

20th Century Chivalry

Understand women? No, I do not. I have been married 40 years to the best woman in the world, but I do not understand women. I think that no one can understand them except the Almighty and other women. Thus spoke my uncle, Colonel Hepburn, a clean cut, well preserved man who had been made the confidant of more love episodes than any other man I ever knew.

I had just been refused by a blue-eyed daughter of Eve with whom I had thought myself in love. In my temporary unhappiness I had turned for consolation to uncle and his cheery wife, knowing instinctively that I was certain of their sympathy and advice.

I never told you about the first girl I ever loved, continued uncle, smiling reminiscently. I glanced at Aunt Maria, as the evident affection existing between the couple was a matter of comment to all who knew. It seemed incredible that their dream of love ever had run other than smoothly or (perish the thought) so that possible that uncle had ever loved a woman than aunt. The cheerful smile on her face and the half-amused look that crept over uncle's expression showed that the thoughts contained no touch of unhappiness.

"Tell the boy about it," said aunt. "It may make him feel better to learn that his heart is not permanently injured because Alice has gone sailing with another good-looking man. After you have finished your talk we will have a nice supper."

"Yes I was just turned 20 and had considered myself immune from Cupid's attacks, until one day one of his arrows struck me a glancing blow and I thought the world was in a blue. It was Annabel Ferguson and her Danish ancestry accounted for her blue eyes and fair complexion. Her eyes had a look of absolute innocence that made it impossible to think that she had ever known a lover and I set to myself the task of teaching her what love was.

"We read Tennyson and talked of heroic deeds and the wondrous love of man for fair woman until my soul was so uplifted that I was ready to undertake any task for the lady I loved—or thought I loved. I longed for the days of chivalry that I might do my fair armor and defy the world for my fair lady. For days we drifted along in this manner and then came the disturber in the form of John Jenkins, an ordinary appearing, jolly and genial salesman on a month's vacation. From that time I was at Annabel's right hand and he at her left, and while I talked Tennyson and the love of fair women he brought boxes of bonbons. I must have shown my disgust at his worldliness but even this seemed to have no effect on his genial manners. One day in one of the rare moments when I was alone with Annabel we had been reading Sir Galahad and I expressed a wish for an opportunity to show how readily I would risk death to prove my love. Her only answer was a glance from her deep blue eyes that gave me hope.

"The next day Annabel, Mr. Jenkins and I were out in a dory. Suddenly Annabel who had been standing up fell to the lake with a heart-rending scream. Although I was a swimmer I at once jumped to her rescue and noted with satisfaction that Mr. Jenkins remained in the boat. My great exertion I realized, but realized that I was so exhausted that I could be of little assistance to her. I was losing my consciousness when I felt a rope falling within my reach and grasped it with desperation. A moment later Jenkins helped me into the boat. As soon as I fully recovered I cast upon him a look of scorn that had no effect on his good nature.

"That evening I told Annabel in impassioned tones of my great love and that I felt I had proved my love by having risked my life in an effort to save hers. As I assayed to place my arm around her waist, she gently repulsed me and in a few words dashed my hopes to the ground. Harry, I am very sorry to hear this," she said. "This afternoon I promised to marry Mr. Jenkins."

"But Annabel," I replied, "think how despicably he acted when you were in danger. Then she confessed to me that she had fallen overboard to see how we would act, and in conclusion she said, 'It seemed to me that a man who was foolish enough to jump into the water when he was not a good swimmer was not so likely to be able to look after a wife as the man who had the forethought to find the most sensible method of saving her.'"

FOREIGN RAILWAY PLATFORMS

As a Rule Only Passengers Are Allowed on Them.

It is much harder for non-travelers to get onto the platform of a railway station in England than it is in this country. Even at the small stations one cannot pass freely from the waiting room to the platform. The same restriction is practiced on the Continent.

Some of the British railways are now considering the advisability of issuing platform tickets, says the Queen. Such a system is followed in Germany, where the friends of travelers can procure these tickets for about two cents each from an automatic machine. So far the idea is not regarded with favor in England.

Plunge Cures Deaf Mute. Miss Bernice Pooler, a visitor at Los Angeles from Philadelphia and a deaf mute since childhood, regained her speech and hearing the other day following an involuntary plunge into the Pacific Ocean at Balboa Beach. How she lost a pair of gold combs and a diamond pin and ruined her gown she says it was worth it. Miss Pooler lost her speech and hearing by falling into a lake in Pennsylvania when she was an infant, 19 years ago. "It was a jolly good wetting," she said. "My poor gown is wrecked, but I am not complaining. I am the happiest girl in the world. I am also the most talkative, probably, but do you blame me? Wouldn't you talk till your tongue was tired if you were me?"

Doubtful Devotion. A certain small boy who lives in a historic town along the Hudson river, the Decoration Day does there with mingled emotions. When the processions of school children go to the cemetery with their wreaths and garlands he has been known to weep with chagrin because his family boasts no grave of "their very own" to trim. Last year he reserved his tears till bedtime when he snuffed back the threatened flood to his mother goodnight. "Never mind, mama," he sobbed on her shoulder. "I'll wait as patiently as I can. I'll never put flowers on yours and daddy's graves, anyway, than on any one else's."

Seedless Apples. One of the scientific wonders of the Klakhat fruit district, Washington, is a seedless apple tree owned by Arthur C. Chapman of Goldendale. This tree, in Chapman's yard, has borne fruit for ten years. A striking peculiarity about the tree is that no blossoms appear as on other trees. The apples are green, measuring two and one-half inches in circumference, and at any time are not choicely eating, but are at their best during the months of February and March, the only other trees of the kind known to exist are in a small town in Missouri. Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

First Oil Well. In the year 1859 E. L. Drake, of Titusville, Pa., drove the first oil well. Like other pioneers he was regarded as a dreamer or a fool and people laughed at the idea of tapping a subterranean oil lake. It was only by pretending that he was in search of a bed of salt that he was able to get drillers to work for him. When the borer had reached a depth of about seventy feet, Drake found his anticipated oil. He was the possessor of an oil well which, with the aid of a hand pump, yielded him twenty-five barrels a day.

Privilege of English Husband. A wife who complained at the Marylebone police court in London the other day that her husband used abusive language to her was informed when Mr. Plowden that this was one of her husband's privileges. "You must put up with it," the magistrate told her. "Better as abusive husband than no husband at all."

Enthusiasm. Nothing is so contagious as enthusiasm. It is the real ally of the tale of Orpheus. It moves stones, it charms brutes. Enthusiasm is the genius of sincerity and truth accomplishes no victories without it.—Baker Lytton.

Long-Spitting Range. A llama looks as innocent as an angel man in the Salvation Army. He chews no tobacco, but he can spit into a man's eye twelve feet away and never touch an eyelash, and oh, how it stings and stings. Little boy, don't tease the llama in the Zoo!

MYSTERY OF AGREA ADIN

No one knew whence Agrea Adin had come, for what he came, or who he was. And no one cared. In those old days he had been a young man like themselves, and there had been rumor after rumor, for why, indeed, should a young man come to the swamps of Florida and settle on the shores of Lake Kissimmee for no apparent reason? Unlike the others he had not been in search of wealth, for he did not labor, and even Agrea Adin must have known that without labor there could be no wealth, even in the phosphate lands.

He had made acquaintances of everyone in the region round about. He knew every man from prospector to engineer, and he also knew their hopes, he knew their wives and their daughters and their timid fears of the swamps and safety of their loved ones, their sons and their ambitions, but of Agrea Adin himself not one single person from Bartow to St. Augustine knew one thing beyond his name and even that was not his own. And so Agrea Adin had grown old with his mystery had become old with age and been forgotten.

But one day there came an ambitious young man to the Newton project at Bartow. The property was a new one and development had scarcely begun. It showed good promise and the owner, a large financier in the North, had sent the young man, Jasper Monroe by name, as overseer and assistant to Griffin the general manager, a disagreeable, non-committal man.

From the first it was apparent that Griffin disliked Monroe. On the other hand it was evident that Monroe was not one who was intimidated by the silent threats and antagonistic moves of the older man. They did not disturb him and the reports that reached the financier in the North were so satisfactory that seven months from the day of his arrival Monroe realized that his services were no longer necessary on the premises, that Griffin realized his employer's desires and work would be accomplished accordingly, and that he could go home.

Home? The very word made him wince. He had been a brave man to the world that had called him South, and the swamps had held no fears for him, but home, ah! that was another thing. Like everyone else Jasper Monroe had formed an acquaintance, or perhaps something more akin to a friendship, with Agrea Adin. The old man had observed that the "lad," as he fondly called Monroe, was not eager to return North, and while he had not asked the reason, something like divine intuition must have told him that it was a woman. And it was Agrea Adin who guessed the truth. Jasper Monroe turned his steps toward Lake Kissimmee and the but upon his shores where Agrea Adin lived. He found the old man expectantly awaiting him. He did not need to tell him that he was welcome. As Agrea Adin had guessed his secret, Jasper knew in the same way that he was welcome.

Bliss reigned for a few moments. He seated himself on the straw seat Agrea had placed at his side for him, and it was he who broke the silence. "Well, Agrea, it is my last night. The seven months have been busy ones and we have accomplished so much at the plant that I ought to start home with a clear conscience, but somehow..."

Agrea Adin interrupted him. "Home," he echoed. "Home," and he drew a sigh. "Lad, I haven't known a home, a mother, a single thing that goes to make a home for over 50 years, not since..." And he stopped. "Since what?" asked Jasper, quietly, but interrogatively, as if not to disturb the old man's thoughts. "It was a woman, lad," he went on. "The sweetest girl in Savannah. Her name was Margaret, Margaret Forsyth and I loved her," and he dropped his voice as if in reverence at the last words.

Jasper Monroe started. Margaret Forsyth had been his grandmother's maiden name. The old man went on again as if unaware of his companion's presence. "And then I went North and there I met another whom I thought I loved. I married her. She died a twelve-month later I returned to Savannah, but too late. Margaret Forsyth had married, too. His name was Jasper Monroe." He jerked out the short sentences as if the words tortured him. Then he continued more easily. "I came here to forget, but, lad, never forget that true love is lasting and cannot so easily be forgotten," and sighing he looked vacantly toward the waters of Kissimmee. Jasper Monroe dared not ask why, nor when, nor what Margaret Forsyth had married Jasper Monroe, and his, Jasper's father, had been her son, and he, the "lad" sitting beside Agrea Adin, her grandson. It seemed too untrue, and yet it was all true. "Agrea," he said after a while. "I am going North to-morrow, but I'm going home to Savannah first. Her name is Marcia Jackson. There was another," he added slowly, "but I'm going to follow your advice and be true to the old love."

Agrea Adin grasped his hand. "Goodnight, lad," he said, and there was a smile upon his face. "My name is Jackson, too. Goodnight."—GRACE SMITH.

RULE OF THE SEA

Whaling Law Applied to a Twice Caught Cod.

That etiquette is observed among the fishermen that journey to the fishing was discovered by an amateur angler his first trip the other day. The amateur hooked a codfish, but his line parted just as the fish was above the water. Back fell the codfish, carrying with him two sinkers and the hook.

Twenty minutes later another angler came out that he had captured a cod with two sinkers and a hook. The amateur went up to the angler, who appeared to be an old salt and asked for his hook and sinkers, which had his name stamped on them. He was surprised when the old salt told him to take the fish also.

According to the rules generally followed on the fishing boats the second angler was entitled to the fish, but the hook and sinkers should be returned to their owner. The old angler explained why he wanted to give up the fish.

It seems that he had followed the sea a great part of his life. When a young man he was a whaler and according to whaling law a dead whale belongs to the ship whose name appears on the harpoon that killed it. Therefore the old salt figured that the amateur owned the codfish as had taken.

A Big Gator Skinned. An alligator considerably over seven feet in length attracted much attention while lying in front of Fire Department Headquarters where it was skinned by several colored firemen. The gator was a beautiful specimen of its kind with a well preserved eye and a beautiful head according to the standard by which our alligators are judged. The reptile was shot on the Hagan plantation about thirty miles north of Charleston on the Cooper River by Stephen Fraser, keeper of the Hagan tract, famous for the splendid hunting opportunities which it presents and for its lumber preserves. The rifle ball which put an end to the alligator entered the skull, and left only a small mark, which was hardly to be noticed without close observation.

The colored firemen who "peeped" the gator took care that the steaks situated near the tail of the animal were not lost. This portion of the gator anatomy is considered as an exceptionally choice morsel by colored people.—Charleston News and Courier.

The Compass. The Chinese seem to have used the compass, or its equivalent, at a very early date to guide them in their journeys across the vast plains of Tartary. They made little lances, whose arms, moved by a freely suspended magnet, pointed continually toward the pole. An apparatus of this kind was presented to ambassadors from Cochinchina to guide them in their homeward journey, some 1,800 years before our era. The knowledge thus possessed seems to have gradually traveled westward by means of the Arabs, though it was fully 1,000 years afterward before it was fairly applied among the peoples of Western Europe.

Availability. A nobleman was once showing a friend a rare collection of precious stones which he had gathered at a great expense and enormous amount of labor. "And yet," he said, "they yield me no income." His friend replied, "Come with me and I will show you two stones which cost me but \$5 each yet they yield me a considerable income." He took the owner of the gems to his gristmill and pointed to two gray millstones which were always busy grinding oat flour.

The Llama's Load. When the llama is too heavily loaded, about 125 pounds, the wise beast lies down right then and there and goes on a strike and refuses to budge a peg despite any amount of coaxing, beating or swearing. It only knows the weight his burden should be almost to an ounce, or that's what they all say in the Andes. Most men know when they are overloaded, but they are afraid to lie down.

A Soda Cracker is Known by the Company it Keeps

It is the most natural thing in the world for exposed crackers to partake of the flavor of goods ranged alongside. In other words, a soda cracker is known by the company it has kept. On the other hand

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