

BONNETS MARKED DOWN

And Three of Every Four Women Stopped to Look.

Men Wagered Money on Whether They Would Stop or Not—Dolly Was Only a Woman After All.

Scene—The bay window of the club, commanding a view of the street. Directly opposite are the windows of a fashionable milliner's, gorgeous with a display of Easter bonnets.

Characters—Tom, Dick, Harry, afterward Jack, and Dolly Street engaged to Jack.

It is 3 o'clock on a warm afternoon about ten days before Easter. The grand parade is at its thickest. Tom (reflectively looking out of the window toward the milliner's display)—I wonder how many girls stop to look at that window.

Dick—I guess one in seven is a good average. Harry—One in three, you mean. Notice the sign, 'Easter Bonnets Marked Down.' Why, either one of those signs would be dangerous. Together they're fatal. Let's watch and count.

Tom (with sudden animation)—No, I'll tell you what. We'll get up a game with it. I'll pick out a girl coming down the street, and you and Harry bet on whether she stops and looks in that window or not. It'll be for a dollar. You both put up your stakes, understand. Harry, he'll be the bull. I'll bet that she stops. Dick will be the bear. He'll bet she doesn't.

Dick—And how if she goes in—goes into the store? Tom—Well, I'll just bet a dollar as to whether she goes in or not, and if she does I win double. It's a one to two shot.

Dick—Great idea! Here, Tom, here comes a girl. See—just crossing the street. Do we bet on her? Tom—No, no. There's an art in this thing you fellows don't seem to appreciate. She wouldn't do. She's been shopping all the morning and spent her last quarter for lunch at the department store. She wouldn't dare look in. Besides, she's from the country, I'm sure. Look at her net bag.

Harry—Tom, you're right. She went with her head turned away. Wouldn't trust herself to look. How about this one that's coming—the one in the brown tailor suit? Tom—Yes, we bet on her. (Harry and Tom each lay a dollar on the table.) Harry—Oh, she's bound to stop. Watch, now. She can't go by that row of bonnets. There, she's right in front—now—now—yes, no—she's hesitating—she's got her eye right on that blue affair—no—yes—yes. Hooray, she stopped. The dollar's mine. Say, it is a great game. (The girl abruptly enters the store.) Tom (pocketing the \$2)—Isn't it? Harry up. Put up your money. Here comes another one. We bet on her. The one in gray, with the bull pup bounding the tone and manner of a wheel of fortune winner. Put up your money, gents. Pick 'em out, pick 'em out. Here she goes, and there she goes, and if she stops or not nobody knows. (Dick and Harry make their bets. The girl passes by in a hurry, merely glancing at the bonnets.) Tom (in a professional chant)—Dick wins.

Why, look at that blue affair—right in the front row and marked down. She's only a woman after all. Look, look! If she hesitates— Jack—She's lost, and she is hesitating. Tom—She's stopped. Harry wins. No, no—wait a moment. She acts as though she was going in. She's going to price the blue affair. I know it. (The girl studies the array of Easter bonnets a moment, starts off, returns and finally enters the store with an undecided air.) Tom (gathering up the money) Bank wins.

Dick (disgusted)—You wouldn't have thought it of her. Wimmin folk air powerful on sartin, and I'll bet she was a pretty girl, too. Harry—She's over in the store now. Look, you can see her through the window. The saleslady is getting that blue bonnet out for her. By Jove, she's looking right over here.

Jack—Who—the saleslady? Harry—No, you goat, the girl. The stunner, and—why—well, of all—Boys, she's bowing over here. Dick—To us? Tom—No, to me. Jack—It's to me, of course. Harry—Oh, you're both wrong. She's bowing right at me. Can't I see? Tom—Betcha \$10 she's not.

Jack—Take you. Dick—How you going to prove it? Tom—Well, I'll bow and wave my hand at her, and then Jack, he'll bow and wave his hand at her, and the one that she answers will be the one that wins. Jack—All right. There's my tenner. Tom, you try first. (Tom bows and waves in the most ingratiating manner, but the girl puts her chin in the air and turns away coldly.) Tom (doletfully)—Crushed, crushed. Well, Jack. (Jack bows and waves in his turn, and he's rewarded with a pleasant little nod.)

Jack (swelling proudly and pocketing the money)—What did I tell you? I bet she's pretty. Harry. She's going to try on that blue bonnet, and she'll have to take off her veil to do that. We'll soon see it—she's pretty or not. Tom (bitterly)—I'll betcha \$5 she's not. Jack (defiantly)—Betcha \$10 she is. Tom—Take you. Dick—Watch now. She's taking off her veil. There! Is she pretty or not? Jack—Why it's Dolly! All—Miss Street!

(A moment of embarrassed silence.) Harry (to Jack)—I say old man, this is no end, beastly. I—well, by Jove, Jack, we've acted like a lot of bloody little cads. Of course, if we'd known—guessed for an instant it was your fiancée—Miss Street, I mean—I that is—hang it, Jack, I feel like a stable boy! Dick—Harry speaks for all of us, Jack. Jack (easily)—Pshaw! That's all right. No wonder Dolly bowed to me. She recognized me all right, but I didn't know her under that veil, and I've never seen that dress before. I thought her walk was familiar, though. Guess I'll run over and talk to her a bit. Goodby, you fellows. (Tom, Dick and Harry exchange cruel glances.)

Tom—And now the question is, did she recognize Jack? Dick—Would Dolly Street flirt with a man and she engaged to Jack? Tom—Would Jack flirt with a girl and he engaged to Dolly? Dick—Well, wimmen folk air—onsartin. (In front of the milliner's store a few moments later. Dolly, coming out, meets Jack.) Dolly (surprised)—Why, you dear old Jack! Where did you come from? I haven't seen you in an age!—Boston Globe.

Optician's Latin. Hiram had returned home from college, where he had won high honors as a student of the ancient languages, but he "fell down" one day when his sister, a demure young girl in her teens, asked him to translate a sign she had seen in front of an optician's office which read thus: COX SULTO SABO UTVO UREY ES. Hiram struggled manfully with it for several minutes and gave it up. "It isn't good Latin," he said. "There are some words in it that are Latin, but the others are either wrong in termination or are barbarisms from other languages, and, taken as a whole, it doesn't make sense."

"That is what I said," rejoined his sister, "but Keturah, out in the kitchen, translates it without any trouble. She says it means, 'Consult us about your eyes!'" Whereupon Hiram collapsed.—Youth's Companion.

by Presence of Mind. At Shearfield, England, recently a curious accident occurred. A passenger was riding on a double deck electrical car, and a single deck car passed in the opposite direction. The rope of the trolley boom of the latter was flying in the wind, and it wound itself around the passenger's neck. Fortunately he had the presence of mind to seize the rope with both hands and release himself or he would probably have been pulled from the car. The old standby, Seal of North Carolina, is always generally good. Holland herring. Selman & Myers.

Poisoned Cigars. The famous Botkin and the more recent Cornish poisoning cases recall England's equally famous mystery of 24 years ago. Two members of a great club in Manchester, both men of position and keen politicians, each received, apparently as a New Year's gift, small boxes containing a few cigars of the very highest quality apparently. Both were taken feebly ill after smoking, and one of them subsequently died.

The cigars were found to be loaded with poison, and it was said that the man who recovered only did so because he used a cigar holder. The facts were at first hushed up, because, as was said, the suspected sender, whose motive was revenge on account of a lady, was a man of wealth and power. But this subject was cleared, and the mystery was deepened by the following circumstances: A rich Manchester merchant, traveling one day in a railway car about the time of the incident related, got into conversation with a most agreeable and highly cultivated stranger, who finally offered his cigar case. The Manchester man was found at Leeds almost unconscious, and the only occupant of the carriage. He grasped in one of his convulsed hands the cigar he had been smoking, and after analysis showed it to be identical with the others. He recovered, but the stranger was never discovered.—Ex.

"Stupid" British Officers. The Duke of Wellington once declared that there was nothing so stupid as a gallant officer, and a correspondent of the London Times complains that while the British officers are as brave as brave can be they are mostly "stupid." This charge is not brought against the British navy. In explanation of the Navy and Army illustrated says: "When an army officer is careless or stupid in handling his men, he rarely kills anybody. It is otherwise with a naval officer. If he is careless or stupid, he will in all probability not only come to dismal grief himself, but will bring it on others. Therefore there is a perpetual stimulus to efficiency in the case of a naval officer, and his supporters have a powerful motive to be sharp with him. An easy going colonel or general may tolerate shams in field days and maneuvers, but the admiral or captain who wants to sleep with some confidence that he will not be waked by a collision or a stranding cannot make light of neglect on the part of the officer of the watch.—Army and Navy Journal.

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A Favorite With the Ladies. "The census man was so kind. He didn't ask me how old I was." "He didn't?" "No, he just asked me what year I was born in."—Chicago Record.

At the Summer Resort. Mattie—Yes, a man has come here, but he is only a hired man. Minnie—Of course. No man would be likely to come here if he wasn't hired.—Boston Transcript.

A Prejudiced View. "What is education, am?" "It is education which gives girls a chance to show that they are smarter than boys."—Chicago Record.

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