

REDUCED TO A FINE POINT

Statistics Sharps Analyse Matrimonial
Chances and Chills.

STRESS OF MODERN SOCIAL REQUIREMENTS

Loves of Spring Bonnets Bloom in the Win-
dows—Brief Chats About Persons and
Things in Woman's Busy World—
The Latest in Fashions.

A chill writer, a man, of course, has collected some interesting statistics upon the subject of men and matrimony that are worthy of contemplation these somber Lenten days. The result of his calculations is offered in the form of a tabulated list, which shows us the percentage of marriageable age varies from 20 to 80. As we were informed, says the Cincinnati Commercial, that out of 1,000 bachelors widowers have a table to themselves only twenty-one may be expected to take unto themselves wives when they are between the ages of 20 and 25. Now, although, it is emphatically at such an age that youths make a profound study of the ethics of flirtation, I must disagree with the clever statistician when he laments their continued bachelorhood. It would be but a sorry spectacle to see them making a study of the ethics of repenting at leisure. From 25 to 30 they grow in resolution, as ninety-four marriages may then be expected among 1,000 marriageable men, which leaves only 906 maidens with nothing more substantial, as a memory of past tenderness, than a ball program, or, may be, a withered flower. Bachelors whose ages vary from 30 to 35 should be strenuously cultivated. Positively 138 out of the thousand are desperate enough to take the fatal step, while, from 35 to 40, 45 and sufficiently bold to do so. This is recognition that there come immediately symptoms of the decline. During the next five years the marriages drop to 122, and thence fade silently away to solitary numerals, ending at the age of 80, in a fraction. Not even half a bachelor out of a thousand is left to blush before the altar when he has attained to his fourscore years. A mater for regret is that we cannot obtain statistics of the ages at which the other sex proposes. Judging from the experience of most women men commence to do so at 17, and work steadily and perseveringly away at the accomplishment until they reach the age of 22 or 23, when they only indulge in this mild form of recreation as an occasional pastime. Now, the table that has been given to us proves that, until he is 35, a bachelor's proposal has absolutely no marketable value. It may, indeed, only be said to fetch a reasonable price between the ages of 30 and 45. The dejection from all this is obvious. Common sense forbids us to give our hearts to the keeping of a man under 30, as the aforesaid hearts must inevitably be broken. It seems that at even the most blooming honeymoon periods the chances against final annexation of a husband are nearly seven to one. The news is not cheering to engaged couples. In any case, I advise Angelina, when Edwinn falls on his knees, to think of this table of her chances, and to be prudent.

Another statistical sharp comes to light in San Francisco, and he has, after reading several hundred novels, given us the benefit of his researches as to how men and women behave at the critical point when a man pays a woman the compliment of asking her to share his burial lot with him as well as the time intervening before that uninteresting event.

Some fallacies are exposed, the principal one being that the ladies do not promise to be a sister to the rejected one often. Seven seventeens out of fifty, while she pretends to be a friend twenty-six times in the same number.

Now, as to the gentleman's behavior, decidedly the popular thing is for him to declare that he cannot live without the woman in question, and in sixty-seven cases in 100 he kisses her on the lips, seventy-two times he holds her hands very tightly, and sixty-three times he begins "all of a sudden."

Distracting, is it not, to have the shop windows full of new bonnets when one honestly desires to renounce the "devil and his works" through the Lenten fast? The new spring hat is classified by the New York Sun as a gay and frivolous creation of chip in green or blue or heliotrope. Sometimes it is of straw with strands of many colors interwoven like the felt braiding worn through the winter. Or it may be of leghorn in the old flat shape, the brim decorated in bobbing curves and bobbins tying luxuriantly in beds of fine and fine lace on the crown of leghorn braid and a shirred crepe de Chine brim of blue caught up on one side to make a nestling place for a handful of pink buds against the hair. Another feature of the spring hat is the drooping lace festooned about its brim. It has feathers, too; not the erect and self-confident grenadier guards we have worn, but softly curling, shyly conscious baby tips, with roses playing at hide and go seek in and out of their soft plumes. The spring has its demure; therefore it will bear close watching. It is likely to surprise us with Machiavellian propensities for deep laid schemes to startle, cunning devices to astound. It promises eccentricities galore and coquettish irresistibility. After all, it is interesting if it isn't becoming.

Seven-two times she has eyes full of love and six-six times she rests her head upon the gentleman's breast. Only four times is she taken by surprise, and six times she weeps silently for joy. Once she sneezes, once she struggles not to be kissed, and once she says, "Don't be a fool."

In cases of rejection it is evidently the proper thing for the gentleman to rush madly away, for he does this in thirty-one cases in fifty. He declares that he will commit suicide but six times, once he says he will go to the devil, and thirteen times he thinks he will go home.

Once he pounds a stone wall with his fist, once he pulls down his vest, and only once does he refuse to be prayed for, but he swears that life is of no value seventeen times.

When life comes to a point when nobody has thought anything, when both are meeting in casual encounter to assure each other of their desire to meet and enjoy social and sympathetic intercourse, but cannot because they are so driven with engagements—when life comes to this it is really a serious question. And it is precisely the condition in which every one describes himself as being. Recently two women desired to meet to study certain works, but on comparing notes as to time there was actually not an hour for two weeks that both could spare at the same time. The days are not long enough. The are full and overflowing. A week is filled before it arrives and the inevitable program of affairs and events that fill the blank pages of one's engagement book leave little margin for the unexpected, which is enough of itself for each day. Now to have one's life reduced to the mere filling of engagements successively, as they arrive, is simply to live the life of a more or less—and probably less intelligent automaton. The stress of modern requirements demands of the individual that he live several lives in one. He needs a relay of selves. He requires one to attend to his especial calling in life; another to read, if he would keep up at all with the march of contemporary literature, to say nothing of the classics and the masterpieces of the past; one to fulfill social obligations of the more public and spectacular kind and another to enjoy the finer flavor of life in that quiet intimacy that is a thing wholly apart from "society" and which is the sweetest happiness that social life affords.

The prominence of cigarette smoking women in modern fiction, especially in dealing with the refined products of civilization on the continent, must have been noticed. If smoking by women were one of the commonest and most natural things in life at great European centers, we should not be surprised, but we do not believe it is yet so common, at least as a public practice, as the fiction writers would show. We think that the novelist is attracted to the cigarette smoking woman rather because there is an element of irregularity about her, something new, somewhat

startling to American readers and therefore likely to take.

There is no question that cigarette smoking is common among the "fine ladies" of Europe, and particularly in that class from which Marion Crawford has drawn some of his recent characters. The curious but pure creature who ran away with Don Orsino's heart he first met in a studio where she was sitting for her portrait. When fatigued with sitting she borrowed a cigarette, placed herself carelessly on a divan, and smoked with Don Orsino and the artist.

Mrs. Everett, the wife of a master drayman of New Orleans, is said to be one of the best veterinary surgeons in that city. She began by treating her husband's horses during an influenza epidemic. She had long been a skillful and, noticing that mules and horses suffered just as people do, she decided to doctor them in the same way. Warm blankets and hot applications, poultices and internal prescriptions were miraculously effective, and finally the animals would open their mouths to take her remedies. After the horses had recovered Mrs. Everett, encouraged by her success, studied every book she could find on the diseases of horses and mules and their surgical treatment, until she could set a broken leg, extract a nail from the hoof and treat influenza and lockjaw.

"Is that all? Well don't let that bother you any longer. You sit with me today and bring an extra bottle." The railroad man had suspected her of being a temperance organizer and after being assured that she was an anti-suffragette, he repented by sharing his liquid with her future meals. He had become aware of her woman suffrage leanings, but never suspected the name of his aged and interesting friend until she started to leave the train, when he saw her pointed out by a lady as Julia Ward Howe.

If I were asked by a young man or a young woman how to be guided in the choice of a life mate I should, in the exercise of a judgment based on wide and studious observation, say: Choose that person who, after a reasonable period of association, proves to be most companionable, writes John Lambert Payne in a pertinent article on "The Secret of Happy Marriages" in the March Ladies' Home Journal. This broad law comprehends nearly all others that can be suggested. It is infinitely better to be single through life than marry one who would not answer to this condition. Speaking somewhat narrowly and selfishly, contentment is the most that can be got out of a married woman. The contented wife is found it will be discovered that they exhibit manifestly opposite characteristics of temperament, habit, taste and physique. It is upon this fixed foundation that happy affinities are formed. It is an important doctrine in medical jurisprudence that "like cures like"—which is only another way for saying that like kills like—and it is equally true in the social realm that companionship is not felt between young men and young women who are closely similar in general appearance or disposition. On the contrary, it arises, and leads to happy unions, between persons who are often widely dissimilar.

They were a company of congenital women before an open fire over 5 o'clock tea, and one of them was saying how she hated to grow old and lose her zest in life and its belongings. Then a fresh-faced matron, with a pair of steady, true eyes, spoke out with her native vehemence:

"Nonsense, what do the years bring but greater treasures and greater capacity to enjoy them? Do you suppose I guessed anything about real happiness in what we call 'youth's happy days?' Why, every year that I have been a wife and mother I have known constantly increasing joy; better and better appreciated with each offering."

The project to honor Mrs. Potter Palmer for her work in behalf of the Columbian fair is a unique one, and the women of the board that suggested it deserve credit for the happy thought. They stop the motion of a committee to turn out a single piece of gold and then destroy the lie pieces of gold without a duplicate, sufficient to give it a priceless value and make it a Kohinoor among gold pieces.

Mrs. Palmer, as has been said, is one of fortune's favorites so far as money and estate are concerned, and there is not much that could be offered her which she does not already possess. This coin, however, in its superb singleness is, as I am mind, much more important than the higher accomplishments.

A soft corduroy cloth, which looks like a heavy-ribbed cashmere, in silver blue, tan, green and heliotrope is made into neat and pretty spring costumes consisting of a very flaring bell skirt, a fancy Russian coat with ample revers and a jaunty back showing wing-like pieces of velvet extending from the revers to the waist line. The parted fronts are fitted shirt-waist of flower-striped surah.

It is a caprice of the moments with a certain set of girls who strive for fads and eccentricities to omit all punctuation marks in their letters. Probably some one who couldn't put them in started the fashion. Just as a girl at the time of a few years ago found that a sore finger throbbed and ached desperately if her hand lay across her lap, and was much relieved when she lifted it again. So she sat all the evening in a conspicuous box with one slender gloved hand touching her cheek—with the result of making the attitude a marked and ragged fashion that entire season.

What Women Are Doing.

An American who has long resided at Honolulu says that the ex-queen "has a list like a stevedore."

"Chopped Chat" is the name given to series of evening talks to be given by a Philadelphia society lady during Lent.

Mrs. C. Carlson of Minneapolis, recently gave birth to twins, making the third pair within three and one-half years.

There are believed to be a score of women in New York city whose collections of lace vary in value from \$20,000 to \$50,000.

Mrs. Henry Clews' bath room is a grotto of onyx, walls, floor, ceiling, basin and tub all being made of the sculptured stone.

Madeline Brohan, one of the most charming actresses of the Franchise, turns out to be the daughter of a Scotchman named Brown.

The most beautiful unmarried princess in Europe, it is said, is the Princess Clementina, the youngest daughter of the king of the Belgians.

A Pennsylvania woman makes pets of spiders. She could make herself perfectly happy by cultivating a well developed case of delirium tremens.

The idea of employing pretty women for bill collectors looks feasible, but it would not work. The delinquent debtors would all want them to call again.

When Clara Morris wants to make real tears start she looks straight at the gallery, though she says she can make them come by looking steadily at any point for a few seconds.

Miss Mollie Neilson of Hamilton, O., who fasted for fifteen days last November, wants to fast thirty days in the interest of science. This is just the season for it and no one should stop her.

Edison likes to have women machinists to do all the finer work of his electrical inventions. There are 200 women in his employ, and he claims that they are far more reliable than men would be.

Mrs. Robert Johnson of Sonoma, Cal., has 200 high bred Angora cats and three servants, devote their entire time to them. Mrs. Johnson is a widow to whom money is no object, she being worth several millions.

Mrs. Whitne's will was written on a single sheet of foolscap paper, but it left \$3,050,000 to her husband. This should be a lesson to young writers that it is possible to say a good deal sometimes in very little space.

Silk gloves are to be worn again, and light shades and tints promise well for summer wear. White gloves are to be worn for almost all occasions.

The Belvoir jacket is one of the features of the season. Embroidered jacket fronts are shown for making up with almost all classes of fabrics.

Although paniers are not yet openly favored by fashion, there are some indications that, before the season is over, they may be arrived at by indirect ways.

Some of the stylish Henri Deux caps have strapped shoulder puffs and lengthwise rows of cut-jet gimp on the revers collar, the latter edged narrowly with ostrich feather trimming.

The point of exaggeration in the length of dress coats having been reached, it is likely that they will be a decided reaction in favor of somewhat shorter styles for next season.

New felt hats of pale rose pink and heliotrope are trimmed with violets, heartsease or juncos intermixed with green velvet ribbon, or with damask roses and ermine silk guipure lace.

Lace capes fashioned much like the winter models, with velvet or jetted yokes and collars, have made their appearance, like many other of the season's fashions, long before they are required.

Millinery exhibits show large quantities of green. Black, of course, is the first choice in the finest class of goods. Closely following, are gray, shades of rose, blue and brown, with some yellow.

With shorter sleeves, there is a decided call for longer gloves. These are, as a rule, less wrinkled about the wrists than heretofore, and the woman with

the shapely arms is to be congratulated.

Although for the moment there are plenty of rumors but no decided changes or deviations in the general line upon which fashions are moving, there is an endless series of innovation in minor characteristics.

New tailored costumes for early spring are made in Director, Russian, and strictly English styles showing short-skirted skirts and natty open pants, present an unusual amount of odd and novel effects in their composition.

The richest of the new coats are of brocade or batiste, corded silk, not infrequently made up in colors. One of the choice models is the Olympia, significant of its Russian origin, and in heavily repped silk in dark hunter's green.

The average husband gives a good deal of quiet fun at his wife's predilection for what appears to be unfruitful "shopping" expeditions, but he seldom gives her due credit for all the money that she saves by "looking round."

A late Parisian novelty—bats in diamonds—are bizarre enough to attract the attention of those seeking after new and strange effects. Old jewels can be reset and rearranged in these bats, which are described as setting off to striking advantage a nail costume.

Linen collars and cuffs are again in high favor, but worn with a difference. The cuffs are no longer a mere strip of white below the sleeve, but profuse for an inch or two, like a man's wristbands. This would seem to be another saucy attempt to seize upon the masculine belongings.

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