

ersville who talked politics when the moonlight was making the town's prosaic streets a silvery highway, and there were others, quite as oblivious of Nature's pleading, who spent the dreamy afternoons in criticizing their neighbor's methods of making pickles, and insinuating that some persons were no better than they should be.

In all that busy little town there were no more unhappy hearts than the two which were intended to beat as one. Pride, however, is no mean master, and he managed to keep at a chilling distance poor Cupid, who, no doubt, had to betake himself to the woods for the afternoon, and perhaps dropped some of his arrows among the fallen leaves.

Then November came with a shiver and a snarl, and trees awoke from their dreaming and howled all night because of their discomfort. And the rains came in torrents, and with them the elections, which kept Parkersville in a ferment until late in the afternoon.

About 10 o'clock, Miss Delia's door-bell rang furiously, and Miss Marshall, who flung the heavy old door wide open, was startled by the appearance of Mr. Benjamin Wilder, who, flushed and jubilant, grasped her hands effusively.

"I've got it," he said, with pardonable triumph. "It's not a large majority, but I guess North Grant has shown Howard that it wants him to stay at home."

"Indeed," said the girl, with lack of enthusiasm surprising to the successful candidate and to herself, "I congratulate you, Mr. Wilder. I'll call Miss Delia."

But that worthy spinster had seen fit to retire at nine o'clock, and refused to come down for any "political foolishness." Mr. Wilder had thought to win a further triumph before he regained his hilarious friends, but something in the girl's face kept back the words that had given him more trouble than any speech to the noble army of electors.

"I'm a good Grit," grumbled Miss Delia, "and so was my father before me. But I'll be blessed if I don't think Ben Wilder'd show better taste by going home and thinking over the good laws he's goin' to bring in, than by calling on decent quiet folks at ten o'clock at night."

"It isn't very late for election night," said Miss Marshall, "but men are foolish creatures anyway. They never know what they want."

This was a speech that might have been supposed to appeal to Miss Delia, who had small mercy on masculine weakness, and who felt a stern joy ten years ago in refusing a widower with a large family of small children. But Miss Delia for some mysterious reason, was not pleased and retorted:

"Well, they're no greater fools than women make them, and I've known George Howard since he wore pinafores and played with a hoop. He's a fine boy yet, and I'm not saying anything against Ben Wilder, but I won't hear a word against George Howard, for I've known him, boy and man, and I'm going to leave him grandmother's china and the old silver tea-pot."

"I'm not saying anything against Mr. Howard," said Louise stiffly, "but he's just like every other clever man. He's so conceited that he thinks nothing is too good for him."

An exclamation that could be truthfully called nothing but a grunt was the only response, and Louise went away to her own room, wondering why she did not feel more elated over the downfall of the man whom she was trying to regard as an enemy.

The next Sunday night, Mr. Wilder called again, and once more encountered a frostily-reserved young woman, who yawned daintily when the election was discussed, and insisted on playing hymns from the "Presbyterian Book of Praise," and forcing Mr. Wilder, who had no ear for music, and who bellowed savagely to make unwilling melody of "Now the Day is Over."

The prosperous and gemal bachelor made his way home with his thoughts in sad confusion. "I wish I'd never set eyes on the girl," he muttered as he turned the corner, "winning an election is easy guessing, compared to knowing what a woman's going to do next. Perhaps she thinks I'm set up on account of the election, and doesn't want to give in too suddenly. Well it's a comfort to see a sky girl in these days. Oh! Hello, Howard!"

The young lawyer turned and shook hands warmly with his former opponent, as he had done on the night of the election, for in spite of twelve years disparity of age, they were strong personal friends.

Wilder was a man who paid little attention to town talk about the girls of the neighborhood and their lovers. Consequently, he had forgotten that rumor had been rife concerning Mr. Howard's attentions to the "pretty teacher," and he suddenly felt the need of a confidant.

"I say Howard, you knew Miss Marshall pretty well at the University, didn't you?"

"I didn't see much of her, I have known her better since she came to Parkersville," said Howard, trying to assume an indifferent air.

"Well—the fact is—oh, hang it all! I can't make out women at all. You see, I thought we were very good friends, but the last few times we've met, she's acted as if I were a stranger, and a mighty undesirable one, too. Do you suppose I've done anything to offend her, or is it just because—"

"I fancy it's just because," said Howard, laughing unpleasantly. "Miss Marshall is a nice girl, but even a University course doesn't take the infinite variety out of a woman's moods. Don't worry about it, Wilder. She may smile on you the next time."

"And her smiles are worth while," said the elder man, adding rather sheepishly, "well, good-night, Howard. Glad the row's over, and we don't have to abuse each other's policies any longer."



But as he left Howard, the younger man walked away in a blaze of indignation. "She's nothing but an ordinary flirt," he mused angrily, "first playing fast and loose with me, and then with Wilder, who's old enough to know better than to bother about a woman."

But George Howard, defeated candidate and disgusted lover, fell asleep that night with his opponent's words ringing in his ears—"and her smiles are worth while."

On the following Thursday, as Howard was passing the High School shortly after four o'clock, he met the Head Master, who seemed to be spluttering about something.

"Have you seen the 'Grant Tribune'?" It's a shame," vigorously asserted Mr. Charles Fielding, the "Dominie."

"What's the matter? Anything about politics?"

It's just a piece of vulgar, personal abuse. I thought Canadian papers were above that sort of thing. I know that Wilder and every decent man in his party will be annoyed about it. I've left a copy of the paper on my desk in the school-room—was too disgusted to take it home with me."

"I think I'll go in and read it," said the defeated candidate. "Do. I'd go back with you, but I'm going to see about that last football match."

Howard entered the old building, and opened the door of the Head Master's room which he had only too good reasons to remember. But he suddenly paused, for Miss Louise Marshall, instructor in Modern Languages, was seated in the old chair holding a copy of the "Grant Tribune," and weeping unreservedly over the editorial paragraphs. She jumped on hearing Howard's footsteps and tried to pass him.

"No," he said grimly, catching her wrist with his left hand, and holding the offending newspaper with his right, while he read the attack on himself. There was nothing especially galling in the lines only a piece of vulgar and decidedly bucolic ridicule of his personal appearance, winding up with unkindly reference to his "swelled head." The wit was that of the small boy who shouts "smarty" from the backyard fence, and Mr. Howard laughed gleefully as he flung the paper aside.

"Well, so much for that. Now tell me what you are crying about Louise."

"I'm not crying," she replied in a quavery voice. "Then they're the best imitation tears I ever saw—or felt," he answered, gently touching her damp cheek.

"Well—I'm tired—and—and that tiresome paper had no business to say such things about you. I—I just hate politics."



Mr. Howard laughed again, for by this time his left arm was around the teacher's shoulders, and the teacher's tired head was dangerously close to a grey sleeve.

"So you don't care for politics. Well, either do I. There are much better things in the world." He proceeded to give a lengthy illustration of what he meant by the "better things," undaunted by the severe environment of blackboards and knife-scarred desks.

"You haven't any right," protested Louise rather faintly. "They have rights who dare maintain them," quoted her lover. "I've read that in some old school book. Now, are you going to apologise, and—well, this will be the third time of asking, and you know what I said about it."

"You were very rude," said Louise, with a flush in her cheeks, that Mr. Howard considered extremely attractive,—no, I'm not going to apologise, and I'm not going to ask about—about anything."

"Then we'll consider the matter arranged," said the gentleman calmly, "and if you don't resign the first week in December, I'll ask you for your resignation, because you don't give enough attention to the backward pupils, the ones who need encouragement."

"I'm not going to resign," said Louise, firmly—"at least, not for a long time yet."

"Yes, you are," said Howard confidently. She raised her head imperiously to meet a glance just a little firmer than her own. Then she looked at the defeated candidate's determined chin, and with a sigh of mingled relief and shame, decided that it is just as well to know when one is beaten.

"I really was rude," she admitted without much show of repentance, "and I wanted you to get in all the time."

"My dear little girl," said George tenderly, as he wondered if the school janitor could be bribed to stay away for another half hour, "some day I mean to be Member of Parliament. But I am prouder of this victory than I could be of a province full of votes. And I'm awfully sorry for Wilder, who is too decent a chap to be ill-treated by a frivolous young woman, and I'm going to write to the editor of the 'Grant Tribune' to-morrow, and tell him that he's done me a great personal favor by abusing me in his miserable columns. I think I'll ask him to be my best man."

"Well," said Miss Delia, as Louise went upstairs that night at the unapproved hour of eleven, "do you think you can take care of my grandmother's china and the silver teapot?"

"I don't know what in the world you mean, Miss Delia," stammered the prevaricating maiden.

"Didn't I say I was going to leave the china to George Howard? Well, when a girl comes home with her hair looking as if some one had been stroking it the wrong way, and with her eyes looking like brown diamonds, and when a man who was beaten for Parliament last week stays for tea and doesn't eat anything but biscuits, and yet keeps grinning as if he'd found a goldmine, I'm not such a fool as not to know what's happened. I'll give you my recipe for mustard pickles if you like, and that India relish. George was always awful fond of them, and it's a queer world anyway, and men aren't easy to understand, but I've never known one of them that didn't take to those pickles."

Women's Institute Notes

THE Annual District meeting of East Lambton County Women's Institute was held in Taylor's Hall, Watford, on June 16th, with a large attendance of delegates, members and visitors. The Executive met at 1 o'clock and the regular meeting began at 2 o'clock.

The President gave a very interesting address and reported several new Institutes during the year.

The Secretary-Treasurer read the minutes of the last meeting and the reports for the year, which were adopted. Very pleasing reports of the Branches were given by each Secretary-Treasurer, showing a decided increase in interest and membership, and giving an outline of work and the different methods, as taken up by the Branches.

Several good addresses were given and a general regret was heard that the time was so limited that several had to be laid over, and the Government delegates could not be heard.

The election of officers for the year resulted in returning Miss Rawlings, of Forest, and Miss Pettypiece, of Forest, with a large majority. Mrs. Dauss, of Thedford, and Mrs. Adams, were elected for the north and south halves of the District.

The President organized a Branch in Watford. A resolution was offered by Mrs. Treadgold, of Thedford, that some branch of work be taken up by all the Branches. A hearty vote of thanks was given to the ladies of Watford, who provided the dainty lunch, and made the meeting such a success, one of the best ever held in the District.

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The Editor of the CANADIAN HOME JOURNAL would be glad to receive reports promptly, and the secretaries of the various branches are asked to send in their accounts of special meetings as soon as possible after the meeting is held. Programmes are decidedly acceptable, as these often contain hints of value for others.

