

CONTENT VS. DISCONTENT.

One, satisfied with what must be her lot—
'Twas not a corner lot—serenely meant
Never to wander from her humble cot,

THE LADY'S MAID'S STORY

'Yes, miss, certainly, I lived with Mrs. Birch—Miss Grigg that was before she married Mr. Birch. I knew all about that affair. It was very singular indeed—very. I'm not sure that I ought to mention it, for if a lady's maid can't hold her tongue she can't find good places.

'Well, Miss Grigg was engaged to be married. Mr. Birch had fallen in love with her when she was playing Hamlet's ma. Perhaps you have seen the play, miss? The young man objects to his ma getting married the second time, so I seemed to make out, and acted most impudent, giving sass to his ma and his step-pa, and carrying on awful.

'Well, she was playing Hamlet's ma, and Mr. Birch fell in love with her and sent her a letter, and called and made an offer, all in no time. She accepted him, of course, and the preparations for the wedding began. I don't think any lady ever had so many dresses before.

'At last everything was finished. The trunks were packed, fifteen of 'em, miss, and fourteen were to go on that afternoon, and one—the one with the wedding and traveling dresses—was, of course, to be left and go with the bride when she started next day.

'Miss Grigg was a lady who didn't like to wait. I went to her at once, miss, as was my duty, and I said to Bridget Duster, the chambermaid:

'Bridget, watch that black trunk and see that the men don't carry it off.'

'Bridget understood with her elbows, of course, miss, and after I had been to the land's end for two yards of blue ribbon exactly such a shade as she wanted, and got back, I found that she had sent off the black trunk first of all, and was very proud of having been so careful.

'The trunks were all miles away by that time. There was nothing for it but to tell Miss Grigg. She flew at me, miss. I don't blame her for being angry. I would forgive her in such a case. She flew at me violent, miss; and then, miss, she had spasms. She beat the sofa, she tore her hair, she screamed, and me all the while saying:

'Remember your eyes, miss. Think how you'll look. Your nose is swelling dreadful, miss.'

'Finally she came to and bathed her face. And says she:

'Flora, what—shall—I do?'

'I don't know, miss,' said I, 'unless you put off the wedding until you telegraph for the trunk.'

'No,' said she, 'that unlovely; besides, one never knows. None ain't to be depended on.'

'You might borrow a dress,' said I.

'As if I'd be married in one that didn't fit,' said she. 'Stop, don't speak a word. I've an idea.'

'She sat with one finger on her lips for a while. Then she said:

'My embroidered dressing gown. The white one! That's here!'

'In the bureau, miss,' said I.

'Very well,' said she. 'I'll be married in that. Telegraph for the trunk, Flora.'

'The white dressing gown, miss' said I, 'nearly antonished out of my senses.'

'Lock the door, Flora. I'm sick of lying on my back. I've taken them in, haven't I? You see what I am about now?'

'Exactly, miss,' said I; 'to be too ill to be married when the time comes.'

'No,' said she; 'to be ill enough to be married in the white dressing gown. I'm going to be married on my dying bed, Flora.'

'I gave a screech and she laughed, and then she made a supper of sardines and biscuits and wine, and she threw the medicine out of the window. Early next day the doctor came. I answered his questions as to what sort of night his patient had passed by saying she had been 'much the same.'

'And then I took a little note she had written to Mr. Birch.

'I knew what was in it. She told him 'that rather than leave the world without keeping her vow to him she would be married on her dying bed.'

'I powdered her up well, miss, and I dressed her in the embroidered dressing gown, with those roses at the throat. I pulled down the green shades and darkened the room. She fixed the pillows to prop herself up with, and then she skipped into bed.

'Give me my pearl bracelets,' she said, 'and the handsomest of those handkerchiefs, and all my rings; and Flora, mind you must sob all through the ceremony, I'm going to be calm.'

'We hadn't five minutes more, but just as the first knock came to the door she whispered:

'Oh, dear! if I only could have slow music. Couldn't you catch that "Traviata" organ, Flora, and get him to play for half an hour outside the window? He's always on the corner. Flora, I'll leave you something handsome if you do.'

'I did it, short as the time was. I caught that man and he ground out his quarter's worth.

'The clergyman was a very nice, neat, near-sighted old gentleman. Mr. Birch was the dreisfullest sight—pale as a ghost and shaking from head to foot. The groomsmen looked dreadfully sorry; the four or five intimate friends looked as though they were at a funeral; and to see her, with her calm smile and powdered face, one hand against her heart, the other in his—I was glad I'd been told to sob; I had to do something. And so they were married.

'I feel,' said Miss Grigg, slowly, 'that this, perhaps the last moment of my life, is very sweet. To die thus, with my hand in yours—ah! Dear friend, adieu. Flora, my faithful maid, take this ring. I saw her pick out the cheapest; but no matter. Remember me by it. Now—leave us.'

'Then everybody kissed her and went out of the room sobbing.

'In a moment more there was a scream; Mr. Birch had fainted away. It took an hour to bring him to.

'The reporter of the evening paper was waiting outside for the news. It was published all over that night, but the next afternoon the traveling dress came back in the black trunk.

'Yes, miss, of course—Miss Grigg—I mean to say Mrs. Birch—recovered at once. And that's the whole story. I'm the only one that knows it, and I wouldn't mention it to any one but you, ma'am.'

'New York News.'

'Advice to Young Writers.

Don't give up your occupation, from which you derive regular income, until you are sure that were you to give your whole time to writing you could produce enough articles, and articles of the proper kind and quality, to bring to you as much returns large enough to supply such wants as you believe must be filled. Until that time comes—and when it does come you can tell much better than I—keep on writing, reading and thinking. Accumulate all the ideas you can. Accumulate all the articles you cannot sell, and accumulate all the customers you can. Do your writing early in the morning whenever possible, and always keep your eyes on the future.

'This last is very important in one particular that I am afraid young writers too often neglect. You must expect what seems curt and often harsh treatment from editors. Take this always as a matter of course, as one of the crosses of the profession, and never lose your temper. Do not allow your sensitiveness to put you on bad terms with any editor. It is like flying in the face of Providence. You may forget what you considered an insult at his hands, but he never forgets if you resent it, and if, years after, you offer him an article, it will most likely be returned without regard to its merits. Never argue with a bull, a mad dog, or an editor.—C. M. Hammond in The Writer.

'Courts of Conciliation.'

'For years there has existed in Denmark,' said a well-known lawyer in the Hoffman house the other day, 'what are called fougelaas kommission, or courts of conciliation,' which have worked to a charm and are well worthy of imitation everywhere, and especially in this country, where all our courts are crowded to repletion with business. These are not courts of arbitration, but are conducted on this plan: There is one judge and two assistants, none of whom are professionals, but are taken from among citizens the same as we take jurors, by consent of all parties. Every case to be acted on must be brought before these courts of conciliation before it can be taken into a regular court of law. The plaintiff comes without counsel, none being allowed on either side, and states his case plainly, and the defendant is summoned to appear on a certain day, either in person or by proxy, otherwise he is fined if the case has to be taken to a law court. Then each party is heard and questioned by the judge, who tells them of the legal rights and duties of each and gives advice or suggestions. The parties are not obliged to take this, but if they do, and agree to settle, the judgment is without appeal and final.—New York Evening Sun.

The people of Portland, Ore., have recently subscribed a sum to import a choice selection of European singing birds to enliven their gardens and groves.

Experiments are being made on Prussian railroads with axle boxes fitted with bearings of vegetable parchment in place of iron.

'Then Miss Grigg said to the ladies who had come in: 'Leave me with my faithful Flora, and we were left alone. I can't say that I was surprised when she sat up in bed and said briskly:

RIDING ON A SHARK.

Thrilling Adventure of Prof. Swanson of Sequel Point, Cal.

Swimming Teacher Swanson of the Capitol bath-house at Sequel Point, Cal., treated the resorters there to a thrilling spectacle the other day. His feat was nothing less than an exhibition of bare-back riding, the burden bearer being a monster shark, which was captured the same day in the nets of a fisherman and towed into the slip. Its arrival created great excitement among the visitors at that resort. No amount of assurance on the part of the proprietors of the hotels or the fishermen that basking sharks were not man-eaters, and that many had been caught with no accident happening, could entirely quiet the fears of the visitors, and bathing was almost given up. Some ocular demonstration of the fact that a basking shark was harmless therefore became necessary.

Swimming Teacher Swanson of the Capitol bath, then determined to give an exhibition with the shark which should convince the most timid. A performance followed, the like of which no man ever participated in before. Swanson put on a bathing suit and swam to the wharf where the partially exhausted monster lay, still partly wrapped in the torn and tangled fishing nets. Slowly approaching the gasping yet enraged monster, a whale in size if not in species, Swanson swam close to his side and then clambered slowly on top, a moderately easy task to accomplish, as the shark lay almost entirely under water. Sitting astride the huge fish like a baby on an elephant, the bold swimmer shouted in triumphant derision at the several hundred people on the wharf, who had gathered to witness the strange performance.

As soon as the shark had realized it had gath red something on his back it commenced to thrash about and threw Swanson off. Women in the crowd shrieked in fear and men held their breath in excitement. It was hardly a minute, however, before Swanson appeared uninjured and laughing outside of the line of foam caused by the shark's struggles. The undaunted swimmer again went to the side of the shark and once more mounted his marine steed. The shark again showed its fear and anger by shaking him off, but not so violently as before. With great persistence Swanson repeated the performance till at last the shark became tolerably tame. Daily exhibitions are

now given and his sharkship has become quite a favorite with bathers who delight in wild, reckless riding. So far no one has ventured a ride out to sea.

Ibsen and His Plays.

There is a funny row about Ibsen and his plays in Australia. In the beginning of June a theatrical matinee was given to raise funds for the Women's College of the University of Sydney, and the play selected was Ibsen's "Dukkehjem." Various dignitaries allowed their names to be printed as patrons of the performance, but when the Countess of Jersey, the Governor's lady, was applied to she refused, saying that from what she had heard of Ibsen she had no wish to see one of his plays, and that it was impossible that an actress who could play in such a piece could be a lady. This was thought to be a cruel and gratuitous insult to Miss Achurch, who was to play the principal character. Letters have been written to the London newspapers remonstrating against Lady Jersey's narrowness.

The Collapsible Clerk.

A little miss from Dearborn avenue entered a North Clark street stationery store wearing an expression that plainly told she knew just what she wanted. In truth, she had been repeating the name of the article she had been sent for from the time she had left her home, and thought she had it put.

'Give me,' said the little miss, 'a dime's worth of stub toad pen.'

And the clerk rolled up his eyes and fopped over quite extinct.—Chicago Herald.

Making a Good Impression.

'Bobby,' cautioned his mother, 'the bishop is to dine with us today, and you must be very quiet at the table. I want him to think that you are a good little boy.'

Very much impressed, Bobby ate his dinner in silence until his plate needed replenishing.

'Pa,' he said devoutly, 'will you give me some more string beans, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'—The Epoch.

A Hard One in Divisions.

'I see,' observed Mrs. Swagga, 'that the sultan of Zanzibar left twenty-seven widows.'

'Yes,' replied Snagga, heartily, 'he sipped a heavy crop of weeds very suddenly.'

'That wasn't what I was thinking of. What I can't understand is how all these widows will get their thirds.'

Rather Too appropriate.

A rather tough joke was perpetrated on a bibulous member of the legal fraternity last week, and the author may as well prepare to have somebody collect his life insurance if the victim ever learns who he is. The lawyer had just recovered from a quiet junket and was surprised a few mornings ago to receive at his office a neat package of black loam on which a card rested. On the package was the inscription: "Real Irish earth. No snakes can live near it." The lawyer says it's too appropriate.—Buffalo News.

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