

## NELLIE'S LEAP YEAR PROPOSAL.

### The Story of a Little Girl Who Brought About a Wedding.

"Really, Catharine, I don't wonder at Mary's surprise at your behavior. You forget that you are Frank's widow. You are too forward."

I hesitated a moment, really anxious to keep my temper; for I was Frank's widow, and the speaker was his mother.

"Forward!" cried Mary. "Indeed, you would have been shocked last night, mother, and acting as if Herbert Halstead was her only friend, when it was only a married woman."

"Yes," interrupted Julia. "I think, mother, if you can't make Kate realize that she is married, with a daughter nearly six years of age, you had better—"

"Send me away," I broke in, unable longer to control myself; "it's not the first time that hint has been thrown out at me. You drive me desperate. I declare I will marry again and get rid of all this!" and then I burst into tears.

"Marry again! How will you do it? Oh, yes! a good joke!" cried Julia, with a shrug at my tears. "Don't you see, Mary, it's leap year!" and she laughed derisively.

"Who'll you ask?" sneered Mary. "Herbert Halstead? Julia, you'd better look out!"

"You may sneer," I cried, checking my tears. "I was now thoroughly angry. But him, I believe I should ask Mr. Halstead, and—he'd have me!"

I had fairly taken up their own weapons of personalities which I had scorned. The moment after, ashamed of myself, I ran to my room to put on my bonnet and get out of the house.

I looked in the glass as I put on the cape bonnet, with its widow's cap and veil, on my head, and I saw a face to which black was very becoming, though it was not a remarkably pretty face. It looked not more than 25, some said not more than 18, but I was really over 24. Married at 18 to Frank Stevens, I had been a petted wife for four years and now a widow for two.

The thought of the happiness of the four and the loneliness of the two, as I looked at the face surrounded by crape, made the tears come again; but I brushed them away resolutely and went out, knowing that a brisk walk would do me more good than anything else.

I went out without my darling, my inseparable companion, my little boy girl, Nellie. This alone showed how troubled I was. Truth to tell, I was too angry to trust myself with the little one, who might have asked to have our conversation explained, for she had been in the room at the time. I could only hope that at 5 years old a child did not understand me.

Soon after I left my mother-in-law and her daughters went out for a drive. They invited Nellie to go, but she feeling, perhaps, that they had not treated mamma well, refused. Soon the front door-bell rang, and like all children, Nellie must run to see who was there. She managed to open the door herself, and there stood her prime favorite among the gentlemen who visited the house, Mr. Halstead, or as she called him since her babyhood, Uncle Herbert. He had been her father's chum and dearest friend, and loved the child for Frank's sake.

"Ladies home, Nell?"

"I'm home," she said, "and I des mamma'll be in soon."

"Very well. Let's go in the parlor and have a chat."

Nellie sat in his lap, discussing the merits of coconut cakes and sugar almonds a little while; but, suddenly dropping her candies in her lap, she asked, "What's leap—leap—leap, I forget. Do you know what it is?"

"Leap? leap frog? leap year? Is that it?"

"Yes. What is it?"

"Why, it's a year when you ladies can ask the gentlemen to marry you. But you see, Nellie, you're too young—or wouldn't you ask me?"

"Oh, no! I wouldn't ask you. Mamma's going to ask you."

The young man nearly dropped the child, and then folded her close to him again, lest, perhaps, he should forget her again. "What do you mean, darling?" he asked. "Now think, Nellie, but don't tell Uncle Herbert anything of your own make-up."

"Oh, no! really, truly, bless me, she's alive—isn't that what you say when you are true? Well!"—the little tot gave a long sigh and panted, Herbert not daring to interrupt her lest she should see his anxiety, and, miniature woman that she was, should refuse to satisfy him.

"Well," she repeated, "you see, they does scold mamma, so they does. To-day morning they maked mamma cry, to-morrow (she would call yesterday to-morrow) they scolded her because she wouldn't sing, and then they said she was forward. What's forward?"

"Forward, indeed!" ejaculated Herbert, under his breath. "If it had been some other, now. But Nellie, how about leap year?"

"Oh, yes! I most forgot! didn't I? Well, you see, mamma said—but, oh, Uncle Herbert, I never showed you my two weeiee new kittens! They're only little sings, without eyes. Come out on the piazza and I'll show you."

It was no use to be impatient. The young man knew the child too well for that, and so they went out and inspected the kittens. Then he tried to coax Nellie back to the subject.

"Oh, I forgot!" she said. "Only they made mamma say—"

"What did they say, darling, I'll give you a big doll!"

"With real hair?"

"Yes, yes! Real hair and eyes, and—oh, nothing. But did they say I wanted to marry?"

"They say mamma wasn't a girl, and she was old; and mamma said—oh, there's mamma. Mamma, didn't you ask Uncle Herbert to marry you? He wants to know."

I had come in looking for the child, and that was the speech I heard. I felt ready to sink with mortification.

"Kate, darling, can I hope you'll let me ask? You must know that I hoped when these (touching my veil and black dress) were put aside, that I could ask you to let me care for you, and at once. Come dar-

ling," as I hid my face in my hands, "You've asked me to marry you and I must name the day; and I say now, at once. Let's give them a good, thorough surprise. I can guess how they have treated you. Come, now, get ready this fairy, this blessed little darling that has brought me my happiness, and we will go to your own minister."

I tried to refuse, but I was so weary of living with mother-in-law, that at last we three slipped out of the house; and dear Dr. S—, who had baptized me, married me to Frank, and knew Herbert well and married us.

We drove back and reached the front door as the family were returning. Julia, who would appropriate Herbert, stepped forward.

"Good evening, Mr. Halstead. So you met Kate on the steps? Strange!"—with a glance at me, as if I had planned to meet him.

"Not at all, Miss Julia," said Herbert. "My wife and I just called in to receive your congratulations and to leave little Midget here for a few days."

No tableau I have ever seen was half so comical as the one those three made. I really felt for Julia, for I knew she cared quickly and congratulated me, whispering as she kissed me: "So you asked him?"

"My husband heard and answered: 'No, Miss Julia, she did not ask me. Through other means, thank God, I learned the one I loved was unhappy; and, as I hoped, for more than a year past, to soon marry me at once. Leap year privileges are still open to those who choose them.'"

We are quite an old married couple now, for three years have passed; but Herbert and I still often laugh over Nellie's leap-year proposal.

## A NEW DANCE.

It is a Waltz, and is known as the Jubilee. Devotees of dancing will be glad of the new waltz, the "Jubilee." It is certain to win a triumph—just as certain as society does her dancing shoes. As a matter of fact, beginners want to waltz the first thing, and inability to reverse is apt to discourage them. Now the ardent swain, the college fellow, the apoplectic dandy in his second childhood, and the fair, fat and frisky widow who gets dizzy when she tries to go "Jubilee," master it in two lessons, and get a fine opinion of themselves all through a revolving to the right. The partners take the waltz position and dance two "dips" to kick with the inside foot and again with the outside; join hands, swing in waltz position and take four waltz steps. This mischievous, captivating dance will in all probability score a double success, for some rogue will be certain to write a song accompanying it.—Chicago News.

American Prayers for the Queen.

"The prayers of the righteous availeth much," quoted a genial South Dakotan to the reporter yesterday, prefacing a little story in a manner befitting the day. "The truth of this," he continued, "has certainly a very striking illustration in Yankton. At the Episcopal church in that town finances were a trifle light some time ago, when one of its members visited England, his former home. Well, sir, he actually succeeded there in securing the promise of \$1,000 a year for his church upon the condition that it should offer prayer at each service for the Queen of England. The condition is being fulfilled, and the money, I am told, is being paid regularly. You can visit the Yankton church at either the morning or evening service and you will hear prayer offered for the Queen of England, the President of the United States and all others in authority."

This fact is of not a little importance in showing that "Victoria thinks South Dakotans are 'righteous.' She is to be commended for her good judgment."—Sioux City Journal.

"I thought Mrs. Snapper was rich." "So she is; she keeps her own carriage." "Keeps her own carriage? That is rather strange." "Why?" "Because I heard the other day that she couldn't keep a servant girl."

Indians don't have ballet performances, but when they give a scalp dance the bald heads are bound to come.

The centenary of the panoramas occurs in 1892. A young Edinburgh painter named Barker was thrown into prison by his creditors. From the way in which the light from a hole in the ceiling struck the walls he evolved the idea of the panorama.

In 1804 there were 35 translations of the Scriptures in existence. There are now nearly 300.

A female jewelry drummer is on the road in Maine. She is handsome, dresses stylishly, wears a man's soft felt hat and hails from New York.

The greatest truths are the simplest; so likewise are the greatest men.

Princess Beatrice's last baby, born on October 4th, was Victoria's 12th grandson and 34th granddaughter.

"A Book of Scotch Humor" illustrates anew of a native of Annandale the saying that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country. "I ken them a'!" said a rustic, speaking of the Carlyles; "Jock's a doctor about London. Tam's a harem-scarem kind of chiel, an' wreathe books an' ower yonder—Jamie's the man o' that family, an' I'm proud to say I ken him."

Jamie Carlyle, sir, feeds the best swine that come into Dumfries market."

"Mary," said Mrs. Barker, "I wish you would step over and see how old Mrs. Jones is this morning." In a few minutes Mary returned. "Sure she's just 72 years, 7 months and 2 days old."

The average expectation of life on the principle of heredity may be found, according to a statistician, by adding the ages of a man's parents and grandparents, if dead, and dividing the result by six.

He—I see that only one girl has been admitted to Harvard College. She'll be no; there are lots of real nice ladylike young men there.

Ethel—Chappie is sure now that marriage is a lottery. Maud—What has convinced him? Ethel—He told Jessie he guessed he would make her his wife, and she told him to "guess again."

## JAPAN SHAKEN UP.

### The Third City in Japan Badly Damaged by an Earthquake.

A London cable says: Despatches from Japan state that shocks of earthquake have been experienced in that country. So severe were they at Hiogo and Osaka that scores of houses were destroyed and many lives lost at both places.

Despatches were received here this evening from Japan announcing that the telegraphic wires beyond Hiogo and Osaka were down. It was added that there had been an earthquake at Hiogo and the rumor was current that a great amount of property had been destroyed and that the loss of life had been considerable. Hiogo is a seaport town of Japan on the Island of Honshu, with a population of over 50,000, and is situated about 22 miles from Osaka. Osaka in point of size is the third or fourth city in Japan, having over 350,000 people, but in social affairs, fashion, commerce and industry it takes the lead.

Later—a private telegram, dated Hiogo, received here to-night, confirms the report conveyed in former telegrams, that a disastrous earthquake shock has occurred in Japan. This telegram says a severe shock was experienced at Osaka and that the destruction both of life and property was very great. So severe was the shock that a number of houses were thrown to the ground and many of the occupants were caught in the falling buildings and crushed to death. A large number of persons succeeded in escaping from their tottering homes only to meet death in the streets. There is no means at present of estimating the total loss of life, as all the telegraph wires in the districts affected were broken by the falling of the poles, which were thrown down by the seismic disturbance. The above-mentioned despatch, however, states that it is known that in Osaka alone the death list contains the names of 300 of the residents of that city.

A Rector's Cruelty.

Astonishing Revelations as to the Management of an Orphanage.

A Dublin cable says: Startling testimony was given to-day in the trial of Rev. Samuel Cotton, a rector at Carnagh, County Kildare, who was charged with criminal neglect and ill-treatment of the children in Carnagh Orphanage. Rev. Mr. Cotton, who has conducted the affairs of the orphanage for many years, has made many appeals to the public for financial aid, and has received numerous complaints against that institution. The Society for the Protection of Children recently made an investigation into the manner in which the orphanage was conducted. It was ascertained that the children were in an emaciated, filthy and ragged condition. A girl had been chained by the legs to a table leg. The rooms of the orphanage were in the filthiest possible condition. In the kitchen was found a baby, six weeks old, covered with rags and dying of cold and starvation. Other children were found in the same almost frozen and half starved. All were weak and sickly, and their growth had been stunted by the treatment received. The sanitary condition of the establishment was perfectly horrible. The walls and floors were in a heastly condition, and some of the beds used by the children were old bags and packing cases filled with stale hay. All the children were kept in a state of terror by Mr. Cotton. Mr. Cotton was committed for trial.

He Loses the Fees.

New York Press: "I see that a man has been buried alive out West, Doctor." "I can hardly believe it." "But the papers say so." "Well, all I've got to say is he is a mighty poor doctor who allows a patient to be buried alive."

They Had no Use for Him.

Puck: "How did poor Waters happen to get lynched?" "He got into the flooded district and somebody spread a report that he was a Government rain-maker."

A Welcome Relief.

New York Weekly: Sea Captain—There is no hope! The ship is doomed! In an hour she shall all be dead!

Seaside Passenger—Thank heaven!

Rev. William J. Boone, Protestant Episcopal bishop in China, is dead. His father before him was also a bishop in the same country.

HER STRONG POINT.

My wife she cannot cook at all, Roast beef she's sure to spoil, But on her sex she has the call When she and I at breakfast fall Into a family broil.

The Madrid Telephone Company, which recently took a losing business from the hands of the Government, has now 1,800 subscribers, or one to every 270 inhabitants. Bare wires longer than 900 feet are not permitted.

"The privileges you enjoy, my son, from being an American," said the proud father, "are simply inestimable. You may some day become President of the United States; while in England no little boy, however brilliant or good, can ever become Queen."

"I am compelled to announce, dear brethren," observed the minister, taking off his glasses and wiping them, "that our regular Wednesday evening prayer meeting will not be held this week. I shall be on hand, of course, but the janitor will be unavoidably absent that evening, and it takes two to make a prayer meeting. We will sing the doxology and be dismissed."

Miss Eastlake, the actress, was left penniless at Philadelphia Saturday night by the attachment of the box office receipts and her scenery by the management of the Walnut street theatre for money loaned her manager three weeks ago to help him out on another attraction. In consequence Miss Eastlake disbanded her company. She cabled to London for money and will reorganize and finish her season on her own account.

—English barnmaids have been introduced in a New York drinking place.

Mother—Why, Rosalie, I thought you were going driving with Mr. De Riche. What are you wearing black for?

Rosalie—You know the poor fellow is mourning for his wife and I want to show my sympathy.

## BURNS NOT A SKEPTIC.

### An Edinburgh Magistrate Maintains That He Was a Religious Man.

Baillie Colston, of Edinburgh, in a recent address on Burns, said: Robert Burns was essentially a religious man, and having thoroughly dissected Scottish life and character came irresistibly to the conclusion that the peasant religious life of his countrymen was the grand secret of his country's greatness. In the "Cotter's Saturday Night," Scotland's peasant life is most admirably depicted. The heads of the household are there, discharging their respective duties. The reception room for all is the kitchen, with its "clean hearth-stone."

There are little children there, who are toddlin' about; and there are older children, also, who came in with their cronies; and there are bashful lovers, too, who are introduced into the family circle. There is gossip freely indulged in, and the younger portion get a lesson as to their duty. There is business spoken of—as to horses, plows and lye. Then comes the supper—a plain supper of which all partake.

The halesome parritch, chief of Scotia's food. But there the evening is not ended, and the assembly does not disperse. There is a duty still to be discharged:

The cheerful supper done, wi' serious face, They round the ingle form a circle wide; The sire turns o'er, with patriarchal grace, The big'ly Bible, ance his father's pride: His bonnet reverently is laid aside, His lyart haffes wearing thin and bare;

These strains that once did sweet Zion gladden, He wades a portion with judicious care; And "let us worship God!" he says with solemn air.

Burns then proceeds to describe the service; how they sing a psalm or hymn, with a chapter read and appropriate remarks made by the father; how they kneel before heaven's eternal king and the head of the household prays for all those under his roof, without any strain of sacerdotal pomp, but in his own natural way and language. He then describes the happy parting of the company, and, reflecting on such a gathering, he goes on thus to moralize:

From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs, That makes her loved at home, revered abroad; Princes and lords are but the breath of kings, An honest man's the noblest work of God.

But while Robert Burns showed how he looked upon the Scottish religious life as a most important factor in forming the religious character of Scotchmen and making them men in the best and truest sense of the word—he himself was brought from time to time near enough to the fountain of grace to show that he was no skeptic, no scoffer, but one who had the germs of religion deeply implanted in his heart.

THAT FISH COMMISSION.

The Stocking of Lake Ontario With Fish to be Considered.

The United States Government has decided to establish a hatchery on Lake Ontario just as soon as New York State shall enact protection laws, and engineers the past season have been inspecting the shore for a location. New York State last winter appointed a special commission to draft joint laws and regulations for Lake Ontario. This joint commission met last week in New York city, at which Ald. Stewart, of this city, attended. Invitations were extended to and accepted by the United States Fish Commission and the Fish Commissions of Ohio, Pennsylvania and Michigan. It was well attended and much interest was manifested.

Hon. Robert B. Roosevelt was chairman. A special sub-committee of twelve States fish commission and the several state fish protection and propagation bureaus of Ontario and Quebec, to formulate a plan of action to be submitted at an adjourned meeting. The meeting of the sub-committee voted to be held in Rochester, November 10th. It is thus apparent that this association has been the means of arousing the people and officials of two countries, and most gratifying progress is now confidently expected.

You May See a Million.

A concession has been granted to M. Stepanni to erect a Moorish palace at the World's Fair. One of the many attractions which he proposes to exhibit in this palace is \$1,000,000 in gold coin in one pile. He card and that nearly every visitor will want to see it.

If of course great precautions will be taken for the safety of such great treasure. It will be in a strong cage and Mr. Stepanni says: "Just under the gold will be constructed a fire and burglar proof vault. To the doors of this vault will be connected electric wires. In the event of an attempt to rob the palace my guards will press an electric button, the entire pile will fall into the vaults and the doors will spring shut." A space 200 by 250 feet was granted for the Moorish palace, upon which Mr. Stepanni says that he will expend \$400,000.

Limited Conversational Points.

Smith—Well, if you can't bear her, what- ever made you propose?

Jones—Well, we had danced three times and I couldn't think of anything else to say. —Texas Siftings.

The average Atlantic steamer is manned by about 150 men, as follows: Thirty-two deck hands, 4 officers, 9 petty officers, 32 firemen, etc., 8 engineers and 65 stewards. The master and chief officials—that is, mates and engineers—are chosen by the owners or managers, while the remainder of the crew are chosen by the captain. First-class ships muster from 12 to 15 men in each watch, and all of these are shipped as seamen.

Paul du Chailu, the noted traveler and African explorer, is a little brown man with flashing black eyes, smooth bronze face and a head as bald as a baby's. He is a confirmed old bachelor, but has manners that charm women.

In boring artesian wells on the Pacific Coast great depths are reached before striking water. At Jara and Monclara the wells are 1,536 and 1,280 feet in depth. The supply is inexhaustible, but the water has to be pumped.

By a mixture of oil and graphite, screws used about machinery may be prevented from becoming rusted.

## A Wish.

I wish I were as busy As the cunning little bee; I wish I were a sparrow brown, To fly from bush to tree.

I wish I were a humming-bird, But not a butterfly; For it lives just in summer, And in winter has to die.

I wish I were the sunlight, To sparkle every day; I wish I were the roses, So fragrant, bright and gay.

I wish I were the silver moon, That's gleaming up on high; I wish I were the tiny stars, Those flowers of the sky.

I even wish I were my doll, With golden hair a curl; I wish that I were anything, But a naughty little girl.

—ELLA BENTLEY (aged 10 years), in "Harper's Young People."

## Their Poverty The Destruction of the Poor.

An interesting writer for the New York Times has been visiting in the regions of the working poor in New York city trying to learn what it costs them to live. Entering a typical store in Hester street, he gave the woman who kept it a dollar to answer his questions, and from her he learned that such stores do a strictly cash business, that competition is at times and by spurts very keen, and that the customers pay more for what they buy than does the well-to-do householder. It gave the writer food for thought when—

He discovered that these people pay more for their common kindling wood than the millionaire does for the hard hickory logs that he sits and watches spluttering on his open hearth, and that they pay as much again for their coal as does that same millionaire. The wife of a workman would come with only 30 or 40 cents with which to purchase her supplies for the day. With that amount she would buy meat, vegetables, flour or bread, a hod of coals and a bundle of wood. It was 2 or 3 cents' worth of this and 5 cents' worth of that. Stuff usually sold by the pound was sold by the ounce, and coal and wood instead of being sold by the ton and the wagon-load, were bought here by the basket and bundle. The prices, therefore, had to be high, for the tenement house stores, selling in such small quantities, had to purchase in small quantities. Their wholesale price, owing to this fact, was almost as high as the usual retail price. In fact, they were really middlemen between the regular retailers and the people of the tenement houses whose small means did not enable them to purchase the quantities usually sold by retailers. They did not want a pound of butter, for they have no ice to keep it on. They do not want to buy a twenty-five pound bag of flour, for they want something else besides bread to eat, and if they bought flour in that way it would take all the available funds.

How did prices run? Well, customers paid 5 cents a pound for flour. So that by the time the patrons of these tenement house stores had purchased 200 pounds they would have invested \$10 for what would only cost the millionaire \$5 at his grocery store. For a quarter of a pound of butter they paid 8 to 10 cents, or 32 to 40 cents a pound for stuff that can be purchased at any first class store for from 25 to 30 cents a pound, and very much less by the tub. They paid 1 cent an ounce for washing soda. First-class grocers are glad to deliver it at your door for 3 cents a pound. For a cup of sugar, holding less than one-half a pound, they pay 3 cents. In a first-class store they could buy a pound for 4 cents. They paid 5 cents for half a bar of seven-cent soap, and at the rate of 40 cents a pound for a very inferior coal.

But the coal and wood end of the business presented an even more striking illustration of the extravagance of the poor. Nearly everybody living in the tenement houses bought their coal and wood each day. If they had money to buy coal and wood in the quantities it is ordinarily purchased, they would not know what to do with it. They certainly could not keep it in the stuffy little rooms where they live. There is usually a cellar in each tenement house, with a little place partitioned off for each family, but if they put coal and wood there it would not stay long. Therefore these tenement house storekeepers had established the coal and wood bins for the poor. They drew their daily supplies from them, and they paid well for doing it. The storekeepers usually only kept two or three tons of coal on hand at a time. It was a light, bulky coal, yielding 100 baskets or palfuls to the ton. It cost the tenement house storekeepers \$5 a ton, delivered. They sold it at 14 cents a pal, or \$14 a ton. What a wall would go up from the rich and well-to-do people of New York if they were called upon to pay any such price as that for coal.

For wood people in the tenement houses paid 2 cents for a little bundle of soft pine, about a dozen sticks four inches long, and averaging about an inch and a half in thickness. It is the poorest kind of fuel, and in fact is fit for nothing but kindling. The man who buys his wood by the wagon-load or the cord would get more fire out of a half cent's worth of his supply than the people of the tenement houses get out of one of these two cent bundles.

A Question of Knowledge.

Her Adorer: May I marry your daughter, sir?

Her Father: What do you want to marry for? You don't know when you're well off.

Her Adorer: No, perhaps not; but I know when you're well off.

Didn't Miss Him.

Mrs. Jocelyn—Don't you miss your husband very much, now that he is away?

Mrs. Golightly—Oh, not at all. You see, he left me plenty of money, and at breakfast I just stand a newspaper up in front of his plate, and half the time forget that he really isn't there.—Puck.

He'd Never Heard It.

Kate Field's Washington: "Jones, did you ever hear the 'Song of the Shirt'?"

"No, (hic) Billings, I never did. Fact is (hic) I didn't know a shirt could (hic) sing."

Mrs. George Gould is said to care nothing for society, but devotes all her time to her home and children. She does her own marketing, keeps a set of books showing her household expenses, and altogether proves herself to be a model housewife.