

CRITICAL MOMENT.

When John Wanted the Ring It Was in His Sock.

John Jenkinson would not have exchanged situations with the prime minister, the prince of Wales or the drum major of a brass band.

Felicia Wilkins had answered "Yes" in a voice as soft and gentle as the sigh of music in a dreamless sleep or the murmuring wail of a caressing breeze from lethean waters soothingly fanning the whiskers of Father Time.

"Felicit Wilkins," he exclaimed rapturously, as his left hand and arm disappeared from sight with a rapid yet sneaking motion toward the back of the sofa on which they sat, and the fingers of his right hand appeared to be feeling for something in his vest pocket.

"The timid, upturned glance of her liquid dark eyes, says Tit-Bits, and the warm blush that overpread the happy face of the lovely girl replied more eloquently than words could have done."

"And you will forgive my presumption, darling," he continued, "if, in anticipation of your answer, I have ventured to provide myself with—with a—"

Jenkinson paused in some apparent excitement, and his finger and thumb nervously explored his vest pocket without seeming to find anything.

"I—must have lost it!" he gasped. "Felicia, it was a ring! Ha! Perhaps it is in some other pocket."

Rising to his feet he thrust a trembling hand into his trousers pocket. There was a hole in that pocket.

"John," said Felicia, as she noted with concern his ghastly face, on which the light of a desperate resolve was breaking, "don't grieve over it. It will turn up. You are excited. Is there anything I can do—"

"Yes," exclaimed John, in a hollow voice. "Felicia, I think I know where that ring is. If you would do me a favor I shall never forget until the last hour of my life, get me a shoe-horn and leave me to myself for a few moments."

Talked Them Into Prison. "About 30 years ago Henry Clay Dean, the eccentric Missouri lawyer and orator, was attending a term of court at which I was defending a man on a pretty serious charge," said Judge Risdon of Kirksville the other day to a Kansas City Star writer.

"Two horse thieves that were in jail sent for Dean. He took their case, and after looking at it from all sides concluded the best thing for them to do was to plead guilty and take two years each."

"His men balked at the idea of pleading guilty. He told them that the penitentiary wasn't a bad sort of place; he had been all through it and knew. 'The warden—a personal friend of mine—is one of the kindest men that ever lived,' said Dean; 'he never makes you work when you are tired; and when you are sick he always looks after you like a mother. You get roast beef and brown bread every day, and pie and turkey on Sunday. Why, when Bill Jenkins—your boys know Bill—used to run a little sawmill over in the corner of Putnam county, they sent him up for—er—borrowing corn. When he went there he didn't weigh over a hundred and thirty pounds, regular skin and bones, and in six months he weighed 300 pounds and avoirdupois, and was made captain of the guard—just getting along fine; said he wouldn't swap his job for any other in Missouri and wrote his folks to come down and live with him. The prison can't hurt anything but your reputation and what does a fellow who's been stealing care about reputations, anyway?'"

"The two horse thieves by this time were dead anxious to plead guilty and begin life in the pen. More than that, all the other fellows in the jail who had heard Dean's talk insisted on pleading guilty and going along."

Her Money Raising Scheme. "Now, dear," said the red-checked man to his wife, "I am going to have a little poker game Wednesday night. My friend and his wife are expert players. I don't want you to distract me."

"I won't," said she. "I'll sit by a little table 'way off yonder and trim my hat."

"That's what you can do," he assented; "sit 'way off yonder and trim your hat. Don't come and stand back of me and say: 'Oh, what a lovely hand you've got! Where did you get all those aces?' Or: 'My, but all your cards are red, diamonds, only that spade!' Don't do that. You hear? But, above all, please, if I should happen to win a pile of money, don't reach out and grab a handful and run off laughing about it. Don't do that, will you? That isn't funny. It isn't funny at all."

"I'll try not to," she promised, "but you know, dear, that is the only way I can get any money out of you. Make you let me have it before company. And then," after a moment of thought, "you borrow it back the minute they leave."

Wax Models of Ships. Paraffin wax models of all proposed British battleships are used by the admiralty for tests before the keels of the ships are laid down, the miniature ships being tied in a great tank. The models are from 12 to 24 feet long, the tank being 400 feet long and 20 feet wide. The models are made of wax because it is a material which does not absorb water or change its weight. Alterations are made and the paraffin can be melted up and used again.

WOMAN WHO TALKS

HER WORRIES AT HOME AS AN ANNOYANCE TO HUSBAND.

When the Man Comes Home He Wants to Hear Something Else Besides the Rasping Side of Troubles.

When a man comes home from business there is one subject that should be tabooed between husband and wife; the day's worries. A man is supposed to leave the cares and annoyances of office hours downtown, and a woman should suppress hers the moment she hears the front door open. If there is a sympathetic bond uniting the two hearts the man will easily guess that the worry lines are due to things which have gone wrong, and he will be grateful for the cheerfulness of the uncomplaining wife, while she, on the other hand, will, in a swift intuition, grasp the burdens of the harassed business man. He has come home to rest, to enjoy the quiet and nearness of family life, and these moments are to refresh him for the next day's struggle.

There is no man in the world so unselfish as the American husband and father. Perhaps he lacks the polish which comes of easy work and much leisure, for this is a luxury that the American never indulges in unless the short interval spent at home can be counted as such. The American millionaire permits himself about one-fifth of the vacation demanded by the English tradesman. Time is something he cannot afford to spend. He has a family, sons and daughters who must have advantages denied his own youth, and so he works on into a sordid middle age that has established a habit of work that cannot be broken. This is true of the man on a salary, and it is to the home and the wife that he looks for the reward for his many sacrifices. But does he always receive it?

We insist that the American woman is not spoiled, says the San Francisco Bulletin, but can we prove that she is not self-centered and selfish? The great middle class is the majority in every civilized community, and of the vast army of women whose husbands are counted fairly well off, how many stop to think of the effort that it costs to keep the wife well dressed, the children clothed and fed and educated. The bills are paid and she has money in her purse, and the average wife stops there. She accepts; she does not question when she makes a fresh demand.

She tells of her worries with her dressmaker, whose price has gone up; she complains of the servant or servants and recounts the irritations of the day; she tells how unmanageable the children are and how expensive is the living. In short, she pours her tale of woes into the ears that have listened to hard facts and business methods for the past eight hours, and the tired brain of the overworked becomes dull and apathetic with the increased pressure.

Home becomes a place to sleep and eat in. He remains at his office until the last minute, for between the choice of evils a normal man will see the lesser in the absence of a woman's complaints. Instead of refreshment, sympathetic companionship, he pictures to himself the worried wife, eager with her grievances, and so he lingers until the very last, and then only a sense of duty impels him to drag his lagging feet homeward.

Can any sensible person blame this type of the unfortunate American provider?

Lace and Politics. The Irish lace ball recently given in Dublin by Lady Aberdeen appears a most brilliant event in Great Britain's social calendar, says the Boston Transcript. Lady Aberdeen's historic ball was one with a purpose aside from providing a few gay hours for her guests. And that the purpose succeeded is seen in the report that Irish lace, already in high favor, is now enjoying a boom, in that term can be used to describe the movement of anything so filmy and delicate as lace. There were Irish lace reels and Irish lace quadrilles at the ball, a different kind of Irish lace distinguishing each set. Only an expert in lace matters could name the kind of lace on sight, and only a pastmistress in the art of dressmaking could tell offhand the names of the lace effects shown in the costumes. It was all very beautiful to the thousand or more who saw it. A great Irish industry was helped as never before, perhaps, and the popularity of the Aberdeens became even more secure and stable, if that were possible.

The Clever Fox. The rector of a parish near Oxford, England, tells this fox story: As he was walking across some fields during a recent fox hunt he heard the cry of hounds. The fox ran into the next field. A fox came running toward him and trotted along by his side, just as a dog would do, wagging his brush. The rector walked on. The huntsman, looking about, saw nothing but the clergyman and what seemed to be his dog, and galloped away in another direction. As soon as the coast was clear the fox gave a whisk of his tail and disappeared through a hedge.

Too True. Church—I see the "automobile heart" is the latest. Gotham—Do scorchers have it? "That's funny." "Why so?" "The scorchers don't act as if they had any hearts!"—Yonkers Statesman.

ICE CREAM DID IT.

He Cuts Out the Treat and She Cuts Him Out in Return.

"Come early to-morrow evening and we will sit in the park," she had coyly said as Walter bade her a loving good-night and went down the steps.

He had replied with a smile and a nod. He was a young and guileless man, and this was his first love, explains the New Orleans Picayune. He had never been uncoined.

The next day seemed never ending to him, but finally the sun went to bed and Walter found a girl hanging on his arm and headed for a park. Under the budding trees they sat down to hear the last songs of the robins before roosting high. He sat with her hand in his, and for ten minutes neither spoke. Then Helen softly, breathed into his ear:

"That must be an ice cream parlor across the street."

"I think it's a beer saloon," he replied, as a chill went up his back. "But ladies are going in there."

"Yes, but it is fashionable now for ladies to go into beer saloons."

She sought to pull her hand away, and there was silence for a moment. Then she said:

"I can almost taste chocolate ice cream."

"It is onions you smell," he replied. "Some one is cooking them for supper."

She moved a few inches away from him, and under the electric light he saw her eyebrows come together and her nose point straight into the air.

"It seems to me that if I had a dish of ice cream—" she softly began, but as she paused he broke in:

"You might have bilious colic before morning."

"Mr. D'puy, will you have the kindness to escort me home?"

"Certainly, my dear, but why this hurry? Perhaps the band—"

"Now—at once, sir!"

"But Helen—"

"Miss Taylor, if you please."

"But I thought we came out—"

"So we did, sir, and we have come in, sir, and good-night, sir. I shall not be at home to-morrow evening."

Visits Goethe's Old House. A young American on his first trip to Europe writes from Frankfurt-on-the-Main: "You know all about Heidelberg, with its dueling place, where the visitor always comes 'just too late' to see an encounter; Homberg, the German Saratoga; Nauheim and all the other beautiful places near this city which every tourist thinks he must visit."

You may know also the old Goethe house in this city, which will always have an additional charm for me because of my adventure there. I happened to go through—cost one mark—at the same time with a lot of personally conducted young girls from England.

When we reached the room where a little old spinet stood the loquacious guide told the girls that it had been played upon by Frau Ruth Goethe and by the poet himself, and that as a special favor—he knew it would bring an additional tip—he would allow one of the party to play a few notes on the instrument.

The girls could not decide which one should have the honor nor what should be played. 'Faust,' 'Egmont' and 'Mignon' were under discussion, when I butted in and played a few bars from 'The Star-Spangled Banner.' The girls didn't seem to recognize the tune, and I have wondered ever since was it their ignorance, the quality of the instrument or possibly my playing."

Time in European Nations. The German empire has a uniform time, adopted April 1, 1903, the central European time, so called, which is one hour faster than the time of the Greenwich meridian. The same standard is in use in Austria, Hungary, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

The west European time is the time of the Greenwich meridian, and is used in England, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg and Spain. France, out of national vanity, holds to the time of Paris, both for herself and for her colonies in Algiers and Tunis, only nine minutes faster than Greenwich time.

The east European time is the same as the time of St. Petersburg, which is 2 hours 1 minute and 13 seconds faster than Greenwich time. This standard is used in European Russia, Turkey in Europe, Romania and Bulgaria.

He Blew the Violoncello. "Gentlemen," recently said a German professor, who was showing to his students the patients in the asylum, "this man suffers from delirium tremens. He is a musician. It is well known that blowing a brass instrument affects the lungs and throat in such a way as to create a great thirst, which has to be allayed by persistent indulgence in strong drink. Hence, in the course of time, the disease you have before you."

Turning to the patient, the professor asked:

"What instrument do you blow?" and the answer was:

"The violoncello."—Cleveland Leader.

Explained. "How did you make out with your French while in Paris?" "Well—er—not very well. You see, I only had occasion to use the language in speaking to shop people, and they don't understand elegant French, you know."—Philadelphia Ledger.

FLITTINBY'S REFORM THE BEST PHYSIC

CLEANS UP THE ACCUMULATIONS SLEEP IS INDEED A SWEET RESTORER.

Reaches the Mature Age When He Throws Away Dead Matter and Is Ready to Begin Life Again.

"I am beginning to throw away things," said Mr. Flittinby; "going through my papers and things and throwing things away."

"I find among them newspaper clippings about things that I would never have thought of again but for this reminder, and some things I have forgotten so completely that even the sight of the clippings does not recall to me why I cut them out and saved them; so important, really, are many of the things about which we bother ourselves or which at some time we found of interest."

"There are letters from men long since dead, and old bills that recall forgotten periods of our life, that now seem strange to us, we live so much in the present. And why keep these old receipts? The men that gave them are dead now or moved away and these accounts will never be sent in again, and if they were they have long since been outlawed by the lapse of time. Throw them away."

"Here are old birthday cards, with pretty, with affectionate, with loving greetings; bringing most pleasant memories, though they do remind us of the years that have gone since first they came to us. And why should we preserve them? We can remember we can cherish those who sent them, without them to remind us, and they would only be there with the old papers in the drawer. To the basket gently with them."

"And here, as I live, are some old valentines! Well, well. This does make us young again. But dear, dear, that was long ago. Why should we keep them longer? To the basket, gently. We have the valentine herself now."

"There are so many things that we put away to save, to treasure, life seems to stretch interminably before us when we are young, and we are going to keep these things always. And it takes us, happily, a long, long time to get to where we can see the beginning of the end. Youth envelops us with a buoyancy and strength that makes life seem a joy that is to go on forever, and in sturdy middle age, indeed, we take little account of the years, but then comes a time when we begin to realize that two and two make four and no more."

"Now I have arrived at that time of life when I begin to know. Don't for heaven's sake think that I am taking a mournful view. Far from it."

"Life never seemed to me so full of joy as now, and I'm good for a good long stretch of it yet, with senses keen and understanding broadening, finding enjoyment in everything; and taking this broader view of things, not occupied too much by detail, this stored up accumulation of long gathering truck seems superfluous and useless, and so I'm just going through it and throwing things away."

"This lot that I've been going through to-day is just stuff that has accumulated in the cubby holes in my desk; but I've got boxes and bundles of such stuff stored away, and I must get it out, a box or bundle at a time and go through it, and throw it away. For of what use will it ever be to anybody? What becomes of this sort of stuff, anyway, when people—er—I mean why shouldn't I sort this stuff out now myself, and not leave it to cumber things up for somebody else to throw away?"

"There may be some things, to be sure, that I'll want to save, things that other people will want to keep, and these things I will save; but as to the bulk of this stuff, why, it's just so much hindering useless baggage, and this I'll throw away, and with the decks cleared start life anew."

A Household Necessity. No household is complete without a pet grandfather, especially if there is a baby to be ruined and an air of cheerfulness to be kept up, remarks Tom Masson in Delineator.

Secure for your purposes a grandfather with a lack of morals, a jovial disposition and about a million dollars. Let him roam at large wherever he will.

It does not matter much whether he is a grandfather on your wife's side or on yours. If he is on your wife's side you will secretly dislike him; if he is on your side, she will. But you will both let him be on account of the million.

Never permit grandpa to be out of the nursery when baby is in it. Then, when anything is broken, we can blame him, and "pull his leg" for a new one.

Babies and grandpas always go well together. They are both the same age. It is well to bear this in mind. Keep a savings bank for both of them. And leave them both in charge of grandpa. When they are full, carefully remove the interiors and begin all over again.

It is not necessary to provide more than one grandpa, no matter how many children you may have. Two grandpas in one house often lead to an inter-necine war.

When you go out with your wife, always leave grandpa in charge of the baby. It is not necessary to tell him to mind. He will, anyway, as a matter of course.

When our baby outgrows grandpa, secure another immediately. Remember that grandpa must be amused and that he is simply able to pay for it.

Third Son of Grant. Jesse Grant, the third son of the great general, leads a simple and uneventful life. He is not in any business. Some mines in the west and a few other affairs occupy some of his time. Tarpon fishing he likes, and he never misses a baseball game when it is warm.

Accounting for It. "It's bad enough for you to see home intoxicated," said Mrs. Lushman, "but why so late?" "Well, you see, my dear, I'm home at 11 o'clock, and I'm as fit as a fiddle."

This Is All That Most Victims of Nervous Breakdown Need to Recover Lost Health and Vigor.

One of the features of modern times is the prevalence of what we term neurasthenia, or nervous breakdown, says the London Express. These names apply to a condition of physical and mental ill-health which is the direct result of the age in which we live and the pace at which we are living. Massage and electricity and novel "treatments" and "cures" are called upon to repair what we have brought upon ourselves by our up-to-date ways of life, by worry and excitement.

There are hundreds of women of the upper and middle classes just now bewailing their "nerves" and crying out that headaches and insomnia and depression are spoiling their lives. This is a neurotic age, and half the world of men and women not only burn the candle at both ends, but in the middle as well. The strenuous life is almost a necessity to the man or woman who is ambitious socially, politically or commercially. We are so anxious to "get on" we attempt to do far more than we are constitutionally fit for, and nervous breakdown is the inevitable result.

Lack of repose is a prime factor in the causation of "nerves;" the constant rush in the social and business world, the frantic pursuit of pleasure and amusement are frequent precursors of nervous ill-health. We recklessly expend our energy; we have no time to rest, and nobody listens to the advocates and disciples of the simpler life.

Home life, quiet domesticity are becoming rarer every year. "Simple pleasures," "homely joys" and the "family circle" are ridiculously old-fashioned terms. Is it any wonder that nervous breakdown and premature decay are on the increase?

The remedy lies mainly with us women—our influence can do a great deal, our example more, to counteract the restlessness and excitement characteristic of this age.

We must preach the gospel of rest. Hard work nowadays means severe nervous strain, and the constant application of business and professional affairs demands regular periods of quiet and complete rest, if the workers are to retain their health. It is the more important that the home atmosphere be such as will restore the balance and lessen the tension of the inevitable nerve strain outside.

Unquietness in the home, the tyranny of social engagements and worldly "duties," following upon a strenuous working day, gives no opportunity for repose. The power to be quiet, the virtue of repose, is worth cultivating in this age of neurotic women; the woman who is constantly on the move, striving after something just out of her reach, diffuses an atmosphere of disquiet and vulgar unrest around her. To be busy does not necessarily mean to achieve; bustling activity is too often barren of real progress.

At 40 years the prosperous man has grown to be a mandarin and wears a coral button. But it would be truly indiscreet to confine to him at this early age any functions calling for judicial intelligence or calm.

"Thirty years sees him developed into a buffalo. He is strong and lusty, full of bodily and mental vigor. This is the true age of love; it is the age for him to marry at."

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When he reaches 50 years, however, although he has grown stout and fleshy, he is fit to hold any municipal or state office; he can administer a city or a province or perform any official duty.

"But at 60 years he is old. Handicraft and all active bodily activities are beyond him. He gives his dependents and clients advice. That is all he is fit for."

"At 70 he is just a dry straw. He has only one care—to husband the breath of life that is left in him, to preserve it, even by artificial means. His sons must assume the care of his estate and the performance of his duties."

Named Pills as Weapons. An extraordinary duel, which at the time created an immense sensation, was one in which the decision was arrived at not by swords or pistols but by means of a deadly poison, says Pall Mall Gazette. The men, who, it is hardly necessary to say, had fallen out over a lady, had left the arrangements of details to their seconds, and until they faced each other they did not know by what method they were to settle their differences.

One of the seconds was a doctor, and he had made up for the occasion four black pellets, all identical in size and shape. "In one of these," he said, "I have placed a sufficient quantity of prussic acid to cause the almost instantaneous death of anyone who swallows it."

"We will decide by the toss of a coin which of you is to have first choice, and you will alternately draw and swallow a pill until the poison shows its effect." Two of the pellets were then taken as the toss had decided but without effect in either case.

"This time," said the doctor, speaking of the two pellets remaining, "you must both swallow the pill at the same instant." The choice was again made, and in a few seconds one of the men lay dead on the grass.

Married Man's Umbrella. A clergyman has posted the following at the Leeds (Eng.) church institute: "As the gentleman who took the married man's umbrella (26-inch ribs) in exchange for a bachelor's umbrella (24-inch ribs) of the same pattern from the church institute on the afternoon of April 16 can have no possible use for it, he can come into possession of his own again by applying to the secretary."

"MARIA THINGUMAJIG."

Foreign Names Bothered Americans in the Olden Days.

International marriages are, in these days of travel, more common than they used to be; but they were not unknown to our ancestors of a century ago, and were least rare, it seems, in some of the old seafaring families. Old-time sea captains made friends in many lands, and were occasionally accompanied on board by some adventurous daughter, eager, like Lord Bateman of the ballad, "far countries for to see." One such, who traveled as far as Russia, did not return; she remained there as the wife of a prosperous Russian merchant.

Her father's fellow-townsmen were naturally interested to hear all about the match on his return, says the Youth's Companion, but there was one important piece of information they never obtained; the bride's married name.

It was so unpronounceable that the good captain declined even to attempt it. He always spoke of his daughter as "my gal who married a furrier;" his mother called her "my granddarter over in Rooshy," and everybody else fell into the way of saying simply—and not at all jocularly: "Maria Thingumajig."

Another old sea captain had two charming girls who accompanied him to France, both of whom married Frenchmen. French is a less difficult tongue than Russian, but the old man's ear was not good, and the two brides, on their first visit home, were somewhat chagrined at the havoc he made with their names.

They had become Mme. Carrette and Mme. Le Boutillier; but he introduced them cheerfully to strangers as Mrs. Lee Bottles and Mrs. Carrots. They gently remonstrated against such a perversion of their names, but in vain; he could achieve nothing better until a compromise was reached, in accordance with which he ceased to try to pronounce them at all.

Therefore when an introduction became necessary, he presented "My darter, Mrs. Nancy B.," or "My darter, Mrs. Polly C.," adding, genially, "and if ye want the full of her name in French, she'll tell ye on askin'." She speaks the language."

Seven Ages of the Chinese. A French officer, Louis De Chantilly, tells of his discovery in a Buddhist convent in the mountains of Tonkin of a dusty manuscript containing the Chinese version of the seven ages of man.

"At ten years old," says the writer, whose name has long been forgotten, "the boy has a heart and a brain as soft as the tender shoots of a young bamboo. At 20 he is like a green banana; he is just beginning to ripen in warm rays of common sense."

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