

ADE GEORGE

ADE'S FABLES

George Ade
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THE NEW FABLE OF THE PRIVATE AGITATOR AND WHAT HE COOKED UP

Ambition came, with Sterling Silver Breast-Plate and Flaming Sword, and sat beside a Tad aged 5. The wee Hopeful lived in a Frame House with Box Pillars in front and Hollyhocks leading down toward the Pike.

"Whither shall I guide you?" asked Ambition. "Are you far enough from the Shell to have any definite Hankering?"

"I have spent many Hours brooding over the possibilities of the Future," replied the Larva. "I want to grow up to be a Joey in a Circus. I fairly ache to sit in a Red Wagon just behind the Band and drive a Trick Mule with little pieces of Looking Glass in the Harness. I want to pull Mugs at all the scared Country Girls peeking out of the Wagon Beds. The Town Boys will leave the Elephant and trail behind my comical Chariot. In my Hour of Triumph the Air will be impregnated with Calliope Music and the Smell of Pop-Corn, modified by Wild Animals."

Ambition went out to make the proper Bookings with Destiny. When he came back the Boy was ten years old.

"We started wrong," whispered Ambition, curling up in the cool grass near the Day-Dreamer. "The Trick Mule and the Red Cart are all very well for little Fraidy-Cats and Softies, but a brave Youth of High Spirit should tread the Deck of his own Ship with a Cutlass under his Red Sash. Aye, that is Blood gauming up the Scuppers, but is the Captain chicken-hearted? Up with the Black Flag! Let it be give and take, with Pieces of Eight for the Victor!"

So it was settled that the Lad was to hurry through the Graded Schools and then get at his Buccaneering.

But Ambition came back with a revised Program. "You are now Fifteen Years of Age," said the Wonderful Guide with the glittering Suit. "It is High Time that you planned a Noble Career, following a Straight Course from which there shall be no Deviation. The Pirate is a mere swaggering Bravo and almost Unscrupulous at times. Why not be a great Military Commander? The Procedure is Simple. Your Father gives the Finger to the Congressman and then you step off the Boat at West Point. Next thing you know, you are wearing a Nobby Uniform right out on the Parade Ground, while bebies of Debutantes from New York City and other Points admire you for the stern Profile and Military Set-Up. After that you will subdue many Savage Tribes, and then you will march up Pennsylvania Avenue at the head of the whole Regular Army, and the President of the United States will be waiting on the Front Porch of the White House to present you with a jewelled Sword on behalf of a Grateful Nation."

"You are right," said the Stripling. His eyes were like Saucers, and his Nostrils quivered. "I will be Commander-in-Chief, and after I am laid away, with the Cannon booming, the Folks in this very Town will put up a Statue of Me at the corner of Sixth and Main, so the Street- Cars will have to circle to get around it."

Consequently, when he was in his 21st Year, he was sitting at a high Desk in an Office watching the Birds on a Telegraph Wire. The Knowledge he had acquired at the two Prep Schools before being pushed into the Fresh Air ahead of Time had not made him round-shouldered.

He was a likely Chap, but he wore no Plumes.

He became dimly conscious that Ambition was squatted on the Stool next to him.

"Up to this time we have been Dead Wrong," said the Periodical Visitor.

"There is only one Prize worth winning and that is the Love of the Niftiest Nectarine that ever came down a Crystal Stairway from the Celestial Regions to grace this dreary World with her Holy Presence.

Yes, I mean the One you passed this morning—the One with her hair in a Net and the Cameo Brooch. Why not annex her by Legal Routine and settle down in a neat Cottage purchased from the Building and Loan Association? You could raise your own Vegetables. Go to it."

Four years elapse. Our Hero now has everything. The jerry-built home of the Early Bungalow Period stands up bravely under the Mortgage. Little Dorothy is suspended in a Jump Chair on the Veranda facing Myrtle Avenue, along which the Green Cars run direct to City Hall Square. The Goddess is in the kitchen trying to make preserves out of Watermelon Rinds, with the White House Cook Book propped open in front of her. Friend Husband is weeding the Azaleas and grieving over the failure of the Egg-Plant.

He finds himself gently prodded, and there is Ambition once more at his Elbow.

"You are entitled to One Hundred Thousand Dollars," murmurs the stealthy Promoter. "Why should some other Citizen have his Coal-Bin right in his House while you carry it from a Shed? Your Wife should sit at her own Dinner Table and make signs at the Maid. And as you ride to your Work with the other dead-eyed Cattle and see all those Strong-Arm Johnnies coming out of their Brick Mansions to hop into their own Broughams and Coupes, have you not asked yourself why you are in the Horse-Cars with the Plebes when you might be in a Private Rig with the Patricians?"

For, wot ye, Gentle Reader, all this unwound from the Reel before the first Trolley Car climbed a Hill or the first Horseless Carriage came chugging sternly up the Boulevard.

So Ambition received special Instructions to make Our Hero worth \$100,000.

Those were the day of tall Hustling: If he saw an Opening six inches wide, he held it with his Foot until he could insert his Elbow, and then he braced his Shoulder, and the first thing you knew he was on the Inside demanding a fair cut of the Swag.

The Golden Rule received many a Jolt, but he adhered strictly to the old and favorite Admonition: If you want Yours, take a short piece of Lead Pipe and go out and Collect.

On a certain January First he made a careful Invoice. All the Hard- Earned Kale dropped into the Mining Companies or loaned to Relatives of Wife he marked off and put under the Head of Gone but not Forgotten. He was a True Business Guy. Even after subtracting all Cats and Dogs he could still total the magnificent Sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars.

When he looked at this Mound of Currency, he felt like a Vag and a Pauper. For he had climbed to the table-lands of High Finance and taken a peek at the Steam-Roller methods of the Real Tabascos.

"Make it a Million," said Ambition, leaning across the Table and tapping nervously. "Are you going to be satisfied with a Station Wagon and a Colored Boy when you might have a long-waisted Vehicle with two pale Simpsons in Livery on the Box? When you go into your Club and see the Menials kow-towing to a cold-looking Party with rippling Chins who seems to favor his Feet, you know that he gets the Waving Palms and the Frankincense because he is a Millionaire. You and the other financial Gnats are admitted simply to make a Stage Setting for the Big Squash."

"I always said that when I got a Hundred Thousand I'd take a long Vacation in Europe and learn how to order a Meal," suggested Our Hero, holding out weakly.

"When you came back you would find your hated Rival on the Hill with the Batteries turned against you. Camp on the Job and work straight toward the High Mark. And remember that anybody with less than a Million is a Two-Spot in a soiled Deck."

From that day the Piking ceased. No more of the dinky trafficking of the Retailer. He went out and bought Public Service Utilities on Nerve, treated them with Aqua Pura by the Hogshead, and created Wealth by purely lithographic Methods. And, if he wanted to reason out a Deal with a contrary-minded Gazook, he began the Negotiations by soaking the Adversary behind the Ear and frisking him before he came to.

A Fairy Wand had been waved above the snide Bungalow, and it was now a Queen Anne Chateau dripping with Dew-dads of Scroll Work and congested with Black Walnut. The Goddess took her Mocha in the Feathers, and a Music Teacher came twice each week to bridge the awful chasm between Dorothy and Chopin. Dinner had been moved up to Milking Time. Sweetbreads and Artichokes came into the Lives of the Trio thus favored by Fortune.

One day the busy Thimble-Rigger took his Helpmate into the lonesome Library and broke the glad Tidings to her.

"I have unloaded all my Cripples," he said. "They have been wished on a Group of Philanthropists in New England. Sound the glad Tocsin. I have a Million in my Kick."

So she began packing the huge Saratogas and reading the Folders on Egypt and the Riviera. He sat in his Den pulling at a long black Excepcionale. Through the bluish clouds of Smoke came that old familiar Voice.

"Let the Missus and the Heiress do the European Thing," said Ambition. "You stick around. Wait for Black Friday. Then get busy at the Bargain Counter. By and by the new Crop will begin to move, and Money will creep out of the Yarn Stockings and a few Wise Gazabes will cop all the Plush. In every Palm Room there are more Millionaires than Palms. But the Big Round Table over by the Fountain is always reserved by Oscar for the Lad who can show Ten Millions."

The Ocean Greyhound moved out past Sandy Hook with the Family and all the Maids on board, but Papa remained behind to sharpen his Tools and get ready for another Killing.

Every time he was given a Crimp in the Rue de la Paix he caught even by leading a new Angora up the Chute and into the Shambles.

When the fully matured Goddess and the radiant Heroine of the latest International Alliance came home with the French Language and two tons of Glad Raiment, they found themselves reuning with the Magnate at the big Table over by the Fountain.

Our Hero was now sleeping in a Bed almost twelve feet wide, with a silk Tent over it. One Morning he found the Companion of many Years sitting on the edge of the Mattress.

"Again?" asked the Multi-Millionaire. "What next?"

"The Exercises up to this Time have been Preliminary," said Ambition. "What is the good of a Bank Roll if you cannot garnish it with the delectable Parsley of Social Eminence? Get a Wiggle on you. Send for the Boys with the Frock Coats and the Soft Hats and let them dig in to their Elbows. Tell the Press Agent to organize a typewriting Phalanx. Assume a few Mortgages on fluttering Newspapers. Lay a Corner-Stone ever and anon. Be Interviewed."

"What are you leading up to?" asked the Financial Giant, a sickly Fear creeping into the Region formerly occupied by his Heart.

"The Logical Finish," replied Ambition, with a reassuring Pat on the Shoulder. "You must go to the Senate. The White Palace, suitable for entertaining purposes, now awaits you in Washington. The Bulb Lights glow dimly above the Porte Cochere. A red Carpet invites you to climb the Marble Stairway and spread yourself all over the Throne. On a Receiving Night, when the perfumed Aliens in their Masquerade Suits rally around the Punch Bowl, your Place will resemble the Last Act of something by Klaw & Erlanger. You will play Stud with the Makers of History and be seen leaving the Executive Mansion."

This Line of Talk landed him. He Fell for it. That year the Christmas Tree drooped with valuable Gifts for the Boys who stood after they were hitched.

He went up to Washington with an eviscerated Check-Book in his Pocket, and a faint Odor of Scandal in his Wake, but he was a certified Servant of the People. His Cut Flowers were the Talk in Official Circles. The most Exclusive consented to flirt with his Wine Cellar.

To a mere Outsider it looked as if Ambition had certainly boosted his Nobs to the final Himalayan Peak of Human Happiness. He had a House as big as a Hospital. The Hallways were cluttered with whispering Servants of the most immaculate and grovelling Description. His Wife and

the Daughter and the Cigarette-Holder she had picked up in Europe figured in the Gay Life of the Nation's Capital every Night and went to see a Nerve Specialist every Day. The whole Bunch rode gaily on the Top Wave of the Social Swim, with a Terrapin as an Escort and a squad of Canvas-Back Ducks as Body-Guard.

Notwithstanding all which, Father was the sorest Hard-Shell that motored along Pennsylvania Avenue.

The Dime Denouncers printed his Picture, saying that he was owned by the Interests and hated the sight of a Poor Working Girl. When the High Class continuous Show in the Senate Chamber showed signs of flopping and the Press Gallery became impatient, some Alkali Statesman of the New School would arise in his Place and give our Hero a Turning- Over, concluding with a faithful Pen-Picture of the Dishonored Grave marked by a single Headstone, chiseled as follows: "Here lies a Burglar."

When he went traveling, he had his Food smuggled into the Drawing-Room.

He knew if he went drilling through the Pullmans, some of the Passengers who had seen the Cartoons might recognize him as the notorious Malefactor.

One day, while he was cowering in a dark corner of his Club to get away from the pesky Reporters, he was joined by the Trouble-Maker.

"I gave you the wrong Steer," said Ambition, now much subdued. "You are in Dutch. Beat it! All the Rough-Necks down by the Round-House and the fretful Simps along every R. F. D. Route are getting ready to interfere in the Affairs of Government. The Storm Clouds of Anarchy are lowering. In other words, the new Primary Law has begun to do business. Every downtrodden Mokus owing \$800 on a \$500 House is honing for a Chance to Hand It to somebody wearing a Seal-Skin Overcoat. From now on, seek Contentment, Rural Quietude, and a cinch Rate of 5 Per Cent. on all your Holdings."

So Ambition, after leading him hither and yon, finally conducted him to the swell Country House surrounded by Oaks and winding Drives and Sunken Gardens.

Far from the Hurly-Burly he settled down among his Boston Terriers and Orchids and Talking-Machines and allowed Old Age to ripen and mellow him into a Patriarch of the benevolent Pattern.

At the suggestion of an expensive Specialist, he went in for Golf. After he had learned to Follow Through and keep within 100 yards of the Fair Green, he happened to get mixed up in a Twosome one day with a walking Rameses who had graduated from the Stock Exchange soon after the Crime of '73. This doddering Shell of Humanity looked as if a High Wind would blow him into the Crick. When he swung at the Pill, you expected to hear something Snap.

Our Hero had about 10 Years on the Ancient, and it looked like a Compote. But the Antique managed to totter around the Course, playing short but safe, always getting Direction and keeping away from the Profanity Pits.

He never caught up with Colonel Bogey, but he had enough Class to trim our Hero and collect 6 Balls.

Ambition rode home with the unhappy Loser in the \$12,000 Limousine. "Buck up, Old Top," said the faithful Prompter. "Fasten your Eye on the Ball and don't try to Force. He is sure to blow up sooner or later. Take another Lesson to-morrow morning and then publish your Defi in the afternoon."

He never had been strong enough to stand off Ambition. So the next Day he took on Old Sure-Thing again and got it in the same Place.

No wonder. The Octogenarian was of Scotch Descent. He was the Color of an Army Saddle. He never smiled except when the Kilties came on tour. His Nippie consisted of a tall Glass about half full and then a little Well Water.

A plain American Business Man with a York State Ancestry had a fat Chance against this Caledonian frame-up.

But that same persistent Ambition kept sending him back to the Ring to take another Trouncing.

One day he failed to show up at the Club House. The Trained Nurse, who fanned him during the final Hours, never suspected. But the Caddy- Master knew that he had died of a Broken Heart.

MORAL: Those who travel the hardest are not always the first to arrive.

THE NEW FABLE OF THE SPEEDY SPRITE

One Monday Morning a range and well-conditioned Elfin of the Young Unmarried Set, yclept Loretta, emerged into the Sunlight and hit the Concrete Path with a ringing Heel.

This uncrowned Empress of the 18th Ward was a she-Progressive assaying 98 per cent. pure Ginger.

Instead of trailing the ever onward Parade, she juggled the Baton at the head of the Push.

In the crisp introductory hours of the Wash-Day already woven into the Plot, Loretta trolleyed herself down into the Noise Belt.

She went to the office of the exclusive Kennel Club and entered the Chow Ki-Yi for the next Bench Show. At the Clearing House for K. M.'s she filed a loud call for a Cook who could cook. Then she cashed a check, ordered a pound of Salted Nuts (to be delivered by Special Wagon at once), enveloped a ball of Ice Cream goosed with Chocolate, and soon, greatly refreshed, swept down upon a Department Store.

A Chenille Massacre was in full swing on the 3d floor, just between the Porch Furniture and Special Clothing for Airmen. Loretta took a run and jump into the heaving mass of the gentler Division. She came out at 10.53 with her Sky Piece badly listed to Port and her toes flattened out, but she was 17 cents to the Good. Three hearty Cheers!

So she went over to an exhibition of Paintings, breathing through her Nose for at least an Hour as she studied the new Masterpieces of the Swedo-Scandinavian School. Each looked as if executed with a Squirt Gun by a Nervous Geek on his way to a Three Days Cure. Just the same, every Visitor with a clinging Skirt and a Mushroom Hat gurgled like a Mountain Stream.

In company with four other Seraphines, plucked from the Society Col., she toyed with a Fruit Salad and Cocoa at a Tea Room instituted by a Lady in Reduced Circumstances for the accommodation of those who are never overtaken by Hunger.

The usual Battle as to which should pick up the Check and the same old Compromise. A Dutch Treat with the Waitress trying to spread it four ways and the Auditing Committee watching her like a Hawk. Then a 10- cent Tip, bestowed as if endowing Princeton, and the Quartet representing the Flower of America's Young Womanhood was once more out in the Ozone, marching abreast with shining Faces and pushing white- haired Business Men off into the Sweepings.

Loretta went to a place with a glass Cover on it and had herself photoed in many a striking Posture. With the Chin tilted to show the full crop of Cervical Vertebrae and her Search Lights aimed yearningly at the top of the Singer Building, she had herself kidded into believing that she was a certified Replica of Elsie Ferguson.

As a member of the Board of Visitation she hurried out to the Colored Orphan Asylum to check up the Picks and watch them making Card-Board Mottoes.

After that she had nothing to do except fly home and complete a Paper on the Social Unrest in Spain, after which she backed into the Spangles, because Father was bringing an old Stable Companion to dinner.

In the evening she took Mother to a Travel Lecture. The colored Slides were mingled with St. Vitus Glimpses of swarming Streets and galloping Gee-Gees. They came home google-eyed and had to feel their way into the Domicile.

Tuesday A. M. dawned overcast with shifting winds from the N. E.. Loretta pried herself away from the third Waffle in order to hike to the corner and jack up Mr. Grocer about the Kindling Wood that he had sent them for Celery.

She had the Druggist 'phone the Florist, and then rewarded him by purchasing three Stamps.

At 9.30 the Committee to arrange for the Summer Camp of the In-Wrong Married Women whirled through the untidy Suburbs in a next year's Motor Car, and Loretta was nowhere except right up on the front Seat picking out the Road.

Once a year the Ladies of the Lumty-Tum went out with their embroidered Sand-Bags and swung on their Gentlemen Friends for enough Dough to pay the Vacation Expenses of Neglected Wives and Kiddies.

In every community there is an undiscovered Triton thoroughly posted on the Renaissance of the Reactionaries and the recrudescence of the Big Six Baby with the up-twist that has the Whiskers on it. This Boy is so busy regulating both Parties and both Leagues that when it comes time for his Brood to take an Outing, some ignorant Outsider has to step in and unbelt.

After letting contracts for Milk and Vegetables, Loretta and the other specimens of our Best People zipped over to the Country Club, breaking into silvery Laughter every time the Speedometer made a Face at the Sign-Board which said that the Speed Limit was 12 Miles an Hour.

They showed a few milk-fed Springers how to take a Joke, and then played an 18-hole Foursome which was more or less of a Grewsome.

Then a little Tea on the Terrace with Herbert lolling by in his Flannels, just as you read about it in Mrs. Humphrey Ward.

A buzzing sound dying off into the distance, a trail of Blue Smoke in the fading Twilight, and little Bright Eyes is back in her own Boudoir packing herself into a new set of Glads.

That evening she had four throbbing Roscoes curled up among her Sofa Pillows.

She had to bat up short and easy ones for this Bunch, as they came from the Wholesale District.

When they began to distribute political Bromides, the artful Minx sat clear out on the edge of the Chair and let on to be simply pop-eyed with Ardor.

Shortly after 12 she turned the last night-blooming Cyril out into the Darkness and did a graceful Pirouet to the Husks.

On Wednesday morning, between the Ham and Eggs, she glanced at her double-entry Date Book and began to gyrate.

On the way down-town she stopped in and had herself measured for a new mop of hair.

Thence to the Beauty Works to have the peerless Frontispiece ironed out and the Nails ivoryed.

When she appeared at the Sorority Tiffin at 1 P. M. she was dolled for fair.

The Response in behalf of the Alumnae of Yamma Gamma was a neat Affair. After swiping the Table Decorations, she and two Companions hurried to a Mat. It was a Performance given under the auspices of the Overhanging Domes, and the Drama was one that no Commercial Manager had the Nerve to unload on the Public. The Plot consisted of two victims of Neurasthenia sitting at a Table and discussing Impaired Circulation.

That evening she helped administer the Anesthetic to a Seminary Snipe who was getting into the Life Boat with a hard-wood Bachelor grabbed off at the 11th Hour.

Loretta wept softly while straightening out the Veil, in accordance with Tradition. Later on she did an Eddie Collins and landed the Bride's Bouquet. At 11.30 she had the Best Man backed into a Corner, slipping him that Old One about his Hair matching his Eyes.

It is now Thursday morning and who is this in the Gym whanging the Medicine Ball at the Lady Instructor with the Face?

It is Loretta.

Behold her at 10.30, after an icy Splash and a keen rub with a raspy Towel.

She has climbed back into the dark-cloth Effect and is headed for the Studio of Madam to grapple with the French Lesson.

After that she will do nothing before Lunch Time except try on White Shoes and fondle some Hats that are being sacrificed at \$80 per throw.

The Suffrage Sisters rounded up Thursday afternoon. A longitudinal Brigadieress in the army of Intellectuality did the main Spiel, with Loretta as principal Rooter.

The Speaker was there with the Pep and with the Vocabulary. Otherwise she was a Naughty-Naughty. The costume was a plain Burial Shroud, the only Ornament being a 4-carat Wen just above the Neck-band.

At 4 P. M., after the Male Sex had been ground to a Hamburger, our little Playmate escaped to a Picture Show, but not until she had duly fortified herself with the nourishing Marshmallow.

There was nothing on the Cards that night except a Subscription Dance, which got under way at 10 P. M. and never subsided until the cold Daylight began to spill in at the Windows.

Loretta did a 27 out of a possible 29. Percentage .931—six better than Bogey and 400 points ahead of Ty Cobb.

Nevertheless and notwithstanding, don't imagine that she failed to come up for Air on Friday Morning.

Life is real, Life is earnest, and she had a Gown to be shortened up and re-surveyed around the Horse Shoe Curve, just as soon as she could leave the Gloves to be cleaned.

Happening into Automobile Row, she permitted a blond salesman with a Norfolk Jacket to demonstrate the new type of Electric Runabout.

One of the most inexpensive pursuits of the well-dressed Minority is to glide over the Asphalt in a Demonstration Car and pretend to be undecided.

She permitted the man to set her down at a Book Shop, where she furtively skinned eight Magazines while waiting for a Chum to pop through the Whirligig Door.

The two went Window-Hopping for an hour. After making Mind Purchases of about \$8000 worth of washable Finery edged with Lace, a spirit of Deviltry seized them.

They ordered their Lettuce Sandwiches and diluted Ceylon in a Restaurant where roguish Men-about-Town sat facing the Main Entrance to pipe the pulchritudinous Pippins.

Was it seven or eight Party Calls that she checked from her social Ledger before 4 o'clock? Answer: eight.

Then a swinging Gallop for home. Whilst she had been socializing around, Robert W. Chambers had taken a lead of two Novels on her. Retiring to a quiet Alcove with four Volumes that were being dissected at the drawing-room Clinics, she took a hack at the first and last Chapter of each. Just enough to protect her against a Fumble if she found herself next to a Book Sharp.

That evening a famous Hungarian Fiddler, accompanied by a warbling Guinea Hen and backed up by sixty Symphonic Heineys wearing Spectacles, was giving a Recital for the True Lovers in a Mammoth Cave devoted to Art.

Loretta had a sneaking preference for the May Irwin School of Expression, but she had to go through with the Saint-Saens Stuff now and then to maintain a Club Standing.

Accordingly she and Mother and poor old dying Father, with no Heart in the Enterprise, were planted well down in Section B, where they could watch Mrs. Leroy Geblotz, who once entertained Nordica, and say "Bravo" at the Psychological Moment.

On Saturday Morning, after she had penned 14 Epistles, using the tall cuneiform Hieroglyphics, she didn't have a blessed thing to do before her 1 o'clock Engagement except drop in at a Flower Show and a Cat Show and have her Palm read by a perfectly fascinating Serpent with a Goatee who had been telling all the Gells the most wonderful things about themselves.

A merry little Group went slumming Saturday afternoon. They attended a Ball Game. Loretta had her Chin over the Railing and evinced a keen Interest, her only Difficulty being that she never knew which Side was at bat.

At dusk she began hanging on the Family Jewels. It was a formal Dinner Party with a list made up by Dun and Bradstreet.

Loretta found herself between an extinct Volcano of Political World and a sappy Fledgling whose Grandfather laid the cornerstone of Brooklyn.

The Dinner was one of those corpseless Funerals, stage-managed by a respectable Lady with a granite Front who had Mayflower Corpuscles moving majestically through her Arterial System.

Loretta was marooned so far from the Live Ones that she couldn't wig- wag for Help. Her C. Q. D. brought no Relief.

She threw about three throes of Anguish before they escaped to the private Gambling Hell.

Here she tucked back her Valenciennes and proceeded to cop a little Pin-Money at the soul-destroying game known as Bridge.

At 11.30 she led a highly connected volunteer Wine Pusher out into the Conservatory and told him she did not think it advisable to marry him until she had learned his First Name.

Shortly after Midnight she blew, arriving at headquarters just in time to participate in a Chafing-Dish Jubilee promoted by only Brother, just back from the Varsity.

She approached the Porcelain in a chastened mood that Sabbath morning.

She was thinking of the Night Before and of playing cards for Money.

She remembered the glare of Light for overhead and the tense, eager Faces peering above the Paste-Boards.

Then she recalled, with a sharp catch of the Breath and a little tug of Pain at the Heart, that she had balled herself up at one Stage and got dummied out of a Grand Slam.

"It would have meant a long pair of the Silk Kind," thought she, as she sighed deeply and turned the cold Faucet.

After Breakfast, she took a long Walk up the Avenue as a Bracer.

After which to the Kirk, for she taught a class of Little Girls in the Sunday School, and she had to fake up an Explanation of how Joshua made the Sun stand still, thereby putting herself in the Scratch Division of Explainers, believe us.

She listened to a dainty Boston Sermon, trimmed with Ruching, singing lustily before and after.

Then back home with the solemn Parade to sit among the condemned waiting for that superlative Gorge known as the Sunday Dinner.

While she was waiting, a male Friend dropped in. His costume was a compromise between an English Actor and a hired Mourner.

On Week Days he sat at a Desk dictating Letters and saying that the Matter had been referred to the proper Department.

He looked at Loretta, so calm and cool and collected in her pious Raiment, and the Smile that he summoned was benevolent and almost patronizing.

"I was wondering," said he. "I was wondering if a Girl like you ever gets tired of sitting around and doing nothing."

Loretta did not cackle. She had read in a Book by a Yale Professor that Woman is not supposed to possess the Sense of Humor.

MORAL: The Settlement Campaign is not getting to the real Workers.

THE NEW FABLE OF THE INTERMITTENT FUSSER

Once a grammar-school Rabbit, struggling from long Trousers toward his first brier-wood Pipe, had Growing Pains which he diagnosed as the pangs of True Love.

The Target was a dry-seasoned Fannie old enough to be his Godmother. She was a Post-Graduate who was keeping herself on Earth by running to the Drug-Store every few minutes.

The Eye-Brows were neatly blocked out by some Process unknown to the writer, and she had a Shape that could be revised ad lib.

An Expert would have Made her at a glance, but the Cub fell for the Scenery and Mechanical Effects.

He had sketched a little synopsis of the Future. After waiting 8 years, until she had unpetaled into the perfect bloom of Womanhood and he was wearing a Full Beard, he would take her by the Long Glove and lead her off into Dreamland.

Just to show how one of those pinfeather Passions may be shunted onto a Siding and left among the Dog-Fennel, when the Subject of this Sketch was *aetat* 22, he was picking them out of the Air in the Left Garden at the State University. Fannie (she of the purchased Pallor) was thoroughly married to a Veterinary with the Drug Habit.

Soon after recovering from the Pip, known in Medical Parlance as the Spooney Infantum, he began to glory in the friendship of an incipient Amazon who wore a Blazer and walked like a Policeman.

She did not hamper her fibrous Physique with any excess Harness that might pinch when she essayed a full St. Andrew's Swipe with a wooden Club. And she had one lower octave of Pipes, like a Brakeman on the Erie.

There comes a brief Period in the Veal Epoch of every Sentimental Tommy when the only real Cutie is one who can propel a Canoe and throw Overhand.

So Walter, such being the baptismal Handicap, often thought it would be Sweet Billiards to keep house with the she-Acrobat for 30 or 40 years, because when they were tired of sitting in the House they could go into the Front Yard and play Ketch.

He was just at the rickety Age when the Gams refuse to co-ordinate.

Every time he sauntered carelessly across the porch at a Summer Hotel, he gave a correct Imitation of a troop of Cavalry going over a Wooden Bridge at full Gallop.

He had a way of backing into Potted Plants.

Each Morning was clouded by the task of picking out a Cravat that would be of the same Radio-Activity as his Socks. And all through the waking hours he carried with him a faint and sickly Realization that his Parents did not understand him.

One day he stood before a kind-faced Registrar and matriculated. Branded as a regular Freshman, he went back to his little Den and put a news-stand Photo of Lillian Russell between two Pennants.

The whalebone Divinity in the Home Town passed out of his Life. He told himself that he would be true to Miss Russell and all the other Members of her sprightly Profession.

The emotional side of his unfolding Nature began to nourish itself on Song Hits, and he slept each night with his Banjo folded tightly to his Bosom.

He became acquainted with a Sophomore who once sat near Trixie Friganza in a Parlor Car. One night Alice Nielsen looked directly at the Box in which he was seated with the other Fraters of the Ippy Ki Yi. In fact, his Life became crowded with tingling Experiences.

The collection of Cigarette Pictures made him acquainted with many Celebrities. His intimacy with them grew apace as he developed a bookish appetite for Sunday Newspapers.

He danced with the local Chickadees, but all the time his Heart was far away, in the Dramatic Column.

Suddenly he found that he was an Upper Classman, to whom each Neophyte touched the Leaf of Lettuce balanced on top of the Head, ostensibly as a Cap.

He became endowed with the divine Right to hit himself on the Leg with a Walking Stick and sit on a hallowed Fence.

Simultaneous-like, he became conscious of the fact that the Footlight Favorites were no longer worthy of him. He began to hold long and serious Conversaciones with the Sister of a Prof.

She was an aerial Performer who wore powerful Spectacles, in which any one standing before her could see an Image of himself, greatly reduced. She looked as if she had been sitting up all night, writing a History of Civilization.

Walter found himself uplifted every time they were left together in the Library. Sometimes she took him up so high that he became dizzy.

He now began to prog as follows: He and the Lady Emerson would be legally welded just after Commencement and spend the Honeymoon at some lively Chautauqua.

The grinding Wheels and raucous buying and selling of the Marts of Trade seemed faint and far away when he roamed through the Cloisters with Elfreda. He was in the moulting Stage, and it seemed to him that Success in Life would consist of going about reeking of Culture.

A Degree looked bigger than a Dividend.

He never had heard tell of such a thing as a Coal-Bill or a Special Assessment for a Sewer.

The vision of Elfreda floated out through a Transom three days after he drew a Desk in the extensive Works owned by the Governor.

He was too busy keeping his Head above the Churning Waves to bother with Speculative Philosophy or write Letters studded with Latin Phrases, like Currants in an English Cake.

All the cringing Peons in the big Stockade hated him because he had a Drag. It was up to him to deliver the Merchandise and demonstrate that he was a Human Being rather than a College Graduate.

In the meantime, the Spectators were hoping that he would Skid and go into the Fence.

He began to wear his Frat pin on his undershirt, and he had no time to frivol away on the fluffy Gender, because he expected to be sitting in the Directors' Room in a couple of years, talking it over with Henry C. Frick.

So he waved aside the Square Envelopes and allowed himself to be billed all over the Macaroon Circuit as a Woman-Hater.

Of course he girlred in a conservative way, but he merely trailed. He did not buzz, or throw himself at the fallen Handkerchief, or run to get the Wraps, or do any of the Stuff that marks the true and bounden Captive.

When he found himself in the cushioned Lair of a Feline, he would lean back in perfect Security, knowing that even if she exercised her entire repertoire of Wiles, she could not warm the Dead Heart nor stir into life the fallen Rose Leaves of Romance.

All the time she was spilling her familiar line of Chatter, he would look at her with an arid and patronizing Smile, such as the Harvard Man produces when he finds himself in immediate juxtaposition to some human Caterpillar from west of Pittsburgh.

Very often, when the registered Dolly Grays got together for a Bon-Bon Orgy, some one would say, "Oh, Crickey, ain't he the regular Cynic?"

Another might suggest that he was hiding a great Sorrow, his whole Existence having been embittered by the faithlessness of some Creature.

Then they would take a Vote and decide that he was a plain Mutt.

The Chauncey who refuses to reciprocate will excite more Conversation than a regular Union Lover, but it is Lucky for him that he does not hear all the Conversation.

Walter at the age of twenty-five thought he was too old and sedate to be a Diner-Out and Dancing Devil.

When he was 28, however, he had become Hep to the large and luminous Truth that the man who sits in his Lodgings reading Dumas may overlook many a Bet.

He noted on every Hand the nice-looking Boys who turned in about 10.40 and avoided the Pitfalls of Society, and most of them were pulling down as much as \$14 a week.

He recalled what this humble Chronicler had said away back in 1899:

"Early to Bed and Early to Rise and you will meet very few of our Best People."

He looked over the Lay-Out and decided that it was just as easy to mingle with the Face Cards as to sleep in the Discards.

He saw many a Light Weight with a gilt sign exposed on Main Street and no Assets except a Suit with a Velvet Collar, a pair of indestructible dancing Legs, and just enough intellectual Acumen to stir Tea without spilling it.

So he decided to have a try at the Gay Life and worm his way into the Safety Deposit Vaults via the Parlor Route.

A worthy Resolve and one often taken.

If a Friend of the People can capitalize his Vocal Cords, why should not the little Brother of the Rich put his undying Nerve into the Market and get what he can on it?

The Captain of Finance is usually owned, Body and Soul, by the other Half of the Sketch. She may be a head bell-ringer in the D. A. R. or the blue-pencil Queen of the Golden Pheasants, but in a vast majority of cases she has not the Looks to back up the Title.

Even the Buckingham Palace manner and the Arctic Front cannot buffalo the idle Spectator into overlooking the fact that she belongs to the genus Quince.

She may not be a Beaut, but it is She who stands at the main entrance to the Big Tent and tears off seat coupons.

Walter knew that if he wished to be mentioned all over town as a Sure- Enough, his passport to the Inner Circle of Hot Potatoes would have to be vised by Patroness No. 1.

He began to work in the Secret Service of the Chosen Few and was First Aid to the Chaperons.

A Hard Life, say you? Not a tall—not a tall.

He was entirely surrounded by Fairy Lamps and sweet-smelling Flowers.

Life became a kaleidoscopic Aurora Borealis.

When the first Crash of Music came through the hothouse Palms, Walter would be out on the Waxen Floor with his hair in a Braid.

Through the long watches of the night he played Blonde against Brunette and then went home with his Time-Card bearing the official O. K..

He swam among the floating Hooks and side-stepped the Maternal Traps, until the compilers of Marital Statistics had his name in the list marked "Nothing Doing."

The Dope on him seemed to be that he was Immune and Jinx-Proof.

After he led one of them back to a Divan and fed her an Ice it was a case of "Good Night, Miss Mitchell."

Truly, a Bachelor flown with Insolence and Pride is the favorite Mark for the Bow-and-Arrow Kid. For every weather-beaten Beau and Ballroom Veteran there is waiting somewhere in Ambuscade a keen little Diana with the right kind of Ammunition.

One night he went to a Small Dance in his regular Henry Miller suit and wearing a tired look around the Eyes. He counted these minor Functions a dreadful Bore.

Over in a corner sat a half-portion Damosel who had come to town on a Visit. Her name was Violet, and she looked the Part.

She didn't know who was running for President or what Miss Pankhurst said about Suffrage, but she had large belladonna Orbs, with Danger lurking in their limpid depths.

She was just at the Age when any girl who is not actually Deformed looks fair to middling, while the real Dinger, with the Tresses and the Complexion and the gleaming white Shoulders and the Parisian figure, is right there with a full equipment for breaking up Families.

Old Dare-Devil Dick, the Hero of 1000 Flirtations, was sitting out one of the Dances recently condemned by Press and Pulpit.

He became aware of the presence of something Feminine at his immediate right. He took a cautious Look and beheld a timid Debutante, sparkling with the Dew and waiting to be plucked.

She gave him a frightened Smile and lamped him very slowly.

Suddenly he felt himself wafted away on a cloud of Purple Perfumery.

She had put the Sign on him without lifting a Finger.

His friends tried to save him. They demonstrated, with a Pencil and a Piece of Paper, that she was just an ordinary, everyday Baby Doll with a Second Reader intelligence and the Spiritual Caliber of a Humming Bird. They proved that exactly the same kind were scattered through every Department Store, working for \$6 a week.

When they got thorough knocking, he hurried over and told her everything and promised her that if she would marry him, not one of these Snakes would ever be permitted to enter the House.

He writhed on the Rug and said that if she didn't whisper that One Little Word, it would be a case of Satin Lining and Silver Handles for little Wallie.

She looked out the Window and yawned slightly and then said, "Oh, very well."

He rode home standing up in a Taxicab, while she was showing the Maids a lozenge-shaped Ring that set him back 450 Bucks.

MORAL: The higher they fly the harder they fall.

THE NEW FABLE OF THE SEARCH FOR CLIMATE

Once there was a Gentleman of the deepest dye who was all out of Kilter. He felt like a list of Symptoms on the outside of a Dollar Bottle. He looked like the Picture you see in the Almanac entitled, "Before Taking."

When his Liver was at Perihelion, he had a Complexion suggesting an Alligator-Pear, and his Eye-Balls should have been taken out and burnished.

He could see little dirigible Balloons drifting about in all parts of the deep-blue Ether. His Tummy told him that some one had moved in and was giving a Chafing-Dish Party. Furthermore, a red-hot Awl had been inserted under each Shoulder Blade.

When every Tree was a Weeping Willow and the Sun went slinking behind a Cloud, his only definite Yearn was to crawl into a dark Cellar with Fungus on the Walls and do the Shuffle, after making a sarcastic Will that disinherited all Relatives and Friends. This poor, stricken Gloomer had time-tabled himself all over the Universe, trying to close in on a Climate that would put him on his Feet and keep him Fit as a Fiddle.

He had de-luxed himself to remote Spots that were supplied with Steam Heat and French Cooking, together with Wines, Liquors, and Cigars, but no matter what the Altitude or the Relative Humidity, he felt discouraged every Morning when he awoke and remembered that presently he would have to rally his Vital Forces and walk all the way to the Tub.

It was too bad that a Clubman, so eminent Socially, should be thus shot to Rags and Fragments. Could aught be more Piteous than to Witness a proud and haughty Income tottering along the Street, searching in vain for a Workingman's Appetite? When one with a spending possibility of \$2 a Minute is told by a Specialist to drink plenty of Hot Water, the Words seem almost Ironic.

His Operating Expenses kept running up, and yet it looked like sheer Waste to lavish so much Collateral on the upkeep of a Physical Swab.

To show you how he worked at recouping his Health, once he spent a whole Summer in Merrie England. He had been told by a Globe-Trotter that One lodging within a mile of Trafalgar Square could hoist unlimited Scotch and yet sidestep the Day After.

The Explanation offered by members of the Royal Alcoholic Society is that the Moisture in the Atmosphere counterbalances or nullifies, so to speak, the interior Wetness.

Also, the normal state of Melancholy is such that even a case of Katzenjammer merely blends in with the surrounding Drabness.

He experimented sincerely with the Caledonian Cure, acquiring a rich sunset Glow, much affected by half-pay Majors and the elderly Toffs who ride in the Row. He began to wear his Arteries on the outside, just like a true son of Albion. This cherry-ripe Facial Tint proves that the Britisher is the most rugged Chap in the World—except when he is in Stockholm.

In fact, if the New York Duds worn by the Yank had been less of a Fit, and he could have schooled himself to look at a Herring without shuddering, he might have rung in as a Resident of the tight little Isle, for he was often Tight.

He learned to like the Smoky Taste and could even take it warm, but still he felt Rocky, and up to 3 P. M. was only about 30 per cent. Human.

One evening in a polite Pub he heard about the wonderful Vin Ordinaire of Sunny France. He was told that the Peasants who irrigated themselves with a brunette Fluid resembling diluted Ink were husky as Beeves and simply staggering with Health.

So he went motoring in the Grape and Chateau District and played Claret both ways from the Middle. Every time the Petrol chariot pulled up in front of a Brasserie, he would call for a Flagon of some rare old Vintage squeezed out the day before.

Then he would go riding at the rate of 82 Kilos an Hour, scooping up the Climate as he scooted along.

Notwithstanding all these brave Efforts to overtake Health, he would feel like a frost-nipped Rutabaga when the matutinal Chanticleer told him that another blue Dawn was sneaking over the Hills.

He began to figure himself a Candidate for a plain white Cot in the Nerve Garage, when he heard of the wonderful Air and Dietary Advantages of Germany. It seemed that the Fatherland was becoming Commercially Supreme and of the greatest Military Importance because every Fritz kept himself saturated with the Essence of Munich.

He could see on the Post-Cards that each loyal subject of Wilhelm was plump and rosy, with Apple Cheeks and a well-defined Awning just below the Floating Ribs, and a Krug of dark Suds clutched in the right Mitt.

All the way from Duesseldorf to Wohlgebaum he played the Circuit of Gardens with nice clean Gravel on the Ground and Dill Pickles festooned among the Caraway Trees. Every time the Military Band began to breathe a new Waltz he would have Otto bring a Tub of the Dark Brew and a Frankfurter about the size of a Sash Weight.

Between pulls he would suspire deeply, so as to get the full assistance of the Climate.

Sometimes he would feel that he was being benefitted.

Often at 9 P. M., before taking his final Schnitzel and passing gently into a state of Coma, he would get ready to renounce allegiance to all three of the Political Parties in the U. S. A. and grow one of those U-Shaped Mustaches.

Next Morning, like as not, he would emerge from beneath the Feather Tick and lean against the Porcelain Stove, wondering vaguely if he could live through the Day.

The very Treatment which developed large and coarse-grained Soldiers all through Schleswig-Holstein seemed to make this Son of Connecticut just about as gimpy as a wet Towel.

Undismayed by repeated Failures, he took some Advice, given in a Rathskeller, and went to a Mountain Resort famous for a certain brand of White Vinegar with a colored Landscape on the Label.

It was said that anyone becoming thoroughly acidulated with this noble Beverage would put a Feather into his Granulated Lid and begin to Yodel.

He sat among the snowy Peaks, entirely surrounded by the rarefied Atmosphere so highly boosted in the Hotel Circulars, sampling a tall bottle of every kind ending with "heimer," and yet he didn't seem to get the Results.

At last he headed for the barbaric Region which an unkindly Fate had designated as Home, almost convinced that there was no Climate on the Map which would really adapt itself to all the intricate Peculiarities of his complicated Case.

Often he would be found in the Reception Room just next to the shake-down Parlor.

After reading a few pages in a popular Magazine dated two Years back, he would be admitted to the little inside Room, faintly perfumed with something other than New Mown Hay. Here he would cower before the dollar-a-minute Specialist, who would apply a Dictograph to the Heart Region and then say "You are all Run Down."

Next day the Sufferer would collect his folding Trunks and Head-Ache Tablets and Hot-Water Bags and start for Florida or California or the Piney Woods.

Sometimes he would seem to perk up for a Day or two. Enlivened by Hope and a few Dry Martinis, he would move up to a little Table in the shade of the sheltering Candelabrum and tackle the Carte du Jour from Caviar to Cafe Noir.

The Climate would seem to be helping his Appetite.

Within 24 Hours, however, he would be craving only some cold Carbonic and a few Kind Words.

Florida seemed to enervate him. California was too unsettled. Even in the Mountains, his Heart always bothered him after a Hearty Meal. And the Piney Woods only made him Pine more than ever.

Time and again he would curl up in the palatial Drawing-Room at one end of the Sleeper and dream that six Life-Long Friends in deep Black were whispering among the Floral Tributes and putting on Cotton Gloves.

While searching for the Fountain of Youth he would bump into Sympathetic Souls of the kind who infest Observation Cars and hold down Rocking-Chairs in front of Wooden Hotels. These Fellow Voyagers in the realm of Hypochondria would give him various Capsules and Tablets, supposed to be good for whatever Ailed one at the Time. So eager was he to regain his full vigor and be able to eat and drink everything forbidden by the Doctors, he would fall for every kind of Dope made from Coal Tar.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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