The Ward of King Canute

A Romance of the Danish Conquest.

By OTTILIE A. LILIENCRANTZ, author of The Thrall of Liof the Lucky.

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CHAPTER XIV.

The Judgment of the Iron Voice.

Fold by fold, the sun's golden fingers drew apart the mists that hid the valley. One by one, the red Severn cliffs were uncovered, and the wooded steeps on which the rival hosts were encamped. It was the hour of the royal duel, when the fate-thread of a nation, beaded with human destinies, lay between the fingers of two men. What a scattering of the beads if the cord should be cut!

Under the elms of the east bank the daughter of Frode stood and watched the boats set out; and the hands that hung at her side opened and shut as though they were gasping for breath. Turning, she found herself facing a wall of stalwart bodies, a sea of coarse faces, and discovered, with a sudden tightening of her muscles, that all the eyes which were not following the boat were centered curiously upon herself.

Before she could take a step the nearest warrior thrust out a hand and caught her by her black locks. "Stop a little, my Bold One," he said gruffly. "Now that you have a moment to spare from the high-born folk, it is the wish of us churls to hear some of your news."

A score of heavy voices seconded the demand, and the fall gradually curved into a circle around her. They were good-natured enough—even the grasp on her hair was roughly playful—but her heart seemed to stop in her as a swimmer might the first instant he lost sight of land and beheld only towering billows looming above him.

"Take your hands off me, and it shall be as you wish."

The big Swede released her wrist to catch her around the waist and toss her like a bone upon the platter of his shield, which four of them promptly raised between them and bore along, laughing uproariously at her sprawling efforts for dignity. When they came to a spot along the bank which was open enough to give them an unobstructed view of the island, they permitted her to scramble down and seat herself upon the grass, where they ringed themselves around her, twenty deep.

"Now for it! While they are waiting for Edmund to land; before there is anything to watch," the Scar-Cheek commanded. "Tell what you told Canute with regard to the English king

"Say not so, when you have brought back the bright blade we mourned as lost!"

which made him so reckless as to agree to this bargain."

A shout from the surging mass of English opposite told when the Ironside had landed, and as soon as it was seen whom he had chosen to accompany him as his witness, a buzz of excitement passed along the Danish line.

"Edric! by all the gods, Edric Jarl!"

"Now, for the first time, I believe that victory will follow Canute's sword!" Brass Borgar ejaculated. "Since nothing less than the madness betokening death could cause Edmund to continue his trust in the Gainer, it is seen from this that he is a death-fated man."

It was little time that the pack gave her for revery, however; now it was Edric Jarl of whom they wanted to hear.

"While they are talking about the terms there is nothing to look at; tell us how the Gainer pulled the net around King Edmund," the rough voices demanded. And again she was obliged to bend her wits to their task.

But it came at last, the end that was the beginning. Suddenly a hand reached around her neck and shut over her mouth. "Stop! They are taking their places. Look!"

He need not have added that last word, from that moment for many thousands of eyes there was but one object in the world—the strip of rock-ribbed earth and the two figures that faced each other upon it.

Now that the royal duellists stood forth together stripped of cloak and steel shirt, and wearing no other helm than the golden circlet of their rank, their inequality was even more glaring than alarmed fancy had painted it. The crown of Canute's shining locks reached only to the chin of the mighty Ironside, and the width of nearly two palms was needed on his shoulders.

The young king alone appeared serenely unconcerned. When he had saluted the Ironside with royal courtesy, he met his sworn as though he were beginning a practicing bout with his foster-brother.

Hushed over the earth, with starting eyes and necks stretched to their utermost, the Danes were like so many boulders. Not did Frode's daughter pause to see that the hand the Brass One had raised himself upon was dripping her foe.

Canute's weapon, playing with the lightness of a switch, had evaded the stroke of the great flail and touched for an instant the shoulder of its wielder. Had he put a pound more force with the thrust— A groan crept down the Danish line when the bright blade rose, as lightly as it had fallen, and continued its butterfly dance. It outlined them a little, long enough that no clever seer up from the English—only a few, only that was half of anger, half of amazement.

Certainly there was no forewarning madness about the young Danishman; this was bright-faced seriousness.

Now his blade was a fleeing will-o'-the-wisp, keeping just out of reach of Edmund's brand with apparently no thought but of flight. Now, when the Ironside's increasing vehemence betrayed him into an instant's rashness, it was a humming-bird darting into a flower-cup. But it always rose again as daintily as it had alighted.

The Danish bank was frantic with excitement. "It is the dance of the Northern Light!" they cried. "Thor has sent him his own sword!"

The lines of English were wild with anger. "Crush him, the hornet, the wasp! Crush him, Edmund!" they roared.

In his exultation the Scar-Cheek rolled himself over and over on the grass, and wound up by thrusting his shaggy head into the lap of the red-cloaked page. "I must do something for joy," he panted; "and—except for your hair—you look near enough like a handsome woman. Do you bend and kiss me every time Canute pricks him."

His head fell to the ground with a thump as the child of Frode leaped to her feet.

"If you lay finger on me again," she whispered, "I will caress you with this!" and for an instant a knife-blade glittered before the bulging eyes. Snorri rolled back with alacrity and an oath; and after a moment Frode's daughter dropped down again and hid her face in her hands. If the king should be slain and she be left adrift in this foul sea! She might as well have screamed as moaned, for all that they would have noticed.

About this time Canute's blade appeared to have become in earnest. Ceasing its airy defense, it took on the aggressive. Before the sudden fury of the onslaught Edmund gave back a pace. And either because his anger made him reckless or his great bulk was against him, he presently was forced to draw back another step. Wildest cheers went up from the Northmen. It seemed as though they would wade in a body across the river.

Only Eric of Norway stamped with uneasiness, and the overhanging brows of Thorkel the Tall were as lowering hoods above his eyes. "Well has he hoarded his strength," he muttered. "Well has he saved it, yet—yet—"

At that moment such a roar went up from Northern throats as might well have startled the wolf's shadow off the face of the sun, for Edmund Ironside had retreated a third step, and the Dane's point appeared to lie at the Englishman's heart. Then the uproar died somewhere in midair, for in what seemed the very act of thrusting Canute had leaped backward and lowered his blade. So deep was the hush on either side of the river that the whir of a bird's wing sounded as loud as a flight of arrows. Bending forward, with strained ears and starting eyes, the spectators saw that the Northern King was speaking, eagerly, with now and then an impulsive gesture, while the English King listened motionless.

"Has he got out of his wits?" the Scar-Cheek roared, fairly dancing with impatience.

In Randalin's face a flash of memory was struggling with bewilderment. "Other weapons than those which dwell in sheaths." Had he meant "the sword of speech," his tongue?

With the deliberate grace which characterized his every motion, the Ironside slid his sword back to its case, and they saw him take a slow step forward and slowly extend his hand. Then they saw Canute spring to meet him, and their palms touch in a long grasp.

From the English shore there went up a joyful shout of "Peace!" And a deafening clamor rose in answer from the Danish bank. But what sentiment predominated in that it would be difficult to say. Blended with rejoicing over their king's safety were cries of bitter disappointment, the cries of thirsty men who have seen wine dashed from their lips.

In their retreat, the two Northern jarls and the young monarch's foster-father faced each other uncertainly. "Here is mystery!" Eric of Norway said at last. "I should be thankful if you would tell me whether he thought it unwise to kill the Englishman before the face of his army; or whether he is in truth struck with love toward him, as the fools seem to believe?"

"Or whether he had reached the exact limit of his strength, so that he was obliged to save himself by some trick of words?" Ulf Jarl suggested.

The Tall One shook his head slowly. "Now, as always, it is he alone who can altogether explain his actions. It might easily be that in his mad impatience he overhauled his strength, so that he was obliged to stop short to keep within bounds. But I think you will find that there is still some trick which is not open to our sight. His mad wit is deepening very fast; I will not be so bold as to say that I was always fathom it."

"Perhaps he thinks a short peace would be useful to the host," the Northman said, and laughed. "Such a truce is as comfortable as a cloak when the weather is stark, and as easy to get rid of when the sun comes out."

By their faces, the others appeared to agree with him; but before they could express themselves a swimmer rose like a dripping seal out of the water at their feet.

"Peace and division again!" he cried breathlessly. "And it is the king's will that you get into a boat and come to him at once."

The rush of the crowd to the waterside to question the messenger gave Randalin her chance for freedom; and she was not slow in taking it. A moment more, and she was in the very top of the willow tree, clasping her hands and wringing them in alternate thanksgiving and terror.

"Whatever it bring upon me, I will get back to my woman's clothes," she vowed to herself over and over. "Though it become a hindrance to me, though it be the cause of my death, I will be a woman always. Odin forgive me that I thought I had courage enough to be a man!"

(To be continued.)

THE "DIDN'T KNOW" PLEA.

Little Patience Shown for Excuse of the Weak Mind.

There is not much patience anywhere in the universe for the man that "didn't know." The whine that if he had known the inevitable results of his errors he would not have perpetrated them is useless everywhere. It is no excuse in law that one "didn't know" what he was doing was illegal. The presumption is that every man knows when he is violating a statute, and in the whole realm of duty and moral law the condition is the same. You suffer for what you did or failed to do, and "didn't know" is no mitigation.

The man who has been careless or reckless in living and finds that in ultimate injured health and remorse he must pay for every misdeed is always ready enough with the declaration that he wouldn't have been in his present plight if he had only known all this was going to happen. The dying man, and he whose health is ruined, would have surely taken that life insurance for his family's protection, but he "didn't know" the breakdown was coming just yet. Or, in his straightened and nonproductive advanced years, with no fine endowment policy maturing to handsomely provide for himself and his dependents, he didn't know he would grow old so soon and that his varied business ventures would average so poorly. The "didn't know" plea there, as elsewhere, comes altogether too late.

Deed of a Hero.

The recent opening of the Hudson river tunnel recalls an accident which occurred during its construction and the brave deed of a man who died, that others might live.

In the summer of 1880 a leak occurred in the main shaft. Twenty-eight workmen in an instant found themselves facing certain horrible death. The river was bursting in on them. They saw no escape. But the head of the gang, Peter Woodland, a Dane, who was in a smaller chamber, saw that, if the glass bullseye in its door were broken the water would be turned into it and most of the men would have time to escape. His own death would be certain and instant. He hesitated. He was a young and well-educated man and he had a wife and children.

One of the survivors said afterwards: "I saw his face as he looked at us through the glass. It was ghastly pale. He gave the order, 'Break the bullseye!' We did it. The majority of the men were saved. Woodland and four others were drowned."

Contraband Tobacco in England.

What becomes of the contraband tobacco seized by the customs? The early practice was to bury it. This senseless waste was suspended for a time by the happy idea of distributing the tobacco among the troopships.

That did not last long, and next year we hear of the contraband being smoked in the "Queen's pipe," a huge receptacle which could turn "hundreds of tons into smoke in a few hours." Again the misgivings of the waste troubled the authorities, and they took to regaling the criminal lunatics in certain government asylums. Any tobacco that was left over was ordered for the use of troops sent on foreign service. But that luxury seems to have been cut off once more, although the criminal lunatics still enjoy their pipes and cigars.

One attempt was made to throw the contraband, when it was slightly damaged, on the market, but this caused an outcry from the tobacco trade. The whole story is a pleasing tribute to the intelligence which administers the public service.—Macmillan's Magazine.

Potato to Keep Tobacco Moist.

"It isn't necessary to resort to any device to keep tobacco moist this time of year," said a tobacconist yesterday; "in fact, there is altogether too much humidity in the atmosphere. But the raw potato is a good thing to bear in mind.

"During the winter months, when artificial heat has a tendency to sap the natural moisture from tobacco, the raw potato comes in mighty handy. Place it in the bottom of a jar, put the tobacco on top of it and the result will be most satisfying. The tobacco will then retain all its best qualities. I have tried many experiments, but have found none to work so satisfactorily."

No New Yorkers in New York.

"At a social gathering at my house the other evening," said a well known New York physician, "I had as guests eight men, every one of whom is or has been a potent factor in the affairs of this city, in politics, finance, the legal and medical professions, journalism and railroad management. It came out that not one of them was a native of the city. Not only was none of them a native New Yorker, but, with one exception, they were all born in isolated rural hamlets or on backwoods farms. The one exception was born in an incorporated village of 1,000 inhabitants."—New York Sun.

Switched Brides.

Before the magistrate of Alipore recently one Modhu Sudan Datt was charged with having murderously assaulted Nobogopal Chatterjee, a matchmaker of the locality. The complainant had negotiated the marriage of the accused's son. The bride was shown to the father, and ample marriage gifts were promised. The marriage was celebrated within closed doors, and on the following morning the accused found that an ugly girl instead of the one shown to him was the real bride.—Allahabad Pioneer.

Long Ready for Death.

William Ludlem, who died at Oyster Bay, N. Y., at the age of 86, made his own coffin ten years ago and had kept it in his house all that time.

Got Even With Widow

"It took me a solid week to think it out, but I did it," said the summer girl. "I paid the widow up for all she had ever done or expected to do. I'm staying when I'm not called home this way to entertain country cousins, who will insist on coming to Washington in hot weather—at a place up on the sound. Of course, there aren't many men there, and when one does happen along the widow reaches out and grabs him. I'm not daft over men, but a summer landscape isn't complete without a few, and no complexioned-doctored widow has a right to monopolize them when the supply is so much less than the demand. I'm opposed to monopolies and I set out to turn the widow from the evil of her ways as soon as I arrived.

"I marked out one dancing man as my share of the loot and began to prepare for war. The widow danced with that man and walked with him and talked with him and held hands in the corner of the gallery, and try as I might I couldn't get a chance to fire a hostile shot. Bathing up there is a sort of a side line. We don't make a blowing horn of it. We just sneak off and take to the water when the tide's in. There's no parade about it. The widow said that she couldn't bear this way people have of sitting around on benches in bathing suits, and as soon as I heard her I knew what made her feel that way.

"I took her trail, however, and one day—a very hot day—when the man was busy writing letters I asked her if she didn't want to take my brand-new bathing suit and go in for a dip. She said she'd enjoy it, though as she didn't as a rule care for sea bathing she hadn't brought a suit. Now, a woman without a bathing suit in her luggage—well, I knew then I had the widow's range and could rout her horse, foot and dragoons. She went off to the sheltered cove, where the bathhouse is, and as soon as I was sure she was in the water I hunted up the man and asked if he didn't want to go and see the widow swim. Of course he did, and he said he'd wondered all along why she didn't go in bathing.

"We went down and sat right smack in front of the bathhouse. The widow was out in the water paddling around and when she saw me the look she gave me made ice form all over the eel-grass. She tried to get us to go back to the hotel and get her comb that she'd forgotten, but I told her she could use the one I had in the bathhouse. She tried—well, she tried every way she could think of to get us to go away, but I was bound I'd sit there until that widow came out of the water, and I sat as if I'd been nailed down. I knew she couldn't stay in the water forever, because the tide goes out there and you'd have to be a clam to hide when that happens. She stuck it out till you could hear her teeth chattering half a block off and then she came in.

"We made way for her to enter the bathhouse, and as soon as the man got one good look at her—my bathing suit was a little short for her—I knew the widow was a has-been. Stunning looking she was in full dress, but in a bathing suit she was simply paralyzing. If a mosquito had lit on one of her knees he'd have to use the long-distance phone to let his wife on the other knee know what had become of him. She was the bowleggedest widow in nine states."—Washington Post.

A Song of Chicago

Serene as Summer season,
She takes her dauntless stand,
And fears no venomed treason,
And spurns the traitor's brand,
And every breeze that's blowing,
And every stream that's flowing,
Through fertile pastures going,
Bring strength unto her hand!

For her rich, teeming prairie,
Gives up its garnered store,
Though seasons change and vary,
They yield her more and more.
All hers the flowers and grasses
That carpet mountain passes,
Green garlands of Parnassus,
Dew drenched in Grecian lore.

For her the stars are shining
Their radiance from the sky,
Bland, balmy zephyrs, pining
To kiss as they go by.
For her the lark is trilling
His fiery rapture filling
The timorous doves unwilling
To dare the blue and fly.

The sheaves that sway in slumber
And pine for cooling showers,
The flocks so vast in number
That graze through gradual hours,
Big herds in fertile places,
The frisky lamb that races,
Shy gazelles of gentle graces,
Are hers; and tender flowers.

Hers is the gold that gleaming
Deep down in murky mire
Lures on the stripling, dreaming,
To grasp the wealth and shine.
All hers the teeming treasure
Which buys the thoughtless pleasure,
And leaves the poet leisure
To launch the liquid line.

Hers every brawling river
That waters all our land,
Whose kingly heart will quiver
And rise at her command.
At her behest the yeoman
Will rise and front the foeman,
As did the stubborn Roman
When treason showed his hand!

Into her garden gracious
Pour all the sons of men,
Her marble halls are spacious,
Grace is her diadem.
Her soaring soul is chainless,
Her silvery shield is stainless,
Her reign is soft and painless,
And beauty is her gem.

Calm as some high-born maiden
In her ancestral hall,
Her robes of state arrayed in,
She marshals one and all.
Her brow is frank and fearless,
She heartens all the cheerless,
Fair Chatelaine so peerless
With henchmen at her call.

When fiery flames were roaring,
And rumbling at her door,
And hell itself seemed pouring
Its vitriol on her floor,
She roused herself reliant
And purged herself defiant
Unlike a maid compliant
Who sells herself for store.

Through darkling nights of terror
She staggered through the fray,
Through choking mists of error,
She groped to find the day.
And though she often stumbled,
As sick at heart and humbled,
She watched her roof tree crumbled,
She won—she won her way.

Stand firm, oh gracious goddess,
To guard what you have won,
The heart beneath your bodice
Beats strenuous as the sun.
Flushed with the hue of morning,
Imperial eyed, and scorning,
The groundlings' gibes and warning,
Cry you—"I Will—I Won."

JAMES E. KINSELLA.
Registry Division, Chicago Postoffice.

Tombs of Ancient Egypt

The excavations which were begun at Beniassan, on the east bank of the Nile, some two hundred miles above Cairo, in December, 1902, have now been completed. There have been discovered and searched in the necropolis extending along the face of the limestone cliff 887 tombs, including that of Sebek Hetepa, 2200 B. C., together with its curious funeral models. Each burial chamber was formed of a recess at the base of a square shaft, occasionally at a depth of thirty feet, hewn in the solid rock and carefully filled in. By this careful means the body of the deceased was preserved from disturbance. This type of burial antedates the mummification period; but it was found in the case of two bodies, that decay had been arrested by the wrappings, which were found still intact. Each tomb contained a wood sarcophagus, with the lines of religious formulae and text inscribed upon it the orthodox hieroglyphics, and with the head pointing to the north and the painted "eyes of Osiris" toward the east.

The sarcophagus was surrounded with a large number of little wooden models representing river and sailing boats, a granary, a group of persons baking, a man brewing, a man leading an ox, a girl carrying a brace of birds in her hands and a basket on her head. Notwithstanding the extreme age—believed to be four thousand years—of these curious relics, they were found to be in a remarkable state of preservation, the oarsmen in the galleys leaning upon their oars and the paint still bright and clean. The ceremonies attending the interment of a woman were slightly dissimilar, the departed lady being provided with a basket of toilet requisites.

These curious little models were buried in accordance with the ancient Egyptian religious rites, in order to provide the departed one with the necessaries for future life. One highly interesting discovery was made in the course of these excavations—an exact counterpart of the modern weaving reed as used in the mills at Wigan, England, the only difference being that the ancient Egyptians of 2200 B. C. used cane teeth instead of steel.

A Happy Little Nation

Novelists who are in search of a new Zenda should turn their attention to the happy little principality of Liechtenstein. It is a tiny country tucked away between the Austrian province of Tyrol and the Rhine, and is unknown even to people who imagine themselves to be proficient in the geography of Europe.

Its area is only about sixty-five square miles, and its population less than 10,000; but it is an independent nation none the less, and possesses many advantages denied to greater countries.

It has no army, no navy, no public debt, no direct taxes, no poor people. Unlike their neighbors in Austria and Germany, the inhabitants are not liable to military service. Practically the entire population tills the soil, the capital, Vaduz, being merely a large village.

Through all the vicissitudes of European history, Liechtenstein has managed to maintain its independence since it was first constituted a principality at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The reigning prince, John L., rules through a miniature parliament of fifteen members. He has an annual income of about $700,000, derived from large estates in Austria and elsewhere. As he spends that princely sum liberally in his dominions, he is naturally a popular monarch. Liechtenstein is under the protecting wing of Austria, but has never been incorporated with that country by any treaty.

Church Without a Name

Within four miles of the quiet Town of High Wycombe, in Bucks, is the small Village of Loudwater, which possesses one of the most remarkable sacred edifices now in existence, says the London Daily News. It is a substantial brick building, with curious, round, beaded windows, and a quaint little open turret rests on the top at one end of the church. It bears little or no resemblance to an ecclesiastical structure, but the exterior is fashioned like a paper mill; while the interior has been likened to a cabin of a ship of the old-fashioned type. Unlike other churches, it does not appear to have a name. If it ever had one, it has now passed into obscurity.

This unique church was built in A. D. 1788, at a time when there were mills in the village for the manufacture of paper, and a number of hands were employed. One of the principal paper makers and his wife realized that the provision made for the spiritual needs of the people was altogether inadequate, and resolved to build them a church. This they accordingly did, and tradition declares that the remarkable design and unecclesiastical character of the edifice may be attributed to the special avocation of the founder, who hoped thus to immortalize his business. The church will soon be restored, when it is proposed to make it look more like a house of prayer than a paper mill.—London Daily News.

JEST NUTS

Her Languid Guess.

"A member of the Stock Exchange has just paid $80,000 for a seat," said the husband of the prima donna.

"Gracious, dear, I should think you could afford to give him a box for that!" said the prima donna, languidly.—Yonkers Statesman.

Somewhat Egotistical.

Downing—Are you a believer in the survival of the fittest?

Upson—Certainly; and I shall continue to be as long as I live.

She Would See About It.

Judge—Now, is it a fact that you stole these things from witness' store?

Prisoner—If you please, your honor, my wife—

Judge—Oh, never mind your wife!

Voice at the Back of the Court—Oh, won't he, though?

Not the Real Thing.

She—So your friend Jingleton is a brain worker, is he?

He—Not necessarily. He writes words for popular songs.

SOON WILL BE FAR AWAY.

President—I think the cashier has a far-away look in his eyes.
Paying Teller—Yes. Better watch the cash drawer.

The Mutilators of Books.

"I have had lots of friends who were guilty of mutilating books they had borrowed from me, but my latest experience was the most novel of all."

"What was it?"

"I lent Mrs. Blanks my dictionary a few days ago and yesterday she returned it without a word."

The Boston Way.

Towne—She's from Boston, isn't she?

Browne—I can't tell. She hasn't had occasion yet to pronounce the world "either."

Towne—She's not from Boston, then. If she were, she'd have found the occasion long ago.

Real Good of Him.

Kind Lady—Let me see. This is the second time I have given you a meal, isn't it.

The Hobo—Dat's wot, ma'am. An' jist ter show dat I ain't ungrateful I'll give youse a testimonial wid me autergraff ter be used fer advertisin' purposes.—Exchange.

No Chance to Enjoy It.

Paterson Pete—I dreamed last night dat I had a million dollars.

Stacked Oats—Did yer enjoy it?

Paterson Pete—Nit! I wuz sued fer breach uv promise, operated on fer appendicitis an' mentioned fer de vice presidency 'fore I'd even got it counted.—Judge.

"It's Morgan's."

Church—I see a statement in the papers that when J. P. Morgan reached New York he left the ship.

Gotham—What's strange about that?

"Why, it being Morgan, I suppose most people expected to see him take the ship with him."

Caught Himself.

Jiggins—The last time I saw you your neighbor wasn't well. You remember you were telling me about his illness.

Berriam (the undertaker)—Yes, it terminated favora—er—as I was saying, alas! it terminated fatally.—Catholic Standard.

Punctilious.

"Don't you know you could get at least a dollar for a day's work?"

"Mister," answered Meandering Mike, "I couldn't take de chance. De work I'd do in a day wouldn't be worth fifty cents, an' I ain't goin' to invite no perceedin's fur false pretenses."

Keep it Dark.

"If a man keeps his eyes open and uses good judgment there's no sense in his being held up and robbed," said the Chicago individual.

"No," replied the householder. "He can sit out on the front porch until bed time and not burn any gas at all."

Not Familiar with Him.

"Have you ever read any of the teachings of Buddha?" asked Mrs. Oldcastle.

"No," replied her hostess as they seated themselves in the sumptuous library. "Where's he teaching?"

Renewing Hostilities.

Mrs. Caller—I'm surprised that you recognized me. It has been more than five years since we met.

Mrs. Naggeby—I had almost forgotten your face, but I remembered that dress you have on.

Still Belligerent.

Nell—She says she's ready to make up if you are.

Belle—Tell her I suppose I'll be ready to make up, too, when my complexion gets as bad as her's.

Not Quite Cured.

Waiter—Roast beef or cured ham, sir?

"Bring me some beef. The last cured ham I ordered here was only convalescent."—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

The Beef Strike.

Bill—I see one of the stakes at the races was $5,000.

Jill—Gracious! Have horse steaks gone up that high, too?—Yonkers Statesman.

A Gentle Hint.

"It is the little things," remarked the boardinghouse landlady, "that annoy us most."

"Yes," rejoined the irreverent boarder, "these small steaks, for example."

Likely Enough.

"How in the world could he afford to buy an automobile?"

"Easy enough. He owned a cow, you know, and he sold her to the beef trust."

Not Inconsistent.

Tess—You don't mean to say you're going to marry him?

Jess—Yes.

Tess—The idea! Why, you said you wouldn't marry him if he was the last man on earth.

Jess (snappily)—Well, my gracious! He isn't, is he?

Business Proposition.

The foreign nobleman entered the old man's private office.

"Mr. Millyuns," he began, "I love your daughter, and ask her hand in marriage."

"Hem!" exclaimed old Millyuns, musingly. "What are your lowest terms?"

Strength.

"Some scientist has declared that there is as much strength in three eggs as there is in a pound of beefsteak," said the observer.

"Well," replied the actor, "I met an egg once that would have eliminated the other two eggs from that proposition."

The Incentive.

"Going away?" asked Tawker.

"Yes," snapped Bacheller, plodding on with his suit case.

"By the way, the Popleys next door to you have a baby, I hear."

"I hear, too; that's why I'm going away."

Had Them Sized Up.

"Who is that distinguished looking man?"

"He is the head waiter."

"And who is that other fine-looking fellow with the diamond in his shirt front?"

"That is the clerk."

"One more question. Who is that insignificant looking man who seems to feel that he doesn't belong here?"

"That is the owner of the hotel."—Modern Society.

Slight Mistake.

He—You look at me as if you thought I was a fool.

She—I beg your pardon. You can't be such a fool, after all.

He—What do you mean?

She—Your remark shows that you possess the ability to read one's thoughts at a glance.

Not Strange.

There was a strange man at the door just now, ma'am, and I don't think he could tell the truth if he tried," said the maid.

Why, then, do you say he was a strange man, Bridget?" replied the woman who was living with her second husband.

Not a Mourning Suit.

Brown—I just met Old Man Smith on his way down town to recover his son's body.

Green—What! You don't mean to say that his son was drowned!

Brown—Oh, no. The old fellow was going to buy the boy a new suit of clothes. See?

Something to be Thankful For.

Lady Caller—I am sorry to hear that your husband has failed, Mrs. Taketeasy. It must be——

Mrs. Taketeasy (sobbing)—Yes, it's dreadful; but (brightening visibly) thank goodness my new costume came home just before the crash!—New Yorker.

What an Idea!

She—"Mercy! Charley! How your clothes smell of tobacco!"

He—"Yes; I rode up in the smoking car to-night."

"Why, Charley, I thought they were using smoke consumers on the railroad now."—Yonkers Statesman.

It Certainly Was.

Riffraff—Hear about Peskom?

Biffbang—No; what about him?

Riffraf—They say his wife made it so hot for him that he had to leave home.

Biffbang—Well, that certainly was a shrewd move on his part.

Ever Notice It?

Brown—I have just discovered what it is that destroys a man's memory completely.

Green—What is it—alcohol or tobacco?

Brown—Neither; it's doing him a favor.

HER FATHER'S ADVICE.

He—I told your father that I just dote on you.
She—And what did he say?
He—That I had better find an anti-dote.

Worst Ever.

Myer—That woman over there laughs like a man.

Gyer—Yes; it's a wonder the grand jury doesn't indict her.

Myer—What for?

Gyer—Why, for mans-laughter.

No Longer Useful.

"Maud, that little boy next door swears like a trooper. I hope you don't play with him."

"No, mother; not now. He's taught me all he knew."—Life.

His Sixth Sense.

"Biffer dines out a good deal, doesn't he?"

"I should say he did. Why, that man can tell an oyster fork from a game fork with his eyes blindfolded and his hands tied."

Just as Good.

"Oh, yes, Skinner was a beneficiary under old Rosley's will." "I didn't know he was a relative of Rosley's." "He wasn't, but he was attorney for a relative."

Tact.

Clarence—That is a mighty good-looking costume, Grace.

Grace—This old thing! It's so shiny I can see my face in it!

"That's probably why it's so good looking."

Yes.

"And I must have a maid to dress me," insisted the authoress.

"To what?" exclaimed the manager. "Oh, I see; you mean after the performance."

A Substitute.

Witte—Is this your advertisement in the paper: "Wanted—A good strong mule to do a light drayman's work"?

Drayman—Yes, that's mine. Why?

Witte—What's the matter? Are you going on a vacation?

The Ruling Passion.

Teacher (of arithmetic class)—"Tommy Twaddle may tell the class what a league is."

Tommy (promptly)—"A league is eight baseball teams."

On the Bargain Counter.

He—A penny for your thoughts.

She—I'm very much afraid you would not get full value for your money.

He—What were you thinking of?

She—Of you.

Something Just as Good.

"Yes, I met your husband last night; he was just full of flattery."

"I met him at about 2 this morning, but he wasn't full then—not of flattery, anyhow."

Couldn't Read Music.

"What's that, Mike?" asked Pat, as he picked up a Hebrew newspaper.

"Bigerry, Oi dinno of wat tune it do be," helped Mike. "Oi'm not sayther anuwin' wan note from th' other."

Before or After?

Scratcher—So, you've married, have you? Before or after?

Scribbler—Before or after what?

Scratcher—You were bounced?—New Yorker.