



A HORRID LITTLE FLIRT.

By W. H. MARTIN.

"Yes, it's quite true, Dick—she's a lovely girl—and as charming in manner as in feature. I can't describe her to you—she's beyond description! But she's a horrid little flirt! If I were you I wouldn't go near the place! You take my tip, old man."

Jack looked at his companion, a tall, slim young man, with jet black hair, and a handsome mustache of the same color; then he cast a glance in the mirror opposite, and beheld himself; his companion was much the handsomer man of the two, for Jack barely reached the middle height, he had light hair and a very poor apology for a mustache, and, worst of all, it was straw colored! Then his eyes were blue gray, and looked quite ordinary compared with his friend's fine dark orbs.

"Miss Harley surely couldn't have resisted your charms?" he said, smiling.

"I tell you she has broken the heart of a dozen fellows already—and mine among them," said the other, trying to look melancholy.

"Well, I shall go and still hope to return heart free in spite of this siren's charms," laughed Jack.

But his companion shook his head at him sadly as he left the room.

Mabel Harley was indeed all that Jack's friend had said of her; her beautifully molded figure, her trustful brown eyes, and her wavy golden hair all combined to give her that peculiarly attractive appearance that had led to the fascination and subsequent downfall of so many would-be lovers.

"Who is that blond young man opposite, who keeps looking this way?" Mabel asked of the lady who sat next her, feeling in her wicked little heart that she had already made another conquest.

"Oh, that's Jack Ordry, studying, I believe, for the Bar. He is over for a visit at his uncle's," replied the lady addressed.

"By Jove!" muttered Jack, under his breath. "The fellow didn't exaggerate in the least—she's simply charming!"

After dinner Jack received a formal introduction to Mary Harley. He invited her to dance, and Mabel complied with a smile which was the more dangerous on account of its seeming innocence.

After the dance the two strolled away together, and took a seat almost hidden from view by the spreading leaves of a palm.

"Are you fond of society, Mr. —?" Mabel queried, fixing her lovely eyes on him.

"Call me Jack, if you please, it is easier to remember, and sounds so much nicer from your lips," Jack responded with one of his most slavish looks.

Mabel smiled winningly; so she had made another conquest already. She wished that fellows wouldn't lose their hearts quite so readily—it spoils the fun.

"With regard to society, I think it depends to a great extent upon the people one meets there. Sometimes I feel awfully bored, but I am enjoying myself to-night immensely."

He cast at her another loving glance as he spoke.

"Oh, for shame, Jack!" she cried, slapping him playfully on the back. "And now—" she continued with pretended gravity, "I am going to concede a point and allow you to call me Mabel."

His answer was a surprise to her. "How delightful! Especially as there will be no danger!"

"Danger of what?" she responded quickly.

"Of us falling in love—or any of that sort of nonsense. We shall be just like brother and sister together."

Then her conquest was not so complete after all, and Mabel answered in momentary pique: "There certainly will be no danger as far as I am concerned!"

Jack answered with wonderful frankness: "Nor as far as I am concerned, either. I think that is quite young enough for that sort of thing, and how pleasant it will be to be able to talk naturally to each other without being misunderstood."

"What a horrid fellow!" Mabel cried, stamping her foot impatiently on the carpeted floor of her room. "The very idea of talking to me like that! But I'll punish him—I'll make him fall in love with me, and then just tell him what I think of him."

"So the duel has begun," Jack so-liloquized.

So Jack waited two days before he paid the Harleys a visit. Mrs. Harley compelled him to take afternoon tea with them, and Jack confined his attentions almost entirely to the old couple; they were simply delighted with him, while Mabel thought his inattention to herself was positively rude.

However, Mabel schemed to get a few moments alone with Jack in the garden after tea, and then she commenced her pre-formed plan of revenge with her utmost ability. For a time she thought she was succeeding pretty well in her wicked plot, and at last felt emboldened to put the question:

"Have you never been in love?" she asked.

Jack treated this as some huge joke. "Good gracious, no!" he laughed.

If Mabel felt mortified at his answers she covered her confusion ably enough, and her laughter never sounded merrier nor more unaffected than as she led the way back to her parents.

"A very successful evening," Jack commented, as he threw himself down on the bed.

"Positively detestable!" cried Mabel, "I hate him!—and I know he does care for me—he couldn't help it!"

Jack's visits were frequent after this; he said there was nothing he liked better than a conversation with Mr. Harley, and one of Mrs. Harley's cups of tea.

Mabel's conduct toward Jack changed and she became more "stand-offish." Under these new tactics she felt sure she should draw him on.

"I have it!" she cried, after having lain awake for two whole hours plotting; "I'll make him jealous!" Then she rolled over and went to sleep in less than five minutes.

Now there was in the neighborhood a certain Colonel who showed undisguised admiration for Mabel.

She went walks with the Colonel and generally contrived to drop across Jack; that young gentleman, however, contrary to expectations, showed the utmost unconcern; he raised his hat and positively smiled when he first met them—to Mabel's great disgust.

A week later the neighborhood was surprised by the announcement that Miss Harley and the Colonel were engaged to be married. "Now we shall see!" Mabel said to herself triumphantly.

The next day Jack dropped in for tea; Mabel met him with a smiling countenance.

"I suppose you have heard the news?"

"Yes," he replied, cheerfully, "and have taken this early opportunity of calling to congratulate you." He spoke so calmly, could it be possible that he didn't care at all.

"The Colonel is a splendid fellow! So handsome! Everybody is fond of him—and though you perhaps could have done better—well, it's best to choose the one that we really love."

Then Jack took his seat at the table, and talked away to the older couple, but the worst of it was he seemed unable to speak to Mabel without bringing the Colonel's name in every time; he seemed a good deal more pleased about the arrangements than Mabel herself. Why couldn't he let the subject drop?

"And when is the marriage to take place, Mabel?"

"I don't know!" She answered so shortly that both Mr. and Mrs. Harley turned to look at her.

Only Jack didn't notice, and went on innocently:

"Anyway, you'll invite me to the wedding—I shall be back in town by then, I expect, but you must write and let me know."

Jack returned home moody and dissatisfied. He was not at all sure of his ground, but he consoled himself by the thought that if he had betrayed his love, she would only have treated him the same as the rest of them—better that she should never know.

The engagement with the Colonel only lasted a fortnight, then the report was circulated over the town that the match was broken off. That afternoon Jack made another call.

"And how's the Colonel?" he queried.

They were standing alone in the garden together.

"I don't know," she replied sullenly. "Haven't you heard that the engagement has been broken off?"

"I am extremely sorry," cried Jack. "Could I do anything to explain the misunderstanding—for I am sure it is only a misunderstanding?"

"No; it is quite irrevocable—I find that I do not care for him—I love another."

There was a look in her eyes that conquered Jack all in a moment. He knew that he was a fool. He had been forewarned what would happen—he went into the snare with his eyes open—simply because he couldn't help it.

"Mabel," he gasped, "dare I hope that I am the one?"

She looked at him unmoved, that sickle smile still upon her lips. "But, you know, you did not intend to be married until you were at least thirty?" she cried, wickedly.

"Mabel," he cried, passionately, "I have loved you all along!" And he was pouring into her ear the tale of burning love.

So she had conquered, at last her revenge was consummated!

Perhaps Jack saw something of triumph in her eyes, for he broke off in the midst of his appeal and cried fiercely:

"I know that I am a fool to let you know!—I was told that you had no heart—you cannot love nor know what love is! Well, you have heard my tale and added another conquest to your list! And now farewell forever!" He turned abruptly and left her standing there.

"Jack—Jack! Come back to me—I do love you!"

And Jack turned to see her little hands stretched out toward him, while her wonderful beauty was enhanced ten-fold by the soft light of love that shone from her eyes.

"Ah!" she sighed, her lovely head resting on his shoulder, and her arms encircling his neck, "I did not know what it was to be in love then—had I known I would never have led others on!"

Then she put her arm through his, and they walked back very slowly toward the house.—New York News,

MANKIND NOT APT TO STARVE

SUCH A "DISASTER" HAS BEEN PREDICTED.

The Modern Prophet is Singularly Unreliable, and in His Latest Theory He Has Not Taken Into Account Methods of Scientific Farming.

Universal and overwhelming disasters have been predicted so often and with such exultant confidence, and have so invariably failed to come off, at least in modern times, that mankind should be rather immune from panic on this account, writes the Washington correspondent of the New York Post. Perhaps the Deluge is the single instance in which an expected cataclysm or general wind-up has been realized "as advertised."

There have been ingenious calculations as to the end of the world, based on Biblical chronology and prophecies which were affirmed to be the result of direct inspiration; and in both cases the prophets and their trusting followers have given away or sold their substance, put on their ascension robes, and, like Darius Green with his flying machine, climbed to the roof for a good start toward the skies; but only to be disappointed. The calculations were demonstrably correct, and the prophets were in no way to blame for the failure.

Long-tailed comets have been a frequent source of widespread alarm and even despair. Not all the savants of the French Academy could convince the people of France, including many of the clergy, that an especially brilliant comet in the early part of the present century would not strike the earth and smash it into bits.

Not even the solemn persons who are addicted to science are all above doing a little in the fortune telling line. No less a personage in that realm than Professor Plazzi Smith, astronomer royal of Scotland, forecast to a day the world's end, basing his prediction on incontestible measurements of the pyramids. His readings were far more ingenious and convincing than were those of Ignatius Donnelly on the Shakespeare-Bacon puzzle.

Why the Astronomer Was Wrong.

Like those of Mr. Pancks in "Little Dorrit," the figures of the astronomer were right. It was clear that the world had to end at the time he noted. Only some change which concerned the earth's endurance can account for the existence of the present generation of men, so long after depopulation and general destruction should have taken place. Another person of science in Europe was assured that a great tidal wave would engulf New York and Hoboken soon after the explosion of Mont Pelee. It did not.

More scientific and far more serious was the prophecy of Sir William Crooks, president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, who was backed by the great body of men versed in the sciences. He declared that at a not distant period and in the course of a single generation the entire human race would perish by starvation. He held this to be the inevitable result of the rapid exhaustion of nitrogen, the vital element of the soil. This served the novelist, H. G. Wells, as matter for a characteristic tale. He fancied that such a calamity, as stupendous as the great flood, should have its Noah—its wise man of foresight, who would construct a huge steel building with a reserve of nitrogen which would allow him to raise food enough to preserve himself and family from the general fate.

Nobody challenged the melancholy conclusion of the eminent Sir William. Nitrogen is produced in nature by processes infinitely slow, while multiplying and every hungry man consumes it in raising foodstuffs with steadily increasing rapidity. Until lately he has not thought of restoring it by any adequate means. It could be figured with some approach to accuracy how long the productiveness of the soil would be such as to maintain the life of the growing race. In the laboratory the chemist was at work on the problem of the artificial production of nitrogen, and happily he solved it. It can be done by the use of electricity, and with a few falls like those of Niagara it would be practicable to obtain an incalculable supply of that agent at a low price. So the fear of universal starvation became less distressing.

Then it was discovered that nature has laboratories by which nitrogen is drawn from the air to enrich the soil. The agency in this case is beneficent bacteria. Alfalfa, red clover, the pea, bean and other legumes are such laboratories and to their roots the bacteria attach themselves. One of the most interesting and important developments of scientific agriculture is that it is practicable to inoculate the legumes with bacteria and transfer them to poor and exhausted soils.

Progress in Scientific Farming.

The latest prophecy of Sir William Crooks does not seem to take account of the progress of scientific farming in America. He affirmed that within the near future the world would be faced by a serious shortage in the wheat supply. He quoted Hyde, the American statistician, to the effect that by the year 1943 this country, with a population of 139,000,000,

would not be able to spare a bushel of wheat, corn, oats nor a ton of hay, for export. Domestic consumption would demand all cotton and wool, fruit and vegetables, dairy and poultry products. The growth of acreage to population was already decreasing and the statistician could determine when no further acreage could be gained.

To meet these contentions there are diversified crops, irrigation, the introduction of new products, and, especially, scientific farming. A paper recently issued by Karl F. Kellerman, physiologist in charge of soil bacteriology, contains some of the results of legume inoculation. Of about 8000 farmers who were supplied with cultures more than one-half have made reports. Successful inoculation is indicated by the growth of nodules on the roots, from which the nitrogen drawn from the air is fed to the plant and to the surrounding soil. The effect is not only to increase the crop of legumes and in every way improve it, but also to enrich the land for subsequent crops of different natures.

Perhaps few facts could show more impressively the revolution that is taking place in practical farming than this process of inoculation.

A better idea of the value of inoculation can be obtained from the reports of the farmers. Thus one who used alfalfa writes: "The inoculated crop did fine, while the uninoculated was a failure and always has been so far." Another, using red clover, says: "Inoculated crop strong and healthy. All the seed of the uninoculated died in forty to sixty days, as did every uninoculated clover field in the vicinity." One who planted the cowpea says: "In the inoculated field the increase of peas over the uninoculated was fully three to one. As to hay, about two and a half tons to the acre in favor of the inoculated." Still another writes: "Three tons of hay from an acre of inoculated seed, one-half ton on land not inoculated."

Scientific farming may prevent the realization of Sir William's doleful prophecy. It obviously means an enormous increase in the products of the land and probably insures a greater proportionate increase of breadstuffs than of population.

Crusade Against the Billboard

By H. G. H. TARR.

Some years ago I made a mental resolve not to buy any commodity whatever or patronize any enterprise that was advertised upon a billboard, fence, barn or rock in the open country. I have just read an article in The Craftsman for January headed "To Boycott the Billboard." The author gives a number of suggestions such as organizing societies with members pledged to this object, and tells us of movements in Great Britain and here having this in view. All of which has not so far and will never amount to a hill of beans. The reason of this is that not enough people are sufficiently interested to take the trouble to attend meetings of an organized society, to say nothing of organizing and going about soliciting members.

You can't reach this crime against nature through legislation as a man's land is his own, as his house is his castle, and a law preventing his exhibiting or permitting the exhibition of an unobjectionable sign thereby would surely be unconstitutional.

So far as I know I have flocked alone in this heroic resolve, all the time trying to devise some plan whereby I can get an organized support without an organization. It has now occurred to me that the following would be practicable, and if properly launched could be made effective and would put out of business every fence, billboard and rock artist in the country.

At the first newspaper editors' convention (I understand they have an association in every State) let them be resolved that all shall insert in their columns a form of pledge which their readers are to be invited to sign, cut out and return to the paper.

This will inspire editorial articles which will tend to shame the farmer and make it more difficult for the billboard man to hire the privilege.

The action of one State association, I venture to say, will be followed by a similar movement all over the country. Of course it will be met with the objection that newspapers could not afford valuable space in continued issues, for to be effective it must be kept up. The answer to this is that while doing a great good they are diverting a large amount of money spent in advertising into a legitimate channel, the columns of a newspaper.

Possibly in some cases the influence of the large advertiser would be too great, but I have observed that the billboard man seldom does much newspaper advertising, so while sweeping from God's green country the soap, castor oil and baking powder ads isn't it possible the newspaper man may be doing a very good stroke of business?

Nuisance to Editors.

One of the modern nuisances of editorial work nowadays is the volunteer information bureau, which out of pure love sends news of one sort or another to be published without charge, declares the Hartford Courant. Nine times out of ten this is easily perceived to be the work of some hired press agent, whose purpose is to steer "public opinion"; the tenth time you can guess the same thing. Why all this trouble, unless it is to effect some end which the galleys editor cannot suspect?

SUGGESTS NATIONAL BOARD OF HEALTH.

W. J. Lampton Says Diseases Would Be Largely Preventable by Federal Aid.

Isn't it about time that we were having a National Board of Health of importance equal to that of any other department of the government? According to a statement of the American Medical Society, "during last year 1,500,000 persons died in this country and there were 4,200,000 sick, involving the comfort and material prosperity of 5,000,000 homes and 25,000,000 people."

If we had a population of four or five hundred millions these figures would not mean so much, but we have not. On the contrary, we have no more than will show that more than one-quarter of our people are threatened in their material comfort and prosperity every year by disease. Medical men believe that at least one-third of this is preventable by knowledge already in hand and the percentage might be largely reduced if federal aid were extended and all the powers of the government available in such good work were put into effect.

Certainly no sickly nation can be strong, and as certainly public health is of more importance than any other one necessity of proper existence. The government looks after the health of cattle and sheep and hogs and other animals of commercial value, but are not the people, who constitute the government, of more significance? And what has the government done, broadly speaking, for the people at large? When the yellow fever, cholera or plague manifests itself the government becomes active enough, but what government aid is expended for the development of knowledge of the various preventable and prevailing diseases that carry off so many useful people every year?

Our physicians are making tremendous progress, and they are doing so out of their own means and the means of those rich men who see more clearly than the government itself what is needed and what should be done. But so important a matter as the maintenance of public health, the acquisition of medical knowledge and the dissemination of information of vital benefit to all the people should be in the hands of the government, with men and means sufficient to pursue disease to its source and throttle it at its beginning. We cannot finally conquer Death, but we can stand him off until our time is up if we only know how, and the government is the one to find out how and to inform us.—W. J. Lampton, in the New York Herald.

A Strip of Territory Added to Alaska.

It is reported in Ottawa that a strip of territory a furlong wide and some fifty miles long, will be added to Alaska, owing to the work that has just been completed positively locating the 141st meridian. There was no dispute as to the location of the boundary to the north of Mount St. Elias, since it was agreed a number of years ago that the line should follow the 141st meridian from that mountain northward to the Arctic Ocean. The line, however, had never been actually marked. Of late years the extensive mining operations in the White River country have led many prospectors to stake out claims which may or may not be in the United States territory. By means of the telegraph, the most accurate method known, the old determination made by the lunar method was checked up, placing the meridian about 600 feet farther east than it had hitherto been supposed to exist.—Scientific American.

A Movement For Clean Bread.

A movement is on foot in Washington to safeguard the bread supply of the public by wrapping it in paper as soon as it has been baked. Some opposition having been offered by the bakers, who objected that the wrapping would impair its palatability and digestibility, the Health Department experimented with various kinds of paper and discovered that the effect of the protective covering was to preserve the freshness of the bread, which was superior after twenty-four hours to that which had not been wrapped. Another advantage of the proposed method is that the union label, which is now affixed directly to the loaf—a plan objectionable to many consumers—could, with the adoption of this method, be used to seal the wrappers. Some restaurants in New York have already taken to the use of similar wrappers for the rolls which they serve to their patrons.—Leslie's.

The Household.

What is a household? A household is a place where babies and dust are raised, bills are contracted, coal is burned, food is eaten and occasionally auctions are held.

As a rule, a household consists of two heads and one foot. One head is the cook, the other the man's wife.

Every day every household is visited by all the trusts.

At regular intervals it is visited by sickness, health, taxes and clergymen.

Nothing happens that the household doesn't get its share of.

It's a partner in epidemics, panics, elections, wars, tidal waves. An earthquake on the Pacific Coast will be reflected in every household in New York.

The stock market quotations are written on the walls and ceiling and floors of every household.

Nothing succeeds (or fails) like a household.—Life.

The German Way.

In Germany the adulteration of wine and beer is prohibited for home consumption, but permitted for exportation. It is an open secret that wine from Vienna and beer from Munich are doctored before shipping to the United States.—New York Press.



Savings banks are established in 228 schools in Scotland. There are 35,712 depositors, with \$48,990 to their credit.

In the course of a paper before the French Academy of Medicine Professor Grimbart recently stated that the central pharmacy, which dispenses supplies to the public institutions in Paris and the Department of the Seine, annually furnished 12,000 leeches for use in the hospitals.

J. Pierpont Morgan has presented to the Wadsworth Athenaeum, at Hartford, in memory of his father, fourteen volumes descriptive of his art collections in London and New York. Each volume is valued at \$1000.

Amateur photographers are not happy in Russia. They have to secure licenses, and if they chance to take a snap-shot of a view near a fortress they are liable to be whirled to Siberia as spies.

Horticulturists have discovered that roses and mignonette cannot live together. If the two flowers are placed together in a vase both wither within half an hour.

Laconians, whose chief city was Sparta, were famous in ancient Greece not only for their success in war, but for their scorn of luxuries and their brevity of speech. When King Philip of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great, threatened them, saying, "If I enter Laconia I will level your city to the dust," they sent back the reply, "If!" Their short answers give to the English language the word "laconic."

New York City has 113 public parks, varying in size from a few square yards in the angle at the crossing of streets, up to Pelham Bay Park, containing 1756 acres.

A New Jersey commuter, fond of figures, estimates that during the six coldest days of this winter, when the rivers were filled with ice, the delays in ferry transportation to persons going to and from their work in Manhattan amounted to forty-two years of working days for one man.

An American syndicate has purchased the Port Coloso Railway and nitrate fields of Chile, as well as nitrate fields in Tarapaca and Antofagasta for \$12,000,000.

Mr. Richard Carter, of South Poland, is probably the tallest man in Maine. His height is six feet eight inches, and he is as straight as an arrow. His shoulders are very broad, arms unusually long and body well proportioned. He weighs only 199 pounds.

Home Paper the Best Advertisement.

The best advertising medium of a town is its home paper, provided the paper be properly sustained, says the Richmond Times-Dispatch. A good home paper, well edited, well printed, well filled with local advertisements, having the smile of prosperity on its countenance, and well circulated, is in itself an index to the thrift and enterprise of the community it represents and an expression of the enterprising spirit of the people. It has now become an axiom of trade that every community is judged by its newspaper. If the newspaper is dull and poverty-stricken, the outsider who sees it will conclude that it represents a dull and thriftless community. If, on the other hand, it is live in all its departments, and shows that it is well sustained, the outsider will judge its constituency accordingly. And usually it is a fair basis of estimate. Nine times out of ten the local newspaper is a correct photograph of the town in which it is published and from which it derives its support.

This is a matter which the people of every town should seriously consider. They should bear in mind that every copy of the home paper goes out as a courier, with a message to the outside world. It is for the people to say what sort of a courier it shall be, and what sort of message it shall carry. If the people proclaim to the world that they will not sustain a home paper, how can they expect the world to believe that they will sustain any other home enterprise that might move in?

The money spent on the home paper should be expended in subscriptions and individual advertisements, for, as we have said, the paper should be an advertisement in itself of the community. But the local paper is necessarily limited in its reach, and in addition to local support the town should appropriate a liberal fund for general advertising in mediums which have a wider circulation. The town is too large to advertise abroad. The largest cities in the United States are the largest advertisers, and if the cities find it necessary to advertise, how much more necessary is it for the towns, which are not so well known to do so!

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In Germany the adulteration of wine and beer is prohibited for home consumption, but permitted for exportation. It is an open secret that wine from Vienna and beer from Munich are doctored before shipping to the United States.—New York Press.