

PLAY SOFTLY, BOYS.

I'm thinkin' av the golden head... I'm thinkin' av the roguish eyes... I'm thinkin' av the noble boy... Play softly, boys, I know ye will...

"MAN PROPOSES"

66 "NO, mother, no; it is useless; let us speak no more about it." My mother stretched her plump, small hands towards the fire...

"You are too severe." "Do you pretend that Latin and Greek are incompatible with modesty, sweetness and domestic qualities in a woman?"

"I am certain of it!" "Very well, then; we will speak no more of marriage. You will accompany me to Desjardins, for you will meet the twin sisters, and you may judge for yourself, since my experience is not worth your own."

Poor little mother! I knew she and her old friend, Mme. Desjardins, had plotted together against my bachelorhood, but a girl with the degree of B. A. was enough to frighten me into it more securely than ever.

I expected her to ask me if I had brought my marbles along, but instead of that she presented me to her daughters. The twin sisters resembled each other only in their dress.

where Rose had appeared anxious to avoid me, perhaps out of consideration for her sister, or perhaps to save me from disappointment.

Under the torture of this sudden suspense I flew to my mother. "I must make a clean breast of it, mother dear; I love Rose, and you must help me to gain her."

"O, James, is not this somewhat sudden? And those convictions you have cherished—"

"Nonsense, mother; listen, this is serious. You will admit that so sweet and unpretending a girl is seldom found now. No more words, please, but do, like the good mother you are, go and ask Mme. Desjardins for the hand of her daughter."

"My dear child, I will teach you how to be consistent; I cannot go back on my word. I will have nothing to do with the arrangements of a marriage for you."

She said all this with such an amused smile that I could not think her serious. I determined, however, to put an end to this suspense, and soon found an opportunity.

There was a concert and ball at the Desjardins' beautiful country home. When bending over her mother's hand I saw but one being, and heaven entered my soul as I caught the light of her eyes. It seemed but an instant before we were outside, wandering about the grounds. The words were on my lips to speak, when some one called to us, "Come, La Mariani is going to sing!"

My soul is full of dreams, My soul is full of love.

"Those words are mine, Rose, do you understand? Don't you see how I love you? You are the woman I have dreamed of since I have known how to dream. You are the companion I have longed for, Rose; could you not love me?"

In a low, sad voice, she murmured: "My friend, I am not the companion you have dreamed of. Too often you have described me, your ideal woman. You love me because you think me simple, as young girls should be—and you think because you have sometimes seen me attending to household duties that I would make a good domestic wife, but you will love me no more when you are undecieved. When you know—"

Her voice had been firm until now, and though her words puzzled me and pained me I became aware of the sorrow in her voice—a sorrow which meant more than sympathy.

"Rose, in the name of heaven, what is it?"

She mastered herself in a moment. "How often have you cruelly told me you would never marry a college graduate—a bigstocking, as you called her, and yet you ought to have known—your mother knows—"

The fool I had been! And how I wished I could fall right there on my knees to ask her pardon. And yet how could I have suspected that so much feminine grace could be united to a ripe and mature intellect?

"O, Rose, speak to me. Speak in Latin, in Greek, if you will. Only say you forgive me and will love me."—The Princess.

Increase in German Trade.

A remarkable proof of the expansion of German trade is furnished by the traffic returns of the Suez Canal. Twenty years ago the German share of the canal traffic was 1 per cent. of the total tonnage. It is now 11 per cent., a large proportion of the trade being with British possessions. Another curious fact in connection with the canal is that the largest vessels passing through are German.

Longest Flight of a Cannon Shot.

The longest distance ever covered by a cannon shot is said to be fifteen miles, but that probably was several miles within the possible limit, according to Captain E. L. Zalinski, the retired army officer, who ranks among the highest authorities in the world on munitions of war. On the point of possible range Captain Zalinski says: "Under existing conditions and with the guns, powder and projectiles available, I believe it possible to fire a shot to a distance of eighteen miles. The distance will be greater when a powder is produced that will exert a uniform pressure on the gun throughout the course of the projectile from breach to muzzle."

Use for Volcano Dust.

Volcanic dust carried by the wind from the mountains of Puy in Auvergne enriches the soil of Limagne with phosphoric acid and potash. According to M. Nivois, Inspector General of Mines in France, it is owing to this natural fertilizer that the soil is so rich. A field at Gerzat, Clermont-Ferrand, has yielded a fine crop of hemp 18 years running without any manure.

Asbestos.

Asbestos is found in nearly all parts of the globe, but there is probably no product of inorganic nature about which there is so much popular mystery. The principal claim for this remarkable product is that it cannot be consumed by fire.

A man feels that he is vindicated in his claim that he is a good father every time the baby cries to come to him.



THE SILENT MARCH.

NOT with the clash of the sabres, not with the roll of the drums. Not the cheers that greet the hero when home from the battle he comes. Not to the sound of the bugle, mellow and clear and sweet. Do they pass on the homeward march with never returning feet. But into the dim, deep stillness, where no more strife may come, with never a footfall sounding, the soldiers are marching home.

Side by side, the line unbroken, as 'twas in the years ago. When they went with flying banners to meet the ranks of the foe. These were the youthful heroes who fought for the nation then. These who march to silent music, scarred and gray, like ghosts of men.

For them no bayonets flashing in the tide of the noonday sun. For them the echoes silence, long since were their battles won.

Now are the batteries silent that breathed their murderous breath. That laid like grain of the harvest the long, dark swath of death. Gone is the smoke of the battle that hung over the far-drawn line. Till the sun was hid at midnight and the sun forgot to shine. And where the tide of carnage surged over the trodden plain. No whistles come to grass or flower of all its crimson stain.

There were tears and hours of longing for those who come no more. For the voices hushed to silence and the footstep on the floor.

In those far days of battle, those days of great strife. When a man for his country's glory set no price upon his life. But guarded that nation's honor down to his latest breath. The soldier brave who knew no fear, who parleyed not with death.

And ever since the wartime, when love and home were sweet. Have the soldiers joined the silent march, with never returning feet. Out from the door of the cottage, from palace of wealth, they came, and the path led on in silence, the way war ever the same. And still the silent army is marching away. And the last recruit will join the ranks and be mustered in some day.

DECORATION DAY IN A VILLAGE.

They called it Decoration day in a little village some twenty years ago. It was one of the great days of the year. The village itself was all green and white. The houses were white, with green blinds, and white fences inclosed the ample yards. The green branches of majestic trees met over the long, white roadways.

The stores, with their green, batten shutters, the flagpole in "the square," the town hall, with the hitching posts about it, were all white. And on the hill stood the white church.

In this hill church, the services of Decoration day were always held. The people who looked down on the village from "the ridge" could see the white steeple with its four little spires rising out of the dense green. It was a landmark. The church bell was sweet, clear and far-reaching. In the rear of the church were the long, low sheds for the horses and carriages. From each side a little cemetery stretched away; the "old cemetery" on the left, with time-worn epitaphs on gray headstones, where the white-haired men and women walked; and the "new cemetery" on the right, with white monuments and flower-bordered plots, where children loved to play. Soldiers lay sleeping in both.

Up in the high belfry-tower are little wooden monuments used only on Decoration day upon the soldiers' graves. Each year they are trimmed with flowers and evergreens, and for that one day placed at the head of the graves. Each has upon it in black letters the name of a soldier. These are brought down to be freshly ornamented the day before Decoration day. Certain of these little monuments are placed unquestioningly aside, sometimes with a whispered word of those who would trim them. A widow takes one of these, bearing her husband's name. Two belong to her; but her son's she leaves, and glances about the vestibule. Miss Hannah, with sweet, sad face, goes to her and takes the other one. The two women go out together to the side porch, from which they can look across to the spot, under shading trees, where the two men lie. Others follow them, till all those monuments set aside have been claimed, and a little apart from the gossip on the porch a group of sad-faced women sit in silence. Each twines the evergreens on the little monument before her with tender, stumbling fingers. The name upon it her eyes cannot read, for the tears that blind her, but it is written on her heart, and on the "Roll of Our Honored Dead."

draw it have tiny flags between their ears and waving on their backs; white horses always, the whitest in the lead, and the more speckled at the wheels.

The little maidens rise from their uncomfortable night's sleep, with sore heads and exceedingly wavy hair. The out-of-town speaker has arrived. The bell in the steeple of the white church on the hill tolls the hour. The flowers have been placed upon the white columns; masses of bloom are about the dark, old pulpit, around the side lamps, on the walls, and following the gallery rail. The church is ready.

The procession of veterans forms in "the square." They march to the shrill, weird notes of a fife, and the intrepid roll of a drum. The neighboring band has come with but six horses, and none of them white. The church is packed to suffocation. The ministers of all the churches sit with the speakers in the pulpit. The veterans file in. The band clusters to the gallery, and sits with the choir. The standard-bearer drops the great flag across the gallery rail, and its soft, silken stripes sweep to the heads of those sitting beneath. The little girls in white, and the proudest moment of their lives, march to the front seats.

The ceremonies begin. They are very long. The commander of the G. A. R. leads the services. The air grows oppressive with the heat and the strong fragrance of the flowers. "A selection from the band" endangers the tympanum of every one present. A poetess recites with fervor an original poem of many stanzas to "Our Heroes." The choir has a solo for the leading soprano of each church, and other numbers interspersed among the readings, prayers and speeches.

Then the procession forms. The flower girls have their baskets of flowers. The band leads the way to the cemeteries. A grave is reached. Two little flower girls come forward and kneel at either side of the grave. The name of the soldier, his age, rank, regiment, last battle, and date of death are solemnly read. A short prayer follows. The children place their flowers upon the mound. The band gives three solemn signals, and at each the Stars and Stripes sweep in salute over the soldier's grave. From grave to grave they go, till all have been remembered, and the sun is sinking in the west.

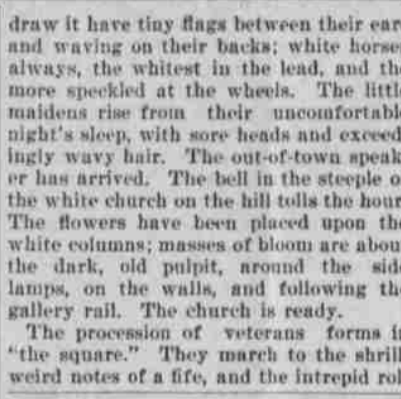
The village homes are full of friends and relatives from out of town, staying to tea. Young couples stroll in the twilight through the shaded streets. Old soldiers sit in groups, recalling their battle scenes. In the cemeteries on the hill, the flowers have faded on the soldiers' graves. The little monuments show their whiteness thickly under the dark pines.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Mean Confederates.

One of Lincoln's little stories has just come to light. It was told by Dr. Walker at the Long Island church club. He says: "One week before the assassination of President Lincoln he visited the hospital at City Point. I was stationed there as a member of the sanitary commission. I was then a boy of eighteen. Imagine my pride at being assigned to convey the President around the hospital. I felt very big. We came to one part of the hospital where we had several tents of what were then called rebel prisoners. With all the pride of a Northern boy I said: 'Mr. Lincoln, do you want to go into all those tents? There are only rebels in there.' Laying his big, generous hand on my shoulder he answered in his quiet way: 'You must mean Confederates.' And I have meant Confederates ever since." That is the true spirit of Decoration day. We should bury all animosities, all hard feelings in the graves of our dead soldiers. We should twine with the olive branch of peace, the woodbine of fraternal love and the honor to the brave compassed by the nasturtium.

Bull Run and Appomattox.

It is a fact not generally known that the first and the last stand of the Confederates were made on land owned by the same man. A part of Bull Run battlefield was owned by Mr. McLean. After this famous battle he decided to move to a locality where there would be less fear from the ravages of war. By a strange coincidence he took up his abode at Appomattox, which subsequently proved to be the final battlefield of the civil war.



GARLANDS OF FLOWERS.



MAP OF SIAM.

SIAM.

How the Land of the White Elephant is Being Dismembered.

The news that Siam has ceded another province to France illustrates the process by which the great powers of Europe are gradually absorbing the once powerful nations of the far East. The kingdom of Siam lies between the British province of Burma on one side and the territory of French Indo-China on the other. It is caught between the two millstones, and at intervals, now here and now there, a piece of its territory is confiscated. Even within the small section still normally under the rule of King Kulalongkorn the Siamese are but puppets in the hands of resident Europeans. Englishmen control the commerce of the country, most of which goes through the port of Bangkok, the capital of Siam and a city of 350,000 inhabitants. What business the English have left untouched is in the hands of German and French traders. Even the small retail trade is conducted not by native Siamese but by Chinese merchants. The royal Siamese navy, consisting of one protected cruiser and a few yachts and gunboats, is officered by Englishmen and Danes, while the standing army of 12,000 men is armed with German rifles and drilled by German officers.

The difficulty with France, which now appears to be settled, is of long standing. In fact, as long ago as 1850 French influence began to be felt in the Malay peninsula. The controversy in which the ceding to France of the Province of Lanang Prubang is the final step broke out into open hostility in 1893, when France sent gunboats up the Mekong River to enforce its demands. Siam made an offer to submit the whole matter to arbitration and the

Siamese commissioner to the World's Fair asked that the President of the United States act as arbitrator. Secretary Gresham was reluctant to mix in the quarrel, however, and after the French arms had met with some reverses a French naval squadron ascended the Menam River, on which Bangkok is situated, in the face of a severe fire and finally threatened to bombard the Siamese capital. Then terms of peace were arranged and the City of Chantium was given into the hands of the French as a guarantee that the provisions of the treaty would be carried out. This town is now to return to Siamese control. In 1896 England and France made a treaty which guarantees the permanent independence of the central portion of the Siamese empire.

A NOTABLE TURF FIGURE.

Col. M. Lewis Clark, who Recently Committed Suicide at Memphis. Col. M. Lewis Clark, of Somerville, Ky., who killed himself at Memphis, Tenn., was prominent in turf circles throughout the United States. Ill-health and unlucky speculations unbalanced his mind. Col. Clark was the grandson of Gov. William Clark, of Missouri. Over twenty-five years of his life were devoted to the American turf, during all of which no breath of scandal has ever assailed his name. He was the author of a majority of the turf rules or laws of the present day and the founder of the first American Turf Congress. For over twenty years he had acted as presiding judge of Western race tracks. He has been at



COL. M. LEWIS CLARK.

the stand in Louisville ever since the "little red horse" Aristides captured the first Kentucky derby, twenty-two years ago. He presided at Memphis, Nashville, Oakley, Dallas, Ideal Park and the City of Mexico. Experience is a teacher of mankind, and some men will learn of no other.