

Old Maid's Secret.

LITTLE Miss Sophie was an old maid, which means that she had passed 35 without either a serious courtship, an offer of marriage or the least indication that she would ever experience either. Once, indeed, when she was quite a child—only 24—there had been a young man, a very pious, well-mannered young clergyman, who—but that seemed like a dream to Miss Sophie now. She might have doubted whether he ever lived if he had not given her that little old Book of Common Prayer and the faded daguerotype of himself in that little folding case in the corner of the "what not."

For four years now Miss Sophie had been "mothering" the two children of her dead sister. Until Mattie grew old enough and strong enough to go to work Aunt Sophie had been hard put to it to make ends meet in the little household. She had sewed and mended, milked her own cow, tended her own chickens, cooked, scoured, and saved to keep Mattie and the boy, Harry, decently at school. She had even found time to do some plain sewing for the neighbors, and it was agreed on all sides that Aunt Sophie hadn't "a lazy bone in her body." Mattie's wages as a "machine girl" in the button factory helped wonderfully in the



"SUPPOSE HE SHOULD."

small household, but it made the old maid's heart bleed to see her set off for the shop every morning, and poor Harry, who was 10, looked very disconsolate loitering away to school without his sister.

Mr. Kingsland, the button manufacturer, had been very kind to Miss Sophie and to Mattie. In fact, he had "made a place" for the child, and had gone out of his way to advance her in the works, with a corresponding increase of pay. But he was a practical business man for all that, and the hours were long, the work hard and the wages not over much. In little towns like Belleville everybody knows everybody, and Mr. Kingsland had special reasons for knowing Aunt Sophie. Her brother had worked in the factory, and it seemed quite fair and natural that he should be kind to the orphans. But this kind of interest hardly explained his first visit to the old maid's house, nor the repeated attentions which he showed them. He was forever asking her advice about the treatment of the girls at work in his factory, and Sunday seldom passed without a visit, long or short, from Mr. Kingsland.

He was pleased to take tea with them, once or twice, and he showed a fatherly regard for Mattie, such an amused friendship for little Harry, such a frank and generous desire to be kind to everyone, that little Miss Sophie came to regard him as something less than a wealthy patron, something more than a mere acquaintance. There was no nonsense about him, and his presence in the house, though a cause of restraint at first for both Mattie and her brother, came to seem so natural that the cheerful little housekeeper always laid his plate for Sunday supper, and the girl and her brother always dressed in their finest and smiled their sweetest when they knew he was coming.

Sometimes when the children were not present he would sit in the veranda with Miss Sophie and tell her old stories of his struggles for an education and a living—an unromantic story full of the grim realities of a poor boy's hopes and disappointments. He had never married. He had been too busy with the harsher affairs of life.

"I don't know that anyone would have me," he would laugh. "I'm 60 years old, a plain old bear; now, don't you think so, Miss Sophie?"

And she would reply with some trite old sophistry, as "Handsome is as handsome does," or "Never too late to mend." But when he was gone, a lonesome glint trudging away to his furnished room in the hotel, she would sit alone for hours after the children were gone to bed and wonder if his visits, if his confidential manner and talk, if his extraordinary interest in her and the little ones "meant anything." And if so?

"Suppose," she would say, looking into her little mirror at her own round, cheerful, wholesome face, "suppose he should? What? Ask you to marry him. What would you say?"

And she would smile a little doubtfully, as she shook her head, and, put-

ting out the light, lay down to think it all over. There was nothing particularly romantic about Miss Sophie. She was a demure, modest little soul, but, being a woman, she could not avoid pondering such a denouement for this persistent friendship of a man whom everybody admired and respected. It was in such terms that she thought of him. He was no hero in her eyes, for the little old maid didn't "go in" for heroes. She fancied that he would make a gentle, considerate, "safe" husband for any woman, and—

"He's like a father to the children already," she caught herself saying one night. And after that she thought of Kingsland in a new light. What an advantage it would be for Mattie and Harry to have a guardian, a protector, a father like that? Mattie, poor child, was not fitted for such hard work. The opportunities for a girl, or even for a boy, were so small in the small town. Then they were such pretty, imaginative, amiable children. She, Aunt Sophie, had already determined to devote her life to them. Why not complete her devotion to them by "marrying Kingsland?"

Her reflections always came back to that.

At last one night he called a little later than usual, while Mattie and Harry were at the concert. Miss Sophie noticed that he was "dressed up," and she felt the fever of curiosity and fear come into her plump cheeks and bright eyes. She had led him into the little parlor, and was about to light the lamp, but he stopped her with: "Don't mind the light, Miss Sophie. I just want to say a few things. I feel more collected, easier, in the dark."

The scared little spinster wondered if she might faint, but sat down in the far corner with a queer little sigh. He went on, speaking rapidly and very plainly: "I am thinking of getting married, Miss Sophie. That is, within the next year or so. Meanwhile I want to do something for you—the children. I'd like to send Mattie to some good school. No, no! She needs to know anything about it. And Harry—I want Harry to keep on at school and take a course of manual training. It can be a secret between us—between you and me. Will you agree to help me do this, Soph—Miss Sophie?"

"Oh, yes, Mr. Kingsland. It is kind, so kind of you, but, but how are we to repay—it will cost so much."

"Never mind that—now," he said. "I want Mattie for my wife—"

"Mattie!" she whispered, choking down a sob, wondering at her own composure.

"Yes, Miss Sophie, Mattie. I haven't said a word to her. I mean to give her a little more education—without her knowing, and then, if she will have me—what's the matter, Miss Sophie?"

For the poor little woman was weeping. But she calmed herself directly and said: "But if she won't have you then?"

"Oh, I'll think no less of her and—and—we'll keep this secret between us, Miss Sophie."—Chicago Record-Herald.

OVER A WATERFALL.

Author Made an Awful Trip, but Came Out Alive.

The author of "Twenty Years in the Near East" relates the story of a singular adventure which befell him while he was fishing in one of the rivers of Montenegro. The story recalls at once all those foolish and usually fatal attempts to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel. The writer had followed up the stream for a mile or so when he came to a waterfall some forty or fifty feet in height. Seeking a place to cross, he went above the fall and decided to make the venture on some smooth, moss-grown stones a few feet above the fall.

The stream, he says, was twenty feet wide, perhaps, and I started cautiously, feeling my way along with the water just over my toes. I was midway of the stream when a pebble shifted, my foot slipped, and the next moment I was down and plunging over the fall. I had not time to save myself or think more than that this was the end of life for me.

I struck a stone with my foot and turned a complete somersault in the air, and then I knew nothing. After a while I recovered consciousness, and was amazed to find myself alive. I was lame in every joint, but found myself able to walk and move my arms. I discovered this much, and then I fainted. This happened two or three times, and each time the water revived me.

Two peasant women came along, and with their assistance I managed to get back to the hotel, where it was found that two of my ribs were broken, a wrist badly sprained, one arm splintered and my thigh terribly bruised. My watch, in a heavy, double hunting-case, was smashed to atoms, even the jewels in the holes being punched out.

Why I was not killed outright by such a fall will always remain a mystery.

Considered as Hard.

"Does your Bachelors' Suicide Club offer no alternatives when it comes a man's turn to take his own life?" "Well—a—he can get married."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

It is our opinion that a woman looks ridiculous at all times when she is hurrying, except when she is hurrying to get dinner.

NAVAL DISCIPLINE.

Laxity a Distinguishing Characteristic on Morocco's Man-of-War.

The Sultan of Morocco is the possessor of only one man-of-war, and the discipline aboard that vessel is so lax as to be humorous to those who have visited the ship. Frances Macnab describes in her "Ride in Morocco" a visit to the Morocco navy. In the absence of the captain, she was received by the chief engineer and another officer, probably a marine. They were both Germans, and entered thoroughly into the humor of the situation.

The chief engineer had five Germans under him, and between them they kept the engines in an apparently high state of efficiency; but the crew, who were all Moors, changed every third day. They knew nothing at all about ships, nor would they learn. The pay is excellent. They are three days on board and three days on shore, and they get their food on board and three pounds a month. Such a berth is considered a suitable reward for any friend or relation of the Sultan.

However much these "sailors" may differ among themselves, on one point they are agreed—nothing will induce them to obey an order. If they are ordered to do a thing they dispute the order immediately, and argue that it would be much better not to do it.

This spirit of disobedience is no fault of theirs. Measures to enforce discipline are forbidden by the Sultan; but the German officers can hale the crew before the governor of the town. When this is resorted to the governor asks who the prisoner is.

"Oh, he's the uncle of the Sultan's wife," is the reply; or, "He is the cousin of the Sultan's uncle."

"Well, let the poor fellow go," says the pasha. "You shouldn't give him so much to do." And there the matter ends.

On one occasion a little light occupation was found for one of the crew, to which, it was thought, he would not object. He was to hold the office of lamp-trimmer to the ship; but he did it so badly, in fact so seldom made any attempt at touching the lamps at all, that the officer remonstrated.

"Who are you, to talk to me?" inquired the Moor. "Don't you know that I am the Sultan's cousin?" This disposed effectually of further lamp-trimming.

"It is your work to clean the deck, and therefore you must do it," said the German officer to one of these Moorish seamen.

"Why should I do it?" asked the Moor. "You are a German, and you come here for work. Do it yourself. I do not come here to work. I am the cousin of the Grand Vizier."

HER OLDEST FRIEND.

Aged Woman Charmingly Tells of a Great Joke on Herself.

The writer known as "Mrs. Grant of Lagan" was, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, one of the idols of literary society, both in London and Edinburgh. She died in 1834, in her eighty-fourth year, a dear old lady who made no pretensions to being younger than she was. She had a sweet spirit and a delightful sense of humor, never more charmingly illustrated than in her account of her last appearance at a large public gathering at a flower-show in a public hall.

I had no bonnet, she says, but a very respectable cap; and as I walked in, from my sedan chair I was surprised to see another lady with exactly such crutches and precisely such a shawl as my own. I looked with much interest at my fellow cripple, and this interest she seemed to reciprocate.

She took her place in another nave equally large and splendid, but so open that I had a full view of it. Amid all the flush of bloom before me I often withdrew my attention to regard this withered flower with still increasing interest, the more so that every time I turned to look her eyes met mine, and at length, I thought, with a familiar expression. At last I remarked it to those about me, and said I thought she would like to be introduced to me when the show was over. Her figure was as ample as my own, but I comforted myself with the reflection that I had a better face, hers being almost ugly. I rose at length, and so did she, but I saw her no more.

There was no such room and no lady. Large folding doors of looking-glass and my own figure had deceived me. This could scarcely have happened had I been familiar with my own countenance, but I have actually not looked in a mirror for more than two years.

Sight Difference.

Tom Edison was at one time a tramping telegrapher. After he had attained success as an inventor he on one occasion called upon a friend of his who was a doctor and expressed considerable feeling because he had not received an invitation to attend a banquet in honor of visiting physicians.

"But," faltered the doctor, "this is a banquet for medical men, and you certainly do not claim to be a member of that organization?"

"Well," answered Mr. Edison, seriously, "I myself was a dispatcher at one time."

"Ah, I understand now," said the doctor, catching the humor of his visitor, "but these men are patchers."—Detroit Free Press.

Coats of Mail for Englishmen.

The London Tailor and Cutter makes the extraordinary statement that there are some men who always include a coat of mail in their wardrobe and some of the west end tailoring establishments manufacture them regularly for their customers.

What do you do with the tin cans at your house?

JUDICIAL DECISIONS.



A stipulation by a common carrier, in consideration of a reduced freight rate, for exemption from liability for damage by wet to property carried is held in *Mears vs. New York, New Haven and Hudson River Railroad Company* (Conn.), 56 L. R. A. 884, to be valid.

Competition, though malicious, if carried on to get customers away from a rival and obtain business for one's self is held, in *West Virginia Transportation Company vs. Standard Oil Company* (W. Va.), 56 L. R. A. 894, not to be unlawful if the customers are not induced to violate their contract.

Giving notice of dishonor of protested paper is held, in *Williams vs. Parks* (Neb.), 56 L. R. A. 759, to be, in the absence of a notary public, for neglect of which an action is maintainable upon his official bond by the party injured. Sureties on a note are held, in *Brown vs. First National Bank* (C. C. A. 7th C.), 56 L. R. A. 870, to be relieved from any obligation at law, to the extent to which the payee has released collateral security without their consent or that of the maker.

The duty of a carrier to protect passenger from injury and insult is applied in *Houston and T. C. R. Co. vs. Phillips*, 57 S. W. 915, where the plaintiff suffered the injury complained of while in the waiting room of the carrier. The Court of Civil Appeals of Texas there holds that where a carrier permits a drunken passenger to enter its waiting-room, use indecent language, and being armed with a knife, to make an assault on a female passenger, causing her to become nervous and sick from fright, the carrier is liable and a verdict for \$4,000 is not excessive.

Maintaining a gambling house and betting on horse races, etc., is made a common nuisance by the statutes of Kentucky, and in the case of *Commonwealth vs. Western Union Telegraph Company*, 67 Southwestern Reporter 25, it was sought to indict the telegraph company for receiving and transmitting race-track news to certain persons who were engaged in maintaining a gambling house. The court holds that as it is not averred that the company had any control or management of the gambling house the only question which arises is whether it is guilty of keeping the house by creating information.

The law creating the telegraph company provides that it is a common carrier of intelligence and information and penalizes it for withholding the transmission or delivery of messages, prepaid and couched in decent language. The court says common carriers are not the censors of public or private morals, and it was certainly not wrong per se for the company to transmit the information.

Well Up in Geography.

Our system of public instruction does not always show its impress upon those who become public men. The late Venezuelan question called out queries that were of interest to our minister to that country, who made note of them.

In December, 1892, a Western member of the United States Congress arose in his place and seriously asked, "Where is Venezuela, anyhow?" This was pending a proposition to consolidate the missions to Venezuela and Guatemala, the impression being that the two republics were adjacent countries.

Another member, equally well up in geography, and equally enthusiastic in his advocacy of "economy," wanted to consolidate the missions to Venezuela, Ecuador and Peru.

It was during the same year that a St. Louis merchant wrote to our minister at Caracas to find out "the most available seaport of Venezuela on the Pacific." A cattle dealer in Colorado inquired "whether, in order to visit Maracaibo, it would be necessary to sail via Europe." Soon afterward a tobaccoist in Virginia wrote to ask "whether it would be advisable to ship samples via the Isthmus of Panama."

Rainfall of the Pyrenees.

A great scheme is suggested by the Figaro of Paris, for the utilization of the rainfall of the Pyrenees. It is proposed to dam the valleys all along the chain, hold up all the mountain torrents in a series of artificial lakes, regulate the overflow, run it through turbines and so generate electric power. It is calculated that no less than 10,000,000 horse-power could be obtained from the Pyrenean range, and this power could be supplied at about one-sixth of the cost of that produced by steam.

Cruel of Him.

Mistress—So you are going to leave because the gasoline stove blew you up in the air?

Alice—No, ma'am; it's because of the insult your husband offered.

Mistress—What did he say?

Alice—Nothing; but he began singing "You can't keep a good girl down."

—Chicago News.

It makes a woman heartsick every time she has to cut a valuable piece of lace.

When a man gets full it is a good time to take his bust measure.

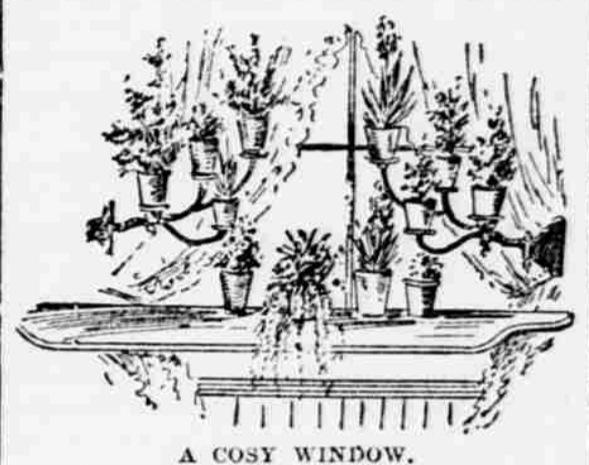
FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN

Brightening Our Homes.

In the winter season a few choice plants in the sitting room windows add much good cheer to our homes. A nice arrangement is shown in the cut. It is well to have a variety of plants, some for flowers, others for foliage. These may be readily procured of any florist, or even ordered by mail or express.

Much satisfaction follows the planting of a few bulbs, such as hyacinths, tulips, lillies, crocus, etc. These come into bloom in a few weeks and are exceedingly pretty. There is a great array of foliage plants that may be readily secured, some also having bright and choice flowers. The latter include geraniums, fuchsias, primrose, etc. A palm, or two, fern, rubber plant, etc., add greatly to the ornamentation of a window filled with plants, or to the living room.

There are many styles of shelves that may be used. A plain, smooth board



A COSY WINDOW.

is often handy. Above it, on either side, brackets may be screwed to the window casing, each containing arms with a flat, round top, for plants. A stand or table in a bay window, may often be used to advantage. Things of this kind are very common in city homes as well as in numberless cheerful farm homes. But there are, as a rule, none too many plants in our homes. As flowers bring refinement and elevating thoughts, let us have more of them.—Farm and Home.

Church Work and the Busy Woman.

What will become of church work when women become too busy to do it? This question has not yet come largely to the front, but it certainly will in time if things go on at their present pace. Men have long ago ceased to be able to attend to church work, except when they are regularly salaried to do it, or when zeal and leisure coexist. The church has looked to women for the unsalaried work that needs doing; and the women, glad of an outlet for their energies, have willingly given their best thought and their spare time to Sunday school teaching, missionary meetings, the making of altar-cloths and vestments, and the conduct of fairs, festivals, church suppers and so on. In the last generation the busiest women in each town were always to be found foremost in the churches. The women of 40 and over are still to-day in church work. But how about the young and busy women?

The Sunday schools begin to notice that she does not offer to teach. She is as tired, after her week's work, as a man, and needs rest on Sunday. She has no free weekday afternoons in which to attend missionary meetings. She is making her living, or else she has clubs and courses of reading to attend, or is heart and soul at work in a college settlement. In the church, moreover, she must work under the authority and supervision of the clergy; whereas on hospital boards or in charitable organizations she has all the authority and all the recognition. Naturally, she grows to prefer the latter. The busy woman is the picked woman, usually, and superior women have been the strength of church guilds and meetings hitherto. The church cannot afford to depend only upon the inferior woman, surely. Can this be the meaning of the salaries offered to Sunday school teachers in some of our cities? The whole question is an interesting one and may have some bearing upon the alleged present decline of church life in America.—Harper's Bazar.

Changing Views.

"I've pictured the man that I'll marry," she said.

When reaching her seventeenth year: "There's only one kind that I ever will wed.

And he must be a hero.

This man must be able and handsome and brave—

Apollo and Mars all in one—

And if I can't captivate such as I crave, Why, then, I assert, I'll have none."

"All men have their faults," she was heard to exclaim.

When reaching her twenty-fifth year: "Of course, I am looking for merit and fame.

But much may be lacking, I fear. I'd like to have dignity, courage and grace.

A man who is earnest and true, Who's strong for the battle and swift for the race—

But half of these virtues will do."

She cut it down in her thirtieth year.

Her smiles were for all that she met. For she had decided, it seemed to be clear.

She wanted that man she could get.—Brooklyn Eagle.

The American Girl.

What makes the American girl a most attractive being is her self-confidence, amiability and good temper. Now, I am not a flatterer, and I must say that pretty women are as much in the minority in the United States as in any other country, writes Viscount de

Santo Thyrsio, in the Smart Set. Beauty, like gold, is scarce everywhere. You can find more gold in California than in Europe; but even in California you certainly find more dross than gold. So it is with women. In some places, or in some countries, the number of pretty women is greater than in others, and in this branch of natural production the United States is not behind-hand. This, however, is only a foreigner's view of the subject. To tell the truth, I have never met an American girl of 20 who did not consider herself fascinating; this is self-confidence, and for a woman to believe she is beautiful is half way to real beauty. In the first place, a plain woman, who is aware of her plainness, is unhappy. Man is a selfish animal, and despite what novelists say about sad women and the power of tears, unhappiness is as repellant to a healthy mind as disease to a healthy body. Then, the conscious plain woman gives up every thought of pleasing, and therefore she does nothing to make herself attractive. She does not dress in a becoming way, she does not smile, she does not try to be attractive. She becomes sour or dull, or both.—Detroit Free Press.

For the Young Mother.

It is a pathetic truth that more children are spoiled by too much love than by too little, or, rather, by love shown in the wrong way.

So anxious is a young mother to see her little one happy, smiling and amused that in quite early days she often excites it with playing with it, talking and tossing, when she had far better let it rest and sleep. The happiest and healthiest babies are those accustomed from the very first to lie on a thick, warm rug on the floor, cooling and growing to themselves, and not expecting to be picked up, nursed, rocked, tossed and excited.

And later on the happiest children are those taught to wait on and "help mother," not those perpetually expecting mother to put aside her work to amuse them. It is neither wise nor kind to so wait on a child's pleasure, and to spend your time amusing a little child, picking up its ball, building houses with its bricks, fetching and carrying for it, is to destroy its powers of self-reliance, to make it grow up masterful and selfish, and unfit it for a world in which the most helpful are the most happy.

Children managed in the right way are quite proud and happy to do little things and wait on others, and this should be encouraged.

Carries Rural Mail.

Mrs. Charles Smith, of Edgerton, Ohio, carries the mail on a rural free delivery route. Her route is known as No. 2, out of Edgerton. Her home is a mile and a half from the postoffice, where she must go to receive the mail before starting out on the route, which is twenty-seven miles long. One hundred and eighteen families live along the route and sixty daily papers are delivered by her, to say nothing of the lot of letters and postal cards. Mrs. Smith began to work on the route on July 1 and has not missed a single trip. She attends to her household duties before starting from home. She carries her dinner and feed for her horse. Mrs. Smith is a woman of robust health and has enjoyed many educational advantages.



MRS. C. SMITH.

Shampooing at Home.

An egg is one of the best cleansers of the head and hair that can be used. Break the egg and beat it up well. Put a little warm water in a basin, lean the head over it and damp the head and hair all over. Next dip the fingers in the beaten egg and rub thoroughly with it. It will make quite a lather and bring out the dirt. Proceed till all the egg is used and every portion of the head has been rubbed with it. The hair must now be thoroughly and carefully rinsed, using plenty of water. The water should be poured over the head by a second person. When all the egg is quite rinsed off and the hair clean rub the head vigorously to dry it, and then the long hair. Let it hang loose for an hour or so, allowing the air to play through it. Hair will be improved by drying it in the open where the sun can shine on it. It is not advisable to dress the hair too soon after washing it.

Beauty and Wisdom Won't Mix. An American scientist has come to the conclusion that the tendency of too much education or intellectual development in women is to make them lose their beauty. He instances the Zoro women of India. They are supreme. They woo the men, control the affairs of the home and the nation, transmit property, and leave the men nothing to do. The result is, says the scientist, that they are the ugliest women on earth.

World's Most Gorgeous Bed.

Anna Countess De Castellan sleeps in the greatest bed of Madame De Sevigne, than which there is no finer in all the world. It is made of gilded cedar wood inlaid with precious stones, and has painted panels by the greatest masters of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.