

A KING'S REQUEST.
If I am a king, as you say I am,
With courtiers to command,
Why am I not treated with due respect,
And kissed upon the hand?

It's a terrible thing to be a king.
Even without a crown;
You are mused and munched, crowded
over and punched,
And joggled up and down.

Your stomach wee is flooded with tea,
Made of the catnip leaf;
And as like as not you are kept too hot,
And flanneled beyond belief.

I should like a little fresh air, if you please,
And some rights of my own,
A few of the minor courtesies
Are appropriate—near a throne!

If I am a king, as you say I am,
Please heed my timid request,
And I'll be as good as a little lamb,
Or a bird in its mother's nest.
—Ethelwyn Wetherald in Good House-keeping.

A Happy Mistake.

By Anna Bolton.

"Is it not possible, my dear Lettice," asked Miss Vynor, having come to an end of her stock of patience, "to find some occupation that will employ your time more usefully, and perhaps with less annoyance to other people?"

"What would you do, auntie?" she said, her hands clasped behind her back, her curly brown head a little on one side, as though it were considering a weighty subject, "what would you do, do you think, if you were to receive no offers by the same post, and you didn't like one any better than the other—the people who sent them, I mean?"

"I cannot—if you refer to proposals of marriage—I cannot at all imagine such a contingency," replied Miss Vynor, stiffly, stooping over her knitting to pick up a dropped stitch.

Lettice's hand crept guiltily to her pocket, and took firm hold of something that was lying there, almost as if she feared lest it should rise from its hiding place and bear witness against her. She began to wish she had not started the subject. Was there the dawn of a suspicion in her aunt's glance?

"Surely, Lettice," continued Miss Vynor, "you do not intend to tell me that you know of any person of our acquaintance who has compromised herself so far?"

"Well, no, I can't say I do," answered Miss Lettice—which was very true, in one way, for she certainly did not mean to tell her aunt anything of the kind.

"Then I think, my dear Lettice, that you might occupy yourself more profitably than in making these idle suppositions," said Miss Vynor.

"Yes, auntie, you're right, as usual. I'll see if I can't find something better to do," and Lettice gladly seized the opportunity of escape from a conversation that had seemed in danger of becoming too personal.

She ran lightly upstairs to her own room, and, after carefully closing the door, drew from her pocket two envelopes, and settled herself in a chair to read their contents, not for the first time.

"Very odd they should both have written and chosen exactly the same time," she said to herself, softly.

For quite a long time Lettice sat with the letters before her, considering, for she was in a serious difficulty.

"I like Humphrey Forde best, I do believe, but he's so grave and so quiet, and, somehow—it's too ridiculous—but sometimes he seems almost afraid of me! His voice quite trembled once or twice when he spoke to me the other day. A man can't be up to much if he's afraid of a girl! No, it must be Will Heywood; he is a dear boy, so bright and full of fun, and ready to enter into everything; and we are sure to get on well together. Are you—I'm half sorry."

She gave a quick little sigh; then rose, drew together her writing materials, and began quickly to write. Only a brief message on each dainty sheet; it was all she could muster courage for. On one she wrote: "Come this evening at 7," and addressed the envelope to W. Heywood, Esq.; and on the other, in hasty, uncertain characters, "Forgive me, oh, do please forgive me, but I cannot!"

As footsteps mounted the stairs towards her room, she thrust both notes in the envelopes, and hid them hastily. The next moment her aunt rapped at the door and entered.

"I cannot say that I approve," remarked Miss Vynor, in her precise way, "of the habit that young people of the present day seem to have formed of spending so much time in their own apartments. In my young days a bedroom was a bedroom, and was not intended to be used as a sitting-room also; and it appears to me that if the habit is conducive to a great waste of time, for there seldom seems to be any visible result from it. I came to propose that we should walk this morning. It is a pity to waste the best part of the day indoors, and especially is it wasted if spent in one's sleeping apartment."

With the help of the walk and other small occupations the hours somehow passed, but never before had a day seemed so long to Lettice Vynor. At length, however, the afternoon drew to a close, and she found herself alone, her aunt having an invitation to spend the evening with an old friend. Perhaps Lettice had counted on this when she dispatched her notes in the morning, but now the time was drawing

near when the favored lover might be expected, she would have given a great deal to be able to delay his visit. Twenty times did she wish vainly that she had sent a different answer, even if it had resulted in the loss of both her friends. Will Heywood as a devoted friend and admirer had been everything that was pleasant; but now it came nearer the idea of Will Heywood as a prospective husband—oh, that was a different affair altogether. For she knew that that was what she meant her message to imply, and that he would be quick to so understand it.

Then at last the doorbell rang, and Lettice heard footsteps crossing the hall. The drawing-room door opened and shut again, but her heart was beating so loudly that she did not hear the name that had been announced, and she advanced to meet her visitor without raising her eyes from the ground.

The next moment she felt herself caught in a strong pair of arms, and kisses were being rained upon her face. "My sweetheart—my sweetheart!" a man's voice whispered passionately, again and again, as if it would never tire of that delightful repetition.

But what—what was this? The room whirled round, her eyes closed, and for a moment she could make no effort to release her self. For this man who held her so masterfully, who was showering his kisses on her face, and whispering passionate endearments in her ear, was not the Will Heywood she had expected, but Humphrey Forde! Humphrey the grave, the quiet, whom she had imagined to be afraid of her! Why was he here? And why, why had she not known before that those kisses all at once had made clear to her—that this was the man she loved after all, and had loved all along?

Then suddenly it flashed across her what had happened. In her haste she had doubtless enclosed the notes in the wrong envelopes, and he had received the one meant for Will Heywood! But he must know the truth! To the girl's delicate sense of honor no other course was possible; even if it meant the loss of his love she would not keep it by acting a lie.

"Oh, you mustn't, you mustn't! I've made a dreadful mistake!" she gasped almost incoherently, finding voice at last, and striving frantically to disengage herself.

Humphrey's arms suddenly loosened, and he held her away from his to look into her face.

"A mistake?" he repeated, slowly, incredulously. "Was that what you really said, Lettice? Do you mean, then, that you do not love me, after all?"

The color flushed over the fair little face from brow to chin, and she hung her head in silence. No, she could not say that!

"Speak, Lettice!" he said, his voice grave and almost stern. "I insist on your telling me this. You know, when you wrote it, what your letter must imply. Do you mean you were mistaken in thinking that you loved me?"

"No, no, not that!" she whispered, as if the truth were being forced from her.

Humphrey could feel how the slight form trembled. He placed her gently in a low chair and drew another beside her.

"Come, let me understand," he said, more kindly. "You say you love me—is it so? Very good; very good. Now tell me, I mean to know, and at once."

"I wrote—I wrote two letters," Lettice stammered, in desperation, and hid her face in her hands.

Only four words, but they flashed the truth upon Humphrey Forde.

"I understand—at last!" he said, and though he spoke quietly, the girl shrank as if she had received a blow.

"You wrote two letters—at the same time, I suppose—and, somehow, by mistake, you sent to me the message intended for another man—for Heywood? Is that your meaning?"

"It must have been so. Oh, can you ever forgive me?" she cried, miserably.

Humphrey rose from his seat without a word, and paced up and down the room, his brows knit, his face dark and stern. The silence grew unbearable to Lettice. If he would only speak, even to cover her with reproaches! Anything would be better than this.

He turned at last, and came and stood before her.

"You told me just now that you loved me, and yet you meant to marry Heywood," he said, as if a thought had just struck him. "Do you love him, too?"

"I—I like him," Lettice answered, with an effort, "more, even, or so I thought this morning, than I liked you. But I know now that I could never have loved him, and I thank God that at least my mistake has saved me from doing him a cruel wrong."

Suddenly Humphrey took the girl's two hands in his own, with a grasp that was almost rough.

"Lettice, when did you find this out?" he asked, in a tone that left her no choice but to answer.

"I found it out—when you kissed me," she whispered, so low that he had to stoop his head to catch the words.

"Oh, can you care for me still, now you know everything?" she cried.

"Do you think my love, then, so slight a thing?" he asked, gravely and tenderly. "Child, do you know that you held my heart—nay, I think my very life—in the hollow of this little hand? I think there has never been a time when I did not love you. Nay, sweetheart, look up and smile! This is no time for tears. Are you thinking of Will Heywood? He will console himself in time, never fear. Things do not go deeply with so light a nature as his. All the same, I do not think we will let him know how near a thing it was for him, oh, little girl!"

Lettice looked up with an April smile, smiling through her tears.

"I think you deserve something better than to be married by mistake," she said.

"A happy mistake for me, my Lettice!" he answered. "And my wife shall be a happy woman if it lies in my power to make her one."—Philadelphia Telegraph.

NOVEL READING CRAZE.

Publisher Thinks That Some College Literary Courses Drive Many to It.

"It is a bad day for the publisher when the book buyer begins to read," is the epigram of a New York publisher. The author of the epigram discussed the other day the increase of novel reading and its effect upon the demand for books other than fiction. Only within the last ten years he said, had the great demand for fiction been the most striking fact of the publishing and bookselling business.

Long before that time fiction had been one of the most important items in the publishing of England and the United States, but never before had so many successful novels been published. He set down the increased circulation of novels to the growth in population, wealth and education, and was hardly inclined to allow a suggestion that on the average the quality of fiction had greatly improved within twenty or twenty-five years. Never before was the financial success of novelists so much talked about and written about and the effect was to stimulate novel writing. Not only are there more novels than ever before published but there are vastly more than ever before rejected by the publishers.

It was doubtful the publisher thought, whether the increase in the reading of fiction has lessened the reading room in other departments of literature. Many of the new readers of fiction are persons who would read nothing else, and lovers of poetry, criticism, history and biography have not been drawn away from their favorite subjects by the fact that unknown young men and women write novels that sell by the hundreds of thousands. A large part of the most intelligent and cultivated readers gives very little time to new fiction. The fact that the colleges and universities are giving more attention to the study of fiction as a literary manifestation has given fiction an importance that it did not once have.

Another thing that the colleges are doing, the publisher thought, had lessened the reading of books proper to literature—that is, the requirement that students preparing for college shall read and study by way of task masterpieces of literature which most such young persons in the natural course of their development would not reach for years after they had finished their preparatory course. The effect was to drive many such students away from literature and make it hateful to it with a distasteful task. Doubtless many such young men and women fled joyfully from the classic of the language to the lightest and most ephemeral of modern novels.—New York Times.

How Mr. Roosevelt Works.

The young men of the country will be entitled sometime to know even more than they have as yet been told about the way in which President Roosevelt accomplishes so much and yet keeps in prime order. His physical constitution was, of course, built up, as everybody knows, year ago by systematic exercises and much out-door life. His mental vigor would seem to have been acquired by a somewhat analogous method. The President does not flinch from the task in hand. He has schooled himself to do the day's work as it comes. He has acquired to a marvelous degree the power of concentration and the habit of decisiveness. He arranges his day well, is very abstemious in eating and drinking, does not allow himself to be cheated out of a full amount of exercise, does not rely in the least upon stimulants or tobacco and, perhaps, above all, never tries to surpass himself or to expend his reserve strength in the achievement of something exceptional. With matters of colossal importance to attend to, he simply does his best as he goes along with every problem that arises in a simple, direct and natural way and thus finds the day sufficient unto itself. He borrows no trouble, sleep soundly, and meets the morrow refreshed and with full courage.—The American Monthly Review of Reviews.

New Stamps for Iceland.

A new issue of stamps has been made for Iceland. The design consists of the head of the King to the right, inclosed by four bands or scrolls containing the value above, the name of the country at the left, the word "postage" at the right, and the inscription "CHR. IX. R. D." below. The workmanship is about the same as that of the preceding issues, but the more elaborate design requires better engraving and printing in order not to appear inferior. These stamps, both regular and official, strike one as inferior to the former issue. Some of the stamps are in two colors, and collectors expect to find them, sooner or later, with inverted centers. The top and bottom of the frames being alike in the preceding issues of the stamps of Iceland, such a thing as inversion of the center could not occur; but with a frame like those now printed such errors may be expected, although great care will be taken to prevent their reaching the public.—St. Nicholas.

France as a Colonizer.

In an article on French colonial affairs Le Temps of Paris gives the following statistics: In 1901, and during the first ten months of 1902, 300 families emigrated to Indo-China, with a capital of 240,500; 213 families went to Madagascar, carrying with them 381,000; and 155 families sought a home in New Caledonia, with a capital of 314,000. Only 37 families went to the other French colonies, their capital representing 113,000.

Le Temps augurs favorably from the immigration in the "Little France of the Pacific," and it thinks that the island's resources will be rapidly developed, especially as no convicts have been sent to New Caledonia since 1897. In a very short time the convicts will all be concentrated at Bourail and at the Ile Nou, and colonists will be the sole occupants of New Caledonia.

Secret Is Well Kept.

The secret of making carbon paper and typewriter ribbons is known to scarcely two dozen people.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL

International Lesson Comments For May 10.

Subject: The Plot Against Paul, Acts xxiii. 12-22—Golden Text, Acts xxiii 12—Memory Verses, 20-22—Study Verses, 10-35—Commentary on the Lesson.

I. The conspiracy against Paul (vs. 12-15). "On the fourth day," Thursday, May 25, "banded together." Made an agreement. "Under a curse." Literally, placed themselves under an anathema. It was an invocation of God's vengeance upon the Jews who failed to do the work which they undertook. But they could be absolved from this vow by the rabbins if they were unable to execute it. Such oaths appear to have been common among the Jews. Josephus tells of a similar conspiracy against the life of Herod into which a party of ten Jews entered with a like failure.

"More than forty." This large number of desperate men, backed up by the Sanhedrin, the highest council among the Jews, would be likely to succeed in their murderous design, and Paul's life was in great danger. "They may have been prompted to this method of getting rid of the apostle, because they did not have the power of life and death any longer, and were not likely to procure Paul's death at the hands of the Roman authorities, on any accusation connected with a religious question."

"To the chief priests." The plotters doubt went to the chief priests and elders who were Sadducees, as they were strongly opposed to Paul (vs. 6-10) and would be glad to see him put to death. "We are bound," etc. Literally, "with a curse have we cursed ourselves." A Hebrew mode of expressing the intensity and earnestness of any action. How firm they made it, imprecating the heaviest curses upon themselves, their souls, bodies and families, if they did not kill Paul! These men must have believed that Paul was the worst of men, an enemy to God and religion, and the curse and plague of his generation, who really his character was the reverse of all this. There are no laws of truth and justice so sacred or strong that malice and bigotry will not break through.

"The Council." The Sanhedrin, the greatest Jewish Council. "It was composed of seventy-one members, chief priests, elders of the people and scribes. Its meetings were held in the temple on the Sabbath and festival days. It had authority to interpret the divine law, to decide on the qualification of priests, and to try those accused of idolatry and false prophecy, etc. The authority to pronounce the death sentence was taken from it by the Romans about three years before the crucifixion of Christ. 'Bring him down from the tower of Antonia to the place where the Sanhedrin held its meetings.' 'Ready to kill him.' They intended to kill him while on the way to the Council. And to this plot the highest dignitaries of the church gave assent. Such a course, however, seems to be in perfect accord with the Jewish opinions and practices of those times. Philo, a great Jewish writer in speaking of the course to be taken towards a Jew who has forsaken the worship of the true God says that it is 'highly proper to inflict immediate punishment on such impious apostates,' not taking time to carry them before any court or magistrate, and this should be done because of an abhorrence of evil and a love for God."

"The plot disclosed (vs. 16-22). 16. 'Paul's sister's son.' This is all that we know of the family of Paul. Nor do we know for what purpose he was at Jerusalem. It is possible that Paul might have a sister residing there; though, as Paul himself had been sent there formerly for his education it seems more probable that this young man was sent there for the same purpose. 'He had received the secret of the plot had too many keepers to be well kept. 'Into the castle.' Thus it appears that Paul's friends had free access to him. 17, 18. 'Paul called.' He had received Christ's own promise of protection (v. 11), but he did not on that account neglect to avail himself of the ordinary means of protecting himself. God's promise enticed him to put his own exertions to the test for his security. 'Young man.' We do not know whether this youth was a Christian or a Jew, nor do we know the means by which he discovered the plot; it is enough for us that God was pleased, on this occasion, to employ a lad as the guardian angel of the apostle. 'The prisoner.' A name which St. Paul was often afterward to employ to himself. To encourage the young man and to allay any fear he might have, and as an expression of kindness and civility. The plot was disclosed to Lyasius with his own consent, and he appeared to know what to do immediately.

III. The journey to Caesarea (vs. 23-35). As soon as the chief captain learned of the plot he ordered 400 infantry and seventy cavalry to be ready to leave Jerusalem at 9 o'clock that same night. This was probably the largest bodyguard Paul ever had. Beasts were also to be provided for Paul, and they were to go with the greatest dispatch to Caesarea to Felix, the Governor. The letter Lyasius sent shows us that he was favorably impressed with his prisoner. Paul probably reached Caesarea by the next evening. He had left Jerusalem under to return. That infamous city was still rejecting those that were sent unto them and fast rushing on to its own destruction—the most terrible destruction the world has ever seen. It was wise for Lyasius to send Paul to Caesarea, for there he would be easier to give him a fair trial. Paul was not confined in an ordinary prison, but resided in the palace of Felix; thus the apostle remained for two years.

Thoughts.—God's saints are under His special care. The Lord is able to overthrow the plans of wicked men. We should always be ready to assist those in trouble. Even children can sometimes do very important work for God's people. Wicked men sometimes resort to the most diabolical methods in order to destroy the influence of God's saints. Those who trust and obey need have no fear of evil workers.

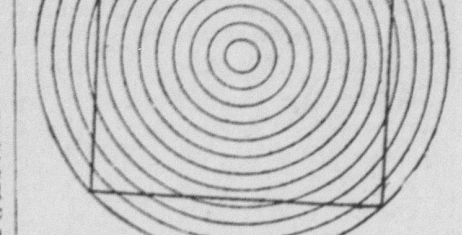
Optical Illusion.

This is a perfect square, as may be proved by laying a rule along each side in succession.

The apparent curvature of the sides is an optical illusion due to the circles.

A curious effect of this sort, alarming to timid people, was produced at the recent opening and dedication of a new theater in Leipzig. The square pillars of the lobby were wound with garlands of leaves, according to time honored German custom, but in a peculiar fashion.

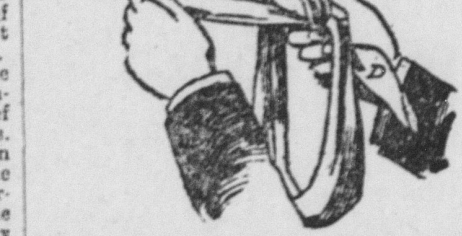
The lower part of a pillar was wound with a right-handed, the upper



with a left-handed spiral, while in the middle the bands of foliage were horizontal. The result was that the pillars looked as if they had "buckled."

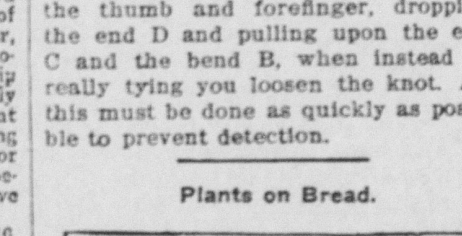
The Magical Knot.

A very entertaining trick is done with a handkerchief. A knot is tied



with two ends of the handkerchief, and by apparently pulling the ends untied again. Take two ends of the handkerchief one in each hand, the ends drooping from the inside of your hands. Tie a single knot, when your hands and your handkerchief will be in the position shown in our illustration. Instead of pulling the ends C and D, grasp the part marked G with the thumb and forefinger, dropping the end D and pulling upon the end C and the bend B, when instead of really tying you loosen the knot. All this must be done as quickly as possible to prevent detection.

Plants on Bread.



Magnified pictures of the plants that grow in mold on stale bread.

Names for New Battleships.

Of the five new battleships authorized by Congress the three 10,100-ton vessels will be named Vermont, Kansas and Minnesota and the two 13,000-ton vessels will be named Mississippi and the Idaho.

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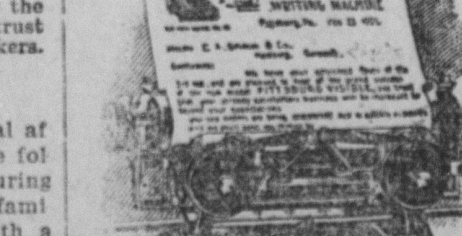
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