

# MARRIAGE WHAT ONE MAKES IT

By Helen Oldfield

Philosophers insist that life is for all men and most women, what they themselves make it, a theory which, while not always tenable, is in the main true. One may not choose the material; environment and heredity are strong; nevertheless it always is possible to do one's best, rather than worst, with the materials at command, and the cut and fit of a garment often count for as much as, sometimes for even more than, the stuff whereof it is made.

Circumstances may fight for one man and against another, inasmuch that there seems to be reason in the complaint of him who said that his copy of Shakespeare read: "There's a divinity that shapes our ends rough; Hew them as we may."

Yet the man or woman who battles bravely against adverse circumstances is many times more likely to win a safe harbor; in the long run than he or she who tamely submits to drift with wind and tide. The one may be wrecked, the other can scarcely fail to be.

In nothing in the conduct of life is the outcome more a matter of individual shaping than in marriage. When a matrimonial venture proves unhappy it is the fault of the parties to the contract; always of one, usually of both. True, there are some persons with whom it is well nigh impossible to dwell in peace and unity; still it always is one's duty to endeavor to overcome evil with good. Undeniably one person may begin a quarrel, but it takes two to continue it, and there are few people who may not be made the best of by persistent, tender charity which is merely unselfish love which "seeketh not her own."

There is more ideal love and marriage in the world than it is the fashion to believe. The obsession of true and lasting conjugal affection is not infrequent, and when it occurs is a joy to behold. In the joy of

watching it one readily can forgive the somewhat irritating air of gentle condescension which the partners in these marriages are prone to adopt towards all the rest of the world, an attitude of conscious virtue and merit—the air of Jack Horner of nursery fame. Such couples as these have no occasion for the exercise of mutual forbearance, no need to make the best of each other. Duty and inclination run smoothly hand in hand and

"Make of life forever, one glad, sweet song."

They are satisfied supremely with themselves and one another, and the least of their needs is advice concerning their treatment of each other.

But all married couples are not so inherently harmonious, and there is sound wisdom in the saying that marriage is like government, in that to be successful it must be a series of judicious compromises. The first important step is to choose well; the next, which is of even more moment, is to make the best of that choice. Strong mutual attraction is the usual and most natural motive for marriage, but this is not of itself sufficient to insure matrimonial happiness. It merely is a good start. There must be similarity of tastes, which implies sympathy, and there must, above all, be the sincere disposition to think well, and first, of the other.

"Better than I love myself Do I love my neighbor."

Even a great life does not always render one unselfish. Unselfishness comes naturally to no human being. It is a virtue which must be acquired, although love is its best teacher. Neither is it true that love makes all things easy; it only makes those who love willingly to do that which is difficult, and most men resemble God in that they love a cheerful giver. Carnegie defines love as "self-giving," and Amiel says that what people ask of us is not our thirst and

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our hunger, but our bread and our gourd.

To make the best of any life, married or single, it is absolutely necessary to cultivate a disposition for content. Contentment is much less a matter of what we have, how much we can get, than of what we can do without. Strife and unrest, the reaching after, the longing for, the unattainable are the greatest foes to human happiness. Which is the more a pity, since the things, coveting which make so many wives and husbands themselves and each other restless and miserable are really worth no little, are so shallow, so unsatisfying.

"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

The sweetest, the most soul filling occupation upon earth is the earnest endeavor to make some one else happy rather than oneself. In all mythical lore the story is told of how happiness eludes those who seek her for themselves alone, in order to dwell with those who would fain bestow

her upon others. When both husband and wife are each continually looking out for the welfare of the other, are striving to do that other good and not evil in all things, there need be no fear that love and contentment will not abide as permanent guests at their fireside.

True marriage does not consist in a reciprocity of feelings only but of duties also. In marriage, as in religion, "Faith without works is dead." It ought to be a partnership in the truest and best sense of the word, where community of interest is joined with community of distress and community of effort. Selfishness, monopoly, and exaction on one side or the other produce discord in the place of harmony, and weaken if they do not actually kill the affection, which is the true basis for such union, which lifts the marriage relation to a plane far above that of mere business and social necessity.

The best proof of the divine character of the institution of marriage is the fact that living together in this relation is certain to improve and ennoble both men and women, provided there is good material in them to work on, and often transforms the frivolous, thoughtless girl into the tender, self-sacrificing wife and mother, the practical poor man's helpmeet; the selfish, self-assertive man into the thoughtful, considerate, devoted husband and father; who find their best happiness in their home and in each other.

The union of the sexes upon some basis or other natural and inevitable. Marriage is the only one which has been found to meet the exigencies of the case, and its honor, its safety, and its happiness are all founded in its permanence and in the sense of responsibility and of duty which are attached to it. "Remember your vows to perform them" was the message of the prophet of old. When people marry they swear to love, to honor, and to cherish each other "for better, for worse, in sickness and in health." Such vows should not be taken lightly, and when they are taken ought to be kept to the utmost limit of one's strength and ability.

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### BAKER TO ERECT ARMORY.

Company A Will Soon Have a New Fifteen Thousand Dollar Home.

An armory, says the Baker City Herald, costing \$15,000 will probably be erected in Baker City for the use of the local militiamen of company A, by the state, within the current year. This will be the result of the passage of the appropriation bill for \$100,000 for state militia armories.

It is believed that local business interests will combine and purchase a site for the new armory, donating the land so that the entire sum given to the local company may be expended in the erection of a building. Portland will receive no benefit

from this appropriation, the amount of \$100,000 to be spent for the benefit of the companies in the smaller cities and towns throughout the state. The companies in Portland now have a fine armory which was erected at a cost of \$65,000, for them by the business men of the Oregon territory.

It is not probable that the smaller companies will secure a new armory soon as the lease which they occupy does not expire soon. The present armory is satisfactory in every respect, and is large enough to meet the demands of the local troops for a long time to come. Other cities where the armories are inferior will be given the immediate benefit of the appropriation. Albany is one that will probably be the first to apply for the money, as the armory there is very poor and entirely inadequate for the needs of the company there stationed at that place.

### Furs Are Scarce.

A recent dispatch from Edmonton says that the fur catch this year has been exceeding light owing to the heavy fall of snow. The trappers complain that snow has fallen almost every night during the present winter, making their traps as useless as though they had been sprung. Reports from the northern wilds in the early part of the season showed fur-bearing animals of all descriptions to be plentiful, and a good season would have resulted with a normal fall of snow, but conditions such that fur of all kinds will advance in price during the next few months.

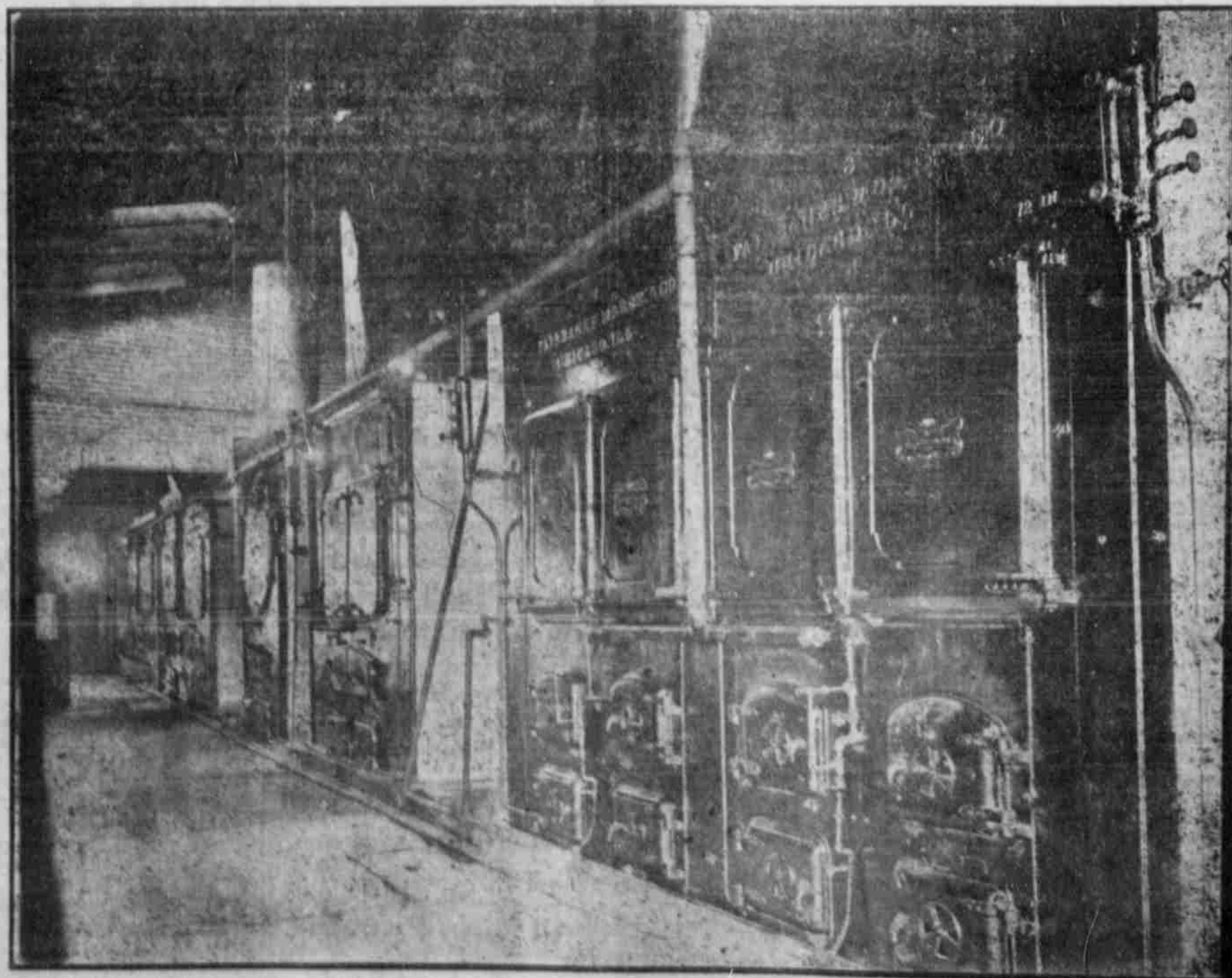
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