

# An Interference

By JOHN Y. LARNED

"What's the matter, Billy?" My sister Beth asked me the question one morning when I was sitting on the porch looking dreamily on the birds that were opening on the trees.

"Nothing," I replied.

"Yes; there is."

"Beth and I were great chums. There was not much more than a year between us, and I was used to giving her my confidence about everything. I resolved to throw my burden upon her in this case."

"You know Alice Woodson?"

"Oh, a case of love-sickness."

"I made no reply to this. I was sorry I had begun a confession."

"Go on, Billy," Beth added.

"I won't. You'll only poke fun at me."

"Not a bit of it. I'll help you. Don't you know that I, being a girl, know just how a girl should be treated to be won?"

"You can't tell me how to win Alice. In the first place, she's in love with Fred Perkins; in the second, she seems to have some sort of grudge against me, and in the third—"

"That's enough. You needn't tell me any more. Now, listen to me. I know all about this before I asked what was the matter with you. I've been watching you and watching Alice, and I'm convinced she's playing you."

"What?"

"Playing you—a sort of cat and mouse business."

"Oh, bosh! For a week past she has treated me abominably and all the while has been looking up with her eyes at Fred like a—"

"Like a chick in a thunderstorm. Will you do what I tell you to do?"

"That depends upon what you tell me."

"The next time you meet Alice pretend to be thinking about something else and don't see her."

"That will make matters worse."

"Very well; if you won't take the medicine I prescribe, go your own road."

I concluded to try Beth's prescription. The next time I saw Alice coming I pretended to be absorbed in something else, and just before we were to come together I turned off in another direction. That was in the morning. In the afternoon of the same day I met again I couldn't play the same game twice in the same day, so I looked at her. She looked at me, too, rather, she stared at me with a cold blank, withering stare that froze the marrow in my bones. I went to Beth and abused her for getting me into such a pickle.

"You're as weak as watered milk. I'm sorry I tried to do anything for you. I couldn't love a man I could bluff like that."

"What would you want him to do?"

"Crush me like a worm."

"How crush you?"

"Will you simply do nothing so far as Alice is concerned and leave the rest to me?"

Since I felt entirely incapable of carrying on such a contest myself I agreed to this Fabian policy. During the next few days I kept out of Alice Woodson's way so far as I could. When I saw her coming toward me I changed my course. I tried not to look troubled or angry or anything in particular. I did my best to show no special emotion while waiting for Beth to do something.

One day I met Alice face to face. She had me good morning in a rather huffy tone. I replied to her salutation.

"I can understand now," she said, "your recent unfriendliness to me since I have learned the cause."

"What cause?"

"Oh, don't pretend ignorance. I used to think that you had a mind of your own."

"And you don't think so now?"

"You're the best man I ever knew who would permit his sister to run him."

I began to catch on to what was at the bottom of this. Beth had evidently been at work.

"What do you mean by my sister running me?"

"I'm not supposed to tell, but I made no promise. Beth has told me all about it."

"About what?"

"About your new fancy, Mr. Ignorance, or, rather, her fancy. Any one can see that she is trying to bring it about herself, and with such a plausible brother I dare say she will."

I plucked up a lot of courage at this. Beth had evidently produced a revolution.

"Do you mean to say that my sister has been betraying my confidence?"

"Your confidence? Why, she told me herself that she was bent on making a match for you. She said she wanted you to marry a girl that was her friend."

I was pretty stupid, but not so stupid as not to see Beth's device and in what it had accomplished. I cut the matter short by saying that when I married I would consult no one but the girl I wanted and began to talk of something else.

It would have been better for me to have had the pluck to manage the affair myself, for my wife has never forgiven my sister for "trying to switch me off to one of her special friends." I have told her the true story, but she won't believe it. Beth doesn't expect her to believe it. She says she wouldn't believe such a thing if she were there.

### Shy on Names.

One would suppose that even in large families parents wouldn't run out of names to give their children. But a certain lack of imagination or imagination is evident in sections of the foreign populated west side. A Unitarian worker on one of her recent investigations came across a family where three of the young ones were named Joe. Her first thought was that either the father or mother had been married more than once, but to her amazement such did not prove to be the case. The mother simply liked the name Joe and took the path of least resistance.

"But," asked the visitor, turning to one of the little fellows, "how do you know when to come when your mamma wants you?"

"Oh, that's easy," was the reply. "When she wants me she calls 'Joe,' and I come, and when she wants my brother, why, he comes."

This explanation is still rather unsatisfactory, but the practice of calling several children in one family by the same name, I understand, is not uncommon in Chicago—Chicago Inter Ocean.

### A Freak In Stone.

The rocky-maze of Strachov, near Japan, in northern Bohemia, is a veritable natural curiosity. It has been well described as a gigantic "freak in stone." To enter the labyrinth without a guide is a perilous proceeding, for an unwary adventurer would probably speedily be lost in the tortuous windings of the maze, where the paths are so narrow, and crooked and the cliffs on the side so high that the explorer soon loses all idea of locality. In days of fiery persecution the Moravian and Bohemian brethren's secret prayer meetings used to be held here, just as the early Christians assembled to worship in the catacombs. The cliffs are honeycombed with cells, and at the far end of the maze is a rock cavern and took toll of all wayfarers. The shape of some of the rocks is very curious. There are, for instance, the "bishop and mitre," the "Madonna and the child" and many others.—London Sketch.

### Boys and Sleep.

One thing a growing boy wants to be long on is sleep, and yet he is most apt to be careless about it. It is during sleep that a boy grows most and catches up. During his waking hours he tears down and burns up more tissue than he builds. Good, sound and sufficient sleep is essential to growth, strength and endurance. A boy should sleep at least nine or ten hours of sleep out of every twenty-four. If you lose out on this amount on one day make it up the next. Whenever unusually tired or when you feel out of trim stay in bed a few hours more if it is possible. A boy should wake up each morning feeling like a fighting cock. When he doesn't he ought to get to bed earlier that night. Sleep is a wonderful restorative and tonic. It helps to store up energy and conserve strength.—"Boy Scouts of America."

### Manners in Russia.

Mme. Viardot, the famous musician, gives one a poor impression of Russian manners from the account she narrates in her "Memories and Adventures" of a visit to the Crimea in 1859. "Their want of logic" amused her. "It enables them to be scrupulously clean in their persons, she says, and yet they are not nice in their table-manners." One substitutes his finger for his fork another drinks out of the cream jug a third eats his perspiring brow with the bread knife.

But, if their manners were doubtful their music was divine. "The whole nation is thoroughly musical, down to the lowest." And in the matter of manners, as in other things, Russia has traveled a long way since 1859.

### The Orange.

The orange was brought from Asia to Spain and Portugal in the sixteenth century. It was taken to South America by the early explorers and ran wild in the forests of the Amazon. Originally a small, sour fruit, it has been cultivated up to its present size and sweetness. The orange industry began to flourish in the United States about 1875 and about 1885 was well advanced. The number of orange trees in this country is now close to 10,000,000, of which California has about 60 per cent and Florida 30, the remainder being chiefly in Louisiana and Arizona.

### And He Wanted More.

"Do the Irish like the Italians, Pat?"

"Sure they do, answered Pat. There's 5,000 of em where I work and I wouldn't mind if there were 5,000 more."

"Where do you work?"

"In an Italian cemetery"—Philadelphia Ledger.

### Nightly Careful.

Marcella, young friend of Seanbrough, seems to be greatly troubled with an affection. "Waxworks" I should say so. He absolutely refused to attend a moving picture show that was being given because one of the scenes had a banquet table.

### Badly Smitten.

She must have been here, I'm going to have a bath, said the girl. Oh, I think I'll have one taken out of the house.

### Riches and Happiness.

Seek not to be rich but happy. The one lies in bags, the other in content. Which wealth can never give.—William Penn.

Cultivation is as necessary to the mind as food to the body. Cicero.

# A NEW MATRIMONIAL SOCIETY

By ESTHER VANDEVEER

Between the mountains of India and Persia there is a tribe among whom the women choose their husbands. When a single woman wishes to marry a man she sends a servant to his house to pin a handkerchief to his hat as an intimation of her desire. Unless he can show that he is too poor to purchase her at the price her father requires he is obliged to marry her.

Until the organization of the Arlington club for men there was no superfluity of spinsters over bachelors in a certain American town, but from then on marriages began to fall off. One of the most popular married women called the maidens together and organized an association for the advancement of matrimony based on the Indian-Persian plan. The first young lady to secure a husband by the method was invited to state before the association how it had worked in her case. She arose and said:

"Mrs. President, I had long admired Mr. George Luddington, who had paid me some attention, and had it not been for the organization of the Arlington club I believe he would have asked me to be his wife. But that pestiferous institution reduced him from an insipient lover to a vacillating hanger on. Soon after the adoption of the plan which we are associated to carry out I worked Mr. Luddington's initials on a fine cambric handkerchief and, calling a messenger, told him to take it to the club at the hour I knew Mr. Luddington dined there, obtain access to the vest-room and pin it to his hat."

"The messenger had no difficulty in executing his commission. I did not know for some time that Mr. Luddington knew from whom the token came. I have since learned that he knew very well, and the action he took in the matter was intended to frighten me off. A few evenings after receiving the handkerchief he called on me, and I saw at a glance that he was or pretended to be very irate."

"What do you suppose has happened to me?" he asked indignantly.

"I can't imagine," I replied meekly.

"An association has been formed in this town so I understand to drive us bachelors into matrimony. If a girl wishes to marry a man she sends some one to pin a handkerchief to his hat. Did you ever hear of such immodest impudence?"

"Never in my life."

"You must excuse me, ladies, for my weakness, but he frightened me out of my wits."

"Who do you suppose this person is?" he growled.

"I can't imagine," I replied.

"Don't you think her very unmoderately?" he asked in a less threatening tone, for my agreeing with him rendered him less severe to me.

"I certainly do. I wonder how she could have had the face to do it!"

"I shrink into a corner of a sofa, as far away from him as I could get. He sat down on the other end and looked at me in kind of a puzzled way. He knew I had sent him the handkerchief and couldn't understand how I could condemn myself for doing it. He looked very terrible, but not quite so terrible as when he first came. Then he began a series of lectures to find out what it all meant."

"The handkerchief," he said, "was very dirty, though the initials were badly worked. They looked as if they had been executed by some one with fingers so big that they were only fit to work with a skewer."

"At this I said nothing. I dared not speak for fear of betraying a tremor in my voice."

"If a girl," he went on, "had sent me a gift without an immodest intention I should have been deeply impressed with it. Quite likely I would have been affected to the point of marriage here to her and proposing marriage."

This statement was received with cries of "No!" "Don't you believe it!" "They all talk that way, but they don't propose." When the commotion subsided the speaker went on with her recital.

"But for a girl deliberately to tell a man she wants him to marry her, thus usurping his privilege, there's nothing she could do to so effectually turn him—"

"He got no further. I was full to the top of my throat. I made several convulsive gulps and burst into a torrent of tears.

"I don't know what he was doing for a few moments, for I held my handkerchief to my face. I heard nothing, but presently felt his arm around my waist. Then he drew me head down on his breast.

"If the fool killer comes this way, he said, with his lips pressed against my cheek, he'll gank me out, certain sure. Don't cry, little girl. Dear little girl, I love you. I've loved you ever since."

"Again there were cries of unbelief 'Oh bosh!' 'What a whopper!' and such like expressions of disapproval, whereupon the speaker indignantly turned her back on the assembly and with her nose in the air marched out of the room."

"Ladies," said the president severely, "I'm astonished at you. This society was organized to promote marriage, not to destroy romance. To doubt the word of a lover who says he has always loved the girl to whom he proposes would be to destroy such elements of the delight attending such occasions."

# Disraeli's Splurge With Canees.

Speaking of walking sticks reminds me of young Disraeli. Writing from Gibraltar, and telling his sister to inform their mother what a sensation his waistcoats and studs were making among the officers, he added: "I have also the fame of being the first who ever passed the straits with two canes, a morning and an evening cane. A change may come on the gun fire and hope to carry them both on to Cairo. It is wonderful the effect those magical wands produce. I owe to them even more attention than to being the supposed author of 'what is it? I forget.' The fault of many walking sticks is that they are too short. Walk with a stick that seems at first intended for a man taller than yourself and you acquire an upright carriage. A Brighton shop that I pass occasionally is selling any number of sticks through pushing the testimony of a well known doctor as to the health advantages of long walking sticks.—London Chronicle.

### Smoke and Soot.

Soot, the principal trouble maker in smoke, is the product of incomplete combustion, and is formed partly by the mechanical removal of ash by the chimney draft and partly by the decomposition of the volatile portion of the fuel which is formed by the process of destructive distillation. The character of soot varies with the distance from the grate at which it has been deposited, as well as the temperature of the furnace, amount of air and method of firing. The acids contained in soot attack mortar, masonry, woodwork, metal work and building material generally. In many European cities it has been found that soot causes the rapid disintegration of stationary and public monuments. The damage done to inside decorations appears to be no less important than the effects upon the exterior of buildings. Smoke is a visible proof of imperfect combustion of fuel, and consequently evidence of waste and inefficiency.—New York American.

### True Hospitality.

I pray you, O excellent wife, not to cumber yourself and me to get a rich dinner for this man of this woman who has alighted at our gate, nor a bed-chamber made ready at too great a cost. These things, if they are curious in them, they can get for a dollar at any village. But let this stranger, if he will, in your looks, in your accent and behavior, read your heart and earnestness, your thought and will, which he cannot buy at any price in any village or city, and which he may wish to travel fifty miles and dine sparingly and sleep hard in order to behold. Certainly, let the board be spread and let the bed be dressed for the traveler, but let not the emphasis of hospitality lie in these things. Honor to the house where they are simple to the verge of hardship, so that there the intellect is awake and reads the laws of the universe.—Emerson.

### Actors in China.

Music as a profession is not now regarded as wholly reputable, but it is common to hear men singing snatches of theater songs as they go along the streets or country lanes, and amateur instrumentalists are many both among the poor and the better educated classes. We listened once, almost entranced, to a boatman on the inner waters of the Chekiang province declaiming with clear, strong voice and tone and rhythm for more than an hour at night a poem of short cantos in praise of Buddha. . . . It is a common thing at Peking the entrance of actors, to see a man standing with his face against the city wall and yelling like some demented. He is a poor practicing his part and strengthening his voice.—Moule's "The Chinese People."

### An Easy Solution.

"How does the biggest suit you John?" inquired the young bride anxiously.

"It's just right, dearest," said her husband. "It may be pipelike, but I'm awfully fond of calves liver for breakfast."

"So am I, dear," said the wife. "Oh John, don't you think it would pay us to keep a calf? Then we could have liver every morning for breakfast."

Ladies' Home Journal.

### Lots Like That.

A certain famous skyscraper builder said in his New York office the other day apropos of costs and values:

"Costs and values get confused because there are so many men who, if sunshine had to be paid for, would swear that gas gave a much more brilliant light."—New York Times.

### One For Each Life.

"I want a good revolver," began the determined looking man.

"Yes, sir," said the salesman. "Six chambers?"

"Why, of you'd better make it a curious six." A space several hundred feet square was covered with broken masts, yards, beams, planks, boards, ropes, blocks and sails. A large ship had here suffered destruction.

"Just how I could get determining, but it seemed to me as if a great body of it coming to school yesterday. She fell in the mind. By doing the same you will prevent such accidents."

### A Modest Request.

"Dear Mr. Editor," wrote Miss Edith, "please excuse Edith for not coming to school yesterday. She fell in the mind. By doing the same you will prevent such accidents."

### Took Him Right In.

"Did you tell me you wanted to marry me?"

"Yes; and he gave me his consent then asked me to lend him \$10."—Boston American.

### Human Nature.

Mrs. Crabshaw is that man who asked you for a loan of your—Crabshaw Yes, my dear, still a friend. I didn't let him have it.—New York Times.

# Found In the Ice

By M. QUAD

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On the 7th day of October, 1852, the ship Princess left Australia with a cargo of wool and other articles valued at \$250,000. She had in her treasure room gold in dust, bars and coin, aggregating \$1,300,000. She was never heard from.

In June, 1868, eighteen years after the loss of the Princess, I was one of the crew of the Boston whaler Tallman, which was trying the cruising ground on the south of Cape Horn. We had had a fair run of luck when we got a gale from the north which lasted for four days and nights without a break. This drove us away south about the ice, and on a dozen different occasions the ship was within a hair's breadth of being cast away or overwhelmed. After the fourth day of the gale there was a calm lasting thirty hours. During this interval the Tallman lay between two monster icebergs, with her boats down and ready to tow her out of the way should they close in on her. Then we got a strong breeze from the east.

Sometimes we lay moored to a berg for several hours; again we were pounding among the great cakes of ice, which threatened every moment to crush in her sides. We had been drifting to the southeast for three days when the breeze fell and left us on a heaving sea, with a monster iceberg about two miles away to the south. The ship had thus far sustained little damage, but the crew were exhausted with the hard work and constant vigilance. The men were given an all night rest, and no incident occurred until late in the afternoon. The mass of ice had a front a mile long on our side, with an average height of 300 feet. What its width was we could not say. We were astonished to see smoke rising from the far side of it. No one doubted that it came from a fire lighted by shipwrecked sailors, who were making her a sign.

The lead mate and three men were ordered off in one of the whaleboats to inspect. We took with us a breaker of fresh water, a bottle of rum, bread, meat, blankets, a lead compass and a lantern, and darkness fell as we pulled away from the ship.

We pulled to pass the western face of the berg and found it to be about half a mile long. As we reached its southern limit and turned to the east we caught sight of a small fire on a ledge about 100 feet above the water. As soon as we got up to it the mate halted and was promptly answered that there were two men on the ledge upon whom I was ordered to remain by the mate and hold on, while the mate and the two men landed on the berg and began making their way up to the ledge.

Twenty minutes later the berg split, a fog settled down, and with it came a breeze. I did not know what to do, and so I hid in my car, wrapped myself in a blanket and sat down in the bottom of the boat. You will think it queer that I fell asleep under the circumstances, but that is exactly what happened. I did not wake until daylight came again. Then I found myself in an ice floe which was drifting to the south at the rate of about three miles an hour.

I did not at all sure how long I drifted, but the general direction was south, and the time was at least four days and nights. On the morning of what was probably the fifth day I awoke to find that the fog had ceased drifting and a quarter of a mile to the east of the berg.

It was a mile or more in length and not over thirty feet high and looked more like a wall resting on the water. The ice was yellow and dirty, with rocks embedded in it here and there, and I have no doubt that a good portion of it was the lower part of an iceberg which had turned turtle. Between me and the wall was a jumble of ice, over which it seemed impossible to make my way, but as soon as I had broken my fast I set out to try it. It took me a full hour to make that quarter of a mile, but at length I reached the wall and found that I could easily get up its rough side. When I reached the top it was to discover that the mass of ice was almost a cube, with a great hollow in its surface to remind one of the crater of a volcano.

In the center of this hollow lay a mass of wreckage, and after a long search, half believing my eyes deceived me, I slid down and began investigation. No one will ever see a more blue chamber. I want to use it on a broken mast, yards, beams, planks, boards, ropes, blocks and sails. A large ship had here suffered destruction.

"Just how I could get determining, but it seemed to me as if a great body of it coming to school yesterday. She fell in the mind. By doing the same you will prevent such accidents."

"Did you tell me you wanted to marry me?"

"Yes; and he gave me his consent then asked me to lend him \$10."—Boston American.

### Knocking on the Door.

To me all knocking at a closed door is fraught with the tragic, an impetuous summons to open to the unknown; to suspend for the time the present action or conversation to make way for that which may not be denied. I have observed, with myself particularly, when in a room alone that a sudden knocking at the door, coming without previous warning as to who might wish admittance, suspends as if in mid-air the thought or act upon which I am engaged. A feeling of vague apprehension possesses me, a momentary wonderment at the sudden and unexpected interruption of thought. And I have observed, too, when in a room with others, that at a knocking at the door all will turn toward it, suspending action, leaving the speech uncompleted, with a strained expression in their eyes, as if fearing something disastrous, while the shadow of silence will fall upon us until the door is opened and the cause of the unknown summons discovered. Though the shadow of silence in such an instance is of such short duration and may fall so lightly upon some that it may be unperceived, to me it is none the less real.—Atlantic.

### The Trick of Ski Jumping.

The art of ski jumping is not so easy as it looks before trying, nor so hard to learn as it might appear after the first attempt. At the start, or takeoff, comes down as though you were coasting on the ski, then at the moment of the takeoff bend the body well forward from the hips and throw as much of the weight as possible into the knees. As you leave the edge of the jump straighten quickly at the hips and secure as much as possible the effect of jumping straight out into the air. While in the air hold the arms as still as possible in the position that best preserves the balance, keep the ski points slightly down, as near as possible parallel with the slope of the hill. The body should be perpendicular to the slope and the ski kept well together. On landing advance one ski as far as possible without upsetting, bending the knee of the leg that is advanced. Keep the skis together and parallel. The rest is practice and more practice.—Outing.

### Noncommittal.

A certain chap named James was never known to take a decided stand on any question. With a view to trapping him into committing himself two friends went into James' office one day and started to talk about a buffalo eating grapes.

"Some people may think that a buffalo doesn't eat grapes," remarked one of the friends, "but when I was in the west a few years ago I saw one of them climb twenty feet into a tree to pluck off a bunch of the delicious fruit."

"A buffalo climb a tree?" incredulously exclaimed the other. "Who ever heard of such a thing? Say, Jim," he continued, turning to the noncommittal one, "what do you think of a preposterous statement like this?"

"Why, I hardly know," was the calm rejoinder of James, "but there's no telling what a buffalo might do when he wants grapes."—Exchange.

### He Was a Bit Fussy.

The following letter was recently addressed to the general manager of an English railway:

"Please send me one tourist ticket for Penzance return six months for train leaving Paddington next Tuesday at 10.30 a. m. arriving Penzance 5.05 p. m. Please reserve corner seat facing engine as near center of train as possible. Inventory carriage—no children, quiet company. Also luncheon (children's basket with glass hot milk and water mixed) at 12 o'clock. Also ten basket China weak tea at 3 o'clock. Also I shilling for guard to see that the driver does not race or rush the train, especially around curves and at inclines, and watch the signals well and machinery well oiled and not over-heated."—London Express.

### Seeing It Himself.

An actor who recently was taken while on the stage by a cinematograph was greatly pleased with the result. Talking about it to a prominent dramatic critic, he said:

"It was the most extraordinary experience I ever went through—actually to see myself acting."

"Now," replied the critic, "you will understand what we have to put up with."—New York Globe.

### A Balanced Rock.

Near the summit of Mount Shattuck, in the village of Russell, Mass., is a granite balance rock which probably weighs about 100 tons. It touches its rest for about twelve inches and balances on a very small point, but it has resisted several determined attempts to dislodge it with a jack-screw.—Boston Globe.

### Their Pride.

"I am a self made man," said Mr. Cumrox.

"And I suppose your wife and daughter are very proud of you?"

"Yes. Just about as proud as they would be of a homemade dress."—Washington Star.

### Classifying Papa.

"So," said Brok, "your engagement to Maud is broken off, is it? Why, I thought she just doted on you."

"So she did," answered Tom, "but her father proved to be an antidote."

### Not That Kind.

"I understand that your wealthy uncle has entirely given up hope."

"Don't you believe it. That man has never given up anything."—Boston Post.

Steadiness is a point of preference as well as courage.—L. B. Swain.