

An Admitted Charge

By LOUISE CARPENTER

Miss Mathews' "tea" was in session, and the young ladies who had met for the mental improvement to be gained by an exchange of ideas, having exhausted the topics the young hostess had laid out for them, descended at once to ordinary conversation, which to common parlance means gossip.

"I've heard," said Miss Phillips, "that this new arrival, Mr. Edmonds, is the best catch that has come to this town in years."

"And I have heard," said Miss Atherton, "that he's not a marrying man."

"No man is a marrying man," remarked Miss Gregory, "unless he is tired of single life and hunting a home. Men don't seek matrimony as we girls do, because a man, especially a young man, is not ambitious to take care of some one. We, on the contrary, must look out for ourselves. Which one of you is willing to be an old maid?"

"But I've heard," said Miss Atherton, "that Mr. Edmonds has expressed himself openly as being a woman hater."

"Then," said Miss Mathews, "it is our duty to give him to understand that we don't wish to have anything to do with him. What do you say, girls?"

"I don't see," said Miss Gregory, "that there is any necessity to show the gentleman that we don't wish to have anything to do with him since he has avowed himself a woman hater, which means that he doesn't care to have anything to do with us."

"That's just like you, Kit," put in Miss Britton. "You're always on the off side."

"How do you know that he is a woman hater? Did you hear him say so?" Miss Gregory asked.

"No, but Miss Farnsworth got it direct from Betty Flske, who knows him very well."

"Supposing," Miss Gregory replied, "that we girls were a jury to try Mr. Edmonds on the charge of being a woman hater, do you think the judge would admit such evidence? If I were his counsel I would show a motive on the part of the girl who reported the confession."

"What motive?"

"Why I don't know any better way for her if she wants him herself to destroy competition. Mind you, I don't accuse her of intending to do so, I only use the point as an illustration."

"It looked for a time as though the matter would be dropped, but another girl had heard the same report, and the majority admitted that it must be so. It was finally agreed that no notice should be taken socially of Mr. Edmonds until it was known whether he was or was not a woman hater. Then the young ladies separated, each and every one, except Miss Gregory, who was not in sympathy with the rest, resolving that she would find out for herself whether the charge was correct."

It was not long before it was noticed that Miss Betty Flske, who had spread the charge, was seen a great deal with Mr. Edmonds. Then the conspiracy broke apart, and each of the young ladies of the tea party managed by hook or crook to make Mr. Edmonds' acquaintance. A conversation very like this was apt to follow.

"I'm very glad to meet you, Mr. Edmonds, but I don't suppose you're glad to meet me."

"Why?" was the surprised rejoinder.

"Because I hear you are a woman hater."

Mr. Edmonds knit his brows.

"Are you?"

"Yes."

After the question was thus put to him six times, each time with a similar reply, the gentleman began an investigation as to how the report about him came to be circulated. One of the girls present at Miss Mathews' "tea" had given an account of the discussion to her mother, and that lady gave it to the accused.

Suddenly Miss Flske found herself dropped by Mr. Edmonds, and he showed by his manner to the girls who had asked him about being a woman hater that he had no use for their society. However, there was one exception. Mr. Edmonds solicited an introduction to Miss Gregory and on obtaining it said:

"I have understood that I have admitted myself to be a hater of women, and I have admitted the fact. But there are few statements that do not need a qualification. I hate all women who are unwomanly, who are backbiters and slanderers, who spread false reports and who believe anything that is told them without an investigation."

This is all the gentleman said to the lady at the time. He remained for some time in the town and during the period of his sojourn lavished upon Miss Gregory every attention she would accept, while to the others who had been implicated in the charge against him he showed himself all that he had been accused of being.

"I do believe," said one of the conspirators to another in discussing the matter, "that Sue Gregory told him the story herself, putting forward her defense of him and lashing the rest of us."

A year later, when the engagement between Mr. Edmonds and Miss Gregory was announced, all the girls agreed that Sue had played her cards very cleverly, but Mr. Edmonds declared that he had been attracted to his fiancee from the fact that she was the first woman he had come in contact with who wouldn't believe anything that was told her without proof.

Don't Worry.

"Don't worry" was the recipe for one life recently given by an aged physician who had preserved his youth. "Good advice, but impractical," you say. But did you ever give it a real trial? A person can't stop worrying merely by saying, "Go to, now; I am not going to worry any more." The more he thinks about stopping the more impossible it is to stop.

There is a way, though. Don't consciously try to stop worrying, but get interested in something else.

If you have something to worry about and give yourself the opportunity you will do a lot of worrying. But if you keep busy you won't give worry a chance. When a great sorrow comes a person may simply abandon himself to it by letting his other interests lag. But by looking about for something to absorb his attention he can put himself in a wholesome frame of mind.

Worry can be fought the same way. —Kansas City Star.

John Bright and Queen Victoria.

In the "Life of John Bright" the author relates that the great man's first visit to Queen Victoria was an ordeal, but it passed off well. The incident was described in a letter from Lord Granville to Mr. Gladstone in which the writer says:

The beginning of dinner was awful—the queen with a sick headache and shy—Princess Louise whispering unintelligibly in my ear and Lady Clifden shouting ineffectually into the still more impenetrable receptacle of sound belonging to Charles Grey. Bright like a war horse champing his bit and dying to be at them. At last an allusion to children enabled me to tell Bright to repeat to her majesty his brother's observation. "Where considering what charming things children were, all the queer old men came from." This amused the queen, and all went on merrily.

When Buzzards Are Helpless.

Some of nature's most active creatures—show strange helplessness—under certain conditions. Place a buzzard in a pen six or eight feet square entirely open at the top, and the bird will be as absolutely a prisoner as if it were hermetically sealed in the enclosure. This is because buzzards never begin a flight from the ground without starting on a run of three or four yards. If they cannot have that preliminary run they either cannot or will not attempt to fly, and so a buzzard will remain a prisoner for life in a jail with a wide open top.

So with the bumblebee. One of these lively insects dropped into a goblet of tumbler will remain there always unless taken out, because it never notices the means of escape at the top. —New York Sun.

Eating Your Meals.

A perfect digestion is the secret of the buoyancy and vitality of a really healthy man. The state of your body and mind at the time you partake of a meal are a big feature as to the ultimate good the food will do you. If physically and mentally tired always eat for at least ten minutes before eating. Bad temper is enough to give you indigestion, while cheerful company and interesting talk causes the muscles and juices of the stomach to work properly. It seems incredible that such ulterior forces should be of importance, but science will not be denied. Sooner than eat when not properly hungry, miss a meal. Never take food more than three times a day; you will soon accustom you to this habit. Take your meals in a well ventilated room.

Ehrlich and His Books.

Nobody ever dares disturb the systematic chaos of Professor Ehrlich's library. Once he lent a man some books and received others in return. One day, long afterward, Ehrlich's books came back with a note from his friend, saying he had married, moved and cleaned up his library. Ehrlich replied: "I congratulate you on your marriage and thank you for sending back my books, but if you think that because you have moved and got married I am going to clear up my library and find your books, you are very much mistaken." —Men-Around the Kaiser.

Careless Wife.

Husband—Where is the hammer? Wife—You had it yesterday. Husband—I'm not asking where it was yesterday. Wife—You had it yesterday, and no one else has had it since. Husband—Eh! Well, if you had the least bit of consideration for my feelings you would have used that hammer for something or other after I had done with it, and then you would know where it is! —London Express.

Removing Labels.

To remove the label from a jar or bottle is often rather difficult. This method is always successful: Wet the label thoroughly and then hold it near a fire for a moment. The steam thus generated immediately acts on the paste or gum.

English Coins.

The sovereign, value 20 shillings, was first used in 1817. In 1830 the largest coin in general use in England was the noble, value 15 shillings.

Stored Rubber.

Two Russian scientists have decided that distilled water is the best preservative for rubber that has to be stored for a long time.

If we make the most of opportunities, opportunities will make the most of us. —Old Saying.

A SILVER MUG

By BENJAMIN CARTER

One morning my chief received a telephone message that a wealthy gentleman named Toothaker was found dead in his bed. He had gone to bed the evening before in perfect health. On the discovery of the body a physician had been summoned and had declined to make an investigation as to the cause of death without some one being present to represent the police. The doctor had on one occasion unintentionally destroyed evidence in a murder case, and this had made him careful. I was sent out on the case.

I found the doctor awaiting me in the library, and he told me all he knew about the deceased. He lived alone with a niece, a girl of twenty, who, it was supposed, would inherit the property. There were also servants in the house. I went with the doctor to the death chamber without having seen any one of the household. The corpse lay on the bed, beside which was a small stand and on the stand an empty bottle, the label of which indicated that it had contained ale. I noticed that there was no glass or mug from which the liquor had been drunk.

Having concluded our observation of the room, we went downstairs, and the doctor, leaving the matter in my hands, departed. I asked to see Miss Alice Toothaker, and she sent word to me to say that she was unwell.

She replied that she had done so about 10 o'clock the night before. Mr. Toothaker frequently drank something at that hour, and she had placed the ale on the stand beside the table. I asked her from what he had drunk, and she said he always took ale from a silver mug. What had become of the mug she did not know.

Investigation showed that the only person interested in Mr. Toothaker's death was his niece, who would inherit a fortune from him. He was a widower, but had recently been paying attention to a woman much younger than himself. My theory was that Miss Toothaker was the guilty person.

There was one link that I could not find. I felt sure that the silver mug from which the deceased had taken the ale was the key to the situation. I believed that Alice Toothaker had removed it. But none of the servants could tell what had become of it, and Miss Toothaker claimed that she did not know who had taken it away. Nevertheless I was convinced from her looks and the stammering way she answered my questions that she had taken it herself.

I wove a chain of circumstantial evidence against her that, if I felt confident, if it did not convict her would strongly point to her guilt. Feeling sure that she knew all about the removal of the silver mug, I relied on her being forced by the prosecuting attorney's searching examination to reveal the mystery of its disappearance. There was one feature of the case that puzzled me. Though I was sure she was prevaricating about the mug, she did not bear herself like a person guilty of a great crime. True, she appeared anxious, for she knew she was suspected, but she showed an occasional confidence in the outcome.

When she was arrested she showed no surprise. She had evidently nerved herself to bear what was in store for her and only begged for a speedy trial. Fortunately for her, the case was brought on a few days after her arrest. Her attorney was evidently convinced of her innocence and seemed to me to be confident of procuring her acquittal. He listened attentively to the statement made by the state attorney as to what he proposed to prove, occasionally giving his client a reassuring look. She needed it, for so ingeniously was the evidence to be brought out woven together that it looked very bad for her.

When the statement had been made and the evidence against the prisoner was all in her counsel, without referring to any part of it, called the maid who had carried the ale to Mr. Toothaker. Having brought out the fact that she had done so, he asked her if one of her duties was not to polish the silver. She answered "Yes." He then drew from her that she had polished the mug from which the deceased drank the ale on the afternoon previous to his death, and, to the best of her knowledge and belief, no one had touched any part of it except the handle.

The attorney then called the butler of the Toothaker household, who brought in a glass clock cover, under which was a silver mug.

I knew now that I had been outwitted. The attorney showed each juror, using a glass, the imprint of a hand on the body of the mug with the forefinger missing. He then told his client to hold up her hands, and all her fingers were present. Then, stating that some one had been in the room with a maimed hand, he rested his case, and the judge instructed the jury to bring in a verdict for the prisoner.

It turned out that Alice Toothaker had been the discoverer of her uncle's murderer. She had examined everything about the bed and discovered the hand print on the cup. Foreseeing that she would be suspected of the crime, she had taken away the mug to make sure that it would not be tampered with.

The real murderer was in time traced and convicted by a missing forefinger.

Easter's Negro Melodians.

For a period of thirty years or so, says the Musical America, Joseph Collins Foster was so far ahead of all competitors as the most popular American composer that the others were scarcely in sight. While we know little enough about a great many of his melodies today, such songs as "The Old Folks at Home," "My Old Kentucky Home," "Old Uncle Ned" and "Massa in the Cold, Cold Ground" have sunk deeper and more permanently into the American heart than any other songs ever written in America. For a better understanding of Foster it is well to remember that his melodies had nothing whatsoever to do with negro melodies—the composer's models being the great melodists of the old world—Mozart, Beethoven, Handel. The fact that his songs formed the piece de resistance of negro minstrelsy and therefore in general drew their poetic subject-matter from negro life is responsible for the legend, so hard to kill, that his melodies were derived from negro songs.

Hat Island's Unique Rookery.

Hat Island, in the Great Salt Lake, Utah, is probably the most unique rookery in the world, as well as one of the most densely populated. The island contains about twelve acres, and on a rocky pinnacle a hundred feet above the brine, with not a drop of fresh water to be found and where there is nothing to excite the curiosity or commercial instinct of man, the birds—gulls, pelicans, herons and cormorants by the thousand—make their home. The island can be seen at a distance of ten miles, rising like a "cocked hat" out of the surface of the inland sea. The birds are utterly fearless. Protected as they are by the laws of the state, they have had little cause to fear man and his death-dealing weapons. It is necessary to use the greatest care to avoid stepping on the nests and eggs of the tens of thousands of sea fowl that have established their rookeries on the island. —Argonaut.

A Change of Front.

The famous surgeon, the late Dr. William Bull of New York, once asked Dr. Osler to join him in a drive through the park in his gig. On one of the upper reaches of the drive the horse grew restive, rearing and pawing in a spilted way that Dr. Bull was familiar with and not the least afraid of.

"Gently—go gently, William" said Dr. Osler. "Don't irritate him. Always soothe your horse, William. And I think you will do better without me on the seat. Pray let me down."

When Dr. Osler was once safely landed on the ground, however, he said: "Now, William, touch his up. Never let a horse get the better of you. Touch him up, conquer him, don't spare him. And now, William, I'll leave you to manage him. I'll walk back," concluded the man willing to outsize anybody else. —New York Tribune.

How to Sell a Cow.

A Scotch dealer at Clones fair was asked by a countryman to do him a favor. "You see that woman," said he, pointing to a woman. "Well, I've offered her five pounds for her cow, but she won't sell. Now, if you, a stranger, should offer her five pounds fifteen she would sell, but would not sell to me for that. Will you be kind enough to take this half crown and bid the bargain with it, and I will then pay the money and take the cow?" The good natured cattle dealer effected the purchase as requested, and then turned to find the countryman, but the latter was gone. He was forced to take the cow himself and pay for her, though she was not worth half the money he had thus bid to oblige the misbegotten countryman. It was afterward ascertained that the woman was the countryman's wife.

Musical Epigrams.

Walter Damrosch, the noted musician, answered at a luncheon a toast on music. Mr. Damrosch was in good vein, and the following are by no means the best of the epigrams that illuminated his remarks:

"Some pianists play from notes, some from ear and some from spite."

"A drinking song need not necessarily have a rest in every bar."

"Composers are musicians with memories."

Women and Love.

Women for the most part do not love us. They do not choose a man because they love him, but because it pleases them to be loved by him. They love love of all things in the world, but there are very few men whom they love personally. —Alphonse Kerr.

Suspicious.

Mother (after the wedding)—Well, our daughter and her husband are off at last. What is it that troubles you, John? Father—I don't quite like that young fellow's parting words. He didn't say "Goodbye," he said "Au revoir." —Boston Transcript.

Austria.

As the Austrian empire consists of a great variety of different races, speaking different languages, so is the area embraced within the Vienna consular district characterized by a great variety of speech, of customs and of industrial habits.

Stirring Up Trouble.

Mrs. Crawford—I was so glad to find her out when I called. Mrs. Crabslaw—I knew you didn't like her, so I told her when you were going to call. —Judge.

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