The Observer.

MORO, OREGON:

FRIDAY.....SEPT. 7, 1906

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ZEKE SHARP'S COMPROMISE

By A. A. PATRICK

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Mrs. Miranda Bilks was a widow—that is to say, Mr. Bilks had suffered demise from the effects of a too hearty meal on peach cobbler, thus leaving his spouse, Miranda, and his daughter, little Miranda, to live as best they might off his none too generous estate, which same was comprised of an ax, a hoe, a spade, a pair of soleless shoes and a pair of trousers, with sundry repairings fore and aft.

Mrs. Bilks therefore did not desert her calling, but continued to bend over the washtub and rub and scrub from morning until night. And so the years slipped away, bringing Mrs. Miranda to middle age and crowning Miss Miranda with the dower of sweet sixteen.

I use the word "dower" advisedly, for it was about this time that Miss Miranda was thinking seriously of matrimony, and nothing under the sun had she but—just sweet sixteen. The real cause of her cogitations on so important a matter was to be found in the person of one Zeke Sharp, a mild mannered, easy going widower with six children. Zeke was not burdened with

"YOU SHORE WOULD FILL THE PLACE," CONTINUED ZEKE.

intellect. It was even supposed by his neighbors that he was entirely innocent of having any of that great force hidden about his anatomy.

This, however, mattered not, for he paid court to Miss Miranda with an assiduity that was marvelous. Indeed it was often only after clear and emphatic intimations from Mrs. Bilks, who looked upon his attentions to her daughter with extreme scorn, that he took himself off.

Far was it, though, from Mr. Sharp's intentions to be discarded and forgotten in such a manner, for he invariably returned the next day to renew his woolings with increased fervor. This state of affairs continued for some time.

At last Mrs. Bilks grew suspicious. There was a lurking fear in her mind that the association of Zeke and Miss Miranda was more congenial than she had believed, or, for that matter, more than they had cared to reveal.

To verify these suspicions Mrs. Bilks ensconced herself behind a door near where the couple sat in order that she might the better catch the drift of their conversation. What she heard satisfied her beyond question that she had surmised correctly. With much dispatch, therefore, she set aside the washtub, doused the fire under the kettle with water and, donning her best frock, hurried to the office of the county clerk, where, with a long pointed finger, she warned that gentleman not to be "givin' of any licenses to Miranda Bilks an' that rapscallion Zeke Sharp."

Then she returned home in a very complacent humor with herself for having forestalled the elopers. She was hardly prepared, though, for the consequent developments, and it was with much surprise that she herself received a visit from Zeke Sharp.

Zeke tapped lightly on the front door. Mrs. Bilks answered the knock and coldly informed him that "Miranda wasn't to home."

"It be you I wus a-wantin' to see, anyways," responded Zeke in a feeble voice.

At this piece of news Mrs. Bilks' eyes widened perceptibly as she regarded her caller for a moment. It wasn't necessary, however, for her to invite him in, for Zeke was already in and seated.

"I shore wus sorry, Mis Bilks, 'cause you wouldn't let me an' Mirandy have them licenses." And Zeke sighed wearily.

"Licenses be fudged!" snapped Mrs. Bilks. "Things air a-comin' to a purty pass when a man wants to lope off with a gal 'tain't more'n sixteen an' ain't never baked bread ner stitched a stitch, much less tended to a house jam' full o' chillern, like you already got. Seems to me you'd a-picked a woman a little nigher yer own age an' one what knows how ter do somethin'."

Here Mrs. Bilks smoothed out a garment on the ironing board, took up an iron and worked industriously as she waited for Zeke to reply.

"That's jes' what I come to see you about," replied the meek man. "You know if our heads wus set me an' Mirandy could go down to Hornetville an' git the licenses, Mirandy's a good gal, an' I think a heap of her, but she's so young an' delicate-like I'm afeard she'd not set much store by the chillern, an' you know I want somebody that'll be a mother to 'em. I thought o' you lots o' times, Miz Bilks, 'cause you're so chipper an' handy 'bout the house, but I didn't s'pose you'd care to take the 'sponsibility."

"I guess you never axed me," retorted Mrs. Bilks.

"You shore would fill the place," continued Zeke. "You're not more'n thirty-five"—

"Jes' thirty-four, an' I guess they ain't many wimmen that can git aroun' as spry an' do as much work as me neither," flashed Mrs. Bilks proudly.

"If you wouldn't mind," went on Zeke, "we might as well hitch up an' try double harness awhile anyways."

"Now you're a-talkin' sense," declared the widow, "an' they ain't no use a-wastin' time if we're goin' to git married. I reckon that house an' them chillern air a-needin' attention bad 'nough now. I guess Mirandy 'll ride a high hoss when she finds we're spliced." Mrs. Bilks flushed to the roots of her hair.

Again the work was put aside, again the best frock was donned, and again the widow visited the county clerk's office, this time accompanied by Mr. Zeke Sharp. It was the latter who applied for the license for "Ezekial Sharp an' Miz Mirandy Bilks." The clerk glanced at Mrs. Bilks and smiled. That lady blushed and hung her head, by which he inferred that she had withdrawn her former objections, and he wrote out the license in which the lady's name appeared as Miss Miranda Bilks.

If Mrs. Bilks had high hopes of being married a second time they were soon to be dashed to the ground, for on emerging from the office who should the couple encounter but Miss Miranda.

"Here's them licenses!" shouted Zeke, as he caught the girl by the arm.

Mrs. Bilks stared at them in surprise. A moment later she came near fainting with amazement when the two suddenly vanished around a corner. She wheeled about and dashed into the clerk's office again, where a stormy interview took place.

"I'll have the law on you, sir!" she railed. "I told you not to be a-givin' them licenses to Mirandy an' that scalawag! He told you miz, an' you writ 'em fer her, you tarnal scoundrel, you!"

"He said Miss Miranda," protested the clerk as he dodged behind a table.

Not far away the decamping parties were standing before a minister, who had commanded them to "join right hands."

"You lie!" screamed the widow. "He said miz!" And she made a dive after the retreating official.

Not far away the minister said, "I pronounce you man and wife."

As Zeke and his bride descended the front steps of the parsonage they must have heard sounds, which same emanated from the office, where the irate Mrs. Bilks was strenuously endeavoring to lay her hands on the clerk who made a mistake.

The Critic on the Hearth.

It may be argued from a story in Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice's "Life" of the second Earl Granville that a wife with a seeing eye can size up her husband quite as accurately as an astute politician. When Sydney Herbert, the first Lord Herbert of Lea, resigned the war office in 1861, Palmerston, then premier, fixed upon the scholarly Sir George Cornewall Lewis to succeed him.

Lady Theresa Lewis immediately expressed her doubt of her husband's fitness for the office, but Palmerston's messenger argued the point, saying the duties would not be military, but civil.

"He would have to look after the accounts."

"He can never make up his own!" declared Lady Theresa.

"He will look after the commissariat," continued Palmerston's mouthpiece, with assurance.

"He cannot order his own dinner!"

"He will control the clothing department," with timid hopefulness.

"If my daughters did not give the orders to his tailor he would be without a coat!"

Palmerston carried the day, however, and Cornewall Lewis reluctantly accepted the office. Not long after the undersecretary found him in a club, trying presumably to inform himself upon his duties. He was reading a work on the military tactics of Lycanians.

The Melon Didn't Count.

The memoirs of General Marbot upon the first French empire relate that on the occasion of a very formal distribution of rewards made by Napoleon before Ratisbon an old grenadier came forward and demanded somewhat sharply, to the astonishment of all, a cross of the Legion of Honor.

"But what have you done?" said Napoleon.

"Why, sire," said the soldier, "it was I who, in the desert of Xafa, when it was terribly hot and you were parched with thirst, brought you a watermelon."

"Thank you," said Napoleon, "but a watermelon for a general is not worth a cross of the Legion of Honor."

The grenadier flew into a violent rage. "Well, then," he shouted, "I suppose that the seven wounds that I got at Arcola and at Lodi and at Austerlitz and at Friedland go for nothing, eh? My eleven campaigns in Italy, in Egypt, in Austria, in Prussia and in Poland you don't count, I suppose?"

"Tut, tut, tut!" exclaimed the emperor. "How you do get excited when you come to the essential point of the whole matter! I make you now a chevalier of the Legion of Honor for your wounds and your campaigns, but don't tell me any more about your watermelon!"

Attempted Insight.

Jones—What's the difference between stinginess and economy? Brown—Stinginess is habitual economy; economy is spasmodic stinginess.

Never neglect small repairs. The stitch in time saves not only nine, but ninety. Don't let buttons hang by their last thread. Darn small holes. Never wear dirty or tumbled lace. Brush off mud and bind frayed skirts. Fine feathers make fine birds, but never go in for only outside show. Your lingerie, corsets and stockings should be good, if plain, and always carefully kept in order. A clean cotton petticoat is better than a shabby silk one, and the smartest boots look bad if they are worn down at heel or minus buttons or tidy laces. Remember the outward appearance is often an index of a person's character and that one is apt to get "untidy" in one's character when habits of untidiness are indulged in.

DUMB PATIENCE

A GAME

As many persons may play patience as can be conveniently seated in a circle in the middle of the room. Place the chairs with the backs inward and between two of them leave enough space for a person to pass through. All the players are seated except one, who is called the director.

Inside the circle is a chair, on which Dumb Patience sits. She is dumb all through the game or as long at least as she is patient, but she may laugh or cry or make any sound that is not talking.

Now, the director's business is to watch Patience and announce to the players, who all have their backs to her, what she is doing from time to time, and then the players have to imitate her.

Suppose she laughs, the director calls out, "Patience says laugh!" and all the players must laugh. Suddenly she stops and begins to sew or to go through the motion of sewing; then the director says, "Patience says sew!" and all the players must quickly stop laughing and imitate her. While this is going on all must be silent.

Then Patience begins to cry, and the director says, "Patience says cry!" when all the players begin to cry and keep it up until Patience begins suddenly to make the motions of playing the piano, when at a word from the director all the players stop crying and move their hands about as if over the keys of a piano.

Patience may do anything she pleases, and the players, who are told of it by the director, must begin at once to imitate her.

When she gets tired of giving the players different things to do she jumps up from her chair and, passing out of the circle, begins to run around the chairs. All the players must get up and follow her until she sits down, when they all do likewise except one, of course, who is left without a chair to sit in, and that player then becomes Patience for the next round.

The Multiplication Table.

A village schoolmaster in Germany one day did something at which the parents of one of his pupils foolishly took offense. On the following morning the angry mother of the lad entered the schoolroom during lesson time and began to scold and rate the master. He knew what was coming and as she began called out in a tone of command, "Children, the multiplication table!"

At once the whole school began to repeat the table in chorus. The woman stormed and raged, while the scholars only shouted the harder, and the master quietly laughed to himself. Speechless with anger and surprise, the woman at last went away, and the teacher was left master of the field of battle.

Korean Children.

The children of Korea are extremely quaint and pretty, especially when only a few years old. At New Year's they are generally dressed up in brand new frocks, and though, according to our ideas of taste, we should not give yellow sleeves to a bright red jacket and wear this over a green frock, I must say that somehow or other it looks all right there and relieves the monotony of the sempiternal white garments. The faces of the children are whitened with chalk, and the hair is oiled and parted in the middle, plastered down and tied into one or two small pigtails.—Cornhill.

Look Up When Speaking.

"I don't talk half as much as you do," said the preacher to the lawyer, "yet your voice holds out twice as long as mine. Why is it?"

The lawyer said he couldn't tell.

"The difference in the position of your head when you are talking explains it," said the elocutionist. "A preacher looks down upon his congregation, a lawyer looks up to the judge. That drooping of the head cramps the vocal cords and makes the preacher's voice more difficult to preserve than that of any other professional man."

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1.40	5.4	....Gibsons....	11.19
1.44	7.0	.....Sinks.....	11.10
2.04	9.8	.....Wasco.....	11.00
2.17	14.1	..Klondyke..	10.45
2.23	16.1	...Summit...	10.40
2.40	19.2	Hay Canon Jct	10.24
2.41	19.9	..McDonalds..	10.22
2.53	23.9	... DeMoss...	10.06
3.04	27.0	.....Moro.....	9.55
3.13	30.4	..Erskinville.	9.37
3.44	38.5	.Grass Valley.	9.20
4.00	45.8	...Bourbon...	8.55
4.16	52.5	.....Kent.....	8.40
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