

# THAT HAT.

"I won't wear it!" I heard her say. I searched her eyes with thought and doubt. How could you darling hesitate? To wear the crown of trouble forth. She murmured, "Is my hat on straight?"

Weeks later, she was my wedding wife. The carriage stood before the gate. To bear us to our dear new home. My joy was quite unimpaired. I whispered low, "My love, my own." As forth we fared in bridal state. With eyelashes all wet with tears she answered, "Is my hat on straight?"

Reveries: I'm not alone. My downfall was precipitate. I gently broke the news to her. My aged wife and loving mate. Our little all was at the door. And we should have to emigrate. She trustfully made answer brave. With confidence for any fate. "You'll make another fortune, dear. But tell me is my hat on straight?"

She snatched our baby from its death. Upon an engine's path late. She spoke a speech, with much applause. Upon the day we celebrated. A serving man in haste. But after every feast supreme. When I my prize would intimate. My heroine would always say: "How nice! But is my hat on straight?"

Oh, woman, dear to God and man. What is your graceful little part? Why is that sweet, delightful hat? So difficult to navigate? Knowledge of good and evil you. Ere you were summoned to vacate. Snatched at in Eden and secured. With penalties commensurate. But will you never know? From now till beauty's dawn and dusk. Past peradventure of a doubt. Whether you have your hat on straight? A. L. Townsend in New York Sun.

# BRIXTON'S CHOICE.

There are many varieties of matrimonial proposals besides those which appear in novels, and one of them made a lot of trouble a year or two ago for John Brixton. Brixton was one of the intelligent fellows who also are adaptive, so he had acquired a lot of acquaintances who were the envy of every one that knew him. Although he was only a salesman on salary—quite a good salary, it must be said—for a large firm of iron manufacturers, he was frequently associated familiarly by bank presidents and other business magnates and could slap any of these gentlemen on the shoulder without giving offense.

As he was a bachelor and old enough to have outgrown the habit of lounging through successive evenings in houses where there were pretty daughters, he was available for dinner parties given by men who knew no better way of spending an evening. Everybody among his acquaintances wished him well and wished they could do something for him, but they respected him all the more because he never tried to borrow money or asked for any other favors. Solid business men told one another that Brixton would be one of them some day. He merely needed the chance which comes to every deserving man in the course of time, and each of them hoped it might be his own fortune to throw the chance in Brixton's way.

It seemed one day to old Budder, president of the Forty-seventh National bank and a hearty admirer of Brixton, that he was just the man to throw a fortune in Brixton's way. The plan came to Budder's mind suddenly, but sudden inspiration and quick action there are part of the daily life of the most stolid presidents of big banks. Brixton had promised to lunch with the bank magnate at midday, and he appeared at the bank just in time to see the old man bowing out a lady with more courtesy and ceremony than he imagined Budder capable of.

As the old man caught sight of Brixton he exclaimed: "One moment, Miss Fewes. Allow me to introduce my very dear and old friend, Mr. John Brixton. Mr. Brixton, Miss Fewes, daughter of old Ben Fewes, whom every one has heard of."

Brixton bowed and looked curiously at the lady. He had seen her father occasionally before increasing years and doctors had sent Mr. Fewes to his final home, and his eyes searched the daughter's face for indications of her father's distinguishing traits. He found them, too, although the interview was short. Miss Fewes was richly and simply dressed. She wore a hat her father's, was dumpy, and her face, though not rude, was as broad and heavy and her forehead was as low as that of old Ben himself. Still, her manner was womanly, and as she finally took her departure Brixton, who had a dear old mother as well as a sister whom he regarded as the best young woman alive, sorrowed to himself that a man as rich as old Ben Fewes could not have married some, one whose blood could have atoned for the rudeness of his own.

"Well, John," said the president, after handing Miss Fewes into her carriage. "You owe me one. Any one of a thousand good fellows in New York would give 10 years of his life for such an introduction to Miss Fewes as I gave you just now. Go right ahead now and make use of it."

"You're always doing the friendly thing, Budder," remarked Brixton, sinking into an easy chair. "But I don't quite understand it this time."

"Don't, eh?" said the president, hastily relighting a cigar which he had laid on his desk when Miss Fewes was announced.

"Well, (guff), Miss Fewes is joint heir with (guff) her brother—her only brother, mind you. Old Ben's estate is estimated by his executors at \$5,000,000. I don't know how close that comes to the truth—I don't take much stock in what I can't see with my own eyes—but this much I do know."

Then the president clapped two pudgy hands upon Brixton's knees, looked squarely into Brixton's eyes and said in a low, measured monotone: "John Brixton, I know of my own knowledge that Ada Fewes has over one million dollars—in good railroad bonds right in my safe here. 'Nough said, eh?"

"Enough money, I should say, for an unmarried woman who doesn't look as if her tastes were expensive. But what have I to do with it? You said—"

"Do with it?" echoed the president. "Why, you donkey, make it your own. Marry the girl. She isn't a beauty, I assure you, but she's respectable and honest, and she'll accept you in a minute."

"Upon my word, Budder," laughed Brixton, "you've been in business so long that even women seem property to you. Miss Fewes never saw me until five minutes ago."

"Perhaps not, but she's got her father's level head on her shoulders. She's seen dozens of other men. Scarcely a month goes by without some fellow offering himself to her—for the sake of her money, of course. She doesn't object to marrying, for, being a woman, she has a heart, but she has enough character to want a husband whom she can respect, and none of the fellows who have offered themselves thus far has been of that kind."

"Upon my word, Budder," said the younger man, "I never would have taken you, good fellow though you are, for a man whom an unmarried woman would have selected as a candidate. It does you credit, though, that she seems to have opened her heart to you."

"Oh, well, Ben and I have been in many speculations together, and she knows he always trusted me. Besides there's no sentimental nonsense about her. She isn't afraid to unload her ideas upon an old friend of the family, so we've talked very freely about it. By the way, she has such a matter of fact manner that she looks older than she is. She's really five years younger than you. Your fortune's made, poor boy, unless you make a fool of yourself in some way."

"Let me sound her about it. You may count upon me to do it without lack of proper respect for either of you, and I'll bet the entire assets of this bank against a penny that you may announce your engagement within a week. Then you'll be bound in glory with a lot of us fellows in a business way as well as socially, and we want you—we really do."

"Budder," said John Brixton, rising from his chair, "you've got a heart as big as an ox, and I'm heartily obliged to you for your interest in me. You must give me time to think of it, though."

"Time to—?" ejaculated the president, snuffing his cigar butt at the president with much energy that he overbore the mark had elicited a howl of anguish from the bank's out as she mistook the mistake for a moue when she opened her eyes from a peaceful slumber. "There's some things that a fellow can't afford to think about. Do you stop to think when a trout rises to your fly? Come along to lunch and make up your mind on the way."

But John Brixton wasn't able to give a decisive answer over the coffee and cigars. A million dollars in good securities seemed well worth the taking by a man who had worked industriously for 15 or 20 years only to reach a salary of \$5,000 or \$6,000, and an appreciative wife thrown in seemed like so much extra luck, for John's mother and sister had for years warned him that wives who hold good husbands in proper regard are as scarce as model husbands.

On the other hand, old Ben Fewes's daughter, who looked as much like her father as a woman could look like a man, would be a strange companion for a man who, in spite of much attention to material things in the way of business, had inherited many fine tastes and sentiments which he had kept in good, usable condition. Whoever he might marry ought to be fairly companionable to his mother and sister—two women whom he could not imagine enjoying Miss Fewes's society.

But while John Brixton went on thinking and wondering and compromising and rejecting his own compromises old Budder took the case in hand as earnestly as if it were a promising investment for his own bank. He was too good a business man to exorcise his authority, but he and his wife took Miss Fewes out driving the very afternoon that he had made his suggestion to Brixton, and they took her home to dinner with them, and the old man made opportunity to sound the praise of John Brixton and to tell what fine women John's mother and sister were. So before the evening was over Miss Fewes was conscious of a mighty wish that some man like John Brixton would ask her to change her name and share her life and fortune with her.

Brixton had been at his office only half an hour the next morning when one of the clerks shouted: "Some one on the telephone for you, sir."

"Who is it?" John asked, raising his eyes from a letter he was reading.

"Forty-seventh National bank—President Budder," the clerk replied.

"Wait a moment," said Brixton, dropping the letter, raising his hat and starting for the door. "I'm out—you don't know when I'll be in."

One of the firm who had overheard the conversation asked his partner whether he supposed Brixton had been specializing in Wall street and got more accommodation from the Forty-seventh National than his collateral would warrant, and the partner replied that it might not be a bad thing to keep Brixton out of temptation by sending him to South America to look after a railway contract which they had been trying to secure through correspondents.

As for Brixton, he went straight home and prowled about the house until he found his sister.

"Ettie," said he, "you and I have always been confidential friends, although we're brother and sister. I want to ask you an unusual question, and I want you to answer it without joking or raising your eyebrows or any other teasing. Suppose I should suddenly determine that I wanted to marry. Whom would you best like for a sister?"

The young woman did not start or laugh or do anything expressive of astonishment, but answered promptly: "I've longed for years to see you and Agnes Hammock make a match. You're made for each other."

"Longed for years, eh? Never changed your mind?"

"Never. Isn't she the dearest friend I

can't see as good old Budder and his

sons as—on she is poor?"

"What does mother think of that?"

"Just what I think and whatever one man who knows her. The dear girl would have been snipped up long ago if she hadn't been too poor to appear properly in the society for which she's best fitted. As it is, scarcely any young man know her except those who are not fit to tie her shoes."

"What do you suppose she thinks of me?"

"Well, on general principles she can't help liking you. For the rest, unless she forgets everything I say to her, she must think you're the one supremely perfect man on the face of the earth."

"H'm! What wonderful things you must have said of me—behind my back. Do you suppose you could arrange for us—she, you and I—to take a drive this afternoon?"

"Yes, but—"

"Exactly. Then find some excuse after you return from inviting her to find something which will unobviously prevent your going."

By way of reply Ettie Brixton sprang from her chair, kissed her brother affectionately and hurried off to dress for a morning call.

Miss Hammock went driving with John Brixton that afternoon, and although she was very sorry that dear Ettie wasn't with them she enjoyed herself greatly after the manner of busy people whose special pleasures come infrequently.

As the drive prolonged itself she changed her mind about Ettie. She wouldn't have had the girl with her for worlds, for although there was more happiness in that carriage than she had ever before imagined the world contain there was only enough for two, and the mere presence of any one else, even her dearest friend, would have entirely spoiled it. Instead of taking her directly home after returning from the pleasant country lanes through which he had driven, John Brixton drove to his own home and called his sister down to the little park, while he remained outside to watch the horses.

It seemed to him that he sat there alone at least 24 hours, although the parlor clock had ticked off only 20 minutes when Agnes tore herself away from Ettie with the remark that she could not be entirely happy until she had reached home and told her mother all about it.

President Budder was still at his dinner table that evening when a letter was brought in. The servant said a special messenger had brought it, with instructions to deliver at once.

"One of the delights of being a financial magnate," growled the old man as he tore the end from the envelope. "Can't eat my dinner in peace. Any customer in such a hurry must be—great Scott!"

"Has some one failed?" asked Mrs. Budder.

"I should say so—failed to make a fortune. Listen to this: 'Mr. Dana Hammock—perhaps some error has been made in sending you this letter. I'd rather write you than tell you that the reason I hesitate to send you a report of your kind suggestion regarding Miss Fewes is that I am already married to a most estimable young woman. I shall accept your offer, however, if you will wait until I have had time to get a divorce. Yours always, John Brixton.'"

"A million dollars—yes, three million dollars out!" ejaculated President Budder, dashing the letter to the floor. "Did you ever know such a fool?"

"I hope so," said Mrs. Budder. "I'd like to believe you'd have been just such a one yourself if a rich woman had been thrown at your head when you were paying attentions to me. Goodness knows you got nothing but me when you married. Stevens, bring up the latest bottle in the cellar. We seldom have so good an excuse to open it."

"Right you are, my dear, as usual," said the bank president, going to the head of the table and giving his wife a kiss which might have been heard a block away had the windows been open. —Once a Week.

The Man's Interest in Thin Women.

The white haired gentleman at the table opposite had been staring hard at me for several minutes. The entire absence of anything disrespectful had allayed my wrath and finally even aroused a certain feeling of affection. There is no woman alive who does not rather like to be looked at when she is sure that no impertinence is intended.

At last the old gentleman spoke to his waiter in an undertone.

"But dey ain't none on dat bill, sah. Bee to yo'self," protested the polite negro.

Another remark in an undertone from the old gentleman.

"Scuse, me, miss," and the waiter turned to me, with air of exhausted patience, "but is yo' had any browned potatoes fo' yo' dinner?"

I had had browned potatoes, but they belonged to an entire and had not figured in the bill by name. I explained the situation and sadly went on with my dinner. The old gentleman's attentions were due not to gallantry, but to gourmandizing.—Kate Field's Washington.

Prize For the Church.

The church of Rome, it is now beginning to be understood, is performing a necessary and altogether praiseworthy service for American society. It is a conservative, a wholesome and an elevating force of inestimable value.—New York Sun.

# READY READING.

How does your New England

Slavery.

By the emancipation proclamation 1,305,172 slaves were freed.

In Europe there are 514,000 negroes in the United States 128,000.

Among the curious animals in Spain are tallent cats with purple eyes.

New York has found it necessary to cover Giuseppe's needle with another coating of wax.

An Albany, Ga. sportsman has, it is said, a dog, a large setter, that will eat half a watermelon any time.

The smallest tree known is said to be a hymenoptera, which occurs in England as a parasite in the eggs of a plant louse. Its length is about seven thousandths of an inch.

A remarkable instance of courage and coolness was shown by a man in Franklin, N. J., who was attacked by a bull and caught the nose ring and held on to it until help arrived. Though he was badly bruised and injured, none of his bones were broken.

James Carson of Tarrington, Conn., must have observed that his apparent widow had applied for letters of administration, for he received from him the other day a letter postmarked San Antonio, Texas, saying: "If you have no objections I prefer to settle my own estate." He has been missing nearly a year.

Richmond, Va., contains among its population eighteen George Washingtons, eleven Andrew Jacksons, four Thomas Jeffersons, four Robert Lees, six John Randolphs, one Jefferson Davis, seven John Marshalls, two John Tylers, four Henry Clays, one Zachary Taylor, two Benjamin Harrisons, two W. H. Harrisons and one Daniel Webster.

American pioneers were God-fearing and life-loving. They staked out town lots in twenty-two Bethels, ten Jordans, nine Josephs, fourteen Bethlehems, twenty-two Goshens, twenty-one Shilohs, eleven Canums, eighteen Tahers and Mr. Tahers, twenty-two Elms and Mr. Elms, twenty-two Elms, thirty Lebanones, twenty-six Bethels and thirty-six Sheres.

The editor of a Georgia paper speaks as if he has had experience. "Editing a newspaper is funny business. For instance, if you give a fellow a 'note' he never sees it, and, so far as showing his appreciation, he probably 'never hears tell of it.' But just say something 'agin' 'em and he'll put you worse than the sheriff. A fellow who don't care much about making can have a pleant running a newspaper."

CUSTOMS AND ETIQUETTE.

The emperor of China recently observed the annual ceremony of "driving the plough," by which he shows his official respect for agricultural pursuits.

A Baltimore lady who has been troubled by the noise of English sparrows has found out that she can keep them away by putting a child's crumple in the window.

G. K. Jernette, associate professor of sociology in the Stanford university, wants to inquire into the life, habits and general conduct of the genus tramp, and as he has set out on a tour in California, after disguising himself as one of the leading fraternity.

The size and color of hat has a marked effect on the apparent stature of a woman. A black hat takes inches off a tall woman, while a bonnet lighter in color than the dress will make a short woman appear taller than she is. A bunch of flowers under the brim of a hat is a commendable style for those who wish to add to their appearance of height.

A Massachusetts divine who suffers from the flies and who likes to have the doors of his house closed in order to keep out the insects, acts pathetically—whether some newspaper man won't write an article entitled "Why Women Stand at the Door, Especially the Kitchen Door in Fly Time, for the Last Words After They Have Taken Five Minutes to Hold an Hour-Longer to Say Good-bye?"

At a recent marriage in Coffey county, Ga., the neighbors attempted to give the happy couple the usual tipan serenade with cow bells and bag horn accompaniment. But the bride's mother was equal to the occasion and filled her old musket half full of small shot, and as the serenaders opened up their grand musicale, she opened up her musket battery, which put a quietus on further proceedings in the musical line. The serenaders are busy picking out small shot.

SITS OF SCIENCE.

Mr. Bonney, an English electrician, says that a current of electricity passing through the soil breaks up the salts and in that way nitrate of potash, nitrate of soda and phosphate of lime may be brought into form easily available as plant food.

The path of an ascending meteor, seen in Austria and Italy, has been investigated by Prof. Von Nissl. The length of the path was about 600 miles from its nearest approach to the earth, which was forty-two miles to the point of its disappearance at a height of about 100 miles.

One of the methods by which micro-organisms can be removed from water, says Knowledge, is by the addition of alum. Experiments carried out at Leeds showed that the addition of one-half a grain of alum to a gallon of water reduced the number of microbes by 99 per cent and the material has recently been used for purifying water on a large scale in America. It is found that in all cases after agitating water to which a small amount of alum has been added, a absolutely sterile liquid is obtained, though as many as 1,200 microbes originally existed in a cubic centimeter of the water.

# THE GARDEN KITCHEN.

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