

The caution of the New Englander in giving a direct answer to a direct question is proverbial. Two natives of a New Hampshire town met after the funeral, and the first asked, "Was not your father's death very sudden?" Slowly drawing one hand from his pocket and pulling down his beard, the other replied, thoughtfully, "Waal, rather sudden for him."—Argonaut.

A Heavyweight.

"And then," she said in telling of the romantic episode, "she sprang to his arms."

"She did?"

"Of course. Do you doubt it?"

"Oh, no," he replied, "but after seeing her I can't help thinking that she must have jarred him quite a bit."

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A Halloween Scheme

It Was Well Planned and Worked Well

By F. A. MITCHEL

"I wish," said Mrs. Edgerton to her friend, Mrs. Tisdale, "that your Alice would fall in love with my Frank. A young bachelor is so beset by temptations. If Frank were married I should not have to keep worrying about him all the time. He is out every evening, sometimes till morning. I don't know where he goes or what he is doing. I never go to sleep till he comes in, and thus I spend hours worrying."

"You have no need to worry about your boy," said the other. "Frank is simply doing what most young men of fortune do at his age—he is enjoying the novelty of things. When that novelty wears off he will become engrossed in more serious matters."

"Would you object to a match between him and Alice?"

"On the contrary, I should welcome it. We have little or nothing to leave Alice, and I should be glad to see her married to a man whose income would preclude the probability of her coming to want."

"Suppose," rejoined Mrs. Edgerton thoughtfully, "we lay a trap to bring them together. It would be useless for me to say to Frank that I wished him to marry Alice, and even if he acceded to my desire it would be equally useless for you to try to force Alice to accept him. If we could contrive to throw them together I would have great hopes of Frank falling in love with her, she is so attractive in every way. But I have my doubts about Alice. It seems to me that she is too serious, too thoughtful, too good for a man of the world like Frank."

"My daughter is very impressionable. There is also a good deal of romance in her nature. If we could bring about some episode by which Frank would appear to be a hero in her eyes we would win our point, or if it could be made to appear that fate intends him for her husband that would have the same effect."

"I have it!" exclaimed the other, speaking suddenly a thought that flashed upon her. "Halloween will be here in another week. I will give a Halloween party. I will invite Alice, and you must come too. We will concoct some scheme to make it appear that fate intends her and Frank for each other."

Mrs. Tisdale made no objection to this, though she would have preferred that the scheme be worked out at her own home, since it would be more becoming that the man should come to the woman rather than the woman to the man. But Mrs. Edgerton possessed a country place especially suitable to a house party. It had been closed for the season, but could be reopened.

Mrs. Edgerton and Mrs. Tisdale were especially adapted to carry out such a scheme as they had in mind. Both had been married very young and had jumped almost from girlhood into a gay world. Neither had yet passed out of the forties, nor had either lost her adaptation for playing a part.

"Mamma," said Alice Tisdale, looking at her mother through a pair of eyes to remind one of a deep pool darkened by surrounding rocks and overhanging verdure, "do you really think there is anything in Halloween?"

"Why do you ask, Alice?"

"Well, we are going to Mrs. Edgerton's country place for a Halloween party, and I would like to know before we go whether the belief or fancy or whatever it is that one may see a fu-

ture husband or wife is all rubbish or whether there is anything in it."

"We don't know, dear, where superstition ends and a legitimate faith begins. There are certainly many wonderful things in the world that we call supernatural. Some of them may be referable to natural laws of which we have no knowledge."

Mrs. Tisdale was well satisfied with herself at this method of answering her daughter's question. She would not intentionally deceive her child, and she felt that in her reply she had spoken nothing that was not true. What she said made a marked impression on Alice. She went to the library and, taking down a book on strange customs, turned to Halloween and read of girls seeing the faces of their future husbands in looking glasses, the setting adrift of candles on a river and other such methods of determining their future. If she did not believe in their efficacy she certainly did not disbelieve.

The house party at Mrs. Edgerton's country place assembled in the afternoon preceding Halloween. They dined and after dinner sat before the great fireplace in the hall telling ghost stories. At 10 o'clock the hostess announced to them that they were expected to scatter themselves over the large domain. There was room enough for all, she told them, and if it was fated that they should meet with any adventure to show them their future mates there was no reason why it should not be done on this Halloween.

The girls all obeyed the hostess, but some of the young men preferred a game of bridge or billiards and demurred to going out into a cool night under the stars to participate in what they considered a childish performance. But Mrs. Edgerton told them that they had not been invited to a bridge or a billiard party, but to a Halloween party, and they must accept the situation. With this they sailed forth, some to sit in a summer house and smoke, while others, respecting their hostess' wishes, wandered over the place. Lights were seen on the bosom of the river, indicating that some of the girls had brought candles and set them afloat.

Frank Edgerton had been requested by his mother to set an example to the other men guests by entering into the spirit of the affair and go forth in search of adventure. He strolled alone on the river bank watching the lighted candles and lighted a cigar, resolving to smoke it to the end before returning to the house, for he was bent on pleasing his mother and feared that he would return too soon. The night was not cold, the stars were bright, and Frank was content to remain in the open so long as the case required.

Suddenly from bushes, perhaps a hundred yards from him, a light flashed. It was not the season for fireflies, and even if it had been no fireflies could give so great a light. It at once occurred to Frank that it had been set by a human being. Either some of the men or girl guests were seeking an adventure. If a girl Frank was ready to accommodate her. He walked toward the place where he had seen the light, but when he reached it found nothing but bushes. While looking about him the light flashed again, but from a different location. Frank went to the new spot with the same result as before.

It was evident that some one, probably a girl, was bent on leading him a game of hide and seek. He was quite ready to play it and waited for another flash. It came, and this time, instead of walking leisurely toward it, he ran. Nevertheless the result was the same as before. He found no one. For some time the light flashed from different points, and yet the trend was in one direction. Though Frank made violent dashes for it, when he reached the point where he had seen it he found only silence and a low growth of evergreens. Once, instead of seeing a flash, he heard a low laugh. This settled the point as to the sex of the hider, for it was a woman's laugh. Frank ran toward the place from which it seemed to come, but one has no sense by which to judge of the direction of sound, and when he reached the illuminated place the light was flashed in an entirely different one.

Finally Frank followed a flash, and though he found darkness he touched something human. Resolving that whoever had been leading him should not leave him, he threw his arms about it and held it fast. That it was feminine was evident from the apparel.

"Let me go," said a girl, struggling.

"Not until I have learned who you are. You have been leading me a fine game, and I must at least get a glimpse of your face before I will release you. Come, flash your light!"

"I have no light. It is you who have been leading me, Mr. Edgerton. Though I can't see your face, I recognize your voice."

"Do you mean to tell me that you have not a flashlight?"

"I have not."

"This is very strange. You are Miss Tisdale, are you not?"

"I am."

No one knows whether Frank Edgerton during this dialogue continued to hold Alice Tisdale in his arms or released her. Alice at once became im-

pressed with a fancy that on this Halloween a will-o'-the-wisp had conducted her to her future husband, and, though she was a modest girl, it is quite possible that she did not continue her efforts to free herself.

Later the two walked into the house together. Most of the guests had returned. Some were telling stories they had invented of marvelous happenings, some admitting disappointments. Alice Tisdale said nothing. Perhaps she was waiting for Frank Edgerton to tell their experience. But Frank held his peace. He was puzzled. He believed that Alice told the truth when she denied having a flashlight. Alice was wondering if she had met a real Halloween experience.

Mrs. Edgerton and Mrs. Tisdale when their children entered were sitting together chatting apparently on commonplace topics, for they showed no animation. The others were interested in one another's stories of their experiences. Edgerton turned to Alice and looked at her inquiringly, as much as to say, "Is it possible that so retiring a girl could have led me such a dance?" She dropped her eyes under his gaze. He wished he was back in the dark place where he had seized her and was again holding her in his arms.

"Come out on the porch with me," he said, "and let us have a look at the stars."

Whether they looked at the stars or not nobody but themselves knows, but certain it is that within a month they were engaged.

What Mrs. Edgerton and Mrs. Tisdale were saying to each other so quietly when the son of the one and the daughter of the other entered the house was this:

"Did your flashlight work well?" asked Mrs. Edgerton.

"Splendidly. But Frank almost caught me several times."

"You had the hardest part. I had no trouble with Alice at all. I led her along like a lamb to the slaughter. After flashing my light I had plenty of time to get out of the way. The electric lamps are blinding, and I don't think she dared go very fast in the dark."

"It's lucky we had our course well laid out. As it was, I found it difficult to draw Frank to the point designed."

"I wonder if we have succeeded."

"That remains to be seen."

OUR ERRATIC MOON.

Science Now Says, as Shakespeare Noted, She is a Wanderer.

There is nothing alarming in the report of the astronomer royal of Great Britain in charge of the famous observatory at Greenwich, on the Thames, a few miles below London, that the moon has been guilty of insistent aberrations during the last several decades, though some of the interpretations of what he said in that report, made annually, would be quite alarming if they were scientifically exact.

Shakespeare, usually more correct in astronomical references than other writers of his time, merely mentioned what every one else knew when he spoke of the inconstancy of the great satellite of earth as changing nightly in her circling orb, but he showed a much deeper appreciation of those lunatic aberrations when in "Othello" he excuses an action of one of his characters in the words:

It is the very error of the moon,
She comes more nearer earth than she
was wont
And makes men mad.

Every month the moon exhibits the simplest phase of her aberration—that when she is on the side of the earth toward the sun the attraction of the latter vast luminary tends to pull the moon away from the earth, while when the earth is between the moon and the sun, so to speak, the double attraction brings our satellite nearer to the earth.

There are many other perturbations of the moon which have never been explained with mathematic precision. As one scientist has said, "The lunar theory is not yet ideally perfect." Consequently even the closest of lunar observers may be in error in regard to certain of the phenomena of the activities of this by far the largest of any of the numerous satellites of our several planets which are favored with moons, her diameter being approximately one-fourth that of the earth.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

On his English tour an American was admiring the velvety smoothness of a certain sward, and, being possessed of land and an overpowering confidence that with money all things are possible, he asked the head gardener how to produce such a lawn. And the gardener said: "It's easy enough, sir. All you need do is to remove all the stones, plow up the ground, plant it with grass seed and roll it for 300 years."

A PICTURESQUE VILLAIN.

Gilderoy the Giant, Who Was Hanged as High as a Kite.

"Higher than Gilderoy's kite!" We have all heard the expression, but not many of us know who or what Gilderoy was.

Gilderoy was a bonny boy, Had roses tuck his shoonies, His stockings were of silken soy, WI' garters hanging down.

The old Scotch balladist's description suggests surely a gay and harmless youth in all the bravery of his knotted garter ribbons and rosetted shoes setting forth to court some pretty lassie, but the old time ballad of broad sheet and itinerant singer too often corresponded to the blood and thunder dime novel of today in glorifying worthless criminals out of all knowledge.

The unpoetized Gilderoy of fact was young and dressed with gaudy richness, but he was a "bonny boy" of six feet ten in his stocking feet, a hulking giant with glittering eyes, a shock of black curls and a scarred cheek. His strength was enormous, and when, after a series of brutal robberies and murders, he had been overpowered by a posse of soldiers, tried and condemned to death, it enabled him to break his bonds and escape to France.

He did not venture in a new country to resume his crimes of violence, but he devoted himself instead to thievery and became before long the very king of cutpurses.

One day when the king and court with the great Cardinal Richelieu had gone in state to attend mass at St. Denis, the king's eye was caught by a towering stranger in magnificent attire, and caught at the moment the stranger's hand moving gently toward the unnoting cardinal's pocket and dexterously extracting his purse. Moreover at that instant the pickpocket lifted his eyes and met those of the king. Seizing his one chance, Gilderoy smiled and made a slight signal to the king to keep silence. Convinced that the theft was merely a friendly wager or jest, King Louis delightedly complied, and as soon as the service was ended approached Richelieu and inquired if he had, perchance, a purse of gold about him, as, not having his own, he desired to borrow a coin.

Richelieu immediately felt for his purse and discovered his loss, but the king's laughter was soon checked when he discovered that not only was the theft genuine, but the light fingered dandy who had ventured to make a "pal" of the king of France had not hesitated also to empty the royal pocket on his way out of the chapel.

Gilderoy, for whom his audacious affront to the royal dignity soon made France impossible, returned to Scotland, betook himself to cattle lifting and highway robbery and was finally betrayed by a confederate and hanged on a gallows so high that his swinging body was likened by those who saw the execution to a kite.—Youth's Companion.

Severe on Himself.

The manager of a factory engaged a new man and gave instructions to the foreman to instruct him in his duties. A few days afterward the manager inquired whether the new man was progressing with his work.

The foreman, who had not agreed very well with the man in question, angrily exclaimed:

"Progressing! There's been a lot of progress. I have taught him everything I know and he is still an ignorant fool."—Exchange.

Kicking the Bucket.

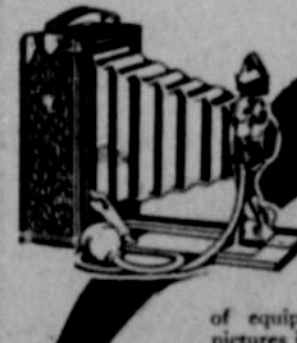
"Kicking the bucket" is an irreverent way of expressing a person's death. The expression originated at the time when a man named Halseover tried to commit suicide by hanging himself from a beam. He stood on a high bucket, which he kicked away from him when he had adjusted the rope. A neighbor rescued him and in his disappointment he said:

"What's the matter? I thought I kicked the bucket."

Would Know Later.

Patient—Now, doctor, what's the matter with me, anyway?

The Head Consulting Physician—My dear sir, do you suppose that if we knew what was the matter with you we would have decided to hold a postmortem?



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