

ILLUSIONS.

The free, bright gold mines of the sunset hills. The pure, sweet promises that star the steams. When quick foot May her emerald garment beam. With apple blossoms, diamond shower that fills. Winter with white forgetfulness of ill—All cheats! Gold-dross! May's imitation gown! And where are all the frail, snow diadems The world has wept away in annual rills. Yet has the hand that framed our stately dwelling. Hidden in beauty architrave and beam; Placed no oak orb in hopeless heavens knell—ing. But aure arch with studded stars agleam: And spirit voices keep on softly telling. To doubt the Doubter and to trust the Dream.—Charles H. Crandall in Youth's Companion.

A GERMAN BRIDEGROOM.

I had spent the evening with a friend who lived a little out of Hamburg. As my horse bore me in sight of my home I was surprised to see a light in my father's counting house, for it was nearly 3 o'clock. I threw myself from my horse and entered the room. My father was at his writing desk, evidently waiting for me.

"Good morning, Henry," said he, without laying down his pen. "I am glad that you have come. I want you to make arrangements to go to France tomorrow at noon."

"To France, father—and on what errand?"

"You are to be married."

"Married!" I cried in astonishment.

"Yes; a daughter of Merchant Peterson, of Bordeaux."

"But, father! Marry a girl whom I do not even know?"

"Certainly. It is a good family, and you can have your choice between three daughters."

"But suppose I don't like any of them?"

"No nonsense, Henry," said my father sternly. "You are to start at noon."

I could not obey my father's order, so noon found me on board ship, with Hamburg gradually fading from my sight. Instead of going directly to the house of my future father-in-law, I left the ship at Boulogne and went to Paris. I rented a furnished room, assumed the title of "Lord Johnsbury," and tumbled about for two weeks, seeing, hearing, and tasting whatever pleased my fancy.

I found the solitary which my father had destined for my fiancée had become loose, so I carried it to a jeweler's store to be repaired. While there, two ladies came in, one of whom was advanced in years and the other young and extremely beautiful. She examined a pair of earrings, but the price was too high, so she reluctantly handed them back. I quietly paid the price demanded and begged her to accept them.

"You are very kind," she said, blushing, "and these jewels are very lovely; but were they still more beautiful I could not accept them from a stranger."

I urged in vain, and again expressing their thanks, they went away. To my delight a few days later I met the ladies walking in the Tuilleries. I hastened to them with earnest questions, requests and assurances, and after a long conversation their cautiousness seemed gradually to give way to sympathy. I took advantage of this fact to offer her the solitaire, and it was placed firmly on her finger before she could think of any opposition.

"I am doing as great a wrong to listen to you as to accept this diamond," said she, "but you are binding yourself to an ungrateful girl, for I accept this against my will."

My happiness was to be rudely interrupted, for three days after this I suddenly found that my money was reduced to five louis. I thought the matter over seriously, and finally decided to go to Bordeaux. As I could not appear before Mr. Peterson like a beggar, some bracelets, also intended for my fiancée, came in just right, though they brought me only eighty louis.

The journey to Bordeaux passed quickly enough, and Mr. Peterson welcomed me warmly. In the course of our conversation he spoke of a letter from my father, and I started to offer an excuse for my delay in arriving, but he would not listen to it.

"My youngest daughters are away from home," said he, "but if my eldest does not suit you they shall be sent for."

We drank to the health of my future bride, and Mr. Peterson then showed me to my room.

"I was amazed when I saw Constance the next morning. I could find not a defect anywhere. The build, the figure, the complexion belonged to no country, but to that of beauty; and the brown hair which fell over her white neck in luxuriant locks, and the sparkling brown eyes were the only signs which showed her relationship to France. Was it so wonderful, then, that two weeks after my arrival I went to Mr. Peterson and asked him for the hand of his daughter?"

The old man led me to her, and placed her in my arms.

"That's right," he cried. "Tomorrow, Constance, I shall write to your sisters, for they must be home for the wedding."

Angelique, the second daughter, came in a few days, but Victoria still remained away. This delayed the marriage, and I had sufficient opportunity to become acquainted with the two sisters in their differences. In Angelique each womanly charm was on a smaller scale than had been apportioned to Constance, but she was somewhat cast down in her manner. Gradually this apparent sadness left her and only the ghost of it remained in the charming body which nature had equipped with irresistible interest.

We gradually became more intimate, and I awarded my kisses and sighs to Constance and my conversation to Angelique. As often as I saw the one I lost my heart with love; as often as I listened to the other my whole soul fled to this charming conversationalist. Each time it hung in the balance. Soon the scales began alternately to sink and rise, and again two weeks after my engagement I loved the beautiful Constance when I saw her, while the image of the charming Angelique shared my dearest thoughts.

One evening I set out for the summer house, where I thought the company

was, and when nearer I distinctly heard the melodious voice of my fiancée.

"I am sorry myself about it," said Constance, "but it cannot be changed."

"If you only wished to have it changed," Constance, said her companion.

"But I may not wish it, Mr. D'Argenet. My father is under obligations to the father of Mr. Wiltmann, and I must be content with the unworthy stranger for my husband."

I had heard enough, and betook myself to the house by the same way I had come. Next morning I went to Mr. Peterson and told him that I could never have the slightest claim upon the hand of the girl whose heart was already given. He was so angry that I had trouble to hold him back, and yielded only when I suggested that perhaps Angelique might console a disappointed lover, and I thought that in a short time I should love her passionately, if I were authorized to do so. Thus the matter was finally settled.

Angelique, however, did not receive the news with the pleasure I had hoped to see, and from that hour she did her best to make me repent of my bargain. I regretted a thousand times that I had changed an agreeable sister-in-law into a cruel betrothed.

The uncle from Rochelle, in whose house Angelique had been visiting, came with a young man who was said to be a cousin. Angelique embraced them both, and my keen lover's eye thought it saw a feeling too tender for merely a cousin. My patience was at an end when she treated the cousin with great kindness, while she showed only stubbornness toward me.

"Merely to put you to the test, sir," she said, when I complained.

"That means that you cut me to the quick to see if my heart still beats," I cried in anger; "but I will soon find a way to put an end to it."

Highly enraged, I went to my room. There I came across a letter of my father's, inscribed, "To the beloved fiancée of my son." I thought these loving words of a future father-in-law would soothe her, so I took the letter to her.

"It is not for me," she said, "for you do not love me, but as I take the place of one more beloved, I will open the letter."

"Beautiful! splendid!" she cried, when she had read it. "You have a very worthy father, and his goodness surprises me. He must know how gladly girls adorn themselves, and 'brides most of all. Will you not show me the jewels?"

I looked at her in terror, and the realization of my thoughtlessness struck me so forcibly that I could not speak a word.

"Well, you have not lost them?"

"My father must have forgotten them," I said at last. "Will you let me see the letter?"

The letter read: "The solitaire and the bracelets, which my son will deliver to you with this letter."

I stood as if annihilated, and cursed in my heart a thousand times the hour in which I entered Mr. Peterson's house.

Victoria arrived late one evening, and the impatient father set the weddings for both daughters for the next day.

In the morning D'Argenet came, embraced me as his brother-in-law, and led me into the room where the marriage was to take place. The father, the two sisters, the uncle and the cousin were there, besides the priest. Victoria was absent. Soon two ladies entered the room, and I was greatly astonished when, as the reader has already guessed, I recognized in them the aunt of Paris and her beautiful niece.

I could contain myself no longer. I flew away from the table to Victoria and seized her hand, which she gave me, blushing deeply.

"Is it possible?" said I. "I have no claims upon your forgiveness, but the love which you first taught me to know."

"I am my own no longer," she replied with a smile, as she displayed the jewels. "I bear the purchase money upon my hand."

"Come, cousin," said Angelique, "since my bridegroom has deserted me, let us go through the ceremony together. He may do what he wishes."

My embarrassment was over. I looked at the father inquiringly, but he could not speak from agitation. He placed our hands together and led us to the other couples. The priest then began without waiting for command, and in ten minutes the three sisters became three wives.

Victoria, who was with the aunt in Paris, learned what news had been received from the German bridegroom, and she now knew how to explain the sudden disappearance of Lord Johnsbury, whom, contrary to the promise she had given her father, she had learned to love. She wrote quickly to her sister Angelique, who understood everything and drew up a plan for my punishment.

Four weeks flew by in this delightful family gathering, which seemed like four days. When the time came for separation I begged my father-in-law for his blessing.

"I have no blessing for you except what you yourself have taken," said he. "You are taking from me my dearest daughter, but still I thank you, for I first, through you, became an entirely happy father."—Adapted from the German by William Dana Orcutt for Boston Globe.

A Drastic Remedy.

An amusing case has just been tried at Kasan, in Russia. A woman of the name of Outchakine was summoned before the judge on the charge of beating a cousin of hers, named Kniazef. But the accused had a complete answer to the indictment.

"My cousin gave me leave in the presence of witnesses," she said to the judge, "to trounce him well if ever he broke the solemn promise he gave me at church, to give up smoking altogether."

Kniazef could not deny this. His austere relative had come upon him unawares when enwrapped in a cloud of smoke. The judge acquitted the prisoner, but admonished her not to lay on so hard in the future.—L'Autorite.

ETHICS OF CAR SEAT SELFISHNESS.

Why a Fair Colored Dude Was Made to Ride Two Stations Beyond His Own.

It is very funny to see a selfish man in the present keep-your-seat era of city travel laboring to establish a system of ethics, or what my friend Jinks calls etiquette, which will satisfy an uneasy conscience.

Soon after 6 o'clock the other evening a crowded Third avenue car train went northward, and, as is always the case, there were more men than women sitting and more women than men standing.

Among the latter were three Grand street shop girls—loud mouthed, slangy and pretty. They made no secret of what they thought of the men who would not rise and give them their seats. It was not complimentary.

At Twenty-third street a remarkable specimen of humanity—one of your smooth faced, cigarette smoking, fur collared tribe—having reached the end of his ride, arose, and with an elaborate smile offered his seat to one of the girls. A nimble footed man near by slipped into it. Every body laughed but the girls and the dude. The latter turned a look upon the encroacher which was calculated to crush him to earth so that he would not rise again, and as he passed the maidens said with a deprecating air:

"That fellow is an awful cad—an awful cad."

"He's got a face," said one of the shop girls, and all three collected about the culprit and proceeded to pass high flavored remarks about him, which he listened to with apparent amusement.

Stung with indignation, a young man sitting next to him got up and gave one of the girls his seat.

Another man who had not thought of giving up his own seat turned around and said:

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself! You had no right to that seat. A man can do with his seat what he chooses."

"That's what I did," said the culprit unblushingly. "I sat in it."

"You ought to be ashamed!"

"Oh, give us a rest!" cried another passenger. "Get up and give the lady your own seat if you are so troubled about it."

Indignant passengers besides.

By this time Mr. Dude, feeling that he had made rather a neat exhibition of himself, got near to the door, when a strong hand was laid on his collar. He turned and saw a very angry workman looking into his eyes.

"See here," said the latter in a tone which made the fur lined fraud quail. "I've a good mind to black your eye for you."

"Wa-wa-what is the matter?" gasped the fellow.

"The idea of your trying to do the dirty after riding all the way to your own station! You deserve a cowhiding. No, you don't! Ye'll ride to the next station."

And amid the plaudits of the entire carful the indignant workman gave the fur lined collar a twist that made its owner black in the face, and would not let him off until the train reached Thirty-fourth street, two stations beyond where he wanted to go.

It was a grand revenge.—New York Herald.

A General Passenger Agent's Story.

Colonel A. C. Dawes is general passenger agent of a system of western roads with headquarters in St. Joseph, Mo. Before the days of the inter-state commerce law the colonel was easy of access to the editor, who was always in need of transportation.

One night he was called out of bed by one of the profession, who informed the colonel that he, the editor, was broke, and that he had received a telegram from home announcing family sickness, and that he was expected to leave on the first train. The colonel took out a map and saw that the price of a ticket to the point of destination was about \$1.55. He handed the editor a two dollar bill, explaining that he had no banks. As the editor left the colonel thought of him in every way except the complimentary way, and hoped he would never look on the man's face again.

Two years later a bill was before the legislature of Missouri in which the colonel had an interest. He was there to put the measure through. In casting about for assistance he came upon the country editor whom he had favored and asked him if he could be of any service. The editor turned in, and through his influence the measure was passed. "It was a lesson to me I never forgot," said the colonel. "It taught me to never despise the day of small things. The man whom I could have kicked into the street for what I thought an impertinence turned out to be an angel."—Chicago Tribune.

A Petrified Monster.

While workmen were digging near the hillside above McKeesport, Pa., yesterday they struck at a depth of twenty-five feet a peculiar looking body that had been earthed by the blasting of the rock. It at first resembled a vein of dark clay or shale, but on close examination it was found that it was covered with scales. The interest of the workmen was aroused, and by careful digging they finally unearthed a stone body twenty-eight feet long and tapering at both ends. A close examination showed it was that of an enormous reptile that had become petrified.

The tail end was first found, and twenty-five feet of it have been taken out, but the head is yet imbedded in the rock. The fossil rested in a fissure in the solid rock, and about it were also discovered dead leaves. The remains have been seen by a number of responsible men, who will take care of them for further examination.

This find recalls the famous McKeesport snake that had been seen in the vicinity many years ago, and which was described by those who had seen it as being over twenty-five feet long. The snake was last seen about twenty-five years ago, and there are people still living here who say they have seen it. There is no doubt the body just found was that of an enormous snake, and it is thought to have been the same as the one which created such fears years ago.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

An Old Saying Not Indorsed.

It is singular how the copybook texts of our childhood do occasionally get a severe contradiction in after years. For instance, on Monday I was obliged to spend an hour or more in the office and company of one of the most successful business men in Detroit. "Order is Heaven's first law" came into my mind the instant I glanced over his desk and around the room. The desk was a litter of penholders and pens, ink scrapers, pencils, cards, paper weights, manila bottles, spoils of tape, seals, a whetstone, a pair of scissors, letters and contracts filed and not filed, old and new calendars, blotting pads and so on. The office looked as though it had not been dusted or swept in a month, and yet check books and files filled with bonds and mortgages told that the man was successful in a business way. What has this to do with heaven? Why the man in question is a very prominent member of a very prominent church.—Detroit Free Press.

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