THE TWO SUITORS

By EDITH V. ROSS

"Circumstances alter cases." This on its face is an indefinite adage. At any rate, it is indefinitely expressed, but it contains a truth.

Miss Arabella Simmonds was a very romantic young lady, one of those girls who dream of a prince who is to come and carry her off in spite of family and friends and other suitors. She spent a great deal of time picturing him in her mind's eye—tall, shapely and withal immaculate in his dress.

When the prince came he came double—that is, there were two suitors, both of whom, though they did not fill Miss Simmonds' dreams, were fine to look upon. One was Peter Dowdy, with nothing unromantic about him but his name; the other Edwin Ledwith, whose name was well enough, but his manly beauty suffered a slight imperfection from a bald spot the size of a silver dollar near the part in his hair.

Both of these young men being at Miss Simmonds' disposal, both being especially desirable to her, she hesitated a long while between them, then one day made up her mind she would accept Mr. Ledwith. The reason for this was that she would prefer a husband with a bald spot to being called Mrs. Dowdy.

It so happened that the evening of the day on which she came to this conclusion both these gentlemen called upon her. Both had proposed and both were anxiously expecting an answer. Mr. Dowdy called first. He had not been with the lady long before she told him that she had been considering his offer, that she admired and respected him, but she did not love him well enough to marry him. The look of melancholy with which this dismissal was received quite touched Miss Simmonds' heart. He uttered no word of reproach, said nothing about having been led on to his discomfiture; he simply withdrew as one who had received his quietus and should have expected it.

It was quite dark outside when he left the house, and there was no street lamp near. Coal had been put in during the afternoon, and the colored man who did the job had neglected to replace the lid after having finished the job.

The result was that Mr. Dowdy stepped right down into a coal bin. He fell and was some time rolling about on the coal before he could get on his feet again. Then, to his horror, he discovered that the hole through which he had dropped was too far above him to be reached. There was a door to the coal bin, but it was locked.

Mr. Dowdy's object was to get out without attracting attention. The egress he preferred was by the hole above, and he set to work heaping up the coal that he might form a pyramid on which to stand; catch at the side of the hole and draw himself up and out. He had nothing to work with except his hands, but he scooped hard and succeeded in forming quite a sizable pile. He knew that when he stepped on it it would give way, so he did his climbing rapidly in order to make a reach before being let down. The result was a fall and a roll, and the light spring suit he wore, the tan spats, his shirt front, collar, cuffs, face and hands were all as black as the ace of spades.

Discouraged, he examined the door of the bin and found it securely locked. A choice of two things remained: either he must remain there indefinitely or he must kick for some one to come and let him out. He shrank from appearing before the girl who had first refused him begrimed with coal dust. But what mattered it? He had been turned down and could not be turned down but once, so he resolved to face the music. He kicked.

Now, it happened that Mr. Ledwith called just before Mr. Dowdy began to summon assistance. He had become tired of suspense and determined to bring the young lady to the point. Fortunately he had missed the open coal hole by a few feet and was admitted to Miss Simmonds' presence. His appearance—he was in evening dress with a boutonniere—was conducive to success. Miss Simmonds thought she had never seen him look handsomer. There was not a speck of dirt on him anywhere. A white kid glove rubbed all over him would not have been in the least soiled. He opened his case at once by telling Miss Simmonds that if kept in suspense any longer he would go mad. He implored her to end his sufferings.

Miss Simmonds was about to confess that she loved him when she cast her eyes aside at the doorway leading into the room and saw and recognized through the coal dust the figure of the man she had but a short time before refused. If his expression had then been melancholy it now expressed the wail of a broken heart.

What a singular being is woman! Here was one who for years had been dreaming of the manly beauty, the shining habiliments of the man she would love. That manly beauty, those fine habiliments were before her, and there, too, was the man who had been rolling in the coal hole. With a woman, sympathy is always a trump card.

"I regret, Mr. Ledwith," she said, "to give you an unfavorable answer to your very flattering proposal, but I am engaged to Mr. Dowdy."

Mr. Ledwith withdrew like a wounded Apollo, and Mr. Dowdy's smile through his mask of coal dust was appalling.

An Appalachian Door.

Any one of tact and common sense can go as he pleases through the darkest corner of Appalachia without being molested, says a writer in Outing. Tact, however, implies the will and the insight to put yourself truly in the other man's place. Imagine yourself born, bred, circumstanced like him. It implies also the courtesy of doing as you would be done by if you were in that fellow's shoes—no arrogance, no condescension, but man to man on a footing of equal manliness.

And there are "manners" in the rudest community—customs and rules of conduct that it is well to learn before one goes far afield. For example, when you stop at a mountain cabin if no dogs sound an alarm do not walk up to the door and knock. You are expected to call out "Hello!" until some one comes out to inspect you.

None but the most intimate neighbors neglect this usage, and there is mighty good reason back of it in a land where the path to one's door may be a warpath.—New York Herald.

Lured to Destruction.

The inhabitants of the Scilly islands in the old days looked upon the occurrence of a wreck as a blessing of providence, and stories are extant about thanks being offered for a wreck in various parts of the country.

Some of the stories told us by the islanders themselves, says Country Life, show that there was an almost diabolical cleverness in the way in which the storm tossed mariner was lured to destruction. For example, it was common to burn false lights, that were calculated to bring the ships on the rocks instead of warning them away, and worse, even, than this was done.

There was at one time a gang of wreckers, who, when a storm was brewing, fastened a bright light to the horns of a cow and sent her to graze along the cliffs, to the bewilderment and deception of the sailors. Needless to say, this spirit has entirely changed now.

London's Destructive Atmosphere.

The smoke and soot that are always in the atmosphere (there are 6,000 tons of soot hanging over London every day) contain lots of sulphur, and this sulphur when it meets certain substances forms sulphuric acid or vitriol. It was the vitriol in the atmosphere that brought the great roof of Charing Cross station down with a crash a few years ago. The engine smoke had eaten away the iron, which was insufficiently painted. And some years ago, before the London underground was electrified, it was a great joke at one of the stations for passengers to go and poke umbrellas into a certain iron girder, which at one point was nearly as soft as putty. Paint is in such cases the engineer's great standby. In some ways paint is more powerful than iron. Many London buildings might be said to be practically held together by paint, particularly railway stations.—Pearson's Weekly.

Lang Willie's Retort.

A Scotch caddie is almost certain to be a shrewd observer of men and things, and he is frequently gifted with a sharp tongue of his own.

Lang Willie was for many years a well known figure on the St. Andrews golf links. On the occasion of Louis Kossuth's visit to St. Andrews a public dinner was given in his honor, and Willie applied for a ticket to the bailie who was in charge of the arrangements. The worthy man curtly refused the application, saying to Willie that it was "no place for the likes of him to be at the dinner."

"No for the likes of me!" was Willie's indignant rejoinder. "I've been in the company of gentlemen from 11 to 4 o'clock maist days for the last thirty year, and that's mair than you can say."

Blowing Out an Egg.

To blow out an egg make a small hole in each end, bore the holes with a large darning needle or hatpin, pressing steadily, but not too hard, and twisting the point round and round until a small hole has been punctured; then enlarge the hole slightly with the sharp point of your scissors, being careful not to crack the shell in doing so. Make the hole in the large end of the shell a trifle larger than the one in the small end. Hold the egg over a bowl, put the small end to your lips and blow steadily until all the egg has run out of the shell.

Hardly Ever.

"Other things being equal," she asked, "don't you think a girl has a better chance than a widow has to get married?"

"Perhaps," he replied, "but a widow hardly ever gives a man a chance to consider other things equal."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Reason Why.

"You haven't many relatives, have you?"

"Worlds of them."

"I never meet any of them at your house."

"No; they've all got more money than I have."—Judge.

Bound to Be Missed.

"Will anybody miss me when I'm gone?"

"Plenty of people. There's the piano man with his dollar a week, the encyclopedia man with his dollar and the insurance agent with his 50 cents."—Kansas City Journal.

The Poor Waiter.

Old Lady (who has been lunching with her son)—Here, William, you left this quarter on the table by mistake. It's lucky I saw it, because the waiter had his eye on it.—Life.

Twenty Years After

By REGINALD D. HAVEN

One day I went up into the garret to find something I needed. While rummaging over old trunks and old boxes I found a trunk that was marked "Family Documents." Curious to learn if I had stumbled on anything valuable, I opened it and spent some time examining its contents.

While overhauling a lot of old papers I came across two batches of letters bound together with a ribbon that had once been pink, but had now faded to no particular color, and tied in a bow-knot. I knew by the knot that a woman had done the job and, by a faint perfume that hung about them, that a part of the bundle at least had belonged to a woman.

I loosened the packages and saw that they were without envelopes, probably sacrificed to reduce bulk. Those in one package had been written in a woman's hand, those in the other in a man's hand. I opened one of the latter and read a dozen lines.

"That's the worst love twaddle I ever read in my life," I said to myself. "I wonder what idiot wrote it."

Taking up one from the other package, I read some of it and wondered that any young woman could be so infatuated with a man as to write such silly stuff. The letters had evidently passed between a couple many years before, for the paper was tinged with yellow, and the ink in some instances had faded. Wondering which of my progenitors had written them, I examined the signature of one of the superfine package and saw that it was signed "Your loving Ethel."

My wife's name being Ethel, I looked more carefully at the handwriting and noticed for the first time that it was quite like Ethel's—indeed, it was Ethel's handwriting with twenty years' change attached. I dropped it, took up one of the other lot and discovered that it was my own penmanship at nineteen.

I felt the hot blood mounting to my cheek. Could it be possible that I had written that sickening stuff? And Ethel—she must have have been demented.

When I had somewhat recovered from my surprise and abasement the idea occurred to me to inflict one of those old love letters of mine upon my wife. I wished to see how she would take me on paper as I was two decades agone. Our oldest son was now about the age I was when I wrote the letters, and incidentally I thought he might be doing the same thing. Also quite likely our oldest daughter was or soon would be encumbering the mails with what she in time would be quite ashamed of.

I selected one of the most lovesick of my letters and one of a near subsequent date of Ethel's. These I put in my pocket to be kept till she should go into the country with the children. When that time came, instead of saying, "Now write tonight, dear," she said, "Don't let it be a week before you tell us how you're getting on." I asked her how she would like to have me write her a real nice long letter, and she said she thought it would be lovely.

She had been gone but a day when I sent her the love letter I had written her twenty years before and, taking the one she had written me, inclosed it in the first envelope I received from her that I might draw it on her when attacked for sending her such an epistle.

When sufficient time had elapsed for her to receive my letter I received a telegram asking if I were ill. I replied in the negative; I was perfectly well and would spend the week end with her and the children. I arrived in the evening just before dinner, but had not announced my train. When I got home I saw at once that there was anxiety in the family, and it was on my account. My wife looked at me scrutinizingly, especially studying my eye, which is an indicator of insanity.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"What's the matter with you?" was her counter question. "Have you any brain trouble?"

"Brain trouble? No. What makes you think I have?"

"Read that," she said, producing the letter I had sent her.

"Well, what's the matter with it?" I asked.

"The matter with it? Do you mean to say that you were in your right mind when you wrote it?"

"I do—as much as you were in your right mind when you wrote the reply."

"What reply?"

I drew out the letter I had in my pocket for her. She took it and began to read, but had not turned a page before she stopped and exclaimed, "What rubbish is this?"

"Rubbish! Do you call your epistolary production rubbish?"

"My epistolary production?"

"Certainly. You wrote it."

Quickly turning her eyes upon it, again she read a few sentences further, stopped, looked at the date, then at the signature. Slowly shame rose in her cheeks as she realized that she was reading one of her love letters to me when she was a girl.

"You've been playing a trick on me," she cried, turning away impatiently.

"Papa," said Ethel junior, "I wonder if I'll ever get such a lovely letter as the one you wrote mamma."

"Very likely you will, my daughter," I replied, "and you will probably make as lackadaisical a reply as your mother, only to blush to the roots of your hair twenty years after on reading it if it turns up to mock you."

FOR THE CHILDREN

Animals Cure Themselves.

The great majority of wild animals instinctively know and hunt for themselves certain herbs or soils or plants which they know will have good effect upon their ailment.

The mongoose, for instance, when he has been bitten by the deadly cobra, eats as soon as he can find it a certain medicinal plant. Other animals use dust, sand, clay, etc., to rid themselves of infection and parasites. It has been noticed that animals in a district where fever is raging eat little, drink much water and seek out quiet and dark places in which to rest. Cats eat catnip, grass, etc., when they become run down, just as dogs eat grass when they are in need of a tonic. Sheep and cows eat certain herbs if they feel illness creeping upon them. An animal known to be suffering with rheumatism will keep in the sun as much as possible.

When an animal's leg is partly cut off it will turn surgeon for itself and complete the operation with its own teeth.

Elephants, deer, birds and even ants are known to bathe regularly and seek instinctively the proper remedies when they fall ill.

Origin of Terms.

Kings in the earliest days were merely the "fathers of families," and the word is derived from the same source as "kin."

A "villain," before the stigma of disgrace was attached to him, was a laborer on the villa of a Roman country gentleman.

Pope is the same as "papa," and czar and kaiser are both "Caesar."

Queen at first meant "wife" or "mother," and a survival of its early signification exists in "queen," used now only in a bad sense.

"Hussy" was once a respectable housewife; a "knave" was simply a boy.

Quelquechose we have jumbled into "kickshaws," and our "gewgaws" represent the jouxjoux or playthings of former French children.

"Jimmy" is a remembrance of the classical adjuration, O gemini, used by the Romans when they called up the twins, Castor and Pollux, to help them.

Sand Sums.

Sand sums is a nice, cool game for playing on the beach. Each player draws a square on the sand to represent a slate on which to note down his score, and marks it with his name. A circle is then described on the sand. A line is drawn across it, then another dividing it into four sections, and so on, making as many divisions as desired, and numbering each. A trench is dug all round to enable a blindfolded child to make a tour of the circle.

Each player is brought from a little distance so that he may be unaware of the point at which he starts. He creeps along the track, and when the spirit moves him thrusts his spade into the circle. The number of the division is then recorded on his "slate," and the next player goes in. After a given number of turns the sums are finally added up and a prize goes to the highest scorer.

Conundrums.

Why is a dirty child like Hannel? Because it shrinks from washing.

What is the only pain of which every one makes light? Windowpane.

What man had no father? Joshua, the son of Nun.

Why does a miller wear a white hat? To keep his head warm.

Why is avarice like a bad memory? Because it is always forgetting.

Why is it vulgar to sing and play by yourself? Because it is solo (so low.)

What is that which touches one, but unites two? A wedding ring.

What is the difference between a photographer and the whooping cough? The one makes facsimiles, the other sick families.

When is an altered dress like a secret? When it's let out.

Fish That Take Cold.

Fish are not equipped to combat rapid changes in temperature because the temperature of the water in the ocean, lakes and rivers beneath the surface remains virtually stable. Some fish, such as carp, when taken from warm water and placed in water several degrees colder take cold.

The cold attacks the skin and the fins and various portions of the skin present a cracked, ridgelike appearance. If returned to warm water the fish usually recover, but sometimes the disease, which seems to be a sort of eczema, eats into the muscles of the fish and proves mortal.

Try on Your Friends.

Which is the more, six dozen dozen or half a dozen dozen?

Six dozen dozen are seventy-two dozen, but a half a dozen dozen are six dozen.

A farmer had a duck in front of two ducks, a duck behind two ducks and a duck between two ducks. How many ducks were there?

Three.

Patchwork.

A patchwork quilt is my delight,
I love to sit and sew
And match the pretty colors bright
Into an even row.

Good fun it is to stitch away,
I mean to do it nice,
'Cos if I do, my mamma says,
I'll grow up good and wise.

I'll mend my papa's socks so good
And make my beatest dress
And be a sewing teacher too.
Then I'll be great, I guess.
—San Francisco Call.

Origin of the Christmas Pudding.

From many causes the humble dish which we are supposed to eat the most beautiful symbol of hospitality at the Christmas festivities. Good cheer by which is meant food to throw into the jolly person that at both ends into the upper orifice of this very jolly person, and these persons were of yarn and were unlike a feather mattress. Finally it became the emblem of the people by being these exactly resembling and of their wisdom on the night before Christmas to that St. Nicholas would put a gift into them so he passed by and by, when the cult of the reindeer became severe, men were put in for the children and useful presents for grown people. In the north country, where it was rather chilly at Christmas time, the persons were hung on the kitchen plate, and it was believed that the gold and silver would roll down the chimney and fall there. When these persons went out of fashion they were substituted and have been made over since.

Feeling a Presence.

Reading a book recently, the writer was arrested by one sentence: "If I went into a room without knowing you to be there I should at once feel your presence." It is the imaginative address from a man to a woman. Most of us possibly have that curious instinct—the obverse of that of the horse that will not rest in a stable that has housed a bear—the instinct that knows the presence of the affinity. There are people—being to the general view objectionable—whom you cannot abide. There are people whose presence you detest and resent, and though you could give no particular reason for the antipathy you would rather die suddenly than live in the same street with them. These are usually, I think, relatives of some sort who have the traditional claim to make themselves a nuisance. But haven't you felt the presence of the person you like?—London Chronicle.

Encouraging.

Recently an employee in a business house who had held a clerkship for several years went to the boss with a plea for an increase in salary.

"I asked you for a little more money a year ago," said the clerk, "but you told me that you were not able to give it to me at that time. Now a little baby has come to our house, which will add to the expense, and I would be very glad if you could favorably consider my request."

"I see, I see," thoughtfully replied the boss. "Let me think it over a minute. Boy, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir," happily answered the clerk, greatly encouraged by his employer's attitude.

"I think I can fix it," responded the employer. "I won't be able to give you any more money, but just as soon as the boy gets big enough we will find a position for him in the office here."—Philadelphia Telegraph.

Next to Them.

"I'm sure," said the guest he had unexpectedly brought home to dinner that evening, "that I have got you out."

"Not at all," she replied sweetly; "not at all. We gave you just what we were going to have ourselves—just our ordinary dinner, you know."

"I wish I could believe that. But I still feel that I have put you to a great deal of trouble and annoyance. If so I am sorry that I allowed your husband to persuade me to come."

"I don't want you to feel that way at all. We were delighted to have you with us. We love to have our friends drop in and take pot luck with us."

And when he got outside he looked back at the house and muttered: "Liars! I smelled corned beef and cabbage when I entered that home, and what I got was English mutton chops and green peas."—Detroit Free Press.

Supporting a Husband in Wales.

The quaint Pembrokeshire village of Langwm and the Gower village of Penclawdd have something in common besides their Flemish connection. In both the woman takes a leading place. At Langwm when a forthcoming marriage is announced one often hears the exclamation, "Peggy, can she keep a man?" At Penclawdd when a young woman gets married the very first thing some of the sourest old maids ask is: "Dear me! Ffordd mae hona'n myn'd i gadw gwr?" ("Dear me! How is that one going to support a husband?").—Western Mail, Cardiff.

Lazy Man.

"Toodles is the laziest man I know. He has an invention fixed so that by merely pulling a wire in bed he can light the fire. But that don't seem to improve matters any."

"Why not?"

"He's too lazy to pull the wire."—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Purifying the Language.

The female red deer is known as a hind and not a doe. The young red deer is known not as a fawn, but as a calf. These trifles are very shocking to sensitive ears.—London Spectator.

Candid.

Brown—I wonder if Smith would indorse my note. Jones—How long has he known you? Brown—A month. Jones—I'm afraid that's too long.—Chicago News.

Not Possible.

We have never seen a man whose conversation was so interesting that he could make the landlord's agent forget what he came for.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

Idleness, handicap and neglect occasion more mischief in the world than even malice and wickedness.—Goethe.

MYSTERY OF THE STOLEN BONDS

Wit of Shrewd Detective Solves an Apt Trick.

[illegible]

[illegible] the money was [illegible] Hartman said [illegible] the money [illegible] Through [illegible] the [illegible] Chicago [illegible] Whether [illegible] the [illegible] the [illegible] the