

A TENNIS ROMANCE.

Frances Robinson had fallen in love. No one besides himself suspected it, not even his mother, who knew better than anyone else how much her son was capable of feeling. No one, you see, thought of love in connection with Francis. He was "nice" of course. How he wished sometimes he wasn't. Then at least people would have some definite feeling about him. He wasn't stupid at all. Indeed, he had always learned easily and been near the top of his classes both in schools and at his university. All his comrades liked him well enough—no one ever thought of detesting him. He had a very clear mind, approaching brilliancy, and he could talk fairly well—as well as most of the men he knew! He was just ordinarily well looking, but who cares if a man is handsome or not? And of all things deliver us from a pretty man! But Francis Robinson wasn't naturally a person you would "take to," as the phrase goes. He couldn't help it, and you certainly couldn't either.

He had fallen in love, I said. He had shown good taste in his choice—far more taste than sense, most people would have said. For who wants to mourn or encourage a hopeless affection? The girl was pretty and she was bright, very attractive in every way. Why shouldn't he fall in love with her if he wanted to, pray? But why should he? Do you think he could hope for a return of her regard?

He sat down determinedly one day in the privacy of his own room to decide the matter. He put it before himself as impartially as he could. He was used to communicating with and consulting himself, for he had never had a friend dear enough to open his heart to. This is the way he put the case—he was studying for the bar, so the expression fits:

"I am young; I am not handsome, but I don't think that need count. I have money enough now to support a wife well and hope to earn more soon. I am in sound health, mentally as well as physically. I am not dull. I can and will make a mark in the world. I love Alice Starr. Why should I not make her care for me? I am certain she cares for no one else. Very well, I am not worthy of her, but no man is or ever will be, and if she will marry me I will make my life such that she need never be ashamed of any act in it. How can I convince her of this? If I should tell her now she would think me mad, and justly. First I must do something worthy of notice, that is sure. I can't write. I never could excel that way. It will be some time yet before I can hope to distinguish myself in court. What can I do.

There he had to leave the problem, and for some time it remained unsolved. What could he do? He asked himself again and again. This thought of the law court most naturally occurred to him, since that was his avocation in life. Suddenly, one day, as he was riding solitarily along a by street in Harwinton, his native town, he saw something that gave him his great idea. He reined in his horse so quickly that that peaceful animal was profoundly surprised, and doubtless pondered, with equine gravity, the why and wherefore of it in his stable afterward.

"By Jove!" thought and almost said Francis Robinson, "I have it. I'll win my laurels in one kind of a court, anyway. She is just devoted to tennis, and if I can't get to be champion of this town in that, with such an aim, I am more of an idiot than I think I am."

Which shows that at least he had some self confidence. He went to work immediately. He played tennis a little, of course, but had never devoted much time or thought to it. Perhaps this was partly due lately to the fact that he was not a member of Alice Starr's club, "Alice Starr's club" I say advisedly, for she was the leading spirit as well as the best player in it. Francis knew he could get into the club, otherwise known as the "Special," if he tried, but first he must play well. For over a month he devoted hours each day to practice with his racket and ball, at first in a tete-a-tete with the side of the house and then with any one he could lure into his tennis. He had a fine court made on his own lawn, the better to entice people to practice.

With his determination he succeeded finely, and when he applied for admittance to the Special he knew he was up to any member in it unless it were Alice Starr. He might have waited a little longer, but he was getting impatient, and people were getting tired of being beaten. He was admitted to the club easily enough. I have said that no one disliked him, and if members didn't want to play with him they needn't. It is a fact worthy of notice that every individual who had been practicing on and of late had been forgotten to mention the fact. It was just beastly luck anyway, and on his own court, too. So there was no general impression of his good playing, as there might have been if his partners had been more generous in giving to the world their scores.

A day or two after he had been enrolled as a member Francis walked into the grounds one afternoon just as play was at its height. The five courts were all occupied just then, but soon, one being left, a man who thought it was rather a shame Robinson shouldn't have

a game his first day, you know, asked him to play. Robinson gladly consented, though he knew Graves did not do much at it. At any rate it was a start, and he beat his adversary a straight set with provoking coolness. Graves had waked up a little by this time, and calling to a passing friend he said:

"I say, Fairfield, don't you want to play? I am no use today and Robinson's been knocking me all out."

Fairfield assented: "Well, yes, he would have a try"—with a smile that plainly said, "We'll see how small fry like Robinson will show up on my playing," for he was one of the best men in the club. To his surprise, however, he found himself unaccountably beaten at every game. He got aroused, then angry, but it was only the worse for him. Robinson simply played better than ever. At last, after two sets, one Robinson's straight and the other 6-2, he became disgusted and said:

"Well, I'm down on my luck, too. I think I won't play any more. That serve of yours is very clever, Robinson." By the time they stopped almost every one was getting tired, and a group in which Alice Starr was standing had been watching them for some time. Robinson turned to her and said: "Won't you try one, Miss Starr? It seems a pity to stop so soon. Single or double, as you prefer."

Alice was by no means averse to displaying her excellent work and she was never weary, so they chose a court. To the satisfaction of both, no one else cared to play. Every one watched them, as she was the only court occupied. To every one's surprise—especially to Fairfield's—Robinson's good luck seemed to stand by him. How provoking it was! Alice would get vantage so easily, then, lose the game. She grew more and more astonished as time went on. If Mr. Robinson had only seemed to try to play! But he didn't. He stood around as easily as possible and didn't even seem to exert himself at all, but just reached out lazily and returned the most difficult balls.

"Jupiter!" said Jamie Wright, whose chief occupation in life was to make supposedly witty comments on other people's actions; "Jupiter! I never saw a fellow play like that. It looks as if he stood in one place and reached out in all directions—regular octopus, don't you know!" And that is the way Francis pretty soon became known as Octo Robinson.

All the young people walked up town together. Francis felt to walk with Alice would seem rather triumphant to her, so he contented himself with talking to her dearest friend Janet Gray. At some complimentary remark of hers he answered:

"You mustn't forget, Miss Janet, that all my life almost I have practiced in ball playing. There's nothing in the world like that—especially amateur with all its tricks—to make a man's wrist as limber as an eel—forgive the comparison. Miss Starr has not had the advantage of that practice, but she plays magnificently—better than I should have ever thought possible without early training."

When Janet, as in duty bound, repeated this conversation to her friend Alice laughed and said:

"Mr. Robinson is shrewder than I thought. Little he knows of the hours and hours George and I have practiced curves in the back yard. If it hadn't been for that I never could have played so well."

All the rest of the summer Francis had chances for games with his star. Harwinton was in the transition state from borough to city, and was not yet so large that every one left it in the pleasantest season of the year. There were lovely drives around it, too, and the young people of the Special often took them together. Of course, when Alice saw Francis so much at the courts she thought of him, naturally, as her particular escort on such occasions, to

And yet she did not think of love. One always stands up for one's heroes, however unpretending they may be, but surely I am justified in saying that mine showed great self restraint and wisdom in keeping so long from telling Alice, even by a look, his secret. Seeing her almost every day, and often being alone with her, it was hard indeed to keep silent respecting his love for her. But he was succeeding in gaining at least her unconscious assent to his constant attention, and that seemed to him a long stride toward his goal.

He had convinced her of his physical ability, but how to do so of his mental? The chance came with the October winds. The tennis courts must be abandoned, but must the pleasant intercourse of the Special be dropped too? Certainly not! The club had a very pretty house on the grounds, and this could easily be made suitable for winter. It was soon in order. Alice Starr was interested: "When Miss Starr does take hold of a thing it's got to go!"

Once a week the rooms were to be opened in the evening and twice for reading and billiards—they had a particularly good table in the afternoon. A club of older people was started for the benefit of the chaperons and one parlor was given up to them. One was kept for dancing for the younger ones, while up stairs, besides the billiard room, two dressing rooms were utilized

for cards and other games. In connection with this, at Alice Starr's suggestion, a debating club was formed. Any member of the club was entitled to membership, and two of the first names on the list were those of Alice Starr and Janet Gray. This opened the way for other girls, and pretty soon it was discovered that the list held an almost equal number of men's and girls' names. The debates took place once in two weeks and each time the speakers were appointed for the next.

Francis Robinson waited eagerly for his chance. A man and a girl supported each side, and after this an informal discussion by all the members followed, and, from Octo Robinson's swift, brilliant little speeches then, much was expected when he should take a leading part. The night came at last when he heard his name. He was to lead the negative with Mary Graves against Alice Starr and Henry Fairfield. The subject of debate was the following:

Resolved, That women should be allowed equal privileges with men at the polls and in public offices.

Francis had one great advantage in this—a sincere conviction against it; that counts for a deal everywhere and most of all when one is unused to making any given point of view one's own. Francis put his whole heart in the work. All the first week he thought about it, racking his brains for novel and convincing argument, and at the beginning of the second commenced to write. It was perfectly allowable and very general to have a written speech, but he had no such idea as that. How could he impress everyone by his brilliancy if he constantly referred to an inglorious copy? Just as if he weren't sure what he did think!

Alice Starr worked hard, too. She had never given much thought to the subject before, not thinking it practical, but as she studied it she warmed to it more and more, and by the fatal Wednesday night was at a white heat. She herself had taken a different phase of the idea than she had thought her opponents likely to choose and given the more usual view of it to Fairfield. He, partly through devotion to her and partly through dislike of Octo Robinson, had done his best.

There was an unusually full meeting on that Wednesday evening, and even Francis felt a little shy. Fairfield opened the debate with a really bright speech, and the applause was warm at his eloquent peroration. Then Mary Graves. She was very quick, and, catching at one or two defective points in Fairfield's argument, turned the tide in her favor. After a pause Alice rose. She, too, had decided to speak without notes, and her eloquence and fire fairly carried away her little audience. Francis was naturally quick himself, but she fairly dazzled him tonight, and when she sat down he felt that he had nothing to say in answer to her unique brilliancy. But then, the great oration that he had prepared with so much care! Surely that, with its flash of conviction, would eclipse the fire of Alice Starr's words.

So he arose and, with an earnestness that surprised every one, began. His first few sentences impressed everybody, but suddenly he looked at Alice Starr. Her eyes were fixed on him with a look almost of fear—fear lest he should snatch away the laurel she so longed for. At that look he stopped. After a moment's silence he went on for a sentence or two, but it seemed that every idea had fled from him. He looked at Alice Starr again, paused a moment and then said slowly:

"I hope every one will pardon me. The unexpected turn of my opponent's argument has just put me all out. I leave the field with the hope that some one here may fill the place I cannot."

He turned and left the room, and for a moment dead silence reigned. Then a murmur of comment arose and half a dozen sprang up at once to give their support to the negative.

Francis Robinson walked slowly out of the building, mechanically putting on his coat and hat as he went through the hall, and went on to the broad veranda. He stopped a moment, and then bethinking himself of a peculiar corner of the veranda, where he would be secure from intrusion, he went there and sat down on one of the benches. He took off his hat and let the cool air strike his forehead and sat gazing blankly at the courts. He tried to think, but it seemed almost impossible. His last chance was gone. Alice would even despise him now. How long he sat there he did not know, but at length he heard the applause that he knew must be for the announcement of the judges' decision, and he wondered if Alice were happy now. He sat with his face in his hands and did not hear a step approaching. Another person had thought of this retired spot and had come here to think. But she stopped as she turned the corner and looked in silence at the dejected figure a moment. Then she said softly:

"I hope I do not disturb you, Mr. Robinson." He started to his feet and his face showed still more the pain he was suffering.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "I did not hear you. Certainly not—you do not disturb me, I mean."

An awkward pause ensued. She broke it. "You must not feel like that. I don't know what to say, but it wasn't

your fault. No one thinks of it against you."

"Can't you see it isn't that? He answered almost fiercely. "It was my great chance. I thought if I could make you see I really wasn't stupid, common-place, I might win your love. And now—now you despise me, or at least you think me a fool. What do I care what others think? It was you I worked for."

There was another pause, and then she said slowly in an almost inaudible tone:

"But how do you know till you ask me, Francis?"

He seized her hands and his happiness. His defeat had done what his success perhaps never would have. A moment later she added, with a happy little laugh:

"And you needn't feel so badly. There were lots ready to help you, and it didn't take the judges long to decide in favor of the negative. So you see you won your point and your fiancée, too."—Isabel Dwyer in Springfield Homestead.

Tricks in All Trades.

"Oh, yes, we all have our faults," said a wealthy retired grocer of this city, as he sat with a group of old friends on the veranda of his west side home. "I'll admit even that the paragraders have some foundation for the sandy-sugar, coconut-pepper and clay-coffee bean jokes they keep flinging at grocers with almanac regularity. But we can console our selves with the true, if not exactly moral, reflection that there are lots of folks worse than us."

"Out of the fullness of my half century's experience I should say that the servant girl trade or business or whatever you like to call it has more sharp and tricky members than any other one I know of. For example, twenty-five years ago I had a splendid customer in a high class boarding house near my store. I always gave the servant who attended the purchases, the waitress and the head cook their 'little dividend' every week. Bless you, we had to do it then and we have to do it now. If we didn't—well you'll see as I get along with the story. And every thing went as merrily as a marriage bell for three years. Then my rival in the neighborhood, a crusty old bachelor, connected a fine scheme to get that boarding house trade from my store to his. He went to the landlady and offered to take an expensive room of her if she would agree to buy her supplies from him in the future. The landlady liked me, and was well satisfied with the goods I furnished her, but the room had been unlet for some time, and 'business is business' anyway, so she agreed to his proposal.

"Old Smith"—that wasn't his name, but it will do for the story—grinned from ear to ear every time he passed my place for the next few days and told every tradesman in the place of his feat. But he made one big mistake in his own course of action. He refused to tip the servants when Saturday came around, saying that they would have to buy from him any how, and he was unnecessarily gruff and rash in telling them so. The girls said nothing but thought a heap, and when Sunday's supplies came home that evening they divided a plan to fix the new boarder, as he broke the shell of his eggs, was assailed by an odor that was simply terrific. Everybody knew that Smith had furnished the eggs, and the glance cast at him by the breakfasters, were the nearest things to basilisk stares imaginable.

"Another batch of eggs was cooked, but they were opened with the same result, and although poor Smith protested that the eggs he had sent around were only a day old nobody believed him, and he went up stairs feeling like a social outcast. At dinner the tomatoes plainly tasted of tin, the potatoes were hard and specked, the cheese burned a hole in one's tongue and the butter—well, I don't care to repeat what the star boarder said about the butter. The boarders held an indignation meeting in the parlor that afternoon, and at its close the landlady went up stairs and told Mr. Smith that he had better move Monday morning and shut down at once on the grocery supplies also. Smith vowed the goods he had sent in were of the very best, but it was no use, the next day I had my old customer back again.

"Where do I suppose the girls got that stock of bad eatables? Well, I can't say exactly, but I know that there was less rubbish carted away from my cellar that week than usual. The girls may have formed a combination with my porter in the matter, but there is no use casting suspicions on people who may have been innocent. As the landlady remarked, 'business is business,' and as I said before, servants are tricky. Let's have a fresh cigar."—New York Times.

Types and Poetry.

Managing Editor—What was it that young fellow wanted?

Office Boy—He says that he wrote a sonnet entitled "Dolly's Dimples," and it got into the paper headed "Dolly's Dimples," and that he wants it explained, as it got him into trouble with something he called his fecunancy. Cincinnati Commercial Gazette.

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Boiling Lakes.
About one hundred miles north of Oroville, at the foot of old Lassen, there is a boiling lake covering several acres. The depth of the lake is unknown, but its entire surface constantly boils like a huge kettle. The degree of heat we do not know, but we were there about ten years ago, and remember distinctly that it would scald the skin from the fingers in a very few seconds. Our party agreed that it would boil an egg in four seconds.

The smell of sulphur pervaded the atmosphere about the lake, and around its borders something like sulphur could be scraped up in handfuls. This lake is near Hot Spring Valley, at the base of Mount Lassen. Between it and the mountain there are, perhaps, a thousand boiling, bubbling hot springs, and in tramping about these springs the soles of persons' shoes become uncomfortably warm. The North Feather river, at the base of Lassen, in its trickling flows and springs, and in a clear, cold and beautiful stream, flows through this community of hot springs.

Some of these springs bubble up boiling water within a span of the river. Standing in the midst of these springs a peculiar sensation is experienced. At a thousand paces the earth emits a vapor smoke, while under the surface there is a jarring, roaring noise, as if hundreds of steam engines were in operation, and the ominous trembling of the earth produces a feeling of uncertainty.—Red Bluff (Cal.) Cause.

How the Sly Crawfish Catches Flies.

A correspondent writes that he recently observed a very cunning and ingenious trick of a crawfish (or crayfish) for catching flies. "Sitting on the bank of a muddy pond, or 'borrow pit,' over the surface of which many small flies were swarming about, I observed that the crawfish came to the surface near the water's edge, and turning over on the side, the tail probably touching bottom, with claws and legs spraddling about in the water, he assumed the exact semblance of dead creatures floating on the water. In a few seconds flies would alight on the apparently dead crawfish, and as soon as one got into the proper position there was a sudden and instantaneous flip, when fish and fly would disappear together under the water. In a few seconds more he would appear on the surface and go through the same maneuver, with the same result. There were, perhaps, two or three dozen of them in sight at the same time, and all industriously engaged in the fly catching game."—Forest and Stream.

Better Than Gold.

It was in Essex street the other day that a gamin of twelve found a youngster of six or seven crying on the curbstone, and when he asked what was the matter the latter replied, Says the New York Sun:

"I—I lost a cent!"

"Lost a cent, eh! Well that's bad. Hev ye hunted all over?"

"Y—yes."

"I'd give you a cent if I had one, but I'm broke. I hain't got no gum, fish-hooks, marbles, or string, either."

The youngster began weeping afresh.

"Say, I'll promise to take ye to the museum next year."

The tears increased.

"I'll come around here with an apple tomorrow."

Louder howls.

"Say, I've got it! If ye'll stop crying I'll let ye lick me."

"You are too big," sobbed the other.

"No, I hain't. I'm bigger'n you, but I hain't got no grit. Any boy kin lick me. Come now."

"May I lick you?"

"Yes. Now I'll get down on my stomach, and you jist pile onto me and hammer till I holler."

He took position, the little one piled on and pounded him about the shoulders till he cried "enough!" And when they got up the small boy was radiant and excited and exclaimed:

"Didn't I make you holler, though! Now I'll go home and lick my two sisters!"

Ups and Downs in the Yeast Market.

Yeast is naturally a most unstable sort of commodity, but its main characteristic is that upon the very slightest

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provocation it will rise. During the past week, however, it contradicted its usual methods and shrunk in a most amazing way. Saturday last it sold for 20 cents a pound. Monday it was selling for 5 cents a pound, and yesterday the price rose again to 20 cents.

Investigation into the causes of this extraordinary fluctuation in price reveals the existence of a hide bound, copper bottomed, double riveted trust which absolutely controls the price of yeast, and holds it at a figure which pays the members of the trust a handsome profit.

A pound of yeast cut into squares and wrapped in tin foil will make forty cakes, which are sold by the manufacturers at 1 cent each, and retailed for 2. The consumer of this yeast then pays 80 cents per pound. The profit is 68 cents, of which the retailer makes 40 and the manufacturer 28 cents. Compressed yeast is made from whiskeys, vinegars, and "low wines," and could be retailed at 15 cents a pound, with a fair margin of profit for manufacturer and retailer.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

A Good Hot Weather Diet.

Here is a good hot weather diet prescribed by a \$25 a visit doctor of Saratoga: Fish, clear soups, sea food, eggs, brown bread a day old, fresh milk, green peas, lettuce and tomatoes in preference to all other vegetables, ripe melons and fresh berries, rice pudding, lemonade and iced tea in preference to ice cups, and half the usual quantity of coffee. He advises contempt for butter, dumplings, pie, roasts, cabbage, potatoes, hot bread and animal foods as too heating for the blood. He also prescribes a two hour siesta after dining, as little exposure to the sun as possible and a glass of ale or porter at night for people who do not rest well. Hot baths he considers better than the cold plunge for cooling purposes, to be taken an hour before eating or three hours after.

Violence is done to perfect health by indiscriminate use of mineral water, especially mixing them, and prolonged stay in the surf. Only an ignoramus will drink from two different mineral springs and only the foolishly athletic overexert themselves. The lounge and summer tourist will get the best rest on his back either in a hammock, steamer chair or bed. Unless the system is regulated nothing will improve it, and there is no better way to keep the portals open and stimulate perspiration than by frequent use of water applied internally and externally. It is hardly possible to drink too much good, clean cool water, and habitual sponging will remove the excretions from the body which facilitate the growth of germs that are filigdy and numerous as the dust particles in the air we breathe.—New York World.

Saved by a Bullfrog.

There are at least four newspaper reporters in New York who are staunch friends of the bullfrog family. They are engaged on morning papers, and they were plowing their way at a tremendous pace through the sand and wire grass of the meadows skirting Newark bay back of Greenville, N. J., to investigate a story of a yacht that had been missing, with eleven men on board, for several days. The hour was late, the story promised to be a long one and much valuable time had been wasted in discovering the name of the place from which the boat had sailed, so the young men were pushing on in the dark toward the shore without stopping to search for footpaths. All at once, from just beneath their feet, a voice that was almost human croaked "B'lokkout," and as the travelers stopped short to take advice a big frog jumped with a plunk into the canal. One more step would have taken the young men into its muddy depths, where they would have certainly received a most unpleasant ducking, and possibly have lost their lives, as it would have been no easy matter to have climbed up the yielding clay walls of the waterway.—Philadelphia Ledger.