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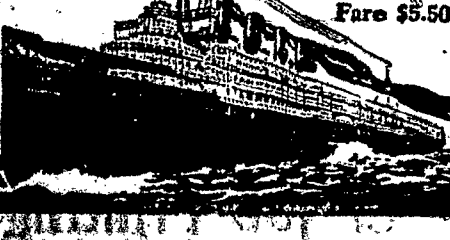
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Girls and Other Girls

By BELLE WITKIN

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"Jack Hartley? Oh, of course, the boys wild! Attractive—yes—of course—all the girls seem to worship him, but—" Mrs. Phillips brought her lips together very firmly—"I try to keep him away from my Jessie!"

Jack passed on the other side of the screen and smiled with a bitter little twist to his mouth. He had returned for Bea's scarf, but the rather shrill voice of Mrs. Phillips had stopped him.

What was the use of anything, anyway? Why did they always "pick on him"? Why must these mothers gossip about him at every opportunity? Jack's reflections were not pleasant.

Since the death of his mother, years ago, everything had gone wrong. He lived with his grandfather at what the old man was pleased to call his home.

The Hartley home was a stately structure of pure colonial style—the most beautiful residence in a town that boasted many wealthy estates. Slight-seeming strangers on inquiry learned that the mansion held many valuable "antiques"—paintings, tapestries, rugs—brought together by a man who knew all that was best in the world of art.

A wonderful old man was David Hartley—so learned, so distinguished—and admirable in his treatment of his irrepressible grandson. No said Mrs. Phillips, and the town docilely agreed.

No one ever gave a thought to the lonely boy who came home for short vacations to the empty house. For empty it was of warmth and cheer and the joy and sparkle of life. Old Mr. Hartley had disapproved of his daughter's marriage and had never tried to like or understand her son. It was enough, he thought, that he gave the boy a home and an education.

Jack couldn't stand the house and on occasions like this, when he took a flying trip from college, it was particularly hard. The other fellows had mothers and sisters and fathers, too. He had never known his father. His only friends in town were the Pages. Harry Page was his roommate and motherly Mrs. Page always made Jack welcome.

Other mothers in the town seemed to spend most of their time criticizing him. The girls, of course, were kind to him. He was good-looking, had all the social graces, his own car and, above all, was a football star on his college eleven. What more could a girl desire?

No Jack had sweethearts by the dozen, but not one girl could he call friend. They were all a good looking, jolly crowd, well provided for, without a care.

In the midst of his reflections Jack remembered with a start that Bea and the crowd were probably still waiting for him. He shrugged his shoulders, picked up the thin face scarf from a chair and went to the waiting crowd.

Jack was up early next morning. He was leaning in the afternoon with Harry Page. He wondered if Harry had an engagement for the morning. Might as well call him up, he decided.

A girl's voice answered him. "No, I'm so sorry, Harry won't be in till ten o'clock."

Jack suddenly sat up very straight. Ye gods of Olympus! Shades of the muses! Oh man alive! What a voice! Honey, peevish and dream Jack sought in vain for words to describe it. He experimented with the strings and finally drew forth a low, vibrant tone that matched the voice he had heard over the wire. There was in it an undertone of wistfulness and longing, a shiver over it all ran trembling laughter.

"Wonder who she is?" thought Jack. "Harry hasn't any sisters; it can't be his cousin—she's but a mere child. Guess I'll drop in and pay my respects to Harry's folks." Ought to, anyway.

In fifteen minutes, with the aid of a perfectly good imagination Jack had almost convinced himself that his sole object in going to the Pages' before he returned to school was to see the family. Sense of duty! Of course! A fellow had to devote some of his time to his roommate's folks. Only decent thing to do.

The afternoon found Jack at the Pages, talking in a dazed manner to Harry's cousin—big-eyed, wistful, little Jeanie Page. How the "mere child" had changed! Eighteen years of course. What a winsome little thing she was, with her tiny face and figure—she towered majestically above her—and her hair—and the color of it as she stood by the open fire! Color of maple syrup molasses. Oh, what an odor he was, to be sure! Her hair was golden flame—chestnut—red gold, that was it!

Yes, she was a winsome little thing, and her voice as she sang for them was exquisite. But it wasn't her beauty or her music that made Jack regret his unavoidable return to duty. It was something in the straight, true look of her wistful eyes, something that promised warm friendship.

Here was a real girl at last. She wouldn't flirt with him. Nor would she expect him always to be the Jack Hartley the other girls liked—the Jack who danced and flirted and frittered away his vacations because there wasn't anything else to do.

She wouldn't laugh at him, she would laugh with him. They would discuss books, music, plays, everything—and they would talk, just talk things out.

They were in the hall, and saying good-by. Jack held a very small hand

and colored, swallowed hard, stammered unaccountably, and finally blurted out, "I—may I—will you—shall I—oh, what I mean is—may I write to you?"

Jeanie, wise little maiden, suppressed a smile, and looked questioningly at her aunt. Mrs. Page was smiling—very much.

"I think so, yes," said Jeanie. "Thank you! Then you—you—I mean, you'll really answer my letters?" "Yes, I surely will," Jeanie was blushing her lip.

Harry was staring in amazement. Was this Jack Hartley, or was he enjoying a very pleasant dream? Then, he decided to rescue his little cousin before her mind was irreparably crushed.

"Come along, Jack," he said "We're late now." Outside the house Harry waited for enlightenment. Now came immediately. They walked along in silence until Jack said dreamily: "A real girl, Harry, and she'll write to me. She said so!"

A smile of comprehension spread over Harry's puzzled countenance, and grew wider every moment as he looked ahead to the days when his most cherished little cousin—lonely little Jeanie—and his dearest friend—lonely big Jack—would find joy and comfort in real friendship.

UP TO HIM TO REMEMBER

Casualty Met Friend Was Creditor of the Other, and Something of a Diplomat.

The two young men met quite by accident in the union station waiting room, says the Kansas City Star.

"Well, if it isn't old Bill Coffey!" one of them exclaimed.

"And Jerry Frum? Well, if you aren't the last man on earth I had expected to see! And how's the world been treating you since you got out of school?"

"Not so good and not so bad" Frum admitted. "It certainly is a long, hard drop from the campus to the cold, cold world. How are your troubles?"

"Might be a lot worse," Coffey told him. "I miss the old gang around school, but I'm sure having a time trying to pry the public loose from a few of its hard-earned dollars."

Then, after a moment's pause, "Remember old man, the last time we stood in this station?"

Frum thought for a moment. "No, I can't say I do," he answered.

"You ought to," Coffey assured him. "I remember it. You had been to a football game and were flat broke. You were wondering how on earth you were ever going to get back to school, when a fellow stepped up and lent you \$30. Remember?"

"Well, I do sort of remember it now," Frum admitted. "It had slipped my mind entirely. But how do you happen to remember so much about it?"

"Happen?" echoed Coffey. "I wouldn't say 'happen'; I was the man who lent you the fifty."

Lenses Riveted in Helmet.

A helmet in which lenses were riveted was presented to Henry VIII, in 1537, and was as far as we know, the first one of its kind made.

For many years it was the custom to fasten the lenses to the hat brim, but, because all head coverings had to be removed in the presence of the king and because the constant wearing of the hat was unsatisfactory for other reasons, this system was not practicable.

The top and sides of the hat or hood were, therefore, cut away, leaving a broad band which riveted the head. Among the nobility this band was often painted or otherwise decorated. It is interesting to note that spectacles in this long gone day were procurable only by the wealthy, as their cost, which in most cases was several hundred dollars, put them far beyond the reach of the average man.—Illustrated World.

Alone.

He carefully locked the door to the room.

Then he looked in every corner and behind every possible hiding place to make sure that no intruder was concealed.

"Are you sure that we four are alone?" he asked.

"Yes," his wife replied.

"No outsiders can possibly enter this room?"

"I think not. You locked the door yourself."

"You are not expecting any visitors? The neighbors have not suggested coming over this evening?"

"No. Besides it is a bad night. I am sure no one will come."

"Good. Then let us start a game of bridge. Perhaps for once in our lives we can play without the advice and counsel of a flock of spectators."

The Irish Notion of Poetry.

The Irish notion of poetry, writes John Eglington in The Dial, is different from that of the poets of other nations.

Detecting the Deceiver

By AGNES JOHNSON

(© 1923, by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

I saw it coming every day, the shameful story of Dan Kraft's cruel deception and his wife's subsequent humiliation.

For several weeks he had been in the habit of going off by himself, no one seemed to know where, and leaving his young wife at home with no other explanation than that old blarney about having an important engagement. There was an element of mystery about the whole affair for, while it was difficult to believe that a man scarcely four months married could be up to the tricks of a veteran husband, I knew for certain that somewhere and somehow he was spending money freely with nothing to show for it, and that Ethel was not happy.

One hears a good deal about petting parties, nowadays—ugly stories of obscure origin were being whispered, for gossipers usually act on the theory that from some things known a few more may reasonably be assumed, if you know what I mean.

Of course, no one said anything to her directly; but every now and then she was forced to listen to significant imputations that made my blood boil. But neither these nor Dan's conduct elicited from Ethel so much as a murmur of protest.

Then the mystery deepened when the rumor that he had cut down her allowance was gradually confirmed by her shabby appearance. As Dan was always well groomed, I could not help commenting on this, but she, trusting and good little wife that she was, excused his extravagance by saying it was necessary for him to dress well in order to maintain the prestige of his office, etc.

One day I ran into her while doing some shopping; she looked pale, and little, tell-tale lines about her eyes startled me that she'd been crying. We chatted for a while, but I offered no sympathy, knowing she would resent it.

She'd lost her fondness for dancing and theaters, she said. But she was a poor actress, for try as she would she could not conceal her distress. Then, in an unguarded moment, she invited me out to see them, and to her obvious dismay I accepted.

That night I returned home determined to investigate, for I was now convinced that something was wrong. I confided in Harry; that's friend husband, who is somewhat older than I, and whom I had expected he would, just soothed and said my fears were unfounded.

"It's the old, old story," I said. "There's another woman somewhere, and the vixen is ruining him."

But it was only an infatuation, Harry insisted, that was bound to be short-lived when pitted against the patience and devotion of a good woman.

"Better lay off," said the stubborn Harry in his customary drawl.

However, I was not to be dissuaded, so the next day I went out of my way to meet Dan, and demanded an explanation, charging him with neglecting his wife and dissipating their income. This bold stroke struck home, for it made him visibly uncomfortable.

"Wall!" said Dan, his eyes narrowing and his jaw firmly set. A defy—or perhaps he was trying to trump him yet, so I maneuvered from another quarter.

"You and Ethel don't go out together much of late," I ventured cautiously.

"No. Fact is—" he stammered. "Last night she seemed rather lonely and—her clothes—" The last thrust made him wince.

"Oh, Eth is all right," he said at last. "She's a dear girl. But I must hustle along now. Sorry; see you some more." And the brute touched his hat and edged away briskly.

I came home all excited, and went to my room. Some twenty minutes later I snatched the evening paper from Harry's hands and stood before him dressed in one of his old suits.

"How do I look?" I asked.

"Awful!"

"I'm going out to do some sleuthing tonight, old dear," I explained, "and when I come back I'll have enough evidence to convince you that Dan is cheating."

After supper I saw Dan go out again (neighbors, you know), and I followed at some distance. The chase led me to the suburbs, where he stopped near a vacant house, and I could see his sleek figure marauding about as if in search of someone.

Presently I saw a well-dressed young woman emerge from some mysterious place and Dan hastened toward her. They greeted each other in undertones and then both entered the house.

Next moment the glare of electric lights revealed them standing in the center of the living room. Not an abandoned shack, as I had supposed, but a new dwelling, the interior of which was well furnished and abounding in good taste. Crouched and walking slowly, I followed up the porch steps and stood between two windows, from which place I could see and hear what was going on inside.

"I'm glad I followed your advice, Miss Atkins," I heard Dan say, "especially with regard to the furniture and pictures. You see, I needed a woman's point of view."

"You have been very kind, for I don't know what I should have done without your valuable suggestions."

"I was glad to be of assistance, Mr. Kraft," replied his confidant. "I envy your wife when she comes to visit possession. I'm sure she'll be delightfully surprised."

The two conspirators were viewing their work with evident satisfaction. They began to move about. I felt an odd sensation coming over me.

"Well, that's that!" beamed Dan. "Remember, you're to be our guest of honor at our first party here. Another week and the upper part of the house will be finished, then all will be ready for the best little wife in the world."

I shall never forget the conviction his voice carried, nor the way Miss Atkins contemplated the cozy new home. It was clear both were proud of their successful scheme.

"By the way, Miss Atkins," exclaimed Dan, "do you think Ethel will forgive me?"

But I didn't wait for her reply, for I'd seen and heard enough, and was glad for the chance to tip-toe away unobserved.

BRIEF LECTURE ON MANNERS

Eastern Writer Seemingly Does Not Approve of Those of the Present Generation.

Every day we lose some of the old charms and graces that rendered life interesting to our forefathers. We have lost the delightful art of letter writing, we are losing the art of dancing, of hygienic and so exhilarating, and we have lost the art of bowing. What can be more inelegant than the present fashion of nodding abruptly and familiarly to the audience adopted by the actors and artists of the period, or the little bows, like that of a charity child, which do duty for courtesies with women? The art of bowing was formerly the prerogative of royalty and of all that was well-bred and cultivated.

We read of George IV, whose manners, for not his morals, were perfection, that there never was such a bow as his. "It concentrated in itself all the graces, all the elegance, all the easy pliability which can be seen elsewhere in the United Kingdom."

The natural base of the Spaniard or the Italian is such that their bow seems a compliment and a cordial expression of deference, while at the same time they preserve their own independence and self-respect. Bows may be put to other uses also. A popular hotel proprietor once described the secret of his success and well-earned fortune as having been attained by "bowing low and charging high." The artful toad of the hat in lifting it to a lady, of which for some beaux were so proud, is almost forgotten, and the slight nowadays of a man coming into a public sitting room, where ladies are present, with his hat on, has ceased to be unusual. Bow and courtesies are nothing in themselves, but they mark a respect for others and an amiable desire to please which are the foundation of much that is beautiful and desirable in character.—Rochester Democrat and Chronicle.

Remarkable Grove.

A member of the forestry service states that near Champaign, Ill., there exists an isolated oak grove, about three miles long by one mile broad, and that this is indeed a peculiar phenomenon. It is known as the Oak Grove and is surrounded on all sides by open prairie, being situated at a considerable distance from the nearest stream, whereas all the other forest tracts in central Illinois lie along the larger water courses.

It is believed from the character of the trees in the grove that it "migrated" into its position from the northeast. It lies on a large glacial moraine, formerly, it is believed, covered with similar trees, and has been protected from forest fires, which have destroyed the remainder of the wooded area, by the water standing in the low grounds scattered throughout the grove.—Washington Star.

Has Unique Distinction.

Henry Begole, a one-time member of the Illinois legislature, has a unique story. The late King Edward, when the prince of Wales, toured the United States. The train on which he rode through the prairie section of Illinois broke down and passengers went to a farmhouse for refreshments. The home visited was that of the parents of Henry Begole, who at that time was a baby.

The crowd being large, the supply of chairs ran out and people found seats as best they could. The prince of Wales sat on the bed and on the baby, who set up a wail.

In later years, when Edward was king, Mr. Begole, then a grown man and active in politics, used to boast that he was the only man in America ever sat upon by a real, live king.—New York Herald.

Francolin, a Relative of Partridge.

The francolin is a game bird related to the partridge. There are 40 or more species, most of which are found in Africa. The coloration of all species is rich and varied, and the plumage of both sexes is practically alike. Francolins travel in family parties, rather than in coveys, and fly swiftly and heavily. They feed in the morning and at evening, at which time they utter loud and shrill cries. Their food consists of insects, berries, seeds and bulbs. Their nests are well concealed and resemble those of partridges. Six to fourteen eggs are laid in the fall and spring. The eggs are brown and buff in color, with small, dark spots. The francolin once abounded in southern Europe, but is now extinct there.