My Career

By EDNA WOOLWORTH

In these days poor girls fit themselves for a life of labor because they expect to be obliged to support themselves, and wealthy girls—at least some of them—because they don't relish a choice between matrimony and idleness. I belong to the latter class. One autumn not many years ago I, then twenty years old, thoroughly imbued with the belief that all men were selfish and if I wedded the man I married would take me for my fortune and, having spent it, desert or ill treat me, decided to go to the city and prepare myself for a career.

I belonged to several societies in my native town, one of which was devoted to the cause of temperance. Our badge was a bit of blue ribbon tied in the buttonhole of the men members and somewhere on the corsage of the women. I was an enthusiastic advocate of the temperance cause and always wore my colors.

The day I alighted from the train on my quest for a career a young man with a pleasing face and as pleasing a smile on it stepped up to me and, taking from me a satchel I carried, said:

"Here you are, Cousin Bess!"

Now, my name happened to be Elizabeth. Had it not been so I should have probably told the young man that he was mistaken in the person. As it was, I thought for a moment that some of my numerous cousins living in the city whom I had never seen had got wind of my coming and had concluded to meet me.

"You are"— I asked.

"I'm Ned Olcott. We received your letter mentioning the blue ribbon. Everything is prepared for you. We have succeeded in getting a position for you in the high school. You're to teach history. I believe that's what you wanted, isn't it?"

We were moving with the throng and by this time had reached the station exit. There was something so ingenuous, so kindly, as well as dignified, in the young man's face and manner that my heart went right out to him. I was seized with a curiosity to know what he would do with me. I hesitated a few moments whether I would inform him of his mistake or delay. Meanwhile he called a cab, and the driver came dashing up to the curb.

"Are you sure?" I began and stopped.

"Quite so. Mother said I was to bring you straight home. Get in."

I yielded. After all, was not this a relative? At any rate, I would act for awhile as if he were. Perhaps he was. He drove me to a modest dwelling standing well back from the street, with very white curtains and some well polished brass at the front door. An old lady, with a lovable face and snow white hair, backed by two young girls, received me, welcoming me with a kiss.

"Why, Cousin Bess," exclaimed the elder girl, "how you've changed! You don't look at all as you did when we played together ten years ago."

"Elizabeth must be tired and hungry. Helen, show her to her room. Dinner will be ready in half hour."

I was glad to escape, for that time at least, from my equivocal position. Helen left me to think over what I should do. I had gone so far that any course I might pursue would result in mortification. I would not be able to make these kind persons believe that I had been drawn into their brother's mistake. I was sure there was a mistake, for just before going upstairs I had been asked how I had left my stepmother, and I had no stepmother.

I was too confused to make much of a toilet. I employed my time trying to think of a way out of my dilemma. Not finding any way to suit me, I resolved to await a favorable opportunity to make it appear that I had been taken up by relatives that I had never seen. When the half hour had passed I went downstairs, and there in traveling dress stood the real Bess, the mother, the son and the two daughters regarding her as if not knowing what to make of her. As I entered the room they looked at me, equally dumfounded. I saw that the denouement had come. I noticed that my double wore a blue ribbon.

"Which of you is Elizabeth?" asked the mother.

"Elizabeth what?" I asked.

"Elizabeth Stanton, of course."

"I am Elizabeth Elliot," I said.

"And I am Elizabeth Stanton," said the newcomer.

For a moment I affected to be much puzzled, then said: "I had my doubts about the gentleman being my cousin, but I have relatives in the city I have never seen and supposed he might be one of them. But since my arrival I have come to believe a mistake has been made."

"You took away my escort," said the other Cousin Bess, smiling, "and I have been obliged to find my way here alone. I see you wear the blue ribbon agreed upon."

"That is a society decoration," I informed her.

"Young ladies," said the mother, "dinner is waiting. Come and partake of it, both of you."

That was not the last dinner I took in that house by any means. Indeed, I now go there frequently because the old lady is my mother-in-law and her daughters my sisters-in-law. The real Bess is also my friend. She has followed the career of a teacher, and I was turned from my intention, to become a wife and mother.

Singing at Sight.

I never really got it throughout my head so as to read musical notation in the ordinary, conventional, civilized way. The fact remains that if today one were suddenly to place before me the score of "Robin Hood," "Pinafore," or "Fra Diavolo" I couldn't for the life of me tell whether a given note was A or G, or what key it was in. At the same time I could sing it correctly or any unfamiliar piece of music, although I should prefer to hear it played over once on the piano so as to get started right on the tempo. The celebrated Mme. Rudersdorff, who was one of the finest dramatic and coloratura singers I ever knew, once said to me when I confided to her this peculiarity:

"Never mind; you are all right. That's the true method of singing at sight anyway. The best of them don't really know anything about music more than that—if they know as much."—Henry Clay Barnabee in National Magazine.

Curran's Mistake.

It was difficult to subdue the high spirits of John Philpot Curran, the Irish lawyer and wit. Indeed, many of his most brilliant witticisms were uttered in the staid and somewhat musty atmosphere of the courtroom.

On one occasion when Curran was making an elaborate argument in chancery Lord Clare brought a large Newfoundland dog upon the bench with him, and during the progress of the argument he paid much more attention to the dog than to the barrister. Gradually the chancellor lost all regard for even ordinary courtesy. In the most important part of the case he turned himself quite aside and began to fondle the animal. Curran stopped at once.

"Go on, Mr. Curran; go on," said Lord Clare.

"I beg a thousand pardons, my lord," replied the wit. "I took it for granted that your lordship was employed in consultation."

Physical Energy.

Study of the blood furnished the clew to Julius Robert Mayer for his discovery of that fundamental law of physics, the law of conservation of energy. Mayer observed, while traveling as a ship's surgeon in the tropics that the venous blood of his patients (in the days when blood letting was still in general vogue) was appreciably brighter in color than in ordinary practice in the temperate zone. From this he concluded there was a definite relation between the chemical action going on in the blood and the amount of work or heat furnished by the body, and thus, following up his argument point by point, he was finally led to the conclusion that the total amount of energy of a given system is constant, that energy can neither be created nor destroyed, but only converted from one form into another.

When Vapor Is Dry.

A popular misconception is the supposition that aqueous vapor and ice are wet. They are in themselves dry, and become wet only when they turn to water. So dry is aqueous vapor that it will dry any moist object that it comes in contact with. Superheated steam, before it condenses, is a dry gas. Ice feels wet if the temperature of the hand is sufficient to melt it; as ice it is dry. Another misconception is that the air can be either moist or dry. It is condensed aqueous vapor in the air that is moist, and it would be moist if there were no air. A given quantity of aqueous vapor confined in a given space will be wet or dry according to the temperature. At 32 degrees, for instance, it might be partially condensed and consequently wet, while at 70 degrees, owing to expansion, it would be dry.

The First Ironclad.

The French were the first people to apply in a practical shape the idea of reviving the use of armor on the sides of ships. They constructed five floating batteries clad with four inches of iron. Of these the first was the Tonnante, mounting sixteen guns. She was launched at Brest in 1855. The first ironclad warship proper was the La Gloire, launched in November, 1859. La Gloire was of 5,600 tons displacement and 800 horse power. The famous Merrimac and Monitor gave the world the first fight between ironclads, but they were not the first mailed battleships. The La Gloire was afloat more than a year before the historic encounter in Hampton Roads.—New York American.

Simple Pleasures.

To become again more joyous, more childlike, more naive than we are, to look into the world with clear eyes and to consign to the devil the problematical chimeras behind which only too often hides the unclean turmoil of the market place, chimeras which have made us unhappy, slavish and uncertain—that would do us all good.—Boston Transcript.

Keep the Bell Ringing.

A bell in a temple of north China has been kept ringing for a century. A tax is levied in the district for paying relays of ringers to work incessantly day and night.

Area of the Oceans.

The oceans, including the inland seas connected with them, cover about 144,500,000 square miles, or 73.39 per cent of the total surface of the earth.

Insects' Eggs.

A butterfly lays 600 eggs, the wasp 5,000, the ant 4,000 to 5,000, while one species of white ant produces 86,400 eggs in a day.

Caught by His White Hair

By MARTHA EVERSHAM

When I was a girl of seventeen I was far older than my years. Young fellows of my own age seemed to me what they really were—beardless boys. They were full of sports and nonsense, whereas I was philosophically inclined. I loved to talk with men who knew a great deal more than I did—men who could talk learnedly on a variety of subjects. Thus I was thrown in with those who were usually double my age.

But my intimacy with such persons was entirely intellectual. Nothing akin to love was excited by any of them. Indeed, many of them had passed middle age and were incapable of sympathizing with a girl in her teens. While it was true that I had intellectual cravings, it was also true that I was still a young girl. There were times when I wished for companionship with young persons. But I was rather inclined to be young with them than that they—I refer to the men—should be young with me. What I mean is that there is a certain dignity in a young man that a girl looks for in one whom she would consider seriously as a possible life companion.

When I was nineteen my father decided that I should finish my education by a trip abroad. We sailed one February morning for Naples, intending to work our way northward with the opening spring, spending the hot summer months in Switzerland. On reaching Naples, when we were going ashore in the ship's tender, I noticed a young man whose hair had evidently turned prematurely gray. Never have I seen so striking a contrast between a young face and white hair. He appeared to be recovering from an illness. He sat opposite me in the boat, and for the life of me I could not keep my eyes off his contrasting features. He knew that I was looking at him, and this fixed his attention upon me.

We drove from the custom house to the hotel, our party of three in an open cab loaded down with hand baggage. On the way we passed another cab containing the white haired young man. Again we exchanged glances as he drove by us, and when we brought up at the hotel entrance he was getting out of his cab to enter the house. I confess I was secretly pleased that we would be at the same abiding place.

That very evening an acquaintance of my father introduced the young man to us as George Caruthers, telling us that he had been ill and was traveling for his health. The introducer would be grateful for any attention we might show his friend. Mother sympathized with Mr. Caruthers, a stranger in a strange land and not strong. She made quite a pet of him, and before we left Naples, he having no definite plans, she invited him to travel with us.

A party traveling for pleasure becomes intimate at once. In these days of form the only way of making new old friends, if I may be allowed the expression, is travel in company with others. I was during a sojourn in the principal Italian cities from Naples to Milan and on the railways connecting them a constant companion of George Caruthers. It seemed to me that there was as great a contrast in his disposition as there was in his outward features. He had the quiet dignity, the depth of understanding of a man and the freshness of youth. These accorded admirably with his appearance. He had, too, a way of falling in with my moods. When I wished him serious he was serious; when I preferred that he should be youthful he was youthful.

These persons with young faces and white hair are very deceptive as to their age. I angled with Mr. Caruthers to draw from him his age. I elicited certain bits of information from him with the intention of putting them together and thus deducing how old he was. But he soon divined my intention and gave his answer in a way to defeat my purpose. Then he would laugh at me for my failure.

We reached northern Italy in a couple of months, and by this time my newly made friend had quite recovered his strength. His complexion was naturally florid, and the contrast between his face and his hair under his improved condition was the greater. He was always close shaven, but I could see that his beard did not partake of the color of his hair. But even this was difficult to determine, for his beard was evidently meager and of a light hue.

It is well nigh impossible for a young man to travel in company with a young girl without an affair of the heart, and our case was no exception. George Caruthers proposed to me on Lake Leman just before we reached Geneva. In reply I told him that I had but one objection to him—that which was now an attraction would one day be a detriment. When he began to grow old he would look far older than he was on account of his white hair. He took off his hat with one hand and with the other pulled off his scalp and an overlay of white hair, displaying a head of short, thick blond hair beneath.

"A wig!" I exclaimed.

"A wig," he replied. "After leaving America, in consequence of fever, my hair began to come out, and before reaching Naples it was nearly all gone. The only wig I could get on the ship was this one, and since knowing you and being with you constantly I have not liked to change it."

Singular that I should have been caught by a wig, isn't it?

Starvation Diet.

I would I were an artist!
Twould fill my soul with cheer
For when I got a thirst on
I'd draw a glass of beer.
—California Pelican.

Still, I'd like to be a woodman
And walk the forests through,
And whenever I got hungry
I'd take a chop or two.
—Princeton Tiger.

The law would offer me more scope,
I love the legal race.
With thirst and hunger I could cope—
Just order up a case.
—Michigan Gargoyle.

My occupation's better still.
If you don't think so try it.
I coach the frisky chorus girls,
And chicken is my diet.
—Cornell Widow.

Forearmed.

Mr. Cooke was a traveling man and was slightly injured in a railroad accident. One of the officials of the road went to his home to break the news gently to Mrs. Cooke.

"Madam," he began, "be calm! Your husband has met with a slight—that is to say, one of the drive wheels of a passenger locomotive struck him on the cheek, and"—

"Well, sir," interrupted the woman, "you needn't come around here trying to collect any damages of me. You won't get a cent! If your company can't keep its property out of danger it'll have to take the consequences. You should have your engines insured."—Harper's Magazine.

Courtship in Camera.

She gave him a cabinet photo.
He gazed for a moment or two
Then pleaded, "Sweetheart, won't you give me
The lovely original too?"

"If you're positive, dear, that you love me,"
She said through a film of tears,
"A negative I cannot give you;
I'm yours to the end of our years."

So courtship was quick to develop;
Their marriage was fixed up in town.
And now in a middle class suburb
She is steadily toning him down.
—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

What Could He Do?

The teacher was reading the history of England to some of the little pupils. When she came to the statement that Henry I. never laughed after the death of his son she noticed one of the little girls had raised her hand and seemed very desirous of attracting her attention.

"Well, Amy," said the teacher, "what is it?"

"Please, ma'am," said little Amy, "what did Henry I. do when he was tickled?"—Harper's Bazar.

Animal Dances.

You know about the turkey trot,
The monkey twist;
The bunny hug, as like as not,
Is on your list.

You know the weasel dip, of course,
The pigeon wing,
And that great dance, the crazy horse,
The latest thing.

I love the neat gorilla flop,
The kangaroo,
The proper place to give a hop
Is at the zoo.
—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Hot One.

The Chap—Your refusal of me has broken my heart.

The Heiress—I'm truly sorry. Is there nothing I can do except marry you?

The Chap—No, but if you could lend me a couple of hundred thousand I might feel that I had only half lost you.—Brooklyn Citizen.

New.

The autumn leaves have lost their grip,
They tremble and they fall.
The flat face sunflowers sway and dip
Beside the kitchen wall.
Old nature fills her dewy cup
And warms her chilly toes,
And mere man hangs the mower up
And coils away the hose.
—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Wrong Chap.

"Young man, you call regularly to see my daughter."

"I do."

"I want to know if your intentions are serious."

"You must have the wrong man, Mr. Wombat. I call to collect the payments on her piano."—Hartford Post.

A Fair Athlete.

She could swing a six pound dumbbell,
She could fence, and she could box,
She could row upon the river,
She could clamber 'mong the rocks,
She could do some heavy bowling
And play tennis all day long,
But she couldn't help her mother,
'Cause she wasn't very strong.
—Puck.

Accounted For.

"How is it that Jinks, even if he is in love, can listen so rapturously by the hour to that girl's strumming on the piano?"

"Jinks is as deaf as a post."—Baltimore American.

Sure.

All things come to him who waits,
Including lots of pelf,
But Fortune every loafer hates.
You must wait on yourself.
—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Undiscovered.

"You know there's more in this world than money."

"I don't know. If there is my wife hasn't thought of it."—Detroit Free Press.

Strange Collection.

The family album is a book
Where any visitor may look
And see our grandsires decked with care
In curious clothes and startling hair.
—Washington Star.

Bath Leak.

"Why don't you buy an automobile?"

"I get sufficient excitement out of the management of my fountain pen."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

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