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THE BOHEMIAN
 By JANE GORDON
 (© 1921, Western Newspaper Union.)

"ALL my life," said Sidney, "I have wanted to do something delightfully out of the ordinary. At home in Smethburg things are so humdrum. When you invited me here to visit you, Uncle Nolley, I was thrilled. Artists are all bohemians, are they not?"

Noel Strange, illustrator, smiled whimsically. "My wife gives this disorder another name when she comes over to straighten up my work place. And if you expect a respectable married man like myself to be bohemian of taste, Sidney, you are to suffer disappointment. I had enough of bizarre cafes during my bachelorhood. However, if you must have a peep into the unusual, I'll take you over to the 'Yellow Gate' for luncheon."

"That will be lovely!" the young woman from Smethburg cried. "I was reading such a romantic story the other day; nothing truly romantic happens in our town. You meet a young man in the conventional way, and by and by you settle down in a regulation white house to wash his dishes for him ever after."

"Now, this story, Uncle Nolley: Two whomet accidentally at a bohemian party, where famous people were assembled—and without any unnecessary introduction—had the loveliest mysterious romance. You see, they didn't know a thing about each other; at the party everyone called her Nance, while he was merely Jack. And they did not learn each other's proper name until the night before their wedding. Then she discovered that he was a great writer, while she was a noted singer."

"If nothing will satisfy the longing for bohemia—but bohemia, we will have to give you your desire. Stop in at the studio after your shopping trip with your aunt and I'll take you over to the 'Yellow Gate.'"

Noel Strange was proud of his young relative as he presented her to a pretty young "scribbler," to whom the really good food of the "Yellow Gate" appealed.

"You will look after my niece, I'm sure, Miss Sella," he requested, "and I'll hurry back to work."

When the independent young scribbler—his name happened to be Noel—decided to hasten back to her office, Sidney decided to linger at the small yellow table and await—adventure. Her bright, eager, glancing eyes brought it promptly.

"A tall young man, who had been nodding the pretty stranger from the opposite table, arose and came with no pretense, other than his wish to meet her, directly to Sidney's side."

"How do you do, Miss Bluebell Eyes?" he remarked as he bent close to smile at her.

And, was not this the adventure she was looking for?

So, presently, with an assumption of coyness, she replied: "Oh, how do you do?—or, rather, what is it that you do?—write or paint, or sing."

"Paint," answered the young man. Think you could be persuaded to pose for me some time. My springtime girl requires just such blue eyes as yours. Sidney caught her breath. "I'd love to!" she exclaimed.

"All right." The artist's tone was matter of fact.

"Now, to seal the bargain and become acquainted, may I take you to a matinee?"

A little thrill crept down Sidney's back—the daughter of Smethburg's minister—at the theater with an unknown man! But was not this the mystery she courted?

"I will go," she agreed, faintly.

"Have a good time with Miss Sella at the 'Yellow Gate'?" Uncle Noel questioned upon her return. Sidney blushed. "A wonderful time," she said, which was true, in part. Don Grenville, artist, was like no man whom Sidney had known outside the pages of glorified romance. And she had promised another meeting at the "Yellow Gate" the following afternoon, which was but the beginning of meetings occurring regularly thereafter. Long ago she had recognized that love had come to her; also long ago—oh, a whole week ago—the young man had confessed gravely, and earnestly, and wildly, his love for her. And with this miraculous granting of her wish, Sidney Smith was disturbed and troubled. To have wished to laugh with bohemia was one thing; to find your future husband a member of that gay, changing throng, was another. Now, in her serious love, Sidney longed that he might be even of the order of home-town young men. So, at last, she was forced to admit this reason of her gloom.

To her astonishment, Don Grenville's answer was to clasp her in his arms. "Why, Sidney," he murmured, "my true little Sidney whom I have found at last, I'm the most domestic, home-loving man in the world. This theatrical playing bohemian stuff was all a fake. I was busy behind the curtain in your uncle's studio the day you voiced your wish for mysterious romance. And later he and I framed up my meeting with you at the 'Yellow Gate.' If you were out for that sort of thing, we agreed I'd better be there to see that you found the right kind of mystery. I'm studying with your uncle. And I guess we've found the right kind of romance—my Sidney."

The Eternal Feminine.
 Fond Father—I think the baby is going to be just like her mother.
 Friend—In what way especially?
 Fond Father—When she sees a dollar in my hands she goes and gurgles until she gets it.

LOWER ANIMALS AT BIRTH
 Seem to the Observer to Be Strange Little Objects—Baby Giraffe Not Long Helpless.

Recently one of the tortoises at a large city zoo laid 42 eggs and hatched out the first tortoise to be born in the "Zoo." At birth he was two inches long and weighed a little over an ounce. His mother was fifty years old when he was hatched out.

Young animals are always very strange little things when first seen. The porcupine is born with its spines, but they are quite soft and pliable. They soon harden when exposed to the air. The puma is born spotted, and has rings on his tail. At six months old his coat becomes tawny in color and his tail loses all its rings.

The tapir is born with curious markings of spots and streaks on his coat. But when he is four months old these all disappear.

Some of the young animals have a pretty good time. The woolly opossum of South America gives her youngsters any amount of joy rides, and she will climb trees quite nimbly with as many as twelve of her children clinging tenaciously to her. The young black-necked swan from the same country often gets a ride in his mother's mouth.

The giraffe is one of the nimblest animals, even when very tiny. He displays any carrying on his mother's part, and when he is only three days old will trot gaily along by his mother's side.

BEARDS ONCE HIGHLY PRIZED
 To Be Without One Was Considered Sign of Effeminacy in Civilization's Early Stages.

Back in the early stages of civilization the clean shaven man of today, instead of giving the impression of power and strength, would have been looked upon as a very effeminate person, an outcast in worth-while society.

All nations in their early development cherished the beard as something almost sacred, a sign of strength and manhood. To lose the beard through an accident or as punishment was as degrading a thing as could befall a man. Tradition has connected wisdom with a long beard; artists have embodied it in their pictures. Most of the Biblical characters, even the first person of the Trinity, is given a beard by old painters and carvers.

The oath of the beard is as old as history. It is found in the first English political bargain when Sir Simon De Montfort swears "by the hair on his chin."

Large Supply Needed.
 Eph Brown was a true believer and fond of any religious ceremony. When "de sution" caught him, he became a sort of unofficial chaplain in a colored labor battalion. He worked as ardently among his fellows, and finally persuaded a dozen or so to join him in an open-air baptizing on a day in January.

That it was necessary to chop a hole in the river ice to provide a space for immersion rather cooled the ardor of the converts, but not so Eph's. Seizing the nearest soldier, he plunged him beneath the icy water. He had not reckoned the swift current, however, and the luckless victim was snatched out of his hands and carried permanently out of sight.

Eph was not in the least disconcerted.

"De Lawd giveveth," he intoned, "an' de Lawd takev away. Bring me an othah privit."—American Legion Weekly.

Plant a Tree.
 Every year we cut in the United States wood enough to measure 26,000,000,000 cubic feet of lumber. Each year we cut over 10,000,000 acres of land at that rate the last of our merchantable lumber will have been exhausted in between 30 and 40 years. Even now we are approaching the forest bankruptcy. We all know the disasters that follow in the path of such a state of affairs. Trees do not mature in a day. The fact that a timber crop is so long in getting here discourages many from doing their share in the work of reforestation. If the land owner will look but a short distance ahead, he will learn that in planting trees he can turn much waste land into a source of profit and at the same time he will be performing a duty to this country and the human race.—Exchange.

First American-Made Steel.
 The first steel produced in the United States, according to the geological survey, Department of the Interior was probably made in Connecticut in 1728, by Samuel Higley and Joseph Dewey. Crucible steel was first successfully produced in the United States in 1832 at the works of William and John H. Carrard at Cincinnati. Bessemer steel was first made in this country in September, 1864, by William F. Durfee, at an experimental plant at Wyandotte, Mich., and open-hearth steel in 1864 by the New Jersey Steel and Iron company, at Trenton.

Knew What Was Coming.
 The spendthrift son was leading hopefully up to his usual request.
 "Yes, you know, father," he observed, "I'm getting along jolly well lately. Why, I was even introduced to Jorjington the other day. He's the leading man in the whole of our business. I—"

"And have you paid him back yet?" inquired his impossible parent.—Stray Stories.

THE ORACLE
 By CLARA L. ALLEN
 (© by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

If you were inclined to be credulous and dropped into Pitt's general store some evening when the self-constituted oracle of Hardport was holding forth upon his favorite topic, you would wonder if all worthy citizens—save one—were reposing in the village cemetery on the pine-dotted plain across the bridge spanning Echo river.

Jotham Peabody's discourse, broken only when Eph Pitt placed his brown-stained gray beard in dangerous proximity to smelly kerosene lamps and extinguished them with loud puffs of an odoriferous breath, would have invited certain conclusions.

It was useless to dispute with Jotham. Several had tried to do so and had retired to side-lines of boxes and broken chairs to sit in silence and listen rebelliously to the overbearing orator.

For Jotham was wealthy and aided distressed fellow-citizens—when security was good—at unobtrusive rates of interest. Some of the discreet were influenced by notes bearing their names, and others feared their time might come. For Jotham was accommodating—If collateral was ample and rate of interest satisfactory to him.

In all Hardport there was but one who dared contradict the doctrine expounded by Jotham, and even he admitted the task to be hopeless, after a prolonged series of heated debates.

This subdued champion was Solon Amazeen. He was a thin, mild-mannered person, lacking nothing in courage, but was modest spoken in circumstances; hence a prospective victim for his enemy, who was big and paunchy, loud-mouthed and overbearing. In fact, each was the physical, mental and moral antithesis of the other. Their only qualities in common were that both were widowers and nearing the threescore mark.

But if Solon was subdued he was not wholly silenced. While his antagonist could smother him with a verbal broadside, he possessed a reserve battery with which he threw an occasional missile of caustic wit that caused Jotham to squint in impotent rage. As a handkerchief maddens the baited bull, so Jotham was angered by the snickers that followed each successful salvo.

Anticipated revenge was sweet to Jotham; but realization would be far better. He could squelch Solon with oral broadsides, but his armor of pride had been dented and battered by the sarcastic sharpshooter.

For a long time he had awaited a chance to humble his enemy and hold him up to ridicule, but not until Fate came to his aid by placing in his hand a sample copy of the Matrimonial Gazette, old man and opportunity meet.

Among Jotham's fixed ideas was the belief that Solon was not averse to a second voyage on the matrimonial sea, and the conviction that all women, like the vast majority of men, were designing creatures with ulterior motives, usually selfish. With his superior mentality this occasioned him no alarm. He could guard against the wiles of both sexes, but the inferior and susceptible Solon might easily fall into the snare of the fowler.

With this in mind he wrote a letter picturing Solon in roseate hues, adding a vivid but remarkably truthful inventory of what he could offer a blushing bride. With scrawled signature and a picture surreptitiously obtained, the message was sent in answer to one he selected from the Gazette.

A period of watchful waiting ensued. Guarded inquiries elicited the information from Pitt that an answer had been received. Nothing happened for a fortnight, however, that Jotham could see.

Then Solon, arrayed in "Sunday best," took the train to Tamwood. He came back that evening and was at the store, serene and sarcastic as ever.

Another period of suspense, another two weeks, and Solon was off again to Tamwood. This time Jotham felt a vague premonition that something was wrong with his scheme. He was sure of it when Solon returned a few days later with a buxom woman whom he proudly introduced as his wife.

But the greatest contradiction to Jotham's theory and his greatest shock came when he learned Solon's wife was really well-to-do.

Things hadn't turned out as he had hoped. Raging inwardly and smiling outwardly, he made his way to the cottage to pay his respects to the happy couple when they held their "reception" the following week.

Solon's welcome was cordial enough and his wife was smiling and happy. All was as it should be, but again Jotham experienced the vague foreboding. He didn't understand why, just then, but it was remarkably clear a little later.

Solon stood up to thank the people for their good wishes. He fixed his eyes on Jotham.

"Thank ye all," he said. "Mary an' I are glad to see ye all an' we're specially glad to see the feller that fixed things up so's we met. I ain't goin' to tell 'bout it, 'cause he's dyin' for a chance. Brother Peabody!"

There was a commotion in the hall. For once Jotham had no words. He seized his hat and fled.

Good Rule for Life's Conduct.
 Life is short and we never have too much time for gladdening the hearts of those who are traveling the journey with us. Oh, be swift to love, make haste to be kind.—Amiel.

FIRST BLUE-STOCKING CLUB
 Association Said to Have Originated in Venice, Though It is Credited to England.

The expression "Blue Stocking" is applied, sometimes a trifle scornfully, to a woman who is unusually learned. The term originated in Venice when in 1400 a society was formed of ladies and gentlemen calling themselves "della calza"—all the members of the society being distinguished by the wearing of blue stockings. The idea was taken up in Paris and became the rage among the lady savants of that city. From France it came to England in 1780 when Mrs. Montague displayed the badge of the Basbleu club at her assemblies. Mr. Stillingfleet, a constant attendant of the soirees, went by the name of Blue-Stockings. Boswell in his life of Dr. Samuel Johnson tells something of the first of the blue stockings in England, and although he writes as if the club had originated in England instead of Venice, his account is interesting. He says: "One of the most eminent members of those societies, when they first commenced was Mr. Stillingfleet, whose dress was remarkably grave and in particular it was observed that he wore blue stockings. Such was the excellence of his conversation that his absence was felt as so great a loss that it used to be said: 'We can do nothing without the 'blue stockings,' and thus by degrees the title was established.' Boswell concludes by saying that "Doctor Johnson was prevailed with to come sometimes into these circles, and did not think himself too grave even for the lively Miss Merton (a prominent member of the society)."

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