

# THE LAST OF HER ROSES

By J. J. BELL  
(Author of "Wee MacGregor.")

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On the doorstep of Lavender Cottage Maj. Carruthers showed signs of un-soldierly hesitation. Instead of pulling the bell-handle he pulled his gray mustache and looked back undecidedly at the garden gate through which he had passed ere his courage failed him. "This will never do," he said to himself, and with an effort he laid his fingers on the bell-handle. A faint tinkle, and presently he was asking a maid, who glanced admiringly at his broad shoulders and bronzed countenance, if Miss Neville was at home.

Maj. Carruthers found himself in a small drawing-room, the furniture of which was old-fashioned yet arranged without primness. A dainty touch was everywhere evident, and, though the season was late autumn, flowers abounded. He noticed photographs of people as he had met them 20 years before, and he observed with a sigh that his own likeness had no place among them.

He singled out one on the mantel-piece. It was that of a brother officer in his first campaign. "Poor old Jack!" sighed the major; "she has forgotten me, and she has remembered you, though you've been in your grave a score of years. I wonder if you were really engaged to her before—"

He turned suddenly, for the door had opened and Miss Neville was coming forward to greet him.

"Do you know me, Hilary?" he stammered.

"Know you? Of course, Jim!" was her reply, as she held out a friendly hand.

Maj. Carruthers was surprised and relieved. He had anticipated an awkward meeting, and at best a polite recognition of himself as an old acquaintance whose appearance was a sort of resurrection, but here was Hilary Neville receiving him as though he had parted from her only yesterday.

"It's awfully good of you!" he cried, boyishly, and then laughed. He could not help it.

"I should have known you by your laugh, anyhow," she said, smiling, and motioning him to a seat.

"And I should have known you by your voice."

Then he became grave. "It's 20 years in December—20 years—since I last saw you."

"Is it so much? I can hardly believe it."

"Neither can I, when I look at you, Hilary."

"You were always abroad any time I happened to be home on leave."

"Yes. For years I had a desire to travel. Now, I'm rather tired of it all, and am quite content to vegetate at Lavender Cottage. I suppose the contentment is a sign of age!" she said.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed her visitor. He was forced to admit that time had changed her, but his heart cried out that she was as sweet and desirable to him as ever.

"I'm 39," she said, bluntly, thinking to shock him.

"Not till January," he returned, simply. "And I'm 59," he added, stoutly.

The maid entered with the tea tray, and on her departure they dropped into a conversation on the past—the past as it had interested both of them. It was natural enough that they should come to speak of Jack Cunningham; but the major was a little surprised that his companion referred to her dead lover without great sadness, though with all gentleness. Her fingers did not tremble as she took the photograph from the mantel-piece and handed it to her visitor.

"Poor old Jack!" he said, softly. "I remember the day he and I went together to have our portraits taken. This is a capital likeness." He wondered what else he could say. After a moment he went on: "Jack was one of those clever fellows who would have come to the top if he had lived. He got ahead of me in everything, Hilary."

"I think you are underrating yourself, Jim," she said, kindly.

"No. It's the truth. But only once was I jealous of his success."

There was a silence, which was broken at last by Miss Neville. "Would you like to see the companion photo to Jack's?" she asked, with a faint smile.

"Yes. I looked in vain for it on the mantel-piece."

"Excuse me a moment, then, and I'll get it for you."

"Stay, Hilary," said the major, following her to the door. "Is it the same as this?" And he took a worn leather case from his breast pocket. "Is it the same as this?" he asked, opening the case.

Miss Neville stared for a moment. Her face flushed crimson and then turned very pale. "Oh, no, no!" she whispered, and fled.

"What have I done?" he muttered. "Have I offended her?" He looked longingly at the faded photograph in his hands—how often, in many a far land, he had gazed on the girlish face—and returned it carefully in its case to his pocket.

His hostess was absent for several minutes, and when she returned she brought no photograph.

"I must let you see it another time," she said, carelessly, almost coldly.

"I have surely offended her," thought the major, miserably. "I'll remind you, Hilary," he said aloud, trying to speak cheerfully. "Was it taken after the one I showed you just now—the one stolen from your mother's album

years ago?" he added, with a feeble laugh.

"It—it is quite a different photograph," she replied, turning away her head.

"I suppose you never guessed that I had one of your photos," he said, slowly.

"I never thought you would have stolen it, Jim," she returned, with an attempt at a smile.

"It used to torment me sometimes." "So you weren't without a conscience after all!"

"I meant that I—I ought to have let my poor old chum Jack know that I had it."

Miss Neville started. "What had he to do with it?" she demanded.

"Oh, well—er—when a man's engaged to a girl—er—"

"What are you talking about, Jim?"

"About Jack Cunningham and—and you, Hilary."

"Well, then, you are talking nonsense!"

"You mean there was no engagement? Forgive me, forgive me. But you see, Jack told me, just before we were ordered to India, that he had an understanding with you."

"Oh!"

"And later he told me he hoped soon to be formally engaged. I was going to write, congratulating you—I wanted to be the first, you know—but he begged me to delay a little. And then came that night in the hills when we were attacked and nearly cut to pieces, and Jack saved my life, and—and lost his own." Maj. Carruthers stopped speaking and walked over to the window.

Miss Neville hid her face in her hands. Her heart was in a turmoil. Could she tell her old friend—her old



HE TOOK IT.

friend who might have been so much more to her—that the man who had saved his life had also deceived him—that the hero had lied and stolen a double happiness? She could not tell him, and she would not. Had it not been for Jack Cunningham she would not have lost Jim Carruthers for the best years of her life and his—how she hated the liar! Yet . . . had it not been for Jack Cunningham she would have lost Jim Carruthers forever—how she blessed the hero! And now she must allow the man she loved to believe that her heart had been his old chum's even as the latter had said.

The major came back from the window and touched her gently on the shoulder.

"I shouldn't have spoken about it, Hilary. I'm sorry, very sorry, that I've hurt you, and I've wished often that I could have changed places with dear old Jack. Now I'll go."

She rose and faced him with tearless eyes. If only he would understand a little—not all—without being told. And oh! if only he had been bold and asked her a question 20 years ago!

She went with him to the door and walked down the garden path towards the gate. Their tongues seemed tied until the major, halting abruptly, pointed to a rosebush and said quietly: "Will you give me that rose, Hilary?"

"Yes, if you wish it. But perhaps I can find you another more perfect." She looked at her, and then shook her head and sighed. "No. There are no more. You must have this one. It is the last of my roses, Jim," she observed, with a thin smile.

She broke it from the stem and gave it to him. He took it and her hand with it. He looked at her face and saw the lines that Time had begun to trace, and he loved her more for every one of them.

"It was good of you to give me your last rose, Hilary," he said, gazing at her in a puzzled fashion.

"Oh, Jim," she whispered, breaking down, "my first rose and all my roses were yours had you asked for them."

"You mean, if I had come in spring," he stammered.

"If you had come in spring."

The full meaning of her words did not reach him—how could it? Yet he understood enough to make him glad; he understood that in some strange way she had kept a small place in her heart for him all these years, that somehow she had grown to care for him in spite of Jack Cunningham's memory, and that she would have welcomed him had he come to her a few months earlier.

"Oh, Hilary," he cried, when they were in the drawing-room again, "I could never have hoped for this!"

"What? The last of my roses?" she asked. "For it's all I have to give you, dear Jim," she added, half gayly, half sadly.

The major took her by the shoulders and shook her tenderly. "The last of your roses is the first of mine, and God knows how sweet it is," he cried, and kissed her.

But was it the last of her roses? Of course not! You can't help a woman making a foolish remark now and then.

## PAN-AMERICAN ROAD

### ROUTE PROPOSED BETWEEN ALASKA AND PATAGONIA.

The Dream of Charles M. Pepper, United States and Pan-American Railway Commissioner.

Years ago, when Cecil Rhodes was in the height of his African successes and was doing more than any other man to develop the British interests there, he startled the world by his proposal of a Cape to Cairo railroad, and, in spite of the skepticism of most people, went steadily ahead with his plans, and to-day what people then declared was but a wild dream has come very near being a reality.

In this country to-day we hear talk of an Alaska to Patagonia railroad, and we think of it as a bit of romancing, but its projector is just as much in earnest as was Rhodes in regard to his African continental road, and he declares he expects to see his plans realized some day.

The man who is so daring as to suggest such a vast enterprise is Mr. Charles M. Pepper. He is United



PERU SCENERY THROUGH WHICH ROAD WILL PASS.

States and Pan-American railway commissioner, and he maintains that his project, far from being impossible, is already probable and the direct corollary to the Monroe doctrine. He quotes the late George M. Pullman, who, keen student of railway development as he was, predicted that one day there would be through sleepers between Denver and Buenos Ayres.

Mr. Pepper has seen Pan-American conditions both as a newspaper correspondent and as a delegate to the Pan-American congress in 1901, and since his appointment as railway commissioner he has made a costly survey with a view of a Pan-American railroad. Such a road as he proposes involves the cooperation of 15 of the South American republics, and the rail links necessary to complete such a system would be 5,000 miles in length and would cost \$200,000,000.

To show that the plans for this gigantic system have passed beyond the problematic stage, Mr. Pepper says:

"It may be said that in the beginning of 1906 every Central and every South American country has a definite policy of aiding railway construction as an integral part of the Pan-American system, and some of them, as in the case of Peru and Bolivia, have enacted special legislation. All of them are sympathetic toward an intercontinental trunk line, because it coincides with their plans for internal development and external trade."

The project as it appears on the profile of the map of the survey made by W. T. Shunk, as engineer-in-chief from 1892 to 1898, shows the general direction of the road to be northwest and southeast along the giant chains of the Andes. The governing principle is a long continental backbone with branch ribs in every direction, taking into consideration mineral, agricultural and timber resources, without omitting climatic conditions.

Mr. Pepper has prepared a table showing what parts of the proposed system are already in operation and what parts are under consideration. The road from New York to Laredo, Tex., 2,187 miles, is in operation, as is also that from Laredo to Mexico City. From Mexico City to the Guatemala border there are 730 miles of road, of which 650 are being operated. In Central America there are 351 miles in operation, 100 miles being built and 592 miles projected. In Panama 612 projected. In Colombia, 20 miles in operation and 845 miles projected. In Ecuador 126 miles in operation, 77 miles in construction and 455 miles projected. In Peru there are 277 miles in operation, 223 miles under construction and 1,285 projected. In Bolivia 233 miles in operation, 128 miles under construction and 180 miles projected. And in the Argentine republic there are 1,033 miles of road in operation and 135 miles under construction.

In an imaginary trip over the future system, Mr. Pepper grows enthusiastic over the wonderful display of natural beauties along the line of the road. When the twentieth-century tourist takes the through railway journey, "he will see the relation of sea-level plains, inter-mountain plateaux, profound valleys, shallow depressions, rushing rivers, mighty gulches, tortuous canyons, sinuous passes, the sparkling verdure and the brilliant foliage of the tropics, the treeless regions of the Andes desert, naked cliffs and jutting precipices, fleece-hidden summits, and the pinnacled peaks of the eternal snows, often passing from the rankness of nature to its most sterile and rugged gifts, almost as swiftly as the imagination can conceive the change."

When She Begins.  
Bacon—At just what age does a woman begin lying about her age?  
Egbert—Just as soon as you ask her how old she is.—Yonkers Statesman.

## THE CHOICE OF PAINT.

Fifty years ago a well-painted house was a rare sight; to-day an unpainted house is rarer. If people knew the real value of paint a house in need of paint would be "scarcer than hen's teeth." There was some excuse for our forefathers. Many of them lived in houses hardly worth preserving; they knew nothing about paint, except that it was pretty; and to get a house painted was a serious and costly job. The difference between their case and ours is that when they wanted paint it had to be made for them; whereas when we need paint we can go to the nearest good store and buy it, in any color or quality ready for use. We know, or ought to know by this time, that to let a house stand unpainted is most costly, while a good coat of paint, applied in season, is the best of investments. If we put off the brief visit of the painter we shall in due time have the carpenter coming to pay us a long visit at our expense. Lumber is constantly getting scarcer, dearer and poorer, while prepared paints are getting plentier, better and less expensive. It is a short-sighted plan to let the valuable lumber of our houses go to pieces for the want of paint.

For the man that needs paint there are two forms from which to choose; one is the old form, still favored by certain unprogressive painters who have not yet caught up with the times—lead and oil; the other is the ready-for-use paint found in every up-to-date store. The first must be mixed with oil, driers, turpentine and colors before it is ready for use; the other need only be stirred up in the can and it is ready to go on. To buy lead and oil, colors, etc., and mix them into a paint by hand is, in this twentieth century, about the same as refusing to ride in a trolley car because one's grandfather had to walk or ride on horseback when he wanted to go anywhere. Prepared paints have been on the market less than fifty years, but they have proved on the whole so inexpensive, so convenient and so good that the consumption to-day is something over sixty million gallons a year and still growing. Unless they had been in the main satisfactory, it stands to reason there would have been no such steady growth in their use.

Mixed paints are necessarily cheaper than paint of the hand-mixed kind, because they are made in a large way by machinery from materials bought in large quantities by the manufacturer. They are necessarily better than paints mixed by hand, because they are more finely ground and more thoroughly mixed, and because there is less chance of the raw materials in them being adulterated. No painter, however careful he may be, can ever be sure that the materials he buys are not adulterated, but the large paint manufacturer does know in every case, because everything he buys goes through the chemist's hands before he accepts it.

Of course there are poor paints on the market (which are generally cheap paints). So there is poor flour, poor cloth, poor soap; but because of that do we go back to the hand-mill, the hand-loom and the soap-kettle of the backwoods? No, we use our common sense in choosing goods. We find out the reputation of the different brands of flour, cloth and soap; we take account of the standing of the dealer that handles them, we ask our neighbors. So with paint; if the manufacturer has a good reputation, if the dealer is responsible, if our neighbors have had satisfaction with it, that ought to be pretty good evidence that the paint is all right.

"Many men of many kinds;" many paints of many kinds; but while prepared paints may differ considerably in composition, the better grades of them all agree pretty closely in results. "All roads lead to Rome," and the paint manufacturers, starting by different paths, have all the same object—to make the best paint possible to sell for the least money, and so capture and keep the trade.

There is scarcely any other article of general use on the market to-day that can be bought with anything like the assurance of getting your money's worth as the established brands of prepared paint. The paint you buy to-day may not be like a certain patent medicine, "the same as you have always bought," but if not, it will be because the manufacturer has found a way of giving you a better article for your money, and so making more sure of your next order.

P. G.

### FACTS ABOUT STAMPS.

A specialist who collects the stamps of France and her colonies recently sold his collection for \$11,000.

It takes a stamp collector to tell where are Ancash, Antofagasta, Apurimac, Chiapa, Diego Suarez, Bamra, Yca, Wadwhan, Gollad, Jhino, Ujong, Faridkot, Nabba and Obok.

It requires more than 40 large albums to house the collection of United States stamps owned by the earl of Crawford. This collection of United States stamps is thought to be the most complete in existence.

The credit of originating adhesive stamps is generally given to James Chalmers, of Dundee, Scotland. He first advocated them in 1837, and in accordance with a legislative enactment of December 21, 1839, they were issued for public use in England May 6, 1840.

### Advice Easily Followed.

"Speak every day to some one who you know is your superior," said Edward Everett Hale. An easy duty. If you wife is not at home say something to the cook.—Kansas City Journal.

### Getting It Down Fine.

The two hundred and fiftieth part of an inch is a millimeter. The two millionth part of a millimeter is what Dr. P. E. Shaw, of England, is measuring. The unaided eye cannot perceive much less than one-tenth of a millimeter. With the help of a microscope the eye can see as little as 1-5,000 millimeter. The measuring medium used for engineering gauges will detect differences of 1-8,000 millimeter. By using interference bands of light we can perceive movement of 1-100,000 millimeter.—Scientific American.

### Townsmen and Countrymen.

That the townsman is shorter lived than the countryman is incontrovertible. Dr. Tatham calculated that in the rural districts of England the average expectation of life at birth is 51.48 years for males and 54.04 for females, whereas in Manchester it is only 28.78 for males and 32.67 for females, which means that each male has to sacrifice 10.48 years, or 39 per cent. of his life, and each female 9.32 years, or 34 per cent. of her life for the privilege of being born in an urban area.—Popular Science Monthly.

### Largest Electric Plant.

Chicago is to have the largest electric light and power station in the world. It will be a steam turbine plant, and all the boilers are to be equipped with automatic stokers, so that no manual handling of the coal will be necessary. There will be an electrical kitchen where substantial meals will be cooked by electricity for the employees. There will be a refrigerating apparatus, an ice plant, a number of bedrooms, as well as locker rooms, baths and other conveniences.

### Giant Exhumed.

Workmen engaged on excavations alongside an ancient Roman Catholic chapel at Bristol, England, recently unearthed in a deep trench the coffin of Patrick O'Brien, a giant from Kin-sale, who died in Bristol 100 years ago. His height was eight feet four inches. Identity was established by the coffin plate. The coffin and remains will be reburied.

### Planted in Cans.

"Mr. Gardner—Well, dear, how are the tomatoes you planted?"  
Mrs. Gardner—Oh, John! I'm afraid we'll have to buy what we need, this year.  
"Why how's that, Mary?"  
"I recollected to-day that when I did the planting I forgot to open the cans!"—Puck.

### No Right to "American."

The supreme court of San Joaquin county, California, has decided that no one can acquire exclusive right to the word "American" in business. The decision was given in the suit of the American Fish company, of Sacramento, against the American Fish and Oyster company, of Stockton.

### Dog-Shearing Motor.

On the banks of the Seine recently considerable surprise was caused by a perambulating motor for shearing dogs. The engine is two and one-half horsepower and can shear six dogs an hour. There is little doubt that before long this means of clipping will be generally adopted.

### Girl's Invention.

A 15-year-old girl, of Brussels, has invented a portable turn-table for reversing the direction of motor cars. The apparatus is fixed on the chassis, which has a driving-wheel at each end and is worked by an electric motor. It has been patented.

### Retort Courteous.

"Hold your tongue for a fool," growled Mr. Naggs, who was trying to absorb some information from his paper.  
"Oh, very well," rejoined his better half. "I didn't know you wanted to talk."—Chicago Daily News.

### Found a New One.

"I spent a delightful hour in the park conservatory yesterday," Mrs. Lapsling was saying. "Among their potted plants they've got some of the finest collections of bicuspidis I ever saw in my life."—Chicago Tribune.

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