RED CLOUD CHIEF

A. C. HOSMER, Proprietor.

RED CLOUD. - - - NEBRASKA

THE PILGRIMAGE.

Long years ago the heart of a king
Was carried in state, like a royal thing,
To the Holy Land, where he longed to go,
Did living desires round his dead heart cling;
And could they be satisfied so?

How strange it seems that kings in their pride
Have lived thwarted lives like ours, and have died
With the thing that they longed to do undone,
Till, unconquered, some from the grave have cried
For their hearts to be carried on!

Yet never a king had such a stake
As I, in the journey I long to make
To a land, alas, where I may not go;
But my heart must be carried there or break,
Whether living or dead, I know.

Come, yellow-haired little boy of mine;
Let me see your face, where your young hopes shine.
You're loving, my darling, and strong and true;
You'll journey, while I vainly long and pine,
So my heart I will send with you.

For I yearn to follow your life, my sweet;
'Tis a long hard way for your eager feet,
And I can go only a little part;
But, dear, till your pilgrimage is complete,
Will you carry your mother's heart?

—*Bessie Chandler, in Harper's Bazar.*

ONE OF THE MANY.

Pathetic Story of a Terrible Struggle with Poverty.

They had been married for rather more than a year—Jim Carrol and his pretty little wife—and their baby daughter was two months old.

He was a fine fellow, was Jim—well set-up, and good to look at; chivalrous, upright, and honest as the day. But though he came of a good old stock—of which he was the last—he was only a clerk in a London architect's office, with a miserable salary of £100 a year, which, of course, he might lose with his situation any day. It will be clear, I hope, to the meanest understanding that under these circumstances he had not the smallest right to think of matrimony, so when he had the audacity to propose for Marjory Linton—niece and ward of the pompous and wealthy old Joseph Linton, of Manchester—that gentleman gave him a very short shrift, and promptly showed him the door. And when, a month later, pretty independent Marjory ran away with this same handsome, impecunious Jim Carrol, her irate uncle—to use his own expression—"washed his hands of her and closed his door against her and her husband forever." At this terrible sentence Marjory did not trouble herself very much, nor did her husband suffer it to affect his peace of mind. He was too happy to care whether all the rich old men in Europe closed their doors against him—or otherwise.

They lived in a tiny house in a red-bricked, pointed-gabled terrace at Camberwell; and they had enough to do to pay the rent and to make ends meet generally, especially after the baby came. But they loved each other passionately, and that made things easier. Marjory was the most sunny-hearted and hopeful of little women; and she was quite sure that some day Dornton & Cox—awakening to a sense of Jim's abilities—would take him into partnership and make his fortune.

But alas! for Marjory's dreams, on the particular evening on which this story opens Carrol was wending his way homeward dejectedly enough, for Dornton & Cox, having had heavy losses lately, were reducing their staff of clerks, and among those dismissed to-day was James Carrol. Jim felt stunned and bewildered; for situations were not as plentiful as blackberries in London in 1884, any more than they are now.

"O Jim, how late you are!" cried little Mrs. Carroll, as she flew to the door to meet her husband. "I thought you were never coming! I had to put baby to bed at last."

"Had you, dear?" he answered, absently, as he followed her into the small but cosy sitting room.

He looked depressed and out of sorts, Marjory thought. Perhaps he has one of his bad headaches. But like a wise little woman asked no questions; only poured out his tea, and gave him his slippers. He did not eat any thing, she noticed; but sent up his cup to be filled again and again, draining it each time feverishly.

He was very silent, too.

"Is any thing the matter, dear?" his wife said at last, in anxious tones.

"Yes, Marjory," he answered, with an effort. Then, after a pause he told her.

For a moment her sunny face was clouded; this was a contingency which they never contemplated. Then she said, bravely:

"Never mind, Jim. It will not be difficult for you to get another situation. I see scores of advertisements in the papers every day!"

But Carrol was not so sanguine. He was of a more gloomy temperament than Marjory, and would not be cheered, not even when baby woke up and smiled and cooed in his face as was her wont.

"You see, Jim," said Marjory, cheerily, "we still have a good part left of your last salary. It is not quarter-day yet for a good while, and we can economize in little things. We might let Ann go" (Ann was the small maid-of-all-work,) "she is really getting very careless; she broke three plates yesterday. If I have a chairwoman to come in Saturdays I can easily manage the work myself. Baby is so good, and requires so little attention."

Jim put his arm around her as she knelt beside him.

"Dear little woman," he said, "I couldn't let you do that. Not yet, at least."

They studied the paper diligently day after day. Carrol answered innumerable advertisements, both by post and personally, but in vain, though he spent an alarming sum in postage stamps, and returned night after night weary, heartsick and footsore.

The days went on; quarter-day drew near and passed, and the Carrols' little store of money melted away. For the baby had been ill, and several tradesmen's bills, small but imperative, had had to be paid. The weather was oppressively hot and enervating, and Marjory's little face began to look pinched and worn, for the baby was peevish and fretful, requiring constant nursing and attention, and the servant had been dismissed some time ago.

Another week passed. Jim felt almost desperate, for he could obtain no employment, and, to make matters worse, the baby fell ill again. It seemed a kind of wasting, nameless illness. She cried and wailed night and day and grew almost hourly more shadowy looking. The doctor, whom Carrol at last called in, shook his head, asked a few questions, advised change of air, and ordered the young mother to take "plenty of nourishing food." With a view to furthering the latter object—change of air being out of the question—Jim pawned his watch and chain. Poor fellow, he felt shamefaced and embarrassed enough as he took the ticket and buttoned his coat over his now chainless waistcoat. But the money so obtained kept them going for some little time; and Carroll, meanwhile, did not for a day relax his efforts to obtain employment. He searched with anxious diligence in each evening's paper the column devoted to "vacant situations," and answered various advertisements which seemed singularly suitable. But those who have studied that column—not for amusement or curiosity, but for dear life—know that of these advertisements only too many are simply swindles, and that the comparatively few which are bonafide are speedily secured by those who have either the influence or the experience, which Jim Carrol had not. He set off every morning for the city, neglected no opportunity, left no stone unturned, but in vain.

"[illegible] is true," he told his wife; but in reality nothing passed his lips from the time he went out in the morning until he returned, unsuccessful, hopeless and exhausted in the evening. Marjory never guessed this, and she herself did without absolute necessaries, silently, and with uncomplaining cheerfulness. It was a terrible time for them both; perhaps it was hardest on Jim, for he had not Marjory's elastic, hopeful nature, her happy, almost childlike faith and trust that things would be better by and by. He felt, too, that he had brought her to this life of poverty and privation, which he seemed so powerless to avert; and as he thought of the future—grim and black, and uncheered by any gleam of hope—his heart sickened and died within him.

In September they moved out of their pretty home to a very small and dingy cottage which stood alone, a little way back from a side street, behind a timber yard. It was not an attractive dwelling, but it was very cheap, and the rent of their former house was now out of the question. To defray the various inevitable expenses connected with the removal, and one or two other necessary outlays, they sold some of their furniture and a few other things besides.

Marjory's jewelry had all gone long ago. One day, in walking westward along Fleet street, Carrol met an old fellow-clerk by name Archie Lyle.

"Hello, Carrol!" Lyle exclaimed, grasping the former's hand heartily and turning to walk along side. "How are you? Haven't seen you for a month of Sundays. Why, you look down in the mouth, old man, What's up, eh?"

"Nothing particular," replied the other coldly enough, "except that I have been out of a situation since I left Dornton & Cox. Inspecting public buildings—when you have a wife and child to keep on nothing—is not a particularly exhilarating or lively occupation," he continued bitterly.

"By Jove, no!" said the other in serious tones. He was a good-natured, easy-going fellow, who had rarely known the want of a five-pound note, and who, as a rule, had only to sit still and let things come to him.

"I'm awfully sorry, old fellow," he went on, awkwardly. "You know I'll never forget the lift you gave me two years' ago. I'm awfully sorry," he continued, with less tact than good nature; "upon my soul, I don't know when I was so hard up as I am this month. Until I get my next——"

"Confound you! What are you talking about?" interrupted Carrol haughtily. "Do you take me for a beggar?"

Lyle murmured some confused apology.

"I don't want your money," Carrol went on in brusque tones. "Can you tell me of any thing I can get to do? Any thing. I am not proud," with a short laugh.

The other cogitated, then shook his head.

"By the way," he said suddenly, when they had crossed several streets in comparative silence, "you are a good draughtsman, are you not? You have a good idea of plans and that?"

"I ought to have," returned Carrol, dryly, "seeing that I have been a clerk in an architect's office for the last three years."

"Ah, yes, to be sure. Well, I know designs are wanted for a new hospital somewhere near Manchester. The premium is a hundred pounds. Now——"

"For God's sake, tell me," interrupted the other eagerly and hoarsely, "do you think I have any chance?"

"Well," said Lyle, "I was going to have a try. My father has an idea I ought to distinguish myself in that line; but I'm an awful duffer on plans—always was. So, if you care to go in for it—it's a goodish premium—it might be worth your while. And, by the way, Carrol, don't sign your own name; for I believe old Linton, your wife's uncle, is to be one of the judges. He is still no end down on you; and—it might make a difference. See? Sign it—oh, any thing you like, and send it under cover to me. You can trust me not to father it," he added, laughing. "I'll send you all the particulars to-morrow, and let you know whenever the thing's decided."

"Lyle, I can not thank you sufficiently," said Carrol, unsteadily. "though I fear there is very little chance for me."

"Pooh!" replied the other, in airy tones, "you've as good a chance as any of the rest."

"How soon must it go in?" asked Carrol feverishly.

"Ah, let's see—I think in a fortnight—but I'll let you know."

They were in the Strand by this time, and Lyle stopped at the nearest restaurant, for it was past two o'clock.

Carrol declined his companion's invitation to accompany him, and with a grasp of the hand the two men parted. Jim turned down a side street, and thence through the Embankment Gardens to the river. He did not feel very hopeful, for when the body is weak, the spirit is apt to be weak too; and big, stalwart-looking fellow as he was, Carrol had but little stamina; and the past months of ceaseless anxiety—and lately, of almost starvation—had told on him terribly. He walked slowly along the Embankment, and across Westminster bridge, and so home.

Majory met him with her usual cheery smile; but he fancied her sweet face was paler and more worn-looking than ever; and the baby's eyes—unnaturally large and bright—seemed to follow him reproachfully. His wife clapped her little hands joyfully when he told her of Lyle's proposal; and she was so merry and hopeful all evening that Jim felt his spirits rise. She prepared a nice little supper for him, too; and Jim did not notice—for a wonder—that one or two of their cherished books had disappeared. Baby was very good to-night, she did not cry at all; and the evening was the most cheerful they had passed for some time.

In the evening of the following day came the promised letter from Lyle, and as soon as it was light next morning Carrol began his task. He worked hard and patiently, but he suffered terribly from nervous headaches; he took even less food than usual, and the baby's constant monotonous wail made him sometimes half crazy.

At last the drawing was finished. Carrol signed it "'Isola,' care of A. Lyle, Esq.," [as his friend had suggested.] Marjory thought it beautiful and had no doubt of its being successful. But Carrol was not so sanguine. However, he sent it off at once, and Marjory already began to calculate how long a time must elapse before its fate would be decided.

It was weary waiting though; and to Jim—aye, and to Marjory too—the once-dreaded pawnshop became sadly and painfully familiar. Meanwhile their baby was slowly but surely fading away from them.

One afternoon Carrol returned somewhat earlier than usual from the city, whither he had been in answer to some luring will-o'-the-wisp advertisement. It was a dull, wet day; and as he turned up the narrow street which led to his home, his heart sank with a curious undefined dread. They had been up with the baby all night; but she had seemed better and brighter when Jim left in the morning.

Marjory met him, as she always did, at the door. At a glance his fears were quickened.

"What is it?" he said, hastily. "The child—is she worse?"

"Jim," she answered, looking up at him, with dry, grief-stricken eyes; "Jim—baby is dead!"

He followed her silently to the room where the tiny creature, with waxen features so like his own, lay cold, and still, and smiling.

"When?" he asked in a choked voice.

"Just three hours ago," she replied, monotonously.

Carrol stood loking down on all that was left to him of his baby daughter, and smoothed the short, fluffy hair with a strange wistful look in his dark sunken eyes.

"Poor little thing!" he said, sadly and brokenly. "God knows what she is spared!"

There was a silence, for Marjory could not speak. The rain drizzed on the window sill outside, the wind shook the casement and moaned in the chimney. Then, with a quick, dry sob Carrol took his wife in his arms and they mingled their tears together.

A few more days passed and the baby was buried. Even that was a struggle to the poverty-stricken father and mother. It was wonderful how they missed the tiny thing—theirs for so short a time—her funny, winning baby ways, and even her fretful, peevish cries. To Marjory, during the long hours when her husband was absent, the house seemed horribly, unnaturally still and desolate.

The weather was wet and chilly, and Jim caught a cold which ended in a sharp attack of bronchitis and left him more spiritless and haggard-looking than ever. So the autumn dragged on.

At last—one dreadful day when even Marjory broke down, and when Jim looked so weak and ill as he set off on his weary and fruitless quest for work that it almost broke his wife's heart to see him—at last, privately, and with many pangs of humbled pride, Mrs. Carrol wrote to her uncle. She did not tell her husband, for she knew that if she did nothing would induce him to let the letter go. The answer came soon enough; and it so chanced that Carrol met the postman at the door and took the letter from him. He gave it to his wife and waited while she read it; then, seeing her face blanch, took it from her trembling hands and with compressed lips glanced at the few words it contained. It was short and to the point.

[redacted]

her against his breast. She clung to him, sobbing passionately, for a long time.

"Marjory," he said, suddenly, have you had any thing to eat to-day? For you ate nothing this morning."

"Yes, dear, of course I have," she answered, sitting up and drying her tears.

"What had you?"—noting with a pang how wan and weak she looked, and what heavy shadows lay under her sweet brown eyes.

"O, all I wanted."

"I know what that means," he said, in low, agitated tones. "Child, you are starving yourself to death! I am killing you—you, my little Marjory, who are dearer to me than my own soul! You are dying before my eyes—as our baby did—and I can do nothing—nothing! O, my God—this is torture!" And laying his head down on his arms on the table, he, too, sobbed—a man's heavy, heart-rending sobs, tearless and bitter.

In an instant Majory's arms were around his neck, her lips resting on his dark bent head.

"Hush, dear boy, hush," she said, in her quaint little motherly way. "You are talking nonsense, dear. I haven't the slightest thought of dying, you foolish Jim. Don't, my dear, don't!" she went on, imploringly. But Carrol's self-control seemed to have deserted him utterly; and for a time his agitation was terrible.

Then there was a long silence, broken at last by Marjory's voice, in anxious tones:

"You have eaten nothing to-day, Jim, I am quite sure; and you are quite faint and worn out."

"My darling, I could not eat," he answered wearily, raising his head and leaning back in his chair. (There were only two chairs in the room now, and very little else.)

Marjory's soft brown eyes filled again with tears; but she resolutely winked them away, and said, trying to smile: "We will make up for lost time and have some supper. Then things will look brighter. I have an idea, do you know, that our luck is going to take a turn."

Jim smiled faintly; his ideas pointed in a diametrically opposite direction.

"And therefore," Marjory went on, with a gayety the more touching to Jim, because he knew it was assumed for his sake, "we will go out and buy something for supper, my dear Jim. A great fellow like you can not possibly live on bread and tea—and not much of that—as you have been doing. Now I wonder," looking round the room meditatively, "if there is nothing more we can put away!" (They always called it "putting away.")

Carrol did not speak. He could not, just then. Marjory stole softly up stairs to her bedroom, and slowly opened a small box which stood there. It contained nothing of much value, seemingly. Only a few baby clothes and a tarnished silver rattle, of whi[redacted]

The next day Carrol himself wrote to old Joseph Linton. His letter was returned—unopened.

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"Post these letters for me, King—will you?" said Archie Lyle, one October forenoon. "I'm off in a tearing hurry to catch a train. Don't forget them, there's a good fellow."

"All right," said the young man addressed; and he put the letters carelessly into the breast pocket of his overcoat.

"Hang it all," King said to himself the next day, "I've forgotten to post Lyle's letters. However, I don't suppose it matters much. He'll be none the wiser." He dropped them into the first pillar box he came to, and lighting a cigar, sauntered on his way.

On the morning of this same day Carrol and his wife were standing, pale and silent, at the window of their sitting-room. They were watching for the postman. They had watched for him unspokenly, feverishly, despairingly, for many days. Soon they heard the sharp rat-tat on the doors in the distance. He came nearer. He knocked at the door of the house nearest theirs. Then—he passed on!

O, Jim!" said the little wife despairingly. Carrol was white to his very lips.

"Never mind, childie," he said, putting his arm round her, and trying to speak steadily.

"O, my dear, I can't help it," she sobbed. "There was a long pause; then Marjory said, almost cheerily: "Perhaps if you went to Mr. Lyle, he could tell you. Jim——"

"I did go, Marjory, yesterday, he interrupted her quietly, "but he has gone from home for a fortnight. If my drawing had been successful he would have written before he left. Try not to grieve, darling; it can't be helped," Jim went on, with a sickly smile. "We must try something else. I may hear of something to-day."

"Perhaps there will be a letter to-night," said Marjory with renewed hope, as she bid her husband good-bye at the door.

Jim came home about six, looking terribly weary and depressed. He had been unsuccessful—once more.

"No letters yet, dear," said his wife, hastening to answer the unspoken question in his eyes. As she spoke they heard the postman's knock in the distance; it came nearer—and died away.

"Perhaps there will be one in the morning," Marjory went on; but her voice faltered.

In the morning! Another long, awful, sleepless night of hoping against hope, of maddening, steadily-growing despair! Jim shuddered. He was worn out, physically and mentally; and he felt as though he could not stand the sickening suspense longer. As he looked at his wife, her wan, changed little face, with its pale ghost of a smile, [illegible]ed to pierce his heart.

[illegible] strange, terrible, determined look set[illegible] round his mouth, but Marjory was [illegible]ing her curly head against his arm, and not see his face.

[illegible]he room was quite dark now, but they [illegible]e still standing at the window. For a [illegible]e Carrol was very still. Then he said: "I am very tired, Marjory, darling. I will [illegible]down for a while. Don't disturb me. I—I [illegible]n't sleep last night." (nor for many nights, [illegible]night have added.)

"But won't you have a cup of tea first, [illegible]?"

"No, I don't care for any."

"A long sleep will do you good, dear," she [illegible], anxiously and caressingly. "You look [illegible]adful."

"Yes," he answered, in a strangely quiet [illegible]ce, "a long sleep will do me good." Then [illegible]denly: "Kiss me, Marjory!"

"Ah, my own dear disappointed boy!" [illegible] cried, throwing her arms round him.

[illegible]e held her to him tightly, and kissed her [illegible]in and again.

"My darling!" he said, hoarsely. "My [illegible]n darling!"

Then he let her go, and went away. She [illegible]ard him go up stairs and his footsteps [illegible]o in the room above.

Marjory sat at the window for a long, [illegible]g time; and watched the stars grow [illegible]ighter and clearer in the soft dark sky. [illegible]mewhere in the distance a street organ [illegible]s wailing out an old hackneyed waltz tune. [illegible] stirred her heart strangely. She remem[illegible]red dancing that waltz with Jim, so very, [illegible]ry long ago—it seemed long ago, like [illegible]ery thing else that was bright and hope[illegible]l. Even Marjory's brave little heart was [illegible]avy to-night. What would become of [illegible]em, she wondered? God only knew.

The clock in a neighboring church tower [illegible]omed out on the night air, and as the last [illegible]roke died away there was a sharp knock [illegible] the door. It was the postman. Marjory [illegible]ook the one letter he held out to her, and closing the door again she went back to the sitting room. With trembling fingers she lighted the candle and examined the envelope eagerly. Yes, it was Mr. Lyle's handwriting! Marjory recognized it without difficulty, for it was a peculiar hand. With a beating heart she stole softly up stairs—she did not take the candle, for fear of waking Jim, should he be asleep—and peeped into the bedroom. All was still. In the pale starlight she could just make out the dim outline of his figure on the bed.

"Jim!" she whispered.

No answer. He was evidently asleep.

Ah! it seemed a pity to wake him, she thought; and perhaps, after all, the letter held bad news. She softly laid a shawl over him in the semi-darkness, and crept down stairs again.

After looking at the fateful envelope for some time she slowly opened it. She could not wait, and she knew Jim would not mind. In another moment she uttered a little glad involuntary cry, and her lips parted in a joyful, half-incredulous smile. Could it be possible! Yes—Jim's design had been selected as the best; the premium would be his! And this was not the only good news the letter contained; for Lyle went on to say that he had heard of a vacant appointment, which he thought he could—through his father's influence—secure for Carrol.

Majory hid her face in her hands; for a moment the revulsion of feeling was almost too much. Then, in a passion of tears and thankfulness, she fell upon her knees. But she could only say: "Thank God! Thank God!"

An hour passed. The moon was drifting among the stars and streaming in through the uncurtained window on Marjory's face wet with happy tears. The candle had burned itself out.

Ah, what a joyous waking Jim's would be! Should she lay the letter on his pillow to surprise him when he awoke? Or should she rouse him! Perhaps he was already awake.

She lit a fresh bit of candle, and, still holding the precious letter, went up stairs. She laid the candle down just outside the bedroom door and entered very gently.

How deadly still the room was!

"Jim!" she said, softly.

But Jim did not answer. How soundly he slept!

Marjory came nearer and bent over him in the throbbing darkness. The moon had hidden herself behind one solitary cloud.

"Jim!"—a little louder.

Still that strange weird hush. A vague fear stirred her heart. She did not even hear him breathe. What if he had fainted!

The moon sailed out again, illuminating part of the room, but leaving the bed in deep shadow.

"Jim, darling," leaning over him and laying her arm across his neck, "a letter has come! It is——" With a sudden sickening terror she stopped and raised herself, for she felt—that her sleeve was wet!

Snatching up the candle she held it over the bed, and by its flickering light she saw [illegible]h, dear Heaven—what did she see!

[illegible]not her Jim, surely!

A white, dead face—a dark, red stain on [illegible] coverlet—a ghastly wound—and cold [illegible]rveless fingers, still holding—what!

[illegible]h, cruel Jim!

A long, shuddering cry rang out on the [illegible]mmer night—wild—agonized—despairing. [illegible]ain and again it echoed. Then all was [illegible]l.

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[illegible]n the asylum at S. there is a fair, slender [illegible]man, with solemn child-like eyes and [illegible]ay hair.

"Hush!" she says to the doctors every day, with lowered voice, and uplifted finger. "Hush! Jim is asleep. I must not wake him. He is so tired, poor Jim! He does not know that the letter has come. You will take me to him, will you not? Not now—but when he awakes!"—*Curtis Yorke, in Temple Bar.*

—Tom (a borrower)—"I say, Dick, I've made a bet with Harry and you are the only one who can keep it. Once upon a time, you know, Douglas Jerrold was asked by an acquaintance if he had the courage to lend him a guinea, and Jerrold replied that he had the courage but he hadn't the guinea. Now, I have always believed that you would give me a different answer if I should ask you the same question, wouldn't you?" Dick—"Yes, I would." Tom—"So, I've won the bet. Can you accommodate me with the loan of a five?" Dick—"My dear boy, I've got the money, but I haven't the courage. O yes, Jerrold and I differ."—*Yankee Blade.*

SHOULD WOMEN PROPOSE.

Belva A. Lockwood Answers the Question in the Affirmative.

Why not? In the ages past men have married their preferences; women, their opportunities. The man may choose, the woman refuse, but she refuses at her peril, as her decision may condemn her to a life of celibacy, especially in our thickly populated New England or Middle States, where the women outnumber the men. The man she accepts may be in no wise the man of her choice; but it may be a marriage of complaisance, of convenience or of necessity under our present system, while the woman looks calmly on to see another fill the place that she has coveted, without any intimation in the male breast of her desire, when a little more frankness on the part of the woman might have added to the happiness of both. A woman would be slow to make application for divorce from the man who had married her on her own calm deliberation and request; while the positive privilege of making another selection should he refuse—and the man should have the same right of refusal as the woman—would give her confidence to approach the man whom she deemed best suited to her condition and happiness. Matches would be more carefully made when considered from both standpoints, and the glamour and indefiniteness that usually hedged around a proposal would be wiped away in the cool consideration of a mutual business contract.

And why should the woman not have a voice and a choice in the man who is to be her life partner—the father of her children, and who is most likely to give the tone and color to all of her after life? The majority of women never rise above the character given to them by the man whom they chance to wed, for chance in the past has usually had more to do with marriage than reason. The Catholics make marriage a canon of the church and indissoluble, but it is considered in most of the States as a civil contract. It should undoubtedly be a civil contract with the utmost mutuality, with both of the contracting parties at liberty to propose and to reject proposals without offense and without any violation of any of the ordinary rules of propriety. This contract should also be construed to contain equal property rights for the man and the woman, and an equal control over the children of the marriage. Why should the woman have more diffidence in selecting the man who is to wed her than in the selection of the house she is to live in and its intricate furnishings, when the former has infinitely so much more to do with her happiness and prosperity?

To propose has always been considered the prerogative of queens, but in this respect every American woman should consider herself a queen. It was not until Queen Victoria had signified to Prince Albert that a proposal from him would be favorably received that he ventured to make advances to that honored lady. Queen Elizabeth, years before, had claimed the right of proposal as England's sovereign Queen. The incident recited in Scripture between Ruth and Boaz, after the day of gleaning in the field, was virtually a proposal by Ruth.

After the formulating of the Gregorian Calendar in 1582, giving to every fourth year 366 days, it was accounted proper for women to propose every fourth or leap year, but so much facetiousness and ridicule has attached to it, that the custom has been more honored in the breach than in the observance. At this time, when we concede to women equal educational facilities; have arrived at a proximate equality in property rights; have given to her to a limited extent the ballot and the privilege of holding office; when the trades and the professions are so far thrown open to her that she may compete with man in money-making and money-getting, I can see no good reason why she may not under suitable circumstances propose; but the proposal on her part would always carry with it the tacit agreement to perform her part in the domestic economy of the household. The right of proposal vouchsafed to woman would undoubtedly have a moral tendency.—*Belva A. Lockwood, in N. Y. World.*

CANES IN HISTORY.

Important Information Gathered for the Benefit of Dudes.

That canes have been put to nobler uses than that of affording nourishment to the abysmal mouths of dudes is proved by history. In fact, the cane is surrounded by historical memories of surpassing interest. The Mexicans first used canes in America. When the Spanish conquered the country a queer custom was introduced. The chief executive of the town carried a stick with a gold or silver head. It was a kind of scepter. The people, of course, rarely knew how to read or write, and when any one was wanted for a crime one of the mayor's subordinates would take the cane, find the culprit, and place it horizontally upon the latter's chest. The proceeding was equivalent to a summons, and the man had to appear before the mayor under the penalty of being cast into prison. The custom was borrowed from Spain where it still prevails in the more important sections.

The cane of early American history, like that of Biblical times, was part of the repertory of the leaders of the church. It was the principal badge of the deacon. The cane was about five feet long. One end was embellished with a big knob, the other with feathers. When the small boy rebelled against the straight-backed pew he got a rap on the head with the uncharitable end of the cane. If the head of the family got to dreaming about his old English home and the cozy little nest in one of the shires the turkey's plumage on the deacon's cane feathered the sleeper into life again.

The Irish have always been associated with a blackthorn stick of short and thick dimensions. They used these queer little sidearms in the invasions of the English kings and in the religious wars. Even in its unpolished state the blackthorn stick is one of the most cherished by cane connoisseurs.—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

PUBLIC OPINION.

It Does Not Pay to Regard It With Too Much Veneration.

A proper regard for the opinion of the world is a great safeguard. A woman should strive to appear so well as to be blameless. But in minor things, in which no question of principle is involved, it is possible to ask one's self too often: "What will people say?"

To place an exaggerated value on the remarks of strangers is a very indiscreet thing. We should have independence enough to do what is right and best for ourselves without asking our neighbor's advice. We should remember that our own ideas may be quite as good as those of others, and that we know our own needs and the depth of our own purses better than other people can.

There are hundreds of women now wearing hard, stiff collars about their necks, hard bones and steels about their waists, heavy bustles that hurt the spine, tight gloves and high heels, simply in deference to what they suppose "the people will say." In fact, this form of compliance with the dictates of other people is universal. You and I say: "How foolish! How monstrous! How injurious!" But we wear the things all the same!

Mrs. B. has a pretty costume left from last winter, but "what would people say" to see her in church in the same things? So she gets new attire on credit, employs a dressmaker whom she does not pay, is tortured by duns, overwhelmed with mortification, and much more unhappy than if she had heard people say: "Why, there is Mrs. B. in last year's suit and the same bonnet!"

Arabella goes to a ball. Every one wears a dress without sleeves to a ball in these days. Arabella knows that that means a cold in her case; but "what would people say" if she wore sleeves? People say very little when she lies at the point of death with pneumonia. In fact, many of her friends have to be told afterwards how ill she has been. They did not know, or care, what her fate might have been.

Matilda Bunce is happy and comfortable, and can provide herself with what she needs in this world. But people will say in a year or two that she is getting to be an old maid; so she marries the first man who offers, gets a bad husband, and soon envies all independent spinsters who do not care what people say about their state of single blessedness.

In all such matters you should not care for what people will say. "Be sure you're right and then go ahead."

SERVICEABLE FENCES.

Some Things Learned by a Farmer of Thirty Years' Experience.

A farmer who has had trouble with "jumping fences," as he terms it, says he stopped it by nailing a horseshoe on each front foot of the cow or steer. But he should have been more explicit. Jumping fences are a great nuisance on a farm, and it seems to me that a well-set post and rail fence won't jump very high. When the earthquake happened about two years ago all of my fences running east and west jumped so as to throw the corners all awry and leave most of the top rails on the tops of the stakes, and many were thrown off. But this was not an ordinary kind of jumping fence. Those who are troubled with the common kind might try the horseshoe plan.

What is the best fence? I have long sought to find this out and have tried the old-fashioned worm fence, staked or double-staked and ridered; the post-and-board fence and the post-and-rail fence, with morticed posts and rails flattened and pointed at the end. I have some miles of fence on my farm and have constant trouble with the fences, all but about half a mile of solid post-and-rail fence made of chestnut posts and five rails to each panel. The rails are ten feet long. This fence stands firmly; the heaviest winds do not move it; no cattle or horses try to jump it, it being five feet high; and from former experience, dating back thirty years, I know such a fence will last as long as this, if properly made. It is cheap. The posts are split saplings about ten years old and eight inches on the split face. The holes are bored with a boring machine and two-inch auger, two holes being made five inches apart from outer edges and the wood between them is cut out with a post axe having a blade two inches wide. Two men will hole one hundred posts a day and will set up the one hundred panels of fence in three days, costing thus seven cents a panel for setting the fence. And when it is set, it is set for years without need for repair or almost daily watching and putting up as with the common rail fence.

The best thing to do with jumping and breachy animals is to have good fences, so that when they are young the animals will not learn to jump or throw down the fences. Bad fences make breachy and unruly stock.—*N. Y. Times.*

Increase of Noxious Insects.

Noxious insects are more numerous and destructive now than they were fifty years ago. Where nature has a chance to work out her laws, all animals, from the highest to the lowest, do not increase beyond proper limits. Even man himself is no exception to this great law; but let a break occur in this great natural chain, and it is felt all along the line. Some species will increase enormously, while others almost entirely disappear. Now as insects are far more numerous than all the higher animals, it follows that if some unforeseen event takes place that favors a great increase of some noxious species, man is sure to be a great sufferer. And this state of things is exactly what is taking place to-day. The reader will naturally inquire why the beneficial ones do not increase as fast as the destructive ones. The answer is, the food plant of the latter has increased enormously, and all the surroundings have favored its rapid increase, while the other, living upon animal (image) food, is entirely outstripped by the vegetable eating species.—*Peck's Magazine.*

—Poverty is like a love affair—a good joke after it is over.—*Merchant Traveler.*

SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

—Over a thousand women and girls in Pittsburgh work in the iron mills, principally making barbed wire.

—A noted chemist has invented a solidified gas which can be immediately volatilized for the special use of balloonists.

—Lithium is the lightest metal known, and it is worth $60 per ounce. Gallium is the costliest metal known, and is worth $1,250 per ounce.

—A patent has been granted in England for a new process of purifying alcohol by means of hydrocarbons. It is claimed by this new method that a pure spirit can be readily obtained by removing from the crude alcohol its fusel oils and other noxious ingredients.

—China crape, as its name would indicate, was originally manufactured in China, where the process was kept a secret and for a long time baffled all attempts at imitation. M. Dugas was at last successful in discovering it and introducing the manufacture into France.

—Wood-creosote oil is recommended by Captain W. H. Bixby, in the Forestry Department's "Report on the Relation of Railroads to Forests and Forestry," as possessing valuable antiseptic properties. It is an efficient poison to animal and vegetable life; it thoroughly repels moisture, and its tar acids possess the power of coagulating albuminous and other fermentable matter.

—A new process has been invented in Chicago by which cold can be as readily conveyed to buildings and as easily controlled as water and gas. With anhydrous ammonia sixty degrees below zero can be maintained. Eleven years ago a chemist named Louis discovered the peculiar cold-producing properties of ammonia. Beef can be solidly frozen after having been placed in refrigerator cars for transportation.

—Lead in the form of filings, under a pressure of 2,000 atmospheres, or thirteen tons to the square inch, becomes compressed into a solid block, in which it is impossible to detect the slightest vestige of the original grains. Under a pressure of 5,000 atmospheres it liquifies. Tin, when compressed in powder, becomes solid under a pressure of ten tons on the square inch; zinc at thirty-eight tons, antimony at thirty-eight tons, aluminum at thirty-eight tons, bismuth at thirty-eight tons, and copper at thirty-three tons.

—Quicksand is composed of a mass of small particles of mica mixed largely with water. The mica is so smooth that the fragments slip upon each other with the greatest facility, so that any heavy body which displaces the sand will sink and continue to sink until a solid bottom is reached. When particles of sand are jagged and angular, any weight pressing on them will crowd them together until they are compacted into a solid mass. A sand composed of mica or soapstone when sufficiently mixed with water seems incapable of such consolidations.

—It is claimed that cotton of a low grade is a perfect substitution for jute in bagging cotton bales. The New Orleans *Times-Democrat* says: "Cotton bagging is as elastic as jute, as strong, as well adapted to covering cotton; it will stand hooks, compresses and handling of every kind; it will protect the cotton better from dirt and from water, and affords it ample ventilation. In the matter of price it can compete with jute, and as it can be used again, it will actually prove cheaper to the planter than the Indian product."

SHE IS A TERROR.

The Woman Who Shops Forever and Never Buys Any Thing.

They are forever shopping but never purchasing. The clerk recognizes the "shopper" the minute she steps over the door sill. She wanders along with an air that shows she has been used to shopping but not buying expeditions. The first counter she comes to is a handkerchief counter; she suddenly becomes very much interested in the latest handkerchiefs; looks them all over, and asks the clerk, who is trying to attend to three or four customers at once, the price of no less than a dozen, then cooly tells him she is only looking around. She passes on to the umbrella counter, and picks up a gold-handled umbrella and asks the clerk the price. On being told the price she suddenly discovers that it is just like one she bought there last year, but a little cheaper. Then she begins to realize what she has lost by not waiting. But she seems to smooth her ruffled feeling by trying in every way possible to ruffle the feelings of the much-enduring salesman. She passes on to the silk counter and asks for samples of all the new shades without the faintest idea of ever purchasing a yard. The clerk, outwardly calm, answers her questions and treats her courteously, while inwardly he invokes a blessing on her head. After dawdling around the small-ware counter for about an hour, she takes the elevator to the suit department, where she proceeds to inspect leisurely all the latest gowns and wraps. The old clerks are all familiar with her maneuvers, and when she steps up with a smooth "What have you got new to-day, girls?" they feel like treating her as she deserves, but what can they do? The floor-walkers' or superintendents' eyes are upon them and they must exhibit their stock, try on, button up garment after garment and turn around so that the shopper can get an all-sides view of it, stand off so she can see the general effect, and after they are tired out soul and body the shopper walks off demurely toward the sealskin department, saying by way of explanation, "I'm only looking around." In the meantime the clerk has lost several good customers, but she is so rejoiced to see the retreating form of the "shopper" that the lost bargains are not given a second thought. The woman that drifts into a store with a vague idea in her head that she wants something is not quite so bad as the "shopper." After asking about five hundred questions and inspecting two-thirds of the stock the store contains, she discovers what it is she came for, and proceeds to make her purchase, which is also cause out of all its same small article that she could have purchased in five minutes.—*Boston Transcript.*