

FABLE OF MAZIE AND AGNES

The Former Was Popular and Courted by a Syndicate

While Agnes Played Her Own Hand and Trumped the First Ace Her Young Man Led.

Once there was a girl, who was being courted by a syndicate. She was the girl who took first prize at the Business Men's Carnival. When the Sunday Paper ran a whole page of Springfield's Typical Belles she had the place of honor in the center.

If a stranger from some larger town was there on a visit and it became necessary to knock his eye out and prove to him that Springfield was strictly in it, they took him up to call on Mazie. Mazie never failed to bowl him over and get him all wrought up, for she was a dream of loveliness when she got into her glad raiment. Mazie had large mesmeric eyes and a complexion that was like chaste marble kissed by the rosy flush of dawn, and she carried plenty of brown hair that she built up by putting things under it. When she sat very straight on the edge of the chair, with the queenly tilt of the chin and the shoulders set back proudly and the skirt sort of whipped under so as to help the general outline, she was certainly a pleasant object to size up, and no matter where the spectator sat in the room he couldn't get a wrong angle on her, for she did not fall down at any point.

Mazie had such a rush of men callers that the S. R. O. sign was out almost every night, and when the weather permitted she had overflow meetings on the veranda.

Right across the street from beautiful Mazie there lived, a girl named Agnes, who was fair to middling, although she could not step it off, within twenty seconds of Mazie's regular gait. Sometimes when she happened to get the right combination of colors, and wore a veil as far down as the nose, and you did not get too close, she was not half bad, but as soon as she got into the same picture with Mazie, the man charmer, she was taded to a gray bleach.

All the plain, everyday XX Springfield girls used to wish that Mazie would go away somewhere and forget to come back. Mazie was the cause of the famine in callers.

The other girls had to admit that Mazie was a good deal of a tangerine, but they did not entuse the same as their brothers did. You cannot expect a lot of spirited girls to strike a chord in G and sing any anthems of praise to a friend who is trying to make wall flowers out of them. It riled them to hear Mazie tell how provoking it was to receive bouquets and books and all sorts of presents from men with whom she barely had speaking acquaintance. Ordinarily a girl sort of palpitates for an hour or two after the delivery boy comes with a five-pound box of candy or a long bunch of Jack roses, so Mazie did not make herself any too well liked by telling the other girls that she was tired of having expensive gifts piled up in front of her. And when some poor man who was far gone on matchless Mazie, the Sprite of Springfield, would start a rhapsody to some other girl, the other girl would say yes, that Mazie was a sweet and lovely girl, but when she said it she would look as if she had just tasted a lemon.

But Agnes, who lived across the street from the Pearl of Springfield, tried to be cheerful and keep her hammer hidden, although goodness knows she had reason to feel put out. It is hard lines for a sociable girl to sit around the house and play Solitaire and practice finger movements on the piano and read James Lane Allen, and see everything lighted up across the street and know that some one else has callers to burn.

Agnes felt sometimes as if she would just have to up and tell the boys what a deceitful, two-faced old thing this Mazie really was, and how she had said that most of the young men in Springfield gave her a pain and acted like farmers when they were in a ball room. But she knew better than to do it, for Mazie had all of them lunny about her, and they would have said that Agnes was miffed because of Mazie's popularity.

Agnes understood that men always show a strong preference for a feather headed girl, if she has the looks and a circus style, and particularly if all the sedate, well read, plain, intellectual girls are trying to close up

ahead of her, so as to throw her into a pocket and put her out of the running. So long as Mazie was the reigning Fad, and while Mazie's front room was the Mecca for Golf Players and Glee Club Undergraduates, Agnes sat back, a trifle forlorn, but not so rattled that she took any chance of queering her own game.

Sometimes when there was such a push at Mazie's home that the late comers could not get up to within rubbing distance of the celebrated Siren of Springfield, and it was too early to go home, one or two of the young men would drift over to pay a little attention to Agnes. Here was the chance for Agnes to make the mistake of her life. But she never asked them, oh, so bitterly, if they had been to see Mazie first, and she never made any of these unwelcome cracks about being second choice. She received them with the long hand clasp and the friendly smile, and threw herself to entertain them, wotting well that now and then a girl must pocket her pride and she laughs best who postpones her laughing until after the bans have been published. Instead of seeking to undermine the uncrowned Queen of Springfield and put the skids under her and call attention to her superficiality and bad spelling and all that, she lauded Mazie to the skies. She asked the boys if they did not think that Mazie was a dashing beauty and by far the swellest in town, and was it any wonder that the whole crowd was dotty about her. When she talked like that the beaux who had not been making much headway with Mazie, on account of the terrific competition, were inclined to demur and say that Mazie was unquestionably an artist on the make-up and a caption when it came to coquettish wiles, but there were others just as nice. Some of them said that the Mazie game was being worked too hard.

In this town of Springfield there was a steady young fellow who wrote Junior after his name, and was prospective heir to an iron foundry. He was English about Mazie for quite a spell, but when he went up to see her and try to make it worth her time to look him over the door bell kept ringing, and he found that instead of conducting a courtship he was simply getting in on a series of mass meetings. So he took to dropping over to see Agnes, and found that he was the whole thing. She treated him kindly and never disagreed with him except on one point. Whenever he would say that Mazie was getting the big head and put on too many frills to suit him, and had been spoiled by having so many on her staff at one time, Agnes would stick up for her friend, and say that she could hardly blame any man for giving in to the superlative charms of one who had Julia Marlowe and Cleopatra set back and worried.

She kept that talk going until he was good and tired of having Mazie dinged at him. One evening he stopped her right in the middle of an eulogium and suggested that they let up on the Mazie topic and talk about themselves for a while. And although she protested, he convinced her that she was worth a ten acre field full of Mazies.

So they were married and went to Niagara Falls and came home and still Mazie remained single. She was supposed to be several notches too high for any one man in Springfield. After getting such job lots of adulation and having at least six pulsating courtiers kneeling on her sofa pillows every evening it would have been a tame let down for her to splice up with one lone business man and settle down to a dull existence in some apartment house. So it came about that there was a general impression in Springfield that Mazie was the unattainable. She was a kind of public character to be idolized, but not removed from the pedestal. The discouraged suitors fell away one by one, and married the ordinary 18-carat girls who were willing to play fair and not keep the applicants dangling. Mazie took up with a new generation and seemed to believe that she could reign forever, the same as the Elfin Queen in the Fairy Story.

But the peach crops come and go. After a few years Mazie's door bell did not tingle with its whilom frequency, and right down the street there was a Seventeen-Year-Older who had shot up out of short dresses like a willow sprout, and it was her picture that went into the Special Illustrated Edition as Springfield's Fairest Daughter.

Mazie saw that the vernal season had passed and the harvest time was at hand, so she decided to chop the Philandering and pick out one for keeps. But when she began to encourage the eligibles they took it to mean that she was prolonging the same old string game. The men who knew that she had turned down at least fifty figured

that there was no possible chance for them so they were leery and would not be led into committing themselves. Besides, Mazie had been handed around by so many that she was beginning to be graded as second hand, and there was not the same keen anxiety to capture her that there had been along about the year of the World's Fair.

At last accounts she was supposed to be guessing Agnes is doing nicely, with a well broken husband. Moral—Cheer up, Girls. Ex.

Too Much "Glad Hand."

I am a back number. I have not arrived at this conclusion hastily, or without thought or regret. It has been borne in upon me for several years. I might have known it sooner if I had been alert to the facts, says a contributor in the Atlantic. The evidence has been most pronounced, perhaps, in the matter of church-going. Whenever I attend church in a new place I find myself hesitating. I make wary inquiries before setting out. I ask carefully about a possible "committee of welcome." I approach cautiously. I have been known, at the very vestibule, to turn and flee. The sight of an especially friendly usher or committee of welcome terrifies me beyond approach. I have an old-fashioned way of regarding a church as the house of the Lord. I have a consequent sense of freedom in it. All this new machinery of welcome and handshaking and pleasant conversation appals me. That a man with a black beard, whom I have never seen before, and whom I am earnestly wishing never to see again, should feel at liberty to grasp my hand and hold his face very close while he welcomes me to the sanctuary is a source of embarrassment, even of annoyance, to a conservative person. It puts me in a state of mind that ill accords with the spirit of worship. Even if I escape the preliminary welcome I never feel thoroughly safe. There is the possibility that the preacher, from his watch tower, may spy out the newcomer, and, by some method of speed or circumvention, as yet unfathomed by me, may be waiting at the front door to give me an earnest social welcome. All this is painful to one accustomed by experience and tradition, to look up to the preacher, to drink in his words of wisdom with no carnal expectation or hope of later being grasped by the hand as a prospective church member.

I find that I miss something in the new method—a hush before the service, a sense of waiting upon the spirit, an atmosphere of prayer and paradise, the hush that followed "The Lord watch between thee and me," the quiet dispersing of the congregation; some gathering in groups to talk over the sermon, or the weather, or the crops, or rumors of war; but every one at liberty to walk quietly away, down the long street, under the shading trees, carrying the words of comfort and inspiration in his heart. My chief objection to the committee of welcome is that they have made all this impossible. Even if one escapes them without bodily contact there is an uncomfortable sense of a gauntlet run; of a strategic turn at the fatal moment, which barely brought one safely through. The spiritual mood, the sense of spiritual communion with one's fellows, is gone, never to return. It is old-fashioned to regret it. It is useless to evade it. But I find myself uneasy, with the great prophet, "I am not better than my fathers. I would that their ways might have been my ways until I died."

The Name Sioux.

The Indian name Sioux, as it appears in such town names as Sioux Falls, Sioux City and Sioux Rapids, is usually pronounced "Soo," but sometimes, in the east chiefly, that simple pronunciation is not known. A committeeman not long ago visited a school in New England, where he heard the pupils say "Si-ox" with complete assurance. At a favorable opportunity he quietly spoke to the teacher of the error, saying, "You know, it is 'Soo,' whereupon she asked the attention of the school and solemnly announced: "You have all been pronouncing this word wrong. It is not 'Si-ox,' but 'Soo ox.'" The committeeman lacked the courage to pursue the subject further. —Exchange.

A Measure of Success.

Friend—Oh, by the way, I have been curious to know whether you were successful with that strange patient you were treating last winter. Doctor—I was, partially. He has paid almost half of his bill.—Philadelphia Catholic Standard and Times.

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THE SOLDIER'S WAIL.

The nurse has hit the trail to camp and arrived in no very amiable mood; and there she sits and soursly sings. Witness the martial roudoux on abolition of the army canteen:

They make me sick, those women—Geet
They make me wait to kick!
Why can't they let us soldiers be?
They make me sick.

Those soldiers, too, I'd like to lick,
By way of reparation,
That whole darn webpage of Old Nick!
How can they stand the W. C.?
T. C.? God chase 'em quick!
Down some steep place into the wheel!
They make me sick.
—Ambrose Bierce.

SOWN BY GUNPOWDER.

A Curious Way of Covering a Rocky Crag With Plant Life.

In the grounds of the Duke of Athol and near Blair castle, England, stands a high, rocky crag named Craigiebarns. It looked grim and bare in the midst of beauty, and its owner thought how much prettier it would look if only trees, shrubs, etc., could be planted in its nooks and crannies. It was considered impossible for any one to scale its steep and dangerous inclivities, and no other way was thought of to get seed sown.

One day Alexander Nasmyth, father of the celebrated engineer, paid a visit to the duke's grounds. The crag was pointed out to him, and he was told of the desire of the duke regarding it. After some thought he conceived how it could be accomplished. In passing the castle he noticed two old cannons. He got a few small tin canisters made to fit the bore of the cannon and filled them with a variety of tree, shrub and grass seeds. The cannon was loaded in the usual way and fired at the rock from all sides.

The little canisters on striking the rock burst, scattering the seeds in all directions. Many seeds were lost, but many more fell into the ledges or cracks where there was a little moss or earth. These soon showed signs of life, and in a few years graceful trees and pretty climbing plants all sown by gunpowder were growing and flourishing in nearly every recess of the formerly bare, gray crag, clothing it with verdant beauty.

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Fresh halibut at the Denver Market.

Notice.

Notice is hereby given that on and after March 1st, 1901, grants for all applications for relocation will be issued at the time the application is made, wherever the claim applied for appears open for relocation upon the records. The allowance of two weeks which has hitherto been made for holders of claims to take out a certificate of work will cease on and after March 1st. Holders of claims are warned, in order to avoid trouble with relocators, to take out a renewal of their claims on or before the expiration of their former lease. (Signed) J. LANGLOIS BELL, c28 Assistant Gold Commissioner.

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