

a friend o' Tam Tamson's, to be bawthered luckin' after sarks and stockin's, an' a sic like paltry women's work, an' that I was thiukin' o' luckin' oot for a wife tae just a kind o' tak care o' me like.

Weel, ae day in great confidence he says tae me: "Noo, Airlie," says he, "dinna ye be led awa wi' thae frizzed-up limmers o' lassies ye see gigglin' aboot, just ye keep a calm sough, an' wait till ye see an advertizeement in the papers frae some decent woman wantin' to correspond wi' an honest man, an' just answer that, an' ma word for't ye'll get, without ony trouble or expense, some gude woman—ready tae drap intae yer arms like a ripe apple. I thoct that was rather a queer way o' gettin' a wife, an' in fact I tellt him sae, but he solemnly assured me that it was the only reliable way o' securing a rail gude wife in this kintra—besides it was a great savin' o' siller in the way o' treatin' to ice cream, an' concert tickets, an' a' the rest o't, wi' the chances o' gettin' the mitten after a' ma outlay. I couldna help seein' there was a gude deal o' force in what he said—sae I promised to lie low an' keep ma weather o' open for matrimonial advertizeements. Lo! an' behold ye! the vera noist day he brings me a *Telegram*, wi' this advertizeement: "*A widow lady, without encumbrances, and possessing considerable property in her own right, would like to correspond with an honest man, with a view to matrimony. Scotchman preferred. Strictest confidence preserved.*"—Box 142, *Telegram*."

Man, Wullie, when I read this, it just luckt tae me like a special dispensation o' Providence for ma particular benefit—for ye see I was baith steady an' respectable, an' then I was a Scotchman. It moved me profoundly, an' I just stud for a meenit wi' the *Telegram* in ae hand an' the browm i' the 'tither, an' fixin' ma een on the clerk I quoted, wi' great solemnity an' feelin', the words o' Shakespeare:

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Roughhew them how we will."

The pair fallow couldna control his emotion, an' clappin' his pocket neepkin to his face he gae awa up i' the elevator, blawin' his nose a' the road up. The meenit I got hame tae ma boardin' hoose an' got ma supper, I slippit awa up tae ma bedroom an' wrote the followin' letter:—

"Dear a Hunder an' Forty-two,—Seein' yer advertizeement for a man, I tak upon masel to write an' tell ye that I'm baith steady and respectable, an' come more-over o' a respectable family—to wit:—the Airlies o' Cleekimin toll-gate—an' a direct descendant o' the 'Bonnie Hoose o' Airlie,' sae celebrated in Scottish sang. I'm a vera cautious man, an' dinna believe in buyin' a pig in a poke, sae afore we proceed ony farther wi' this business, I wad like ye tae send me yer photograph—so's I could see the pig, like, afore makin' the bargain. Just address yer letters tae Hugh Airlie, Esq., Tamson an' Tamson's Wholesale, Toronto."

This epistle I carried an' deposited safely wi' the *Telegram* lass at the counter. The vera next afternoon ma fren, the clerk, hands me a letter in a most beautiful handwriting, from which I at wance concluded she maun be a woman o' fair education. The first thing I luckt at was the photograph—Ma certy! she was a strappin' kimmer, as fine luckin' a woman as ye'd meet wi' atween twa pair-hees, an' wi' a pair o' roguish een that could glower ye through an' through. Of course she had a wheen mair ruffles an' falderals an' ribbons roon her neck than I approved o', but then, twa ree plain words after we were marrit, wad settle a' that vanity. The letter was short and tae the point, showin' her to be a woman o' sense—an' nae haveril.

"Dear Mr. Airlie,—Yours received. At your request I enclose photograph. Although

a widow I flatter myself I am as good-looking as ever, and am bound to make a good wife. I have considerable money and property of my own—and have determined to marry only a Scotchman. Any questions you may ask I will answer in my next. Please answer at once as there is another candidate in the field.

"Yours truly,
"MARIAN MATHESON."

Ye may be vera shure grass didna grow at ma heels afore I answered this very sensible letter. I quickly sorted up ma parcels, an' after soopin' up the warehouse, I borrowed a sheet o' paper an' an envelope frae ma fren the clerk, an' slippit awa doon intae the basement, whar in the privacy o' a capacious packin'-box, I poured oot ma hale heart on paper. I tellt her that when I luckt on her photograph I exclaimed wi' the poet Cowper:—"Would that those lips had language."—an' that, afore lang, I houpet tae hae the pleasure o' preein' that bonny moo. Ye see, that "My Daurlin," o' Tam's wife was dinlin' i' ma heart yet, an' I thoct hoo fine it wad be tae hear this bonny picter ca' me the same. Sae after twa ree mair saft words, I proceeded tae the business pairt o' the maitter.

I tellt her that as a primary condition tae becomein' Mrs. Hugh Airlie, she maun be able to mak baith brose an' parritch properly; no like crowdy or sawdust steered up in boilin' water an' saut, but fine, lithe, mellow parritch, that wi' a wee drap o' milk would slip doon a body's throat like an oyster. I would also like her tae ken hoo tae roast a fine haffit herrin', tae mak a pot o' gude kale, an' a farl o' crumpy shortbread for a New Year's day. Abunc a' thing I tellt her that gin she was a leetery woman I wad hae naething whatever tae dac wi' her, I said I was a bit o' a leetery man masel—an' a poet forbye, an' I wasna gaun tae hae ma ain wife settin' up in opposition tae me, besides, I belived in women keepin' in their ain places, an' no trespassin on the preserves o' the nobler sex. It was a vera weel tae crack aboot the works o' Mrs. Hemans, an' Mrs. Brownin', an George Eliot, an' Mrs. Stowe an' a wheen mair—but just think what has been lost tae the world in the way o' washin' an' mendin' sarks, daurnin' stockin's, shooin' on buttons, an' scrubbin' flures, the time they were daidin' awa wi' their poetry an' sic like. Another thing, a leetery woman is no near sae apt to be meek an' obedient tae her lord an' maister as a woman wha is content tae tak her ideas frae her lawfu' husband, or tae live for him an' him only, and tae be humble an' obedient according tae Scripture. Na! na! nae leetery woman for me; I couldna' pit up wi' ony sic truck. About the bawbees an' the property, seein' I had nane o' the twa masel', I thoct the suner we were marrit the better, so we could become a kind o' joint stock company like, an' I tellt her I could get ma fren the clerk for best man, an' get the hale thing ower wi' as little expense as possible. Tae this letter I received an answer the very neist day, appointin' a meetin' at the fit o' Simcoe-street, just opposite the freight sheds, at aicht o'clock i' the eenin' o' Teusday.

Ye may be vera shure ma heart gae pit-a-pat tae meet the bein' that was tae be the better half o' masel', an' the life-lang pairner o' ma joys an' sorrows. For the first time i' ma life I spent a hail 'oor, kaimin' oot ma beard, an' fidulin' awa wi' ma neck-tie, so as tae mak a gude impression on ma intended, although, tae tell the truth, I had little fear. Ma grannie used tae say I was the best luckin' o' the family—the vera flooer o' the fluck in fack. I had aye a grand nose, sin' ever I was a laddie in the tippany book, its sae lang an' substantial, an' soapy; in a conjunction wi' ma lang upper lip, gies me an appearance at wance respectable lookin' an' sagacious.

Ma ain private opinion is that I favour Sir Walter Scott in the expression o' coontenance.

No! as I said afore, a luck i' the gless convinced me that I had naething tae fear on the score o' looks, sae stickin' ma red silk pocket neepkin in ma breast pooch so as the corner could be seen properly, an' takin' up ma stick i' ma hand, I gae daunderin' awa doon Simcoe-street just at the darkenin'. It sae happened that the assistant bookkeeper, an' a wheen o' the clerks were gaun doon that way at the same time, an' I brak out in a cauld sweat tae think, what if they should stick tae me, an' I wadna get a chance tae meet ma fate after a'. Hoover, they said they were in a hurry tae meet some freens at the train, an' sae they passed on tae ma great relief. I hadna lang tae wait, for as sune as it was aicht o'clock, I saw a black veiled figure come slippin' oot o' the dark shadow o' the station. I thoct o' Isaac gaun tae meet the veiled Rebekah, an' on the wings o' love an' expectation I cut across the street tae meet ma destiny.

"Ma dear Mirren," says I, squeezin' her hand, an' admirin' her fine tall feegur. Sae overpooered was she at ma affection that she burst oot a greetin' an' had tae keep a-blawin' her nose a meenit or so afore she could command her voice. At last she says in a quiverin' voice, "My dear Airlie."

"Dinna ca' me Airlie," says I, "ca' me Hugh—ca' me yer darlin'," says I, whisperin' low an' pittin' ma airm roon her waist. At this supreme moment, tae ma great disgust, wha should come up an' pass by but the book-keeper and twa clerks—but they lookit as gin they had been at a funeral—an' gae by without takin' ony notice o' me.

"Ma darlin', I love you," whispered the widow in ma lug, an' nearly daft wi' joy an' the thoct o' the siller an' the property—I said, "Ma dear Mirren, we're engaged noo, let's get marrit at wance."

"Next week," quo she, blawin' her nose again.

"Weel, then," says I, "your wull is ma pleasure, sae next week be it—but for the present just let me pree that cheery moo."

The pair creature was shakin' like curds in a spume, an' she turned awa her head, but I insisted, an' liftin' her veil wi' ma stick I printed (Gude forgie me, a stoundin' smack—on a muckle black moustache! Tae say I was horrified, I wadna begin tae describe ma feelin's, the mair sae when she began flingin' up her heels, an' laughin' fit tae split the sides o' a rhinoceros. I immediately recognized the voice, as weel as the breeks an' cutkins o' that deevil o' a clerk, wha had gotten up the hale sell for the benefit o' the clerks an' salesmen, the hale crood o' whom were at that meenit congregated across the street an' doobled up every wan o' them like as they had been seized wi' the cholera. But wait—the mills o' the gods grind slow—I'll get even wi' that imp o' Sautin yet.

Yer brither,
HUGH AIRLIE.

Right to a T. Hamilton people call it "The Toronto Defective Department."

The eternal fitness of things.—In view of recent differences of opinion the name of the most fashionable place of worship in the Ambitious City has been changed to "The Church of the Disension." It was rechoired.

"Langtry vs. D—l—n," said a late arrival from the far west the other day, "what awful scandal is this I hear of about D—l—n and Mrs. Langtry? By Jove, sir, a fellow don't know whom to trust nowadays."

Professor David Swing, who has now become permanently editorially associated with *The Current*, appears with his first regular contribution, entitled "Squaring the Circle," in its issue of April 4. Professor Swing discusses the position of Emerson and Carlyle in the world of thought, holding it to be as impossible to accurately estimate them as it is to square a circle.