

MILESTONES ON LOVE'S PATHWAY

The "riddle solvers" are filling the newspapers with suggestions as to the best method of disposing of the "marriage problem," by which they mean, in truth, the divorce evil. One would think that the holy institution upon which the world's homes are built and through which the world's peace is made possible had come to be regarded as an experiment and admitted to be, as a general rule, an experiment that has failed. But the failure is not with the institution itself. It is with the individual and, comparatively speaking, is only with a few individuals. So admirable is the institution that it has stood the test of time and survived the faults and the follies of most of the men and the women who have taken advantage of it.

Various "remedies" have been suggested and one man who is so foolish as to imagine that he even thinks he thinks, suggests that marriages be contracted for a five or ten-year period, with the right to renew if both parties agree. It is unnecessary to dwell upon any proposition in which it is assumed that the marriage tie is not the holiest of all earthly bonds. Some one ought, however, to register a protest—in the name of the married lovers living and the married lovers dead—against the effort to make it appear that the institution should be judged in the records of the divorce courts rather than in the archives of civilization. When a uniform divorce law is adopted by all the states, the divorce evil will be reduced to the minimum. But even with the undoubtedly large number of divorce suits, marriage is by no means a failure. In the language of a great statesman, it has "done more toward the peace, happiness, settlement and civilization of the world than any other part of the whole scheme of divine wisdom."

"All the world loves a lover." It is interested in the youthful sweethearts gathered at the trysting place, but its profound admiration is commanded by the picture of the husbands and wives who are the sweethearts of today, even as they were the sweethearts of twenty or thirty years ago. At a time when newspaper reports have become nauseating with the details of the divorce courts and particularly when the press of New York city is filled with the stories of domestic infelicity, it is refreshing to learn that, after all, good many come out of Israel. No opportunity should be lost by those who have found that marriage is not a failure to impress their conviction upon the rising generations. In this effort they will be greatly helped by reference to a little volume prepared by a New York woman as a gift to her husband with which to mark the end of the second decade of their wedded happiness.

Theodore Sutro is one of the prominent lawyers in New York city. The book is a collection of letters and poems written to Mrs. Sutro by her husband and compiled for the purpose of commemorating the anniversaries of their married life of twenty years. On their twentieth anniversary Mrs. Sutro distributed among her friends 300 copies of this little volume. She explains that her purpose in giving even this publicity to the book is to "teach husbands and wives that wedding anniversaries are good things to remember, for they recall a tenderness and affection that should not be forgotten."

The little volume is entitled "Milestones on Love's Pathway," and in the dedication, addressing her husband, Mrs. Sutro says:

Accept this little compilation of some of the very many beautiful letters you have written to me. I have called them "Milestones on Love's Pathway." May they recall to you the happy occasions, and may the thought that I have preserved them inspire you to continue these lovely milestones—which mark the way on the road of happiness, strewn with your kind deeds and loving affections.

It need not be imagined that there was never any turmoil in the Sutro home. This husband and wife were made of the same clay of which other husbands and wives are constructed, and in a letter addressed to his wife, dated September 30, 1904, referring to "our delightful companionship," he says: "Some little storms have passed over our pathway, but as I look back the vista of sunshine is so clear that the memory of this alone remains;" and he adds: I may freely and honestly call them ten

happy, very happy years. And they have grown happier as time elapsed. May they be an omen of the future! May the next ten years be as happy, as little alloyed by sorrow caused by ourselves.

You have been a good little wife! True as steel, upright, full of good impulses, imbued with noble aims. If I have had some successes you have inspired me to achieve them; if I have had reverses and disappointments they have not been your fault. You have stood bravely by my side in the battle of life without complaining, without regrets, a brave little soldier, full of courage, full of hope!

To this I bear testimony freely and without reserve.

I have tried to merit your fond love. I hope I have fully succeeded. May we continue to be happy is the sincere wish and devout prayer of

Your fond, faithful and loving husband.

On the occasion of another anniversary Mrs. Sutro was presented with her portrait framed in silver. Accompanying the gift was a verse written by her husband entitled: "To Florence," as follows:

Far too costly is this setting
For the picture you behold!
But 'tis vain to be regretting,
Workmen ne'er do as they're told!
Yet this one whom I am chiding
Builted better than he knew;
For a happy thought, abiding,
From this costly framework grew!
Crystal with the wood uniting
Wakes fond memories of the past,
While the striker is inviting
Hopes of happiness to last!
Crystal fete and wooden ended!
Silver wedding still to be!
But the three together blended
Here, in wonderment, you see!
These are symbols full of glory,
Milestones scattered on the way,
Telling of our lives the story:
One perennial wedding day!

In February, 1901, when Mrs. Sutro was about to undergo a surgical operation and the shadow of death seemed near, Mr. Sutro sent a letter, in which he said:

What a noble little letter you have written to me! It is another link in the long chain of loving tokens which you have vouchsafed to me during our sixteen years of supreme happiness.

It is not a question of your love for me, as you have manifested this in ten thousand ways; nor is it a question of my love for you, as of that I know you must feel assured to a degree that I need not tell you that I would not want to live without you; that if on October 1, 1884, a horoscope of the future had shown me every moment spent with you from that day to this and revealed to me exactly as you are at this very hour, my words to the clergyman who, in uniting us, asked me, "whether I would take you, Florence, to be my wedded wife," would have rung out in clarion tones and joyously; "Yes, yes and yes again and yes forever!"

You will have the best medical skill, the best nurses and the best of everything of the best hospital, but the strongest factor in your recovery will be, I feel sure, your own strong determination to continue to live. A blessing and a joy for so many loving hearts!

Your parting is hard to bear, but it will only be brief, and I shall see you daily; your return to our home will be all the more joyous because you will be free from the dread malady which now threatens you, and with a new lease for a long, healthy and happy life with me to the very end of my own days! God grant it.

The eighteenth anniversary was marked by this letter:

Eighteen years ago! Think of it! And you were 18 when I first met you, and the year was 18-83.
Eighteen seems to be our lucky number.

May we celebrate at least eighteen more happy anniversaries! Why not? And now a bumper to this day, one of the happiest of the many happy days of our lives.

On one of Mrs. Sutro's birthdays her husband presented her with a painting accompanied by a poem written by himself, and entitled "My Own May Song," which was as follows:

My own May song, my beautiful song,
Composed on the first of May;
Each sorrow you shorten, each joy you prolong,
Wherever your music holds sway.
My own, my living, May song indeed!
Each word a kind thought, each note a good deed;
Its imprint her beauty, its music her life;
Like a flower of May, is this song, is my wife.

Such things as these are not intended for the eyes of men and women whose feet are not familiar with the holy ground to which they lead; but in cottage and in castle, all over this broad land, there are thousands of men and women with whom marriage has been just as successful as it has been with the Sutros. There are in the homes of America thousands of caskets that are filled with just such love letters as these, written in many cases, by a gray-haired husband, lover still, to a gray-haired wife, sweetheart yet. In this day, when we are apt to judge of the institution of marriage by the records of the divorce courts, it is instructive, as it is refreshing, to be reminded that that institution is to be considered in the experience of the Sutros, into whose domestic life has come some tempest, but much sunshine, rather than by the experiments of those who have seen all tempest and no sunshine.

It is safe to say that these lines will be read by many men who, after years of wedded life, may in all truth say: "The wife is dearer than the bride."

We need to impress these things upon the boys and girls now growing into manhood and womanhood. We need to impress upon them the facts that the home is the heartstone of civilization and the wedding day must not terminate the period of courtship if governments resting upon the home are to be preserved.

RICHARD L. METCALFE.

"A SHADOWY MEMORY"

It seems to be generally accepted in newspaper circles that Secretary Taft is no longer the administration's favorite for the republican nomination in 1908. For a time Mr. Taft was regarded as a presidential candidate, but Mr. Taft is dispatched to the Philippines; and we are told by newspaper correspondents who are presumed to speak with some degree of authority that one of the conditions upon which Mr. Root accepted the position of secretary of state was that he would receive the support of the administration in his aspirations to obtain the republican nomination in 1908. We are told by these same authorities that provision will be made for Mr. Taft by an appointment, by Mr. Roosevelt, to be Chief Justice of the supreme court in the event Chief Justice Fuller retires before the expiration of the Roosevelt term, or by Mr. Root in the event of his election.

The Taft boom seems suddenly to have died. Perhaps it is a coincidence but it is, nevertheless, a fact that the "Taft Free Trade Order" has passed with the Taft boom.

Can it be possible that Mr. Taft's announcement that supplies for the Panama canal would be purchased in other markets if such a course were necessary to protect the government from extortionate prices had anything to do with this? Can it be that the stand-patters have already won the battle?

It was the New York Press which denounced the Taft order as being "treasonable against the citizens of the United States and their sovereign will," adding that when the American people fix the punishment for the official responsible for this order, "we (the Press) do not think there will be enough of his political existence left for mortal eye to see it as anything but a shadowy memory of a misguided past which closed not a day too soon." Whether this establishes the right of the New York Press to be known as a prophet, it must be admitted that the Taft boom disappeared very suddenly and is now little more than "a shadowy memory."