



Jean Blewett's OWN PAGE of Happiness



Love Letters From the Front

Do YOU KNOW that our Toronto postmen were deprived of holidays this year? With nearly a hundred of their number overseas the ones at home have had to be every day on the job—and the job growing heavier all the time.

Love laughs at censors. The mails of this year and last—to go back no further—have carried tons of bona fide love letters. And such letters! What a book they would make with their revelations of unguessed tenderness, with the human heart throb making them alive and vivid, with deep secrets told baldly or brokenly as the case may be. But it is a book which will never be published. The letters are too precious. Each is a pearl of price hidden in somebody's heart.

"I've heard from Billy to-day," confides the little matron across the way. "He was resting, didn't have to go back to the trenches for twenty-four hours, so he had opportunity to write all sorts of things." She blushes as she says it, and her eyes are tender. You know that the "all sorts of things" resolve themselves into the familiar, "I am sitting here thinking of you," which has a place in most of the letters from the front. You picture him, pencil in hand, pad on knee, in the light or gloom baring his heart. "I am sitting here thinking of you."

Sitting Here Thinking of You!

BARING HIS HEART! exclaims some one, "Where is the fire or passion in that simple threadbare statement?" Simple I grant you—every primal truth is that—but threadbare, never. Ask the woman who gets such a letter, aye, ask her million sisters while you are about it. No adding of tender line to tender line, loving precept to loving precept. There is no need for such. He goes back to the firing line to-morrow. This may be his last chance to let her know how dear she is. "I am sitting here thinking of you." There is nothing in the world so well worth thinking of. He is seeing her eyes, her lips, the soft wave of her hair, seeing a face the smoke of battle cannot hide or blur, hearing a voice the thunder of the guns cannot drown. All this goes into his, "I am sitting here thinking of you," and all this—and more—will the woman, by the aid of love's own cypher, read into it. That love letter may come to her with the soil of the trench on it—or with the stain of something infinitely precious, the life blood of her hero. "Thinking of you," she has the words by heart. A good thing, too, since her poor eyes are so filled with tears she cannot see. But, withal, by the gladness which grips her, thrills her, lifts her toward the stars, she knows that love is lord of all.

The Mother's Share is Great

AND WHILE WE ARE ON the subject of love letters have you noticed how general is the feeling of understanding between the mothers at home and the sons overseas? It is a beautiful thing in these troublous times, a heartening thing, like a glorious glint of sunshine from behind a storm cloud. Yes, this precisely describes it. Look into the eyes of the mothers and you will discern back of the darkness of foreboding, the rain of anxious tears, a light warm and wonderful. Over and over again you will hear a woman say in proudly tremulous tones:

"I never really knew my boy until his letters revealed him to me."

A mother and her man-child are usually more affectionate than confidential. She loves him for time and eternity, but she does not know him well. There is a wall of reticence between. But out yonder in the heart of things, out yonder in a world of death and daring, the wall goes down. Ah! then he writes the true and tender things to the woman who bore him, nursed him on her bosom nineteen, twenty, it may be thirty years ago, reveals himself as he has never done, perhaps would never have done in ordinary life. "A man in the making! God bless him!" says the mother and so say we all. They tell us if all the Bibles in the world were destroyed the Word could still be gathered, bit by bit, from the highland shepherds who have it "hidden in the heart." So with the love letters from our soldier lads, here, there, everywhere are they hidden in hearts that will hold them fast so long as life endures.

Marry Off the Selfish Bachelors

IN BEAU BRUMMELL'S DAY the definition of a bachelor ran: "One whom youths copy and benedicts envy." How are the mighty fallen! Here we have no less a person than Prof. King of the University of Pennsylvania, one of the best known embryologists of the day, coming forward with scientific reasons for the banishing of the bachelor. "Make the bachelor extinct and the human race will cease deteriorating!" says Dr. King. The world will right itself in our generation. A revival of the Spartan law which compelled marriagable men to marry is what this country needs. The bachelor establishment is usually founded upon selfishness, and furnished with it as well. He is too much taken up with

The Husband's Soliloquy

She is so winsome and so wise she sways my heart and will,
And when I hear the query put: "What mission does she fill?"
O, then I say with pride untold,
And love beyond degree,
This woman with the heart of gold
She just keeps house for me—
For me—
She just keeps house for me!

A full content dwells in her face, she's quite in love with life,
And for a title wears with grace the sweet old fashioned "wife"
What though I toil from morn till night?
What though I weary grow?
A spring of love and dear delight
Doth ever softly flow.

Our children climb upon her knee, and lie upon her breast,
And ah! her mission seems to me the grandest and the best.

O, then I say with pride untold,
And love beyond degree,
This woman with the heart of gold
She just keeps house for me—
For me—
She just keeps house for me!

—Jean Blewett.

doing his duty toward himself to do his duty to one of our fine women by making her his wife, or toward his country by rearing a family. One honest husband is worth a dozen of him! When the war is over such of our soldiers as have not wives should take wives. The hope of the country is in her fighting men. Never mind who among them is maimed or halt, I refuse to believe with the pessimist that war, with its horrors and hardships, will have impaired their virility or vitality. We need to preserve a race with red blood and fighting courage. There is going to be no place for bachelors." The poor bachelors evidently suspect that they are being plotted against. The other day the little niece of one of them enquired the meaning of the term "Bachelor of Art." It means a man who manages to escape the yoke of matrimony in times like these," was his significant reply.

The Noble Red Man Speaks

WHEN THE MORAVIANTOWN Indian who knows all about plant life, was in the city for the Exhibition we took him to call upon our nice old fashioned neighbor whose nice old fashioned garden is the pride of her heart. "Never put off till spring what you can do in the fall, is my motto," she said, depositing an arm full of dead vines and stalks upon a bonfire before shaking hands. "I'm making ready for a 1918 output which will make this year's one look like a mere nest egg." The Indian who was something of a poet spoke of the beauty of bloom, the mystery of growth, and quoted the "lovesome" lines:

"Not God? In gardens when the eve is cool?
Nay, but I have a sign,
'Tis very sure He walks in mine."

Our hostess nodded, remarking that garden religion was a long way ahead of some church religions in the matter of being bright and sun touched. "But putting poetry and preachment aside, a garden is a godsend to the woman who keeps house. This one is 50 feet long and 25 across. It cost me five dollars for soil and fertilizer and two dollars for plants and seeds, and the actual cash value of its yield this season was ninety-eight dollars," she said. "Besides this, it has provided enough wholesome exercise to cure a firmly seated case of gastritis, and, incidentally, put my nervous irritability and bad temper on the shelf. I've quit having the blues—too happy, prosperous, and busy to spare time for 'em."

It's Just Like Indian Summer

NEXT TO BEING in the company of a boy of seven who has just put in his first day at school and has so much to tell his tongue trips and breath fails getting the words out, or a girl who carries her first love letter in her bodice and in her heart a radiance she cannot help but pass on to others, or a young mother whose baby has taken the prize at the fair and who is nothing more or less than a living, breathing, beautiful bit of maternity, or two glad people (old or young) who have quarrelled and made up, I would rather be with a woman of middle age who has spent the summer in making a garden flourish. And preferably in a garden, an autumn garden.

"It is a lovesome thing, God wot!"

This place of brown mould, crimson vines, happy hearts (another name for sunflowers) some pinks in their second childhood, a row of hollyhocks led by the stiffest backed hollyhock of all, a regular policeman of a hollyhock in musty, fusty grey uniform with many buttons and one lone bloom like a gay boutonniere on a shabby coat; with the bonfire's heat and all this blue smoke—"it is like Indian summer," we exclaim, and the man from Moraviantown laughs. "Indian summer is the red man's season." "Yes," he says. "But what's in a name, eh? My children they are purple red as a poke-berry or sumach bloom with what you think Dutch measles" and laughs again.

Joy That Goes With Work

"YOU LOOK AS THOUGH you were glad to be back at the old grind," a lady remarked to "dear teacher" on the day school opened after the vacation. "I am," came her reply, with a smile which turned her lips up at the corners. "If I weren't glad to be back I wouldn't be back. When teaching becomes a weariness of the flesh—if it ever does—I will drop it and try something else, if only in justice to the pupils." She was no mere girl. Her face had a few lines, lovely lines on it, but truth was on her lips and in her eyes. "You seem very fit" the lady continued almost resentfully, "but of course you've had two months of idleness." "Oh have I? I worked on a farm all of July, worked hard. This toned my body up. Then from the first day of August to the thirty-first I was in solitude loafing with my soul, with just the wind, the water, and the woods for company. It rested me so I feel all made over, ready for anything. Looking ahead at the season's work I could cry 'hip-hurrah' with the youngsters." Do you wonder that she is a success, or that she is "dear teacher" to all her scholars? The more gladness goes into our work the better our work is done.

Russia's Girl Warriors Popular Heroines

"THEY ARE STRICT disciplinarians, and they fight like devils," says a press report of Mme. Butchkareff's battalion of women. "Legion of Death" is the name it has earned for itself. "How else could we fight!" exclaims the intrepid leader. "The wrongs worked us by the brutal Huns, the murder of innocent children and rape of virgins, the desolation and death have killed all softness in our bosoms, driven us into a mad fury of retaliation. It is as devils we desire to meet them." We are told that the people of Petrograd went wild over the bravery and success of this battalion, each member of which carries enough cyanide of potassium to end her life in case of capture.