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### A NICKLE PLATED SUCCESS.

For the past year or two I have been an interested but silent as the grave reader of the opinions of great men, women, editors, or lawyers, doctors and thieves, as to whether marriage is a failure or not, and I have been surprised because no one has taken up the cudgels in defence of matrimony, the rock of salvation for the world. What does marriage mean? It means home, and home means the laughter of children, the smiles of women, the fragrance of flowers, the light of the hearthstone—a light that outshines the stars of Heaven.

Marriage is a nickle plated, everlasting success, and I can prove it. I knew a woman whose husband was fat, black, and 40; had stubby hands and always wore a paper collar too big for him, and "pants" too short, and yet his wife told me in a burst of confidence one day that she thought he was "real stylish." And I knew a young man who married a girl who was red headed, slab sided, as thin as a rail, and who overshadowed him as a beapole does a clothespin, and yet he actually described her to me before I saw her as "fair and most divinely tall."

And I was personally acquainted with a woman who was just exactly as homely as they make them, and her leading abomination was her walk. She seemed to be lurching all over, and sort of unjointed and then jointed up again as she meandered around. Boys ridiculed her, girls giggled as she passed by, and men stood off and swore about her as she went down the street, and yet positively her husband has been heard to say that "Sarrah Jane wasn't much a beauty, but she did have a nice, easy, careless gait."

Can you call any system a failure that makes people happy and contented with their possessions, that obliterates defects and offences, and reveals charms, attractions and beauties that under other circumstances you couldn't see with a telescope? Not much! The world is chuck full and running over with people like those described above, and in consideration of that fact I can but say, "Oh, love! where is thy sting? Oh! divorce, where is thy victory?"

Human nature may be a failure. I can't deny that, marriage is a howling success, and has done more for human nature, the bad material it has had to work with, than any condition or system that was ever invented. Away back when Adam was a young man—now I know Adam is a rather ancient subject, but you need not elevate your eyebrows in contempt, for you'll be ancient yourself some day—he found himself in the world one day—he did not know how and I don't know, do you? And the world was young and beautiful; the first flush and bloom was on the mountains and valleys, the flowers wondered at their own fragrance, the birds were thrilled by the sweetness of their songs, the waves broke into little ripples of delight at their own liquid beauty, and the stars of Heaven and the unfaded blue were above his head, and yet he wasn't satisfied.

One morning he was standing idly in the blushing dawn while the sparkling dew of novelty, innocence and variety lay thick around him, wondering why the days were so long and why there were so many of them, when suddenly out from under the swinging vines and the swaying foliage Eve came forth and passed lightly by. Adam saw that her cheeks were red and her eyes were bright, and he, too, went on; but he did not forget her, and he came early next morning and lingered near the path she had trod, and she came again.

Adam saw that her arms were white and rounded and her step was light, and he whistled a soft low whistle, with a sort of Oh won't you stay a moment cadence in the music, and Eve looked up, and I think right then he plucked a flower and offered it to her, and of course, she did not know what it all meant, but she glanced at the rose and then at him, and saw he was tall and strong and beautiful—and she began to understand; reaching out her hand she took the flower, and then for the first time in the world a woman smiled and blushed, and I suspect it was at that moment that the "morning stars first sung together."

After a while, in some primitive way, they were married, with love for high priest and the stars for witnesses, and made them a home—something that every man and woman strives, plans and works for, because there is no place on earth like it.

Marriage may be a failure in a few individual cases, where, for instance, a man swears everything black and blue on account of a piece of beefsteak or a cup of coffee, or where a woman opens her mouth, and in the short space of ten seconds makes a man's life a howling wilderness or sandy desert because she can't have everything she wants and have it right away. But marriage as a system is a nickel-plated, anti-monopoly, everlasting success.

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