



# THE FAMILY HISTORY

## A MALE FLIRT

SCAR EDSON was a male flirt. There he was, at least—found out by all those attentions, when they came from Oscar Edson, instead of "meaning something" meant precisely nothing at all.

Lucy Brown couldn't believe that all Oscar's pretty speeches and fine compliments meant nothing more than what they were. He had walked with her more than with any other girl in Dayton, and she had been so devoted and kind, and all that, and she had been so faithful in him. "Better be careful," said Maria Spooner, warningly. "He's the biggest flirt in Christendom. He don't mean half what he says."

"I don't believe all I hear about him," said Lucy, stoutly. "He's not a flirt."

"Yes, he is," said Maria, in a tone that indicated that no arguments would change her opinion on the subject. "Isn't he always paying attention to every girl that comes along? Isn't he always ready to make love to a new face? You know he is."

"No, I don't know any such thing," asserted Lucy. "He's gentle and polite, and if the girls will insist on taking the attentions which he prompts by politeness for attentions of another nature, he isn't to blame, is he?"

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### THE METRIC SYSTEM.

Metric standards of weights and measures have been adopted by twenty-one countries, Great Britain and the United States being the only prominent exceptions. Before another year Great Britain will, in all probability, have passed an act legalizing the system in the United Kingdom and providing for the preparation of a table of equivalents between the metric and the imperial standards. This will leave the United States in a conspicuous minority among nations.

The British act, it should be noted, is merely permissive, and the choice between pounds and metric is left to every merchant; but even so, it is a concession to the metric enthusiast, in that it will lead to a more careful teaching of his system in the schools and to a wider use of it in dealings with other nations.

The metric system has many advantages. It is simple, and it is making rapid strides toward ultimate success. Its standards unquestionably facilitate the keeping of accounts, and give one a ready means of comparing the work of the world. With our decimal money system we have a good start made upon the metric gradations, and our arithmetic classes have always paid more attention to the French standards than corresponding classes in English schools.

It may be fifty, or may be one hundred years before the metric system becomes the established method of adjusting weights and measures in all civilized nations. The change is gradually being effected, however, and it is rapidly enough to entail confusion or sudden great cost. American scientists have long asked for a compulsory bill from Congress, and it is likely that we shall at least go as far as parliament in this change before many more sessions are ended.—Boston Journal.

### CITIES OF ALASKA.

There Are Several Important Settlements in the Territory of Alaska, located on a low strip of land on the west of Baranof Island. Mount Edgecumbe, an extinct volcano of Stratford, is the landmark of the town. The population was 1,150 in 1890. Salmon fishing and curing is the chief industry.

There is a population of 1,250, consists of 1863, is located near the Lynn channel, by which there are trails to the Yukon. The year 1896 witnessed a great improvement in the town, and Juneau is today a progressive city, with fine buildings, wharves, electric lights, water works, hotels, etc.

Wrangell, on the northern part of the island of the same name, is about ten miles from the mouth of the Stikine, and is the point of departure for traders and miners proceeding into the interior by way of that river. There are 316 inhabitants.

Douglas City, on Douglas Island, near Juneau, has a population of 402. This is the location of the Copage, quartz mill in the world, Yakutat, with a population of 308, is on Yakutat Bay. Nuchak is situated on Hinchinbrook Island, 432 miles by sea from Sitka, and 20 miles from the mouth of the Copper River. It was formerly an important trading post, but much of the commerce has been transferred. It was on the River Kakan, or Kenai, that the Russian mining engineer, Doroslov, re-located the existence of silver and gold in the mountains. After laboring with a numerous party in the mountains for two seasons, at great expense to the Russian-American company, he returned with a few ounces of the precious metal, but he could present no inducement to the corporation to proceed any further in this enterprise. In former years Kenai was the site of a large brick yard, the only establishment of the kind in the colony, from which all stoneware and earthenware were supplied with the material for the old-fashioned Russian ovens or heaters.

### A MISDEADEN BURGLAR.

Scar-faced Sikes, the burglar, was operating on the ground floor of a house at Seventh street the other night, making judicious selections from the articles of silver and alleged silver which he found in the dining room, when he inadvertently made a noise, which disturbed somebody upstairs.

He heard that somebody cautiously opened a door, and then all was still, as if the somebody were listening. Then a voice floated down the staircase: "William, is that you?"

Without a second's hesitation the burglar replied, "Yes, darling," and he moved toward the door, hoping that his reply had satisfied the inquirer, who would then go back to bed, and wait for "William" to come upstairs. But he was disappointed.

The voice immediately let loose some piercing screams, and as the burglar rushed into the street, he was followed by a man who called out: "That comes of my inexperience with the ways of husbands. Instead of replying 'Yes, darling,' I should have said, 'Of course it's me; shut up and go to bed.' That would have been more natural and soothing, and I could have got away without giving myself a nervous fit."—Harper's Bazar.

### They Dug Graves.

Many of the gold finds in the Klondike region have been purely accidental and some of them were decidedly interesting, though perhaps not more so than many accidental finds in other parts of the world.

West in the '40s and '50s. It was before 1850 that three men, while working for gold in California, discovered the dead body of a man who evidently had been "prospecting." "Poor fellow!" said one of the trio. "He has passed in his checks." "Let's give him a decent burial," said another. "Some wife or mother will be glad if ever she knows it." They began to dig a grave. Three feet below the surface they discovered the signs of gold. The stranger was buried in another place, and where they located a grave they opened a gold mine.

An adventurer who had drifted into Leadville awoke one morning without food or money. He went out and shot a deer, which, in his dying agonies, kicked up the dirt and disclosed signs of gold. The poor man staked out the "claim" and opened one of the most profitable mines ever worked in Leadville.

### A STORY OF JOHN BROWN.

Senator Proctor's First Impressions of the Historic Abolitionist.

Riding along with Senator Proctor, of Vermont, through the mountains, which parallels the valley John Brown, who hid before descending on Harper's Ferry, that Senator said to me, writes George Alfred Townsend:

"I was a contributor to John Brown's raid. It was unconsciously, of course. I will tell you about it.

"In February, eight months or more before we heard of Brown at Harper's Ferry, he came to Vermont lecturing on Kansas. He was lecturing near Bristol, I went to hear him. He was right interesting, and after the lecture the hat was passed, and I put in what was at hand. The next day occurred one of our regular Vermont snows, and I never saw him again. He was in Vermont four or six hours. He made such an impression on me that I immediately put my pockets and gave him all I had of money. He had not said a word about the matter, but I suppose my money went toward the secret campaign he had projected against Harper's Ferry, for he did not go back to Kansas any more.

"John Brown captured my judgment as well as my feelings. He had no self-praise; not much reference to his own deeds. But he had studied the Southern character and he said they attacked nothing but force, and an exhibition of force would stagger them. They invaded Kansas by force, he said. 'Go thou and invade Missouri!' He was nightly calm. His force was in his quiet power. I think he would have been a great general, and that was what stood in need of the most, a ranger of piercing enterprise, a Forrest or a Stuart, on the Union side. His Harpers Ferry, had he been met by other forces, was wild, but he was the greatest being in it. His miscalculation and capture revealed a man who behaved up to the historic consistency and dignity."

### Hard Work.

Algi—Say, Regl, what do you say if we take a trip to see Klondike, w're de group's all covered w'd gold?

Regl—Yes, but you've got to pick it up.

Algi—That's so; we'd have to hire a man.—Detroit Free Press.

### TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

#### A CHOICE SELECTION OF INTERESTING ITEMS.

Comments and Criticisms Based Upon the Happenings of the Day—Historical and News Notes.

That silence is golden is proved by the Paris dentist who made \$35,000,000 by holding other people's jaws.

Gen. Weyler has "taken the field again," and as that is about all he ever does take he cannot be blamed.

Nebbraska women want to substitute brooms for the guns used by the boys in the State military schools. That would be a sweeping reform.

The inventor of Inflexer matches, who died recently in England, had an income of a million dollars a year. He didn't have to scratch for a living.

The affair on the Indianapolis baseball field shows the folly of trying to have a professional baseball game without having first notified the police.

An exchange remarks that "Hall Calne got a small advance of \$50,000 on his novel, 'The Christian.'" That's a big advance on what most authors get.

In the light of recent occurrences at ball games the wisdom of our forefathers in providing that each State may have a militia force becomes more and more apparent.

The bargain sale is taken rather too seriously in London. Though twenty soldiers were present to insure a recent race, one woman was killed. It is remarked that she had her bargain in her arms and died happy.

Probably Lord Salisbury, could bear these numerous foreign troubles better than any man in a position of high office, if he were to see the opportunity to take an hour's rest in his hunting territory.

A German explorer just returned from the wilds of Africa says the best way to frighten off a wild beast is to utter a loud shout. The worst of it is that he says the power of the human eye is hard fall in hunting territory.

Spain's declaration that no interference from the United States will be tolerated is not of especial moment. When the United States Government determines to interfere it will not be for the purpose of exciting the commendation of Spain.

A Chicago man has eight living wives and a Kansas City man has wedded the same woman eight different times. Single men should be careful of a man form marriage law strictly enforced would change the habits of some people with a suddenness little short of violence.

While the stealing of a watermelon cannot be strictly more grounds for defence, the man who does not look back upon a few episodes of the kind is conscious that his youth lacked something. Such being a popular view, the Kentucky farmer who let a poisoned dog loose to attack a neighbor's cow, and the mortal wounding of a neighbor's partook, must expect hereafter to be heartily disesteemed.

Under the newspaper head-line, "Better Times Coming," printed in a Kentucky paper, is the subhead, "Whisky and Tobacco Outlets Encouraging." Much depends on the point of view. The most encouraging whisky and tobacco outlook is that afforded by the recent report of the United States Commissioner of Internal Revenue, showing that in the last fiscal year there was a decrease of nearly a quarter of a million dollars in the revenue receipts from the liquor and tobacco business as compared with those of the year before, indicating a corresponding decrease of consumption.

Mr. Tenyson's Downs is the name by which the inhabitants of the late of Wright still call a crest overlooking the sea, where a few days ago a little company of English and American admirers gathered to unveil and dedicate the monument of the great poet. The memorial is in the form of an Ionic cross, and stands high above the rocks and ferve sea, a landmark as grateful to mariners as the large freedom of the air is to the poet. Tenyson, as his undying messages to the reading world. Not inaptly, upon the four arm of the cross, might have been inscribed his own injunction to "Live pure, speak true, right the wrongs, and be your own content, 'Else wherefore born?'"

The opening of the first public playground for Chicago children under the auspices of the Northwestern University Settlement indicates a channel of usefulness into which the activities of our various agencies of philanthropy might be most profitably directed during certain months of the year. The location selected, the Times-Herald says, is a most fortunate one for showing that the public playground can do as much for the child as the street. The conditions that come from the congested character of the population in the tenement districts. The sixteenth ward was chosen for the reason that the mortality of children under five years of age is greater in this than in any other ward in the city. Chicago is behind nearly all the large cities in this particular branch of philanthropy. Ten years ago a movement started by Hon. Abram S. Hewitt secured the establishment of several of these playgrounds in New York city, which was followed by an appropriation of \$1,500,000 by the Legislature for the purchase and maintenance of playgrounds and small parks for children south of the Harlem river. These playgrounds are quite as much of necessity as public parks. The direct result is a decrease of mortality among the children, while indirect results are seen in the lessening of the opportunities for vice and the creation of that healthful mental activity that always comes from adopting the diversions and employments of childhood to the child's age. The movement for a system of these playgrounds in the thickly crowded tenement districts of Chicago is a noble undertaking.

Few people, aside from those specially interested, have any idea of the value of the work constantly being done by the government in deepening and widening the channels of the great lakes. One of the most important of these, just completed the past summer, is the twenty and twenty-one foot ship canal through the connecting waters of the great lakes, between Chicago, Duluth and Buffalo, an improvement which has been in process of construction four years and involves

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## Hawaii May Bring Us More Chinese.

According to a San Francisco paper there are in the United States 40,000 native born citizens of Chinese parentage. In San Francisco there are 25,000 Chinese, and in Honolulu, the children are entitled to the rights of citizenship. The school census shows 1,500 children less than 17 years of age of Chinese parentage, and this is probably a very incomplete census, owing to the difficulty of obtaining information from the Chinese. In the Hawaiian Islands there are 21,000 Chinese, and if the Islands are annexed the majority of these will be in San Francisco within a few years. The Hawaiian Chinese are married, most of them to Hawaiian women, and in this population of 50,000 there would be not less than 20,000 families.

False Economy in Greece. Greece is, of course, now compelled to economize; but instead of making retrenchments in the direction of highly-paid posts with purely nominal functions, the government has decided to begin by reducing the wages of all secondary officials by 50 per cent. In addition the national schools have for a time been closed to save the salaries of the teachers for that period.