

A Bachelor's Confession.

The Bachelors' club came to order. The president in the chair. "Fellow bachelors," he said, "one of our number has committed matrimony. Edward Hammetton has taken to himself a wife. I will read article 7 from our constitution, applying to his case: "When any member shall become engaged or has been married he shall pay a fine, and his membership in the club shall cease. He shall state the arts by which he was snared. If there are palliating circumstances in his case he shall not pay the whole fine, but such portion of it as the club may consider a just amount in his case. "Mr. Hammetton will now make his statement." "I assure you, gentlemen," said the retiring member, "that no intention whatever to desert you ever entered my head until a diabolical combination of young women in the town where I live forced matrimony upon me. These persons organized a club based on a custom prevailing in a foreign land. Between the mountains of India and Persia, I have since understood, is a powerful tribe, among whom the ladies can choose their own husbands. All a single woman has to do when she wishes to change her state is to send a servant to pin a handkerchief to the hat of the man on whom her fancy lights, and he is obliged to marry her unless he can show that he is too poor to purchase her at the price her father requires. "Inspired by this suggestion from a land where secret venomous methods underlie all social conditions, every unmarried woman in the town where I live formed a club—rather entered upon a conspiracy—to force the bachelors into matrimony. One morning, being about to leave my home, on taking my hat from the hall closet something soft and scented fluttered against my hand. I shuddered. I had touched the Indian poison flower and was reminded of its waxy petals and its seductive odor. Taking the hat to the light, I saw pinned to it a blue silk handkerchief in one corner of which was embroidered my monogram in white silk thread. Observe, gentlemen, the insinuating method of this designing creature. She not only knew how dear to every man is his alma mater, but she was aware that blue is the color of my college. "Mind you, gentlemen, I did not at the time know of this society or of its malevolent purpose, for the members kept both secret so long as possible. I asked my butler how the handkerchief came to be pinned to my hat. He said that the servant of Miss Eugenia Tomlinson, living at the other end of the street, had called before I was out of bed, asked for my hat and attached the handkerchief. Why he had done so he did not state. "Going to my club after I had breakfasted, I sat down to a cigar and a paper. In the paper I read a full account of the organization and practices of this pestilent Indian plant that had been imported to our soil. I also read a list of the bachelor heads that had already fallen and was aghast to see the names of two of my most intimate friends. "Great heavens," I cried, the perspiration starting out on me, "and I have already received a deadly Black Hand notification!" "The lady who had thus marked me for matrimonial misery, both from her beauty and general attractiveness, was all powerful. Any man on whom she pinned the skull and crossbones must walk the plank. There was no hope for him. Nevertheless, though seeing the signal to leave to, I made up my mind to pay no attention to it. I simply sailed on minding my own business." "Why didn't you take to an aeroplane?" a member interrupted. "Rats!" "Buncombe!" "Brave boy!" and the like greeted the speaker. "One week after the receipt of the signal," he continued, "the period given blacklisted bachelors by this club, I met one of my most respected woman friends on the street. She cut me dead. The same day I met several others and received the cut direct from all. Here, was, indeed, a boycott. You must remember, gentlemen, that, although we do not wish to surrender our independence to these creatures, to be ostracized by them is a serious matter. In time I was cut by every unmarried woman in town. Besides, the most attractive married women were honorary members of the club and joined the boycott. "And then, gentlemen, appeared the most alluring feature of this malignant scheme. Last of all my feminine acquaintances I met the girl into whose toils it was intended that I should fall. A seductive blush overspread her features, a bewitching smile parted her vermilion lips and showed two rows of pearls beneath; then a modest drooping of the eyes. These women who had united to assist in snaring me were all denying me the benefit of their society for the purpose of driving me like an innocent bird into the opening of the net intended for me. "At this point in the speech there were groans and cries of "Poor boy!" "Innocent bird!" "Where's his mother?" "He's going to cry!" and the like. "Here, fell—I was going to say fellow bachelors; alas, I can call you such no longer—I took that first step which leads to the final inevitable fall. I turned and joined her. Like the inebriate who slips the first glass of wine that he knows will drag him down to his ruin, I submitted myself to a pres-

ence which I knew would steal away my brains. I might as well have swallowed laudanum. "Run for a stomach pump!" "Walk him!" "Pour water down his throat!" These and other such calls came from the unsympathetic members of the club. The benedict continued his confession: "My intention, gentlemen, in joining her—so I persuaded myself; whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad—was to say something to her to cause her to desist in her intention to ensnare me. I began in this wise: "If my circumstances were such as to enable me to marry I should esteem myself honored beyond measure in being invited by a lady in every way so calculated to inspire my esteem. But my income, only \$10,000 a year, is barely enough for my own— "Cries of "Dead give away!" "Selfish brute!" "I'll bet she's going to cry!" "Who said cry?" asked the confessor, surprised. "I did," replied the homeliest member. "That's exactly what she did." "I knew it," said the homeliest member. "A member of the club told me in confidence that certain instructions are laid down for the girls, the principal of which is to cry." The confessor groaned and went on: "We were walking toward the girl's home and at this point reached her door. She burst into a passion of tears and ran into the house, shutting the door behind her. "I stood looking vaguely about me, not knowing just what to do. I wished a policeman would come along and run me in. I had an undefined sense of having committed a crime. It seemed to me that I had plunged a dagger into the heart of the girl who had left me. I went to my club, lighted a cigar, smoked it two minutes and threw it away. I went into the billiard room, knocked the balls about for two minutes more, threw down my cue and, shoving my hands in my pockets, walked up and down in the hallway. Several of my friends came in, but somehow I wanted to get rid of them. They all wanted to know what was the matter with me. One of them pestered me, telling me about some liver pills he had used with great effect. "I dined at the club with another. I surprised him by ordering my dessert immediately after the soup and undertook to carve a bird in cross sections. You see, the poison had entered my blood and was crawling through the veins to the heart. When the dinner was over I told my friend I was sick and was going home to bed. I lied. I had never before told a deliberate lie. You see the effect of this Indian flower with its noxious but ecstatic perfume. Facile decensus avari, which, being interpreted, means, "When a man makes a false step the descent into iniquity is easy." "When one has committed a crime he feels an irresistible desire to visit the spot where it was enacted. The spot where my crime had been perpetrated was a few steps from the home of the girl who had inoculated me. I went there. I was possessed with a desire to apologize for a sin I hadn't committed. I rang the bell, went into the house and sent up my card. "Come up!" cried a voice. "He'll never go there any more," said another. "Gentlemen," continued the confessor, "I sat with wildly beating heart in the drawing room till I heard a rustle of skirts and the tap of a tiny heel on the staircase. A moment later there in the doorway stood—what shall I call it?—a vision of loveliness, a dream. "Gentlemen, I have finished." "Go on!" "Don't I wish I'd had one like that!" "Peaches and cream are nothing to it!" and other such indelicate, or, at least, irreverent, cries filled the room. The president rapped for order. "Fellow bachelors," he said, "we have all listened to the confession of our unfortunate ex-member, and I know there is not one of us who has not listened with exuberant sympathy. Expressions of opinion as to the amount of the fine he shall pay are now in order. You are aware that the amount lies between \$100 and \$500." "I move," cried a voice, "that on account of the united pressure brought to bear and the boycott (unusual circumstances) the fine be remitted entirely." "And I move," said another, "that the fine be doubled. It's my opinion that our ex-brother was a willing victim." "And I move," said the homeliest man, "that the ladies of this city be invited to organize one of these Indian plizen societies right here among us." At this there were groans and cries of "Put him out!" "Renegade!" "He's been infected!" under which the homeliest man tried to hide. The president arose. "Gentlemen," he said, "since it is left with me to name the fine, I will say that I agree with our fellow member who says that the circumstances in this case are unusual, and I will remit the fine altogether." The confessor arose for a last word. "Gentlemen," he said, "I insist on paying a double fine. My descent into Avernus is worth a hundred times the amount." A Cure For Nerves. The "nervy" girl will find that an hour's sewing is a wonderful nerve soother. She can sew in all her little irritations, her fancied injuries, and generally become her normal self again when she has finished a long seam. One of the most neurotic and excitable women, the famous George Sand, wrote in praise of the soothing powers of needlework.

Keep This In Mind. That your daughter will doubtless not love you if your conversation is a perpetual, "Mary, stop stooping!" "Mary, don't hunch your shoulders!" "Mary, how many times must I tell you about standing on one hip?" But you have the satisfaction of knowing that she will probably love you less in after years if such injunctions were omitted. Boys and girls doubtless think mother a "crank" or "fussy" when she insists upon tri-daily cleaning of teeth, daily baths and regular gymnastic exercises. Dancing school is a nuisance, to boys especially. Walking half an hour a day with a cane back of the armpits or a weight on the head in the interest of a good carriage is dubbed by thoughtless children as "tommyrot." Yet the mother who gives in to the fighting of her children—and few of them like these efforts for beauty—will live to see the hour when those children say: "I don't see, mother, why you did not make me take care of my eyes or teeth or hair. You know we did not understand the importance." Carbolic Disinfectant. Many persons have a general idea that carbolic acid is a good disinfectant, but have no idea how to use it. Either the crystals or the liquid acid can be used, the former going further. They must be mixed one part to twenty parts of water. Stir until dissolved. This solution can be used to boil white clothes that have been employed around contagious diseases. The clothes should boil about an hour, when all germs will be destroyed. Carbolic soapuds made boiling hot will destroy germs in woodwork and painted walls if they are carefully washed down with it. There are good carbolic soaps on the market that are excellent for disinfecting purposes. They can be safely used on the skin without roughening it unduly. Where there is much sickness in a family or where one is exposed to infection, as often happens to women who do charity work or who teach school, it is well to use it before one eats. Hampered by Conventionalities. Washington was crossing the Delaware river at Trenton. "Of course," he said, "I don't mind standing up in this boat and gazing sternly in the direction of the unsuspecting foe, since the artists insist on depicting me in this absurd attitude, but the blithering chumps ought to know better than to paint these blocks of floating ice projecting a foot above the water. Any man with an ounce of gumption knows that the ice in this river isn't eight feet thick." Angered by these reflections, he fell upon the Hessians shortly afterward with extreme ferocity.—Chicago Tribune.

Forgetful. Absentminded Annette belongs to a club of young women in the west end of town. She went to a bridal shower given by the club and left her present at home. "I'm so sorry that I forgot it," she said. "Never mind," the other girls told her. "You can send it around later." A few weeks later the club gave another bridal shower, and again Annette left her gift at home. "Do you know what I've done?" she said when she discovered her mistake. "I've forgotten my present!" No one felt disposed to help her out. "But, then," she added, "didn't one of the girls forget her present last time, and didn't we say it would be all right if she sent it around later? I'm sure that happened to somebody."—Newark News. The Battle of Chalons. There have been so many bloody battles it is perhaps impossible to say with absolute certainty which of them all was the bloodiest, but the balance of the evidence seems to be in favor of the battle of Chalons, France, fought A. D. 451 between the Huns under Attila, and the Romans, Goths and Franks, under the command of Aetius, the most renowned captain of his day. At the head of his 500,000 of savages Attila was having every-thing in his own way, and it looked as if Aryan civilization was destined to fall before the Tartar despotism, when suddenly, like the bolt out of the blue, Aetius fell upon the barbaric hordes and Europe was saved. It is estimated that 400,000 of the barbarians were left dead on the field. Couldn't Frighten Him. An Indian maharajah once received Lord Clive, the famous soldier, in his palace court. Presently in sprang two whopping big Bengal tigers, as big as ever grow. They rolled and growled and romped all over the court, growled, spit and struck at each other. All the time the rajah satly and snakily stole glances at Clive to see if it would scare him green white. After a little the tigers were driven out. Clive smoked his cheroot all the while. Hood's Sarsaparilla Hood's Sarsaparilla For Spring Loss of Appetite and that Tired Feeling. Cures thousands of cases every year, tones the Stomach, aids the digestion, cleanses and revitalizes the blood, gives vigor and vim. ROOTS, BARKS AND HERBS—Hood's Sarsaparilla so combines the great curative principles of roots, barks and herbs as to raise them to their highest efficiency for the cure of all spring humors, all blood diseases, and run-down conditions. No REAL SUBSTITUTE—There is no real substitute for Hood's Sarsaparilla. Any preparation said to be "just as good," you may be sure is inferior, costs less to make, and yields the dealer a larger profit. Insist on having Hood's. 55-19

Big Cargo, Little Ship. An old official of the navy tells the following story of a conversation he heard between two old sailors: "It was a rat ship I was sailin' in that trip," said one of the shellbacks. "One of the dingiest rat ships I ever knew. They was rats in it from bow to stern, rats in the hold, in the galley, in the steerage, in the fo'castle, in the old man's room—everywhere rats, nothin' but." "Bimeby it got so bad we had to put in an' get them off. So we hooked up to a dock an' fumigated. I was on deck, an' I saw them rats leavin'. I counted 'em. They was 15,000,000 of 'em." "Fifteen million?" asked the other. "Ain't that a lot o' rats? Are you sure?" "Sure! Yes, I'm sure. They was 15,000,000 rats, and I counted 'em. More than that, every rat weighed half a pound. They was big, fat, sassy ones, I'm tellin'." "Fifteen million rats, and every one weighed half a pound, and they all came off your ship. That's 7,500,000 pounds of rats. Say, Jim, what was the tonnage of that ship?" "Oh, about a hundred and fifty tons."—Judge. His Sarcastic Apology. A well known New Yorker figured in a quaint encounter with a "panhandler" not long ago. The fellow had asked him for a dime, when the following conversation took place: "You're a positive nuisance! Tuesday you struck me for a dime, Thursday I gave you another, and now you have the nerve to ask for a third!" "Excuse me, but are you the gent that gave me a dime on this corner the day before yesterday?" "Yes." "And now I've tackled you for the third time?" "Yes." "Waal," said the hobo contritely, "I sincerely beg your pardon, old man. That's too much gall even for me. The only excuse I have to offer is that you have improved so much in your personal appearance that I didn't recognize you."—Cleveland Leader.

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