to Conquer Or Die.

"I was just about gone," writes Mrs. Rosa Richardson, of Laurel Springs, N. C., "I had Consumption so bad that the best doctors said I could not live more than a month, but I began to use Dr. King's New Discovery and was wholly cured by seven bottles and am now stout and well." It's an unrivaled life-saver in Consumption, Pneumonia, La Grippe and Bronchitis; infallible for Coughs, Colds, Asthma, Hay Fever, Croup or Whooping Cough. Guaranteed bottles 50c and \$1.00. Trial bottles free at Adams & Winnick Co.'s drug store.

Notice.

Notice is hereby given that my wife, Missouri A. Barnard, having left my bed and board against my will and consent, I will not be responsible for any bills or expenses she may hereafter contract or incur.

J. D. BARNARD.

The dental work of Dr. C. A. Chinn is well known in this country to most of us. He can always be found in his old stand, next door to the First National Bank, Greenham's building.

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