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MAY A WOMAN PROPOSE?

MRS. LESLIE DISCUSSES AN INTERESTING QUESTION.

An Intercepted Glance—"It Might Have Been"—She Blushes and Looks Down. If He Will Not Ask, Shall Her Life Be Spoiled?

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LITTLE while ago, in a city thousands of miles from New York, and yet a city where human nature exists and develops very much as it does among ourselves, I caught a glimpse of a romance, a tragedy if you like, or, if you prefer, a genteel comedy that set me thinking upon the question that heads this paper.

It was at a great reception, and among the guests I noticed a peculiarly sweet and gentle young woman, elegantly dressed, richly jeweled, and bearing the unmistakable mark of worldly prosperity, but with it the equally unmistakable mark of a crushed and hopeless life. She leaned upon the arm of a man whose broad, red face, sleepy eyes and stupid mouth made me long to yawn behind my fan, or to put it in one word, made me "tired," although he also looked well to do, and very well contented with himself and all his belongings, including his lily of the valley wife. They passed on and so did I, but presently found myself, in company with a man who knows everything about everybody, near the pretty lily as she stood all alone looking sadder than ever.

"Who is she?" asked I.

"She? Poor little soul! She is one of the great army of martyrs who go through the world whispering to themselves, 'It might have been!'"

"What, or rather who, is her 'might have been?'" asked I, and my companion murmured:

"Look and see!"

I looked just in time to catch a glance from those mournful eyes that told their whole story. It was sent straight into the eyes of a man known to all the world as a poet, a romancist, an idealist of the first water and purest brilliancy.

And he in turn looked at her, looked as souls may look hereafter across the impassable gulf dividing those forever lost to each other, and in whose loss all is gone that might make life worth the living.

"Yes, I see," murmured I to my companion. "What is the story?"

"Only that she was an heiress and he could hardly find butter for his bread before the world found him out. He loved her, but was too proud and sensitive to declare himself, and in trying to appear indifferent so far overdid the matter as to seem careless. She fancied herself rejected, and all in a hurry accepted and married that buttertub whose name she bears. Probably some accident, some unguarded moment, tore away the veil from between them, but too late, too late. They are both of them persons who would die rather than sin against their moral code, and I dare say that little look we just surprised will suffice them for months."

"What a pity!" said I, as we moved away.

"What a stupidity!" retorted my friend. "Why didn't she speak out when she found he wouldn't or couldn't?"

"What, offer herself to the man?" exclaimed I in horror.

"Yes. Say in effect, 'Why don't you speak for yourself, John? Why shouldn't she?'"

"Because she knew better than to put herself at any man's mercy."

"When you resort to sarcasm it is a confession that you have no sound arguments to offer, but think it over and see if I am not right."

I have thought it over ever since, but cannot yet say with conviction either that he was right or altogether wrong. As a general rule I suppose all of us feel that it is a man's business to select his wife and to offer her his love, while she is limited to the privilege of saying Yes or No, as the case may be. *The man conjugates Amo in the active voice, and woman in the passive*, and the tradition that he pursues, entreats, urges, while she at last yields a

HIMSELF AND HIS LILY OF THE VALLEY WIFE.

coy and reluctant assent to his suit, is so flattering to the pride of both sexes that it probably will never die. But in point of fact, is that tradition a law of obligation? Has it any true inwardness?

Well, I think it has, and yet that woman's face, that man's weary and hopeless eyes, rise up before me and say, It has not!

One instance does not make a rule, however—in fact, we are all fond of saying that the exception proves the rule, and the case I have quoted is certainly an exceptional one—but the question is, does it prove anything one way or the other?

Again, I think we are all too fond of laying down rules and then trying to fit other people into them, whereas human nature is always breaking out in original directions and making new laws for itself, although they may be laws that nobody but their framers recognize.

A girl and a young man "meet by chance, the usual way," and are mutually attached. After a little while he begins to think he would like to see that face opposite his at table for the rest of his life. The same idea occurs to her, but whereas he, so soon as he knows his own mind, proceeds to display it in the most reckless fashion, so that all the world assists at the wooing, she—that is, in the more usual way of proceeding—makes it the study of her life to conceal her predilections and her hopes. She watches the door until he appears, and by the time he is in the room she has her back turned and is talking with an air of eager interest to whomever comes to hand. He, looking around the room, espies her cold shoulder and at once makes for it as a storm driven vessel does for harbor. He comes, and a delicious thrill of joy speeds along the telephonic nerves of her whole system and whispers to her heart, "He is here! he is here!"

Then she turns with the best air of indifference she can muster, and if the happy blushes *will* flood her face, she buries it in her bouquet or flutters her fan so rapidly that he cannot really see her cheeks, while she says in a languid, or a flippant, or an icy fashion, according to the type of girl she chances to be: "Oh, Mr. So-and-so! How do you do this evening? Have you been here long? Pretty gathering, isn't it? Mrs. Love's rooms are so nice for a reception." And all the while, if the little witch dared raise her eyes to his, the lover could read their tender story as plain as print—as plainly as she without looking reads his.

Next he, wondering, poor fellow, why he never can meet her alone for more than a moment at a time, and why she never seems to understand his hints and half spoken words and efforts to find out her real sentiments toward himself, seizes one of those little moments and in so many words declares his passion and asks her to be his wife. Perhaps half the girls who thus receive a fully expected and thoroughly welcome proposal exclaim:

"Oh, I never thought of you in that light; you take me so by surprise that I—don't know"——

And then the lover, alarmed lest he has been all along mistaken, begins to

AN INTERCEPTED LOOK.

falter, and to wipe his damp forehead, and to urge his suit with stammering tongue, and to seize a hand which very faintly struggles to escape, and so on and so on until the fortress capitulates, and after awhile the coy captive confesses that she "likes him a little" and will promise to marry him, and then the years go on until after awhile it is she who does the kissing and he who turns the cheek, she who talks sentiment and he who reads the newspaper.

Now this, I think all of us are agreed, is the proper and conventional mode for proposals of marriage to come about, and our question is, May this method ever be reversed, and the woman do the wooing and the proposing?

I should say she may never do the wooing, but sometimes may give it to be understood that at least "Barkis is willin'." Again there may be circumstances where a woman stands alone in the world, needing no protection, maintenance or counsel, sufficing to herself for all worldly or business requirements and uttering no plaint of loneliness or need of comradeship. A man seeing such a woman moving in her own orbit as a queen, and surrounded by admirers, might well hesitate before venturing to beg her to abdicate in his favor; to accept him as her lord and master, the arbiter of her destiny, the controller of her movements; asking her to give up the very name by which she is so widely known and admired, and to adopt his comparatively obscure cognomen.

Or it may be a beautiful girl in the full flush and pride of her first season, with wealth at her back, a powerful family connection, a wide circle of friends, admirers and acquaintances, a girl in fact with the world at her feet and an almost unlimited power of choice. A young man, obscure of family, undistinguished in appearance or manner, poor in purse, perhaps a clerk upon a moderate salary, perhaps a struggling young lawyer or doctor, sees the debutante; sees, loves, worships her, and although he cannot conceal his devotion, he no more thinks of declaring it than he does of asking the evening star to come down and illuminate his humble lodgings.

Now if the stately and self sufficing woman, or if the lovely girl upon her pedestal of sweet pre-eminence, should cast her eyes upon the silent and unpresuming adorer, should look and listen and read the secret of his love, and feel that in that love lies all the promise of the future, should also perceive that so deep is the man's self distrust and consciousness of the great gulf life has opened between them that he dares not speak—what is she to do?

To bury her own feelings and not perceive his? To go on through life with a sense of loss ever growing upon her? To marry another man and creep along at his side like a broken hearted captive, like the poor child I described first?

Is she to bury the best possible love of her life, and smooth over the grave, and plant it to grain—good practical, marketable grain—or perhaps to hollyhocks and sunflowers and flaunting poppies?

Ah! well, some women, many women, do one of these things, and the air is full, full, could we only hear them, of these "might have beens," the sobbing, sighing, weary moans of hungry hearts; very mistaken, perhaps, in their estimate of what would have made them happy, but not to be convinced of it by their own reason or that of any one else. "There is no cream so rich as that which rises on spilt milk," says the proverb, and a very wise one too.

Should, then, the woman or the girl in such case boldly grasp the golden fruit not offered to her; should she, instead of modestly pretending unconsciousness, tear aside the mask under which the man is trying to disguise his heart and force him to reveal the love he had sworn to die rather than to tell? Must she in one word make the proposal he is too shy, too proud or too honest to make?

Well, yes; why not? And yet even as I write the word the deep instinct of womanhood rises up within me and says No! Better to die of a broken heart than to live without self respect!

Now which is the true answer? The cold Yes of Reason, or the eager No of Instinct?

Well, one why not is a grave doubt as to how such a course would affect the married life of a couple so brought together.

Lives there a man so magnanimous that when the inevitable "little difference" arises, and she says, "I wonder you ever fancied you wanted me for a wife!" would not sometimes reply:

"I don't believe I ever should, if you had not put it in my head!" Or is there a woman, who, with a feminine capacity of self torture, would not sometimes say either to herself or her husband:

"You do not care for me because I asked you to marry me. You only said yes because you couldn't bear to say no!"

So after all we leave the matter about where we found it, the pros balancing the cons so nearly that every weigher's individual feelings will give the scale its downward tendency, now to the right hand, now to the left, and each eager, anxious heart must remain a law unto itself only restrained by the immutable decrees of good taste and womanly delicacy.

MRS. FRANK LESLIE.

The total length of the Brooklyn bridge is 6,537 feet. It is 135 feet above the river, computed from the middle of the span.

WOMAN'S WORLD IN PARAGRAPHS.

Accomplished Girl Graduates from the Cincinnati Technical School.

The Cincinnati technical school has taken a step in advance of any of the other manual training schools of the country. It permits girls to take all its courses, even to engineering and carpenter work, if they desire. At the commencement this summer two young ladies received diplomas who were more thoroughly accomplished in some ways than any girl graduates of the season, it is safe to say. These young women were Lucy Mary Riggs and Julia Bedinger. They were both of them bright, spirited Kentucky maidens. They not only learned architectural and mechanical drawing, but became expert in the use of carpenters' tools, and are practically familiar with the use of steam machinery. Now I hope they will go on and make use of their knowledge in some way, either as teachers, manual workers or draftsmen.

Helen Watterson, the "Woman About Town" of the New York Evening Sun, one of the brightest, jolliest newspaper women, I know, as well as one of the most industrious, confides to me that when she reads about the literary women who are written up so much, have their pictures printed in the newspapers, etc., and a beautiful story told of how they work eight and ten hours a day in an office, and have time to keep house, go into society, dress up in all the latest frills of fashion, have splendid receptions and do their full duty as domestic women besides—she, the "Woman About Town," simply does not believe it. Between ourselves, no more do I.

The marriage service of the Episcopal church is so beautiful and impressive, is it? Oh, yes! But it contains that degrading and monstrous word "obey." It is better to live an old maid a thousand years than to promise to obey a man.

The Michigan legislature has passed a law requiring that one of the professors at the state university shall be a woman. I congratulate Michigan on its enlightened legislature.

Illinois is the twenty-third state to pass a school suffrage law for women. Now let the Illinois mothers and other female voters turn out en masse at the next election and show that they at least appreciate the noble right of suffrage their husbands and brothers have conferred on them.

If I lived in Illinois no kind of weather could keep me home from the polls on school election day.

Marion Hazard, of Providence, can harness a horse in four minutes and thirty seconds.

The most accomplished girl of her age in America is probably Edna K. Wooley, of Chicago, aged seventeen. She passed the highest examination ever recorded for assistant bookkeeper in the postoffice of that city. She intends to become an expert bank bookkeeper. She plays the piano and church organ. Of evenings she studies Latin, German and literature. She also paints very creditably. Besides that she can fence, row, fish, box and ride horseback, and "just loves to dance." At the business college where she graduated she did a year's work in six months.

Miss Mary H. Krout secured her present place on the editorial staff of the Chicago Inter-Ocean because of the brilliant political repertorial work she did for her paper in Indiana during the Harrison campaign. In that state she had the whole management of The Inter-Ocean's political news dispatches and reporting during the campaign. Women must always be beaten when they come in competition with men in the industrial field, must they?

ELIZA ARCHARD CONNER.

An Ensign's Debut.

This season's crop of Annapolis graduates has been neatly distributed about the navy, and several of the luckiest youngsters have settled in the Brooklyn navy yard.

One of them was assigned to the Philadelphia, and one fine morning he was put on duty as officer of the deck for one of the morning watches. It was his first "active duty," and his chest expanded a full inch as he buckled on his sword and marched to the quarter deck. This was at 10 o'clock, and his watch was till noon. In this trick there is but one order to be given. That comes at seven bells (half-past 11 o'clock); and to this effect: "Bosun's mate. Pipe sweepers."

The youngster had "boned" up on his duties carefully, and struck a superb attitude on the bridge as the seven strokes began, clearing his throat to give the regulation nautical ring to his order. And to make him especially careful, he knew, although he could not see them, that half the ship's company were hidden away somewhere intently watching his debut.

So as the seventh bell rang out on the sultry air he sang out, in a voice to be heard half way across the basin, "Bo-o-o-sun's mate!"

"Aye, aye, sir!" responded that functionary, stumbling aft with his whistle in his fingers.

"Swipe peepers."

The boatswain's mate endeavored to pucker for a whistle, but his lips divided in a grin that made blowing impossible, while a shout of laughter came from all along the deck.

"No, no," stammered the unfortunate ensign, "I mean 'Peep swipers.'"

The boatswain's mate nearly fell into a fit at this, and the screams of laughter from the onlookers well nigh started the cruiser from her moorings. The youngster lost his head completely at this second disaster, and it took seven men to keep him from jumping into the East river.

The whistle was finally sounded and the sweeping trick was done, but the youth had his meals brought to him in his berth all that day, and spent his month's pay the following twenty-four hours in buying the silence of his comrades.—New York Herald.

A Philadelphia dude carries a cane 250 years old that has been in almost every country of the globe.

Calf love is called calf love because man is such a stupid animal as to remember it all the days of his life.

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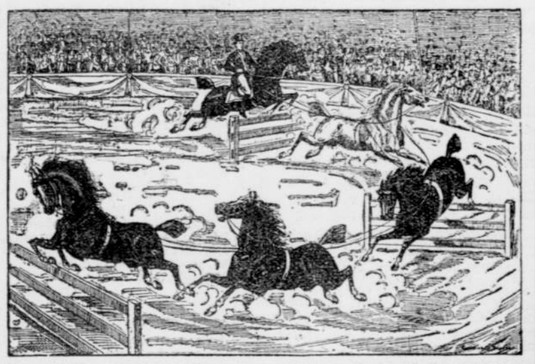

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NOTICE is hereby given, that, pursuant to the order of County court of State of Oregon for Multnomah county, duly made and entered in the matter of the Estate of Geo. L. Woods, deceased, the undersigned will on Friday the 7th day of August 1891, at the hour of one o'clock in the afternoon, at the front door of the County court House in McMinnville, Yamhill county, Oregon, sell at public auction to the highest bidder the undivided half of south half of Donation landclaim of Caleb Wood and wife in Yamhill county, Oregon. That said property will be sold subject to a mortgage thereon for $1415, and interest from November 17, 1884 at 8 per cent. per annum, and the right of the tenant on said property in the crop for the current year. Terms of sale; ten per cent. cash, on day of sale and balance on confirmation of sale and delivery of deed. A. G WALLING,
Administrator of the Estate of Geo. L. Woods, deceased.
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225 Miles Shorter—20 hours less time than by any other route.

☞First class through passenger and freight line from Portland and all points in the Willamette valley to and from San Francisco.

Time Schedule (except Sundays).

Leave Albany	12:20 pm	Leave Yaquina	7 am
" Corvallis	1:03 pm	" Corvallis	10:35 am
Arr'v Yaquina	4:35 pm	Arriv Albany	11:15 am

O. & C. trains connect at Albany and Corvallis.

The above trains connect at YAQUINA with the Oregon Developement Co's. Line of Steamships between Yaquina and San Francisco.

N. B.—Passengers from Portland and all Willamette Valley Points can make close connection with the trains of the YAQUINA ROUTE at Albany or Corvallis, and if destined to San Francisco, should arrange to arrive at Yaquina the evening before date of sailing.

Sailing Dates.

The Steamer Willamette Valley will sail

FROM YAQUINA.	FROM SAN FRANCISCO
May 7th,	May 3d,
" 16th,	" 12th,
" 24th,	" 20th,
" 31st,	" 28th,

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