

A Husband's Mistake

Mme. la Baronne de Givone was a reproduction of that famous type of classic beauty, the Greek goddess, examples of which are so rare now and growing more and more so in this fin-de-siècle epoch. A woman born for the Olympian cothurne and the simple drapery clasped upon the shoulder, neither pretty, nor witty, nor marvelous in any way, but Greek, plain Greek from brow to instep—upon the word of her estimable husband, the shrewd, farsighted, and successful financier, M. le Baron and banker, Alonzo de Givone.

The baron, moreover, was not wrong; madame his wife reflected the universal admiration as a polished reflector throws back the light; they always chose her to preside over those functions that required traditionally statuesque patronesses; men bowed before her as before an armed sentinel, and women never thought of such a thing as being jealous of her.

The age of this beautiful Greek, however, announced by herself, was of a very vague character, like the age of a statue as given on the bill of sale, "somewhere between nineteen and twenty and nine-and-forty years."

As for the baron's age, it was that of all husbands when they are loyal spouses—fifty years. Very rich and childless, every evening saw them in the social swim, but leading there, as elsewhere, the solemn, ceremonious, well-regulated, dignified life of the old clock in the salon of their stately old mansion in the outskirts of the Bois de Boulogne.

But—alas, that it should be so!—transcendent virtues are always subject to thunder-clap relapses. One day, at the house of a diplomatic personage—a careless parvenu, who opened his doors to all sorts of arts and artists through an affected democracy—Mme. de Givone made the fatal encounter. She trembled—she the proud, distinguished Baronne de Givone, trembled before a comic singer, the vulgar star of a café concert hall.

He had come there, poor devil, to snuff a lous and his supper, without a thought of reanimating goddesses of the Parthenon, and was chiefly concerned, while chirping out his "inimitable imitations," by a suddenly discovered slit that striped with white the sooty black of his coat under the arm, and the necessity for keeping his hand clasped over his heart to hide the fiery stroke of an unpaid laundress's iron, which spread itself out in brownish tint upon an otherwise snowy shirtfront.

The physique of this singer of comic ditties perfectly corresponded with his employment—half-eyed, thick-lipped, nose like a duck's bill, awkward in gait, and with only the knowledge of making a stage-bow fairly well—an ungainliness, all the same, that mattered little; Mme. de Givone was caught by the epidemic that at times seizes all too-perfect women of vaguely defined years.

She believed that she loved Caesar Ibes, and fell upon him, like a bolt from a clear sky, with all the notes, flowers, invitations, et cetera, that women of the great world employ in such cases as barometers, so to speak, of the condition of their affections. Caesar did not, however, return this love, though touched a little, of course, like all amiable animals to whom, through an impulse of pity, one speaks carelessly as one passes. He did not love her; and when she called him the "ray of sunlight in the autumn of her life," instead of telling him, as she might have done, of his "inimitable tones," a dull dislike rose up in his heart against her.

Caesar Ibes was not rich, either; Hermine bankrupted him in cabs engaged by the hour, and actually dared to offer him on his birthday a cigar-case embroidered by her slim Greek fingers, when he would have infinitely preferred to the work of the needle a diamond scarf-pin, or even a good imitation diamond, provided the mounting was not too sham.

Still one can taste a little of love and not become a drunkard. Caesar, not knowing what else to do, permitted himself to go on being loved and being ruined by cab hire, in obedience to the will of the goddess, who made of this prosaic and useful vehicle their regular and not too compromising trysting-place.

It went on thus—well, really, it does not matter how long—when, one morning at the breakfast-table, M. de Givone, with frowning brow, announced a sudden departure, possibly a week's absence, and a call to Lyons on a serious banking errand.

Hermine saw him set out with the joy of an emancipated school-girl, and promptly dispatched a note to her "dear friend" to call upon her that coming evening, closing with directions as to finding the servants' stairway.

"My husband deceives me," she declared; "I am sure that he deceives me, because he has grown so cold to me of late. This voyage is but a pretext to join some—some creature. I scorn him, and I wish to see you—to see you here, in my own house. Come!"

The evening came, and the clocks of the quarter were still striking ten as Hermine de Givone, the "deceived" wife, all glittering with diamonds and rustling with laces, as she had come from the concert where Ibes, all the fashion at the moment, had been the lion of the occasion, stepped from her carriage, dismissed the waiting maid

and ten minutes later, by the servants' stairway, was ushering the young comedian to the sacred precincts of her private boudoir.

A strange awkwardness, however, seemed to settle upon the two culprits as they crossed the threshold of that severely Greek nest, with its Olympian memories; Hermine slowly and silently unclasped her diamond necklace and turned to lay it upon a table near by, and Caesar, with equal slowness, fumbled nervously with the buttons of his concert-hall paletot.

Then, just as the diamonds fell into the bronze tray waiting to receive them—fell with the light spattering sound of falling tears—the door opened again and M. de Givone appeared.

Hermine uttered a cry and fell prone to the floor, and Caesar began mechanically to rebutton his paletot, his pale face convulsed with terror. The banker was pale, too, but only noisily calm.

"Sir," said he, quietly drawing a revolver from his pocket, "you are poor, you are a coward, and I know why you are here. You came to steal my wife. Happily, I had taken my precautions. I have placed on guard at each side of the servants' hallway of my house two police officers charged to arrest and to search you. They will find"—pointing to the baronne's jewels glittering in the tray beside them—"that diamond necklace concealed between your shirt and waistcoat; they will take you to the police station, and there you will admit the theft; there, also, you will declare that you were here to see the baronne's maid, and this vulgar comedy will end by a just application of the law. It is to say, a certain number of months in prison. In consideration of restoring the diamonds, however, I agree to do what I can to soften the rigor of the rightly deserved sentence."

And smiling blandly, M. de Givone placed his finger upon the revolver's trigger.

"But—but, monsieur," stammered the comedian, entering the tragic role in spite of himself, "you would compel me to sacrifice my honor."

"And my honor, sir," responded the banker, drawing nearer, "what of that, sir? Appearances give me the right to blow out your brains here and now, sir; but I do not love scandal. Take your choice, then. Carry off the diamonds or—I kill you!"

Briefly, nothing was more cleverly arranged. Caesar Ibes was poor, a nobody, riddled with debt, a physician to please only chambermaids, and Hermine de Givone as flawless before the world as the statue she resembled.

With moist brow and chattering teeth, Caesar made but a step to the table where flamed the resplendent necklace.

"To call out is useless," he grumbled, essaying to smile. "If I told the truth, even, they'd take me for a fool, I suppose!"

"No one would believe you, sir," Givone raised his arm again, and Caesar saw the gleaming barrel of the revolver almost against his brow. It was an invincible argument. Caesar yielded.

"Well, if I must, I must," said he; "better a prison than death, you know." And the necklace vanished into the hiding-place designated by M. de Givone, who followed him to the threshold, pointing the way he should go, and dropped behind him the portiere.

Caesar found himself alone in the corridor. To the left, in the distance, twinkled the lamp of the vestibule, lighting the servants' stairway; to the right, shining panes of the corridor window. Beyond that window was the garden, beyond the garden the Bois de Boulogne, the fields, security, and freedom!

"Bah! why not?" thought Caesar brusquely, dazzled and blinded by that which he had suddenly conceived; "I've time enough to throw myself into a train; eight hours lands me at Paris, and once in England—the devil himself couldn't catch me. Houp-la! try boy, and that"—snapping his thumb lightly in the direction of the banker's closed door—"that for all the enraged husbands in Paris!"

He threw up the sash, flung a leg over the window-ledge, and—the diamonds with him—was lost in the night.

Six months have gone since then; the worthy financier is still deploring the mistake he made in persuading Caesar to steal against his will, and Mme. la Baronne Givone more than ever resembles a well-groomed statue. —Translated for the Argonaut from the French of Rachilde by E. C. Waggener.

They Knew the Answer.

"Well, there were only three boys in school to-day who could answer one question that the teacher asked us," said a proud boy of eight, according to a writer in the Chicago News.

"And I hope my boy was one of the three," said the proud mother.

"Well, I was," answered Young Hopeful, "and Sam Harris and Harry Stone were the other two."

"I am very glad you proved yourself so good a scholar, my son; it makes your mother proud of you. What question did the teacher ask, Johnnie?"

"Who broke the glass in the back window?"

The International Candle.

Beginning July 1st, a new unit of electric illumination, to be called the international candle, is to be adopted by France, England and the United States. The American standard candle is to be reduced one and six-tenths per cent, in order to make it uniform with the English candle and the Bougie Decimale of France. The value of the Heiner, the German unit, is nine-tenths that of the new candle.

MARCH WEATHER OUTLOOK.

There Promises to be Wide Range of Temperature.

Records for some years show that the mean temperature for March is thirty-nine degrees. During the past twenty-one years, however, there has been a wide range in the temperature. The mercury has during that period climbed up as high as eighty-five degrees and has gone down as low as five. So, judging by these records, there may be some more real winter in the following thirty days. Last March there was a total snowfall of eight inches. March originally was the first month of the year, but in various rearrangements of the calendar it became the third. In some parts of the world it still retains its place as the first month of the year. The sacred year of the Jews begins in March and the feast of Azymes or unleavened bread falls on the fourteenth month of Nisan, or March 29th. The church feasts of March during the current year occur as follows: St. David's day, March 1st; Mid-Lent, March 2nd; St. Patrick's day, March 17th; St. Joseph, March 19; Palm Sunday, March 20th; Maunday Thursday, March 24th; Good Friday and Feast of the Annunciation, March 25th; Holy Saturday, March 26th; Easter Sunday, March 27th. The six weeks following Candlemas, February 2nd (groundhog day) will end Tuesday March 15th. St. Christopher's day, when, according to the supporters of the groundhog weather tradition, the little marmot may come forth from his underground sleeping quarters and not worry about his shadow until next Candlemas. In other words, spring weather should be due on March 15th. But spring does not begin until March 20th, Palm Sunday.

What the Figures Show.

Joseph Chamberlain, the British protectionist, in a speech at Glasgow, said:

"I propose to put no tax whatever on maize, because maize is a food of the very poorest of the people. I propose to exclude bacon from protection also, because bacon forms the staple food for many of the poorest of the population."

In other words, Mr. Chamberlain admitted that the import duty on maize and bacon would have to be paid by the consumer, and not the "foreigner!"

Another question: If our protective system is not the "substantial" explanation of the abnormal increase in the cost of living in the United States, how does it come that British prices, under free trade, increased but 7.7 per cent, in ten years, while American prices under protection, increased 34.3 per cent? Here is the table which tells its own story, and ought to be considered "Exhibit A" in any Congressional or other investigation into the increased cost of living:

Year.	English Prices.	U. S. Prices.
1896	100.0	100.0
1897	104.4	104.6
1898	109.5	112.6
1899	105.1	116.2
1900	107.2	124.3
1901	107.6	126.3
1902	109.0	132.8
1903	108.0	127.8
1904	108.7	127.9
1905	107.7	134.3

Increase 7.7 34.3

These figures are calculated from official statistics of the British Board of Trade in the "Eleventh Abstract of Labor Statistics," and from figures in 71st "Bulletin of the United States Bureau of Labor."

The year 1895, which was the year preceding the enforcement of the highly protective Dingley tariff, is taken as the standard year, the cost of food in each country being taken as 100. The meaning of the table is that food which cost \$1 in Great Britain in 1896, could not be duplicated for less than \$1.077 in 1906, and that food for which the American consumer paid \$1 in 1896, cost \$1.343 in 1906.—Exchange.

Keep The Money At Home.

An Ohio concern is sending circulars here, offering to furnish an outfit of printed stationery for \$3.85, in advance, customer to pay express charges, which would be 60 to 75 cents.

We will duplicate the offer, save you express charges, will guarantee as good if not better stock, and you can see just what you are getting before you pay for it.

Don't send your money away from home for printing when you can get the same thing for less cash right here.

A fine new line of Wedding invitations just received at this office

LETTERS BY TELEGRAPH.

Western Union to Inaugurate a New Service.

Announcement is now made by the Western Union Telegraph Company that it is now prepared to handle long night messages at the rates customarily charged for ten word day messages. It appears that the Western Union has a large unemployed mileage of wire which is not earning anything. These wires must be maintained in any event to take care of the regular day business, and it is apparently the new idea of the new interests in the Telegraph Company to let the public have the benefit of them. The announcement states that a "Special Night Letter Service" will be established. The charge for this service will be the standard day rate for ten words for the transmission of fifty words or less, and one fifth of such standard day rate will be charged for each additional ten words or less.

To be taken at these rates Night Letters must be written in plain English language, that is to say, code words or communications written in foreign languages will not be accepted. The messages will be taken at any hour up to midnight and transmitted at the Company's convenience during the night for delivery the following morning. For the present the new service is confined to Western Union offices in the United States. The tariffs charged for Night Letters are so low it is expected that the new service will be largely availed of by business concerns and others to quicken their correspondence by using the telegraph instead of the mails. A Night Letter sent by telegraph will reach its destination at the opening of business hours the following morning thus saving as much as three or four days when long distances are involved.

The Passing of the "Deaf and Dumb."

"The habit of the ancients was to put deaf babies to death either by exposure or by violent means," writes Christine Terhune Herrick in *Woman's Home Companion* for March. "Down almost to the present time deaf infants among savages have been disposed of in this fashion."

"Our later methods—deaf and dumb schools in which those thus afflicted are segregated, taught the sign language and instructed in trades in which their disability is not an insuperable drawback—are known to all of us. For years it was taken for granted that such methods of training were the only ones possible to the deaf—and because deaf, dumb. At last there was an effort made abroad, notably in Germany, to teach speech to the deaf. The endeavor spread on the Continent, and despite the prevailing conviction that deafness connotes dumbness, it was proved that the deaf could be taught to speak. The tongue of the dumb was unloosed."

"For some time the speech-teaching efforts were confined to those of school age and over. The thought of taking the deaf child at an age when he would naturally learn to talk, were he possessed of all his faculties, was the inspiration of a woman, the late Miss Emma Garrett, of Philadelphia, who had known of a few intelligent mothers who had done this successfully with their own children."

"How did she come to think of it? I asked her sister Miss Mary Garrett, who carries on the work begun by both."

"I believe the Lord put it into her mind," said Miss Garrett. "She had never been especially interested in philanthropy, but when her thoughts were once turned in this direction, she became enthusiastic over the work and devoted her life to it."

Bees and Blossoms Feed Swiss.

Switzerland is a land of flowers, and its thrifty inhabitants have made the blossoms very largely contributory to the food supply says the Philadelphia Record. According to statistics gathered by the Swiss Society of Agriculturists "there are 250,000 hives or colonies of bees in the country, each of which produces 40 pounds of honey during the season, a total of 10,000,000 pounds a year. The average price of Swiss honey for the year 1909 was 25 cents a pound, giving the year's product a total value of \$2,500,000." As the flowers grow without cultivation, and the bees work without other wage than caretaking, producing their own food supply, the honey crop is in great part clear profit. The Swiss honey is of very delicate flavor and fine quality.

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