



TRIAL BY FIRE.

THERE are colonels and majors and generals and some old captains who hold that Isabel Hampden was the most attractive woman who ever graced the frontier, and in their time most women seemed attractive because of their scarcity.

She had been brought up in garrisons and large cities, and by the time she was 22 she knew the world rather well. Moreover, she knew men—not girls and women, but men.

Because she had been allowed to live in posts during most of what should have been her boarding-school days, and because she was pleasant to look upon and converse with at an age when most girls are impossible, men had fallen in love with her pretty much ever since she could remember. It was said that she had refused all the bachelors in all the frontier regiments. This was not far from the truth.

A woman who had married one of the rejected ones said that refusing was a habit Miss Hampden had formed, and that it began to look as if she might never break herself of it.

In the nature of things this was repeated to the girl. Her good temper was one of her charms. "It is so much better a habit than accepting them all," she argued, sweetly. Nevertheless, she wondered if there were not some truth mingled with the malice.

But Lieut. Loring was the last victim of her practice. He proposed to her, unfortunately for himself, just after she had met young Ardsley.

"I thought this morning that maybe I would marry you," said Miss Hampden. "But I've changed my mind, some way."

"Weren't you just a trifle prompt in determining my intentions?" he asked. "Has the event proved me wrong?" she returned.

He lost his temper. "You are spoiled," he said.

"If you knew how often I have heard that! Yet I do not think I am. I am simply sincere, and you are a little too vain, all of you, to grasp the difference. I like you awfully well—no, now, don't misunderstand me. I don't love you. And you are too nice a fellow to be married to a girl who only likes you. No," she repeated, "I do not think I'm spoiled. I have been so placed that men were making love to me at an age when other girls were playing with dolls. It's partly because I am pretty and partly, largely, because there are so few women out here. When I have been in the East I haven't made much of a sensation. I've grown a bit hardened, perhaps. Custom has dulled the edge—which was fearfully keen and cutting, at first—of being told that I am breaking a heart. But, though I am only 22, I've lived to see dozens of you marry and be happy. You'll do the same."

"O, no, I shall not," moaned Loring. "O, yes, you will, Jack. And I shan't mind. Now I've promised to dance this with the new Mr. Ardsley, and if we stay out here any longer every one will guess what has happened."

"They'll know when they see me." "Don't be a goose, Jack. It's only the heart that is trying to take itself seriously that exhibits the pain."

"Don't discuss a subject you know nothing about. You have no heart."

As Miss Hampden walked off with Ardsley, she knew that Loring was wrong; that this tall boy, fresh from West Point, as new in experience of



DON'T BE A GOOSE, JACK.

the world as the brass buttons on his blouse, was the man she was going to love. He would love her, of course. It is to be feared that it did not enter her head that he might not. She saw a ring.

"Is that your class ring?" she said.

"Yes," he told her.

"May I see it?"

He gave it to her, and while she examined it he sat and admired her. Miss Hampden raised her eyes and met his.

She smiled, but it was like no smile she

had ever bestowed on a man before. He looked at her very gravely, and her hand closed tightly over the ring. In a moment she was studying it again.

"I like this. It's unusual," she said. "I am glad you think so, as I conceived the design." He expected to be told that he was clever.

"Indeed!" was all she said, and that indifferently.

"How cool! I rather thought you'd express surprise, and give me some credit. You are not addicted to flattery. It would seem."

"I am not. But I don't think it would have been flattering to be surprised that you have done it. It struck me as being quite the thing you would naturally do."

"That is very pretty."

"It is perfectly true."

It happened, oddly enough, that Ardsley chanced not to have heard of Miss Hampden's reputation by the next night. He was rudely awakened to a knowledge of it.

There were private theatricals in the hop room, and Miss Hampden was the leading lady. Now the suitor was quite recovered, and he meant to play a joke on those in the audience who were not—and there were some eight or ten, three of them married. He proposed to the heroine in nicely read lines, and was rejected by her with a perfection that spoke her practice. So the audience that; and it laughed.

When the laugh had subsided, the hero arose from his knees. He walked to the footlights and sighed.

"Ah! well," he said, "I have one crumb of comfort. I am not the only man in this place who is in the same fix."

The astounded Ardsley looked about him, and he picked out the entire num-



SOBBING AS IF HER HEART WERE UTTERLY BROKEN.

ber by their faces. Miss Hampden dropped her head in her hands and laughed with the rest.

Between the acts, Ardsley made inquiries and learned the truth. He was bitten with a desire to obtain the unattainable, and he was not one to dally. He went behind the scenes.

"Whom are you going home with, Miss Hampden?"

"I fear no one will take me after the light Mr. Graves has put me in."

"May I do so?"

She nodded, and Ardsley went back to his seat.

"So you have refused the entire army?" he asked, as they walked home.

"Not quite."

"The entire department?"

"Well, a fair percentage of it," she admitted.

"Are you going to refuse me?"

"I can't say until you are offered."

"I offer myself now."

"And I accept you now."

"Good enough! Will you announce our engagement to-night at supper?"

"At the risk of being adjudged insane—yes."

"Put on this ring until I can get you another. It will fit your middle finger. Now I am in earnest."

"So am I," she said.

They were very much in earnest, the event proved; and the garrison derived unmixed pleasure from the total, unconditional, obvious surrender of Miss Hampden. She was as open in her infatuation as she had always been in everything else. And Ardsley was equally infatuated.

He took back the class ring and gave her a diamond which cost him three months' pay. They were altogether happy. So, just a fortnight before the day arranged for their wedding, the gods demanded the first payment on their loan.

Ardsley was ordered off on a scout. Miss Hampden clung to Ardsley and cried like a little girl, and did not behave in the least like a woman who had seen countless scouts. And she let him go to the wars remembering her standing with her arm against the wall and her head upon her arm, sobbing as if her heart were utterly broken.

Ardsley did not come back from the

scout. He was in a fight on what should have been his wedding day. Others were killed and their bodies were recovered and buried, but Ardsley's body was never found.

There was a tale that a fire had been seen on the battlefield the night after the encounter, and in the midst of the fire a tree with a form which might have been that of a man against it. There were Indians grouped around it. Miss Hampden never heard the story. She never even guessed at what had happened until twenty years afterward.

She was the superb and spiritless wife of a mighty general, and she was accompanying her husband on a tour of inspection in the West. They were at an agency one day, and were visiting the tepees. It was the agency of the In-



"MAY I SEE IT?" SHE ASKED COOLLY.

dians that young Ardsley had fought two decades before; and the General's wife was nerving herself not to show that she remembered this.

The General was examining the trinkets that hung on a string around the neck of a half-blind squaw.

"Here is a West Point class ring!" he exclaimed.

His wife repeated her words of twenty years past.

"May I see it?" she asked, coolly.

She took it in her hands and turned it about. She could make out the design, though it seemed to have passed through some heat that had melted it. There was no doubt in her mind.

Nevertheless, she looked inside. The heat had not affected it there, and the initials were quite plain even yet.

"D. A.," she said; "it was David Ardsley's ring. The fire did not touch the letters. I understand now why they never could tell me which was his grave."

The General broke the string and picked up the class ring from among the scattered baubles. The squaw was chattering and whining and clawing around on the earth. The General held the ring out to his wife. She raised the dark eyes that had been so bright and happy the last time it had been held out to her.

"Can I have it?" she asked.

The General put it in her hand, and the hand closed over it.

"Thank you," she said.—Utica Globe.

Doctor Barrow and Lord Rochester.

Among other instances of Dr. Isaac Barrow's wit, the following set-to between him and the profligate Lord Rochester is related, in which the doctor certainly had the best of it: These two gentlemen meeting one day at court, while Barrow was king's chaplain in ordinary, Rochester, thinking to banter him, accosted him with a flippant air and a low, formal bow, saying, "Doctor, I am yours to my shoe." Barrow, perceiving his drift, returned the salute with, "My Lord, I am yours to the ground." Rochester, improving on this, quickly returned it with, "Doctor, I am yours to the center," which was as smartly followed up by Barrow with "My Lord, I am yours to the antipodes." Upon which Rochester, piqued at being felled by one he called "a musty old piece of divinity," exclaimed, "Doctor, I am yours to the lowest pit of the nether world;" upon which Barrow, turning on his heel, archly replied, "There, my Lord, I leave you."

A Matter of Doubt.

The facetious man ambled gingerly over the icy pave. "These are times that try men's soles," he called to a passing friend. He threw a heavy emphasis on the "soles," and the friend smiled.

At that moment the punster's feet flew from under him, and he came down with a resounding thwack.

"I see," said the passing friend, with much gravity, "that the exact seat of the soul is still a matter of doubt."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Relieved.

Jack—Do you know that you remind me very strongly of my Aunt Jane.

Alice—Oh, I'm so glad.

Jack—Why?

Alice—I was afraid you were looking at me that way because I had a chunk of soot or something on my nose.—Cleveland Leader.

The difference between what a man thinks of himself and what other people think of him is a good deal like what a man asks for a piece of property and what the other man offers to give.

The pleasure in receiving a letter lasts no longer than it takes to break the seal. After that, comes the worry of answering it.

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER.



O SAY, can you see by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars,
Through the perilous fight
O'er the ramparts we watch'd, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?
On that shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, now conceals, now discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected, now shines on the stream:
'Tis the star-spangled banner! O, long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!
And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
'Mid the havoc of war and the battle's confusion,
A home and a country they'd leave us no more?
Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave;
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!
O, thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their lov'd homes and the war's desolation!

Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n rescued land
Praise the power that hath made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, for our cause it is just,
And this be our motto: "In God is our trust;"
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

"BEFORE AND AFTER."

Trips to Thibet's Holy City Not Conducive to Good Looks.

Last summer Mr. Henry Savage Landor, artist, author and traveler, and grandson of the celebrated Walter Savage Landor, undertook an exploring expedition through Thibet. His objective point was the sacred city of Lhasa, to which entrance is forbidden on pain of death to strangers, and especially to Europeans. It was a most daring enterprise, but one that appealed strongly to Mr. Landor's adventurous spirit.

Mr. Landor had almost succeeded in getting within the gates of Lhasa when his disguise was discovered and he was taken prisoner. All his companions, except two faithful coolies, deserted him and fled. The Thibetans inflicted the most horrible torture upon him. His body was seared with red-hot irons until he was almost lifeless. Then he was condemned to be beheaded, and was actually taken to the place of execution.

The grand lama, who appeared on the scene, however, decided to commute Mr. Landor's sentence. His life was spared, but for over a week he was

duce himself. But he at last arose, and taking a semi-circular sweep to the left, and then proceeding to the front, opened something like this:

"Ladies and gentlemen: I—have—lectured—many—years—and—in—many—towns—large—and—small. I have traveled—north—south—east—west. I—have—met—many—great—men; very—great—men. But—I—have—never—yet—in—all—my—travels—met—the—president—of—a—country—lyceum—who—could—introduce—me—to—an—audience—with—that—distinguished—consideration—which—my—merits—deserve."

After this deliverance the house, which had stared at me for several minutes with vexed impatience for not "pressing the button," was convulsed at my expense, and gave him unremitting attention to the end.—Harper's Magazine.

A Beautiful Passage.

A very vain preacher having delivered a sermon in the hearing of the Rev. Robert Hall, pressed him, with a mixture of self-complacency and indolence, to state what he thought of the sermon. Mr. Hall remained silent for some time, hoping that his silence



LANDOR BEFORE AND AFTER HIS VISIT TO THIBET.

subjected to the agony of the rack. How he survived can only be explained by his marvelous fortitude and iron constitution. The torture concluded, he was bade to leave the country at once, and it goes without saying that he did not tarry.

When Mr. Landor left for Thibet he was in the best of health, the picture above on the left showing him to be both youthful and handsome. The picture on the right was taken after his return. It shows a man seemingly aged and a physical wreck. Of the twenty-two scars of wounds he bears, many are on his face.

Mark Twain and a Lyceum Manager.

Before we left the ante-room he particularly requested me not to introduce him to the audience, and I told him (for he called it "a whim of his") that this little whim of his should be respected. When we reached the stage I began, after a while, to feel not a little nervous for fear that he would never intro-

would be rightly interpreted; but this only caused the question to be pressed with greater earnestness. At length Mr. Hall admitted, "There was one very fine passage." "I am rejoiced to hear you say so. Pray, sir, which was it?" "Why, sir, it was the passage from the pulpit to the vestry."

Picturesque Costume.

The Princess of Montenegro, the beautiful mother of the Crown Princess of Italy, has been visiting Rome and startling the Romans by wearing her picturesque national costume. When driving she wears a bright scarlet silk cloak thickly embroidered with gold, and on her head a diadem of black velvet glistened with gold coins and gems. For the opera she dresses in cloth of gold.

When one man proposes a good thing, another man usually proposes one so much better that nothing is done.