

MY SPOUSEMATE.

BY GEORGE COOPER.

Such a clever girl at school!
Up in every puzzling tale.
Numbers had I never seen.
And you did the hardest feat in
the world.

So pretty you were, and nice,
Neat and pretty and precise.
When I need to watch you, I
thought that I could do for
you the best.

How I envied that old maid
That you clung with such pride
To your spouse!
Then I carried home your books,
"Mid the frantic, furious, and
Of the rest.

Soon you passed, with fine precision,
Out of sight to long distance.
When you left, what a reaction
Followed on your sweet extinction.

No one guessed.
Now we meet in no years after,
And your bright eyes in laughter
School to me.
That your baby? "Sweetie, wait
And carry on!"

LOVING THE MONEY, NOT THE MAN.

"Uncle Coleman, I'm going to marry
Lucia Frothingham!"

"What?"

"Uncle Coleman put down his news-
paper, pushed his spectacles up on his
forehead, and glared at his nephew.

"Going to marry Lucia Frothingham?"
he cried, after a while in sheer
dismay. "You idiot!"

"Thanks," was the cool reply. "I
know you do not like the lady, but
where there is a strong natural love—"

"Strong natural love!" inter-
rupted Uncle Coleman contemptuously.
"You may love her; she is pretty and
fascinating, but what she loves is your
bank account, my boy. I knew it when
she was a girl. And now she is a
hundred thousand, but boys will be
boys. Only for goodness' sake, wait a
year or two before you saddle yourself
with a wife!"

"I am twenty-one, sir," (without im-
mensely air of dignity). "Now, Frank, to
hear reason. Lucia Frothingham is a
fascinating woman, touching the thir-
ties, if not already over the line—a finished
girl, and as mercenary as she is pretty."

"I know her, and I tell you her affec-
tion is centered upon Aunt Jennie's legacy,
and the half million in prospective at my
banker's."

"Uncle Coleman," cried his nephew,
hotly, "I never thought of it, much less
spoke of it."

"I don't suppose you ever did. Hav-
ing always had an independent income,
I don't think you ever counted on a dead
man's shoes. But Miss Frothingham
was educated in the rich school of gen-
tle poverty, and a rich husband is the
prize for which she has studied and
toiled, for—well, say ten years. She
was in society before you were done
playing with your dolls."

"Uncle Coleman, you are speaking of
my betrothed wife, remember."

"Hem!"

"Years are of no consequence where
there is true love."

"Hem!"

"And I love Lucia as she loves me."

"Not a bit of it."

"To-morrow she goes to Saratoga,
and if you can make me I will go, too."

"And the business in Hartford, I
should advise you to attend to all matters
belonging to your aunt's estate as soon
as possible, Frank."

"It may keep me in Hartford a
month," said Frank, despondently.

Coleman Burke looked with a pitying
affection at his young relative, such a
boy yet in man's estate, though he had
reached "man's estate."

"A month that may settle your whole
fortune," he said. "Remember, money
does not fall like a hundred thousand dol-
lars more than once in a life-time."

"I suppose I must go."

"It will be best. Besides," added
Uncle Coleman, dryly, "it will be a
good test of your lady love's constancy."

"I am not afraid of her forgetting me,"
said Frank, loftily.

"You are actually engaged?"

"Certainly! I bought a diamond
ring at—yesterday, I put it on
her finger last evening."

"Hem! Well, the foot-killer hasn't
been here lately, that's certain. There,
be off, and let me finish my paper in
peace. You will go to Hartford?"

"Yes."

But after his nephew left him Cole-
man Burke let his paper lie idle upon
his lap, while he fell into a fit of musing.
Interrupted by impatient ejacula-
tions, he read the morning paper, and
had been a childless widower
for thirty years, while four little graves
beside that of his wife recorded the heart
history of his life.

When he had lived lonely and a sin-
gular mourner for many long years, his
brother and wife died, leaving Frank, a
curly-headed boy, to the care of his uncle
Coleman. All the long-lost fountains
of love in his heart had opened, and
he poured out his affection upon the child.
He was truly the starlight of the old
man's existence, and though his manner
had been cynical, his heart had been
sorely wrung by the announcement of
his engagement, and he had been pal-
pably jealous of any mercenary match.

Had Frank loved a true, tender woman,
were she a beggar, his uncle would have
given her a father's love and welcome.
But by the light of his own brief mar-
ried happiness, he had seen the miserly
store for his nephew, if he married Lucia
Frothingham—a flirt, extravagant and
selfish. How to save him was costing
the old man torturing thought. Active
opposition would only strengthen what
was but a boyish infatuation, and yet
he must be saved. Suddenly a light
broke over Coleman Burke's face, and
he rose from his chair and went to a
long mirror in the room. The reflec-
tion was not "disturbed" to make any
vanity, yet the old man smiled well
pleased.

"If I can only carry it out, it will be
proof positive, he thought.

Short, fat, nearly bald, with spectacles
and a cane, Coleman Burke was cer-
tainly a strong contrast to the tall, hand-
some young fellow who had won Lucia
for his promised bride, yet he said
aloud:

"I'll let him out!"

A week later all the fashionable at the
C— hotel, at Saratoga, knew that Cole-
man Burke intended to take a wife.
What had the news upon the
scented air no one could have told you,
but there was no lack of information
about the elderly bridegroom in specu-
lative. Everybody (that was anybody)
knew that Coleman Burke had retired
from business years before, with half a
million of money, and had made fortu-
nate investments since. That he was
decked in fashion's latest styles, wore
diamond studs and rings, carried a watch
case, drove a fine team, and occupied
expensive rooms at the hotel, all could
say for themselves.

Very soon after he came another fact
was patent to all observers—that he was
very attentive to Miss Lucia Frothing-
ham, the belle of many seasons.

Mrs. Frothingham hoped in her heart
that Lucia would not be a fool, and
would remember how Mr. Coleman
Burke's pocket-book outweighed his
nephew's; also, that an old man's dar-
ling was far more apt to have every-
thing gratified than a young man's slave.
Having delivered this maternal lecture,
the widow dilated upon the expenses of
the Saratoga trip, and was rather marked
in her emphasis upon a speedy subjugation
of her elderly adorer.

And Miss Lucia shrugged her fair
gloving shoulders, threw over them a
cloud of black lace, and descended to
the porch where Mr. Burke waited to
escort her to a drive. His manner of
waiting was certainly more business like
than sentimental. Where Frank had
groined eloquent over the beauty of the
liquid, dark eyes, his uncle dilated upon
the suitability of diamonds for brunette
beauty. Where Frank tenderly quoted
poetry descriptive of the slender grace
of the willow figure, his uncle thought
of the most becoming color for the
slight figures. As they drove, the fat
old gentleman asked her opinion of the
most suitable carriage for a lady's ex-
clusive use, and showed her a picture of
contempt for an India shawl folded upon
a seat near the lake, as one far below the
quality he would purchase to deck a
lady's shoulders.

Sometimes, indeed, as Lucia informed
her affectionate parent, she was a little
spoony, pressing her hand and smiling
up at him, blue eyes over the rim of
his spectacles, like a fat old porpoise.

But as a rule, he was simply devoted
to her. He gave her a "bouquet of
new flowers" the morning after she was
married; a drive in the afternoon; a walk
in the evening; or an offer of escort duty
at a ball, became the usual daily routine.
But the elderly wooer was an energetic
and persistent one, and even Lucia, vain
of her conquest, was bewitched by the
rapidity of the courting. Only a fort-
night ago she had been a bowing acquain-
tance with Mr. Burke, and now he had
positively offered a parure of expensive
diamonds for her acceptance.

"A letter from Frank! Coming to-
day," mused Mr. Coleman Burke, read-
ing an epistle handed in at his door.
Surprised to find me away from home,
I have written him a letter, and I have
kindly light that the one I had pre-
viously had. Hem—yes—well."

And so Mr. Burke mused and mused
as he doctored his most exquisite suit,
his dressing necktie, and fastened a
bouquet in his hair.

"Bless my soul, Uncle Coleman, what
a swell you are!"

And then Frank was in the room and
the two exchanged cordial greetings.

"How are you, Lucia?" Frank ques-
tioned, "is she well?"

"She was perfectly well last evening,
when I took her for a drive."

"You?"

"Certainly. You do not suppose I
have failed in attention to my future
niece, do you?"

"You like her better than you did,"
continued Frank, pleadingly!

"See here, Frank," the old man said,
suddenly wheeling round from the glass
door, "I have written you a letter, and I
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departure, while Lucia Frothingham went
into genuine hysterics on the sofa.

Uncle Coleman joined Frank on the
porch, and thinking his arm in his nephew's,
said kindly:

"Forgive me the pain I cause you, for
the love I bear you."

"I thank you," was the reply. "You
have saved me a life of misery by showing
me a mercenary woman in treachery. I
shall never feel any emotion but grati-
tude that you proved your words."

A Clergyman Taken In.

A rather amusing incident occurred re-
cently to a reverend gentleman, who is
a popular preacher in a city not more
than twenty miles away. He went to
have his likeness taken at a photog-
rapher's, and put on a surplice in an anti-
cipated room, he was not a little dis-
concerted on seeing a Christian beauty,
full costume, chained and on her knees,
her countenance expressing the pleadings
of a broken-hearted girl on being dragged
before the Minister, proprietor of a
happy family.

The reverend gentleman, as soon as he had recovered
from his surprise, took an interest in the
high proceeding, and ventured to sug-
gest that the veil fell too far across her
face. "Would you kindly show me what
you mean?" said the man of shadows
and shadows. The reverend gentleman was
kind enough to do so. The flash of light
was wickedly employed; for, to his hor-
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was wickedly employed; for, to his hor-
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beauty, full costume, chained and on her
knees, her countenance expressing the
pleadings of a broken-hearted girl on being
dragged before the Minister, proprietor of a
happy family.

The reverend gentleman, as soon as he had recovered
from his surprise, took an interest in the
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