

IDLE JACK.

He Went to Work and There Were Results.

"Marriage between us in our present circumstances would be a mistake," said the girl.

The man looked his wonderment out of mild blue eyes. He sipped his coffee, blew cigar smoke lazily upward and appeared to think.

"Circumstances," he observed, "were never more propitious."

The girl shrugged her shoulders in comic despair.

"Will you never understand me, Jack, dear?" she asked.

Jack smiled. "Why should I?" he returned. "If I understood you doubtless you wouldn't charm me as you do. Ignorance with me is bliss."

The girl fell silent and the man continued to sip his coffee and smoke as if he hadn't a care in the world.

Those who knew John Wood Knight and those who knew of him would have wondered with him at the girl's remark. He was born in the purple, as birth goes in New York.

Of good family, with a fortune that made work unnecessary, possessing a strong and handsome body, which housed a mind of average education and intelligence, he did not seem to be the sort of man to make any woman doubt the advantage of marrying him. He was distinctly eligible and had been much sought after until it was evident that Priscilla Sanborn had annexed him for good.

Priscilla had not always had doubts. She had accepted with pride congratulations on her engagement to John. Their friends said it was an ideal match. The man was tall, fair-haired and pink skinned, the woman a brunette above the average in height and of exceptionally good figure. Outwardly they were well matched.

They had dined this night in a back room of the Cafe Pimlico, one of those quiet places within sight of Broadway but free from the glare and noise of that resplendent thoroughfare. They had been here many times before. John had said it was the only place in New York you could get things properly cooked, and he was a stickler for good cooking.

"You can't eat frills," he said when some one asked him why he didn't go to the places approved by fashion. John was very good to himself in the matter of eating.

Priscilla had asked John to bring her to the Pimlico this night. She had said, somewhat oracularly, that they must have a good talk; a good talk to the boots talk was the way she put it.

Priscilla was a very sensible young woman. Those who knew her at all intimately declared that her good sense was very pronounced, that it was impossible for her to be frivolous. She never allowed her feet to stray where her head had not pointed the way.

She had been silent through dinner. Max, the rotund waiter, had served them in astonishment, for they were old customers and usually were very talkative. After he had brought the coffee he withdrew, shaking his head doubtfully.

"I'm afraid Mr. Knight and his young lady have had a falling out," he remarked to the chef.

The chef, intent upon a dish the success of which in other hands would have been doubtful, grunted. "Too bad" and went on with his work.

John had not worried over Priscilla's preoccupation, and even her declaration that their marriage would be a mistake did not get below the even surface of his mind.

Priscilla watched him with a queer little smile. She loved him, she told herself; the trouble was she loved him sensibly. When you let the head rule over the heart romance takes wings. Is it not so, you who have loved?

However, Priscilla had made up her mind to something and it was bound to come out. She stopped smiling and returned to the attack.

"I want you to listen to me, Jack," she said, "I want you to understand why our marriage as matters are now would be a mistake. I have read much and I have observed more, and I have come to the conclusion that the man who doesn't work, who doesn't bear his burden of the world's burden, will not make a good husband, and"—she hesitated for a moment and blushed prettily—"and will not make a good father. Jack, dear, you're a loafer."

"Sure," said Jack. "Why not?" "Why don't you work?" persisted Priscilla.

"Don't have to," said Jack. "Jack," said Priscilla somewhat sharply, "if you marry me you've got to work."

"Good Lord!" said John Wood Knight, startled, "so that's what you want. All right, I'll work. Don't mind work a bit if it pleases you. What shall it be?"

Priscilla did not deceive herself into thinking she had won. She was prepared for this ready acquiescence.

"I want you to make a career for yourself."

"What in, pray?"

"In politics."

"Well, I'll be hanged," said Jack. "Wouldn't I just make an ass of myself in politics? I suppose you want me to be President?"

"Hardly that, Jack. At least not yet a while." Priscilla was serious.

"But it has been on my mind for some time that my husband must be a man who does something else than spend

the money other people made for him. You don't have to work for money, so you must work for fame. I'm afraid you wouldn't gain much fame in literature or art, or even in a profession even if you were to go to school 'all over again. Politics it is. You'll be a reformer, and with me to help you you will make yourself somebody."

"I'll bet you won't," said Jack. He sat up straight and took control of the talk. "Now, you listen to me, Priscilla. Do I understand you to say that you won't marry me unless I work?"

Priscilla nodded.

"All right. Now I want you, Priscilla." He reached out his hand and patted hers as it lay on the table. "I want you, and if I've got to work to get you, why, I'll work. You are so keen on the dignity of labor that I'll have to go to it; but I am going to pick out my own job."

"That's the talk, Jack, dear," said Priscilla clapping her hands. "What will you do?"

"I'll be a cook," said Jack.

"A cook!" Priscilla almost shrieked. Then she laughed. "Don't joke, dear," she said, "this is serious."

"And I am serious," responded Jack, very serious, indeed. "I am quite content to live the life as it came to me, without questioning the right or wrong, but I grant you the emptiness of my life has made me disatisfied at times. I looked to you to fill that emptiness, to keep me always in tune with life. But you believe in work and don't want me unless I work. Therefore—the logic is easy—I must work. And I will work at the only thing for which I have an aptitude—cooking. And when I have made a name for myself I will return to you bringing my laurels."

Priscilla had no word ready, so John went on.

"If you could have found your tongue you would have said that it isn't the work for a gentleman. I know. But if you believe in the dignity of labor, so do I, and I believe that any work that is fit for the man is fit for the gentleman. Not that I recognize any essential difference between the man and the gentleman, but I fear you do. Now you know I can cook. Haven't I been the cook when we went to Dick Stalling's camp in the Adirondacks and didn't you applaud with the others? I like to cook, too. A frying pan enthralls me to do great things and I have a positive love for a broiler."

"Max," he called to the waiter. Max came up with the bill.

"Not yet, Max," said John. "Can you tell me if there is a vacancy here for a cook?"

"The second cook left yesterday, sir. Have you some one to recommend?"

"Yes, myself."

"It pleases you to jest, Mr. Knight," Max was somewhat aggrieved.

"No joke at all," said John. "I have decided to stop loafing and go to work. There is nothing I can do better than cook. Who hires the cooks here?"

"The chef, sir."

"Ask him to come in, please." All the other guests had gone, so his request could be granted.

"Yes, sir," said Max, departing for the kitchen.

Priscilla had found her tongue. "Don't be a fool, Jack," she almost snapped.

Jack's blue eyes beamed on her. "It's your own doing, dear," he said.

Max returned, having in tow a portly, white aproned, white capped individual, who bowed ceremoniously.

"This gentleman," said Max to the chef, indicating John Knight, "would like to cook for you."

"That's right," said Jack. "Can you give me a job, Mr.—"

"Pelletier," put in Max.

M. Pelletier bowed. He spoke English with scarcely an accent.

"Possibly," he said. "I will give you a trial anyway, because you appreciate my cooking, as I know. But if you work for me it must be serious. The kitchen of the Cafe Pimlico is not a school for cooks, and it is not a place for idleness."

"I mean business," said Jack, "and will report for duty to-morrow. At what time?"

"Come at 10 o'clock," said M. Pelletier. He bowed and moved majestically back to the kitchen.

Jack paid his bill and he and Priscilla left the restaurant. Priscilla was fairly dazed. In the taxicab she was silent and John, having had his say, wisely refrained from further speech.

At her home John declined to go in for the usual lovers' good night chat. As soon as he had been admitted he turned to go.

Cafe Pimlico. It was a different Pelletier who received him.

"Understand, young man," he said, "you've got to work. Why you are doing this I don't know, but since you are doing it you've got to do it right."

"Quite right, sir," said John Knight.

John was almost discouraged at the end of the third day. Routine was hard to him. Then came a change. Without realizing it, he had come to like the work. It was with pride that he sent out a flet a la Marengo or a Chateaubriand Pimlico to some particular guest, while Pelletier nodded grudgingly approval.

One day he prepared a dish of his own contriving, a dish he had set before his friends many times in his idle days. Pelletier had a little end of the kitchen and at Pelletier's dinner hour Jack sent in the dish with his compliments. He waited with a boy's eagerness to hear what the great cook would say.

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Pelletier did not appear for some time and the more he delayed the more Jack hoped. Finally Pelletier emerged.

"Your dish?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," said Jack.

"We will put it on the bill of fare," said the chef. Jack blushed with pleasure. So it happened that ragout d'agneau a la Jack became a popular dish at the Cafe Pimlico.

Max the waiter had taken a friendly interest in Jack's endeavors and favored him from time to time with the gossip of the cafe. When any diners appeared whom Max recognized as Jack's friends he would bring back word to the kitchen. One night Max came in somewhat agitated.

"Miss Sanborn is with a party at my table," he said.

"Yes?" said the new second cook.

"She has insisted on the ragout a la Jack."

Jack set about preparing it with an odd smile. Later in the evening he called Max.

"Did Miss Sanborn say anything to you?" he asked.

"Nothing," Jack looked disappointed. "But she ate and ate of the ragout," declared Max, and Jack brightened. "At least my work is appreciated," he said to himself.

Jack Knight had been the second cook in the Pimlico for a month when he had realized that he had found a vocation. He had begun the work partly in a spirit of bravado, but the liking he had had for amateur culinary pursuits had grown into a passion. It was in him to be a cook. Maybe his great-grandmother or some other ancestor had, been a cook and he was a revision to type.

Jack began to dream. He would excel in this profession into which the word of a woman had sent him. He would be a head chef—better still, he would have his own establishment. It came to him as a surprise that he could have a place of his own. He had forgotten that he was wealthy.

There was nothing rash about John Knight. He would stay a year in the Pimlico, if he need be, until he had mastered at least part of the science of cooking; then he would open a place which would attract the gourmets of the world. Old Pelletier would be his steward and between them they would make the Cafe Jack famous.

His musings were interrupted by the unusual sound of a woman's voice. Women came rarely to the Pimlico kitchen. He looked over the serving counter and beheld a vision.

His first glance caught two roguish black eyes, a pretty mouth, half open as if to let out a question, and rosy cheeks, a dimple in each. Later he added to the picture hair of the deepest black, arranged in a studied lack of order, and a hat which was all red roses. Jack, it must be confessed, stared. He became aware that the vision was talking.

"Where is papa?" it said.

"Who is papa?" responded Jack.

"Monsieur Pelletier."

"I'll call him," Jack got a chair for her and summoned his chef.

"Antoinette," said Pelletier, in an attempt to be severe, "you shouldn't interrupt me in business hours."

"But papa, I had to see you, really and truly, on something that wouldn't wait."

The chef started to lead the way to his den. She whispered something to him and he stopped and beckoned to Jack.

"My daughter wishes to know you," he said. "Antoinette, this is Monsieur Knight, my second cook. He is a good one. Jack, this is Mademoiselle Pelletier."

Jack bowed low. Blue eyes met black in admiration and challenge as father and daughter departed.

Jack did not see the vision again for some time. He was wondering if he ever would, when Pelletier surprised him one night with an invitation. "Will you come out with me some night to my little cottage in The Bronx and stay the night?" said Pelletier. "We will breakfast under the trees and you shall see my garden."

Jack would. Especially would he take delight in seeing the garden, he assured Pelletier. But he hoped inaudibly that someone else than Pelletier would show him the garden. He was day dreaming when Pelletier spoke further:

"Understand, Jack, it is not the chef of the Cafe Pimlico who is inviting his second cook. It is Monsieur Pelletier, gentleman—and I am well born—who is inviting a friend."

got what sent him into this. He returned to his pots and pans with greater enthusiasm for the work. That Cafe Jack of the future had a deeper meaning. He made frequent trips to the garden in The Bronx. He said it gave him inspiration.

One dull afternoon he was alone in the kitchen absorbed in making a new sauce when Max appeared mysteriously.

"Miss Sanborn is in the back room and wishes to see you," said Max.

Jack hesitated. He didn't want to leave his sauce and yet the kitchen was hardly the place for the talk he knew was coming; but it was as good as any other part of the restaurant and Jack had an idea that he would like to have Priscilla see him at work. So he asked Max to bring Miss Sanborn in.

Priscilla came in somewhat timidly. Aggressiveness seemed to have gone from her. Jack reached his hand over the serving counter and gravely shook hers.

"How d'ye do?" he said. "You see I am intent on a sauce, but we can talk as I work."

"The ragout was fine," said Priscilla.

"Thank you," said Jack. He was decidedly cool and at ease. Priscilla was embarrassed.

"I've been expecting to see you, dear," she said meekly.

"Too busy," said Jack, reaching for the mustard pot. He measured out a portion with a critical eye and dumped it into the mess before him.

"I was wrong, Jack," the girl burst out, "and a fool, too, to tell you to go to work. You've done enough. Come back into the world and to me."

Jack stirred the contents of the saucepan thoughtfully and put the pan on the stove. He kept a watchful eye on it.

"If this turns out right," he observed, "there will be a change on the bill of fare to-morrow."

Priscilla stamped her foot. "Will you be serious, Jack?" she exclaimed. "You have kept up this play long enough. I made you do it and now I want you to stop it."

"Can't," said Jack.

"You mean you won't."

"No, I mean I can't." The sauce had come to a boil and Jack took it off the stove. It seemed to please him. "Listen to me, Priscilla." He was serious now. "It is true you sent me into this, and for that I thank you. I have found joy in a work that suits me down to the ground. You preached the dignity of labor. I have proved that you are right."

"But a cook, Jack," the girl pleaded. "Surely this work isn't dignified."

"It is to me," said Jack. "My birth and money were just accidents. I find more real pleasure in preparing a proper dinner than in any of the pursuits of the idle person you knew. You called me a loafer. I was. Now I am a worker, doing my part in the world. Of course, I am ambitious. I would be a better cook and in time I would have a place of my own. Some day you will be proud to come to the Cafe Jack."

"There is something else in life besides work," Priscilla's eyes were very wistful.

"I know," said Jack quietly. He was thinking of a garden in The Bronx.

Priscilla didn't know about the garden. "Is this cooking—this vocation—more to you than I am?" she asked.

"Must I choose?" asked Jack.

"Yes, please," Priscilla's voice was tender.

"Why should I?" said Jack. "The woman should accept the man as he is, if she wants him. Do you mean that you wouldn't marry a cook?"

Pride and training loomed strong in Priscilla's mind. The tenderness was gone.

"Why should I?" she burst out.

"Surely it isn't necessary."

"It is if you marry me," declared Jack. "Be sensible, Priscilla, you were not in love with me, but with the man you thought I might be. There is no such person. Therefore you have left only the empty shell of an ideal. Hadn't you better keep to your ideal until you find somebody who will fill it better than I?"

"Do you intend to live without love?" asked Priscilla.

"I may find some one willing to love a cook," said Jack hopefully.

"You are hopeless and I have humbled myself for nothing," said Priscilla. "Is it good-by, then?"

Before Jack could answer Antoinette burst into the kitchen. There was something explosive about Antoinette's goings and comings.

"Oh, Jack," she began, and then stopped short as she caught sight of Priscilla.

When Stenographers Gladly Marry

By Elsie Diehl.

PERHAPS it is true that lack of marriages is entirely the fault of woman. The average girl fears a man, man practises as much deception.

It is hard to comprehend why people say: "Women take the bread out of man's mouth." Woman with brains can command a good salary, but woman without cannot. Man with energy and brains commands triple woman's wages.

All stenographers don't necessarily marry their job. When she meets the right fellow, one who she feels can be trusted, the stenographer quickly resigns her position. The "stenographer" fears much. Why? Because she hears her employer's affinity calling him up, and oftentimes hears him read dear affinity letters.

Man asks: "Is there a woman that knows anything of housework?" Woman replies: "Is there a man that can be trusted?" Woman can learn housekeeping, but man can hardly learn to pass temptation.

I am a stenographer, still working, but not married to my job when Mr. Right passes my way. Neither a stenographer, teacher nor nurse can see her way clear to marry a man on a salary of \$20 to \$25, but if a man earns double she will gladly give up her profession.

All girls of today know something of housework, but we all like to be away from it. I know how to cook, but I don't like cooking or scrubbing. All girls like to have nice white hands and nice finger-nails and be always dressed so as to look presentable.

We are not so bad after all. Give us a chance. Bring home to wifey the money and she will fix up a cozy home, but without money—impossible!

The Language of Simple Genders

By James C. Fernald.

THE crowning triumph of English simplicity is the abolition of grammatical gender—that is, gender of words as words, irrespective of sex in the objects they represent. All the other leading languages give masculine or feminine gender to names of objects with which no thought of sex can be rationally associated, as mountains, rivers, trees, clothes, tools, articles of furniture, members of the human or animal body, etc. Some of these languages, as the French, Italian, and Spanish, have no neuter gender, so that every inanimate object must be represented by a masculine or a feminine noun.

Hence we often have a quiet smile when the Frenchman or the Italian, in his early experiments with English, speaks of the chair or table as "she." In languages like the Greek, Latin, and German, which have a neuter gender, that gender is sometimes so capriciously applied that a neuter noun may be used for a living being which must have sex, as the German neuter nouns Madchen—maiden, girl; and Weib—wife. Ingenious theories have been advanced as to the giving of gender to inanimate objects on account of fawns, dryads, and other divinities, more or less divine, which were originally supposed to preside over some of them; but the illogical gender far outruns the theory. Why, for instance, should a man's head be feminine in Greek, neuter in Latin, feminine in French, masculine in German, and feminine again in Italian? The unpoetical fact seems to be that all this is due to a certain stupidity of generalization. Men of the early day seem to have concluded that because some nouns naturally have gender, therefore gender was an inevitable property of the noun per se, and they inflicted it accordingly without reason or discrimination upon every unfortunate noun that came in their way. Then, as languages were artificially perfected, nouns were made masculine, feminine, or neuter according to classification or termination, without the slightest reference to nature.

Here English has made an entirely new departure, so that gender, as far as it is indicated in our language, exactly and uniformly follows the meaning of the noun to which it is applied.

One respect the trade of the machinist differs from that of almost every other artisan; it is benefited rather than depressed by the development of automatic machinery.

Carpentry, cabinet-making, carriage-building, shoemaking and many other occupations have been greatly modified and some have been virtually revolutionized by the increased use of machines to perform work which was formerly done by hand; but by all these changes the machinist has profited, for it is he who makes the machinery, both for his own trade and for all the others.

A young man who enters upon this occupation will have, therefore, if he shows mechanical ability, a growing prospect of steady work at good wages; and if he develops inventive talent, an outlook that is unlimited. As in most other trades, he must begin at the bottom, usually at wages of three dollars a week; and at the first he will have no more important or interesting work to do than running on errands, a good, old-fashioned term,—sweeping the shop, oiling bearings and cleaning tools.

But if he has the right stuff in him, these months will not be tedious or unpleasant. He will be all day in an atmosphere of oil and leather and acerbated dressings before his eyes; and these are stimulating conditions. Little by little he will be broken in to the actual work of the machinist, curate mechanism before his eyes; and these are stimulating conditions.

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