

A SEA-SIDE SIREN.

BY S. J. NEWTON.

From New York Weekly.

CHAPTER I. [CONTINUED.]

"Oh, you foolish boy," murmured Eva, as if to herself. "Do you know the greatest kindness I could do would be to destroy your faith in human nature once and forever?"

"You can destroy my faith in every human being saves one, and I should not mind; but you will always be the same to me—a woman beyond comparison. I did not think I could ever have dared to speak to you as I have done, but it is out at last; and oh! my darling"—with a look of longing affection—"have you nothing to say to me? No word of hope—of—love? Things couldn't go on forever as they have done, and I want you to decide when we shall end our life and begin the new. I want you to—"

"Stop!" she said. "Don't ask me—don't ask me to be your wife."

"And why? You cannot fail to have seen my affection for you. I love you, Eva, and—"

She broke into a short laugh.

"Oh, you silly fellow, why couldn't you take things—take—things—sensibly?"

"I—I don't know what you mean," he said, blankly.

"Poor boy—why will you take life so seriously? Why couldn't you have let things be? We have been very happy—you and I—why not have let it remain so?"

"I don't think I quite understand. I am not much used to woman's ways. Do you—do you mean—there is some reason why you can't marry me?"

"There is—the best of all reasons. I am married already."

"You have been, you mean—your husband is dead?"

A burning flush overspread her face.

"No. He is alive."

The water soured against the bows of the boat; the tide had turned; both sat as if spell-bound. "Will he never speak?" she said to herself.

At last his mouth framed the one word:

"Alive!"

There was something awful in the expression of his voice; it was that of an old man.

"Alive!" he repeated, his voice by degrees assuming a more natural tone, "and you never told me."

"You never asked me," with an attempt at a smile.

"I believed in you," was the simple rejoinder.

She looked at him, and her whole heart went out to him.

"Oh, Archie, I never thought it would come to this, believe me, I didn't. I was so miserably I wanted a change from the dreary, dreary life I am compelled to lead, and you came in my way, and you were different from all other men I have ever met. It was good to be with you, and you never seemed to be earnest, and—"

He turned the boat's head sharply around, and pulled as if his life depended upon the exertion. His face was hard set and resolute, and as she watched him she felt a keen pang of remorse.

"If you had not taken things so seriously, if you could only have made love to me as other men have done."

"I couldn't," he said, in a chok-

ing voice, "for I loved you. God help me."

With a harsh, grating sound the boat touched the beach; he held the bow up by the painter, but made no sign to assist his companion to step out, and to steady herself she placed her hand on his arm.

With a rough gesture he shook it off.

Then she fairly broke down. "Archie, won't you say you forgive me?"

"I have nothing to forgive."

"Won't you say good-by, then?"

"Good by. You have a husband—go to him; you belong to him; and he to you."

"You are cruel. Have I not told you how miserable my life is. Will you make it a little more bearable by being my friend?"

"Friend! do you know what you say—you who have robbed me of everything that makes life worth living? Until I knew you I believed that women were good, that they were sent into the world to be a comfort to us men who are willing to work for them, die for them, if need be; but friends—No, the dream is passed, and by dint of hard work I may in time be able to forget that it ever existed;" and he strode away over the rocks, and he was left there standing alone.

"Why would he take life so seriously? After all, we might have been the best of friends."

The Bustle Has Come Back.

An announcement has been made that the bustle is to be revived. In its incipient stages it has already appeared. The obnoxious little accessory of woman's toilet which for the past five years has been in disuse is no longer to be ignored. A pronouncement of the renewed interest in the formidable little pads, which supplied nature's deficiencies, was given when padded hips came in.

A tiny roll measuring about eight inches across and four deep is to be inserted in the dress skirt. Since the abolition of hair cloth it has become necessary to substitute something which will fill the requirements and hold out the ripple skirt of a St. Louis Seize coat. The bustle seems to fulfill the mission admirably.

If hair cloth linings or bustles are to be the alternative for modish gowns, women, it is thought, will choose the lesser of the two evils, which is the bustle.

The bustle is light in weight, it absorbs the moisture and it does not attract the dust and dirt of the sidewalk. In Europe the bustle has already assumed generous proportions. Hair cloth modelled into a tripple box plait, or three organ plaits, are the newest examples from the manufacturing concerns. It is predicted that the evolution of the short bustle into the old-fashioned tilter, which corresponds to a hoopskirt relieved of the wire across the front, will be very rapid. Then there is but a step further to insure the restoration of the hoopskirt in all its circular glory.

Wire bustles, capable of being increased or decreased in size, are among the winter's novelties in this line. There is, however, some timidity evidenced by the customers in thrusting the bustle upon the public.

A cautious movement is on foot among modesties to pave the way

for its acceptance by the public. With this object in view whalebone is being inserted in the seams of dresses at the back. This makes a graceful curve, and imparts a much desired basis for the fullness which is the distinctive feature of all up-to-date costumes.

Maidens who affect the aesthetic in dress will deplore the revival of the bustle. Less obnoxious styles carry disfavor with these aesthetes, and their objection to its adoption may not count. Small reefs in the back of dresses, a few inches below the waist line, rather impart a stylish air and are already being used.

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