

Violets on the Left Shoulder

By F. A. MITCHEL

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In New England are two colleges in close proximity. In one young men are educated, in the other young girls.

One day Edwin Langdon, a senior in the man's college, was strolling on a road not far from the women's institution when he saw a black spot above him.

He watched it sink gradually till it appeared as a paper balloon rocking in the air and fell not a hundred yards from him.

Going to where it lay, he took it up and noticed that to the cross wires holding a sponge that had been saturated with alcohol hung a piece of pasteboard on which was written in a feminine hand.

"I contain a secret," said Langdon to himself, "and judging by your handwriting the secret is not to be kept. Some under-graduate of the women's college has sent you off for the purpose of telling her secret."

The student carefully examined the balloon in every part, but the secret was not found. Thinking it might lie under the pasted seams, he took it to his room and moistened and opened them. He was not rewarded for his pains.

"I have it," he exclaimed suddenly. "Some girl has written the secret with a fluid that requires a chemical agent to bring it out. I'll take it to the laboratory and apply tests."

He did so and succeeded. By soaking the paper successively in several different acids he at last found one that brought out letters containing a message.

"You are warm, but you haven't got me yet. If you do a bit—"

The writing stopped abruptly. "Oho!" said Langdon inwardly. "So you're warm, are you? That means that you're on the right track."

Only you didn't like to call kissing you a reward. Any man who wouldn't under such circumstances exercise all his wits to reach the goal is so many miles off.

Next Langdon tried the chemical agents he could think of in trying to bring out the matter for a week, then he temporarily gave it up—that is, as to investigation. He continued to think about it pretty much all the time.

One evening he was holding the balloon close to a gas jet examining the paper with a magnifying glass, turning successively different parts to the jet when on the paper, very near the flame, came brown letters.

They were too faint to be read, but Langdon knew he had got the secret—that is, if there was no more of the problem to be solved. What was the element required to bring out the writing. Holding the paper very close to the burning gas, a message in deep brown letters appeared.

Junior prom. Violets on left shoulder. "Well, upon my word!" exclaimed Ned. "That's a round about way of making the acquaintance of a stranger. And to think that I didn't get on to the best explanation. That message was probably written in common lemon juice. But the 'Junior prom' comes off next week. In four days more I would have been too late."

Snubbing an Ex-President. On the morning of March 4, 1944, Mr. Tyler left the White House, not caring to assist in the inauguration of his successor.

When Mike Ingan left the courtroom for a two years' term in the Arizona penitentiary for horse stealing—the vigilance committee had missed him or he would have been hanged.

"I'll be ready for you, Mike, but I'm afraid you'll have to seek me in the city where I was born and brought up. I advised you long ago to stop monkeying with other people's property and go to work."

Bloodhounds. A bloodhound is not much more dangerous than a French poodle. His fan ears and wrinkled forehead give him an appearance that does not invite intimacy.

Great Writers and Great Readers. Macaulay was quite contented if he turned out two footscap pages as his actual completed task in mere writing for one day.

Did He Get Off? The James Liddell, who, with Scott, compiled Liddell and Scott's lexicon, was dean of Christchurch college, Oxford.

London Built on Sponges. One could surely find no worse ground to build upon than a bed of sponges such as we use for the bath.

Famously Illustration. "Sometimes a virtue can be exaggerated until it becomes a vice," said the earnest adviser.

A Leading Question. "Mr. Wombat?" "What is it, Tommy?" "When you were a little boy and fell on your head, did they ever give you a nickel to go out and play?"

CONQUERED AT LAST

By R. PEMBERTON SLADE

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"I'll be ready for you, Mike, but I'm afraid you'll have to seek me in the city where I was born and brought up. I advised you long ago to stop monkeying with other people's property and go to work."

Billy from childhood had been one of those boys who need a wider range than a city affords. While there was nothing bad about him, he was very narrowly finally his father, feeling that his son would not make an ornament to civilized society, concluded to send him out among the cowboys and desperadoes.

A couple of years passed, during which the young man had got on fairly well as a hound-dog business man. He lived at home with his father and mother, the idol of both.

One night Billy, whose room was over the rear entrance to the house, heard a singular sound. It was like the turning of a sugar in wood.

"Yes, I'm Mike Ingan, and I know that voice of yours. You're Billy Stokes."

"At your service. Now, I remember when we parted a couple of years ago you said that when next we met a pair of gums would be between us."

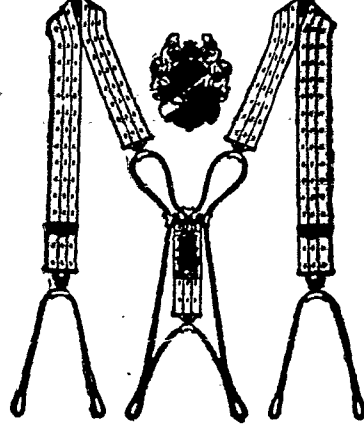
"Yes, there's the rub. That's going to bother me in turning you over. I wouldn't mind sending you up again, but you know very well that I sympathize with your family."

"What! Help a man who has come here to murder me?" "There was no reply to this."

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