

Love's Second Degree

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This is a bit of plain history, and the reader whose mental appetite craves adventures flavored with the essence of heroism and self-sacrifice will save himself disappointment by paying it by. It is, it may be said, the plainest of plain history.

John Delwin, the hero, is a man who sells groceries. Formerly he was an ordinary boy of numerous freckles, there a delivery clerk in the village store of which he was later part owner. His life, so far as his acquaintances can judge, has been a psalm from the beginning.

When he married Emma Minkler he wore the customary black, and the bride was attired in the customary white, and congratulations upon the happy event were many and sincere, just as the village newspaper said. So far as is known no hearts were broken or even bruised in the case. John had no rivals. Nor had Emma. He wanted a good sensible wife. She wanted a good sensible husband. They were married. Everybody was satisfied.

Theirs was the most commonplace of courtings. He escorted her home from church one night, and they stood for a time at the front gate while the little god of love performed his duty. They did not realize the solemnity of the occasion, otherwise he would have talked less fluently of butter and eggs, and she would have subdued her references to the starching and ironing of shirts.

It was fate. John said to himself that there was a girl who was practical, a girl well calculated to comfort a man who worked for his daily bread. Emma said to herself (mark the coincidence) that there was a man who was practical, a man who wasted his brain tissue with no trivial subjects of thought. And from that moment the compact between them was virtually sealed.

A year passed before he asked her to share his fortunes. Scarcely an instant passed before he received his answer. He kissed her then, and they were very happy.

"John," said she, as they parted that night, "engaged couples are different from unengaged ones. Come and see me often, John, for I shall be lonesome without you. Come Monday, Tuesday and the other days."

"I'll do it," said John, trying to remember a couplet he had laboriously committed to memory; "I'll—I'll do it."

"Do," said she.

"O, I will," said he. Thus it came about that whenever business was a bit slack in the store John girded up his apron, which bore a saleratus brand upon its bib, and went forth to call briefly upon Emma. And he never failed to find her busy with household work, her round white arms bared to the elbows, her fingers often bedecked with dabs of dough, her face flushed by the heat of the kitchen fire. And he said to himself fervently, in much the same spirit that characterizes the stock burst of gratitude in the more thrilling of love tales, "What a prize I've won! What a girl she is! O my!" And he walked upon air in his leaden deliberate way straight to the wedding day.

Emma was not beautiful. She was not witty. She possessed not those qualities which throughout the pages of a questionable literature have made woman at once the despair and joy of the masculine heart. John understood this and gloried in it. He himself had not been a success at holding up one end of even a five minutes' conversation with the more dashing of the girls who attended the church socials. He rather feared these girls. He was never able to quite free himself from the suspicion that they were making fun of him. He pitied the



"What a prize I've won!"

brilliant young chaps whom they married.

And it was so also with Emma. The brilliant young chaps [adjective used in the purely complimentary sense] voted her dead dull without a dissenting voice. They said she was a cheese, whatever that may be in the human form. She was utterly without power to set the strings of the gifted male ears in motion. And she slipped in her sensible solid way, declaring that she hoped the Lord would have mercy on the poor creatures that married them—with the emphasis strongly on the pronoun.

So she was married to John, and John was married to her, and, as has been stated, everybody was satisfied.

Another year passed, during which John built a square dwelling with

no nonsense about it, and set a row of hard maples along the front walk, and purchased a cow. Then he bought a simple wicker perambulator and opened a ledger account with the leading doctor.

Life for the blissful couple was on in real earnest, and life in real earnest is a pretty serious matter.

It was then that the covering of the deals began to loosen in places and fall off. By the end of one more year the process was complete. John growled at the cost of living. Emma neglected her back hair. He discovered with a shock that the cooking was badly done and that the house was badly kept. He uttered a hoarse note of complaint, and was momentarily paralyzed by the sight of Emma shedding great soaking tears. He had thought her superior to such petty weakness.

Matters did not improve during the



"What! You say that!"

next year. They unimproved. John's business affairs went wrong. It was the year of panic, and collections were difficult to make. Instinct prevented him from groaning in the market place, hence he brought his groans home and discharged them in an avalanche at his wife.

Then John failed. He came home one night, and sat for a long time beneath a cobweb in a corner of the sitting room, staring with wide unseeing eyes at the picture of Garfield upon the wall, saying nothing, heedless of the food upon the table.

Emma sat in the kitchen, rocking ceaselessly, their child asleep in her arms. She knew what had happened. A glance at John had told her all she cared to be told.

So the minutes became hours, and the fire died out, and a chill came into the air. The clock struck nine. John spoke.

"Em," said he, "it's all over."

"I know it," she returned. "What are you going to do about it?"

"I don't know," he replied. "I'm clean discouraged—beat. I'm a poor stick."

"You are," she agreed promptly. He started violently. "What!" he cried. "You say that? I reckon, madam, I'm as much of a success as you—you that deceived me—that lured me to marry you under false pretenses! You that made out to be helping your ma so good with the housework! You that run whenever you saw me coming and put on your apron and rolled up your sleeves and dabbled your hands with flour or grabbed up a flatiron! You—O, I know all about it! I should think you'd have been ashamed of yourself, letting your ma do all the work while you just lazed round! I should think you'd be ashamed of yourself this minute sitting there on that floor that hasn't been swept for a week! Did you think I wouldn't find you out? O, you deceiver you!"

He arose to his feet, excitedly pacing from one room to the other; then paused, an expression of surprise and bewilderment in his eyes, for Emma was smiling at him through tears.

"John," she demanded, quietly, "who told you that?"

"I overheard your pa telling Squire Wigham," he said, "and they seemed to think 'twas the best joke ever was. But it hurt me fearful and rolled me up. You've no idea how it rolled me up, Em!"

"Yes, I have, John," said she. "Mercy! Do you think I'm blind and deaf? But it wasn't so bad as pa made it out to be, honest, it wasn't. Just once I run and put on an apron and rolled up my sleeves to deceive you, and that time 'twas because I'd torn a big hole in the front of my dress and the sleeves were all stained up with raspberry juice. Pa was always teasing me about it afterwards. He thinks he's an awful rich joker, pa does. And as for my failing to keep house good for you, John, there wasn't any trouble till baby came, and then I didn't have time nor strength to do it, and you couldn't afford to hire help, and you wouldn't tell me why, and—and—O, John!"

She placed the child in its cradle, and with deliberate impulsiveness threw her arms about John's neck. His arm slowly wound itself about her waist.

"We're just as foolish as—as the fools, John," she sobbed.

"Fooler," declared he, decidedly. "I hadn't given you a fair shake, Em. I'm going to be different."

They were silent for an interval—an interval of close, wordless communion such as in the popular love

tales precedes the marital state, but never accompanies it. Emma broke the silence at last with a whisper.

"John, I'm awful sorry about the store."

"Don't you worry about that," said John. "I'm no worse off than lots of others. It don't fret me a mite—not a mite, Em."

Then he turned up the lamp and rekindled the fire and drew the curtains, and they sat down comfortably with beaming faces to tea and muffins just as the clock struck ten.

JERUSALEM'S RUINS.

The Remains of a Mediaeval Church Discovered.

The Greek Catholic monks, who are in possession of the chief portion of the church of the Holy Sepulcher, are now going to build a bazaar opposite it, where pilgrims may purchase souvenirs of their visit to Jerusalem. During the process of clearing the site the foundations of an old mediaeval church, forty meters long and thirty wide, with three apses, were discovered. A number of fine capitals, fragments of basalt pillars and bas-reliefs, with symbolic animals, were found, all these remains having, doubtless, belonged to the choir of the church. Last year a valuable silver shrine, containing a piece of the holy cross and relics of the Apostles Peter and Paul—according, at least, to the inscriptions on them—was discovered at the same place. The patriarch of Jerusalem, it is said, is keeping other discoveries secret, owing to his dislike of the Roman Catholic church. Those mentioned above are all the more important as it can be ascertained to what church they belonged. According to the statement of a mediaeval traveler, the hospice and the monastery, which the citizens of Amalfi founded about the year 640, as a refuge for Western pilgrims, was situated due south of the Holy Sepulcher, about a stone's throw away. The first church was built in honor of St. Mary de Latinis, and the second, the ruins of which have now been found, in honor of St. John the Baptist. The French monk Bernard, who lived there in 870, highly praised the hospitality and the large library of the hospice. A Mohammedan historian says it was destroyed by the Khalif Hakem and rebuilt shortly afterward; while, according to another account, it prospered down to the time of King Baldwin of Jerusalem, from 1100 to 1118, when the two communities of St. Mary and St. John adopted the latter as their joint protector. This was the origin of the Knights of St. John. The remains now discovered, therefore, are the ruins of the cradle of this order. It is most unfortunate that the preservation of these very interesting remains seems impossible, owing to the ill feeling which exists between the Greek and Roman Catholics in Jerusalem.—London Standard.

Nautical Hair Apparent.

British service papers have noted that the Prince of Wales is the first heir apparent to the British crown to hold an actual commission in the navy, the senior service on their side of the water. Hitherto the heir apparent has been put into the army, and any naval rank he may have held has been purely honorary. The same rule was followed in the case of the sons of the present king; Prince Edward was made a soldier, and died while major in a hussar regiment; Prince George was made a sailor, and has commanded his own ship on a regular cruise. Now, by the death of his elder brother, he becomes Prince of Wales, the first of the line to be a sailor. Hitherto he has been promoted rapidly, but with a decent period of service in each rank, until he now holds the commission of a captain. Hereafter his promotion will be honorary, as it will no longer be advisable for the heir to the crown to go to sea in command of a fleet or to take the risks of a naval officer.—New York Sun.

Fastidious Dog.

"Yes," said the manager of the defunct Uncle Tom's Cabin company, "it was our dog that broke up the show." "The dog, eh? What was the matter with him?" "Too fastidious. You never saw such a hood in your life. You know the play, of course. We tie a piece of meat in the folds of Eliza's frock, and that's what draws the dogs after her when she runs across the blocks of ice. Well, what do you think this dog demanded?" "Can't imagine." "Porterhouse beef-steak, sir, and with the tenderloin left in! Yes, sir. How's that? And you couldn't fool him. He wouldn't chase Eliza a foot unless the meat was a choice cut. No, sir. And, by gum, sir, our company had to live on liver and bacon, so that blamed dog could have his steak. Yes, sir." The demand was too much for you, was it?" "No, it wasn't. That is, it wasn't until he began to insist upon mushrooms with his steak. Then we just threw up our hands and quit."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Gamekeeper's Tip \$250.

The position of head gamekeeper to an English country gentleman who habitually has shooting parties is a most valuable one, for even the most humble of the invited guests is expected to leave a very substantial tip with the outdoor servant in question. In all cases where the visit extends to a week or more, the head gamekeeper expects, and generally receives, a tip of from £3 to £50, and it is very doubtful whether any sum less than a sovereign would be acknowledged with a word of thanks.

A play is to be made by George Ade for the use of Ward and Vokes.

SPANISH WAR MEDALS FOR THE NAVY

In expectation of a ceremonial presentation of a part of the medals won in the late war with Spain, the Philadelphia mint is now going right ahead with work of fashioning the several thousand medals to be given to the meritorious and the valorous of our navy during the campaign in the West Indies in 1898. These medals are to commemorate participation in certain naval engagements principally on the coast of Cuba and to distinguish those officers and men whose specially meritorious service other than the battle is particularly deserving of recognition.



From the man behind the gun to the man before the blazing furnace in the fireroom, every one on a ship in battle will receive a battle medal, and, if in more than one engagement, an added bar, instead of another medal, for each additional action—the bar to bear the name and date of the subsequent fight.

The obverse of the battle medal will bear the head of the commander in chief of the whole campaign, encircled by the inscription "U. S. Naval Campaign in the West Indies, 1898," while the reverse will typify the men behind

and encircling the anchor will be the campaign designation. On the plain reverse side of the medal will be stamped the name and rank of rating of the recipient, together with a brief statement of the service for which the medal was given. The ribbon in this case will be red or crimson and will fall straight down behind the medal so that the color will show through the openings between the star points. The design has been made purposely simple.

Days Spent in Bed.

There is no better preventive of nervous exhaustion than regular, unhurried muscular exercise. If we could moderate our hurry, lessen our worry and increase our open-air exercise a large proportion of nervous diseases would be abolished.

For those who cannot get a sufficient holiday the best substitute is an occasional day in bed, a writer in the Nineteenth Century suggests. Many whose nerves are constantly strained in their daily vocation have discovered this for themselves. If we cannot prevent agitation, we ought, if possible, to give the nervous system time to recover itself between the shocks. Even an hour's seclusion after a good lunch will deprive a hurried, anxious day of much of its injury. The nerves can often be overcome by stratagem when they refuse to be controlled by the strength of will.

Catching Rats.

Rats are very susceptible to the odor of certain drugs, and any ordinary trap set in their haunts is likely to succeed if dressed with these scents, the attraction of which, rat catchers affirm, they cannot resist. An example is: Powdered asafoetida, eight grains; oil of rhodium, two drams; oil of aniseed, one dram; oil of lavender, one-half dram. Shake together in a bottle and use a very small quantity to dress the bait.

To catch rats, cover a common barrel with stiff, stout paper, tying the



Reverse of the Medal, Showing the Men Behind the Guns.

the guns—the young officer and the youth of the blue jackets and the marines. The three figures are shown in the fighting-top of a battle ship. The blue jacket, who has just moved his body from the shoulder piece of his still smoking one-pounder, is watching the result of his last few shots while the young officer, catching sight of a chance for the alert marine. In the distance, over the rim of the fighting top are seen the Brooklyn and the Texas—partly clouded in their own smoke, while against the extreme left shore line lies the blazing wreck of a Spanish craft. The sea in the middle distance is dazed with plunge of hostile shot.

The "specially meritorious service" medal will be a wreath-encircled star. The wreath will be of laurel and the star will bear in prominent relief the badge of the service—the anchor. The bands that bind the wreath will bear the descriptive title of the decoration.

Knew Too Much.

A young man employed in an oyster

Old Ship Finally Condemned.

The famous old Italian brig, Anita S., which had well earned the proud distinction of being the slowest vessel afloat, will make no more of her famous long voyages. A cablegram from Tenerife announces her arrival there after a prodigiously long trip from Italy and her condemnation as old unseaworthy. She will be sold for a few dollars and broken up for firewood. No ship afloat ever took longer time to make a trip than the old Italian brig did. She was 205 days going from Brazil to Baltimore, Md. While she

shop has lost his situation, and this because he gave prompt answer to his employer's eager question. The employer had six lively little land turtles, which attracted much attention as they wandered aimlessly about the window. He painted a large white letter on the back of each of the shells, and put up a notice to the effect that, whenever the turtles got into such relative positions that the letters spelled "oyster" he would present half a dozen natives to every one who was looking on.

Then he became frightened lest the mystic word should occur too often, and covered reams of paper figuring out the odds. He gave it up at last, and was about to remove the turtles when his most accomplished oyster opener informed him that the odds were 720 to 1 against the combination. The turtles are still in the window, but the oyster opener has gone. Such knowledge of odds, the employer thought, could have been acquired only by years of betting experience. It is not wise to be too wise.

Electricity for Summoning Pages.

The practice of clapping the hands to summon a page in the house of representatives in Washington has passed away. Electric annunciators are now in use. There is one at the back of the Republican side and another behind the Democratic side. When a member pushes a button a small red disk appears in the annunciator, bearing a number which shows where the page is wanted.—Boston Herald.

Talking at a Long Distance.

Eighteen miles is said to be the longest distance on record at which a man's voice has been heard. This occurred in the Grand canyon of the Colorado, where one man shouting the name "Bob" at one end, his voice was plainly heard at the other end, which is eighteen miles away. Dr. Young

records that at Gibraltar the human voice has been heard at a distance of ten miles.

Vaccination of Plants.

Vaccination of plants is the idea of a French botanist. Parasitic diseases—microbial or fungoid—harm through the poison they cause the tissues to absorb, and inoculation with suitable cultures makes the tissues proof against absorption.

Finest Pearl Necklace in World.

The pearl necklace of the Empress of Germany is said to be the finest in the world. The gems are all perfect in shape and coloring and the whole is valued at \$500,000.

Wounds Heal Slowly in Philippines.

Medical men have noted the injurious effect of the Philippine climate on wounds. The time for healing is much longer than here. In South Africa it is shorter.

Two New Steamships.

The two new steamships that are being built for the passenger service between San Francisco and Oriental ports will mark the beginning of a new era in trans-pacific navigation. They are double the size of the largest that now cross the Pacific and inferior in size to only a few of the latest Atlantic liners.

There are 13,000 policemen in London, drawing salaries of \$6,469,760, while there are 6,000 in New York, drawing salaries of \$10,550,000.