

# The Green Market of Daughters

Presenting How Matrimony for Gain is Related to the Prevailing Demand for Divorces

By MARY JOSEPHINE TROTTER

JUNE once more—and the blooming bride. And what must we do—for the whole world loves a lover, does it not?—but make again the perennial choice 'twixt the berry-spoon (you have heard of it), and the fish-fork? "The blooming bride!" My profane friend pronounces the phrase with equivocal stress on the "blooming."

However you view it, the blooming bride, by the gardenful, is among us. There are gardens and gardens, of course, as the tedious bromide has it. The more sulphuric "Jean Paul" hints, there are also, incidentally, market-gardens. In "The Green Market of Daughters," he says:—"Every owner of a very beautiful or very rich daughter keeps, as it were, a Pitt Diamond under his roof, which to himself is of no further service and which he must put to its first use, after it has long lain idle, by selling it to a Regent."

Certainly the humourist was writing as a German. And of Teutonic marriages a lecturer on the nation once made an observation in my hearing, to the effect that a German daughter submissively will marry any man (to be understood, of course, as a man of substance) with whom, in her parents' opinion she can be happy, whereas an American girl (Canadian also intended) will refuse to wed with any but the man, whether or not that man be wealthy, apart from whom she believes she cannot be happy.

It sounds a nice distinction enough; but how to reconcile it with conditions in, if not Canada, well then, let us say the United States?

THE divorce habit grows in the country to the south. There broken marriages have become so common as to necessitate the insistent urging of "uniform divorce laws," in behalf of the legal status of the child. An American writer of the month suggests as a more effective measure

"the prevention of marriages which, because they are inadvisedly made, make subsequent divorce advisable." A step in this direction is the movement in Chicago to revive the old custom of publishing the banns for a reasonable period preceding a wedding. It is not to be thought that Uncle Sam monopolizes this problem. A similar step in Canada was the passing, recently, of the Marriage Act amendments. Which, however, is by the way.

ARE mercenary marriages among the "inadvised" which are likely to end in divorce, or at least separation? The author of "The Green Market of Daughters" inclined to the positive answer. Here is his opinion on the subject:—"It is a common objection of so-called sensitive hearts that this sort of transaction very much constrains, or in fact crushes love; whereas nothing perhaps makes so good a preparation for it as this very thing. For when the bargain is once concluded and entered by the book-keeper (the parson) in his ledger, then does the time truly come on when the daughter can consider and provide for her heart—namely, the fair season after marriage which is universally assumed in France and Italy, and is gradually coming to be in Germany also, as the more suitable time for the female heart to choose freely among the hosts of men." You guess the issue—conditions pointing, collectively, to broken marriages, or, that resource forbidden, to broken hearts.

History and fiction (which is history in the abstract) is plenteous in the examples it offers of victims of these matrimonial bargains. There was George Eliot's Gwendolyn, married to Mr. Grandcourt and madly and vainly in love with Daniel Deronda. There was the wisp wedded to Barnes Newcome, pining for her lover. There was Ruskin's wife who married the writer and afterward was courted by Millais. At present there is the familiar example of Emily in the modern drama "Milestones." The list would defy the attempt to give in detail.

The parental attitude, in the main, is what is attacked by Richter. Naively the same is ridiculed by Tennyson in his verses, "The Northern Farmer." The urge in the latter case is applied to a son. Here are three of the verses:—

"Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as bean a talkin' o' thee;  
Thou's bean talkin' to muther, an' she bean a tellin' it me.  
Thou'll not marry for munny—thou's sweet upo' parson's lass—  
Noa—thou'll marry fur luvv—an' we boath on us thinks tha an ass.  
"Seea'd her to-daay goa by—Saaint's day—they was ringing the bells.  
She's a beauty thou thinks—an' soa is scoors o' gells,  
Them as 'as munny an' all—wot's a beauty?—the flower that blows,  
But proputtly, proputtly sticks, an' proputtly, proputtly graws.

"Doan't be stunt: taake time: I knaws what maakes tha sa mad.  
Warn't I crazed fur the lasses mysen when I wur a lad?  
But I knaw'd a Quaaker feller as often 'as tow'd ma this:  
'Doan't thou marry for munny, but goa wheer munny is!'"

THE philosophy may or may not have checked the emotional state of "Sammy." Filial acquiescence was the fashion in those days. And indeed in the light of a recent item such filial concurrence can scarcely be said to have lessened in this regard. Says the item from Boston:—"An organization of girls of Wellesley College have resolved to marry no man with an income of less than five thousand dollars a year." And to keep old Boston from shortly becoming the shunned and only Peculiar City of Spinsters (hang the culture!) the item informs that these businesslike fair ones are endeavouring now to persuade the girls of other colleges to follow their (so-called) unique example.

Now, whereas one quickly excuses a mother who urges a contract upon her daughter in order to spare her a grind of existence which she herself may rebelliously have gone through, while one can forgive, in such a case, neglect of the romantic, a



ONE OF THE SAMPLES

Of Fine Featherism Who Studied the Races—and Weather Signs—at Toronto, Victoria Day.

saving disgust, thank fortune, arises at an act like the sordid act of the Wellesley students—if it happened. And the feeling should be as thoroughly, as formidably, in order at the mercenary intentions which are none the less disgusting because they lack the courage to be avowed.

For my part, I rather regret that the love lyric has vanished and that few among the present-day women would rue what the bride of Burleigh regretted—to find that her home was the castle in place of the cottage; that modern air castles, in other words, have something about them that's almost forbiddingly—solid. And yet, for practical purposes (and it must be admitted that marriage is not my habit), perhaps the students of Wellesley College are wise. Men should "get busy," there's not a doubt. For there has been a mountain of talk on the "cost of living"—or rather, an ant-hill.

## Neighbourliness in the Concrete

A UNIQUE celebration in settlement annals was the recent spring festival, held outdoors, of "Central Neighbourhood House," Toronto, a settlement workers' headquarters. One of the public playground spaces provided accommodation, and the settlement children delighted themselves, their parents, and their trainers, with graceful dances and games in the folk lore manner. Miss Neufelt, a Jewess, has charge of the work, the key-note of which is neighbourliness—irrespective of race or religion.



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Who Regarded the Jockeys as Something a Little Bit More Than Incidental at the Meet.



"WELL-DRESSED TORONTO"

Supported Its Reputation in Many a Picture as Prettily Posed as This, at the Woodbine Races.