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A BETROTHAL OF SOULS

BY T. BLAIR EATON.

The girl closed the magazine and turned expectantly to young Sam Hastings, who stretched his six-foot-two in one of the piazza chairs.

"And that is me," she said in ungrammatical rapture.

"What is you?" asked young Sam.

"The whole idea of the poem," she explained somewhat impatiently. "Can't you recognize it? I am the voice that speaks through ages."

"You don't say," said Sam, casually, with a failure to be impressed that was disheartening.

"It is wonderful, wonderful," said the girl, looking across the green fields to the patches of white cloud on the distant horizon.

"Don't doubt it," said Sam heartily, "but you see, that sort of thing is beyond me. I can tell all the points of a horse, and I know that the average automobile from A to Z, but when it comes to this high-flown poetry—not for mine, thank you."

"Sam," she said, with mild reproach in her tones, "you are tremendously mundane."

"I suppose I am," he agreed. "Say, where did you meet this—what's his name, J. Talbot Dottridge, is it?"

"I have never met him," she said, serenely.

"Well, you said a minute ago you knew him," said he. "How the deuce—"

"I know him from his works," she said, and then added slowly, "and from his letters."

"His letters?" Sam suddenly sat up. "You don't mean, Aurora, you've been writing to that fellow?"

"We've corresponded for over a year," she said coldly.

Sam gasped. In the excitement he broke the amber stem of the pipe between his fingers.

"Sam," she said uneasily, "I suppose I ought to tell you that Mr. Dottridge is coming down here next month."

"I suppose I should congratulate you," said Sam, rising.

Aurora flushed. "There's nothing definite yet," she said. "Mr. Dottridge and I are engaged."

"Good heavens, Aurora, you're never so much as seen him," he protested.

"It is a betrothal of souls," she observed naively, evidently cribbing a phrase from one of J. Talbot Dottridge's letters. "I am the only one who has ever understood him."

"It doesn't matter what manner of man he is externally," she said. "It is the soul alone that counts. I think he is the only person on earth that understands me, and he assures me that I am the only one who has ever understood him."

He looked at her with a queer expression in his eyes she had never seen before.

"Good-bye, Aurora. I think I'd best run along," he said.

She watched him go down the path with his long, lazy stride. He was eminently good looking, and there was a comforting suggestion of strength in his broad shoulders. It was a pity he did not possess the soul of a J. Talbot Dottridge.

The following month the post arrived and took up his abode at one of the summer hotels. He was somewhat below medium height, a trifle portly and decidedly bald-headed. The effectiveness of his rather fine eyes was spoiled by the vicinity of 40. It was evident, too, that fame had but recently found him, for he accepted his honors with pompous self-satisfaction.

These first few weeks he was constantly with Aurora, and young Sam Hastings began to smoke more than was good for him and to lose much of his good-natured carelessness. It certainly looked as if the "betrothal of souls" would end in a wedding of the conventional type.

One sultry night Sam went over to the hotel to see some friends who had run down from the city. As he reached the second floor he beheld J. Talbot Dottridge coming down the hall. A chambermaid stepped from one of the rooms, just as the two men passed. She looked at him searchingly for a moment, and then touched his arm. He turned, and even in that dim light Sam Hastings saw something like consternation in the man's face.

"You're mighty high-handed since you got famous, Jim," he heard the woman say. "Ain't you goin' to even speak?"

Dottridge said something under his breath and hurried to the stairs, while Sam Hastings hastened after the retreating chambermaid.

"Say," he said as he overtook her,

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BY OUR FOREFATHERS OF BEING TOO GAY

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The most ancient receptacles of wine were formed of animal hides. These must be almost as old as wine itself, for these certainly would have been very little use in expressing the juice of the grapes and allowing it to ferment unless there had been vessels of some sort to contain it. Even if stored in underground cisterns, as is still done in Southern Europe, bottles would be required for carrying the liquid on journeys or even for consuming it at home. Frequent mention is made of such bottles in ancient literature. At a feast in the Iliad the guests are described as bearing wine upon their shoulders in a bottle of goatskin from which the goblets of the guests were filled.

Throughout the interior of Spain wine is still conveyed from place to place in bottles made of goat or pig skin identical in every respect with the description given by Herodotus. It will doubtless be remembered that in the Sierra Morena Don Quixote's room was hung round with these cures, and that the doughty knight, mistaking them for the myrmidons of a wicked enchantment, valiantly attacked them with his sword until the room was inch-deep in red wine flowing from the gashes made in the skins.

In Portugal and Greece these skin bags are also used for the conveyance of wine, as they are much more portable than any other sort of vessel, especially in a mountainous district where they have to be borne by mules. These leather bottles have a peculiar interest, for in make and material they connect the vineculture of today with its origin in the unknown past. They are survivals which have floated down to us on the stream of time unaffected by centuries of age.

A leather bottle capable of holding an armed man would seem to us too unwieldy for practical purposes; but there is evidence that many of those used by the Romans were of still greater dimensions. Among the ruins of the ancient city of Pompeii a mural picture has been discovered representing an enormous skin bag on a wine cart, which was being pulled by a machine shaped like a boat. Two men were drawing the wine off into amphorae in order to gain popularity, a Roman politician would occasionally dole out wine wholesale to the clients whose favor he courted, and this practice probably originated the conveyance on which the wine skin was borne through the streets and the men engaged in circulating it.

The coronation ceremony of Ptolemy Philadelphus excelled in pomp and pageantry every procession recorded in history, not even excepting the triumphant progress with which Alexander the Great celebrated his escape from the deserts of Gedrosia. Perhaps the object of Philadelphus was to dazzle his subjects, that they should forget the domestic crimes with which he inaugurated his ascent to the throne. The coronation procession is estimated at over half a million of our money. It lasted the whole day, being opened by the figure of the Morning Star and closed with the goddess of Victory, clad in gorgeous uniforms, marched past. Although the festival was held in winter, owing to the delicious Egyptian climate abundance of fresh grapes were provided on one of the great vehicles of the procession and a vintage scene faithfully represented. To the sound of flute and song, 60 satyrs, under the superintendence of Silenus, and the staid and sober Phyllophagae, trod out the grapes and flooded the streets with foaming must. GAL 2—QUEER BOTTLES—The wine of the show was a car 3 feet long by 21 broad, bearing a gigantic oval shield of leopard skin and containing 2,000 amphorae of wine. As the Greek amphora is equivalent to eight imperial gallons, it is evident that the quantity of wine was enormous. The sides must have been strengthened with some material stronger than leather to enable the skins to resist the pressure of such a weight. As the car moved along in the stately procession the wine was allowed slowly to flow from it, so that the thirsty multitude could fill their drinking vessels as it passed.

The scholastic Latin term for a wine-skin is butis, and thus a small skin was the diminutive buticula. From this buticula is derived our word "bottle," and, with slight linguistic modification, the same word has been adopted in all modern languages.

Although skins were never used for wine in England when grapes were first introduced here, the leather bottle or blackbag was one of our earliest drinking vessels. It is celebrated in one of our old English ballads, and is not an uncommon allusion emblem at the present day. "I'm no better than a leather bottle," said a Londoner in his "English Villanous Seven Times Pressed to Death." When so ornamented they are called "villainous boys."

Many of these ordinary wine vessels were made in the shape of a boot, which was the fashion in the French provinces when they returned to France that "the Englishmen used to drink out of the boot." The English boot was a leather bottle, however, of some of the French nobility, for in the expenses of John, King of France, it is recorded that he gave to the battle of Poitiers, there is the following entry: "Four deus bottles of wine, each containing a Londoner Monsieur Philippe, 8s. 6d." no inconsiderable price in those days. A. D. 1350-60.

As the arts improved leather bottles were supplemented, but not displaced, by vessels of clay, great care being taken in the construction to avoid sandy earth or any substance likely to be porous. These, like the hides, partly to prevent the liquor from exuding, were all coated on the inside with pitch, but principally as an antiseptic, to keep the wine sound. These vessels were called amphorae, and doubtless originally held the standard measure of eight gallons, but as their use became limited to cellar storage, their size gradually increased, until they attained the capacity of 100 gallons and upward.

The smaller amphorae were made on the potter's wheel, the larger ones were moulded in pits, where they were baked over furnaces. In many of the modern vases in Val de Aoste, as at St. Julien, in similar earthenware vessels, narrow at the base and widening upward, with arms or ears on either side at the top, and every one of them has its coating of pitch, exactly the same as 25 centuries ago. Ridley's Wine and Spirit Trade Circular.

Worse Yet.

H. E. Buermeier, the president of the National Amateur Skating Association, was residing in a hotel in New York.

"I found this banquet interesting," he said, "and I was one of the last to leave. In the cloakroom, as I was putting on my hat and coat, I couldn't help noticing the woebegone look on the attendant's face. The poor fellow appeared worried and sad, and every little while he sighed and muttered to himself."

"You seem disconsolate, friend?" I said.

"I am disconsolate, sir," said the attendant.

"What is the trouble?" said I. Haven't the guests tipped you well tonight?"

"The attendant answered in an excited voice:



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Greenland's Big Crop of Ice.

The largest mass of ice in the world is probably the one that fills up nearly the whole of the interior of Greenland, where it has accumulated since before the dawn of history. It is believed now to be a block about 600,000 square miles in area and averaging a mile and a half in thickness. According to these statistics the lump of ice is larger in volume than the whole body of water in the Mediterranean, and there is enough of it to cover the whole of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland with a layer about seven miles thick. There is enough ice in Greenland to bury the entire area of the United States a quarter of a mile deep.—London Titbits.

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