

An Up to Date Matrimonial Method

By OSCAR COX

"Well, I declare!" exclaimed Kate Goodwin.

"What is it?" asked her friend, Clara Seal.

"If that isn't the most monumental piece of impudence I ever heard of!"

"Tell me what it is."

"You know that red-headed, freckled, boss-jointed Alf Woodbridge?"

"Yes."

"Well, he's sent me a printed circular stating that he's in the market for a wife. He says he's up for competition, a prize. Just think of it! He'll marry the girl who passes the best examination in those things that are requisite in a wife."

"Do you mean to say that he has had the assurance to do such a thing?"

"I do."

"He hasn't sent me one of his circulars. If he did I'd send it right back to him."

"H'm! Better wait till you get one of 'em. He says that only a few of the most desirable young ladies of the town will be invited to compete."

"Worse and worse. I wonder that he hasn't died of conceit before this."

"Conceited persons never die of that disease; they seem to thrive on it."

"Of course you won't take any notice of his circular."

"Certainly not, but there's one thing I'd like to know—that is, if any of the girls so demure herself as to fall in with his idea, which one of them will get the?"

"Prise. Just think of that fellow offering himself as a prize!"

"I'll tell you what I have a mind to do."

"What?"

"I've a mind to fill in his questions just to see what comes of it."

"Can't you find that out without pandering to his silly conceit?"

"No, he says that no information will be given any girl who has not been invited to compete and does not enter the race."

"Hic—oh heavens! Don't you know that the girl who wins will let it be known even if she submits to the indignity for fun or to punish him?"

"Well, I'm going to pretend to be a candidate, and if I win I shall just tell him what I think of him."

"That's a good idea. I believe I'll do so too."

There were a dozen eligible girls in the town, and six received the circular. The six who were left out were furious. Every one of them pronounced Woodbridge's impudence unbearable. The six who were invited seemed to have various opinions of Woodbridge's act. Some considered it unpardonable, some pronounced it very funny, and one or two girls with advanced views considered it a very practical way of getting a wife. They said they had a mind to select husbands in the same way.

One morning Mr. Woodbridge was surprised at receiving through the mail a note inclosing a list of printed questions filled in by writing. The note said that the sender considered his competitive examination for a wife "perfectly brutal," but that underneath it all was a basis of common sense.

"I'll cowhide those fellows," remarked Mr. Woodbridge, red as a beet. "I didn't suppose when they threatened to perpetrate that joke on me that they would have the hardihood to do it."

The next morning Woodbridge received another set of examination papers and a set in the afternoon. Each girl who responded had an especial excuse for doing so.

"This is getting interesting," remarked Woodbridge to himself. "What excellent reason these girls have for competing! After all, what's wrong in the idea? Marriages are made in all sorts of ways. Why not by competitive examination? In this age of marriages, experimental marriages, in which both husband and wife are to be tested, marriages without ceremony and marriage till the contracting parties are tired of each other, why not go a step further and have marriages on examination?"

In the last set of examination papers Mr. Woodbridge received all the questions were sent him and new ones inserted. The new ones were so worded as to constitute a virtual examination of the man. The lady inclosed the paper in a note stating that she considered the plan admirable, but the questions were all wrong. If Mr. Woodbridge considered his examination satisfactory she would be happy to marry him at once. She had a brand new idea of the marriage ceremony. The couple were to be photographed standing beside each other holding hands. She objected to anything being said on the occasion since matrimonial promises, all the world knew, did not mean anything.

Woodbridge burst into a laugh at this form of marriage. He wrote a reply to each one of the young ladies who had sent in papers stating that there had been a reaction toward matrimony in him. He would do a bit of courting with the winner, and if she accepted him the result of the examination would be known by the announcement of his engagement with her.

This set the girls agog till one day it was announced that Alfred Woodbridge was engaged to be married to Miss Kate Goodwin.

Woodbridge gave his friends who had perpetrated the joke upon him a supper as an acknowledgment of his gratitude for being instrumental in his securing so much happiness.

STARS IN THE UNIVERSE.

Enough to Allow One For Every Human Being on Earth.

For years the approximate number of stars visible to the eye, a matter of 1,000 or 4,000, according to the definition of average vision, has been known by most persons, however, and by many scientists, the total number of stars in the heavens has been considered countless, if not limitless. The universe is now declared to be finite, yet of a magnitude of dimensions and of a populousness far beyond all earlier conceptions. This assumption is a result of very recent investigations into the motions and distances of the stars.

The latest studies on the subject of the number as well as the light of the stars have been made at the royal observatory at Greenwich, England. The late Franklin Adams succeeded in making a set of 200 photographs covering the entire sky. After counts were made on these pictures, from which the brightness of the self-luminous bodies between practically the twelfth and seventeenth magnitudes could be inferred, it was concluded that they numbered about 55,000,000 stars.

From this a formula was determined showing the change of number in passing from one magnitude to another. With these figures it was reasoned that the aggregate number of stars is not less than 1,000,000,000,000, probably not more than 2,000,000,000,000, and probably approximately 1,000,000,000,000, the estimated present population of the earth.

In making computations it was inferred that there would be as many stars fainter than magnitude twenty-three or twenty-four as there are brighter. From September 1901, Popular Mechanics Magazine.

KILL LOBSTERS KINDLY.

Put Them in Cold Water and Slowly Bring Them to a Boil.

Holling over a slow fire is the best method of killing lobsters, and the most death a lobster can meet, so has been determined at the Jersey state biological station. The experiments were carried out by Joseph Stuedel, a well known biologist, for the Isle of Jersey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, whose members associated the prevalent method of killing lobsters with medieval torture.

Lobsters, says Mr. Stuedel, are extremely difficult to kill. Piercing the brain does not seem to cause the lobster more than temporary annoyance, and the brain is a mere nerve ganglion the size of a hemp seed. He has to be killed all over. To throw him into boiling water falls to do the work either mercifully or quickly since he struggles violently to escape for about two minutes.

The pleasantest way to end a lobster's troubles, Mr. Stuedel finds, is the old-fashioned way of placing him in cold water and bringing him to a boil. As the water warms he becomes limp and rolls over as for a sleep. By the time the water reaches the comparatively mild temperature of 70 degrees Fahrenheit he becomes comatose. At 80 degrees he is dead. To use a business illustration, the biologist says it is like a person succumbing to a beat wave, with loss of consciousness and a painless end.—London Cor New York Post.

Tips and Tips.

"The Scotch caddie is the best caddie in the world," said a famous player. "Only, like all his race, he's a little bear, a little tight across the chest. Bang goes sixpence, don't you know?"

"A friend of mine spent his vacation golfing on the famous St. Andrews links in Scotland. My friend had a very fine Scotch caddie, a notoriously fine Scotch caddie, and he said to the man the first day on the course: "Dugald, my man, I expect to get some good tips from you during my stay here."

"And I expect," said Dugald dryly, "the like frae you."—Exchange.

Buying a Dog Blanket.

"What's the matter there? Can't you please that lady in a dog blanket?"

"I can please her, all right," answered the clerk, "but she wants the dog to indicate his preference, and he's one of these blase pups that don't seem to care for anything."—Judge.

Musical Comment.

"Yes," said Mr. Cumrox, "we spent a lot of money teaching our boy Percival Claude to play the violin. But it was wasted."

"Doesn't he play?"

"Yes. But if he knew anything about music he'd realize how it sounded and wouldn't."—Washington Star.

Disimilarity.

"Marriage is a lottery," said the ready-made philosopher.

"I shouldn't say that," commented Miss Cayenne. "In a lottery it's a comparatively easy matter to tear up a losing ticket and take another chance."

—Louisville Courier-Journal.

A brave spirit struggling with adversity is a spectacle for the gods.

—Seneca.

CRATER LAKES.

Easter Island Has a Wonderful One, and So Has Java.

Wonderful lakes are often found inside the craters of volcanoes. One of these can be seen upon Easter Island—the island which was wonderful remains of an unknown ancient people. Inside a crater is a lake, near the borders of which the several undulating craters composed of tufa, evidently destined for the huge figures on the shores of the island, but never completed. A pond on this lake does many waterfalls, one of which is said to be a goose unknown to science.

Another curious crater lake existed until recently within the icebound crater of a volcano in New Zealand. The water was noted for boiling point, but a short time ago an eruption of more than ordinary violence tossed the whole lake into the air.

A most interesting crater lake can still be seen in Java in the volcano of Papandjara, and it is possible to enter the crater and gaze down on the scene below. Standing on the rim, one can see the vast seething mass of boiling mud. Every now and then a wave of mud moves heavily along the sides of the chasma, only to fall back into the molten mass, and now and then columns of sulphur thrown out of the lake of mud are gradually forming walls. It is indeed pleasant to escape from this dismal enclosure to breathe the free air once more.

ISOLATED ISLANDS.

Lonely Tristan da Cunha Gets Outside News Once in Two Years.

Though scientific progress has made it possible to do a double journey between England and America in a fortnight, there remains many islands with which it takes years to communicate.

Of the South-Sea coast are the groups of islands known as the Hebrides, Orkneys and Shetlands. Of these the most isolated island is St. Kilda, some three miles long and two miles broad. The inhabitants and lives of great loneliness, for but once a month, to get to the west coast, and the sea often makes any communication with St. Kilda impossible for months.

The group of eight Phoenix Islands in the Pacific has a total population of only 133, while another little bit of the British empire is Fanning Island. This is a landing place for the Pacific submarine cable and usually there are about 100 people on the place.

The loneliness of all parts of British territory in the island of Tristan da Cunha, in the south Atlantic, which is also the smallest inhabited island in the empire. It is 1,800 miles from land, has a population of seventy-four Scotch Americans, and the inhabitants get news of the outer world usually once every two years.—London Star.

Recognized.

A Pennsylvania lawyer known throughout the state for his sharpness once met his mate in a very unexpected quarter.

An old woman was being cross-examined by him as to how the testator had looked when he made a remark to her about some real estate.

"I don't remember. He's been dead three years," she answered testily.

"Do you mean to tell me that your memory is so bad that you cannot go back three years?" demanded the attorney.

The witness was silent.

"Did he look anything like me?" the lawyer finally ventured.

"Some to me he did have the same sort of vacant look," responded the old lady.—New Orleans Playmate.

To Make Business a Science.

The science of selling offers a great field for study for the department of commerce and for the many business schools which are springing up in our colleges. Commerce is not mere money getting. It is a science, as banking and law and medicine are sciences. It should be studied as such, for with such study comes not only greater efficiency, but a higher standard of ethics as well. There is no more pressing public service to be done than the discovery of the best ways of reducing the cost of distribution and of elevating business to the standards of a profession.—World's Work.

Thoughtfulness.

"Lady," said Flooding Peter, "would you mind letting me have some eggs, card or some horse-rabbit?"

"What for? I haven't given you anything to eat."

"No one knows it better'n me. But I'm a member of the S. P. U. A. an' a member no grudge. That dog of yours has jes' bit a piece out o' my leg an' I want to give him some seasoning."—Washington Star.

One Way to Get It.

"I have come to your town to get some atmosphere in my new story."

"Well, if you go right down the street and turn to the right, then keep on to the first engine house on your way, they'll probably lend you their pulmotor."—Hartford American.

Pleasant Outlook.

"Well, dearest, I'll speak to your father tomorrow. You might put him in a good temper for me."

"Yes, I'll be so beastly obstinate that he'll be positively grateful to you for taking one of his hands."—London Opinion.

Did He Best.

"Mary, were you entertaining a man in the kitchen last night?"

"That's for him to say, mum. I was king may best with the materials I could find."—Liverpool Mercury.

WHAT CAME OF A LARK

By OSCAR COX

"If I were to lose my fortune," said Frank Atwood to his friend, Ned Colby, at the Athenaeum club, "do you know what I'd do?"

"What?"

"I'd hire out for a coachman."

"You'd have to make it a chauffeur. There are no coachmen any more."

"There are a few. I have no fancy for a machine, but I love a horse."

"If there were any young women in the family there'd be one of these great marriages that we see so often mentioned in the newspapers, followed by the customary announcement of divorce."

"Oh, no, there wouldn't."

"I'll bet you there would."

"How could we settle such a bet?"

"By putting the matter to practice. Advertise for a position and when you find one with a pretty girl in the family take it. I'll bet you a hundred that within three months you marry the girl."

"That would be interesting, wouldn't it?" said Atwood thoughtfully.

The upshot of this bit of dialogue was that Atwood advertised as suggested and, after answering several invitations to call and present credentials, at last found a place where there was the required pretty girl. His credentials were wanting, but fortunately he was able to imitate the Irish brogue and claimed to have just come over from the green isle, where he had been chief hostler for Sir Charles O'Malley. Since his employer was not versed in literature he did not appreciate the absurdity.

The bet stood \$500 even that within three months Atwood would be at least engaged to Miss Bertha Fossdick, daughter of his employer, \$500 more that he would marry her, and \$500 more that he would run away with her.

It would seem that Colby should have received odds on such a wager, and if he had been a real coachman twenty to one would not have been enough. But Frank Atwood was a very attractive young fellow and had a smile that no girl could resist. Miss Fossdick was but seventeen, and it was predicted that when the next year her introduction to society should take place she would prove a heart smasher.

Why parents will allow their daughters to pass under the influence of their drivers is a mystery. From fifteen to twenty is an irresponsible age for a girl, and in nine cases out of ten where the sexes are thrown together without restraint, especially where they are young, a match will be the result. At any rate, Miss Fossdick, being permitted to go out alone driven by the hand some coachman, at once fell under his influence. Atwood, being full of the Old Irish, told her that he was young or son of an Irish baronet, that the family had been impoverished by the loss of a suit to court and he had been obliged to shift for himself. He had come to America, got stranded and, having always been used to horses, had taken up their handling as a vocation.

Quite likely some of the low born drivers who steal the daughters of their employers tell some such yarn as this. Atwood's conscience did not trouble him because he was an American gentleman with a future, and in his own proper person an excellent match for the young lady. But it served to enlist her sympathies for him, and sympathy is akin to love. She wished to inform her father of what the cabman had told her, but Colby, knowing that such a story going to his employer would result in his being immediately fired, refused permission.

And so the game went on, the hand some coachman driving the pretty Miss Fossdick every pleasant afternoon, and since it was not pleasant for her to have him perched on the box so far above her she soon came to select a cart to ride in, so that he might sit beside her. Occasionally they would meet some of Atwood's friends, who would stare at him, wondering how any two men could so closely resemble each other as the handsome clubman and this liveried coachman. But Frank would keep his eyes on his horses and brayen it out. On one occasion they met Colby driving with a party of friends, and although Ned, according to agreement, did not give the coachman a war, the ordeal was trying.

The outcome of the wager was a compromise. One day Frank Atwood appeared at the club, not in livery and sat down to lunch with his friend Colby.

"Ned," he said, "what was intended for a lark has turned out seriously. I am going to propose for the hand of Miss Bertha Fossdick and I don't wish the girl I love to be the subject of a bet. I propose that we call the wager off."

Atwood never went back to the Fossdicks in livery. He wrote a long letter to Mr. Fossdick in which he told as much of the truth as it would do to tell, gave him references and asked permission to apply to his daughter for her hand.

It required some time for Mr. Fossdick to be convinced that there was not something wrong about the applicant, but after diligent inquiry he became satisfied that Frank Atwood's social position was excellent and his income ample to support Miss Bertha in the style to which she had been accustomed.

Ned Colby was best man at the wedding.

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Please others and you may please yourself.

They can't get a new dance out of the war anyhow.

Though you have money, you cannot buy what is not to sell.

Everything must be seen when the nations can't even float a loan.

When bad news travels it always throws on the high speed lever.

Lots of royal kinsmen in Europe now do not speak to one another.

The European situation is a reminder of that comical frequently quarrel.

Some men are like eagles—they have their wings. They are all going.

What a politician has found it easier to make a record than to explain it.

Belgium is bitterly opposed to being the international cemetery of Europe.

Europe will find the bread box is more vital than the ammunition chest.

The colleges' courses in European history will all have to be changed this fall.

Some people's curiosity is as crooked as the interrogation point that goes with it.

The great decisive victory will be won when General Starvation takes command.

However, war has its compensations. Several poets have been sent to the front.

Anyway, Holland should have no trouble in placing her enemies on the water wagon.

America is at present enjoying a supremacy based on plowshares rather than on swords.

It takes a good deal of care at the present time to save a waste of \$30,000,000 a day at the lung.

A great many actors are said to be stranded abroad. Just as many are that way over here.

No doubt it is worrying the czar a great deal these days to know whether his Poles are negative.

They were so successful in localizing the war in Europe that pretty much every locality gets some of it.

When this war is over there probably will be no complaint for some time that Europe is overpopulated.

To say that the unexpected always happens is partly to confess our ignorance of what ought to be expected.

As war is expensive Canada is probably sending those million bags of flour so that England may have the dough.

These still searching about for a name for the present war shouldn't overlook the name General Sherman gave it.

When it comes to going to extremes you have to hand it to the doctor who says wearing of tight shoes causes baldness.

This is the first time on record that Latin America was as anxious to do business with us as we are to do business with it.

We thought music was the only universal language. But how often the roar of the cannon and the wall of the widow and orphan?

The way merchant ships are already passing through the Panama canal further confirms the conviction that it is filling a long felt want.

Men are discovering in the red light of war that many things which they considered permanent and immutable are nothing of the sort.

A manufacturer is making gloves with coin pockets in the palms. A one armed man is going to have a fine time getting at his change.

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There are to be some more new football rules this year, but even the changes may not make the reason for football clear to some people.

A state of neutrality requires only that every man shall attend to his own affairs and respect the rights of his neighbors to do the same thing.

The government has issued new charts showing the approaches to the Cape Cod canal, and foreign governments can buy them if they will.

Mr. Carnegie spent enough money on peace palaces to be pardoned for expressing some indignation in regard to the way The Hague treated him.