Or.Hist.Soc., City Hall.

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READ THE OBSERVER ALL the time. For County news

Benton's Comedy.

By Frederick White.

Copyright, 1907, by Frederick White.

WHEN Benton's comedy was published in a leading magazine no one was more surprised than Benton himself. Of course he had received the editor's acceptance and a week or two later a very satisfactory check, but the full realization of what it meant did not come to him until after months of waiting he saw with his own eyes his own work under his own name. It was the first time, and Benton felt a certain responsibility.

Many a man has had the same feeling on the birth of his first child, and Benton was simply experiencing some of the pride of fatherhood. For a time he struggled with the desire to adopt literature as a profession, but as the weeks passed and he failed to find himself heralded as a genius saner thoughts prevailed. Woolen goods were in demand, and so were his services as a salesman. Some months afterward he received this note:

My Dear Mr. Benton—At the request of the Hillside Dramatic club I write to ask your permission to use your play, "Maids and Widows," at our midwinter entertainment for the benefit of the orphans' home of this place. We have all read your comedy with great interest and appreciation and think it just what we need for our purpose. Trusting that you will grant our request, believe me, very cordially yours,
ELIZABETH RANKIN VAN CLEAVE.

Benton felt very much gratified when he received this note. He was appreciated, after all. He at once indited the following reply:

My Dear Miss Van Cleave—It will afford me the greatest pleasure to give you permission to use my play for the benefit of the orphans' home. It is always gratifying to find one's work appreciated, and I assure you that the Dramatic club has my best wishes for a successful representation of "Maids and Widows." Very sincerely yours,
JOHN AUSTIN BENTON.

He wondered if the members of the club would gather about Miss Van Cleave and regard the signature of the well known author and playwright with awe, and he began to think of writing a four act tragedy. One morning he was agreeably surprised to find another letter in the handwriting of Miss Van Cleave.

"Thank you so much," she wrote, "for letting us use your play. We have had two rehearsals, and everything seems to be going nicely. Will you please tell me if Alice is supposed to fall in love with Henry at the breakfast table, or is it when they are on their way to the golf club? I am to play Alice, and I do so want to make a success of the part.

"By the way, I find my aunt, Mrs. Baker, is an old friend of your mother's. Is it not strange how small the world is after all?

"Do you consider it necessary for Henry to kiss Alice in the last act, as the book says?"

Benton whistled as he perused this note. He remembered having heard of his mother's friend, Mrs. Baker, and this must be her niece, the beautiful Miss Van Cleave.

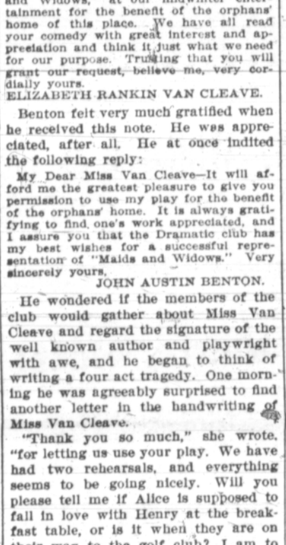
That evening he wrote the following letter:

Dear Miss Van Cleave—In my opinion Alice did not fall in love with Henry at the breakfast table. That would be asking too much of any girl. Eleven o'clock and the golf club is a different matter.

Under the circumstances I should consider it necessary for Henry to kiss Alice. He really could not help it, you know, for Alice is a charming girl.

I am glad that the play is progressing well and wish you every success. Sincerely yours, JOHN A. BENTON.

On Tuesday evening Benton received a note from Mrs. Van Cleave inviting



WITH A PLUNGE THEY STARTED.

him to run out to Hillsdale the following Saturday to witness the presentation of his play and also to spend Sunday with them. Mrs. Van Cleave spoke of her sister's friendship for his mother and in closing stated that he would be met at the station by some member of the family. A convenient train reached Hillsdale at 5:30 o'clock, giving him time to dress for an early dinner.

Benton accepted at once and spent the intervening hours in wondering if the author would be called upon for a speech. On Saturday afternoon he boarded the train, suit case in hand. All the way to Hillsdale he wondered if Miss Van Cleave would be the one to meet him. It was only an hour's run from the city, and soon Benton stood upon the platform. He looked about him, noting the well kept, prosperous appearance of the place and the many handsome traps and carriages awaiting their occupants. A groom in surprisingly tight breeches came up to him and, touching his hat, inquired, "Mr. Benton?"

"Yes," said Benton. "Mrs. Van Cleave's carriage?"

"Master Harry awaits you in the dog-cart, sir," replied the man, possessing himself dexterously of Benton's luggage and leading the way across the platform. Benton followed. A boy of sixteen or so was endeavoring to calm a mettlesome cob that was trying to see how straight he could stand on his hind legs without falling over backward.

"Chuck those things in behind, Burns, and get to his head," he ordered. "How de do, Mr. Benton? Excuse my not shaking hands and climb in."

Benton waited for a moment of comparative quiet and then climbed in. He was not accustomed to a horse like this, and the boy noticed it at once.

"He hasn't been out for a week," he explained, "and he feels good. Let him go, Burns." And, with a plunge, they started, the well trained Burns clutching the rail and swinging up behind with the greatest imperturbability. Once on the straight road leading from the station the cob settled down to a good steady gait, and Benton began to enjoy himself. Young Van Cleave was surprisingly easy for one of his years and kept up a constant flow of talk.

"That's a corking good play of yours, Mr. Benton," he said. "I'm going to be James, and I'm dead letter perfect. Got my clothes last night, and Aunt Fan thought I was the new man and asked me to get her a glass of water. Say, can't James come on in the last act with a letter or something?"

Benton good humoredly said that he thought it might be arranged and inquired who was to play Henry.

"Oh, Artie Brown, and he thinks he's the whole show. Wanted to kiss 'sis' every rehearsal. Said he didn't want it to go wrong the night of the play. Sis couldn't see it and said she thought that was something a man of his experience could do without rehearsing. Rough on Artie, for he knows it all and likes to have people think he's a regular 'killer.' Whoa, boy! Easy now," to the cob as they turned into a private roadway and whirled up to the steps of a fine old colonial house.

The groom was at the cob's head before they really stopped, and Benton climbed down and followed young Van Cleave into the house. Mrs. Van Cleave welcomed him cordially and introduced him to her daughter and the members of the house party, some of whom were to take part in the play. Miss Van Cleave showed him the music room, where the performance was to be held, and exhibited the stage, which was already set for the first act.

"Do you not feel very important," she asked, "when you consider that you are really responsible for it all?"

"No," said Benton. "I cannot say that I do. After all, the real responsibility rests with the players."

"You cannot shirk your share so carelessly," she said, laughing. "Stand or fall, you are one of us in this, and I shall see that you receive your full measure of praise or blame."

"Let us hope, then, that it will be praise—for all our sakes," he said, with an admiring look at her.

"Seriously," said Miss Van Cleave, "I do hope you will not be disappointed in us, and you must not be too critical."

"I shall not be disappointed in you," he replied decidedly.

While Benton was dressing for dinner some one knocked at his door.

"It's me—Jack. Can I come in?" said that ungrammatical young man in an excited tone of voice.

Benton opened the door and inquired what the trouble was.

"Here's a go!" said Jack. "Artie Brown has busted his leg or something and can't act. Sis is having a fit, and the others are just wild. It's too late to put it off, and what are we going to do?"

"Is there no one else to take the part—no understudy?" inquired Benton.

"No one knows it except the prompter, and she's a girl. Father has just come in, and he's tearing his hair. He plays the old man, you know. Got a bald wig and whiskers, and he'll die if he can't wear 'em. Say, what can we do about it anyhow?"

Another knock at the door, and Mr. Van Cleave, Sr., appeared.

"Pardon me, Mr. Benton, for introducing myself in this unceremonious manner," he said, shaking hands, "but this is a serious matter. The tickets have been sold, and it is too late for any postponement. My daughter has suggested that possibly you are sufficiently familiar with the lines to take the part, or, failing that, to read it. It is asking a good deal, I know, but if you could possibly do it it would be a great relief to all of us, besides helping us out of a very embarrassing predicament."

Benton's head whirled. It was an unexpected role that he found himself called upon to play. It is one thing to watch others act and quite another to do it oneself. However, he was a self reliant young man, and, as it happened, he was familiar with the part of Henry.

This was the character into which he had put his own individuality. Step by step and situation by situation he had made Henry act and talk as he himself would have done under like circumstances. So, while it would have been almost impossible for him to take any other part without preparation, in this case he felt that he might venture upon it without danger of absolute failure. It was a risk, but under the circumstances he did not feel justified in refusing.

"I think I might do it after a fashion," he said gravely, "I should like to have a glance at the book, and I shall have to look to you all to help me out with the business."

"You may count on us for every assistance in our power," said Mr. Van Cleave. "It is a great relief, and you are placing us under a lasting obligation."

"I hope you will be able to say as much after it is all over," said Benton, "but in any event I will do my best."

Jack brought him the clothes that the unfortunate Arthur was to have

"I SHALL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED IN YOU."

worn, and they proved to be a very presentable fit.

Before the curtain was rung up Benton found time to go over some of the more important scenes of the play. He was very much relieved to find himself quite at home in both lines and situations.

A short time later he stood in the wings listening to the announcement of the accident and the request that the audience would kindly overlook any lack of smoothness in the part of Henry, as the gentleman who was to play it had stepped into the breach at a moment's notice. Then, after a few hurried words of direction from the stage manager, two very flurried young people took their places for the opening scene and the curtain went up.

Now, there are certain psychological processes which prevail under certain conditions. We are mystified by their apparent unaccountability. We raise our hands in helpless incredulity and exclaim, "How inexplicable!" when there is nothing strange about it if we remember that youth and propinquity work hand in hand to carry out the universal behest. One each at least of these processes and conditions confronted Benton as he stood on the lawn before the clubhouse an hour later. He had done well, and he felt strangely exalted. He knew he was John Benton, but it was a new personality that cloaked him. He was in love—in love with a girl whom he had met yesterday for the first time—or was it today? He was waiting—waiting impatiently and giving voice to his inmost thoughts in words that were strangely familiar. He saw her coming slowly through the trees and started forward to meet her. They seated themselves on the clubhouse steps. They fenced with each other lightly, but with an undercurrent of feeling. He loved her—he loved her—and in a moment he would tell her so. His heart bounded, for he knew what her answer would be.

"It is only since yesterday, but it is enough. A week, a month, a year, and it would be the same. A hundred years from now, and it will still be the same. I love you. Will you be my wife?"

She arose, and he followed her. Her eyes were cast down, and her hands hung limp by her side. He seized them in his own, and his compelling gaze forced her to raise her eyes to his.

"Answer me," he said.

"I love you," she said falteringly as she swayed toward him, and he clasped her in his arms, and only his ears heard the added "dear."

He kissed her full upon the lips.

There was a roar of applause. From the wings people flocked upon the stage clad in golfing attire, their faces strangely red and white. Then he remembered. Still holding the girl by the hand, he led her to the front. It was his place to repeat the epilogue. The others formed a half circle behind them. He spoke:

"In what may seem a very short space Alice and Henry have met, loved and settled the question, quite to their own satisfaction. May we hope that the match and the manner of its making meet with your approbation? And as the curtain falls let these words, typifying the end of the old and the beginning of the new, close our story—and so they were married.'"

Women of Diplomacy.

Almost all the celebrated women have gained their fame by diplomatic means. The famous women of Jewish history were all subtle in their methods—Rebecca, Jael and Herodias, to name but a few of them. What born diplomatists, too, were Catherine of Siena, the great saint, and Catherine de' Medici, the great sinner! The list of them down the ages is unending.—Woman's Life.

HELLO, PARIS!

Wireless Phone System From New York to French Capital.

Contracts were recently signed whereby a wireless telephone service is to be established on the 700 foot tower of the Metropolitan Life Insurance company in New York city by the De Forest Radio Telephone company. Dr. Lee De Forest, scientific director, declares his belief that eventually it will be possible to communicate by speech from the lofty pile in Madison square to the top of the Eiffel tower in Paris.

He expects when the apparatus is installed to have wireless telephone communication between New York and Philadelphia, Boston, Montreal, Chicago and Havana. Then he hopes to achieve the feat of talking to the French capital. As soon as the Metropolitan tower is completed an antenna consisting of eight small copper wires will be fastened through the topmost balcony on the fifty-second floor, just below the lantern. The wires will be insulated from the metal frame of the structure and will run down diagonally to the Fourth avenue end of the roof of the main building to a pent house, in which the wireless apparatus will be placed.

The station will be 160 feet above the curb, while the wires will thus have a length of 700 feet and will be as far as possible removed from the absorbing influence of structural steel. It is announced that the apparatus will have a ten kilowatt capacity, which would make it capable of covering 1,000 miles.

When the service is installed Dr. De Forest declares that it will be possible to actually talk with incoming steamships on the sea and even to transmit to them by wireless telephone not only words, but music. One of the plans is to transmit opera as sung in the opera houses in New York direct to the salons of approaching liners.

Dr. De Forest said that he anticipated no interference between the Radio Telephone service and the wireless telegraph messages around the metropolis, as on account of the great height of the tower the Metropolitan station would be able to employ a wave a mile and a half long, so that no other station, no matter how near, would be able to hear it.

WOMEN AS RURAL CARRIERS.

They Cheerfully Accept Hardships Involved In Distribution of Mail.

Positions as rural carriers are not supposed to be attractive to women, and the postoffice department does not encourage their employment as such, but an increasing number of women are invading the rural delivery field, sometimes as regular carriers, but more frequently as substitutes.

Assistant Postmaster General Degraw is authority for the statement that when women obtain places as rural carriers they invariably accept cheerfully the hardships that accompany the work and vie with the male carriers in enthusiasm over their work.

An example of this enthusiasm is shown in a report received at the postoffice department in Washington of the case of Miss Lenna Sennott, who is the substitute carrier on a twenty-eight mile route in one of the New England states. Miss Sennott has held the position for three years, and, although the route is a long one and is thickly wooded in some sections, Miss Sennott says she has no fear in driving over it alone, and she carries no weapon of defense. When asked what induced her to enter the service Miss Sennott said that one day about three years ago the regular carrier told her he was unable to find a substitute and jokingly asked her if she would like the position.

"I told him I would like to be his assistant or substitute," said Miss Sennott, "provided he had horses that had some life. He agreed he had good horses, so I was sworn in as his substitute. The horses are all right. They prick up their ears and step in good shape when they meet an electric car or an automobile. These are the kind I like to drive.

"I am met with a smile from all the patrons of the route. Even the dogs won't bark at me. Yes, there are some places pretty thickly wooded, but that doesn't worry Lenna Sennott any. I never carry a gun or any weapon save the ones that were born with me. I don't say I am a boxer, but I can hold my end of a tussle with any one. No, I have never been afraid, because there is nothing to fear."

Wild Animals Returning.

The animals that prey are growing in such numbers in the northern part of the state of Minnesota, particularly in those natural game preserves, the national and state parks, that they threaten the continued existence of animals of the hunt. And from the southern part of the state, even from such long settled regions as that about the big bend of the Minnesota, in the neighborhood of Mankato, St. Peter and New Ulm, the three historic towns, the wolf from being a well nigh extinct animal has come into its own again and become a menace. Suddenly at the semicentennial moment the state appears to be supporting as many fish, flesh and fowl as it did in territorial days, says the St. Paul Dispatch. The state will have to assume anew the extermination of wild animals, and bounties offered will be even more in demand. There is danger both to inhabitants and to game in these depredations. Particularly should there be concern for the scattered dwellers in the north of the state, who are anticipating the coming of a denser population, holding down lone claims and the like.

Abdul's Reforms.

The Power of the Young Turks In the Sultan's Domain and the Plots and Intrigue at Constantinople.

ABDUL HAMID II., sultan of Turkey, may now in all truth be termed "the sick man of Europe." He has suddenly turned reformer owing to the widespread revolt against his methods and favorites, and if there is anything that will make a Turkish sultan sick it is reform. The mere reading of the word "reform" in a newspaper has been known to give Abdul creeping paralysis.

The rise of the Young Turk party, backed by and, in fact, made up of the leading military officers in the Turkish army, has caused all the recent radical moves of the sultan—the re-establishment of the old Turkish constitution, the issue of a call for a house of assembly, the discharge of powerful state officials and court dictators and change of legation officials in various countries.

Among these new moves is the recent substitution of Mundji Bey Fikri for Mehmed Ali Bey as Turkish minister to the United States, the former being an opponent of the sultan. And now as a further palliative the sultan will build his people a parliament house for the lawmakers soon to be elected. He is now more fearful of assassination than ever, for he is wise enough to know that the Young Turks are not demanding reform for reform's sake. They are of the same stamp as the sultan's bloodthirsty and grafting favorites, but they are on the outside, and they want to get on the inside.

It is evident that Abdul Hamid fears something more than continued demands for government reform. It is admitted that he knows of se-

ABDUL HAMID II.

cret plans for an open and armed revolt against his dynasty for the purpose of deposing him from the throne. He well knows that only a small part of the army is faithful to him or would remain so in case of radical developments. So fearful is the sultan of his soldiers that he dares not punish or even reprimand men whom he knows to be conspiring against him.

The flight to this country of Izzet Pasha, his one time secretary and later his chief adviser, greatly weakened the sultan's position, for Izzet is known to be a consummate master of court intrigue, and he could have been depended on to smooth out some of the wrinkles in the sultan's affairs.

Izzet would probably have been imprisoned or executed by the Young Turks had he remained in Turkey because of the general hatred he has aroused through his harsh measures in the past. An Arab, a college graduate and accused of having been a corrupt judge in Constantinople courts, Izzet wormed his way into the confidence of the sultan and gradually obtained great influence over him. He ordered massacres at various times, it is said.

Izzet is the father of Mehmed Ali Bey, the deposed American ambassador of Turkey. And Mehmed's successor, Mundji Bey Fikri, made a bit-

MUNDJI BEY FIKRI.

ter attack on Izzet when informed that he (Mundji) was to be ambassador at Washington.

Just where the fugitive Izzet has been in the United States became more or less of an international mystery for a time. It is known that there are many Turkish and Armenian refugees in America who would dearly love to meet Izzet and settle some old scores.

KEEPING BRILLIANTS BRIGHT.

How Women Can Care For Their Own Jewelry.

Jewelry demands time and attention from its owners if it is to be kept in good condition. More particularly does this apply to the imitation gems which are so much worn nowadays. When new such stones often defy detection, but when they get soiled their character is sometimes only too apparent. Rhinestones are in great vogue, and once they lose their luster nothing will restore it. The woman who knows, however, can prevent this from occurring.

One of the best ways of preserving the brilliancy is to prepare a warm water bath, taking care that the liquid is perfectly free from any gritty sediment before immersing the articles of jewelry. Allow the jewelry to remain in the water two minutes, then remove and scrub with a stiff brush.

Rinse off the soap by plunging the pieces into a bowl of clean water and then place them in a box filled with jewelers' sawdust and allow them to remain there for half an hour or until all the water has been absorbed. When dry whisk off any fine pieces of wood which may adhere by means of a soft brush and rub with a soft cloth.

This method is only possible when the stones are set in silver, platinum or gold. When not entirely surrounded by some metal the only way to clean them is by softly brushing with a camel's hairbrush.

Many women destroy rhinestones in their efforts to clean them simply because they do not understand how these stones are set. Most imitation stones are simply pieces of glass and are really softer and easier to scratch than the ordinary window panes. Their brilliancy is obtained by the tips of lead or the aluminium in which they are set.

Hence it will be realized that scrubbing and liquids, even water itself, will have a tendency to loosen these tips and allow dust and moisture to find entrance between the stone and the lead foil. Rhinestones of the better quality, which are made of a composition, can be cleaned with soap and water just the same as diamonds and may then be dried in jewelers' hot sawdust.

How to Clean Sewing Machines.

Sewing machines need to be given personal attention. If the machine works hard or squeaks, then you may be sure it needs a thorough cleaning. Remove the needle and shuttle and give every joint and bearing in the machine a generous bath of gasoline. You must not have a lamp or fire burning anywhere near this explosive fluid. With the needle and shuttle still out, turn the wheels briskly to allow the gasoline to penetrate every part of the machine and to loosen and clean out all old oil and grime. After the wheels have been turned for a minute or so, wipe away all visible oil, grease and dirt. Cotton rags are the best for wiping away the oil, for they absorb the grease readily. It is necessary that every drop of oil be removed. Now oil the parts with pure machine oil and run the machine again for a few minutes before reinserting the needle and shuttle. You will find after this treatment that your machine is in perfect temper and a delight to work with, so smoothly and easily will it run.

How to Remove Callous Spots.

Callous spots are most frequently found on the soles of the feet. They are due to pressure and friction and often are decidedly painful and annoying. As much of them as is possible should be rubbed away in the daily bath, and what remains can often be removed without any pain whatever by rubbing the spot with a piece of toilet pumice while the callous is in a softened condition from the bath. Another method of removing a callous is to bind the spot up overnight with a cloth saturated with crude petroleum after the spot has been bathed and rubbed and scraped. This will often soften the callous. Strapping the foot with an adhesive plaster will often bring relief. The plaster should be smoothly put on. The spot under the plaster will perspire freely, and this will cause the spot to entirely disappear.

How to Relieve Headaches.

As headache is one of the most common complaints among women, the average woman cannot know of too many cures for headache to resort to in an emergency. Witch hazel is an excellent cure for headache. Saturate a cloth with witch hazel and apply it to the part of the head where the pain is most felt and renew it as soon as the cloth becomes dry. Headache that is produced by an excessive flow of blood to the head can often be cured by this remedy when others have failed. This is as speedy a relief as is known, as it more often than not will bring relief in a few minutes and seldom fails to cure within an hour.

How to Prolong Life of Rubbers.

Women who have trouble with their rubbers breaking at the heel after wearing them a short time may like to know how I make use of mine when they reach this state, says a contributor in the Delineator. I cut out the heels as far as the upslope of the arch, making sandals of them. These are sufficient protection except in the case of slush or heavy rain.

How to Dust Polished Floors.

To dust polished floors and to clean blackboards dampen (not wet) a soft cloth with kerosene, roll tight and leave from eight to twelve hours. When ready to use, fold in a square of several thicknesses. With this floors and blackboards may be beautifully cleaned without scattering dust.