

Fable of a Knock Hammer

Once there was a Steady who overplayed his Standing and came within an Ace of losing his Home.

It happened thuswise. He was a Daylight Performer and loved to parade his Attractions. If he had a Duchess on his Staff he would lead her along the main-traveled Streets and show her off. But he held her by the Arm just the same for fear that some one would run out of an Alley and grab her.

When he had a Beaut wearing his Photo in her Watch he wanted all the World to know about it.

Furthermore, he was the kind that would take a Friend with him when he went calling on No. 1. He wanted the Friend to see for himself that the Girl thought the World of Papa. It was Fine Business for the Friend to sit over on the Far Side of the Room and Watch them hold Hands, now and then stealing a little old Hug. The Friend must have enjoyed every Minute of it.

Once in a While the busy Lover would look over at Friend and, tip him the Wink, as if to say, "Oh, I suppose this little Party fairly hates me."

But one Evening when he went out Hand-Holding and carried his own Gallery with him he ran into Bunches of Trouble. The Friend belonged to the Buttinsky Family and refused to stay on the Far Side of the Room. He was a clever two-handed Boy and had practiced a few Holds of his Own. He pulled his chair over and made it a Threesome. In about eight Minutes he had the Regular Fellow stymied and Hazel was leaning against him so as to make his Conversation a Short Carry.

Before he left that Evening he had himself all dated up for a Return Engagement. It looked as though the other Young Gentleman had the Casters under him.

From that time on it was Nip and Tuck. They took all of her Open Time in one Chunk and divided it up between them.

Sometimes they got on the Reservation together and then the only one who had a good Time was the Girl.

The Original Gentleman Friend was a Wisenstein. As soon as he saw himself losing out, he began to lay deep and shifty Plans to head off the new Entry. A two-by-four Chinless Intellect would have tried to put the Rival into the Nine-Hole by opening up on him and telling where he spent some of his Evenings, but Wisenstein had read on a sign somewhere that every Knock is a Boost. He knew that no Fellow ever landed a real Princess by talking Scandal about the other Candidates. Accordingly, he played a deep system. He became Press Agent for his Friend. He touted Mr. Buttinsky as the real Essence of Allygazel. He painted him in four bright Colors and put his Picture in every Window.

When he got the Girl aside he would tell her that dear old Buttinsky was one of the most charming Chaps in the World and claimed to have a lot of Women spreading their Nets for him. He said that Buttinsky was a great Singer, having been known up in the Country where he

came from as the Village Thrush. He advised her to have Buttinsky tell a number of his Stories, because as an After-Dinner Wit he had Chauncey M. Depew churned to a Froth and was commonly known as the Life of the Party. Then he asked her if she had seen Buttinsky cut loose in a Ball-Room. He said that all the Girls who saw Buttinsky move across the gleaming Floor in the Two-Step, began to look Glassy out of the Eyes and sank back in a Swoon. If she ever found time she ought to talk Books with Buttinsky because he knew them from A to Izzard and could get rid of Literary Talk in a Style calculated to charm a Bird out of a Tree. And as for dear old Art, he was supposed to be the Man who wrote it.

Buttinsky did not know that he was being Lithographed as a Phenomenon. When the Princess urged him to trot out his Accomplishments he thought she was so Sticky on him that everything he did looked good to her. So he squared up to the piano and sang "Because" in a Tenor that came from right between his Eyes. He chucked in a few Minors. They were these naughty Witch-Hazel Fellows and after he had turned a few of them loose in the Parlor he had the Princess straightened out as stiff as a board and biting at the Doilies. When she led him around to the Subject of the late Novels he got all halled up, for he thought that Gertrude Atherton wrote "Mary MacLane." And one Night when she teased him out on the Dancing Floor and he missed step and tried to walk up one side of her, she began to have a dim and twinkling glimpse that this Boy Wonder was a Shiner.

He certainly did not look to be such a Much at any Game. She was horribly disappointed. Buttinsky helped Matters a lot by trying to undermine Mr. Wisenstein, who had been saying all the Nice Things about him. Every time he got the Princess backed on a Sofa he did a Hammer Solo. For instance, he advised her to have no Dealings with a Man who drank. He said that Wisenstein was a Nice Fellow. But then for about 30 Minutes the absent Wisenstein would get his.

About the time that the Princess began to class Buttinsky as a False Alarm so far as Accomplishments were concerned, she started in to be indignant because he roasted one who always spoke so lovingly of him.

As for Wisenstein, when she came right and asked him about his Habits, he owned right up and leaned on her Shoulder and said his only Hope was to get a Good Woman to Reform Him. Which, probably, was a very foolish Move.

Then when she remembered how Magnanimous he had been, always speaking well of a Certain Person who had tried to sew Buttons on Him, she perceived that Wisenstein was one of Nature's Noblemen. He contradicted her at first, but finally let her have her own Way. And Mr. Buttinsky did not seem to be One-Two-Seventeen.

MORAL: Beware of the Friend who tells how Good you are.—George Ade

The Stage in Other Lands

Theatrical interest in Paris is aroused by Sarah Bernhardt's production of "Francesca da Rimini" and Gabrielle Rejane's announced intention to join forces with Antoine Bernhardt's Rimini play is by F. Marion Crawford, having been written by him in English and translated into French by Mr. Morel, who made the version of "Hamlet" that she used, in that case having a collaborator. Rejane's husband is manager of the Vaudeville and the great comedienne has made that her professional home in Paris. But she found it more profitable to tour in foreign countries and the syndicate that finances the Vaudeville is said to be annoyed. She has just produced there a play by Henri Patulle called "The Mask." In order to do so she removed "La Passerelle" while it was still paying, having signed a contract to try the Bataille drama before going on her foreign tours again. That made her habit of quitting Paris once more displeasing to the syndicate, and it is said to have led to the final severance. She will play two weeks in London in June at Mrs. Langtry's theatre, acting in "Zaza" for the first time there. David Belasco would not permit her to play that piece in the countries that he held until Mrs. Carter had made it thoroughly known. After her London engagement Rejane will go to South America, but will not come to the United

States. Although her genius was appreciated here, there is not a large enough public for French drama to pay. According to present plans, when she returns to Paris she will help Antoine sustain the morbidly modern drama at his theatre.

A recent production of Antoine's seems to have about struck the limit in immorality for Paris—that is, the limit in serious drama. Farce and delicacies seem to be unbounded in the city of pleasure. "Coeurs Vermeils" by Luquet and Lauras, is a society comedy of the Pinner type with the Oscar Wilde sort of epigrams. The earlier scenes contain a man's persuasion of his sister that an immoral association with a friend of his will be harmless. Later in the play her husband condones the sin, and the brother, sister husband and lover dine in merry sociability at Monte Carlo. Much of the language is said to be brilliant. Nearly all the critics condemned the play, and the authors tried to hide behind the excuse that the whole thing was intended to be a farce.

Constant Coquelin has revived "Cyrano de Bergerac" at the Porte St. Martin. George Feydeau, author of "The Girl from Maxim's," has finished another farce of the same sort. Its leading role will be taken by Miss Cassive, who played the title part in his older play. It is called "The Princess of the Folies Bergeres," and will be produced at

the Nouveautés in October. Miss Cassive is going to play in London this spring "Le Billet de Logement." Clyde Fitch has failed again in London. It is an odd fact that the man is certainly among the most successful playwrights in America, if not the leader, has had nothing but rejection over there. His "Beau Brummel" went well here, and when Richard Mansfield was acting in the British capital several years ago he wanted to produce the comedy. But the disagreeable light in which it placed a Prince of Wales made the censor refuse to allow it. Then Mr. Fitch had years of failure at home and naturally such plays as were exported were unfavorably received abroad. The nearest to success was a comedy called "Gossip," which he wrote for Mrs. Langtry, but that did not come very near. His first great hit here was with "The Moth and the Flame," which had gone the rounds of American managers' offices for two years unappreciated, and when produced by Herbert Keley and Effie Shannon placed its author among the first dramatists of the country. That never went abroad, nor did "Nathan Hale," which Nat Goodwin would like to have produced in London but that its villains were all English soldiers. He did show "Mr. Fitch's work to London in "The Cowboy and the Lady," but that was not much of a play and made very slight success in either land. The three Fitch plays since then that are really worth while are "Barbara Frietchie," which Julia Marlowe is keeping for a contemplated London debut, "Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines," which depends greatly on the personality of Ethel Barrymore and which may be used within a year or so for her appearance there, and "The Climbers," which seems almost sure to convince the English of Mr. Fitch's ability, and soon Jessie Millward is going to produce it in the fall, playing Amelia Bingham's part. She has made a good offer to Frank Worthing to go abroad for his original role. In the meantime, Mr. Fitch has been represented in London by "The Last of the Dandies," of which we have had as yet no chance to judge, and "Sapho." Mas. "Sapho!" If anything could make us forget "The Moth and the Flame" and "Barbara Frietchie" it is his dramatization of "Sapho." It is no wonder that London balked. And it certainly did stand on its hind legs and howl when Olga Nethersole produced this rubbish at the Adelphi. With this record it is hardly wonderful that Englishmen ask us why we boast of our Clyde Fitch.

Paul Kester is a case of an American dramatist who is in just the opposite position. In London he is well spoken of, while here he kindly talk is of what he may do some day. Mr. Kester is a scholarly man and a hard worker. It is likely that he has stowed away something better than he has ever shown to us. London crowded a theatre for months to see "Sweet Nell of Old Drury," but it drew only one large audience, the first, during its three weeks at the Knickerbocker. Mr. Kester does not regard the play highly himself. He wrote it when he was very young (he is still a young man) for the barnstorming purposes of Hortense Rhea, and only touched it up when Julia Neilson took it for London. The dramatization of "When Knighthood Was in Flower" that he made with Julia Marlowe, was not a very commendable effort. He has just had a London success with "Mlle. Mars," in which Mrs. Langtry has had a long run at her theatre. It was unfavorably received at first, but has grown into a success. Next season we can judge of it. Charles Frohman has arranged to bring Mrs. Langtry to this country in January, opening at the Garden and appearing in only "Mlle. Mars." So we may be brought about to London's opinion of one of our dramatists about the time London reaches ours about another.

London did little more than New York to celebrate Shakespeare's birthday. The Urban Club gave a dinner and a traveling company revived five of his plays during a week stand at a suburban theatre. But at Stratford-on-Avon they had the usual high jinks. The town was crowded, principally by American tourists. At the Memorial Theatre F. R. Benson's company acted "Henry VIII." Ellen Terry was the

important addition as Katherine of Aragon, in which she was seen here with William Terriss in the title role. Sir Henry Irving as Cardinal Wolsey and Jessie Millward as Anne Boleyn. Miss Terry thus reappeared on the English stage for the first time since her American tour. The rumor got about that she was ill and would not act, but nevertheless there was a crowd around the theatre in the morning for the performance that was announced for evening. In the morning the memorial exercises in Trinity church, where Shakespeare is buried, occurred. Miss Terry placed a modest wreath on his tomb. It was of pansies and on a ribbon hanging from it was written, "Pansies—that's for thoughts."

Marie Corelli, the novelist, expressed her devotion rather more spectacularly. So large was the wreath that she brought, and that she insisted on carrying into the church and placing on the tomb itself, that she was weighed down by it. It was five feet high and had two long streamers of crimson brilliantly lettered in gold. The strangely incongruous words on one end said, "From Shakespeare's humblest but most loving student," and on the other "To England's greatest King."—New York Sun.

Reckless Marriages

We hold at least in theory, however we may fail in practice, that mankind are a family, that both the Church and the State are a home, where all should be cherished; that the greater the weakness and misfortune the greater should be the care. We have abolished legalized slavery, and the better among us are urged as by a divine voice to think no sacrifice too great whereby the conditions of multitudes of toilers may be made more tolerable, more hopeful. We recognize that the rights of man are the rights of women also, and slowly we are gaining insight into the truth that whatever is wrong for her is wrong for him.

Our progress consists largely in the discovery of remedies for ignorance and impotence. Quinine, drainage and sanitation have made vast regions habitable where hitherto healthful life had been impossible. The discovery of the causes of many of the worst diseases has shown us how they may readily be cured or prevented. The knowledge of the causes of evil whether physical or moral, necessar-

ily leads to the inquiry how they may be suppressed or controlled.

The cosmical and geographical conditions which interfere with the normal development of human endowments we can hardly hope greatly to modify. In the tropics the race is and probably will always be indolent, ignorant, weak and sensual.

Hereditry, too, plays a great part in the destiny of each one. We are in mind as in body largely what we have assimilated or what heredity, which is the outcome of endless assimilations, makes us.

They who are born with a taint in the blood, with perverted instincts and enfeebled wills, not only fall to vice more easily than others, but they are also more difficult to reclaim.

If man shall ever learn to do for his own kind what breeding and training enable him to do for various strains of domestic animals, he will have discovered an effective means for preventing crime and misery. But what he calls his rights which often are but his prejudices and passions, will probably continue to keep him from treating his own species with the wisdom with which he manages inferior creatures.

Reckless and senseless marriages are an inexhaustible source of evil. Many of our people enter into wedlock as thoughtlessly as they take a

stroll or fall asleep, and the result is quarrels, contentions, divorces and children reared in an atmosphere which blights their tender lives.

Hence crime among the young is increasing far more rapidly than the population grows. So long as this poison fountain remains open so long will vice and pauperism continue to breed degradation and wretchedness.

Homes which are hells thwart the wisest efforts to reform abuses. They hinder the school, weaken the church and undermine the social fabric. Our chaotic and lax marriage laws encourage and facilitate imprudent marriages, but the origin of the evil lies deeper.

Institutions, it has been said, are the control of men, public opinion in that of women.

Women decide how we shall build and furnish our houses, what we shall eat and wear, what we shall find beautiful and entertaining, where we shall live, what we shall read, whom we shall consider friend or foe, what beliefs or prejudices we shall hold and what religion we shall have. From them we learn our mother tongue, from them our notions of right and wrong, of propriety and justice.

The fountain head of social good or evil, of vice and crime or of honor and virtue is in the home; and the wife and the mother make or unmake the home.—Bishop J. L. Spalding.

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