

CASE OF MARGARET.

Mrs. Jones while counting of her stitches in the necktie she was crocheting, suddenly paused and glanced out the window.

"It's a shame," she exclaimed to the other women, "that Margaret doesn't get married! Here she is, getting on toward twenty-five or twenty-six, and actually if you ever see her with a man it's a surprise!"

"Yes," eagerly assented Mrs. Brophy, hastening to the window and looking out carefully from behind the curtain. "I've often said so to my husband. There she is—pretty, with attractive manners and capable. Why, she'd make any man a good wife—a wife he could be proud of! I just can't understand it! What are the men thinking of to let her grow into a regular old maid?"

"But that's the way the world's growing!" commented sad Mrs. Grimson, plaintively. "You see it everywhere. The men don't want wives to take care of, and the women are too particular about the men!"

"Yes, that's just it!" declared Mrs. Burnham. "Girls are too high and mighty! Why, they want a whole establishment to begin with, and the poor men are frightened to death! If these girls would make up their minds to take the men who ask them, for better or worse, not forgetting the 'poorer' with the 'richer,' they'd all be married happily in no time."

"But they'll get gray headed and unattractive and set in their ways. I can notice Margaret getting rather set—haven't you noticed it? But they'll realize too late! And, perhaps, they'll be a lesson to the coming generation!"

Just then Mrs. Roth entered, much excited. "What do you suppose?" she exclaimed, breathlessly. "I've just met Margaret on the corner and she's got a diamond ring! She didn't want to talk about it, but I found out that she's known him a long time, and they're going to be married soon! I tried to get something out of her about him, but all I could learn is that he's a young city man whom she met at school. Actually, I'm dumfounded!" She collapsed into a seat and sighed deeply as she proceeded to arrange her sewing.

"Well, did you ever!" was Mrs. Brophy's brief comment.

Mrs. Jones shook her head. "Poor girl!" she murmured. "There she is, earning her own living and making good money, too, and going to give it all up for the sake of some man she probably hardly knows!"

"Yes, but it's like girls!" exclaimed Mrs. Burnham, impatiently. "They're willing to take up with anyone, just to get married. She'll find it's a very different thing, slaving around a house all day and taking care of children, from the easy life she's been leading. She thinks she's going to live amid roses from the time she gets married—but she'll wake up! It's rather sad, isn't it?" And she gazed dreamily out the window.

Mrs. Gray sat silent, meditating. "Think of giving up the freedom of girlhood!" she finally said. "She'll miss her parties and dances, her freedom to go and come as she pleases, and her right to buy what she wants with the money she's earned herself. It's different from what it was when girls were dependent on their fathers and marriage meant only the change of the person who attended to money matters. To give up one's independence for the sake of a man—especially a man one barely knows—is positively foolhardy! Margaret always seemed such a nice, sensible girl, too. I'm surprised."

"Isn't it strange how crazy girls are to get married?" declared Mrs. Roth. "They don't realize when they're well off until it's too late! And you can't tell them anything! They're just forced to gain their own experience—and repent too late!"

"There she goes!" exclaimed Mrs. Gray. And they all hastened to the window.

"She looks a little worried, don't you think?" remarked Mrs. Jones.

"It's a shame! There's not a man good enough for a girl like Margaret!" declared Mrs. Burnham. "Oh, she's coming in here!"

They all hurried to the door.

"Oh, Margaret, congratulations! Congratulations!"

"We've suspected it right along."

"When is it going to be?"

"Who's the lucky man?"

"I'm so glad—after all these years of business, it'll be such a relief!"

And Margaret was ushered in, blushing happily.—Chicago Daily News.

Ready for Further Orders.

Captain Lawson was owner and pilot of the New Orleans. The Mississippi broke its banks. There were miles of rushing waters, says the National Monthly. Only an experienced eye could tell the channel. Captain Lawson had been at the wheel for 36 hours. He was exhausted from loss of sleep. Rastus, a colored pilot aboard, was called to the captain.

"Do you see that north star?" asked the captain.

"Yes, boss."

"Well, hold this boat on that star."

"Yes, boss."

When the captain awoke an hour later his boat was winding in and out among the trees. The captain was indignant. "I thought I told you to hold this boat on the north star!" he cried.

"Lor, boss, we done passed dat star long ergo."

A KITE AND A CURL

By ROSE MILLER.

Professor Irving and his small son were constructing a magnificent kite in the cool shade of the orchard trees.

"Now, son, our kite is finished all but the tail—we need something bright and flyaway for the end of our tail—suppose you go up to the house and ask Mrs. Keppy for a bit of red ribbon or tape or something."

Sammy darted away among the trees, dodged under the fence and made a detour through the hayfield.

Professor Irving whistled over his task, and when it was completed he threw himself back on the grass and, pipe in mouth, dreamily watched the clouds.

"I have gotted a flyaway, daddy," announced Sammy's voice.

Professor Irving sat up, yawned, and in the very act paused with his mouth wide open. He stared at the trophy in Sammy's grimy hand.

"What is that?" he thundered at last.

"It's a pretty curl—er, flyaway, daddy."

"Where did you get it?" sternly.

"I found it," evasively.

"Where?"

"Garden!"

"Well, of all the amazing things!" commented his father, taking the long silken curl that clung to his fingers in the most annoying manner.

He smiled as he folded the curl carefully and tucked it into his notebook.

"Sir!"

Here was a peppery tempered voice indeed. The professor turned mild eyes upon the speaker.

She had advanced upon them from behind the trees, and she was a veritable Goldilocks, albeit her hair was a shower of red-golden curls that hung far below her waist. She wore a faded lawn frock, and about her neck was tied a huge bath towel.

Professor Irving had struggled to his feet, his puzzled face partaking of the embarrassment that clouded his son's. "What do you mean?" he asked. "What has Sammy done?"

"That!" she pointed tragically to the curl.

Slowly Sammy's father opened the book, took out the dainty silken curl and regarded it with bewildered eyes.

"My curl, if you please!" she demanded haughtily.

"I am very sorry for what Sammy has done," said the professor gently. "You see, we have been making a kite, and I sent him up to ask my housekeeper for a bit of ribbon for the end of the tail—we needed a gay flyaway. He brought this back. He said he found it in the garden."

"Sammy found it in the garden, but not in his own garden," said the girl, with eyes suddenly brimming with laughter. "I had been washing my hair and was drying it in the rectory garden. I was sitting on the grass, sewing, when suddenly I missed my scissors. Just as I turned to search for them I felt a tug and heard a snipping sound—and Sammy was running away with one of my curls!"

Sammy bawled lustily and burrowed his head under his father's arm.

"Never mind, Sammy," she said at last. "I am sure you didn't mean to do a naughty thing. If you will come with me I will find you a bright ribbon for a flyaway."

Sammy smiled at Goldilocks and tucked his hand in hers.

"I will send him home soon," she smiled. Then she turned and added: "I am the rector's niece, Miss Allen." She went away with Sammy, and when the two had disappeared among the trees the professor still stood there staring after them, with the red-gold curl twining around his fingers, as the image of its owner was entwining itself about his heart.

And the professor neglected to return that curl to Rose Allen. In fact, he kept it always. "For," said he afterward, "a man may keep a curl of his wife's hair!"

"Even if he doesn't use it as a flyaway," added Rose, as she hugged little Sammy.

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Those Pesticiferous Sparrows.

Mr. Dearborn says the English sparrow reduces the number of some of our most useful and attractive native birds, such as bluebirds, house wrens, purple martins, tree swallows, cliff swallows and barn swallows, by destroying their eggs and young and by usurping nesting places. It attacks the robin, wren, redbird, vireo, catbird and mockingbird, causing them to desert parks and shady streets of towns. Unlike our native birds, whose place it usurps, it has no song, but is noisy and vituperative. It defiles buildings and ornamental trees, shrubs and vines with its excrement and with its bulky nests.

Original Turnpike.

It was formerly the custom to obtain the funds to maintain principal thoroughfares by collecting a toll from those using them. Pikes or gates were set across the roads by the keeper or toll collector.

To prevent people who traveled his road from passing without paying the toll he was armed with a pike, a long-handled stick with a sharp iron head. This was put across as a barrier, and when the toll was paid it was turned aside to permit the carriage or wagon to pass on its way. Hence the name turnpike.

Duty of the Wiser Part.

Since the foolish part of mankind will make wars from time to time, with each other, not having sense enough otherwise to settle their differences, it certainly becomes the wiser part, who cannot prevent these wars, to alleviate as much as possible the calamities attending them.—Benjamin Franklin.

Juvenile Criticism.

"Mamma," said little Lura, who had teased her father in vain for a nickel, "you are my dearest relative, but papa is the closest."

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But They Both Get It.

Some people jump at conclusions; others are more leisurely in making their mistakes.—The Pelican.

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There is a difference between a circulation which strikes the same reader several times in the same day and the circulation which does not repeat the individual. There is a difference between circulation which is concentrated into an area from which every reader can be expected to come to your establishment, if you can interest him, and a circulation that spreads over half a dozen states and shows its greatest volume in territory so far from your establishment that you can't get a buyer out of ten thousand readers.

You've got to weigh and measure all these things when you weigh and measure circulation figures. It isn't the number of copies printed, but the number of copies sold—not the number of papers distributed, but the number of papers distributed in responsive territory—not the number of readers reached, but the number of readers who have the price to buy what you want to sell—that determine the value of circulation to you.

You can take a single egg and whip it into an omelette soufflé which seems to be a whole plateful, but the extra bulk is just hot air and sugar—the change in form has not increased the amount of egg substance and it's the substance in circulation, just as it is the nutrition in the egg, that counts.

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