

SONIA MARANIEFF

By F. A. MITCHEL

The province of Vyatka, in Russia, borders on Siberia, and though it is not quite so far north as St. Petersburg, it is rather a wild country. Near its center is a fine estate, in which on a piece of rising ground is a spacious residence. One day a lady rode out from this house on horseback. It was the spring of the year, and the winter had been cold. The lady had been told that wolves from the forests had been driven by hunger to seek food in the more civilized region, and she had pistols and holsters at the pommel of her saddle and a short rifle slung over her shoulder. Two servants, also armed, rode a short distance in her rear. She was going to visit a charitable institution in which she was interested. During her return a sound of barking and shots was heard behind her which drew rapidly nearer. Then a sleigh appeared, the driver lashing his horses to escape a pack of wolves. A man in the rear seat of the sleigh fired a shot at the brutes, then threw down his gun. It was evident that he had used his last cartridge. The equestrienne, supported by her servants, began firing at the wolves, which maddo off into the woods. Then the man in the sleigh thanked them for his life since had it not been for their coming, in a few minutes more both he and his driver would have been devoured. Handing a card to the lady bearing the name Count Boris Geronisky, he said: "If you ever come to St. Petersburg please advise me. Trust I shall be able to make your visit there enjoyable."

When the lady read the name on the card the expression on her face changed, but the count, whose nerves had been severely taxed, felt a swimming sensation and did not notice the impression his name had created. "You need rest and refreshment," she replied to his request. "We are not half a dozen weeks from my house. If you will partake of my hospitality I will accept your invitation later, for I shall soon visit the capital."

The count invited her into his sleigh and together they rode to her home, where she entertained him at dinner. After which he proceeded on his journey.

Within a few months Count Geronisky received a card on which was the name of Sonia Maranieff, the lady who had saved him from the wolves. He called upon her and begged her to tell him in what way he could best make her visit to the capital enjoyable. "I live on the edge of a wilderness," she replied, "and have never seen anything of life in a great city. I would like to be present at one of the functions given at the palace."

"You shall be present," the count answered, "not only at one function, but as many as you please. I am one of the emperor's privy council and can command invitations for the asking."

Sonia Maranieff proved a great success in court society. Though she came from a wild country she was refined, and there was about her a greater freshness and ingenuousness than in the women of the city. More over, she was beautiful. Since she always gave her name as Sonia Maranieff it was supposed that she was a married woman. Many men strove to win her, but she seemed to prefer the attentions of him who had introduced her. Count Boris was devoted to her, but it was generally known that he was a married man and the Russian church does not admit of divorce.

There is a custom in Russia that a man of rank may marry a woman of wealth, giving her the right to bear his name and title for a consideration. Count Geronisky, on coming of age found his paternal estate involved in debt. A career at court was open to him, but he must have means to achieve it. For 200,000 rubles he had given a wealthy woman the right to call herself Countess Geronisky. The marriage had been by proxy, and he had never seen his bride. Those who noticed Count Boris' attention to Sonia Maranieff and to whom it was evident that he had fallen in love with her, knowing of his marriage, sympathized with him; for there was a certain dignity about this girl from a distant province, a chaste bearing, to make it evident that no man could possess her without making her his wife.

One evening when Sonia was dancing at the Winter palace a lackey stepped up to her with a telegram on a salver which had been forwarded from her abode. She opened it, and it was evident that it contained some distressing news. She straightway left the room, and so absorbed was she that she dropped her telegram. A lady picked it up and read the address, "Countess Geronisky."

The incident was soon common talk. Geronisky was congratulated on his marriage with Sonia Maranieff and asked why he had not announced it. The count was astonished and when told of how Sonia had dropped the telegram sought her immediately. He found her in an apartment, waiting for her carriage. "I learn," he said, "that you have received a telegram bearing my name and title. Are you not Sonia Maranieff?" "It was Sonia Maranieff till I became the Countess Geronisky."

The countess had received news of the death of her mother. Her husband went home with her, and after that they lived as man and wife.

"Love," she said, "must have something to feed on."

"I acknowledge that," he replied, "but I don't believe it will be able to develop much vigor on marshmallows."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Mary went to milk the goat. And then I heard her mutter, "I wish this goat would turn to milk." And then it turned to butter. —Cincinnati Enquirer.

"You don't believe I love you?" she said. And she pressed him for his answer.—Ohio Sun Dial.

"Where are you going, my pretty maid?" "I want to go mooring, sir," she said. "May I go with you, my pretty maid?" "You may if you pay for the car," she said. —Yonkers Statesman.

Fond Parent—My daughter Maud is exceptionally clever—able to do everything under the sun. Smartie—She'll make a fine general houseworker.—Life.

"That rich old fool," said White, "will not let me his daughter wed." "He may be rich, he may be old. But he's no fool," Black said. —Lippincott's.

Rich Father—I fear that young man of yours is living beyond his means. Daughter—Oh, no, papa; he hasn't any.—Boston Transcript.

A booby old codger named Young With some hair tonic whisky got stung. "Oh, I don't mind the taste," he exclaimed in great haste. "But it grows full all over my tongue!" —Cincinnati Enquirer.

Post—I have just inherited a fortune, but I shall keep right on writing! Editor—Oh, I was hoping you would go in for agriculture.—New York Globe.

When man admires woman's style And all her pretty graces 'Tis sad when he starts making eyes To find her making faces. —Yonkers Statesman.

"You are not lifting your voice in this great argument." "No, I'm saving my voice to cheer with the side that comes out victorious."—Washington Star.

Perhaps it's only natural, Though actors throw a fit, That when a fighter's on the stage He scores a knockout hit. —Spokane Spokesman-Review.

"Is that a valuable dog you have?" "I bought him for a thoroughbred, but I don't believe he can be." "Why not?"

"I've had him six weeks and he hasn't disappeared once." —Detroit Free Press.

Look down, not up, and dodge the slide. Or legs and arms will scatter wide. And he who runs for passing cars May hit the earth and see the stars. —Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"I met Jones just now, and he told me his business plans are all in the air." "So they are. He builds airships." —Baltimore American.

"Dad often cautions me, you know, 'Gainst telling things that are not so.' Said Johnny, 'yet dad has a way Of telling whoppers every day. To dozens right here in this town, sir, He said the baby was a bouncer. I tried him. 'Twasn't so at all. He wouldn't bounce; he'd only squall.'" —Judge.

"I walk six miles every day for my health." "So you are rich enough, then, to own an automobile?" —Chicago Record-Herald.

"Sermons in stones," said Shakespeare, That wisest of wise men, We might infer that women were Upon the warpath then. —Kansas City Journal.

Small Brother—I looked through the keyhole when sis was in there with Jim. Father—What did you find out? Small Brother—The lamp.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Keep a-smiling, poets bellow, And you'll be a happy clerk, But the grim and grouchy fellow Never gets the extra work. —San Francisco Chronicle.

"What became of that Shakespeare study club you organized last winter?" "It has engaged a teacher and is learning the hesitation waltz." —Chicago Record-Herald.

There's one thing on which we agree, My girl and me, I think the world and all of her, And so does she. —Philadelphia Record.

Patience—The bills announce that there is to be a monster benefit at the opera house. Patrice—I wonder who the monster is?—Yonkers Statesman.

Fate will catch us tripping, Catch us one and all, When we give up slipping, Then we're sure to fall. —Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"What do you think of football?" "Oh, it's rather tame," replied the militant suffragette.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

There was a young miss in Eau Claire Who bought a new wig of blue hair, "For," she said, with a smile, "I must keep right in style. No matter what color they wear." —New York Evening World.

"Mrs. Brown has the kleptomaniac." "Indeed? What is she taking for it?" "Anything that looks good to her." —New York Times.

You'll notice this most every day— Strange how the habit clings!— Some men use great big words to say Some mighty little things. —Cincinnati Enquirer.

The Deconglate Bard. Within his attic, cold and bare, A poet labored at his lay. He ran his fingers through his hair And often paused awhile to stare. At something that seemed far away. His face was deeply lined with care. He tolled for little pay.

No piece of gold or silver gleamed Within his flabby little purse. No sunlight through his window streamed What time he smoked his pipe and dreamed.

The dreams from which he woke his verse. At last he heaved a sigh that seemed To be almost a curse.

He munched his crust regretfully. A frown o'ercreased his pallid face. "Behew the bitter fates," said he, "That in their anger sentenced me To labor in this dismal place! Oh, that I had the call to be A star at second base!" —Chicago Record-Herald.

Then He Went. The young man who never knew when to go home was silent. So was the young woman.

"You should say 'A penny for your thoughts,'" suggested the delayer. The young woman hid a yawn. "I should say a mousetrap," she corrected.

"A mousetrap? What's a mousetrap?" "It's a Japanese coin," she replied. "It takes 224 of them to equal a penny."

Then he went.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Iceland. I'd like to live in Iceland. They have no telephones. The gossips do not have a chance To rattle old dry bones. —Chicago Post.

I'd like to live in Iceland I really would. I swear I'd like to live in Iceland. They do not tango there. —Los Angeles Express.

I'd like to live in Iceland. There when the blizzards bliz None drives. "Is it cold enough?" They just assume you're Erik. —New York Sun.

A Hibernian. Mr. Cutler, the promising young artist was making a call on Mrs. Dillon, a new member of society. "I do not expect to go out in society much this season," said the young man in response to some question of his hostess.

"I am going to hiberniate." "Indeed, are you, really?" exclaimed Mrs. Dillon, with evident pleasure. "Well, you will enjoy your trip. I was over to Ireland last summer." —Boston Herald.

Means Nothing. A man may have a sounding name And still be quite unknown to fame. Napoleon St. Clair Bronson Greaves. When last we met was peddling eggs. —Birmingham Age-Herald.

One would suppose a name so fine Must be that of some great divine. But Chesterfield Maximilian Bates. Each morning shines our number eight. —Youngtown Telegraph.

We've heard that in this life's great game There's a very little in a name. Now, Constance Charity McNair Can have a rolling pin for fame. —Yonkers Statesman.

Worldly Wisdom. Young Lady—A friend of mine is engaged to a man, and now he refuses to marry her. What would you advise her to do? Old Lawyer—Is the man wealthy? Young Lady—No, he hasn't a cent. Old Lawyer—Then I'd advise her to write him a nice letter of thanks. —New York Press.

Those Old Days. In days of old When knights were bold, They clanked around in armor. Though they were bold, They never told Of dresses of the charmer.

But nowadays They sing their lays And let them with a bang go. And drain a glass To that brave lass Who wears the trouser tango. —Spokane Spokesman-Review.

Now, Hawaii. "I was just wondering"—began Mr. Gabb as he looked up from his newspaper. "Wondering what?" said Mrs. Gabb. "I was wondering what would become of the silent vote when women get the franchise," said Mr. Gabb.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Transformed. Slim little girl in the checkered apron. Hair combed back from bulging brow. Eyes so deep and true and tender. Ankles, oh, so very slender. Slim little girl, where are you now? Slim little girl, you are no longer Broad as that old strong So's grown. You that once seemed so ethereal Now belong to the world material And have a slim little girl of your own. —Chicago News.

Not Practicing It. "Here is a letter from John. He says he is studying political economy." "Isn't that fine?" "I don't know. It doesn't seem to be doing any good. At the bottom of his letter he says he's out of funds and wants \$25 more." —Detroit Free Press.

Pickups. She dropped her handkerchief; he stooped And picked it up. Her hat fell; he picked it up. And likewise with her fur.

So gentlemanly was he that She put him to the test. She dropped a gentle hint, and then— Well, you may guess the rest. —Lawrence American.

Her Habit. "Did you hear how the telephone operator broke off her engagement?" "No. How did she do it?" "Just held out her hand to her ex-offense and coldly remarked, 'Ring off.'" —Baltimore American.

THE MISSING BANK TELLER

Part a Dog Played in Clearing Up a Mystery.

The country homes of the Rudds and our family adjoined, and Walter Rudd and I grew up together, bosom friends. Walter was fond of animals, I of books. Among his pets was a yellow collie, the most intelligent being of the brute creation I ever knew.

I remember especially an instance in evidence of this. One rainy day, needing exercise, I concluded to walk around the house. Dick, the dog, was with me and, seeing me getting on my hat and coat, inferred that I was going for a stroll and was rejoiced at the prospect of going with me. There were two gates to the place, and when I came to the path leading to the nearest Dick was there. I kept on. Dick looked up, surprised; but, inferring that I was intending to go out of the other gate, immediately went to it. When I passed the path leading to that gate, too, Dick's astonishment was beyond bounds. "What does the fellow mean?" he said plainly with his attitude and expression. Then, seeing that I was not leaving the grounds, he went away disappointed.

One morning I was awakened by a scratching mingled with a dog's moans at our front door. I went downstairs and found Dick. He ran down toward the gate, indicating that I was to follow him. I was not long in understanding him and after getting on some clothes went with him to a wood several miles away. He led me to a point near a brook, but when he got there looked about him surprised and disappointed, moaning piteously. Then, putting his nose to the ground, he followed a scent to the brook, where he lost it.

All this was unintelligible to me. After waiting developments and getting none I went home.

I found there a messenger from the Rudds to ask if Walter had spent the night with us, since he had not come home. At once I began to suspect that something was wrong with him, and the dog's action might be an explanation. Possibly there had been foul play at the spot where Dick had led me, and some person or persons had concealed their tracks from the dog had gone away, walking in the brook. I took Dick back to the spot and led him both up and down the stream in the hope that he would pick up the scent; but, notwithstanding a patient effort on the part of both of us, he failed.

The case of Walter Rudd was one of those mysterious disappearances that occur every day, the bulk of them never being explained. Dick, being deprived of his master, adopted me as such. I being that master's most intimate friend I became very fond of him and never went anywhere I could take him without doing so. The first winter that I went to the city I left him behind, but the caretaker of the house wrote me that he was pining away, and I sent for him.

Walter Rudd had been teller in a bank. The cashier was Edward Griffin, a young man who a couple of years later became rich as a promoter. I knew Griffin, but had only a speaking acquaintance with him. One day while in the city walking with Dick on the street I saw Griffin approaching. Suddenly Dick gave a growl, darted forward, jumped upon Griffin, and only great effort on my part kept the dog from taking the man by the throat. I caught Dick by the collar and dragged him away, striking him with my cane at the same time. Griffin seemed very much affected by the encounter, paling and trembling like a leaf, but I was not surprised at this, as it is no light matter to have a dog suddenly spring on one's throat. I did not have an opportunity to apologize to the man, for Dick was so eager to get at him again that I was obliged to drag him away by main force, and Griffin hurried on.

Had Griffin been some rough unknown man I might have suspected that the dog's action had something to do with the mystery attending Walter Rudd's disappearance. As it was, I put it down to one of those unaccountable dislikes a dog will take to some special person. But some months after this, when Griffin's schemes turned out burst bubbles and he no better than a common swindler, the thought came upon me that while he and Walter were in the bank together the cashier might have had some reason for getting rid of the teller.

I asked the president of the bank for information bearing on the case and was confidentially informed that during the time referred to Griffin had been carrying a large defalcation, which was discovered only after it was made good.

After consultation with the Rudd family I was authorized to employ a detective to get evidence, with a view of confirming our suspicions.

It turned out that Rudd knew of Griffin's defalcation and had told Griffin that his duty required him to inform the officers of the bank. Griffin made an appointment to meet Rudd in the wood to talk the matter over. Griffin murdered the only man who knew his secret and left the body where it lay. He came back and found the dog with it. But the dog went away, and Griffin carried the body far down the stream and buried it.

Griffin, learning that a detective was working on his case, committed suicide. Dick is still my companion, though he is very old.

DAMES AND DAUGHTERS.

Probably the best known business woman in New York city is Miss A. E. Amend, private secretary to Charles Tarbell, the oil magnate.

Mrs. Julius S. Walsh, Jr. of St. Louis is the largest woman holder of stock in the United Railways of that city. She is the owner of 900 shares of the preferred stock.

Mlle. de la Ruelle, an inspector of labor for the French government, has just concluded a year's investigation of labor problems in America. She is the first woman ever sent abroad on such a mission by France.

Dr. Rachel Hirsch, a woman physician of Berlin, recently appointed a professor in the Medical college of Berlin, is the first woman to be so honored in Germany. She is forty-three years old, unmarried and for ten years has been a surgeon at the Charity hospital, Berlin.

Mrs. A. A. Adams, whose appointment has been recommended, will have the distinction of being the first woman assistant United States district attorney. It is said. She is a graduate of the University of California and was admitted to practice last year. She is engaged in legal practice in San Francisco.

Flippant Flings.

A St. Louis plumber has fallen heir to \$500,000. What does any plumber need of an extra \$500,000?—Los Angeles Express.

This is the season when the man who made an income tax return remembers a lot of exemptions he could have put in if he had thought of them in time.—Washington Star.

A Boston doctor tells fat women that by tangoing they can get thin. And he might tell thin women that in watching fat women tango they can laugh enough to get plump.—Concord Monitor.

The German professor who says the people, the press and parliament constitute the three civic evils of Germany doubtless thinks the ideal state would be composed of a royal family and a batch of professors.—Chicago Record-Herald.

Fashion Frills.

Men's trousers in Paris are now to have plaits. Quite the newest wrinkle.—New York Sun.

"Daring gowns" are announced as seen at the French race courses. We shall probably take their dares before long.—Boston Herald.

London tailors are trying to introduce "blue dress suits," as if a man wasn't uncomfortable enough in one of those black things as it is.—Detroit Free Press.

Women's hats are to be small and will be decorated with flowers. This announcement ought to bring comfort to the male patrons of the street cars who are tired of chewing feathers.—Toledo Blade.

Aerial Flights.

A \$5,000,000 appropriation for aviation in the British army estimates gives a hint of the altitudes to which the seraphine is flying.—New York World.

The aviator who commands public respect is the one who frankly considers the dangers of flying as well as the spectacular possibilities.—Washington Star.

This thing of flying across the Atlantic seems to whittle itself down to a proposition similar to what Josh Billings said about killing a flea. "It is easy to kill a flea if you can."—Indianapolis Star.

The Cookbook.

Always put a slice of bread into the kettle when cooking pea soup. It prevents the peas from sinking to the bottom and burning.

Add a teaspoonful of baking powder to old potatoes when mashing them and beat briskly. This will make them light and creamy.

If cooking anything with milk in it and salt is required, do not put it in until the last moment, for salt curdles milk if boiled with it. Puddings made with milk and eggs should be cooked gently; a strong heat will inevitably curdle them.

Pert Personals.

Colonel Goethals is another illustration of the fact that the man who does things is always popular.—Detroit Free Press.

The suspicion grows that Andrew Carnegie, in a last desperate effort to die poor, is financing the Federal league.—Boston Globe.

Once more Henry Ford makes us gasp, it being reported that he admits an income of \$6,000,000 a year. Do not be surprised if you learn some day that he has two pairs of suspenders.—New York Press.

Industrial Items.

Over 3,000,000 women are employed in other than household occupations. Clear factories of New York employ nearly twice as many women as men.

The output of musical instruments in this country is constantly increasing, but the number of factories is on the decrease.

Official figures recently compiled show that the United States broke all records for mineral production last year, the total value being more than \$2,072,882,000.

Strange Wills.

Many are the eccentricities to which wills have borne testimony from time to time. The Earl of Portarlington left instructions that he should be buried with all his rings on his fingers. The late Earl of Orkney stipulated that he should be taken to the cemetery in an old-fashioned hearse, so that the coffin could not be seen and that no flowers should be placed on his grave. He also left word that his coronet would be found by his nephew and successor "in a cellar" of his house.

A Vienna millionaire, who died recently, left a sum of money with which to defray the cost of twelve months' electric lighting, not only of his vault, but even of the very coffin in which he was buried. Less particular was the Frenchman who asked that his body should be thrown into the sea a mile from the English coast. He was, too, so disgusted with his own country that he would neither be buried there nor allow any of his relatives or fellow countrymen to benefit by his death. He left the whole of his money to the poor of London.—London Globe.

The Ship's Rat.

The black rat is the ship's rat, and it travels from country to country. The animal is found universally over the Monte Bello group of islands, even on the small outlying islets which are never visited, on which it occurs most abundantly. Its presence is attributed to a schooner which was wrecked some twelve years ago, for it is well known that this rat is a good swimmer. It is curious to find that this animal, which is now so rare in its native countries, is to be looked upon as a great curiosity, should usually be one of the first species to populate new lands where it is comparatively free from competition. Driven from all civilized countries by the brown rat, it has taken to the sea, being better adapted for a life on board ship than its otherwise victorious rival.—P. D. Montague in Geographical Journal.

Curious Ball Play.

A ball club in a regular game made six hits in one inning, one of them a triple, and yet not a single run crossed the plate. This terrific bombardment with freakish result was pulled off in the first inning of the game. The first man to face the pitcher smashed the ball to the corner of the lot—for a triple and was thrown out at the plate trying to stretch his hit into a home run. The second batsman swatted a single and, like his predecessor, tried to make an extra base and was headed out at second. The third batsman and the fourth and fifth also singled, filling the bases. The sixth man at the plate hit the ball between first and second base, and the runner who had been on first was hit by the batted ball, retiring the side without a run scoring.—Chicago Tribune.

Her Game Blocked.

The timid looking little woman on the car noticed that her purse was not in her bag, where she had placed it. Instead it was hanging from her arm on a chain—hanging in full view where it would tempt the nimble fingers of the pickpockets assigned to that beat. With great forethought she picked up the purse and started to put it in the bag. But the purse didn't go in, because it was attached to the arm of the persimmony faced woman standing next to her. Of course the woman with the bag stopped right there and dropped the stranger's purse.

"You'd better let that alone," spoke up the persimmony faced woman. "I've been watching you ever since you got on, and you needn't think I didn't see what you were trying to do."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Fresh Air.

There is throughout the civilized world an increasing knowledge of the value of sunlight and of fresh air. Benjamin Franklin in 1754 wrote:

"Physicians have discovered that fresh air is beneficial to those who are ill. Perhaps in 100 years they will find it does not hurt those who are well." It has taken over the century prophesied by Franklin, but at last boards of health, bureaus of charity, trustees of schools, commissions on housing, intelligent bodies in all phases of civic life urge the need of securing all possible sunlight and fresh air.—Exchange.

Musical Calamity.

Mrs. Newriche—I believe our next door neighbors on the right are as poor as church mice. Hiram. Mr. Newriche—What makes you think so? Mrs. Newriche—Why, they can't afford one of them mechanical piano players; the daughter is taking lessons by hand.—Puck.

Celluloid Cement.

Celluloid articles can be mended with a cement made by dissolving bits of celluloid in acetone. It takes only a few minutes to make the cement, which is applied like glue, the broken edges are pressed together, and in fifteen minutes the cement is hard.

When a Mule Bites.

When a mule begins to bite it is a sure sign that he has rheumatism in his hind legs and can't use them.—New Orleans Picayune.

One Consolation.

First Photographer—You were rejected yesterday, weren't you? Second Ditto—Yes, but I got a clear negative.—Columbia Jester.

Art Thou Anvil, be Patient; art Thou Hammer, strike hard.—German Proverb.