

MY POOR WIFE.

BY J. P. SMITH.

CHAPTER III.

At the end of the cedar-walk I took up my position, lighted a cigar, and tried to wait as patiently as I could. It was a lovely evening in late June, and the drowsy hum of the bees, mingled with the breath of roses and syringas, coming from the old English garden behind the walk, sent my thoughts wandering back to another evening in June, just a year ago, when I had sat on the same bench, burning with love and suspense, waiting to ask the fair lady who had given me my first kiss today to be my wife. We had known each other from childhood, and during my sister's lifetime little Edith had lived almost as much with us as at the Hall. I remember I had proposed to her at the early age of fourteen and had been favorably answered. "Yes, Paul," the young lady had said, lifting up her rosy lips for my sheepish kiss. "I will marry you, as you are the eldest, and have asked me first—and then, when you're dead I'll marry Arty, if he's good."

To which arrangement Arty—at the time being hopelessly in love with Edith's French governess, a black-eyed vivacious damsel of twenty-nine—cheerfully agreed.

After that I saw nothing of her for many years. My sister beginning to all and being ordered to the South of France, I spent my holidays for some years with her and my father at Riviera; then I passed into Sandhurst, and, after that, I had five years with my regiment in India.

In the meantime matters had not gone smoothly at home. My handsome brother Arthur, destined for the bar, and who was supposed to have all the brains of the family, turned out to be a desperate scamp and an unmitigated fool. He disgraced himself at Oxford; then, throwing aside all sense of restraint and decency, sowed the most prolific crop of wild oats ever chronicled in the sober and respectable annals of the Dennyses of Colworth. Before he had reached his twenty-second year he had squandered two considerable fortunes—one left him by his mother, whose favorite child he was—another by his godfather, besides plunging my poor father into a gulf of debt that eventually hastened his death. Hearing of his critical state and heavy troubles, I resigned my commission and hurried home, only to find him, alas, resting quietly in his grave, and my wretched brother an exile in the wilds of Australia, whither he had gone to evade his creditors.

It was a very dreary home-returning, and bitterly did I anathematize my precipitancy in giving up my profession to moon away my life at Colworth in solitude. Nearly all the "chums" of my boyhood had "moved on" somehow, except my immediate neighbors at the Hall, the old General and his niece; and I think, but for their kindly reception, I should have started wandering again. The former I found in a very precarious state of health and temper, the combined influences of gout and unlimited brandy-water making him a trying companion to poor Edith, who was however most patient with him, and as devoted as any daughter could be.

At first I did not recognize in the beautiful and graceful young lady who greeted me so easily and kindly, the child I had played with years ago; but, by degrees, landmarks of old times cropped up, we found we had not forgotten each other in the least. I fell head over heels in love with her at once, and for weeks hovered about her in a state of beatific suffering, not daring to hope, and unable to tear myself away. Day after day I told myself I had not the slightest chance. Was she not the most beautiful, charming, angelic creature in existence, besides being the presumptive heiress of the old general's vast wealth? Was not every eligible male in the country my rival? Yet, I stayed, and by degrees the delightful, intoxicating fact became clear, even to my bewildered senses, that she showed more favor to me than to any other suitor. She had always a smile of welcome and a bright word for me, and at times, when she believed herself unobserved, I have caught her lovely blue eyes stealthily resting on me with a look of unmistakable affection that fired my blood, and made me lose my head for the moment.

One day, driven to desperation by one of those stolen glances, I resolved to try my fate and learn the best or worst. She had gone to spend the afternoon at the Rectory, her uncle told me, but would be back to dinner. I went to the cedar-walk, knowing she would return by that way, and spent a feverish hour preparing for the attack, composing heart-rendering appeals, declarations of eternal devotion; and yet the moment she stood before me in her blooming beauty, with a slim white finger held under her nose within an inch of my moustache, and said beseechingly, "Oh Paul, dear boy, do try to get home, and don't shed tears over me!" I felt the curate only too true. It does hurt to have a girl tell you she loves you, though she is not your wife, and she is not your girl.

Unconsciously cutting a pharisaical phrase short, I was in the act of rising to take my leave when a girl entered, her apron full of freshly-dug potatoes, which she held out to Mrs. Sney for inspection.

my lips, as I stammered out rapturously—

"Edith, Edith, my darling, I love you—I love you. Oh, say it is not in vain! I—"

Here I stopped in dumb dismay, for Edith, with a look almost of horror, hastily dragged her hand from me, and, covering her crimson face with it, cried hysterically—

"Hush, hush—oh, please hush! You—you don't know what you are saying! Oh, this is a dreadful mistake! I—I—thought you knew—you had guessed I—I—"

"Loved some one else?" I prompted fiercely.

She bent her head in assent, her face still buried in her hands.

"No, I did not guess," I answered hoarsely, after a short pause; "and I think, Miss Stopford, if you review your conduct to me during the last two months, you will have to admit you gave me little reason for arriving at such a conclusion. Who is he?" I demanded roughly.

"I—I can't tell you; don't ask me. Oh, Paul, dear old friend, won't you try to forgive me?" she pleaded, lifting her lovely tear-stained face timidly to mine. "I am so sorry, so sorry if I have pained you—I did not mean to indeed. I—I thought you looked upon me only as a sister whom you had known—"

"A sister!" I interrupted, with a harsh, loud laugh—"a sister! Edith, can you look me in the face and say you believed such a thing? No! I thought not"—as she covered away from me instinctively. "You knew what you were doing well—well; but you would not spare your dear old friend one single pang—you would drag him to your feet, and let your heartless vanity batten on his anguish! Oh, it was shameful! Had you not a glut of victims already?"

"Paul," she cried impulsively—and there was a touch of decision in her voice that silenced me—"that is enough; I will listen to no more—let me pass, please. One day you will be sorry for those words—on your bended knees you will ask my pardon!"

"Now, now, my dearest, my sweetest," I interrupted impetuously, falling down again before her, love overmastering every other emotion. "I will ask your pardon a thousand times, if you will only give me one little word of hope! Oh, Edith, if you knew how I loved you, you—you would pity me a little!"

I had seized her dress, and was kissing its flimsy frilling wildly, when her cool white hand was laid on my brow, and she whispered tenderly—

"I can't, I can't pity you, Paul. Don't you—don't you understand you have come too late!"

CHAPTER IV.

With an imprecation I sprang to my feet, cursing her for a consummate flirt, and left her sobbing and reproaching me for my wrath and cruelty.

That night I went to town and tried to drown despair in dissipation. At the end of a fortnight I had almost persuaded myself I was cured, when, one night at the opera, I saw her seated beside a young fellow of whom I had been vaguely jealous from the beginning. Lord Sandmouth's sailor son, just returned from sea.

She was smiling on him as she had smiled on me, and my jealousy broke forth as fiercely as ever. I could not tell whether I loved or hated her most. The next day I determined to put the sea between her and me, but could not at once decide which side of the globe I would steer—whether to make for Norway or the Nile, New York or New Jerusalem, when I remembered a commission, entrusted to me by a dying friend in India some two years before, and I decided on fulfilling it before starting on a longer journey.

He had died of fever in the jungle, and I was the only European with him during his illness. He had asked me on my return home to find out if his mother was still alive, deliver a package of letters into her hand, beg her forgiveness, and tell her how deeply he regretted their long estrangement. For fifteen years he had not seen or heard of her, but he gave me her address at their time of parting, in a remote village on the coast of Donegal.

After a weary railway journey, and many hours' painful jolting over miles of wild barren mountain, I found my friend's mother living in a desolate farm-house halfway up a craggy peak overlooking the sea, eight miles by road from the nearest post-town—and a more disagreeable, repellent, harrowing old woman it was never my ill-luck to come across.

It was with a feeling of repugnance that I delivered the poor fellow's last request for forgiveness, hearing the way she sought to make spiritual capital to herself out of his very death, and improve the occasion for my benefit.

Unconsciously cutting a pharisaical phrase short, I was in the act of rising to take my leave when a girl entered, her apron full of freshly-dug potatoes, which she held out to Mrs. Sney for inspection.

"Mike sent you in these, and wants

to know if he's to go digging for the market."

With an imperious gesture she silenced the girl, motioning her to the window, where, after the first startled glance in my direction, she sat quite still, looking out to sea.

I resumed my seat half unconcernedly, and stared at the new arrival with an interest quite unaccountable to myself; certainly, her beauty did not appeal to me, she did not even strike me as being possessed of ordinary good looks. Her face was covered with freckles and tanned by the sun, and her hair fell in an unkempt mass around her neck and shoulders; her dress was a coarse serge, unrelieved by the slightest attempt at trimming or ornament. While I looked, my thoughts went back to Edith, on whose fairness I had often feasted, sitting in the sunlight, as this girl was now, her pretty fingers sparkling with diamonds, bangles and bracelets tinkling musically on her wrists and mingling with the soft from of lace and silk each time she drew her needles through the everlasting strip of oatmeal cloth.

Lace—could I imagine such a texture shadowing that child's little brown fist fingering the clay-crusted potatoes on her knees! I began to wonder lazily who she was—servant or relation of the grisly chateleine?—when my surmises were brought to an abrupt close. Mrs. Casey's improving oration had reached a rounded period, and I was evidently expected to say "Amen" and take my departure, chastened and edified in spirit. I rose to say good-by.

"You will have a charming afternoon for your walk, Mr. Dennys," she said, taking my hand with some alacrity. "Situated as you behold I am, away from all civilization, I regret it is not in my power to offer you even the form of hospitality." When I had murmured a hasty disclaimer she resumed complacently, "But you will have a charming afternoon for your walk; you came from Ballykilgagan, did you not?"

"Yes, I walked thence—I could find no car in the village; it must be eight or nine miles at the least."

"Because you came by the road; by the cliffs and across the Goat's Back it's not quite five. Helen, my granddaughter here, will put you on the track if you like."

I said I would like, and the next minute Helen and I were standing outside. I waited for a moment thinking she would want hat, cloak, or sunshade, but, as she seemed to consider herself fully equipped, we started at once across the sloping meadow that led to the brink of the cliff, where she paused with shyly averted face, pointed to a tiny sheep-track winding round the coast, bade me keep to that until I had turned the third point, then to steer inland in a southerly direction until I came to a ruined cabin.

Here I interrupted her, somewhat aggressively, explaining that I was quite a stranger in these parts, and would be sure to lose myself if she did not accompany me farther.

"Besides," I concluded tentatively, "as your grandmother impressed on me, it certainly is lovely weather for walking, and you have nothing particular to do this afternoon, have you?"

"I have nothing at all to do; if you wish, I'll go with you as far as you like," she answered, much to my surprise, and starting at a break-neck pace down the cliff.

(To be Continued.)

NONPLUSED JOKERS.

One Verse of Poetry Paid for Robbie Burns's Dinner.

Here is a story told of Robert Burns in his youth. Burns was living in the town of Ayr, and though still young had attained more than a local reputation as a poet, says the Newcastle (England) Chronicle. One day he was passing through the main street of the town and saw two strangers sitting at one of the inn windows. With idle curiosity he stopped to look at them. Seeing him and thinking that the rustic might afford them some amusement while waiting, the strangers called him in and asked him to dine with them. Burns readily accepted the invitation and proved a merry, entertaining guest. When dinner was nearly finished the strangers suggested that each should try his hand at versification and that the one who failed to write a rhyme should pay for the dinner. They felt secure in the challenge, believing that their rustic guest would pay for the meal. The rhymes were written and Burns read the following: "I, Johnny Peep, saw two sheep; two sheep saw me. Half a crown apiece will pay for their fleece, and I, Johnny Peep, go free." The strangers' astonishment was great and they both exclaimed: "Who are you? You must be Robbie Burns."

Pleasing the Birds. A scientist once put an automatic musical box on the lawn, and spent many hours watching the robins, bluebirds and other birds gathering about it. A looking glass put up where the birds can see themselves in it, is also very attractive, while a combination of a musical box and a looking glass pleases the birds more than anything else one could put out for their amusement.

One Exception. "I know there's a good deal said about sandy foundations," observed the metaphysical boarder, "but sand makes the best foundation for a prize fighter." "Still," objected the argumentative boarder, "you can't build a prize fight on anything but rocks."—Chicago Tribune.

OF GENERAL INTEREST

INFORMATION FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD.

Events of More Than Passing Interest Which Have Transpired Since the War Ended—Peace Progress and Movements of Army, Navy, and Departments.

Wednesday, November 2.

Great Britain is preparing to make a naval demonstration.

The war department has not yet decided on the date for sending troops to Cuba.

The official relations between Russia and Germany have been ruffled recently over the trip of the Kaiser to the Holy Land.

Thirty Klondikers returned on the steamer Flora, which is the last boat from that region. A large amount of gold was brought.

Salvador, Nicaragua, and Honduras, three Central America states, are taking steps to coalesce and have but one president for the three.

France has come to the conclusion that she is too weak to cope with Great Britain. Her military preparation was only a precaution to be on the safe side.

The postoffice department has ordered a "postoffice on wheels" for use in the rural district in the vicinity of Westminster, Md. It will have mail order facilities and collect mail at stated points.

More than 600,000 bushels of wheat and corn cleared the Philadelphia custom house Saturday on steamers bound to European ports. The shipments of wheat and corn for Philadelphia for January 1 have aggregated 25,000,000 bushels.

At Beaver Dam, Wis., Adam Hammer, insane, secured a gun and wounded nine people before he was shot by Lieutenant Tibbetts to stop his mad career. Tibbetts shot the man in the shoulder, merely wounding him in order to effect his capture.

A Port Townsend, Wash., special says: The discovery has been made that some miscreant has defaced the two fifty-four ton guns that are waiting to be placed in position at Arrowstone Point by cutting names on the stem barrels with soap and acid. Suspicion rests on discharged workmen.

H. Darwin Mellraith and his wife of Chicago arrived at New York from Southampton, Eng., on the steamship Penland. The Mellraiths started on a wheeling tour on October 10, 1895, from Chicago. They passed through Nebraska in November of that year, stopping over a day in Lincoln.

Indian Commissioner Jones severely criticizes the whites for treatment of the Indians at Leech Lake. He lays the trouble for the uprising at the door of the pale faces because they took advantage of their red friends. He declares that Indians have been arrested on trivial charges in order that fees could be collected.

A big smashup occurred on the Union Pacific road, two miles west of Fremont. Two locomotives and ten freight cars were completely wrecked, and many other cars were damaged. Two freight trains collided while both were going at a high rate of speed. Luckily no one was killed, but one engineer and several others received injuries.

Thursday, November 3.

St. Louis is planning to have a world's fair in 1903 to celebrate the Louisiana purchase.

The dvagner empress of China has prohibited the publication of periodicals and newspapers in China.

Aguainaldo has threatened with dire punishment the rebellious natives who refuse obedience to his commands.

Although France and England may not come together on the Fashoda incident, it is thought they will eventually mix up in a grab for slices of Egypt.

Friday, November 4.

The pope is ill again.

Carl Shurz has announced himself opposed to expansion.

The Texas is in dry dock at Brooklyn for repairs.

The gunboat Helena has left Boston for China. It will go via Suez canal.

The revenue cutter McCulloch, now with Dewey's fleet, has been ordered home.

At a watermelon contest at Bridgeport, N. Y., one little darkey ate twice his weight in melons.

The T. B. Rayl Hardware company of Detroit, Mich., has gone into bankruptcy with debts of \$1,500,000 and only \$12,000 worth of assets.

The envelope trust has raised the price of envelopes 25 per cent in all grades. The trust is said to control 90 per cent of the production.

Charles Nelson, colored, was electrocuted at the Ohio penitentiary at Columbus for the murder of James Zimmerman, a merchant at Bowling Green, Ohio.

Saturday, November 5.

At Gibara, in Cuba, smallpox cases exist and the malady is gaining ground.

Spain's reply to the United States proposition to take the entire Philippine group is a flat refusal to surrender the archipelago. It is believed an ultimatum will issue from Washington.

The president has issued a proclamation reserving for the use of the United States navy, certain water front property in Honolulu, selected by Captain Tanner recently, until the United States congress shall otherwise elect.

A terrific explosion, the origin of which is a mystery, shook the three Ohio counties of Muskingum, Morgan and Guernsey. It was similar to an earthquake.

Ben Wheeler, while handcuffed, jumped from the window of a Pan Handle train near Columbus, O., and made good his escape from the sheriff in charge. The train was going a mile a minute.

The transport Panama, with troops aboard, reported lost, arrived safely at Havana, landed seven passengers and left for New York. It is reported to have 400 sick on board.

Private Thomas Hannan of San Francisco, a member of Company I, New York engineers, came in contact with live electric wire at Honolulu and was shocked to death.

The war department has issued orders for the movement of troops to Cuba. The first troops will leave on or about November 22, and will comprise a brigade under Brigadier General Carpenter.

Sunday, November 6.

English and French both fear the Fashoda incident is not closed.

David A. Wells, the noted economist, died at his home at Norwich, Conn.

Prince George of Greece has been appointed as head of the new administration of the island of Crete.

Germany, it is said, will take no part in the Philippine dispute, and it is also stated that she has so informed Spain.

General Merriam at San Francisco has ordered sixty-five men and officers of the California heavy artillery sent to Manila.

St. Louis has adopted a curfew ordinance. It was secured through the personal efforts of Colonel Hogland, president of the boys' and girls' national home, backed by the church influence.

Wm. Beck, a Lake Shore employe, was arrested at Toledo, O., for systematic stealing from express cars. A search of his house revealed silverware, clothing and silks galore. Goods to the value of \$5,000 were recovered.

Monday, November 7.

The explosion and combustion of escaping gas wrecked the supreme court room and the rooms immediately adjoining it on the main floor of the capitol at Washington. The damage is enormous. The entire central eastern part of the great marble pile from the main floor to the subterranean basement practically is a mass of ruins. The library of the supreme court, located immediately beneath the supreme court room, was badly damaged by fire, smoke and water, practically destroying the great collection of law reference books. The library contains about 30,000 volumes and was used not only by the justices of the supreme court, but by the members of congress and lawyers practicing before the supreme court. The most serious damage, in the opinion of the judges of the supreme court, is to the records stored in the sub-basement. These included all the records of the supreme court from 1792 to 1835. The room contains records and opinions rendered by the fathers of the judiciary of the government. Apparently the documents in this room are either totally destroyed or so badly damaged by fire and water as to be useless. The explosion occurred in a small room where a 500-light gas meter was located. The escaping gas caught fire and darted up the elevator shaft.

Tuesday, November 8.

President McKinley left Washington yesterday for Canton, to cast his vote.

The Bank of Spain has advanced the government 60,000,000 pesetas for current expenses.

Mrs. Leslie Carter has declared herself a bankrupt, placing her liabilities at \$63,773, and assets none, except \$200 worth of wearing apparel.

The Missouri supreme court sentenced Frank Garrison and James Brown, colored, to be hanged on December 2. Both committed murder.

Five fire alarms in fifteen minutes, coming in during a heavy gale, scared Emporia, Kan., people into a belief that the town was about to burn up. Incendiarism was responsible.

Thomas Port, president of the Porc Glass Manufacturing company of Muncie, Ind., was run over and killed by a passenger train. Mr. Port is slightly deaf and did not hear the approach of the train.

Peter Christenson, an aged hermit, died a few months ago near Stockton, Cal., and left a fortune of \$75,000. The heir has just been found in the person of his sister, Miss Catherine Christenson of Davenport, Ia.

The London Daily Chronicle says it has received information that in the event of the inquiry before the court of session praying favorable to Dreyfus, a riot will be precipitated and attempts made to assassinate all champions of Dreyfus.

General Gomez has written a letter to Senor Quesada in which he expresses his faith in Uncle Sam and says independence will come in due time. He also says the present program must be adhered to until the Spanish evacuation is completed.

There is some prospect that the Maria Teresa did not founder, but is still afloat. It has been learned that no one saw the cruiser go down, and as a report comes that a two-masted vessel is ashore on Cat Island, it is believed it is the Spanish cruiser.

The big capitol building at Washington is the scene of wreck and desolation following the explosion. The hall of justice is wrecked and the supreme court is without a home. The damage is not quite so bad as first thought. The work of repairing is already under way.

The war inquiry board is nearly through taking testimony. Arthur Williams, a negro, was lynched at Jacksonville, Fla., for the murder of Miss Elina Ogden. He implicated two others, who are now under arrest, but it is expected they will be lynched also.

The cruiser Infanta Marie Teresa, which Hobson so successfully raised and started it on its way to the United States, was lost in a recent gale, sinking thirty miles off Walling Island. The crew in charge were saved by the repair ship Vulcan, which was accompanying the cruiser. The loss of the cruiser will be the subject of investigation.

RESULT IS IN DOUBT

EARLY ELECTION RETURNS INCOMPLETE.

Indications are That Nebraska Has Elected the Fusion State Ticket, but by a Reduced Majority—Barkett and Mercer Safe—Roosevelt Carries New York.

At 3 o'clock this, Wednesday, morning incomplete returns show a gain for the republican ticket over the vote of two years ago. Reports had been received from 266 polling places showed a republican majority of 2,971 and a net republican gain of 4,588. The republican committee claims if this rate of gain is maintained Hayward will pull through with 4,000 majority.

Lincoln—Chairman Gaffin of the populist committee, at 3 o'clock Wednesday morning, claimed the election of the entire state ticket by 8,000. As to the legislative ticket, nothing definite in relation thereto was known at 7 o'clock Wednesday morning. Both parties claim it.

Omaha—At the republican county headquarters it is claimed that the entire republican legislative ticket is elected except Walker and Kiersted. The defeat is conceded of Winters for county attorney and Kiersted for county commissioner. A claim is made for a good majority for the republican state ticket, but no figures are given by either side. Mr. Hitchcock has received returns from thirty-four precincts out of more than 100 in his district, showing that he has received in them 2,874 votes, against 3,007 for Mercer. This proportion, if maintained, will elect Mercer, although it shows a gain of 255 for Hitchcock over the vote of two years ago. The headquarters were closed at midnight, and it will be very late before the returns are tabulated.

Omaha—Fifty-nine precincts, a little over half of the county, show election of three republican state senators and all republican representatives except possibly two. Flynn and Sturgess, fusionists, run ahead of the county ticket and are counted safe. The figures given do not include South Omaha which is counted on to give the fusion ticket 400 majority.

Roosevelt Elected. New York—Theodore Roosevelt has been elected governor by 18,000 to 20,000. The rest of the state ticket is probably elected also. The returns from Greater New York and from the counties outside of this municipality are incomplete, but enough have been received to indicate a falling off in the vote up in the state, while that in the city was well sustained. The consequence is a falling off in the republican plurality in the state from 812,000 to the approximated figures given above.

Congressional. Washington, D. C.—Chairman Babcock of the republican congressional committee has just made the following statement to the Associated Press: "While I am satisfied that the republicans will control the house of representatives in the Fifty-sixth congress, it is impossible at this hour to indicate what our majority in the house will be. Thus far we have no definite returns from Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa or Kansas.

Secretary Kerr of the democratic congressional central committee said: "The republicans have lost control of the house of representatives. We will have from 186 to 190 members, and will organize the house of the Fifty-sixth congress. The majority of the house will be from fifteen to twenty over the republicans and perhaps more. Our advices indicate democratic gains in some of the states as follows: Alabama 2, Illinois 5, Iowa 1, Kentucky 2, Maryland 2, Massachusetts 2, Missouri 2, New Jersey 2, New York 6, North Carolina 2, Pennsylvania 6, Virginia 3, West Virginia 1.

New York—Returns received in the associated press office in New York city from all over the country up to 12:30 this, Wednesday, morning, indicate that eighty-five republicans and 109 democrats have certainly been elected to seats in the national house of representatives. The same districts two years ago returned to the lower house of congress 105 republicans and eighty-nine democrats. Based solely upon the estimates in these districts, a republican loss of twenty-one and democratic gain of twenty-one is indicated. These estimates concede to the democrats in Greater New York except one, the Fifteenth.

Lincoln—Ed R. Sizer, manager of Burdett's campaign, claims a majority in each county for Burdett and a total majority of 2,000.

The 3d, 4th, 5th and 6th districts are probably fusion on congress.

Hastings—Republicans a majority, on straight ticket, of 378. This insures the election of the entire republican county ticket. MacColl carries Hastings by 129 in 1896.

Kearney—Buffalo county will elect Wyman and Eastering, fusion candidates to the legislature, by 200 majority.

Lincoln—As early as 10 o'clock Chairman Stone of the republican county committee had reports from enough precincts to make him feel sure of a majority of from 1,500 to 1,800 in the county for the republican ticket.

Paris Sewage Farm. The sewage of the city of Paris is now being used to irrigate an immense farm of nearly four square miles' area. It has proved such a benefit to the land that farmers in the vicinity, who opposed it, are now anxious to arrange to receive sewage on their own farms.