THE SQUIRE'S PROPOSAL

FuvE and fifty years," said Squire Dockworthy, meditatively, shak-Dockworthy, meditatively, shaking the ashes out of his pipe, "five and fifty years. A man ain't likely to be married, I guess, when he has lived satisfied with a single lot all these days."

"Stranger things have been known to happen, Unpele Dockworthy," said Ferdinand Aperly, who was a graceless college boy of nineteen or there abouts.

"Not in these parts, I guess," opined the squire.

Well, but, Uncle, things are different from what they used to be," persisted Ferdinand. "You see there never has been a period before, when Woman's Rights were in the ascendency as they are now."

"I don't see as that effects my particular case," said Squire Dockworthy, "I ain't a woman,"

"Ab, you don't comprehend the imminence of the danger," said Ferdinand, solemnly.

"Eh" said the squire.

"With Miss Armathea Jenkyus living next door, and leap year at that," added young Aperley mischieveously, enjoying his relative's growing consternation.

"But you don't s'pose "I suppose nothing," interrupted Ferdinand. "I only put the case problematically, just to convince you sir, that you can't be too careful."

"Oh, pshaw!" said the Squire uneasily, drawing a buge yellow silk handkerchief across his brow. "you can't scare me with your college nonsense, Ferdy. A man can't be married without saying 'I will,' no more than a woman."

But when he went to the village that afternoon Ferdinand noticed that he took the way down Hollow dam, a good eighth of a mile out of his way, sooner than pass the casement of Miss Armathea Jenkyns' one story residence, next his own, on the high road.

"I've made some impression on him at all events," said Ferdy to himself with a sparkle of merry diableric in his eyes.

The Squire was sitting in his firelight that evening enjoying the season between daylight and dark technically known as " blind man's holiday," when there soundcd a soft rap on the pannels of the door.

"Come in," said the squire; and a tall form entered, clad in sober black, with a bonnet of rusty bombazine trimmed with a huge black jet buckle.

"Good evening to ye, Miss Armathea," said the squire a little tremulously, as he recognized the bonnet and garb of his spinster neighbor. "That colt of mine's been breaking through your pickets again? I declare to gracious I have a mind to sell him."

"'Tisn't that, squire, thank you kindly," was the answer.

"Set down! s et down!" said Mr. Dockworthy. "Bless me, what a cold you've got-you're hoarse as a crow."

"Ahem !" said Miss Armathea-"This weather is trying on weak lungs; but I called on business squire."

"I knew it was the colt," said the squire desperately.

"But it ain't the colt," said Miss Jenkyns. "It's myself, squire."

"Oh," said the gentleman.

"I have concluded," went on his visitant, "to take advantage of the rights accorded to our sex by the year, and-andin short, squire-"

Mr. Dockworthy moved his chair a little back, but Miss Armathea anticipated the movement by sinking theatrically on one knee before him.

"Joshua, will you be mine," she murmured, with what might have been either a sobor a bysteric laugh.

"I-I'd rather not," said the squire

hitching his chair a little further still. "Joshua, would you broak my heart?"

"I guess tain't so brittle as all that," said the squire uneasily. "I love you, Joshua Dockworthy-I have

loved you these ten years stammered the lady still on her knees. "Say, oh, say you will be all my own, I'm a good cook, Joshua-I'm a master hand at men's shirts, and everybody knows that a place ain't a place without a woman to slick it up."

"I know," said the squire, "but-" Miss Armathea rose to her feet and flung her arms about the squire's neck.

"Joshua! Joshua! will you say yes."

There was a rattling at the door latch of the room beyond. The squire grew scarlet as the possibility of Ferdinand Aperly breaking in upon this unexpected tete-a-tete occurred on his mind.

"Take your arms away," said the squire nervously. "Please-that's a good girl." "Not till you speak the word that is to seal my future bliss," persisted Miss Jenkyns, letting the rusty bonnet drop on his shoulder.

"Quick !" gasped our hero; "there's some one coming." -

The footsteps drew near. They paused

almost at the door. "Yes," gasped the squire, breaking into a calminy perspiration all over-"yes, yes.

Only go." Miss Armathea Jenkyns only paused for a parting pressure of her lips on her lucient lover's brow, and hurried away with sudden rustling of sombre draperies, while on | your pashu book has been poorly bound."

the other side of the door, the threatening sounds of footsteps passed by without any one entering.

"Thank goodness for that," said Mr. Dockworthy to himself. "If that young raseal Fredy had happened in just then. But what have I done? Engaged myself to marry that old maid? I at five and fifty years of age! I'd better go into a lunatic asylum at once. What will Ferdinand say? I wonder if I couldn't go to Chipa or California or Japan, or some of those faraway places! Or, perhaps it would be better to swear her to keep the peace, or-

And Squire Dockworthy smote his two hands despairingly on the bald spot on the top of his head, as he reflected on the futilty of any remedy short of matrimony for this ailment of leap year.

Yes, as he mused on the past, present and future, he could not help thinking that many a man had found a worse helpmate after all than Miss Armathea Jenkyns. She was not young to be sure, but then neither was he. She was fair, fresh, and pretty; she was very handy at a wedding or a funeral; she comprehended perfectly the exigencies of the needle; and she was just the element that he needed to brighten up the solitary old farm house.

"It aint a bad idea," said the squire to himself : "but I most wish she hadn't been the one to propose it. Very likely, I'd have thought of it myself, if she had given me time. However, leap year is leap year, and I don't suppose we ought to blame the women for taking whatever advantage the law allows them. I won't say nothing to Ferdy, but I'll just drop over there in the course of the morning."

Mr. Dockworth was as good as his word. Miss Armathea Jenkyns' breakfast dishes were hardly washed the next morning when he walked in.

How pretty she looked, like a full blossomed cabbage rose, or a dahlia, or any other mature bloom, in the great black gingham gown and white apron she wore, standing infront of the kitchen sink. Not a gray hair in her abundant tresses-not a crow's foot at the corners of her eyes.

"Well, Armathea, said the squire; a little sheepishly."

"Well, squire," said Miss Jenkyns, with nonchalence, as she wrung out ther dishcloth and hung it on a nail at the corner of the dresser.

"I've come to talk that little matter over with you."

"What little matter?"

"Why about our being married."

Miss Jenkyns paused, with her apron half untied, and stared at the squire with wondering blue eyes.

"My sakes alive!" she ejaculated, "who's talking about being married? Nobody has asked me yet, and if they did, I'm not by any means certain that I could say yes.

" But they've asked me said the squire beamingly.

"Who has ?"

"Why, you-havent't you?"

"Joshua Dockworthy, are you crazy?" demanded Miss Jenkyns, with dignity; "I ask you?"

"Yes last night don't you remember?" "Last night! Why, widow Lercy took tea here, and spent the evening, and I never went across my threshhold. And if I had it isn't likely that I should go philandering over to your house to ask you to marry me, I guess."

"Well, then," said the squire, "look here. It's a trick of that young rascal Ferdinand-one of his college games."

"That's probable enough." said Miss Jenkyns, who looked prettier than ever, with reddened cheeks and shining eyes." . The squire's countenance fell; he was more disappointed than he cared to own,

"Look here, Armathea," said he "don't you suppose-

"Yes," said Miss Jenkyns, laughing and coloring. "I do suppose-that is, if

you wish it very much." "Well, I do," said the squire. "And I'll tell you what-we'll be even with For-

dinand Aperly yet." And when the young collegian heard that his chance for an inheritance from his rich bachelor uncle was to be diminished by the mariage of that elderly relative, he

started in dismay. "You are really going to be married,

uncle," he gasped. "Really and truly."

"And what on earth has put it into your

"Leap year, I think," said the squire, with a sober twinkle in his eyes, which revealed to Ferdinand that his uncle had detected his trick.

Young men who will sit up tate on Saturday nights playing cards, and go to church next morning with a "full deck" in their pockets, should be careful about their being so bestowed as not to fall out. When Bob Howe went to the Baptist meeting in Circleville, and took his seat with his sweetheart in the front pew in the gallery, he had occasion to use his pocket handkerchief, and drawing it rather suddenly from the breastpocket, drew out with it the entire pack of "Cohen's best linen," which flew all about below. The good minister "saw" it, and knowing whereof he spoke, simply observed ; "Young man,

The Dutchman's Strike.

A German man, called Jacob, who had lately arrived in this country, got a sitnation in a planing-mill, at a salary of \$10 per week. Returning home one evening with one of the young hands of the mill (whom he called John), he told him that he got \$15 per week.

"Vot?" cried Jake, "you vas gotten fif-I vos so olt like you a couple of dimes, un I

got me \$10. How dot vos?"? "Well," replied John, "if you don't get

enough, you strike the boss for more." "Vot you say? Strike the boss for more? You dink I vos got more hier vages uf I vos strike ter boss ain'd id ?"

"Yes," replied John, "I think you would."

"All reid," said Jacob.

So on Monday Jacob went to work as usual; but, instead of entering the shop he took up his station by the door, and as the proprietor came down the street, Jacob stepped out in front of him, and struck him saying, at the same time:

"Dare! I vos strike you for more higher vages, don't id?"

The proprietor bawled "Police!" with all his might, which had the effect of bringing an officer on the ground, and Jacob was arraigned for assault and battery .-When the mayor asked him what he had to

"Vell, ton't vos could find me out vot der matter vos id. I go me home mit a man vot work by me to got some more vages higher I vos petter go strike ter poss; so ven ter poss he vos come dish morning, I striken him for dot vages higher, and now quite understan me dot."

During the laugh which followed, the German was informed by the mayor that when he wanted to strike again, not to make such a striking demand, and his employer withdrawing the charge, he was discharged.

A Judicions Judge.

A case recently tried before the Cloumel Irish) Assizes was brought to a singular and novel determination by the presiding Judge. The parties in the case were a young man and a young woman, both of them whom claimed possession of a rural property, one by virtue of an ancient lease, and the other under a will. They were in court for the purpose of giving testimony, when a bright idea occurred to the Judge, who interrupted the case to say:

"It just strikes me that there is an easy and pleasant way to terminate this law suit. The plaintiff appears to be a respectable young man, and this is a very nice young woman. (Laughter.) They can both get married and live happy on this farm. If you go on with law proceedings it will all be frittered away between the lawyers, who, I am sure, are not ungallant enough to wish the marriage may not come off.

The young lady, on being interrogated, blushed, and said she was quite willing to marry the plaintiff. The latter, on being asked if he would wed the young woman, gallantly responded, "Most undoubtedly," The Judge remarked that the suggestion occurred to him by instinct on seeing the young couple. A verdict was subsequently red for the plaintiff on cond his promise to marry defendant within two months, a stay of execution being put or to do this thing or the other; there are on the verdict till the marriage ceremony is completed. The counsel gave the young lady such an unmerciful "chaffing" on her consent, which many in court thought should have been first obtained from plaintiff, that she left the court in tears.

A Common Mistake.

There are a great many common mistakes which might as well be properly understood and avoided.

One is to believe that the sun draws water. It does no such thing. The white rays radiating as it were from the sun, never occur but when the sun is intercepted by broken clouds. These rays are only the light of the sun penetrating the openings through the clouds, and made apparent by the dark back-ground of clouds above or beyond, just as the rainbow is always brought to view on a dark back-ground of beavy clouds. To obtain the same phenomenon on a small scale, go into a dark room that has a small aperture where the sun can shine in, and the defusion that the sun draws water will at once become apparent. Any one who ever helped to store hay or grain in a dark mow, will remember the rays of light that penetrated the roof, and in which could be seen the innumerable and magnified particles of dust floating in the air. The rays in the clouds and the rays in the mow or dark room are produced in the same way and are exactly of the nature-simply and only rays of light .-Hence, these rays in the clouds are no sign of rain, as many uniformed people be-

TA lady at Bridgeport, Conn., remained too long on a train to kiss a friend and trying to get off after it had started, vengefully, as she arose; "any woman, at least," she thoughtfully added.

SUNDAY BEADING

What to Read. I believe very thoroughly in courses of eading, because I believe in having one book lead to another. But, after the beginning, these courses for different persons will vary much from each other.

There are but few books which it is neessary for every intelligent boy and girl, deen toolars a week? Tunder and plitzen! man and woman, to have read. First is the Bible, of which not only is an intelligent knowledge necessary for your healthy growth in a religious life, but-which is of less consequence, indeed-it is necessary for your tolerable understanding of the literature, or even science, of a world which for eighteen centuries has been under the influence of the Bible. Around the English version of it, as Mr. Marsh shows so well, the English language of the last three centuries has revolved, as the earth revolves around the sun. Second, every one ought to be quite well-informed as to the history of the country in which he lives. All of you should know the general with all his force, felling him to the ground history of the United States well. You should know the history of your own State in more detail, and of your town in the most detail of all. Third, an American needs to have a clear knowledge of the general features of the history of England .-Fourth, it is necessary that every intelligent American or Englishman should have read carefully most of Shakespeare's plays. Lastly, it is a disgrace to read even the newspaper, without knowing where the places are which are spoken of. You need, therefore, the very best atlas you can provide yourself with. Remember that what you want from books is the information in them, and the stimulus they give you, and I vos got here for salt and battery, I don't the amusement for your recreation. You do not read for the poor pleasure of saying you have read them. You read for what is in the books, not that you may mark such a book off from a "course of reading," or say at the next meeting of the "Philogabblian Society" that you have just been reading "Kent or Godwin." You must be guided, of course, in your reading, by the time you have, and by the opportunity for getting the books. You will read every day, and you will divide your reading into two departments-you will read for facts and you will read for fancy. Roots must have leaves, you know, and leaves must have roots. Bodies must have spirits, and, for this world, at least-spirits must have bodies. Fact must be lighted by fancy, and fancy must be balanced by fact.

How to Try Your Friends.

Let a man fail in business, what an effect it has upon his former creditors! Men who have taken him by the arm, laughed and chatted with him by the hour, shrug up their shoulders and pass with a cold "How do you do?"

Every trifle of a bill is hunted up and presented, that would not have seen the ight for months to come, but for the misfortunes of the debtor. If it is paid, well and good; if not, the seowl of the sheriff meets him at the corner. A man who never failed knows but little of human nature.

In prosperity he sails along gently, wafted by favorite smiles and kind words from everybody. He prides himself on his name and spotless character, and makes his boasts that he has not an enemy in the world .-Alas! the great change! He looks at the world in a different light when reverses come upon him. He reads suspicion on every brow. He hardly knows how to move; spies about him, a writ is ready for his

To know what kind of stuff this world is made of, a person must be unfortunate, and stop paying once in his lifetime. If he has kind friends, then they are made manifest. A failure is a moral sieve; it brings out the wheat and shows the chaff.

A Prond Man's Bones.

Of all the vices which disfigure the human soul, not one is more foolish than pride. Its folly was practically illustrated by that surly old cynic, Diogenes, who, while examining a heap of bones, was accosted by Alexander the Great.

"What are you looking for ?" asked the proud monarch.

"For the bones of your father, but I cannot distinguish them from those of his slaves," replied the philosopher.

If the cynic was rude he was also right. In the end the king and the slaves are alike. As both come alike naked into the world, so both leave it alike naked. Both come and go with nothing. How foolish then for one to lord it over the other during the brief interval between the cradle and the grave! The proudest man on earth is only dust. Why should be despise his fellows who are made of the same material, and are inheritors of the same destiny .-Consider this, O proud heart, and take lessons in the school of Christ, who was meek and lowly in heart.

The very fact that you have trouble is a proof of the faithfulness of Christ, for you have got one half of His legacy, and you will have the other half; you know Christ's last will and testament bas two portions in it. "In the world ye shall have tribulation ;" you have got it. The was thrown violently on her face. "If next clause is, "In me ye have peace;" ever I kiss anybody again. " said she, you have that too. "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world;" that is yours also, done out the

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