

WIDOWER CHEERS WIDOWS

Singular Birthday Banquet Projected by a Retired Banker.

WILL BE THE ONLY MAN PRESENT

Rose but Women Benefit of Husbands Bidden to the Feast—Practical Kindness to Lora Creatures.

Alfred A. Howlett, a retired banker of Syracuse, N. Y., does not think a great deal of the older wailer's advice to his son Samuel. He does not "beware of widows," but instead has a very high opinion of these lora creatures and whenever occasion offers seeks to do them a good turn.

"On my last birthday," said Mr. Howlett, "I gave a little party and had ten widows as my guests. After that every time I met a widow I knew on the street she would say, 'Why didn't you invite me? I am a widow.' You see, I didn't think anybody would care about it."

A Successful Business Man.

For fifty years Mr. Howlett was president of the Salt Springs National bank and directed its affairs with great ability, resigning only two years ago on account of his age. He was formerly president of the Syracuse & Chenango Valley railroad and president of the Syracuse Savings bank.

Mr. Howlett has always been ready for a job, practical or otherwise, and his friends are racking their brains to get some good one on him on the day the party, which will last from 4 o'clock in the afternoon until 8 o'clock in the evening. But he assures all his friends that there is no job concerned in his present enterprise, insisting that the dinner will be carried out strictly on the lines indicated, and that no trouble or expense will be spared to make it a success.

Stands High in the Community.

Mr. Howlett holds a high place among the active and successful old men of Syracuse. Ever since he came from the farms of Geddes to work for Horace and Hamilton White, bankers, in his youth, he has been a lively and active figure in the city's life.

He was a director of the Salt Springs bank when it first opened its doors in 1852. Seven years later he was vice president and cashier, and immediately thereafter president. Since that time he has been connected with some of the leading enterprises of the city, including Syracuse university and the Onondaga County Orphan asylum.

"People don't seem to remember that widows are most always left out of society altogether and I want to give them a good time."

"Some of the men are jealous. They are trying to have fun with me, but if I live until February 14 that party will come off. My son has got to get out with me in going to the entertaining all alone. Any man that comes prowling around will get kicked out."

Not His First Experiment.

Two years ago, to celebrate his birthday, Mr. Howlett asked in ten widows whom he knew well. They had such a good time and told their friends so much about it that he has been busy since explaining to other widows why he did not invite them. Finally he determined to invite every widow he knew. He was surprised that the papers should make a fuss about a man dining with 125 widows if he wanted to. His idea was simply to amuse his friends and himself.

"When I was married," remarked Mr. Howlett, in speaking of his earlier days, "I said to my wife: 'Minerva, where are you going to church?' She replied that she was a Methodist. I proposed that we go to the Unitarian and she said she wouldn't hear of it. And finally I suggested as a compromise that we go to the Presbyterian church, as I considered that about between the Methodists and the Unitarians."

Five years ago he was at death's door and a New York specialist was sent for.

COULD NOT AGREE ON GAME

Rise and Fall of a Card Club Composed of Girls.

INDIVIDUAL WHIMS RUPTURE THE DEAL

Whist, High Five and Poker Each Had Advocates, but Were Voted Down for Solitaires.

When the tall girl was invited to help make up a second table at what she declined on the ground that she had had no practice at card playing this winter and would spoil the game for everybody else. The hostess was surprised at that excuse.

"That is strange," she said. "I thought you had belonged to a card club all winter. You told me early last fall that you and a lot of girls in the music and art classes were going to play cards two evenings a week for recreation."

"The tall girl sighed. 'I know I told you that,' she said, 'and I thought we were going to. We had talked it over and had perfected all our plans. We even got far enough along to borrow extra tables, and one evening we met up in my room, but we never got any further than that because we couldn't decide upon what game to play. 'Personally I inclined to high five, because you can talk when you are playing that and have a good time, and that is what I play cards for. I don't care for my sense in sitting down to a card table in the same solemn spirit that you take to a funeral.'"

"When I said that the senior art student accused me of being frivolous. She insisted upon what she just did that to show off. She has a memory about four yards long, and she likes to play what she can make a display of her mental powers. She never forgets what cards have been played and who holds them, and when the game is coded she likes to have people congratulate her and say, 'Dear me, what a wonderful memory you have. You never forget a point, do you?' I think it perfectly awful for any girl to be so puffed up with pride as that girl is. Even if I don't have a memory that never goes out, I wouldn't inflict my friends with it all the time."

"The girl who makes a specialty of classic heads wanted to play casino—she said it was so restful after an all-day tussle with the features of Sophocles and Diogenes and Peter the Great. The composer from Indiana said that the rest of us could play any old thing we pleased, but as for her it was hearts or nothing. That girl is too silly for any use. She really is popular with the men—I cannot deny that—but it is no reason she should make herself disagreeable when there are other women around. The idea of talking about a game of cards as if she was only playing to get practice in the manipulation of real hearts between times. We were all perfectly displeased with her attitude, and on that matter what game we did decide upon, it most certainly should not be hearts."

"Another girl wanted to play euchre. I am afraid that girl will come to a bad end if she doesn't look out. She has the true gambling instinct. She said frankly that she looked upon cards as a means of making money and that she preferred euchre because it gave you the best chance to win big prizes at a progressive game."

The Poker Advocate.

"The girl from Chicago came out strong for poker. There is another girl that will be hater watching. Some of us remonstrated on the ground that you cannot play poker without money. Of course you can't, said the Chicago girl. 'That is why I like to play it. What do you suppose I want to play for—peppermint drops?' She seemed to think that was smart, but we did not, so we voted down poker."

"Another girl put up a strong fight for seven-up, somebody else wanted to play each of the other girls held out for some favorite but impossible game. We talked the matter over from 8 o'clock till 12. The discussion waxed real hot at times, and the hotter it waxed the further we got from an agreement. At last the Chicago girl said that the only way to settle the matter was to play cards together for each girl to have a table to herself and play solitaire. The whist advocate argued that there would not be much fun in that and that if we were going to play solitaire we might as well play it at home, as a risk of catching cold by remaining around to each other's houses in bad weather. We finally agreed that there was some sense in that and so adjourned at ten minutes past midnight in a tolerably amiable frame of mind."

"So there you have the history of the rise and fall of our card club. Since I have played nothing but solitaire for four months I am afraid I should not be a very desirable partner at whist and so would rather be excused."—New York Times.

NEW TREATMENT FOR CORNS

Relief for the Afflicted Promise by Manipulators of X-Ray Machines.

That soft corns, excessive perspiration, skin cancers and other forms of eczema can be cured by the X-ray are the assertion of several reputable physicians of Chicago.

Diagnoses from Boston say that in a hospital these skin cancers are being successfully treated by the X-ray brought smiles to the lips of many Chicagoans, who say that it is a general practice among specialists here to treat these things in that manner, and has been for the last three or four years. Incidentally the fact was brought out that Chicago is about five or six years ahead of Boston, New York and other eastern cities in the use of the X-ray.

Diseases allied to eczema are brought about by an abnormal condition of the cells of the skin. If there is a superabundance of the pathological cells, the trouble is sometimes called a skin cancer. When treated with the Roentgen rays by exposure to the rays for periods of specific length the skin cancers disappear entirely.

It is said that treatment of this sort continued for three weeks will show no change in the cancer, but that at about the end of that time the vanishing of the cancer begins and will continue, whether the treatment is continued or not. What the causes for this are the users of the rays will not hazard a guess. They claim to have theories, but none of them is willing to state what his theories are. Inquiry among the specialists in diseases which are said to be most benefited by the X-ray as a curative agent developed some remarkable opinions.—Chicago News.

QUAINT FEATURES OF LIFE

F. N. Brown, the retiring sheriff of Republic county, Kansas, publishes a card thanking "the people who have retained me in office for a space of five years." Mr. Brown also duly thanks Providence for certain favors, using the following language: "In the discharge of my dangerous duties of this office I want to make this acknowledgment that I have always been protected and guided by a kind and loving God, and when dressed in His armor there is absolutely no loophole for bullets. Praise His name, and again I say, thank you."

A sidewalk charged with electricity caused annoyance to pedestrians passing John Furia's grocery, 714 Halsted street. One of the operators at the Chicago and Canalport avenue police station, was attracted by the cries of a boy. He went to the boy's assistance, and the latter told him that he had a nail in his foot and could not move it. Reed wore rubbers, and the policeman stepped on the nail. He assisted the boy from the walk, and later observed that others passing the place received electric shocks.

After having been relieved of a rest octopus that she had carried in her stomach for two years Mrs. Elizabeth Wendt is resting easy at St. Luke's hospital, New York City. While at Long Branch, N. J., two summers ago Mrs. Wendt drank a glass of water from a natural well in the yard of one of the country homes. As she swallowed the water she felt a peculiar wringing sensation in her throat which became her to cough violently. She suffered from severe choking spells for several months, but thought nothing of the matter until six months ago, when she felt an unaccountable gnawing sensation.

"I am tired of town," was the first message Dora Meek gave her parents after her wonderful 120 days' sleep at Centralia, Ill. The message came this afternoon on a pad kept at her chair, and with it a request to visit Kate Fisher, a country cousin, since January 1 she had been covering rapidly. The attack of hysteria had been ascribed to a lovers' quarrel, but now, it is said, to home sickness or overwork in a restaurant. A year ago she suffered a shorter attack, and did not talk until she was well. She now sleeps soundly, less than half the time.

OIL BRICK FAKE BRANDED

Fraud Order Issued Against a Concern Which Worked an Ohio Craft.

Last Friday the postmaster general issued a fraud order against L. M. Bryan & Co. of Cincinnati, dealers in "a trust-killing, marvelous and supernatural device" intended to produce "mysterious, everlasting fire, free from smoke, soot" and all other inconveniences incident to the use of common coal.

This firm offered to send to all applicants a formula for this wonderful invention. Replies brought forth printed circulars describing the wonder and ending by offering for the small sum of \$1 to supply the formula and appoint the applicant as an agent for the concern.

So easy was it to sell the invention, the circular stated, that the fortunate agent could immediately find himself rolling in the lap of luxury. Ninety per cent was shared and the agent was assured that the invention created "great excitement" wherever it was displayed.

Why Syrup of Figs is the best family laxative

It is pure. It is gentle. It is pleasant. It is efficacious. It is not expensive. It is good for children. It is excellent for ladies. It is convenient for business men. It is perfectly safe under all circumstances. It is used by millions of families the world over. It stands highest, as a laxative, with physicians. If you use it you have the best laxative the world produces.

Because Its component parts are all wholesome. It acts gently without unpleasant after-effects. It is wholly free from objectionable substances. It contains the laxative principles of plants. It contains the carminative principles of plants. It contains wholesome aromatic liquids which are agreeable and refreshing to the taste. All are pure. All are delicately blended. All are skillfully and scientifically compounded. Its value is due to our method of manufacture and to the originality and simplicity of the combination. To get its beneficial effects—buy the genuine. Manufactured by CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP CO. San Francisco, Cal. New York, N. Y. FOR SALE BY ALL LEADING DRUGGISTS.

Amazing Courtship Of Peter Spiggot

Short Story by OLIVER THUMM.

(Copyright, 1903, by T. C. McClure.) Every time I see a pair of happy lovers or read a tale of true love I am reminded of the remarkable devotion displayed by the Widow Dickens for my friend, Peter Spiggot. Ah, but she was well worth the winning; a fine, plump woman not over 30, light of foot and gay without folly, with a complexion like a lady blush apple, soft, silky hair, with a gleam like a copper kettle where the sun struck it, and a voice that was better than any medicine in a sick room. Peter was bound to have her, and small blame to him, but the poor man had some terrible flaws. He was barely turned 45, and, you might say, in the very prime of life, but he was bald as a pumpkin, brown as a potato and galling as a besople. When he first began to court the widow she looked on him as a fair good joke, but let her see right away that he was plump in earnest, and in spite of his looks, the widow soon began to like him mightily well. But when it came to the point of marrying she kept telling him "No."

"Peter," she said at last, after he had been pressing her hands for a season, "you're kind and true-hearted; you've got enough of this world's goods to make a wife comfortable and I don't mind owning you that you would be my first choice if it wasn't for a few drawbacks. For one thing I never could marry a man by the name of Spiggot. Dickens ain't such an uncommon name. I'll allow, but it ain't a patch on my maiden name, which was Damm. I married Henry Dickens to get rid of that unchristian name and I've always said that I'd never marry again except to better myself."

The very next day Peter came over to her house with a piece of yellow wrapping paper, on which he had written a list of names, one for every letter of the alphabet. "Just cast your eye over that, Martha," said he, "and see if you would like the picking of a husband out of the lot?" "I wouldn't especially lean toward any of them," the widow remarked after looking over the list quite earnestly. "The fact is I've already made up my mind that if I had the choosing of a name for my next life partner I'd be mighty well satisfied with Darrington. You see it's a fine sounding name and it never begins with 'D.' All my pillow shams and fine sheets and table spreads that I've made ever since I was a young girl are marked with a 'D,' so you see it would come awfully handy not to have to change them."

Six weeks later Peter came across lots to the garage where the widow was setting out some tomato plants and handed her a big document with a gold and red seal on it. He had had his name changed to Peter Darrington by act of congress. It had cost him a pretty penny, but he knew that the congressman from his district had to live, so he never grumbled.

"Well," said he when she had slowly read the paper through from beginning to end, "I suppose now you're ready to name the day when you'll be Mrs. Peter Darrington?" Mrs. Dickens thoughtfully emptied the entire contents of her sprinkling can on the tomato plant she had just set out before she answered. "No, I ain't," she said at last. Peter climbed over the fence, picked up the empty sprinkling can, went to the well and let it, and set it down beside her. "Why?" he asked. "Because," she answered. "I was afraid it was some dreadful scandal like that," said Peter, not meaning any harm, but being naturally sarcastic like.

The widow blazed right up. "Look here, Peter Spiggot Darrington, if you must know the reason, it's because you're bald-headed! I've tried and tried to get you to wear a wig, but you're so mighty bald that I can't. And I never could marry a bald-headed man, even if his name was Darrington!" Mrs. Dickens' Peter said with the same narrowing of his eyes that he used in a horse trade, "well, you give me the reason of you for not wearing a wig." "Well," replied the widow, who had herself traded a horse or two without loss, "six months is a long time, but I don't mind giving a favor for an old friend. So I'll give you my word not to consider any offers till next November." "Much obliged. Fine weather, ain't it?" "Without waiting for an answer to this last question he was robs. It was a month before Peter called again and then he stalked into the kitchen with his hat on and a little paper package in his hand. "Good morning, Mrs. Dickens," he said, "I just come over to find out what color of hair you liked best." He opened his little package and spread out on the kitchen table twenty white envelopes, on each one of which was neatly pasted a sample of a different shade of hair. The widow gasped. "Look here, Peter Spiggot-Darrington," she ejaculated, "you're not going to buy a wig? You might know I couldn't abide a man with a wig. Why don't you take off your hat?" "I can't, Martha," he replied, "I'm irritating my scalp." "Irritating it! You don't mean to say

the old Red Brush school when they wanted to be relieved. "Well, of course you're the doctor, Mr. Dickens," said Peter, trying to smile cheerfully, "but there's no reason we can't be good friends anyhow. I'm bound to say that knowing you has been improving to me in all ways, for when I first began to keep company with you I was baldheaded and too tall for comfort, and my name wasn't fit for anything on earth but to sign checks on the bank with. In spite of all I've gained, though, I wish you could have told me in the first place that I was too old. I needn't have wasted all this time."

When Peter went away this time the widow Dickens sat down to peel potatoes and cut her finger. At dinner time she burned the meat and set the coffee boiling. For two days she had a notion, off and on, to send for Peter, but she didn't, and Peter didn't come around to bother her. He just laid in a new stock of drugs and went musing around again. After awhile his live stock kept dying off, one at a time, at an awful rate, but in a few months he began to buy up all the old tough stock he could get, and also began to sell the tenderest and juiciest young shoats and calves and chickens that ever came off a farm.

Aided by his mighty love for the widow Dickens he had discovered what the wisest men of all the ages had failed to find—the Elixer of Youth! When he had it down to where he knew it was perfect and could be relied upon, he took a bottle of it and went down to the widow's house. "I've come to make a last appeal, Martha," he said; "and I want a clear understanding with you. All I want is a plain answer to a plain question. If I was younger would you marry me?" "Peter," she said, "I would." "Then here goes!" said he, and with that he tilted up the bottle, emptied the Elixer of Youth down his throat and tumbled down in his clothes, a squalling baby with an amazing stock of sun-colored hair!

You see Peter had, some way or other, miscalculated the strength of the elixer and took an overdose, and it set him back about thirty years farther than he had meant to go. Well, the widow was flustered and so sorry she didn't know what to do. Now that it was all over and eternally too late she saw that, in the end, she really meant to marry Peter all the while. In the meantime something practical had to be done, so she snatched the baby out of the pile of heavy clothes and wrapped it up in a blanket till she could borrow some baby clothes. Then she gave it some milk and sat down to think over what she should do. There was all that property to look after and Peter had no chick nor child, no kith nor kin of any kind. So she up and married that baby!

She tried to keep her from getting a license, but she proved he was 42 years old and in his right mind, so what could they do? The last time I saw Mrs. Peter Darrington she was just giving her husband an all-fired good spanking. "Peter Spiggot Darrington," she said as she slapped him down on the floor, "if I catch you pulling that cat's tail again I'll just fairly skin you alive!"

ESCAPED A SPY'S FATE

Georgia Congressman Had a Narrow Margin for His Life in War Times.

One of the most popular members of congress is Representative Livingston of Georgia, a former confederate soldier, who was thoroughly "reconstructed" soon after the last gun of the conflict had been fired. He was telling a story of the war in the appropriations committee room at the capital the other day of his narrow escape from Yankee soldiers during operations at Atlanta. He and a Texas scout were sent on a perilous mission in citizens' clothes. "I knew every pat leading to the city and the streets, as well as I did the back paths around my own farm, and General Hardee directed me to ascertain information about the enemy, which I believed I could do from a woman living in the city."

"We rode up to the back gate, but to our astonishment the Yankees were in her house. I sprang back into my saddle and we galloped away, the Yankees hot after us. Years afterwards, the late General Coggswell of Massachusetts and I met here in this committee room, and I happened to learn that he was the military commander at Atlanta at that time. Then I told him my story. "When I finished telling it General Coggswell said: 'You were a good deal of a spy, but you were a good deal of a man.'"

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