

Divorce and the State.

Although nearly all persons are married by a clergyman, the marriage contract under the law is a civil agreement that may be made in the presence of a properly qualified layman, and may be dissolved only by the civil courts. To disclose how frequently the marriage contracts have been dissolved, the bureau of the census has lately begun to look over the reports of the divorce courts for the past 20 years. The information thus obtained is to be used in the creation of sentiment in favor of uniform marriage and divorce laws throughout the whole country. Such uniform laws are urged on the ground that they would prevent easy divorce and make it impossible for a man or a woman who had grown tired of a wife or husband to go to some state which has lax laws, and there secure freedom to marry again. But this does not go far enough in setting forth the reasons. Lax divorce laws and easy divorce threaten the stability of society itself by undermining the family. To say that the family is the unit of the existing social organization is to utter a commonplace, but it is so common that it is overlooked by those who make up the divorce colonies of the various states. The whole social fabric rests on the trinity—or shall one say the unity—of father, mother and child. Nearly all laws grow out of the necessity of protecting the family in its work of rearing the young and preparing them for their union in new families. The rearing of a family is the incentive behind the efforts of practically every sane and healthy man and woman. The fathers and mothers are sentinels round the camp of the younger generation, guarding it from foes both seen and unseen. All creation conspires for the protection of the young, and the family is one of the agencies through which that divine cooperative work is done. There may be justifiable reasons for the breaking up of a home through divorce. If so, they all take their origin in the violation of the obligation by one party or the other to the marriage contract. But such breaking up is a social tragedy, says the Youth's Companion. No law that can be passed will make the unfaithful loyal to their obligations, but something can be done to make men and women understand the hideousness of their conduct when they seek to break the most sacred contract ever entered into between two human beings.

Men, Women and Meals.

When men suppose that dinner goes on whether they are at home or not, they labor under a curious misconception. Arthur Pendenys, writing about this melancholy fact, declares: "Some one once said that an ordinary woman's favorite dinner is an egg in a drawing-room. All women have a passion for something on a tray. To the masculine mind things on a tray are unsatisfying; but to the feminine body they embody the very manna from heaven." It is easy to understand that Arthur Pendenys, or any other "masculine mind" might have trouble in comprehending the why and wherefore of this debilitated taste; but no woman would be at a loss to explain it. It comes from the fatigue which woman suffers as the result of her colossal task of feeding man. To nourish the human race is the appointed work of woman. At the very inception of life, says The Reader, this is her labor, and never can existence be so fine, so free, so heroic or so beautiful, that she must not pause three times a day—or more—to bend her mind to the menu that shall please her lord. She has been accused of writing no epics; it is said that she is incapable of composing an oratorio, of designing a cathedral, or conceiving an heroic statue or painting a picture of the first quality. The retort is that she might have done something of the kind if the men had not been hungry so frequently and so insistently. To be the nourisher of the human race is an undertaking so prodigious that it is a marvel that the mere exasperation of being chained to the larder has not made fiends or lunatics out of women—and from squaw to countess, their sufferings in this regard have points of similarity. Is it any wonder, then, that with the ever-hungry man out of the way, the woman seeks escape from the tyranny of food, and "eats strawberries by moonlight on a flowery bank?"

The czar has decided now to give to the peasants the lands belonging to him and to the government. His action recalls the pictures of the desperate travelers in the Russian sledges, throwing over whatever they can lay their hands on to delay the fierce rush of the pursuing wolves.

Over in Germany somebody has found out how to make cigars that are free from nicotine. They found out how to do that long ago in the Connecticut cabbage belt.

WIFE'S SUCCESS KILLED LOVE

Dissensions, Misery and Divorce the Result of Husband's Wounded Egotism.

Average Man Must Be the Bread-Winner and the King or the Domestic Structure Is in Danger of Collapse—The Case of Burr Nichols and His Gifted Wife.

Shattered Romance of Two Artists Seems to Prove That a Woman Must Beware of Becoming More Famous Than Her Husband, in His Chosen Line of Work.

Jealousy, dissensions, misery and divorce. Are these the inevitable consequences when a wife is engaged in the same life occupation as her husband, when their lives move on parallel lines and with parallel ambitions, and when it is possible that the work of the wife exceeds in merit that of the husband?

So it would seem from the unhappy marital history of Mrs. Rhoda Holmes Nichols, a history in which art and jealousy crept in at the door while love flew out through the window.

Her divorce has just been recorded in the New York supreme court. It is not an altogether unusual thing nowadays for a wife to outdo her husband at his chosen occupation. In almost every instance where this occurs misery is the consequence.

Men do not like to have wives smarter than themselves, or more artistic, or wiser in a business way, or who win praise for doing things for which praise is usually accorded a man, declares a writer in the New York World.

Let a woman bake a fine pie, or do a fine bit of embroidery, or hem or stitch, or sew or keep a neat house, and the husband will listen to the world's praise of her with complacent satisfaction.

But let her keep to the kitchen, if you please, or play the piano in the parlor, or mother the children in the nursery, or do anything but step over the line of demarcation where he is boss.

He is the bread-winner and the king. Those in his kingdom must be weaker than himself and dependent upon him, or the whole domestic structure falls and there is no more happiness in the world.

ARTISTIC JEALOUSY CAUSES SEPARATION.

So it was with Mrs. Rhoda Holmes Nichols, who now has her own studio, her own children, and her own lonely

but even after she began to sell her pictures she continued to be an enthusiastic student.

She went to France and Italy, where she studied art in the best schools. She was successful there, and eventually went to South Africa and Asia for landscapes.

Still heartfree and winning her own way in the world, she settled down in Florence, where the air is the very breath of art, and where the sky is as tender as the eyes of love.

Here in the course of her work she met a young painter named Burr Nichols. He, too, was a fine artist, and their mutual tastes drew them much together.

It is strange that the very traits and characteristics and the mutual likes which give birth to love should in the end be the means of its death and funeral. The young artists did not dream of the truth of these things. How could the art from which love sprang be its murderer? Neither did they rock of the future when they became engaged. Was there not the magic of love in their brushes? Were they not bohemians enough to face the future with light hearts? Could they not paint the tearful eyes away from the face of sorrow, and put the cap and bells on the picture of poverty? On these fundamental beliefs they were married.

Nichols, like his wife, was a fine painter. They lived an ideal life in their studio. They painted together, talked together, planned together, living and dreaming for each other.

Ah, what a little fraud love is after all! He had fired the last arrow in his quiver when he shot them through the hearts, and then he left them, deeming his duty done.

The Nichols artist family was increased by two lovely children as time passed, and their happiness increased accordingly.

DECIDE AMERICA IS BETTER FIELD.

While they were prosperous and contented in Florence they at last decided that they could better themselves in this country.

They came accordingly and settled down in the studio quarter in New York. They continued their successful career, disposing of their pictures as fast as they could paint them. They were happier than most married people. They made friendly criticisms of each other's work, adopted each other's suggestions, were forbearing and forgiving, as men and wives should be.

In 1897 Mr. Nichols began a picture which, as it developed and the inspiration took wings within him, he resolved to send to the Paris Salon. As the idea grew his work became more painstaking. Should he succeed, the added incentive as well as the prestige it would give him would be of

Then followed a period of deep anxiety in which two souls joined. Impatiently they awaited the issue. In a month the answer came. The picture had been accepted and would be displayed "on the line."

Joy reigned in the Nichols household. They would now paint with a deep and strong foundation of success under them. The Paris Salon had spoken and the Paris Salon was mighty. The picture had secured "honorable mention."

The husband resolved to paint another picture for the following year. The wife would try it, too, she said. Was not her husband's success her own? If she should succeed, would not her success be gracious in the eyes of her lord and master?

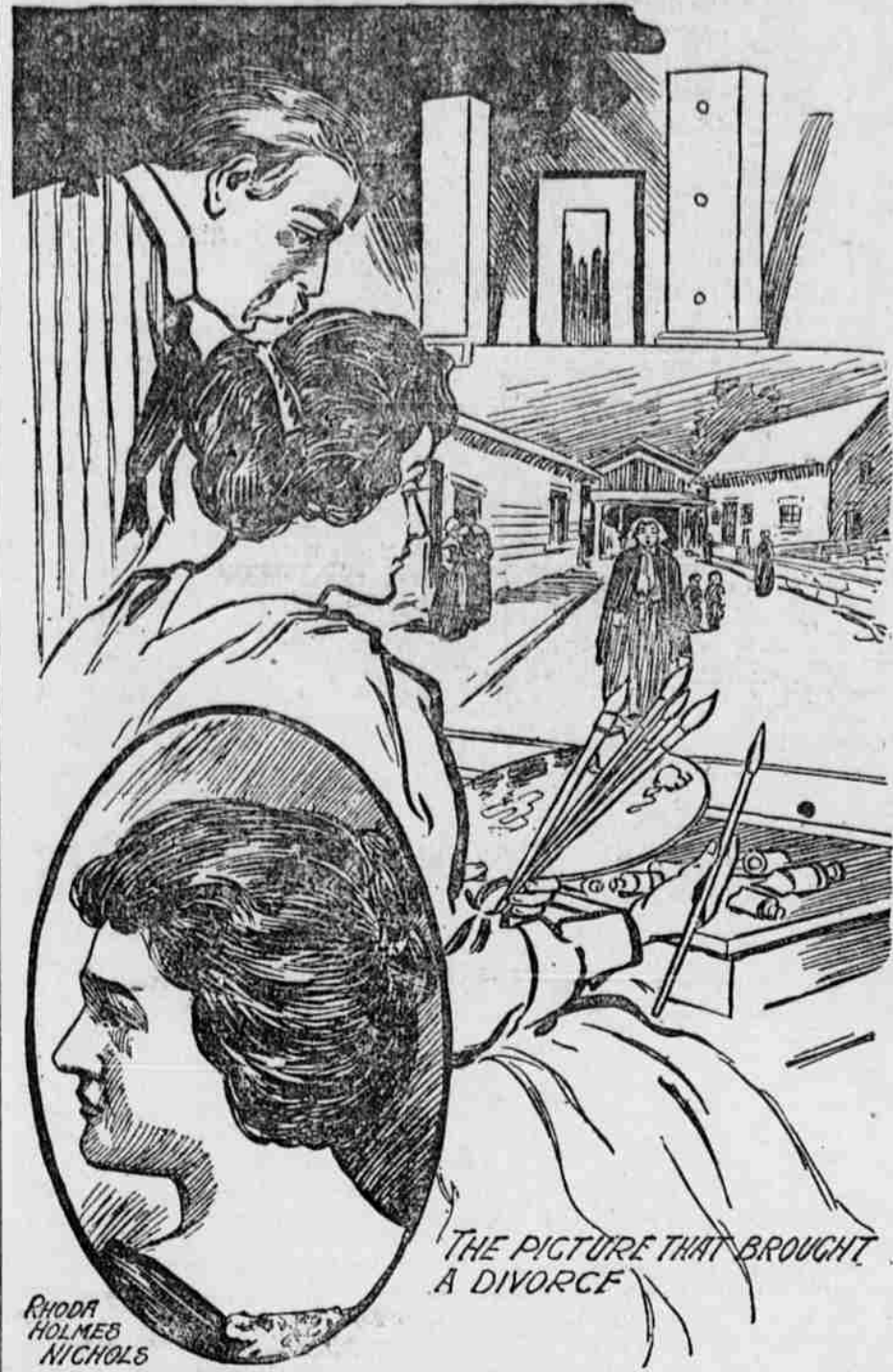
Mr. Nichols smilingly gave his assent to the plan and they set to work

fatal blow, and under that blow love withered. There was no more peace, no more happiness in the household. Seeing this, the children were silent and miserable.

But the last straw came when Mrs. Nichols' picture, her famous "Scarlet Letter," received encomiums on both sides of the Atlantic. The husband had never done anything like it.

After a year of trouble the couple separated, the husband going away and the wife remaining to work out her own career.

Hereafter her existence was peaceful, if lonely. There was but one easel now, and one painter. There was but one ambition, and that was the support and education of her children. Art for art's sake was no more. Love for love's sake was a farce. The woman continued to work



with light hearts. Mrs. Nichols could only paint between the intervals of caring for her children, but she went at the work with a light heart, hoping against hope for success.

The two painters wrought and labored side by side. They saw their separate efforts grow from mute outlines, and take form and shape according to their ideas.

FIND HAPPINESS IN COOPERATION.

Up to this time not a cloud had marred their domestic sky. They were happy, with the careless happiness of children. Their art was a joy—a play to them.

And so they played together until the paintings were finished. In order to insure separate consideration they were packed and shipped in separate boxes to the Paris Salon, where sit the world's arbiters in art.

In due time Mrs. Rhoda Holmes and Mr. Burr Nichols received their respective verdicts.

For Mrs. Rhoda Holmes it was: "Painting accepted and given honorable mention."

For Mr. Burr Nichols it was: "Painting judged unworthy; hereby returned."

Here fell the shadow, if we are to believe those who sympathize with Mrs. Nichols. Here entered the note of discord. Here was the parting of the ways whereby two souls became estranged, through the life of earth and the eternity of heaven.

With the wife's joy was a feeling of sincere sorrow for her husband. He had worked so hard. He had hoped for so much. Why could not both of them have won?

Although the shadow was in his heart, the husband spoke bravely of the future. "Let us try it again, he said; 'we may both win next time.'"

And so they went to work for a second trial. Side by side they painted as before. But now there stood a ghost between them—the impalpable shadow of jealousy and discontent. The wife, perceiving this, grieved much over it. The husband, imagining things that were not, grew gloomy and taciturn.

In due time the two pictures were packed in separate crates and shipped to Paris and in due time the answers came back.

His answer was a box with his picture, returned with a due acknowledgment; hers an acceptance with honorable mention.

Then, say Mrs. Nichols' friends, the man's nature seemed to change entirely. He became grumpy and cross. Nothing seemed to please him. The iron had entered his soul. The wife had outdone the husband in his chosen sphere of life. Oh, strange phase of a man's nature which makes such a thing unforgettable!

Some old philosopher has called love "the egotism of two." The egotism of Burr Nichols had received a

WOMEN WHO CHARM

HEALTH IS THE FIRST ESSENTIAL

It Helps Women to Win and Hold Men's Admiration, Respect and Love

Woman's greatest gift is the power to inspire admiration, respect, and love. There is a beauty in health which is more attractive to men than mere regularity of feature.



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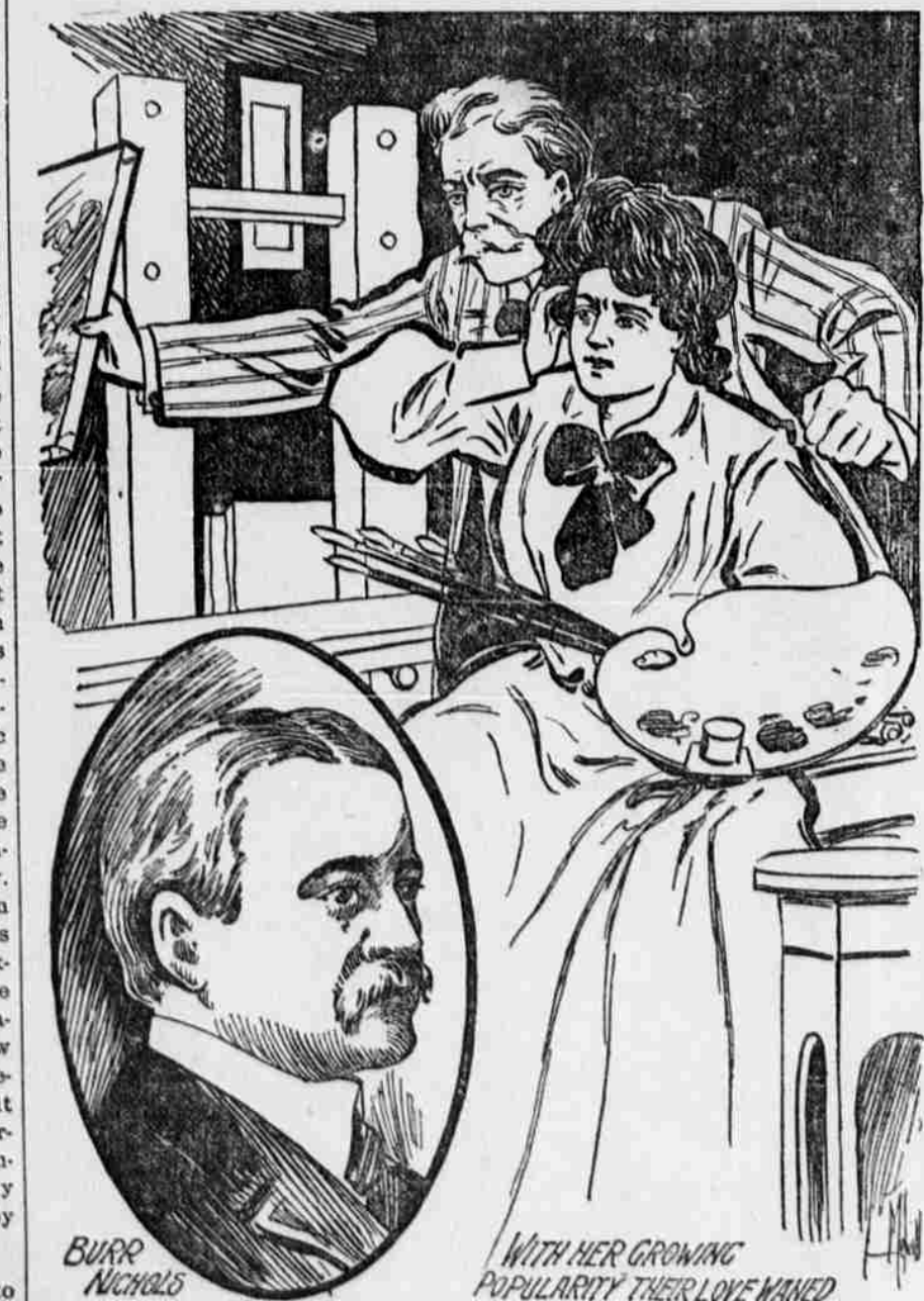
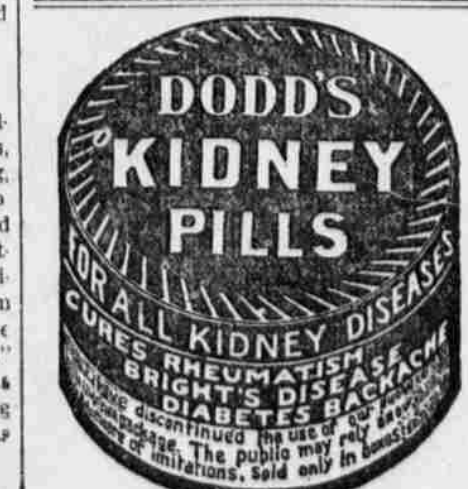
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Legally Her Husband's Boss.

Boston has one woman who is legally her husband's boss. She is Mrs. Ellor Carlisle Ripley, one of the assistant superintendents of the public schools of the city and the wife of Principal Fred H. Ripley, of the Longfellow school of Roslindale. Mrs. Ripley draws some \$85 a week of the hub's wealth, about \$1,500 more per annum than the man who has recently become her "hubby." An assistant superintendent is virtually a supervisor and Mrs. Ripley is in reality her husband's superior and could "fire" him in a minute if she saw fit. Mrs. Ripley is a young woman of pleasing personality.

Opals Found in New South Wales.

Valuable finds of opals have been made near Walgett, N. S. W., one patch of stone worth £600 having been struck, while two miners found a stone for which they received £900.



course in life, separate and distinct from that of her divorced husband.

Before Rhoda Holmes married she was known as now as a water-color painter of much merit. Her pictures were sought by dealers and connoisseurs, who paid good prices for them.

Being an artist, she naturally became well known in the New York artist colony around Fifty-seventh street and Eighth avenue. She was pretty and popular and good.

Miss Holmes was not only a painter,

priceless value in his future work.

The wife watched his work with the greatest solicitude and pride. She encouraged him and gave him loving and unstinted praise. She put her own brush by to watch his. To her his work afforded a period of self-negation in which all her being was wrapped up in his.

Eventually the great painting was finished. With the utmost care they packed it and sent it off to the Paris Salon.