

THE ANTIDOTE

Published every Saturday in time for the evening suburban trains. Subscription One Dollar per annum, single copies Five Cents. May be obtained at all the leading stationers and newswriters in Montreal, Toronto, Quebec, Hamilton, Ottawa, London, Halifax, St. John, Kingston, Winnipeg, Victoria, Vancouver, &c. All communications and remittances should be addressed "THE ANTIDOTE," 171 and 173 St. James Street, Montreal. We do not undertake to return unused MSS. or sketches.

YOKE FELLOWS.

Once upon a time in an English village Bill and Jane, George and Martha—if these were not their names they might have been—went to the parish church on a Monday morning to get married. Clergyman and clerk were ready to the appointed hour, and the wedding service went on satisfactorily till the clergyman, joining the hands of the first couple as they stood where the clerk had placed them, began "I, William, take thee Martha," "Ho, sir," interrupted William, "Mine is Jane." "It's me, sir, for George," said Martha. The clerk averred that his sorting was right, and that Bill and Martha, George and Jane had to be respectively joined in holy matrimony. The young people protested; the clergyman shut the book, for the banns had got mixed and there must be three new "askings" in church with the right names coupled before the marriages could take place. So the disappointed bridegrooms and brides withdrew to the churchyard and the clergyman went to the vestry to take off his surplice.

But behold, before the clergyman had had time to go away, there were the brides and bridegrooms at the vestry door. "Please, would he be so good as to marry them the way the bans were?" They had talked it over together, they explained, and they had settled it would do just as well that way, they were all friends and came from the same place, each young man would do equally as well with the other young woman, each young woman would do equally well with the other young man; they had come a long way and had to get a holiday on purpose, and they did not want to have all the trouble over again. They should be just as happy with the exchange, they unanimously assured their pastor, so he put on his surplice and went on again at "I, William, take thee Martha." And true enough the exchange did just as well.

Now these were sagacious young people who judged themselves and life rightly. Marriage goes by the board at least in general in civilized countries—but then, chance makes shoals. There really is no reason why in most of the marriages that take place between respectable persons of fairly decent tempers, another bridegroom or another bride would not have answered just as well. There is generally a certain romance about courtships and wedding, but generally it does not go very deep; the gilt of the gingerbread does not last, and is never expected to last; the gingerbread is the important part of the matter, and the gilt but an embellishment, which has to come away and let substantial stuff be reached. So the superficial romance wears off; and a sound, wholesome, stodgy affection is left for use. As soon as ordinary people have done getting married and being surprised at it they recover from sentiment as if it had been the measles and are safely restored to their normal state of matter of fact.

What husband and wife, then, need of each other is the performance of their respective shares in the business of family life and a reasonable good nature, and we need not think so badly of human nature as to suppose that the majority of persons, with this ideal of marriage—that is to say, the majority of persons who marry—are not qualified to behave comfortably in the partnership with another partner, Martha as well as Jane, George as well as William.

Persons with higher requirements for happiness in marriage are, of course, harder to suit, and more likely to be disappointed, but there is no need of taking them into consideration here, where we are not concerned with lovers in wedlock, nor with any sort of head and heart companion, but with yoke-fellows—people in harness together with their jog trot to perform in step.

Dull couples usually get on together the most affectionately, for, though dull people like to be amused, they are not quick to discover that their lives are dull, and also they take each other's uninteresting nature as a part of the order of things in this world, and are not conscious of a want; if, however, only one of the couple is dull, the cheerfulness of their lot is less assured, for the brisker partner is

apt to feel a responsive animation to be his or her due, and to feel the absence of it at once as a wilful neglect and an impotence, while the dull partner is apt to be suspicious of not being respected at her due worth. Two passionate persons are more likely to achieve a mitigated harmony, with no mischief in its little agitations, even than one passionate and submissive, for they keep each other within limits, and so have a domestic clearing-house in lessons of self-control.

(To be concluded in our next.)

A Violet Attack of Violets.

The craze for perfume is increasing daily, and the ever fashionable scent is that of violets. A first-rate modiste always sends her dresses out with sachets sewn in around the hem, tucked away in the bodice and hidden in the skirt. Their gloves are scented to match; also the muff, and of course the handkerchief, the effect being an all-pervading sweetness.—New York Tribune.

AT THE PLAY.

Behind the beautiful maid I sat,  
And my heart at the memory grieves,  
For although she kindly took off her hat,  
She failed to pull down her sleeves.

WOMAN'S ONLY SARCASM.

"Women seldom indulge in sarcasm."  
"You think they do not?"  
"As a rule they are too kindly-hearted to be sarcastic."  
"H'm! Did you ever hear one of them say from the top of the stairs, 'This is a nice time to come home.'"

DYING WITH MEDICAL AID.

Doctor (to patient)—I do not wish to frighten you, but if you have no objections, I'd like to call in a couple of my brother physicians."  
Irascible Patient—All right! If you need any assistance in murdering me, call in your accomplices.

JEALOUSY.

"Yes, sir," said the actor airily, "I tested the capacity of the house."  
"Which," inquired the envious brother-in-art, "do you mean—capacity for seating or suffering?"—Washington Star.