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A MODERN OLD STORY

(Original.)

Elijah Chubb, who wrote over the pseudonym of Lionel Malcolm, had been writing realistic stories wherein nothing happened, the humdrum of life went on as it really is, people marrying and dying in the ordinary way, till he was wearied. He determined to try his hand at the old-fashioned tale of complicated events. He realized that his story, though old in method, must be new in substance. Unfortunately he could not overcome literary habits that had controlled him for years. Here is the result of his labor:

An automobile, twenty horsepower and of the latest pattern, stood before the door of a stately mansion near the border line between New York and Pennsylvania. Within the house two people on the very threshold of life, a youth of eighteen in leather dress and a maiden of sixteen in princess, stood in a drawing room furnished in Louis Quatorze style. At the windows were curtains of rich renaissance lace. Over those hung heavy satin brocade. The girl was looking up timidly into the youth's face.

"Luella," he said, taking both her hands in his, "I have a confession to make."

"Make it," she replied, with a shudder.

"I am a married man." She moaned a low, deep, melancholy moan.

"I was married at eighteen, divorced in South Dakota at eighteen and six months, and my former wife lives in Pennsylvania. A suit for alimony has established the fact that the Pennsylvania laws do not recognize the South Dakota divorce. I am free to wed you here. In Pennsylvania my marriage would be bigamy."

Her head fell on his shoulder. He raised her face and saw that she was weeping. Then she spoke:

"I, too, Lawrence, have a confession to make. I was married at fifteen and only secured my divorce a month ago, as in your case, in Dakota. My husband has contested the divorce in Pennsylvania, from which state we have but recently removed, and lost his suit. There I am free to marry again. But, alas, he has followed me here, and my lawyer tells me that the New York laws make me still his wife."

She had no sooner spoken than there was a sharp ring at the telephone. Going to the instrument, she took up the receiver and said softly:

"Hello!" After listening a few moments she dropped the receiver, staggering, when her lover caught her in his arms.

"Heavens!" she cried. "It was my lawyer. He says that my divorced husband has got an order for me to show cause for something or other and I must get out of the jurisdiction of the court. What shall I do?"

"My automobile is at the door. Let us go at once."

As she passed through the hall she took up a dust proof wrap and put on a pair of goggles, as did her lover. Both jumped into the machine standing at the door and sped away at twice the speed allowed by the city ordinances.

"Dearest," he said, "why should loving hearts regard these conflicting laws? Let us be married and defy them."

Her head dropped upon his leather sleeve.

Passing the rectory of St. James' church, he saw the rector coming down the steps. Drawing up at the sidewalk, the fugitive hastily asked him to perform the marriage ceremony. Lawrence, turning his head anxiously, saw an automobile coming rapidly down the street. With a herculean effort he pulled the dominie into the machine and was off like the wind.

"We are followed by an officer of the court," he explained, "and cannot stop for marriage. Marry us as we go."

The dominie demurred to such an unusual proceeding, but after much persuasion consented and performed the ceremony. Scarcely had he pronounced the couple man and wife when Lawrence gave a groan.

"What is it dearest?" asked the youth—that is, if she was his wife.

"We are headed southward and have either passed or are passing or about to pass the Pennsylvania line."

"There my marriage is legal," she said quickly.

"And there I am a bigamist."

"What shall we do?"

"We cannot turn. We are followed too closely. The slightest curve would upset the machine. We must go on. Thank heaven, dearest, you will be free from these odious laws."

"And you will be liable to arrest?"

Far in the distance appeared a cloud of dust, a cloud as large as a man's hand, which the fugitives supposed was nothing to them but a coming automobile which they must pass by, keeping to the right as the law directs. Alas, how little we know what is in store for us! Just before meeting the coming machine Lawrence saw an opportunity to take a road to the left which curved and would enable him to go northward without upsetting. The automobile behind had gained perceptibly and was close at hand. Lawrence swerved to the left, which was the right of the coming machine. The two met going at a rate of a mile a minute, and the machine coming from the north plunged into the two wrecks. All were killed.

The author sent this story out to the magazines with a note explaining that the complications rendered the death of all the characters inevitable.

—OPE HOPKINS.

When Blondin Was Afraid.

One of Blondin's favorite jokes was to offer to carry some distinguished spectator across the rope with him on his back. Everybody naturally refused, and the great equilibrist, with a genial smile, would say, "I am sorry you are afraid I should drop you." But he was hoist once with his own petard.

He was exhibiting in Paris and was about to cross the Seine on his rope. Cham, the great caricaturist, had come to make a sketch. Blondin, recognizing him, at once invited him to cross with him.

"With pleasure," replied Cham, "but on one condition."

"And that is"—queried Blondin.

"That I shall carry you on my back," answered Cham.

"Not if I know myself," answered Blondin.

"Ah," triumphantly exclaimed Cham, "this time, M. Blondin, it is you who are afraid!"

Illustrious Shoemakers.

Shoemaking is a calling which has given the world some very great men. One authority asserts that the majority of cobblers have exceptional brains, that their attitude when stooping over their work tends to a cranial development in the part where the intellectual faculties are seated. Some one has written a book on illustrious shoemakers. In it are Sir Cloudesley Shovel, Gifford the Terrible, Bloomfield, author of the well known "Farmer's Boy," Carey, the orientalist; Admiral Myngs, George Fox, founder of the Society of Friends; John Kitto, the Biblical scholar, and Sturgeon, the electrician. The list of illustrious shoemakers runs into scores.

Rocks That Float in Water.

A geologist who is well up in his business can name a dozen or twenty different specimens of rocks and minerals that have less specific gravity than water and which will, if tossed into that element, float on the surface. Hubelite is one of the best known representatives of that class. The common pumice stone is another example. The rock with the very least specific gravity known is damari, a substance found in an extinct volcano in Damaraland. Its atomic weight is 5, or exactly one-half that of hydrogen.

The Sum of Genius.

Men give me some credit for genius. All the genius that I have lies just in this: When I have a subject in hand, I study it profoundly. Day and night it is before me. I explore it in all its bearings. My mind becomes pervaded with it. Then the effort which I make is what people are pleased to call the fruit of genius. It is the fruit of labor and of thought.—Alexander Hamilton.

THE THIRD HOUSE.

Legislative Annex of the Special Interests in Congress.

The third house, as the lobby is sometimes called, is the legislative annex of the special interests. It is the house of special representatives, and its membership is a curious study in the widely different.

Its meeting place is the lobby and committee rooms of the nation's capitol, the hotel rotunda, the lawyer's office, the street, the banquet room, the little back room, the bar, the road house, the home, the brothel—anywhere the legislator may be found and personally approached. That is the object of a lobby—personal contact with the people's representatives and the influence upon legislation worked thereby.

If legislators were perfect, there would be no lobby. If they were perfectly wise, there would be no occasion for the lobbyist who desires "to inform" them; if perfectly honest, there would be no occasion for the lobbyist who desires to "make it worth while"; if perfectly patriotic, there would be no occasion for the lobbyist who desires for himself "a little personal favor"—at the people's expense. The existence of a lobby is premised on human frailty. It is present to prey on human weakness, to warp the action of the legislative body by appeal to vanity, ignorance, cupidity or fear.—Gilson Gardner in Success Magazine.

Emergency Foods.

According to Dr. Robert Hutchinson of London, if at any time meat is not available, bread, sugar and eggs will make "a very respectable support for the body." Sugar is an exceedingly valuable article of food as a source of energy, the unfortunate thing about it being that it contains no nitrogenous matter. Bread, however, does contain some; hence it balances up well when combined with sugar. In times of scarcity of food bread and molasses is not a half bad diet—at least it can be relied on to keep the body up to a fair state of efficiency.

Women as Walkers.

Even the athletic girls and women of today can hardly make any advance upon the record of Mary Lamb, who wrote to Miss Wordsworth (both women being between fifty and sixty years old): "You say you can walk fifteen miles with ease. That is exactly my stint." She then speaks pityingly of a delicate woman who could accomplish "only four or five miles every third or fourth day, keeping very quiet between."

Manhattan Island.

Indians who accepted \$24 from Governor Peter Minuit for Manhattan Island in 1626 did not make such a bad bargain, for if they had invested that sum of money at compound interest at the prevailing rates since then their heirs would now have \$12,000,000,000.

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