

OLD MAIDS.

A Striking Contrast Between Their Fate and That of Many Married Women.

Let us approach the subject with discretion, it is a delicate one. According to the generally accepted definition, an old maid is a woman who has arrived at a certain period of life without marrying; and there is an unspoken continuation to the definition which hints that she has not married because she did not get the chance. In most cases this is not exactly true, for few women reach the age when old maidenhood is supposed to begin without having had at least one proposal.

As a rule, old maids are supposed to be fitting objects of commiseration, especially by the sterner sex, who can hardly be brought to believe that a woman may possibly be happy under the disadvantage of not possessing one of themselves as her own peculiar property. I think a great deal of really valuable sympathy is wasted in this way that might be fittingly bestowed upon a large number of married women.

Take the average husband, a good enough man no doubt—while the household machinery runs smoothly. But let him have a cold dinner, even by unavoidable accident; let the baby be cross; let the fire be out; or in fine, let any small inconvenience occur, and where are the smiles, the jests, the carresses, that come so spontaneously when everything is running on greased wheels? Yet the man who will growl the loudest and be most disagreeable when the household arrangements get out of gear, is the one who is always finding fault with his foreman or 'boss' because he expects men to be machines. What about expecting a wife to be a machine? If an unmarried woman has to work for her living instead of having someone to do it for her, at least she has her evenings for relaxation; not so her married sister, who has a family to look after. When the ten-hour-a-day workers are resting and reading the newspaper, the housekeeper has the supper dishes to wash, the children to put to bed, torn clothes and little stockings to mend, and perhaps, a batch of bread to set or something else to do for morning. Of course when she married she undertook all those things and it is her duty to do them; but did she not look forward to having the love of her husband to make the toil easy? Did she not depend upon his tender consideration and sympathy in all weariness of mind or body. Did she not look forward to his appreciation of her care for his comfort, did she not think he was prepared to share her troubles as she was to share his? Ah yes! but what has been the result of her expectations? The considerate lover has developed into the fault finding, unsympathetic, inappreciative husband, who buries himself in a book or newspaper when supper is over and growls ungraciously if he is disturbed; or who goes out with his old companions to have 'a good time,' or to go to the theatre. If he thinks of his wife it is as one who has household duties to perform and cannot get with him; even if he desired her company, which he generally does not. And this is one of the men who pity or smile at old maids!

Of course all marriages are not of this kind, but they are frequent enough to make a woman hesitate before she risks her all upon the lottery.

All this is very commonplace and has been told many times before now; but life is made up of commonplaces, and commonplace happiness is better than commonplace misery.

There is another side to the question, which does not seem to appeal to the masculine mind, or very rarely; and that is that in many cases a woman is too good for the class of men that fate throws in her way.

That that particular class is precisely the one that thinks any man, no matter what his moral or intellectual status may be, is good enough for any woman on earth, goes without saying. To hint to a man of that description that the woman he honored by a proposal of marriage was his superior in every way, would probably draw forth a coarse sneer. Such men have a low opinion of womankind and the woman who marries one of them is to be pitied unless she is of as vulgar a fibre as himself.

It often happens that youth and inexperience lead a woman into an unequal

union of this kind, and on the wide earth there is no one so much to be pitied; no, not even old maids. To be linked for life to a man for whom she is forced to be continually in an apologetic attitude, whose coarseness, and low appreciation of all that is noble and refined cause her to wince a hundred times a day, who ridicules her ideals and tries to pull her down to his own level. Could anything produce greater unhappiness? A man of this kind may be well educated in a sense of the word; he may make no mistakes in grammar; yet a woman would be happier married to a man who could not write his own name but whom nature had endowed with delicacy of sentiment and feeling.

If to associate daily with the mentally inferior can cause so much misery, how much worse must it not be to have added to it moral inferiority? Then indeed the cup of sorrow is full, and a wife needs all the grace that she received at the altar to enable her to do her duty, to keep herself from deteriorating in every way, and to bring up her children in the love and fear of God. That many a woman has won a crown akin to that of martyrdom in an unequal marriage, is no reason that other women should voluntarily embrace the same cross. If some, seeing those things and not meeting with the men who could help them on the upward road, elect to remain single, who can blame them?

Public opinion, voiced by men, has decreed that a woman whom a man intends to marry must be like Caesar's wife. The worse a man has been, the more particular is he in the choice of a wife, and it never occurs to him that he has unfitted himself for association with any good woman. Is it not time that men should begin to learn that it is their duty to bring to the marriage contract the same qualities that they demand in the woman? Unless the commandments were meant only for the weaker sex this must be true. One thing at least is certain, and that is that there would be fewer unhappy marriages if women were only as particular in their choice of a life partner as men are. Probably this would add to the number of old maids in the world; but as the sum total of human happiness would be increased thereby the result might not be so deplorable after all.

EMM E. STREET.

ROMAN NEWS.

(Gleaned from the London Universe)

The Abbe Lemire, professor of rhetoric at the Little Seminary of Hazebrun, has brought out a charming and most instructive volume (in French) on Cardinal Manning and his Social Action.

His Holiness has received in private audience the Prior of St. Mary of the People, accompanied by another Augustinian, who presented him with a photograph of the picture of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin venerated in their church.

In the Benedictine cloister of Sincow in Bohemia at present there are three ladies of exalted noble families at the moment—namely, the Princess Schwarzenberg, the Countess Bianca Thun, and Leopoldina Sall-Relfenschied.

The Archbishop of Cologne and Mgr. Korum, Bishop of Treves, assisted at the gallant dinner given to the German Emperor on his passage through the latter city. His Majesty has been entertaining the son of King Humbert at his cottage near Metz, where grand military manoeuvres have been held. The French are wrath at this visit of the descendant of a former ally to the Monarch of the "hereditary enemy." Bad blood again fermenting between France and Italy.

The Pope has received the officers of the Palatine Guard recently decorated, and reminded them that their service in the Vatican was a permanent armed plebiscitum of the Romans in favour of the Holy See. He always counted on them in the hour of danger, although his chief trust was in God. His Holiness concluded by affirming that the actual moments are grave and arduous, but that worse may be at hand, when the Palatine Guard will have an opportunity of showing itself in all its splendour.

The Holy Father has been much interested by the story of the evangelization of the Gilbert Isles, in Micronesia, lately related to him by Father Bontemps, who called at the Vatican, accompanied by two of his youthful neophytes. The first apostles of the learned and intrepid missionary of Isoudun were humble savages who had emigrated from another isle, where they had learned the elements of Christianity. These natives had been in the habit of assembling to hear Mass—which was celebrated, so it was reported, in other isles. They directed their gaze thither once a week where they believed the priests sacrificing, and joined in worship. The enthusiasm with which Father Bontemps was welcomed may be conceived. The Pope caused the two neophytes to recite prayers in their native tongue, and afterwards gave them silver medals in souvenir.

GIVES A GOOD APPETITE.

GENTLEMEN,—I think your valuable medicine cannot be equalled, because of the benefit derived from it. After suffering from headache and loss of appetite for nearly three years I tried B.B.B. with great success. It gave me relief at once, and I now enjoy good health.—Mrs. Matthew Sproul, Dungannon, Ont.

THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL.

His Holiness Speaks Plainly on the School Question

New York, Sept. 22.—The Rome correspondent of The Catholic News sends a synopsis of the recent encyclical from the Pope to the Bishops of Hungary, a copy of which was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Booker to Mgr. Satoll at Pittsburg on Tuesday.

His Holiness urges concord and union among Catholics and instructs the bishops to promote the holding of congresses. He calls their attention to the importance of combatting for the truth of books and journalism, and urges that the clergy should not occupy themselves too much with civil and political matters. The Holy Father dwells on the perils of mixed marriages, and continuing speaks at length on the school question and the disciplining of teachers. He said: Relative to elementary schools venerable brethren, you must insist and even require that parish priests and all those having the care of souls, devote all their care to the instruction of their pupils in Christian doctrine, that they confide to no others that grave and noble task, but that they set their hearts on reserving to themselves the entire weight thereof, well assured that not only the salvation of families, but likewise that of the nation depends in a great measure on the pious and salutary instruction of early youth. And never deem to have attained that degree of industry and of good management such as to warrant you to rest from further progress in schools.

OBITUARY.

The Young Ladies of St. Mary's Parish Mourn.

By the death of Rev. Sister St. Eliza, of the Congregation of Notre Dame (nee Mary Ann Deane) the Catholic religious world of Canada loses a devoted and noble person, a zealous worker in the cause of education, and a grand soul in the realm of religious life. The deceased lady was sixty years, four months and three days old, and had been thirty-two years, nine months and eleven days a member of the congregation to which she belonged. She had been Superioress in several convents, and was noted for her zeal, charity and great confidence in God. The wonderful success of these institutions was due, in a great measure, to her able administration. In August, 1891, she was appointed Superioress of the academy in St. Mary's parish, Montreal, which place she held during one year. It was then she contracted the severe malady which necessitated her leaving and resigning to others the heavy duties of such an important office. For sometime she languished at the St. Agnes convent, in St. Anthony's parish, where, for the last time, she exercised that untiring energy so characteristic of her life. She went thence to St. Andrews, Ont., where her Sister—Rev. Sister St. Mary Francis—is superioress. While death was expected during the past two months, it was only on Tuesday, 19th instant, that she calmly passed to her reward. On Thursday a solemn service was chanted at St. Andrews; the remains of the pious nun were brought to Montreal. A service was held at the Mother House and the burial took place in the cemetery vault. This morning a solemn Requiem Mass was sung in St. Mary's parish church by the Rev. Father O'Donnell, and the whole congregation—especially the beloved pupils of the deceased—felt keenly the grief that such a loss must necessarily cause.—R. I. P.

LOOKED LIKE A SKELETON.

GENTLEMEN,—Last summer my baby was so bad with summer complaint that he looked like a skeleton. Although I had not much faith in it, I took a friend's advice and tried Dr. Fowler's Extract of Wild Strawberry. He soon got better. I truly believe it saved his life.—Mrs. Harvey Steeves, Hillsborough, N.B.

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

IRISH DAY AT THE FAIR.

There will be a reunion of Irishmen in connection with Ireland's Day at the World's Fair. It is calculated that over 100,000 of Erin's children will meet on that occasion in honor of the discovery of this land of their adoption, which has afforded them a home free from the tyranny of England. It will afford an opportunity of friends meeting again, although separated for many years. To facilitate this reunion of acquaintances and to enable persons to make satisfactory inquiries about missing friends, arrangements are made for certain counties to meet at particular places in Chicago at a stated hour. People will avail themselves of this opportunity of their lifetime to meet their friends once more. Headquarters for Irish reunions in connection with Ireland's Day at the World's Fair will be as follows:—

Saturday, Sept. 30th.

- 8.30 p.m. at Hotel Western Reserve, 6345 Wharton Avenue, near Fair Grounds, for Clare, Galway and Mayo.
- 8.30 p.m. at the Alhambra Hotel, State St., for Kerry and Cork.
- 8.30 p.m. at Hotel Montreal, 6288 Madison Avenue, for Longford.
- 9.00 p.m. at McCoy's Hotel, for Donegal and Derry.
- 9.00 p.m. at Gore's Hotel, for Antrim and Tyrone.

Sunday, October 1.

- 4.00 p.m. at the Western Reserve, for Waterford and Tipperary.
- 4.00 p.m. at the Alhambra, for Louth, Meath and Westmeath.
- 4.00 p.m. at McCoy's, for Carlow.
- 4.00 p.m. at Gore's, for Cavan.
- 4.00 p.m. at Hotel Montreal, for Fermanagh.
- 7.30 p.m. at Western Reserve, for Kildare.
- 7.30 p.m. at Hotel Montreal, for Kilkenny.
- 7.30 p.m. at Alhambra, for Dublin and Wicklow.
- 7.30 p.m. at McCoy's, for Sligo.
- 7.30 p.m. at Gore's for Roscommon.

Monday, October 2.

- 10.00 a.m. at Western Reserve, for Leitrim.
- 10.00 a.m. at the Alhambra, for Limerick and Monaghan.
- 10.00 a.m. at the Hotel Montreal, for Armagh and Down.
- 7.30 p.m. at the Alhambra, for King's county.
- 7.30 p.m. at the Western Reserve, for Queen's county.
- 7.30 p.m. at Gore's, for Wexford.

A Happy Event.

At St. Mary's Church, four miles from Quebec, a most interesting event took place on Monday, the 25th instant, when Mr. Lawrence Egan, a well-known culler of Quebec, and one of the Ancient Capital's most popular citizens was united in the holy bands of matrimony with Miss Lizzie Raymond, of Montreal. The bride, who is most highly esteemed by her large circle of friends and greatly beloved by all who have the pleasure of her acquaintance, was most becomingly attired in a neat travelling suit, and was given away by Mr. James Ryan. The bridesmaid was Miss A. G. Ryan of Montreal. The presents were numerous and costly, including a solid silver service from the young lady's friends. Mrs. Egan was for many years in the employ of Messrs. J. S. Sharpies and company, lumber merchants of Quebec. The TRUE WITNESS extends its sincere congratulations to the happy couple and wishes them all the blessings of life, as they walk together the avenues of the future.

An Evening With Numismatics.

The first meeting of the autumn session of the "Antiquarian and Numismatic Society" was altogether devoted to Numismatics. Mr. J. B. Learmont, vice-president, occupied the chair, Mr. Alain C. MacDonald, secretary. Amongst those present were Messrs. Henry J. Tiffin, Major Lyman, W. O. McLachlan, Dr. Kerr, Ludger Gravel, W. E. Lyman, de Lery Macdonald, W. H. Birch, H. T. Ferrault, W. D. Lighthall, A. A. Beauchamp, J. A. U. Beauchamp, Chas. Branchaud, Dr. S. D. Mignault. Mr. Tiffin exhibited what is, no doubt, the finest collection of medals and decorations in Canada. The collection comprises almost every medal given by England for deeds of valor, and a complete collection of Papal and French medals. A piece which created much interest was that given by "Bonnie Prince Charlie" to the Highland chiefs who espoused his cause. It is the only one known to-day, it bears the bust of Charles and on the reverse Flora Macdonald. There was also shown a medallion from the Order of the Garter, from the Duke of Norfolk's family, who for centuries have been the Garter King at Arms. The "Order of the Bath," the ancient order of the Fleur de Lys, the order of St. Louis, etc. Some fine historical coins were exhibited by Dr. Kerr and the Messrs. Lyman. The rules of the Society were suspended and Mr. Tiffin was unanimously elected a member.

"Is Miss Penscratch trying to win a name for herself?" Miss Growler: "I should say so. Why, she almost proposed to old Mr. Ducats last night."