

THE ART OF COURTSHIP.

How to Change a Girl's Negative into an Affirmative Answer.

So ye ask her, did ye, Cyrus? An' she answered with a "No?" An' ye think the world a sandy desert wilderness of woe?

An' the wind is full uv groanin' an' the air is full uv piteen. An' there ain't no blessed star uv hope peeps over yer horizon?

An' the purty smellin' roses look like tossils on a hearse. An' the joys uv this probation you are findin' very scarce.

An' the birds sing funeral diriges to the ears uv Cyrus Baker. An' the universe is lyin' ready for the undertaker.

Cyrus Baker, yer a flat, sir, an' you couldn't well be flatter. The way to get the girl ye love is jes' by keepin' it all up.

All the purty dears are cur'us; this is jes' the way I view it. That the girls would like to love yer, but you've got to make 'em do it.

Don't hang round a lookin' lonesome as an icicle in June. An' go-a-janglin' through the wort, a fiddle out uv tune.

Jes' call an' see her now an' then, but don't get sentimental. Jes' drop in once in twice a month, as if 'twas accidental.

But don't do reg'lar courtin', an' don't hang round an' wait for her. An' don't say any words uv lov, however much yer want ter.

An' ten to one she'll sweeten up, for Nancy can't stay sour. An' nex' time she'll say "Yes" so quick that you'll be overpowered.

An' then the universe'll be brim full uv song an' praise. The sky will be a flower patch stuck full uv star bouquets.

The wind'll be a fiddler playin' tunes upon the grass. An' he'll play his jolliest music w'ea you an' Nancy pass.

MORE THAN HIS MATCH.

One morning, the customers who came to Beckett's mill with their 'turns' were a little surprised to find the mill door closed and written notice posted thereon, which read:

"Mill closed on account of wife dyin'. Have to go to burryin' over to Coon Run Meetin' House. Will be back in two hours. SAM BECKETT."

Two or three customers, who had come from the extreme end of 'Possum Ridge, concluded to wait for Beckett's return rather than to make the trip again; and so, tying their horses, they sat down on a log and fell into a friendly chat.

"I'll tell you what, fellers, Rial Harder said, after the weather and the crops had been discussed, 'the takin' off of old Sam's woman is pretty doggoned suddint, ain't it?"

"Yes, it air, Rial, for a fact," Dan Hawkins replied. "Reckon there warn't nobody spectin' it."

"No; and I guess old Sam hadn't figured on it any hisself."

"Wonder if it'll git Sam down much?" "Reckon not bad. You see, when a feller's buried four wives, he naterally gits sort o' used to it, and the takin' off of the fifth ain't likely to go so hard with him as it would if she was the first. It's all in bein' used to things."

"Yes, that's so, Rial. And if a feller ever gits used to wives a-dyin', I guess Sam ought to be. There ain't many men as kin boast o' burryin' five of 'em hand-runners."

"No, there ain't many, Dan, that's so. Wonder who Sam'll marry next time?"

"Lor, I hain't no ide. Nobody ever thought of him marryin' any of them women he has married. Seems like he has a mighty takin' way with the women folks, o'neh-w, and it does 'pear like women do the most unaccountable things. Now there wasn't anybody as ever thought of Tilly Smith a-marryin' old Sam, was ther?"

"I guess not."

"But she married him, though."

"Yes, that's so, she did."

among its numerous log-cabin neighbors.

Some time previous to the death of Beckett's fifth wife, old Jerry Higgins had died, and having a daughter to leave to the tender mercies of the world, bequeathed her to old Sam's fatherly care.

Betty Higgins was just 'rising onto' eighteen, and was as pretty a girl as ever graced 'Possum Ridge society, and for that matter she would have been no mean ornament in more aristocratic circles.

For years she had constituted Jerry Higgins' family, and he being a man well-to-do financially, and justly proud of his daughter, he devoted considerable means to giving her an education, and had even gone so far—against the protest of his neighbors, of course—as to send her away to attend school in the city.

Old Sam was a rude, gruff fellow, who had seen the suns of fifty summers, but who was perfectly preserved physically, and in good trim for taking a sixth wife at any time.

The week at the mill had run behind a little during Tilly Beckett's short illness, and for two or three days after the funeral old Sam was kept quite busy grinding the accumulated 'grists.'

In the meantime Mose Hackett, the 'preacher feller,' had spent a good deal of his spare time in the neighborhood of Beckett's mill. In fact, he and Betty spent a great many hours in quiet strolls along the shady lanes of 'Possum Ridge, or in peaceful ramblings along the banks of the beautiful Coon Run River.

In one of these long walks they happened to pass by the mill. Beckett was at the time leaning through the little window looking listlessly down the road that ran off through the woods, and all at once his gaze fell upon the advancing couple.

In a moment a dark frown came over his face, and his brows contracted with vexation. He watched them until they had passed on and out of sight, and then, with a dissatisfied shrug of his broad shoulders, he turned away muttering:

"Twon't do—twon't nigh do! That thar feller's gittin' too numerous in these parts, an' the first thing I know that gal will be fer marryin' him. I promised old Jerry I'd keer fer 'er, an' I'll do it. 'Tain't fer her good to marry sech upstart as him, an' she shan't do it."

Since the death of Beckett's wife, Betty had gone to live at Dan Bunker's, and accordingly, as soon as the grist had all been ground out, Beckett closed the old mill, and dressing himself in his best suit, walked over to Bunker's house.

Pretty soon after his arrival, Dan and his wife managed to retire, leaving Beckett and Betty alone together in the best room.

"Ruth, Dan said, when they were outside 'yer know what Beckett's come fer?"

"No, I don't, Ruth replied. "Wal, I do."

"Then what is it?"

"Why, he's come a sparkin' uv Bet. 'The land sake, Dan! do you reckon so?"

"I know it. Ain't he got on a 'biled shirt an' his go-to-meetin' blue-jane coat? An' what else would he have them on if he wasn't figuring on axin' Bet to have him?"

"Dan Bunker, do you know what I think of old Beckett?"

"No, I don't, Ruth; but, for that matter, I 'low it's not so much what you think of him, as what Bet thinks of him, that's of interest to old Beckett."

"Well, I think he's an old varmint; and, for that matter, I 'low that Bet won't think much different when she finds out his business. The idea of the old thing marryin' a pretty young gal like her—and that, too, when his other wife ain't been dead a week!"

"As soon as Dan and Mrs. Bunker were well out of the room, old Sam turned to Bet and remarked:

"I see you walkin' about a good bit o' late with that preacher feller, an' I don't approve of it. I hope you don't mean nothin'—like business."

"I don't know that I understand your meaning, Mr. Beckett, the girl replied, 'but I must say that I am at a loss to know what objection you can have to Mr. Hackett."

"Wal, I've this much objection to him or anybody else; I don't want you to marry anybody but me. I'm your guardian, an' I know who'll make you a good husband, and I ain't willin' to trust you with them thar young upstarts. I've made up my mind to marry you, Bet. I done that the day Tilly was buried, an' now I've come to ax you to jine me."

"Marry you! the girl exclaimed, in amazed wonder. "Why, I never thought of such a thing!"

"Don't need to be thought of. All you want to do is to say the word, an' I'll git Dan to go an' fetch Squire Beeson, an' we'll have it over in less'n an hour. Don't need no thinkin', Bet. You know me an' I know you, an' you know how much money an' land I've got, an' you know what sort of home I kin offer you. Ain't that enough?"

"No, it's not enough. You are a fool if you think I could be induced to marry an old man like you, simply because you have a little money; and that, too, when your poor wife is hardly cold in the grave. I won't listen to you, and either you or I will leave the room!"

"Do you mean what you say, Bet?"

"Yes, I mean what I say—every word of it. I'd die before I'd marry you!"

Yes, going to marry him." Old Sam took two or three turns across the room, then halting in front of the girl, his face livid with rage and his form shaking with anger, he bent forward until his hot breath scorched her cheeks, and hissed:

"You shan't do it. You're mine, and I'm goin' to have you, and before you shall marry that fellow I'll—"

He never finished the sentence, but the look in his eyes and the awfulness of his manner made his meaning plain to her, and she shrank back from him.

"You will not," she cried. "You dare not."

"Won't I. You'll see. And, girl, his blood will be on your head, for you drive me to it. I've had five wives, and I loved them as well as man usually love their wives, but I never loved anybody as I love you."

"Go! I've heard enough!" and with that the girl swept from the room.

For a moment Beckett stood still, looking after her, then, whirling on his heel, he strode out and away.

As he walked along the road leading toward the mill, his mind dwelt on the scene he had just quitted, and, with each succeeding minute, his rage grew fiercer and his anger higher, and his face looked strangely white in the soft moonlight. Once he clenched his fists and muttered:

"It shan't be so. I'll kill him first. It's her money that bought that land, and her money that built the house, and though nobody knows it, it'll be found out if she marries him, and then I'll be fixed in a nice pickle. No, it musn't and it shan't be. She must be my wife."

He had walked quite a distance and come to the point where the road followed along the river bank. It was a narrow pass between the river and the bluff, and only a foot-path, or night out as the people called it, where foot travelers turned off from the main road and saved some distance by going through.

Beckett had passed several yards along the bank when he heard the sound of foot-steps approaching from the other way, and looking up, what was his surprise and indignation to find himself face to face with the preacher feller.

Both stopped short, and for some time neither spoke. Beckett's rage was too great to permit of his uttering a word, while the other was too much shocked by old Sam's looks and actions to find any words to speak.

"What's the matter, Mr. Beckett?" the minister finally said.

"Matter enough," Beckett replied, in a trembling voice. "I love nothing serious has gone wrong with you."

"You're a liar, Beckett screamed. "You don't hope any such thing and you know you don't. If you did you wouldn't do it."

"Do what, my friend? I do not understand your meaning."

"No, I reckon you don't understand it, who you're talkin' to."

"Bottom of what?"

"Bottom of this trouble. Oh, you're a good one, and you've worked it mighty fine, but you shan't never marry her."

A light began to dawn on Hackett, and he thought he was getting an insight into the old man's meaning.

"Now look here, Mr. Beckett," he said, very calmly, "I know you are Miss Higgins' guardian, and I proposed to respect your rights by informing you of our intentions. I say you can't marry the gal. You can't have her."

"What's your objection?"

"I'm goin' to marry her myself."

The reply struck Mose Hackett as so preposterous and ridiculous that he could not avoid laughing.

In an instant Beckett's face grew red with anger, and taking a step forward, he said:

"You laugh at me, do you, you little gutsnipe of creation? You think you'll get her anyhow, but I'll see to it that you don't."

And before the minister realized his meaning, Beckett had his strong arms about him and was doing his utmost to throw him over into the river.

Beckett was a hardy man and unusually strong, and he experienced no difficulty in lifting his little antagonist up and churning him about. But to throw him into the river was a much more difficult task, since the little man clung to him like a leech, and refused to be shaken loose.

coming, and they feared Beckett would meet him and use violence, and came to his rescue.

"Now repeat your promise in the presence of these two," the minister commanded, and Beckett reluctantly complied.

"I'll tell you what, the minister continued, it will be a good idea to complete this business while we're at it. So if Dan will go and fetch Squire Beeson, we'll have the marriage performed, and the papers signed over while Mr. Beckett is in the notion."

Dan went for the squire, who lived less than a half mile away, and in a short time the marriage ceremony was gone through. Beckett then signed over the girl's property and departed for home, a sadder and a madder man.

The next day he went down and married the Widow Mages, and from that day he and his old mill have jogged along, doing moderately well.

But Beckett has never liked a preacher since that night.

Wasteful Economy in the Kitchen.

"Many a young wife," said a motherly woman the other day, "would find the wheels of her household not in the best possible order if she would spend little less money on the furnishing of her drawing-room and devote it, instead, to supplying her kitchen with labor-saving appliances and plenty of utensils. Economy in kitchen utensils may easily be pushed too far, and if there is another place where a woman may be more exacting than in another for extravagance it is just there."

"To have to stop in the middle of making a dessert in order to clean a saucepan or a kettle in which the soup has been prepared, because you have not another, is folly when soup kettles can be had for twenty-five cents each."

To have your kitchen knives of such poor metal that they will not stay sharp, or to let a good knife remain dull because you think you cannot afford to have it sharpened, is a real waste out of all proportion to the saving. To have nothing by which you can measure your ingredients accurately, because it costs more to buy a set of weights or a graduated measure than to trust to guess-work and an old tea cup, has spoiled many a good dish that cost as much and has brought humiliation on many a good cook. To scrape your porridge pot with a spoon because you will not buy a patent pot-scraper, for twelve cents, wears out ten spoons, to one pot scraper, and the hired girl invariably selects the exact opposite in actual cash. But in comfort to one's self and to one's husband and children, and saving of time, temper, brain-worry and back-ache, they repay their own cost many times over every week."

There is hardly anything in the kitchen of which there are not two varieties, the cheap and the dear, and the result of the use of either is generally exact opposite in actual cash. But in comfort to one's self and to one's husband and children, and saving of time, temper, brain-worry and back-ache, they repay their own cost many times over every week."

He Wanted to "Remain."

A typical Missourian from the back counties appeared at the Tremont House recently and asked for a room. He said his name was John Wakely. About 5 o'clock he approached the clerk's desk and said:

"I'll remain, 'cause I'm kinder tired."

"Pleased to have you, sir," rattled the clerk. "What's your name? Wakely. Oh, yes, give you No. 561 front room, with bath, southern exposure. You can get dinner at 6."

The fellow stood like a bronze for a few moments, and then took a chair opposite the counter. At 6 o'clock another clerk came on watch, and Wakely went to him, saying:

"My name's Wakely. Guess I'll remain."

"Thank you, Mr. Wakely. Let's see, 561; best room on that floor, if not in the house. Just make yourself at home here."

The man seemed dumfounded at something, and he returned to his chair, directly opposite the register. When the night-clerk appeared at 11 o'clock the Missourian almost ran to the counter.

"I'm glad they got a new boy," he said. "I'm what they call 561, and I want to remain. Do you understand?"

"Certainly, Mr. Wakely. I am going to eat my luncheon now, but if I can do anything for you after that, don't hesitate to call me. Be pleased to serve you, sir."

The strange guest, after glaring at the clerk, returned to his chair, where he did not move until 2 A. M. Then he was disturbed by a couple of late boisterous traveling men.

"We've had enough fun," spoke one of the drummers. "We might as well retire, and—"

Here the man from Missouri jumped two feet in the air, yelling to the clerk: "Retire. That's the darned word I've been trying to say since yesterday noon. I guess I'll retire."

Indiana's much married woman" has just been wedded at Shelbyville, Ind., to her ninth husband. Her first appearance as a blushing bride was in 1867, and she has been reappearing in the same role, at intervals of from two to four years ever since. She has been no respecter of persons in her eager quest for a satisfactory life partner. The high and low, rich and poor, farmer and townsman, have all been tried and found wanting, but she has shown no sign of letting up in her pursuit of an ideal husband. Six of her ex-husbands are still living.

"The sphere of woman is certainly extending," said Mrs. Lushington to her husband. "Every once in a while some woman goes out to the lecture field."

"Yes," said her husband wearily, "every married man knows that."—Washington Post.

"That Settles It."

How a Hotel Clerk Took Fanny Davenport's Refusal.

The other night as the curtain went up on the second scene of "Hamlet," a gentleman in evening dress, whose fierce mustache and goatee suggested fire-eating proclivities, marched down the right aisle of the opera house parquette to a front seat, sat down, and then with a very fierce expression upon his face, strode up the aisle again into the foyer and out of the theater. A gentleman who saw this singular performance said to me: "That reminds me of an incident which took place in this very theater about a dozen years ago. It was while Fanny Davenport was playing an engagement here. A young man, who was a clerk at the Union Depot hotel, after a rather lively priming with the boys, went to the opera house. He was a good looking young fellow with a black mustache, and the figure he cut that night was given color by his new light overcoat and high silk hat. By the time he reached the theater it was pretty full; so was he. But he bought a ticket for a parquette seat right down front, and with tolerable steady steps he made his way to it. It was in the middle of a scene. What the play was I don't remember. As he reached his seat and was divesting himself of his load overcoat, Fanny Davenport came down the stage to the footlights and said to the villain, who was courting her, but with her eyes to the audience: 'I can never love thee!' She said it with great emphasis, and the handsome hotel clerk arose from his seat, took up his hat and overcoat, and saying in a loud voice, 'Well, that settles it,' retraced his steps up the aisle, while the audience burst into a roar of laughter and applause."

There is a spacious passage on the ground floor extending through the building from east to west, from which a massive staircase leads to the second story. On the lower floor are six rooms. These and the passages are all wainscoted and have large cornices giving an appearance of great solidity to the whole. On the south side of the passage are the parlor, breakfast-room and library, and a narrow staircase leading to a private study on the second floor, and two several chambers. On the north side of the passage are a reception room, a parlor, and a large drawing-room. When there was much company the latter was sometimes used as a dining-room.

On each side of the mansion and about forty feet from it are substantial buildings, one erected for a kitchen and the other for store-house and laundry. They are connected with the mansion by gracefully curved colonnades which are paved and roofed. There were also two other buildings used for house-servants quarters. The flag stones for the large and smaller colonnades were imported from Ostend, and a house joiner and a brick-layer were procured from England to do the work. The enlarged mansion at Mount Vernon was completed in 1785, and it was made the scene of a joyous house-warming on Christmas Eve. From that time Mount Vernon was seldom without a guest while Washington occupied it.

This was of course before he was chosen President. As we all well know after he had served his country by filling successfully the highest office of a gift, he was enabled with his wife to spend his closing years at his beautiful home, and there he died.

The form and general arrangement of the grounds are the same to-day as they were at the death of Mrs. Washington in 1802.

A Very Small Peach Crop.

EASTON, Pa., April 18.—Ex-Assemblyman Joseph M. Hackett, of this city, returned this morning from his farm in Caroline county, Maryland, and reports the peach crop there a failure. His farm last year yielded 6,000 baskets, while this year he does not expect a basket. The weather was very warm in February, and all the trees were soon in bloom. The blossoms were killed by the heavy frost on the night of March 6. Mr. Hackett also says there will be peaches along the water courses in Maryland, but none in the interior of the state. The crop in Delaware, he says, will also be a failure.

A Call That Will Soon Be Heard.

MR. CLOVER, President of the Farmers' Alliance of Kansas, tells a Chicago Herald correspondent: "When the Alliance is fully convinced that the tariff is inimical to the best interests of the farmers, they will go for a demand for reduction that the Democrats have ever dared to go. These demands may not bear the Democratic stamp, but they will be made loud enough for the country to hear them. And the day for that may not be far off, either." The Republican statesman who recently declared that "farmers have the call in this Congress" was only premature by a little. The farmers' call has begun to lift its voice.

An Easy Situation.

The late Rev. Henry Ward Beecher received a letter from a young man, who recommended himself as being honest, and closed with the request: "Give me an easy situation, that honesty may be rewarded." To which Mr. Beecher replied: "Don't be an editor, if you would be 'easy.' Do not try the law. Avoid school keeping. Keep out of the pulpit. Let alone all ships, stores, shops and merchandise. Abhor politics. Keep away from lawyers. Don't practice medicine. Be not a farmer or mechanic; neither soldier nor sailor. Don't study. Don't think. Don't work. None of these are easy. Oh, my honest friend, you are in a very hard world! I don't know of but one real easy place in it. That is the grave."

Mount Vernon.

All the associations of Washington's life cluster about Mt. Vernon. Not the mansion as it now stands, but the house of comparatively small dimensions which is embodied in the later structure, was a familiar spot to Washington, from his boyhood. His brother whose home was there was very fond of the boy George Washington, and he was often a visitor at Mount Vernon, and when at sixteen he was made public surveyor, he made his home with his brother that he might be near the scene of his labors. The estate was in due course of time bequeathed to him and it was to this home he brought his young bride in the spring of 1759. He wrote a description of it at that time, which states that it was in a highly healthy country, in latitude between the extremes of heat and cold, on one of the finest rivers in the world.

The mansion at that time was two stories in height and had four rooms on each floor. A lawn sloping toward the high river bank was shaded by stately trees. The surface of the river before it abounded with water-fowl in their season, and the white wings of commerce connected with the port of Alexandria above enlivened its placid bosom. This was the home to which Martha Washington was brought, and this the happy beginning of a domestic reign of forty years.

But Mount Vernon, as it now stands, was built after the Revolution. George Washington and wife found that the

duties and pleasures of their lot called for much wider and greater accommodation for their numerous guests than they could give, and so "yielding to the inevitable," the historic Loring tells us, as the General and Mrs. Washington, who entirely underrated the importance of an enlargement of their dwelling to dimensions which would allow them to exercise a generous hospitality so congenial to their feelings. Every arrangement of the new house was planned primarily for convenience and durability. Washington was his own architect. He drew every plan and specification for the builders, but invariably submitted his suggestions to the judgment of Mrs. Washington. The house was to be her realm over which she was to reign queen.

He calculated and indicated every measurement with exactness, ascertained the cost and defined the quality of all materials to be used before purchasing, and superintended the building in person with the greatest vigilance. The result was the production of the spacious mansion at Mount Vernon, as it appears to-day.

The old building was not disturbed until the extensions, which were made at each end of it, were completed, when it was modified. The whole structure is of the most substantial frame work. It has stood in its present form a century and exhibits few signs of decay, though long neglected in intermediate years.

It is two stories in height, ninety-six feet in length, thirty feet in depth, with a covered piazza or colonnade twelve feet wide, extending along the entire eastern or river front, and supported by eight square columns twenty-five feet in height. Over this piazza is a balustrade of a light and pleasing design, and in the centre of the roof is an observatory or cupola octagonal in form, with a small spire. There are seven dormer-windows in the roof.

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