



The * Stepmother.

"It is disgraceful," cried Gertrude Foster, passionately. "That is a fact," returned her brother, coolly, "but what are you going to do about it?"

The young man was lying in a hammock, swung at the end of the piazza; his sister was seated near him, in a rocking chair, which she kept in vigorous motion, as though thereby trying to accentuate her remarks concerning the letter she held in her hand.

A boy about 16 years of age was lounging on the steps, with a novel before him, but the contents of that epistle had apparently taken away his interest in the story, for he was not reading.

"You surely are not surprised, Gertrude," continued the occupant of the hammock, "I have been nothing for some time the care father took in making his toilet, when he went out on business. Business!" laughing derisively; "my stern parent never fooled me much. I thought he was going a-woolng."

"Yes," returned Gertrude. "But how can a man with a heart fall in love again—so soon, anyway?"

"Maybe she was his first love, from whom he was separated by a misunderstanding," said Harold, putting his hand over his heart sentimentally.

"Hello! the rain has stopped—and there comes a livery stable carriage. How dramatic! Rain stops, enter hero! Come along, Jim; we would not be here to embarrass the greetings of two young and loving hearts." He disappeared through the door, while Jim slowly followed in his lazy, languid way, saying, "Tell Dick I will see him at supper."

By this time the carriage had entered the gates and was coming rapidly up the long avenue that led to the house. The Fosters prided themselves on their well-kept grounds, especially the drive from the lodge gate to the house, which was bordered on either side by maple trees.

They gave a delightful shade during the summer months, and their gorgeous foliage in the fall made the Foster place the glory of the neighborhood.

But neither Richard nor Gertrude thought of the maples as he was driving under them that afternoon. He had been abroad two years; his only thought was that, at last, he was really to be with his fiancée once more. While she forgot her father's second marriage, in joy of seeing her lover again.

But after they had been together an hour or two Gertrude remembered the letter and her face fell.

"O, Dick!" she said, "father is married again. I received a note just a few minutes before you came, telling me about it. He said he should be home in a few days and wanted me to have everything done to make her home-coming pleasant."

Dick looked grave—then replied: "Well, it will be only for a little time, but," cheerfully, "I will take you away right off, if you like."

Gertrude laughed. "O! I guess I can support her presence a few weeks, but isn't it dreadful—for a man to get married a second time?"

"Awful," he returned, with conviction. Then, after a second's pause: "I mean as a rule; of course, there are exceptional cases. That reminds me," he added; "you have heard me speak of my aunt Marion?"

"The aunt who, you say, has redeemed the race of old maids in your estimation?" asked Gertrude.

"The same," he answered. "Well, mother wrote me some time ago that she was going to be married. I suppose I shall hear all about it to-night when I go home. You know," he continued, "a great many years ago Aunt Marion fell in love. She was boarding in the country at the time, and, although he reciprocated her affection, they had not confessed their mutual attachment when her nearest friend came to board at the same place. This young lady also was fascinated by the same gentleman, and began to think how she could supplant my aunt in his estimation. She had recourse to strategy; told numberless falsehoods to both of them, and managed, in a short space of time, to provoke a quarrel between them."

"Aunt Marion was proud and sensitive, sought no explanation from her whimsical admirer, trusted her friend, and lost her lover.

"In a year or two she heard of their marriage, which opened her eyes a little and caused the girlish friendship to be broken off. Two years ago she received a letter from this woman, who, it seems, was dying, confessing the whole truth. She also left an explanation for her husband, which he found

when she was dead. After a while Aunt Marion acceded to the widow's repeated entreaties to be allowed to call, and in a few months they were engaged. I guess my prospective uncle made the other woman a good husband, but he did not really love her, for his wife wrote that he had never forgotten his first love, and only married her in gratitude for the sympathy and tenderness she showed when telling how my aunt had deceived him. I think," continued Richard, "that I would never have made known the truth if I had been in her place. But I suppose the voice of conscience gets loud in the presence of death. It was a tardy reparation, though."

"Dick, what is your aunt's name?" asked Gertrude, abruptly.

"Why, the same as my mother's," he answered, somewhat astonished at the question; "Moore, Marion Moore. Pretty name, isn't it?" he added. "Too pretty to change, I think. Why, Gertrude, what is the matter?"

For the girl had grown deathly white, and did not seem to hear his last remark.

"Nothing," she said at last, making an effort to recover her self-possession, "only your aunt is—my stepmother."

"What!" ejaculated Richard. "Aunt Marion your stepmother! It cannot be—and yet—I never knew her lover's name; never heard it. Is that her name, Gertrude, are you sure?"

"Here is the letter; you can read for yourself," she answered faintly. He saw there was no mistake and wondered how in the world he could recall his words.

"I am sorry, Gertrude," he said at last. "Of course, you know I never would have told you had I dreamed of such a thing; I dare say I exaggerated. I never heard Aunt Marion say anything about it. All my information came from her sisters, who did not like your—her friend. Just forget all about it, Gertrude."

Gertrude was weeping as if her heart would break; but as he finished speaking she handed him her ring, without looking up.

"What is that for?" asked Richard, aghast. "I did not mean to hurt you; surely you are not going to punish me like that, when I offended so unintentionally."

"No," sobbed Gertrude, "it isn't that, only I shouldn't think you would want to marry the daughter of such a mother."

Richard laughed as he took the ring and placed it on Gertrude's finger again.

"What a silly child you are!" he said, fondly. "It wouldn't make any difference to me if every relative you had was in the penitentiary. You would not be responsible for their sins. Besides, I suppose your mother thought she had every right to try and win your father. He was not engaged to my aunt, you know, and they say all is fair in love and war. So think no more about it, and we will never mention it again."

Gertrude never did mention it again, but she thought about it many times; and when Mr. Foster brought his wife home he found everything arranged to his liking.

He had said to her: "The boys will be all right, and if Gertrude does not treat you well let me know."

"Never, James," replied Mrs. Foster, "for you might be tempted to tell her the history of the years that are gone, and children should reverence their mother's memory, which I doubt if she could do, knowing all."

But there was no trouble. Gertrude treated her stepmother with the utmost respect and courtesy, and behaved in such a way that Mrs. Foster actually dreaded the girl's wedding day.

As she watched the carriage that contained her nephew and his bride drive down the maple avenue, now resplendent in its autumnal colorings, she sighed—then turned toward her husband, who was standing near. "I never thought to have loved Louisa's child so well," she said.—Exchange.

The loftiest Inhabited Place.
The loftiest inhabited place in the world is the Buddhist monastery of Haine, in Thibet. It is about 17,000 feet above the sea.

Monster Needle Factory.
The largest needle manufactory in the world is at Redditch, Worcestershire, England. Over 70,000,000 are made there weekly.

When a bore takes up a good deal of a man's time, the man who was bored takes up the time of those around him in complaining about it.

WILD GAME ABOUT EXTINCT.

Work of Extermination in Switzerland Is Well-Nigh Complete.

Switzerland will soon be entirely free of wild animals if the rate of extinction that has prevailed of late is maintained. In the official archives in Zurich are records of the various kinds of beasts that once existed in the land of the red cross. Evidences of beaver life have been found on the shores of Lake Morat, the bones and skeletons being fully six centuries old. One of the tributary streams which feed the lake is called Beaver brook, the title being due to its former inhabitants. That the name is old is shown by the fact that no beavers have lived in Switzerland since the twelfth or thirteenth century.

Brown bears were plentiful in the mountain lands until the seventeenth century. The last one killed of which there is any official knowledge came to his end in 1898 in Barbereche. Nowadays the bears that are raised in Bern for various show purposes are imported young from other countries. Deer were more than plentiful in the highlands in older times, but they were cleaned out pretty well in 1748 to 1750. There is a record in the Swiss archives that a deer was seen in the woods in 1871, but it was apparently far from its own stamping ground.

Up to the seventeenth century wolves were such plagues that several cantons offered substantial premiums for their heads and skins. It took ages to chase them off the plains, and fully 100 years more to clean them out of the highlands. Not a live wolf has been seen in Switzerland since 1837. The lynx disappeared about the same time. Wild boars were numerous in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but none has been encountered since 1800. A few wildcats are reported to have been shot since 1891, but the authorities doubt the authenticity of the reports.

Not less than seven prominent kinds of quadrupeds have been exterminated in Switzerland in five centuries, not to mention the world-famous wild goat, or chamois. A few of these beautiful animals are raised and kept by the landlords of some of the leading resorts to maintain the impression that chamois are part and parcel of the Swiss mountains. But they are domesticated and are vastly different from the timid little animals that nobility used to hunt and poets rave about.—New York Press.

HOMESPUN PHILOSOPHY.

Comment on Commonplaces by the Atchison Globe Sage.

Some burdens are easier carried than thrown off.

Whoever finds a fool first plucks him most thoroughly.

No young man can be in love with all the nice girls.

No man can be always right, but he always blames the other fellow.

You should keep your inward feelings secret, particularly silly ones.

If you don't believe you are a bore, watch people get away when you turn your back.

In extremely cold weather, people can't understand that ice will ever be in demand.

Somehow a man who has sense enough to keep his own counsel is never liked.

There should be a good deal of pleasure getting into trouble; it is hard enough getting out.

When what women call "dainty" refreshments are served, the men present never get enough to eat.

A little gambling game will attract as many spectators as the ordinary sermon, and hold them longer.

To agents: If you sell to a man who does not want to buy, and who does not need the article you sell him, it is robbery.

There are too many of us who imagine that an iron-clad resolution, born every few hours, is all there is to being economical.

No banker could ever succeed in putting his bank on such a firm financial foundation that he could write poetry without injuring it.

When a man wants a woman to take a particular interest in him, he tells her that some day he will tell her the true story of his life.

An Atchison girl feels that she alone knows what true suffering is. Her lover is an actor, and every time she sees him acting the hero, it is with another woman in his arms.

Emperor William as a Robber.

Emperor William never plays cards except for very low stakes. Yet in a game with a Leipzig lawyer, once upon a time, the latter lost twenty marks. He laughingly exclaimed: "I have got into a regular robbers' den." Everybody roared with laughter, the Emperor as heartily as the rest. When his majesty was staying, the following year, at Barby, and noticed the lawyer, he went up to him, handed him a twenty-mark piece set in diamonds, in the form of a scarfpin, and said: "Restored by the robbers."

The world will never be as bad as some people think it is, or as good as they think it ought to be.

AN AUDACIOUS BANDIT.

For Years He Levied Tribute on the Mining Company of Mexico.

The most audacious and magnanimous bandit that ever flourished in Mexico was Eraclio Bernal, who in the end died a miserable death. Bernal levied tribute on the mining companies of Mexico for years. The local authorities were powerless against him until the strong hand of President Diaz intervened.

One of Bernal's great exploits was the robbery of the Jocuisita Mining Company, an American enterprise in charge of Capt. Rawlings. At 5 o'clock on a fine June morning Bernal came down from the mountains with eighty men. He placed guards at the mine, the mining office, the store and other important points. After rousing Capt. Rawlings from bed he assured him that he was exceedingly sorry to disturb him at so unseasonable an hour, but that his business was of the most urgent nature. In the first place, he asked for \$200 in order that his robbers might buy food. He did not intend to rob poor storekeepers. As it happened, most of the money was spent at the company's store. Then he explained that he wanted \$10,000. Capt. Rawlings said that he did not have this, and that even in a week he could not get together more than \$5,000. All he had on hand was \$4,000. This Bernal finally agreed to take.

When Bernal received his plunder



ERACLIO BERNAL.

Capt. Rawlings told him that he would have to account to his employers for the missing property and asked the robber if he would not kindly give him a receipt for it. Bernal cheerfully gave this. The bandit said that he would send later for \$225 which Capt. Rawlings had retained for his workmen. Bernal explained that his messenger would bring a request for the money signed with the bandit's secret sign, of which he gave a specimen to Capt. Rawlings. The messenger came in due course.

Bernal's end was miserable. The robbed mining companies complained strenuously to President Diaz, who sent word to Gen. Martinez: "I give you three months to catch this man." Gen. Martinez took 2,000 soldiers, scoured the mountains, broke up the band and executed 300 robbers and suspects. For Bernal dead or alive he offered \$10,000. A rancher named Garcia ran him down from ambush and shot him through the back.

TALKS ON ADVERTISING

There are still a few business men who do not believe that advertising pays. These men try printer's ink occasionally, and when they find no immediate results they discontinue the practice. But advertising is cumulative. It must be done regularly, steadily, persistently and intelligently, and if it is done in that way the results are certain. One thing is absolutely beyond contradiction, and that is that those who advertise do the business and that those who do the business do more advertising.

The favorite argument of the non-advertising merchant is that he is so well known to the community, advertising couldn't do him much good; that the people already know where he is located and the class of goods he carries. Well, take it in Philadelphia. One would suppose that Wanamaker's store is well enough known to need no more printer's ink. But during the month of March John Wanamaker paid for \$40 columns of advertising in the Philadelphia dailies, the Record, Times, Press, Ledger, and North American. That means 108 columns of advertising matter in each of five papers—or nearly six columns in each paper each day. A page every day in five papers probably beats all advertising records in the United States. Is it any wonder that John Wanamaker is the merchant prince of America?

The eyes of all the women in town are on the first clothes a man buys his wife to see if they are cheaper, or more expensive, than those her father bought her.

THEY WANT TO

These Grateful Women Who Have Been Helped by Mrs. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Women who have suffered from all the ailments of the female system and been relieved of their sufferings by Pinkham's advice and medicine constantly urging publication of statements for the benefit of suffering women. Here are two such letters.

Mrs. Lizzie Harvey, 235 Market St., Lowell, Mass., writes:

"It affords me great pleasure to all suffering women of the benefit received from taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. I can only find words to express my gratitude for what she has done for me. My sufferings were a constant reminder of the doctor's care. Upon examination he found fifteen very large polyps but he failed to do me good. I received several bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, also used the Compound Wash, and am cured. Mrs. Pinkham's medicine saved my life, and I recommend it to all suffering women."

Mrs. Amos Trombley, Kingston, Ctr., N. Y., writes:

"I took cold at the time my legs were born, causing me to have a lame leg, and was sick in bed for several weeks. Doctors did me no good, surely thought I would die. I was so troubled with falling of the hair I could not eat, had faint spells, and often as ten times a day. One day a lady came to see me and told me of the benefit she had derived from Lydia E. Pinkham's medicine, and advised me to try it. I did so, and taken only half a bottle before I was able to sit in a chair. After using three bottles I could do my own work. I am now in perfect health."

"What Do You Want?"

An old Irishman was on the way in one of the circuit courthouses one day, and the attorney cross-examined him had a hard time to elicit any information. He worked around particular points, and plied the witness with about a dozen questions. Growing tired of his fruitless examination, he asked, rather impatiently, "Well, can't you tell me something?"

"Well, what would you like to tell you?" asked the witness, and that floored the attorney.—Troy Free Press.

Weyler's Forecast.

"I don't think," growled Gen. Weyler, "that my ability as a general is recognized as it should be."

"What's the matter, general?"

"Well, didn't I predict that the war would eventually be pacified?"—St. Louis Transcript.

The Modern Battle.

Said the famous general to his staff: "Are the correspondents ready?"

"They are, sir!"

"Have they been informed of the new uniform?"

"Yes, general."

"Have the photographers done their duty?"

"They have, sir."

"Then let the battle go on."—Boston Transcript.

Source of Great Annoyance.

First Cook (reading)—Wanted, a man to Connecticut, a first-class man, Good wages.

Second Cook—Niver, on yer honor, isn't that where they set the alarm clocks?—Jeweler's Weekly.

A single walnut tree recently cut in Cass county, Mich., was seven feet in diameter at the base. It was estimated that it will yield \$700 worth of lumber.

ALABASTINE

ALABASTINE is the most and only durable wall covering entirely different from all other wall coverings. Ready for use in white or twelve beautiful colors by adding cold water.

ADIES naturally prefer ALABASTINE for walls and ceilings, because it is pure, durable, and sticks on walls with a caving animal glue. ALABASTINE is not a kalsomine.

BEWARE of the dealer who says he can sell you the "thing" as ALABASTINE. "Nothing just as good" is either not posted or is lying to deceive you.

ND IN OFFERING, the best bought cheap and to sell on ALABASTINE. Demands, he may not realize, damage you will suffer if kalsomine on your walls.

ENSIBLE dealers will not a lawsuit. Dealers risk on selling and consumers by infringement. Alabastine own right to make wall covering to mix with cold water.

HE INTERIOR WALLS every schoolhouse should be coated only with pure, durable ALABASTINE. It safeguards health. Hundreds of testimonials used annually for this wall covering.

N BUYING ALABASTINE that packages are properly labeled. Beware of large pound packages light mine, offered packages.

UISANCE of wall paper is avoided by ALABASTINE. It can be used on plastered walls, wood ceilings, brick or tile. A child can brush it. It does not rub or scale off.

ESTABLISHED in favor of all imitations. Ask about it or drugist for the card, for "Alabastine Era," free for ALABASTINE CO., Rapids, Michigan.