The Christmas Proposal

by Katherine Edelman

LAURA WORTHLEY had passed her thirtieth birthday some years since, and although she was possessed of more than ordinary good looks, coupled with a good disposition and an inherent ability for home making, she had never had a proposal of marriage. Once, some one had almost spoken the words—Laura often thought of that wonderful evening since—but just as it seemed that the fateful moment had arrived Aunt Mabel had come seeking her for something or another. Next day Robert Barrett had left Lindenfield and Laura had never heard from him since.

The passing of time had eased the pain in her heart and she had managed to go about and show a smiling face to the world, but often she felt

very, very lonely. But she told herself that she had no right to think of Robert; he was probably married and settled down long before now in that far-off land where his company had sent him.

But, always as Christmas approached she found herself thinking of him and picturing the home that might have been theirs together. Aunt Mabel had been dead two years now, and since her death Laura had felt very much alone in the world, in spite of many friends.

But every year at Christmas time her cousin Vera, a widow of limited means, came to spend the holidays with her, and always at this time she gave a party for the young people. And lest any of them might be thwarted of love and a proposal, as she had been, she saw to it that plenty of mistletoe was in evidence.

She looked very beautiful now as she welcomed her guests to her annual party. She was one whom years give new and added charm in recompense for the rosy flush of youth that they steal, and as she walked to the door to answer a new peal of the bell, she would have attracted attention anywhere.

Opening the heavy door she looked without. A little cry sprang to her lips, for there she saw Robert Barrett. A rush of joy, of wonder, of delight, flooded her whole being. He had come—he still loved her—else, why would he be here?

Steadying herself by the doorway she bade him welcome, and as she recovered from the sudden rush of joy at seeing him again, her voice grew cool and composed as she assured herself that his coming meant nothing more than a friendly visit—that even should he be still unwed, it would be some one younger, fairer than she that he would now seek.

He seemed rather ill at ease, and he blundered and stammered so when he spoke, that his voice was almost drowned in the sounds of gay laughter and music that came from beyond. Then, suddenly, without warning, his arms reached out and he clasped Laura close and she felt his kisses upon her lips. He was asking

the question that she wanted most to hear, and he was telling her that she meant all the world to him. When they both came back to earth he showed her the spray of mistletoe above them: "It gave me the courage I lacked long ago," he whispered.

Later he told her why he had never written. Aunt Mabel had spoken to him the evening before he left, and had told him that it would not be fair to tie Laura with a promise; also she had hinted of another man who was more favored. The company had just brought him back to Lindenfield, and as soon as he got in, learning that Laura was still free, he had come.

And because it was Christmas time, and also because the years that were coming held a wonderful promise for them, and they could afford to be generous, there was no resentment in their hearts for the thing Aunt Mabel had tried to do.

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Agricultural Items

Plant a tree.

* * *

Put in a short row of carrots every two weeks.

* * *

Low-grade fertilizers mean low-yield crops.

* * *

Mow pastures to destroy bitterweed and wild onions.

* * *

There is no limit to the demand for the best in farm products.

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Toys, Dolls, Candies, Gift Boxes, Tools, Tree Ornaments, Holly Paper, Hosiery, Books, Tissue, Neckties, Chinaware, Ribbons, Handkerchiefs, Glassware, and thousands more.

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PATIENCE

By THOMAS ARKLE CLARK
Dean of Men, University of Illinois.

I HAVE just read an account of a recent speech of Governor Brewster of Maine with reference to the development of prohibition in his state, which, according to the statement quoted, it took 25 years to perfect. For years after the prohibition act was passed, the situation seemed hopeless. The sentiment in the state was almost equally divided; officers were elected who, if not pledged to ignore the law, at least made it clear that they would do so. And yet constantly the sentiment grew in favor of enforcement, officials in time became more strict, and ultimately prohibition became a fact; and today the law is rigidly enforced as Governor Brewster is convinced it will in due time, if we will be patient and keep after it, be true of national prohibition. The law has not failed, and he is sure it will not fail. Time is all that is necessary to prove this. We are impatient when an effort or a project or an innovation does not at once suceed.

I am reminded in this connection of my old professor of German. Most of us in his classes had little familiarity with any langrage excepting our own, and in many cases even English as it should be spoken was something near a foreign tongue. We were getting on very badly with our translations, and when it came to pronunciation the situation was little less than hopeless. But he was a patient old man and an experienced one.

"It will come," he used to say to the stammering, halting farmer boy. "It will come. Patience and work will do it. It will come."

The old man's words have given me courage many a time during the years which have intervened since those far-away days. When I have worked at something or with somebody for a long time without seeming to get anywhere, and faith and patience are about gone, I recall the encouraging words of my old teacher, "Keep at it and it will come."

Habits are not easily changed; custom and tradition have a tremendous hold on us, and when we attempt to change these we must not look for immediate nor for complete success.

It was my job years ago to eliminate hazing from the institution with which I was connected. It had been the custom, for I do not know how many years, to heap upon the poor freshman as soon as he got to the campus all sorts of indignities. There was no malice in it, it was just fun; but the people who needed such treatment usually escaped, and those who were shy and self-conscious and in need of encouragement, and friends were most likely to receive the harsh introduction to college life. The college was being injured very much by the practice, and it was generally agreed that it should be stopped. There were definite rules against it; the difficulty was in enforcing them. It took five years to make any definite impression and ten to wipe out the practice. For a long time it seemed as if no progress were being made at all.

It is so with every reform; but if we keep at the thing with patience and intelligence and persistence, it will come.

(©, 1927, Western Newspaper Union.)

One dollar an acre is a fair charge for cutting small grain, exclusive of twine.

* * *

Real cleanliness and disease germs never get close enough together to shake hands.

* * *

Increases in the prices of dairy feeds indicate that higher prices may follow this fall.

* * *

On no account should moldy corn be fed to any pregnant animal. Poultry suffers quickly from moldy grain.

THE BASIS OF FRIENDSHIP

By THOMAS ARKLE CLARK
Dean of Men, University of Illinois.

IN THE Workhouse Wards, one of Lady Gregory's plays, the two old Irishmen from whom the play takes its name were continually arguing and quarreling. They almost came to blows at times, and neither had a kind word to say to the other. Vituperation was their regular sport. One of them had a wonderful rich relative about whom he was constantly boasting. She had everything which he had not in the workhouse, and some day, he averred, he was going to her, leaving his sordid, unpleasant surroundings for good.

Strangely it turned out so. She arrived one day in great state and carried away her indigent relative to a life of ease and luxury—and loneliness It was more than he could endure; he had no friend with whom he could argue; no companion with whom he could engage in a combat of words, and he pined for the old companionship. Before long he left the pleasant, easy life for which he had so long yearned and returned to the joys of poverty and companionship, where he could argue and quarrel to his heart's content.

Miller and Bland were constantly together, and yet their interests were apparently quite dissimilar. Miller was a practical man engaged in mechanical matters. His delight was in abstruse mathematical problems, in the investigation of things which concerned themselves with chemistry and physics. His was a reasoning mind, with little imagination or interest in the so-called artistic.

Bland was a dreamer. His delight was in literature and poetry and music. The moment you laid eyes on him you realized that he was temperamental. A false note in a symphony would give him pain. A room furnished inartistically would cause him to shudder. Anything that had to do with mechanics or machinery was to him a foreign tongue. He was no more like Miller than day is like night. Their religious faiths were different, their politics were different, their tastes in reading were far apart. And yet they were constantly in each other's society. When you saw one you were likely to see the other, talking always and smoking—always smoking.

Miller once explained to me the basis of their friendship—"something to argue about," he said, "and a common bad habit, that is at the foundation of many close friendships."

It made me think. They argued about everything—religion, literature, education, politics—everything but the best sort of tobacco, and on this point they were quite agreed. While they argued they smoked, and the argument gave them excuse for further indulging in the bad habit of smoking.

Associations grow dull if there is nothing to stir conversation, and nothing so stirs conversation as argument, and nothing else, perhaps, is so futile. An argument is never ended; no one was ever really convinced by argument unless he wanted to be convinced, and who really wants to be convinced?

And nothing so puts one in sympathy with another as a common weakness, whether it be appendicitis or the questionable habit of chewing tobacco. I guess Miller was right.

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It's a wise farmer who encourages his boy to take up club work—and he'll be wiser still afterward.

* * *

For hay sow soy beans at the rate of two bushels per acre with a grain drill on a well prepared seed bed.

For the Holiday Season

Entire Stock Reduced

Latest Modes in

Coats and Dresses

J. M. NOLAN & SON

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Corvallis, Oregon

The first commandment of farming: Thou shalt not let thy land get poor.

* * *

High-priced land and ordinary pasture grasses do not co-operate for success.

* * *

A silo saves a third of the value of the corn crop, which is otherwise largely wasted.

Doves are important weed destroyers, it is said. One dove was found to eat 9,200 weed seeds at a single meal.

* * *

Try a row of French endive to store in the cellar next fall for winter salads. It is a big money saver and the finest of salad materials. It is as easy to raise as parsnips.

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The Gift Shop

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