

A Woman's Vote.

By Peers Hervy.

"Is Mr.—er—Sydney Forrest at home?" he asked, shuffling some cards in his hand upon which were written complimentary notes relating to the voters whose names and addresses appeared upon them. "Doubtful" described some. "Against" others, while several bore such remarks as "He will support no candidate who does not promise to legislate against fogs."

To his somewhat inarticulate question the young parliamentary candidate received an answer in the affirmative, and was shown by a pretty housemaid across the hall into a delightful drawing room with French windows opening upon a shady veranda hung with Virginia creeper.

"Who shall I say, sir?" inquired the girl.

"Lord Edmund Quinton," he answered, and was glad to note the look of pleased intelligence in her eyes.

At election times even a waiting maid's approval must not be despised, especially if she is pretty, for then she may have more than one admirer with the needful vote.

Left alone, Lord Edmund looked approvingly round the room. The morning was hot, and his canvass had not been very successful among the "doubtfuls" and "againsts." This voter was described as the latter, but the drawing room had anything but an antagonistic air about it.

He sat down in a great chintz-covered chair and wondered what the next week would bring forth. He was the sixth son of the Duke of Carolyn and a distant cousin of the noble earl who had just appeared to the country on a momentous question, and it was a cause of much interest to Lord Edmund's family whether or not he should be returned for the borough of Sandford, as his only chance of office in his cousin's government should Lord Hotham again be given a majority in the House depended on his having a seat in Parliament. Each side in the division declared that they were sure of victory, and both sides were horribly afraid of the other carrying the day.

Although there was not much fear that the Earl of Hotham would not get his majority in the country, yet in this particular instance personality counted for much in that Mr. Rayner, Lord Edmund's opponent, had been nursing the constituency for years, had a house in the district, and was locally popular, while Lord Edmund was comparatively unknown and was only sent down by his party a few weeks previously when the first rumors of a general election began to disturb the surface of official calm and the member for Sandford announced his intention of retiring from parliamentary life.

"If I get in I must take a house in the place," mused Lord Edmund, "and if the owner will sell it I will have this one," and he idly watched a little fountain on the smooth lawn sparkling in the sunshine.

He was not kept waiting long when the door opened and a pretty girl came in. She was about twenty-three, but her assured carriage gave a suggestion of more years, perhaps. She came forward smiling and shook hands.

"It is very courageous of you to go about bearding lions in their dens in this fashion, but I am sure a little rest from canvassing will do you no harm. At the last election this house was the center of the opposition, and your life would not have been safe," she said laughing, "but I will promise to protect you if danger should arise. I was just going to lunch. Won't you join me? I am all alone to-day. Manly has gone to London for the day."

"Really you are too kind," Lord Edmund said smiling, "but I should not have presumed within your hospitable door if your servant had not told me the voter was at home, yet I am so famished I really think I will accept your kind invitation."

"That's all right, I told Edith to lay your place, but I would like to know who the voter is," and her white row of teeth flashed out as she laughed.

"Why, why," the name on the card had slipped his memory, "the gentleman you just now said had gone to town."

Again the girl laughed.

"She is not a man, but the most womanly woman or old maid ever created. She is really Miss Manly, my companion, but I call her Manly because it is so incongruous."

"But surely," gasped Lord Edmund, hauling out his canvassing cards in sheer desperation at the situation, "surely—yes, let me see. Sydney Forrest lives here."

"Yes," she said with another scream of laughter, "I am Sydney Forrest; you don't mean to say that woman's suffrage has become law and that I really have a vote?"

The young man looked dubiously at the piece of pasteboard he held in his hand as if there was something uncanny about it.

"You have certainly got on the register in some mysterious way," he said, looking up at her whimsically, and they both laughed in unison.

"How could my hostess ask such a thing?" he replied, politics sinking out of view for the first time for weeks.

"Well, the other side won't, of course," she said, "for you see my father was one of the strongest supporters they had, but he died three years ago and so I got a companion to live with me here, as I was so fond of the house."

"But surely my opponent's agent must have known who you were? Our agent is a new man, I think, since the last election."

"Perhaps he did know. Men always believe women inherit their politics from their fathers."

"And don't they?" the young candidate asked, with just a degree more interest in his tone than the question seemed to demand.

"Let me see," she replied, going to a table piled with papers, "now I know why I have been inundated with party literature during the last few weeks. I think your opponent's portrait is here," and she pulled out two cards with the pictures of the candidates upon them. "Yours does not do you justice," she said seriously, examining the original with mock severity, "but Mr. Rayner's is decidedly flattering. You can't see that his hair is red and his figure rotund. I don't like him," she called me 'little missie' at the last election."

Lord Edmund laughed again; "I really think I must support woman's suffrage if I am returned."

"I should," she replied, "we would have the handsomest house of representatives in the world if women had votes, for you know in England we outnumber the men."

"But you would not give the wives votes surely? That would be putting too much into their hands."

"Do you think a wife so very powerful?"

"A politician's wife can make or mar his career."

"But a poor spinster is of small account whether she had a vote or not." Her eyes were a challenge as she held his opponent's picture face toward him under her pretty chin.

"Madam," he said, making a low bow, "I have already lost so much since I entered this house that it will not surprise me if I should also lose your support at the poll."

"Lost indeed," she said with a somewhat heightened color, "what have you lost? Time, I suppose."

"Fatigue," he answered gallantly, "if you must have an answer."

"I think lunch must be ready," she said hastily, putting down the picture. "I will lead the way."

The pleasantest meal must come to an end, but it was with much reluctance that Lord Edmund at length rose to take his departure.

"May I call again?" he asked as he shook his hostess's hand.

"Yes, the day after the poll," she answered.

"Not until then? It's a whole week off."

"No, not till then," and again she laughed as she waved him an adieu.

But although Lord Edmund found many excuses for passing and re-passing Arcadia Lodge during the next seven days he saw no more of his fair entertainer. She came to none of his meetings as he had dared to hope she might, but somehow the knowledge that beneath the red tiles of her house he had sat and talked with her gave the coming contest a zest which it had before lacked.

His speeches grew in eloquence; his supporters felt the power of his enthusiasm and worked with renewed vigor as the day of polling drew near.

"By the way," he said to his agent the day before the poll, "I understand Miss Sydney Forrest's name has got on the register."

"Yes, we must object to her vote if she appears. Her father was one of our opponent's chief supporters at the last election."

"And for that reason I wish no objection whatever to be taken to her recording her vote. It is easy to strike her name off at the next registration."

His agent was about to remonstrate, but Lord Edmund cut him short.

"I know it will be a close shave either way, but see that no objection is taken to Miss Forrest's vote."

For a moment their eyes met.

"Very well, my lord," the agent replied.

So it happened that when Miss Forrest's smart doorman drew up at the polling booth with the horrified Manly sitting primly beside the car driver Mr. Rayner's agent came gallantly forward and helped the young lady to alight. He paid her a few ally little compliments which she smilingly endured as he described to her the procedure in recording a vote.

Lord Edmund's representative smiled gallantly at so fair a voter, and the little boys wearing Mr. Rayner's colors cheered lustily as she remounted the dogcart and drove away.

At last it was over. Canvassing, meetings, posters, colors, had done their work, and the last ballot box had been carried into the town hall, where the counting was busily proceeding.

Outside in the market square stood a crowd of expectant men and women waiting for the declaration of the poll, and inside in one of the rooms the candidates and their friends anxiously awaited the result.

Rumors of how the numbers were adding up on both sides floated in and out as the different ballot boxes surrendered their secrets, and it was clear to all that the contest was about as close as it could be, and that only the final result would reveal the elected member.

After what seemed an unreasonable

time to the waiting crowd, the mayor, the candidates and their friends appeared on the balcony of the hall. A breathless silence ensued as some one held a lamp in the still air for the mayor to read the figures:

Lord Edmund Quinton.....3,462
Mr. Charles Rayner.....3,461

Majority.....1

For a moment the result seemed to stun those collected, and then yells of triumph, mingled with shouts of "Recount!" "Recount!" echoed through the square. Colored lights flared here and there and a flash of yellow fell for a moment on a woman's smiling face as the hood which covered it slipped back.

Lord Edmund standing on the balcony waiting to speak, saw it like an angel's face shining a moment in a golden radiance while the next face and figure had vanished in the night, but it seemed to inspire the words he spoke. Sandford shouted itself hoarse in approval of its new member, and Mr. Rayner gracefully acknowledged that the fight had been fairly fought.

Lord Edmund called next day at Arcadia Lodge, and Miss Forrest received him under the tree in the garden which gave the house its name.

She looked delightfully cool in her green linen frock, and this time Lord Edmund not only wished for the house but its owner as well.

"I met Mr. Rayner this morning," she said smiling, "and he thanked me for saving him from the disgrace of a majority of two."

"I have more to thank you for than that," Lord Edmund replied gravely, "I have to thank you for my whole political career."

"I thought it was only wives who made or marred such things," she answered mischievously.

"If a woman can make a man's career as a spinster, how much more can she help him as a wife?" he said sadly.

"Really," she murmured, looking away from him, "I don't think I—I quite understand."

Well, when I see what post my cousin allots to me in his new government I will come down and try and make my meaning a little more clear."

At this juncture tea and Miss Manly arrived together, and when the latter discovered that Lord Edmund only approved of woman's suffrage in rare instances she consented to take him into favor.

Some three months later, when the engagement of Miss Sydney Forrest with the member for Sandford was announced, Mr. Rayner's agent began to have some misgivings about the majority of one which had lost his party the election.

Importance of Co-Education. Co-educational institutions exhibit one important tendency which all women's colleges would do well to note. It is the disposition to discourage the overserious, the eccentric or the unconventional, which is the healthiest influence for the college woman in her work.

On all sides the co-educated girl is in the fire of masculine criticism. From professors and from students alike she hears the protest, she sees it in the campus witty paper, she finds it on the bulletin board, she accents it in the glance of her fellow worker—that gay, and not always gentle, rally against the blue-stocking.

She avoids the queer and the ugly as she would a pest. She takes greater pains with her dress, she smiles a sweeter smile, and she even dreams a gentle dream of the future—all on account of that mighty, that ridiculous, that masculine heart—Good Housekeeping.

Roulette Invented by Monk. Strange as it may seem, the roulette wheel, that alluring machine by which so many fortunes have been won and lost (mostly lost), was devised by a monk, Rascas, during a six months' "retreat" for meditation and prayer. He probably little realized the gigantic popularity as a gambling device his simple invention would find in later years.

In Monte Carlo, the greatest gambling resort in the world, more than five million dollars are lost by players every year. The Casino at Monte Carlo is controlled by a firm which styles itself "The Sea Bathing and Strangers' Club Company. Though no one was ever known to dip a toe in the surf at Monte Carlo during the winter season, the profits of this company in the season of 1904-5 amounted to \$7,204,000.—Appleton's Magazine.

Rugs, Modern and Antique. Because many antiques are admirable is no reason for denying the merit of modern rugs. There are more rugs of high quality being woven to-day than ever before, and this is due principally to the fact that there is a better market for them than ever before. The United States alone imports \$4,000,000 worth a year—about \$2,500,000 before the duty is paid. No wonder that the Shah of Persia nurses the rug-weaving industry, tenderly bestowing orders and honorable rewards on successful rug merchants and inflicting the most severe penalties for the use of aniline dyes or anything calculated to bring Persian rugs into disrepute, says My Country Life in America.

British Arms in South Africa. The British government has ordered another brigade of field artillery to South Africa. It has already five brigades there. A brigade consists of three batteries—18 guns. The total number of British troops in South Africa now is about 25,000.

NEW ZEALAND'S ODD BIRD.

The Kiwi Has Some Remarkable Peculiarities.

When the first skin of a kiwi was shown some English naturalists about seventy years ago, they were greatly perplexed as to its relationship. The kiwi is a native of New Zealand, and while once very common there, is now becoming extinct. Its remarkable peculiarities are—first, the apparent absence of wings, as the plumage so covers the small, rudimentary sticklike appendages of a wing, that none whatever is apparent. The situation of the nostrils, at the bill's extremity, "is a second peculiar feature. While hunting for earth worms it probes the soft ground, making a continual sniffling sound; thus the scent is evidently of great help in finding food, and the reason for the position of the nostrils quite apparent.

A third peculiarity is the very disproportionate size of the egg in comparison to the bird, it being a little less than one-fourth the bird's own weight. One kiwi's egg found weighed fourteen and one-half ounces, while the bird weighed just under four pounds (sixty-four ounces) and was about the size of an ordinary hen.

The plumage of the kiwi is a dull brown streaked with light gray, and the body resembles a miniature haystack, rather badly backed off at the rear part, as nature has not provided the kiwi with such decorations as a tail. The absence of wings is compensated for by their swiftness of foot, and the large, clumsy-looking legs, which are sometimes used as weapons, are placed far back on the oddly shaped body.

How Six Million Live. Consul-General Wynne furnishes an interesting compilation from the Statistical Abstract for London, 1905. The 6,500,000 persons in Greater London live in 928,008 houses. The population 100 years ago was just one-fifth of what it is now. Though the number of births was nearly double the number of deaths in 1904, the birth rate is steadily declining. The vital figures show that in 1905 there were 1,028 post offices in London, and 2,435 public telephones working. The total imports at London in 1904 amounted to \$849,086,000, and the total exports \$462,299,000. Some idea of London's wealth is shown by the assessed income tax value in 1904 in the administrative county, houses—representing \$219,264,000, trades and professions \$364,045,000, profits of companies and other interests \$698,511,000, salaries (corporate bodies) \$118,044,000, salaries (army and navy) \$108,674,000. In 1905 there were 3,223 motor cars and 1,852 motor cycles in London. Licenses to drive were granted to 8,070 persons, the fees received amounting to \$36,800.

Use for Spider's Silk. Several small articles of wearing apparel have been made of silk woven from spiders' webs, and they were found to be more durable, lighter in weight, and more pleasing to the touch than articles made of the ordinary kind of silk. Spiders' silk is not likely to become popular, however, because spiders cannot be cultivated profitably owing to their enormous appetites.

The spider ought not to be regarded as an enemy to mankind, for it does a great service as a destroyer of insects. The speed with which it can gobble up a house fly is amazing. It has been calculated that a man, eating at the same rate as a spider, would require "a whole fat ox for breakfast, an ox and five sheep for dinner, for supper two bullocks, eight sheep and four hogs; and, just before retiring, nearly four barrels of fresh fish." It is, however, a wasteful feeder, and often only sucks the juices of its victim, discarding the more solid parts.

Some Russian Proverbs. Here are some proverbs commonly on the lips of the people of Russia: When the thunder ceases the peasant forgets to cross himself.

A man needs only not to be a cripple or a hunchback to be accounted a handsome fellow by the women.

Even an old man can win a woman's love and keep it if he isn't jealous.

When the devil cannot arrive in time, he sends a woman on before him.

Praise your wife, not three days after the wedding, but three years after it—if you can.

Poverty is not a sin, but it is the cause of many.

At home a man is judged by his dress; abroad, by his wit.

Fellow-travellers and fellow-gamblers soon know each other well.

A lie told cleverly may be truer than the truth told foolishly.

Misfortune comes by the hundred-weight and goes by the ounce.

Effect of Dew on Colors. Dew is a great respecter of colors. To prove this, take pieces of glass or board and paint them red, yellow, green, and black. Expose them at night, and you will find that the yellow will be covered with moisture, the green will be damp, but that the red and black will be left perfectly dry.

The oldest university in the world is at Peking. It is called the "School for the Sons of the Empire." Its antiquity is very great, and a grand register, consisting of stone tablets, 320 in number, contains the names of 60,000 graduates.

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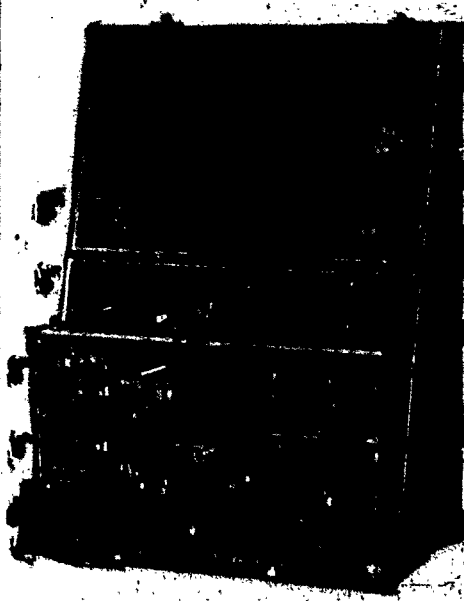
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