

Wouldn't that be retrogression instead of evolution?

MRS. STRANGE-ADE:

It may seem inconsistent to you. But—if you mistake a lane off the main road and retrace your steps, that is not retrogression. Therefore, a return to ancestral type is only a step back in the right direction. Unfortunately, when, by accident, man discovered his ability to help perpetuate the race, his talents were side-tracked to mere physical pleasure. But—, when he takes up his task of bread-winner regardless of the birthrate, he will be able to concentrate on religion and good works.

JOE MANN, with a smile:

But in the meantime, Mrs. First Aid?

MRS. STRANGE-ADE:

A scientist may be as paradoxical a first aid as she is a strange aid.

(R) Enter the attendant of the sanatorium:

MRS. STRANGE-ADE, surprised:

The attendant of the sanatorium!

ATTENDANT:

Yes; and you have given me the sprint of my life. Come peacefully—

MRS. STRANGE-ADE, taking revolver from her bag:

Take another step at your peril! (Attendant gazing into revolver, recalls).

MRS. STRANGE-ADE:

I was thrust into a sanatorium because I have advanced scientific ideas on evolution. But, have not all progressives been called fools or dreamers? Of course, evolution is a slow process. Do I talk as if I had wheels?

JOE MANN, with deliberation:

What you have said about man losing his happy privilege of helping to perpetuate the race when science gets on the job; and of being able to concentrate on great works when he takes up the task of bread-winner without a side-line, looks good to me.

LUCINDA, chewing the rag in utter disgust:

To catch what? An old woman!

ATTENDANT:

What kind of a man are you anyway? There was a time when men were loyal to their sex. What is getting into the men nowadays? Trying to make women their equals.

MRS. STRANGE-ADE, toying carelessly with revolver:

Humph! Equals. In a few centuries science shall declare her the survival of the fittest. For, the production of the fatherless frog is the forerunner of the fatherless child.

ATTENDANT, dramatically:

I implore you as man to man! Help me get her back to the sanatorium. If she succeeds in making these (bitterly) socialist suffragettes believe that woman, with the help of science, can create and perpetuate the race without the assistance of man— (Weeps). Think of it. If you are any kind of a man! If those suffragettes get scientists going to rob us of all our rights— (In despair) I don't think of it! I don't think of it! (Weeps) It will be worse than the matriarchate; it will be worse than war (sobs); it will be worse than— Oh, well,— (with a wide gesture of despair with both hands) I don't think of it! I don't think of it! (He drops in chair sobbing).

JOE MANN:

I have lived to see women fight for their rights; but I never expected to see men fight for their privileges. (To attendant) Cheer up— Oh, cheer up! That will never happen.

ATTENDANT, jumping up:

Fool! Don't you know what scientists have done? No one can imagine what they will do next. They may find our substitute to-morrow, if they are egged on by those (bitterly) suffragettes— I don't think of it! I don't think of it! (He drops on couch, buries his face in pillows and sobs).