

HE—SHE AND THE IMP

By A. C. ROWSEY

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He went to breakfast fully prepared and determined to speak about it. When half through the meal, he compromised with himself—he would just hint.

Yet the evening came. With it his laundry and the landlady, and the hint was not yet given.

Mrs. Halstead was the landlady, or "the mother of two, the relict of three," as the cheerful idiot in the hall-room epitomized her. "He was only a counter jumper," the landlady scornfully remarked before she fired him.

Mrs. Halstead had watched the old man all day. In her mind he had been construed and reconstructed into a possible fourth in the "also ran" class, whereby she should change her name—and later wear crape. For three months at one time she had flutterings around the heart because of an air of embarrassment about him when he looked at her. Finally he told her about some nice that had invaded his closet. In her eyes it was evidently only a hasty excuse when his courage failed him.

The "old chump," as she called him, had recently assumed mourning and remained in his room all day. These two things urged Mrs. Halstead to encourage him to speak his mind, arguing quite accurately that some one had died and he had inherited.

So she plumped herself in a chair after laying the laundry on the bed. Grimly she waited.

Mr. Peters was rejoiced at her lingering. The lean old man paced the floor, favoring her at every turn with a look of indecision.

"Mrs. Halstead," he began hesitatingly—seemed to be talking to the rosebuds on the carpet—"I have—hem—wanted to speak to you about"—He flushed, closed his thin lips obstinately and continued his walk irresolutely.

"Was there ever such an old fool?" she said to herself under cover of her apron—her face had a habit of perspiring under mental pressure. "About?" she queried in her smoothest tone. Her supplemental toilet was finished.

"Yes, about"—His heart forsook him. "Well, I guess another time will do, Mrs. Halstead." He sat down, trembling.

In the glare that she threw at the back of his bald head the orange blossoms were drooping, drooping and going.

"Now, Mr. Peters," she coaxed, "hadn't you better get it off your mind once and for all? I know'd you wanted to say—something"—oh, the coy ways of forty-five years and 180 pounds—"and—couldn't just get the hang of it—how to say it, I mean!"

Her words were very grateful to him.

"Perhaps you are right; only I thought—it might—be considered—eccentric—er—imbecile—senile!"

"I'd like to see any one say so, sir," she bristled, like a porcupine, or as only a landlady can. "They would not stay in this house and say it. Besides, I think every—every one"—shilly-shally—rather expects it!"

"Oh, indeed! Well, I am sure—still, it is very gratifying—very, very," said the old man. "You see, the newspapers say there are 300 of them to choose from. Do you think you could get a nice, pretty one—for me?"

She was bewildered, but not entirely nonplused. From experience she knew the old man had a habit of speaking "adjacent thoughts" aloud.

"You won't mind the children?" endeavoring to bring him round to the main chance and at the same time ascertain the future status of her two little darlings.

"Why, bless you, no," he exclaimed. "I love children—always have—er—good ones. Now that I feel financially able to care for one, I want to indulge myself. It has been the dream of my life." The old man was talking to himself. "I have lived a lonesome life. I never had a hobby, like other men, except this." Then he turned to her. "I prefer a boy, not too odd—two or three years, I trust, would be old enough; also, while I think of it, I will pay for any trouble he may cause you." Mr. Peters drew forth his wallet. His face was full of a tremulous excitement.

Mrs. Halstead mentally heard a dull thud as the bottom fell out of her hopes. But she did not show it when the old man placed a bill and a newspaper clipping in her palm and dismissed her with "Please get him tomorrow, poor little chap! I suppose they feed them on bread and water. He must be hungry." For, if the truth be known, the old man had in his early youth been an item of public expense owing to the bibulous habits of his male progenitor.

A forlorn hope presented itself to her. "Why, Mr. Peters, why don't you get married and"—Her modesty would not allow her to proceed.

"Bless my soul!" And he scratched his bald head dubiously, then meditatively. Presently he gazed at her attentively. "I don't know—I never thought of it." She fluttered with the quiet agitation of her weight, age and experience. "Hem! Well, I'll—er—won't make any difference. I'll try the boy first."

It was a month later. He sat with his knees wide spread and his elbows resting on their bony knobs. His heels were hooked in the rung of his chair, and his careworn old face rested in the palms of his upturned hands. In front

of him, on another chair, was the youngster, Robbie, crying.

"What is the matter with him—now?" the old man asked himself wearily. The child yelled. The foster father clawed his ears with his wrinkled hands and hoped, in a despairing fashion, that Mrs. Halstead would come to the rescue. Then he dreaded her look of disapproval at the mess around the child. Toys of every description—pictures and picture books, his watch, fancy bottle stoppers, about everything not nailed—was there. Still the imp cried: "Mamma! Mamma! Yobbie wants mamma!" Yell! Yell! Y-e-l-l!

The little splinter dressmaker who lived in the hall room passed the door just as Robbie achieved a brilliant chef d'œuvre of yells. She skipped by in a scared manner, hurriedly vanished the key in her door and vanished. Peters and she had never exchanged a word, although he had occupied his room ten years and she had been in hers a year before. He was prejudiced against her in those early days because she ran a sewing machine sometimes at night. The cause had ceased to exist, but the prejudice still clung to him, although he never protested against her. She on her part had grown to regard him as a gruff old ogre—past whose door she always hastened.

This afternoon he actually yearned for her or Mrs. Halstead or any woman to soothe the youngster. He sat there wondering if she knew anything about children. He hesitated. Robbie began to take in air for another outburst. Peters darted into the hall and knocked timidly at her door.

A few minutes later the child was sobbing on her breast, pouring out his tale of woe in indistinguishable syllables, while the distrustful Peters walked the floor, eying the imp apprehensively. Miss Robinson held the child tenderly, absorbed in her office. The foster father was entirely out of the picture. The little woman loved children dearly.

Mr. Peters read the letter and heaved a sigh of relief. It was from his niece and contained an invitation to make his home with her. He had never seen his niece until the executor of the estate introduced her at a meeting of the heirs.

Mrs. Halstead came in person to make his bed. The signs displayed at the breakfast table had actually made her blush and the boarders stare. Such looks! Such smiles!

"Mrs. Halstead," he began briskly. Her portly form was bent with tucking in the clothes. "I am thinking of making a change in my life—a great change." He paused for encouragement.

"Yes," sweetly.

"Now—you see—Robbie and this woman next door—Miss Robinson—she—I supposed women have—hem—great ways with children." Warclouds gathered on the widow's face. "And I"—

"Not Miss Robinson?" exclaimed the landlady.

"Bless me, yes!" He looked at her in astonishment.

"Well, I declare!" Out of the door she founced, with blood in her eye.

"Now, what is the matter with her?" he asked himself, rubbing his glasses and peering down the hall. "What strange creatures women are!"

He had intended telling her that from the way Robbie took to the splinter it seemed best to provide female care for him in the person of his niece.

"Papa," called Robbie. The old man started. The boy had kicked the covers from his cot. Mr. Peters looked gravely down at him.

The boy grinned back, tossed his bare fat legs and chuckled.

"You—you little imp," commented Peters, with a smile, "do you know?"

His niece went out of the room with her nose held high in air. He shook his fist with latent rage at her vanishing form. The idea! Send the boy back because, forsooth, she didn't like children!

The muffled sound of sobs came to his ears from Miss Robinson's room. He felt the hush of "the great idea."

"I—Mrs. Halstead—ordered me—to move!" the splinter explained tearfully when she answered his knock. "It—seems so like—like home."

Then he managed to get out "the great idea." She? Oh—well—for love—of—the—boy—yes.

An Exhorter's Little Blunder.
"Public speakers often make curious mistakes," said an observant man, "and I have had occasion to note some rather singular things in this respect. Some time ago I attended a religious meeting in an out of the way section of the country, and the very first thing the speaker said put me to thinking. He was a short, stocky fellow, with a rasping voice, and was as solemn looking as if he had been going to the guillotine. Here is the first thing he had to say: 'I want to say a few words before saying what I want to say.' I could not refrain from laughing at the bad break of the fellow, and all the good things he said after that had no effect on me. It was wasted ammunition, so far as I was concerned. This goes to show what a little mistake will sometimes do for a man. Really I believe the exhorter was as much put out by the bull as I was amused, for his talk was not as smooth as it might have been."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Doubtless.
Voice (in the house)—Bessie, what is keeping you out there on the porch so long?
Bessie—I am looking for the comet, mamma.

Voice—You'll take your death of cold, Bessie—Not at all, mamma. I'm—I'm well wrapped.—Chicago Tribune.

WOMAN AND FASHION

A Handsome House Gown.
House gown of white silk veiling and white mousseline de soie. The underdress of the veiling is drawn in at the waist by a girdle of blue ribbon. The yoke and the narrow front are of



FROM PARIS.

white taffeta, tucked crosswise, the front bordered with narrow ecru lace insertion.

Falling over this is the loose gown of plaited white mousseline de soie, headed by a trimming of white openwork embroidered taffeta, which also finishes the flowing sleeves. The standing collar is of this embroidered taffeta.—Wiener Mode Album.

The Bolero Still Lives.

The bolero jacket has been condemned to death so often that it should by this time be able to bear the sentence without a shiver. The boleros, that have invaded tailor gown territory, and the Louis XVI. coats, that are becoming insistent, threaten the bolero, and once more it is predicted that it is doomed, but in some of the most fetching and stunning models it bobs up serenely. Moreover, it lends itself so delightfully to the new cape effect that it has a new hold. So it is quite safe to say that the woman owning a bolero will not be out of style when she wears the little garment, for they are too handy to die an easy death. Then, too, they are easily remodeled by adding a dash here or a dash there. Even the modish sleeve can be made to them, and thus give it quite another appearance.

Camel's Hair Effects.

Camel's hair effects are very popular today for outer wear and particularly for dressy street costumes. Shown is a very pretty effect in a brown and white mixture. The blouse front jacket comes only to the waist line. It is trimmed with the new idea of two wide cross stripes of braid over the front. The same braid adorns the sleeve, two bands of this being placed close together and separating where the sleeve opens over an under velvet effect made rather full. The skirt shows inverted box plaits on either side and a habit back with a suggestion of a train. It is adorned at the bottom with several bands of black silk braid.

Child's Frock.

The full skirt of this frock is gathered to the edge of the pointed yoke, which is cut from embroidery and tucking. The edge of the skirt is finished with a deep hem. Rows of in-



FOR A LITTLE GIRL.

sertion give a dainty finish. Comfortable bishop sleeves, shoulder frills of embroidery, rosettes and ends of pale blue ribbon complete the frock.—New York Journal.

Touques With Evening Gowns.

With evening gowns white velvet touques are in favor, with tuille sometimes covering the plaits at the top of the big structure and bunches of velvet grapes, with foliage, massed evenly at the sides. Velvet flowers, indeed, are much seen, and the humble perennials of the dooryard bloom on the proudest headgear.

KAISER AS A HUNTER.

German Emperor Happiest When Following the Chase.

Emperor William's joking to Ambassador White about President Roosevelt's bad luck in hunting bear, while he himself was having rare good luck slaughtering game in England, calls attention to a passion which is remarkable when one considers that the emperor can use but one arm in shooting, says the Berlin correspondent of the New York World.

The emperor is one of the most ardent huntsmen in Europe. He is happiest when living in one of his six hunting lodges, where he never appears in uniform. He wears a gray green hunting suit and a soft felt hat of the same color, with a chamouis beard stuck into the band. He has just completed thirty years as huntsman and sportsman and celebrated the event by sending to every gamekeeper on his numerous estates some token of his regard in presents ranging from gold watches and jeweled scarf pins to the right to shoot a hare at Christmas.

It is a pleasure to see his majesty on a hunting expedition. It is a mistake to suppose that he is spared all the fatigues of hunting or that he wishes to be spared them. He takes his stand among the huntsmen and rejects all privileges and all advantages offered him. At a recent wild boar drive he shot thirty-six out of forty which rushed past his stand, a total which was not reached by any other of the huntsmen. This touches a sore point, for unerring shots on other occasions become shocking bad shots when the emperor is present. It is court etiquette not to make a bag approaching in bulk that which the emperor makes.

For big game the emperor uses a six or eight millimeter rifle. It seldom happens that wounded game escapes him. What he shoots either falls immediately or falls at a distance of from thirty to fifty yards. At his side he wears a dagger and on his hip a revolver in a red leather case. Behind his majesty in constant attendance is Baron von Helntze, the court huntsman, and behind the baron two rifle carriers, whose duty it is to load and hand the weapons to the emperor.

WINTER TENTS.

They May Be Made Comfortable Even in Coldest Weather.

The whole winter can be pleasantly spent in a tent by inclosing the tent in other larger tents with air spaces between, which may be heated with an oil stove in extreme cold weather, says a writer on "Tenting" in the December Outlook. All tents should be rolled up on all sides on spring rollers. Tents for ladies should be double, with air spaces, and should communicate by covered ways with the dining tent, bath tent and drawing room tent. Place a barrel on a stump near the bath tent and connect with hose. It will be the ambition of the men to keep the barrel full. The drawing room tent should have a sod chimney built in at one end, with a large fireplace. It should be furnished as prettily as ladies can devise and should be well stocked with musical instruments, books and card tables. It should be large enough when cleared for a ballroom. Nothing could be jollier on a cold, rainy evening than a party before the open fire.

A complete outfit of this kind of varicolored duck is less costly than the summer cottage and far more convenient and comfortable. I venture to say that ladies who scoff at camping will be converted in such surroundings.

NEW WORK FOR THE BLIND

Physician Says They Will Excel as Masseurs.

"A brand new occupation for the blind and one in which they will excel the seeing is beginning to be taught in the asylums," said a physician in the Philadelphia Record. "This is the occupation of the masseur. The blind, with their delicate sense of touch and with their soft, supple hands, take to massage as a duck takes to water. Massage, you see, doesn't require eyesight, for the masseur's busy hands hide from him what he is doing. It requires just those qualities that in the blind are developed to an excess—an ability to see, as it were, with the fingers."

"I know a blind masseur who practices in New York. His work is a revelation. No seeing man or woman I have ever met could come anywhere near him. The massage, as you know, is becoming more and more popular daily. We are getting more and more masseurs, and soon, I am glad to see, a good proportion of these men and women will be blind."

Use For Solomon's Reservoirs.

A writer in the London Home Messenger, in describing Bethlehem, says there are immense reservoirs there constructed of solid masonry which were undoubtedly the work of King Solomon. For centuries Jerusalem has suffered from a deficiency of water, but it occurred to no one to use these reservoirs designed and built by the great Hebrew king. It is now reported that these reservoirs will again be used and that water will be conveyed to Jerusalem through aqueducts following the very course designed by King Solomon's engineers.

The New Flag Stamp.

There is something kin' of Yankee in this stamp of ours that's new, An' I kin' of like the notion Of the flag. Say, friend, don't you? Seems to kin' of breathe the slogan, "Send the flag across the sea!" Let the colors we are proud of All the postal union see.

If you're traveling in lands foreign, It will be added joy to you When your mail comes decorated With the flag, red, white and blue.—W. D. Nesbit in Baltimore American.

YOUNG WIVES, REMEMBER—

That necessities should be selected before decorative articles of furniture.

That it is not wise to provide too many pots, kettles and pans when furnishing a kitchen.

That it is always decidedly cheaper in the end to buy only good carpets and good furniture.

That, no matter how tiny the income, a small sun should be put aside regularly for the proverbial rainy day.

That a simple dinner well served is decidedly more enjoyable than an elaborate dinner poorly served.

That a practical knowledge of "economy of good cookery" will be absolutely necessary for the young housewife, no matter how much "help" she can afford to keep.

That all bills for marketing should be paid weekly or, better still, when the articles are bought.

That with care and economy a small amount of money will do wonders.

That it is important to be systematic in looking after the leftovers.

That all cold vegetables and scraps of meat may be used in soups and salads and croquettes and in many appetizing ways too numerous to mention.

That "where there's a will there's a way" even if the means are limited.

Candle Lighted Dining Tables.

Candle lighted dining tables are more popular than ever. Four candles are needed to light the smallest table, and four double branched candlesticks are better liked. Besides silver and brass, glass candlesticks in old English and colonial designs are seen. Cut glass is to be preferred, of course, but very good imitations may be had. There is one material which it is hard to understand ever came to be used for either lamps or candlesticks, and that is wrought iron. Possessing no powers of reflection or refraction, the light of even a strong flame is diminished at least one-half and a most depressing effect obtained. Candle shades are works of art, whether made of silk and trimmed with chiffon and beads or fashioned of paper and decorated with water color designs. Glass shades, cubes of opalescent material, jewel incrustated, are charming, as are also the parchment paper ones with old prints in delicate pink and blue tints inserted on one side. Candle shades should always be arranged to entirely hide the flame, as the glare so near the eyes is very unpleasant.

Beauty and Dress.

Beauty is the gift of nature, but one's bodily appearance is largely what one chooses to make it. A plain face is improved by careful dressing; a pretty one is partially spoiled by the lack of it. As a rule, plain women are the ones who study the art of dress and realize its full importance, although an occasional pretty woman is found to be well posted. "It takes such an awful lot of time to dress well and keep thoroughly trim," complained a girl the other day, as she carefully inspected her wardrobe with a view to repairs. Of course it does. It takes time to eat and sleep and enjoy oneself, but as we have all the time there is, we might as well invest it to good purpose. It pays to look well, in satisfaction to oneself and in the opinion of others. The world always has and always will judge by externals, and a good appearance has a distinct financial worth.

Idea For an Invalid's Room.

A very pretty idea of bringing sunshine on dull days into an invalid's room is to arrange the curtaining in such a fashion as to produce the effect of sunshine and brightness even when the heavens are clouded. By doing this your loved invalid's room will not be a fidgety place, where the eye is worried by endless patterns on paper or walls. All will be restful and harmonious. For the big window it is best to have rose colored Indian silk curtains just to the sill. They are to be lined with ivory—if they can be said to be lined when that part of them is seen from the outside. This is done to prevent the sun from fading the brilliant hue too soon and will add a soft warmth to the glorious translucent color of the rose, which will make sunshine of itself on dull days.

Bachelor Cow Girls.

The gifted bachelor girl daughters of William Walker, the owner of a big cattle ranch in Oregon, do almost all the work of caring for the horses and cattle maintained by their father. Clad in picturesque but practical costumes of duck, buckskin and plain calico, they "cut out" cattle almost daily, break and train unruly horses and if night overtakes them in the mountains or far out on the prairies curl up in their saddle blankets and sleep the sleep that knows no fear. Withal these daring bachelor girls are quiet mannered and womanly, and they are only unmarried because every one of them is in love with her present lot—Pilgrim.

Effect of Mixed Vells.

That women whose hair is beginning to turn gray make a mistake when they wear veils of mixed black and white is the report of New York milliners. These veils of a grayish tint are trying even on hair that has retained all its original luster and richness of coloring, and when they are drawn taut over locks that have a few gray streaks of their own the effect is enough to make any woman unhappy.

Wooden Salad Bowls.

Wooden salad bowls are pretty and appropriate. Burned wood has been rather overdone, but decoration in green leaves is especially attractive for these bowls. Carved and inlaid bowls are also seen. A wooden fork and spoon accompany the bowl, with decorations to match.



AZTECS NOT A DEAD RACE.

Numerous Pure Blood Survivors Still in the Valley of Mexico.

To the mind of the general reader the term Aztec conveys the idea of a more or less misty, extinct greatness, the idea of a great body of aboriginal Americans of mysterious origin who at the time of the advent of the Spanish had reached the acme of power and native civilization and then unexplainably very rapidly and completely vanished.

These problems—namely, the origin or derivation, the physical type and physical destiny of the Aztecs, to clear which history alone proves insufficient—have been and remain prominently the subjects of anthropological investigation, and through these investigations, in which the anthropological department of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, is taking an important part, enough has already been achieved to warrant the hope that in not a very far future but a little concerning the Aztecs will be left in obscurity. One result of these investigations is the knowledge that the Aztecs of the time of the conquest are still represented by numerous pure blood survivors.

They are scattered, but still clearly recognizable by a student of the people, in the suburbs of the city and in practically all the smaller towns in the valley of Mexico. From the valley they can be traced southward. They are numerous in the districts of Amecameca, and they occupy, though probably largely mixed with the Nahuatl branch of Tlaluhtecs, entire villages near and in the mountainous country between Cuautla and Cuernavaca, in the state of Morelos. In this last named region there are in particular two large villages, Tetelcingo and Cuauhtec, in which the Aztec-Nahuatl descendants not only speak the pure Aztec language and know but little Spanish, but they also preserve their ancient dress and ancient way of building their dwellings. In both of these villages the natives are almost free from mixture with whites.

To estimate the number of pure blood Aztec-Nahuatl descendants still in existence is very difficult. The Aztec language is still used by at least a million, probably more, of the natives in Mexico.—Harper's.

Highest Priced Land in the World.

The highest priced land in the world is that bounded by Wall and Broad streets and Broadway, in lower New York city. A square foot of ground on a corner of Broadway and Wall street cannot be had for less than \$450. The most expensive land in London sells for \$300 a square foot. The average price of land in New York city's financial district is about \$175. Next in the scale comes the woman's shopping district from Fourteenth to Twenty-third street on Sixth avenue and from Thirty-fourth street to Forty-second street on Broadway. Here land ranges all the way from \$60 to \$350 a square foot. On the northwest corner of Broadway and Thirty-fourth street the latter price was obtained. The real estate man who can tell the future movements of population on Manhattan is in a position to realize a fortune. The growth of Brooklyn and Jersey City has checked the movement of the population north, and it is said the most valuable land on Manhattan Island will always remain south of Central park.

Tough Glass.

One of the so called "lost arts" appears to have been rediscovered, partially at least, by Louis Knuffeld of Matthews, Ind. It is a process of making glass of extraordinary toughness, so that it will withstand rough usage and violent changes of temperature without breaking. The composition of the new glass is the secret of the inventor. The product is said to be quite as transparent as ordinary glass and perhaps even a little clearer. Tests that prove the surprising toughness of this glass are: Boiling water in a lamp chimney made of it and using such a chimney to drive nails. If the chimney is first cooled in ice water and then suddenly held in a flame, it does not crack.

Cross Purposes.

The young man in the guise of a old farmer was consulting his particular girl, who was doing the fortune telling act at the charity bazaar, and each had penetrated the other's disguise.

"You love a fair maiden," she said, inspecting his palm, "who will give you a severe jolt when you propose to her."

"Good heavens!" he exclaimed, quickly recovering himself. "Then she will accept me!"—Chicago Tribune.

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