

Copyright, 1912, by the Star Company. Great Britain Rights Reserved.

## "PRESERVE WICKED RENO AS A COLLEGE FOR BRIDES!"

**A Woman Observer's Plan to Apply the Methods of Science to America's Greatest Social Problem, and by Creating a College of Observation in Nevada's Notorious Divorce Colony, Make Its Graduates Divorce Proof.**

By Leslie Curtis,  
Former Associate Editor of the Reno Gazette, Author of "Reno Reveries," Etc.

EVERYBODY has agreed that divorce is one of the most serious problems of modern America. The law has dealt with it, society has dealt with it, and the church is perpetually struggling with it. No one has yet found any effective remedy for the steady growth of marital shipwreck. I have at last found the remedy.

The only real progress in the world of science has been made since the microscope was discovered. Only in the fields of chemistry, biology and physics has tremendous progress been made, and the reason is that in these fields the microscope is available.

Science has discovered that we learn from observation. If we can see with the eye, we can learn. I would apply the methods of science to the scandal of divorce. I would, so to speak, put under the microscope the whole wretched, miserable story of matrimonial misery, and by seeing and studying would learn the remedy.

My plan is to establish a college of observation here at Reno, where the sad and painful story of domestic misery and misfortune unfolds itself in every possible phase and color.

Every expectant bridegroom and every prospective bride should be given a course in my School of Applied Domestic Research. I am certain that a six months' course of lectures and daily attendance at the divorce courts of Reno would make my graduates divorce proof.

Under present conditions, women marry more or less blindly, live blindly, and often end up in Reno or its equivalent with "Bachelor's of Failure" written after each name and a past full of knotholes as a diploma. Why not reverse the usual order and place Reno first? Happiness would then be sure to follow, based on a definite knowledge of what marriage means—and what divorce costs.

I am perfectly serious in my idea. The utility of it has already been tested, because it has been noted by interested people that the second marriages of Reno "graduates" are invariably successful. This because six months' observation of others has taught them to choose more carefully. Another instance lies in the fact that few, if any, divorces are secured by home people. Boys and girls, mingling with the human disappointments from the East, learn invaluable lessons and enter matrimony with a seriousness worthy of maturity.

I believe in divorce, but not the abuse of it, and two years in Reno as an observer convinced me that women are to blame for the majority of unhappy marriages. Three-fourths of the women who go to Nevada do not deserve divorces, although they are evidently sincere in thinking themselves abused.

They seek freedom because their idea of marriage is fundamentally wrong. This is not true in all cases, but in many.

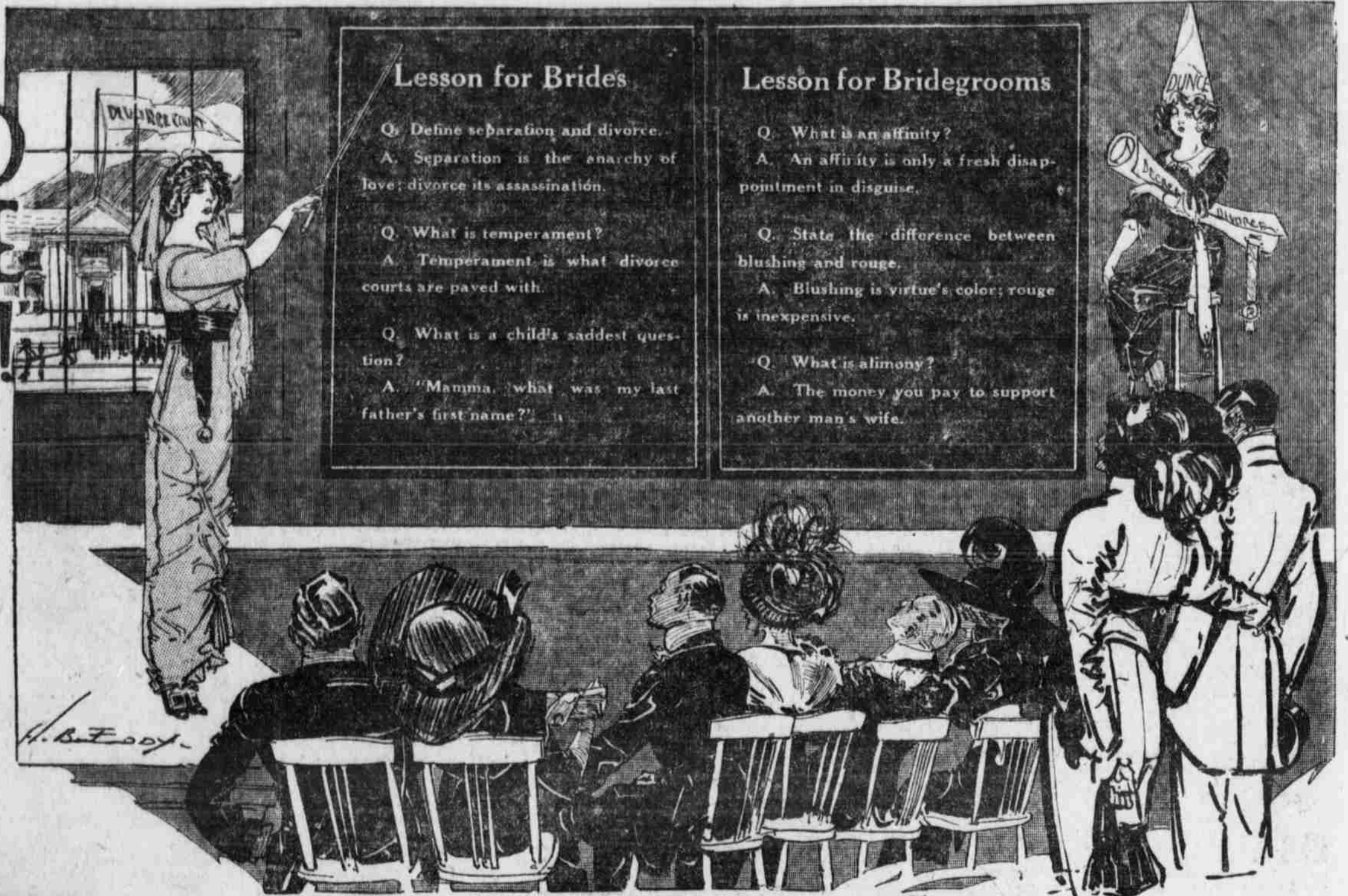
Everybody knows good women who have suffered agonies as the wives of drug fiends and drunkards and who are perfectly justified in seeking freedom. Men who marry for money are also despicable, but it always takes two to make a bargain, and if girls knew how to choose intelligently before marriage the drunkard, the drug fiend and fortune-hunter would be overstocked with mittens.

Husbands, in my opinion, are less to blame for the prevalence of divorce than their wives. Women marry for any number of reasons, but men usually for love, because their field of choice is unlimited and they always pick the one girl



Miss Leslie Curtis, Who, After Four Years' Observation at Reno, Evolved the Idea of Starting a College of Observation There to Study the Causes of the Divorce Evil.

"The most important course will be the study of actual cases in the court. The bride will be given a microscopic view of all their phases."



"Every day the prospective brides and bridegrooms would receive lessons in the subtler phases of marriage and divorce. The ever-saddest sight of Reno's divorce mill through the window would stimulate their eagerness to learn."

who seems superior to all the rest. Almost every man desires to be a model husband when he does settle down with his ideal, and has no intention of promoting discord. But when he discovers that his wife's illusions and ideas are foreign to all the tenets of sane living, he soon loses interest in the partnership. Wife goes to Reno, eventually, and hubby pays alimony all the rest of his life.

My school for brides would prevent such tragedies. "Forewarned is forearmed" is an excellent motto. With Reno for a location, life's lessons could be illustrated with living examples, a far more impressive method than dry lectures, or legislative cures.

I would have Reno kept, by an act of Congress, just as it is, with special provision against making it any harder to get a divorce. The Government would maintain Reno as a divorce reserve, paying all bills incurred by those seeking divorce.

Then I would have all the States pass a special act providing funds for the maintenance of my College of Observation. All the brides and bridegrooms would have to do would be to pay for their keep and a nominal tuition charge.

Course Number One would be to dispel the idea that beauty alone will hold a husband. It is a fact that three-fourths of Reno's visitors are really beautiful. Men rave over them, seek their society and become madly infatuated—yet they cannot hold a husband

for any length of time. What is the reason?

Acquaintance with these dazzling ladies would soon teach my pupils that beauty usually carries with it an over-developed vanity and love of admiration, which, in the close companionship of marriage, counteracts the advantage of comeliness. The pretty woman is so accustomed to compliments that she feels neglected if her husband fails to rave over her beauty every time he comes into her presence. No matter how much a man appreciates the good looks of his wife, he cannot be always talking about it, because there are more vital things to occupy his thoughts in these days of keen business competition.

The wise wife will understand this seeming indifference; the unwise will find joy in attracting the admiration of other men. This, no matter how harmless at first, will lead to the divorce court sooner or later. Reno is full of beautiful, vain creatures, whose greatest joy in life is to hear a masculine voice whispering, "You are so beautiful!"

After my pupils had been given this general view, expert psychologists would take up certain applicants for divorce in detail and dissect her character as thoroughly as a subject is dissected in a clinic. Course Number Two would be taken every afternoon at the University of Nevada, for, while my pupils are using human models in finding "What not to do," they must also be absorbing, in a practical way, "What to do and how to do it." In the Domestic Science class not only do they teach cooking so that it becomes a pleasure rather than drudgery, but also economy in buying, measuring and utilizing food stuffs with the least possible waste. All these things inspire in young women the desire to do things right when they have homes of their own.

Course Number Three would consist of observation in the cottages and apartments of divorcees.

Life is unconventional among colony members, and we would be able to find untidy kitchens and disordered boudoirs with tumbled dressers and a thousand and one cosmetics in plain view. Expensive lingerie thrown carelessly about indicates several characteristics of the owner, especially if laundry devastation goes unattended and loops of torn lace are held with pins. Such investigations offer unlimited

### Lesson for Bridegrooms

- Q. What is an affinity?  
A. An affinity is only a fresh disappointment in disguise.
- Q. State the difference between blushing and rouge.  
A. Blushing is virtue's color; rouge is inexpensive.
- Q. What is alimony?  
A. The money you pay to support another man's wife.

possibilities. Course Number Four is merely a study of folly. Occasionally my pupils should dine at the Colony Cafe and other haunts of the husbandless elite. Surrounded by merry parties of lovely women and their admirers, lulled by seductive music and served with choicest viands, they could bask in the atmosphere which starts many a pretty traveler on the road to Reno. The glamour of white lights in the great cities becomes a mania with some women and makes them forget the homely things of life that really count. No doubt my bridelets and groom-



"Drive men to run away with their stenographers and others who have a more accurate and less lofty view of their character."

lets would comment on the beauty of this scene and see no cause for censure or alarm. Later, when frequent libations had flushed the faces of flower-like women and loosened up hilarious tongues, they would be assigned to join some party bound for a joy ride.

After a wild ride through the mountains my pupils would be so disgusted that they would beg to be taken home.

Course Number Five, perhaps the most important, is a series of mornings at the court. There will be studied the workings of the famous "divorce mill." Here, on the raw testimony of husband and wife, my pupils would be able to absorb the subtle and most corroding horrors of divorce. Stenographic reports would be taken and used later for analysis by our college psychologists. I would depend more for real educational value, however, upon the actual sight of the "mistreated" ones upon the stand.

Course Number Six would be directed solely against jealousy. How to avoid even the appearance of evil would be one part of it. Learning to discount the value of gossip, another. The suspicious mind is always ready to discolor the most innocent action, and the wife who continually harps on her fears will drive a man into just what she depicts. Every session of Reno's divorce court is a record of petty jealousies, founded on hearsay and little blocks of nothing. Narcissus, largely a fault of women, is closely allied but should not be confused with fault finding. The latter appears to belong to the masculine side.

Last, but not least, would come Course Seven, dealing entirely with the mental conception of marriage. Many modern maids marry with the idea that they are conferring a great honor on mere man, and he is never allowed to forget it. The fault here is in exaggerated ego. A good woman certainly honors the man she marries, but the honoring is not altogether on her side. She has chosen him from a small number of suitors, while he has picked her from an unlimited field. In absence of anything better, she accepts his offer and spends the rest of her life impressing him with the fact that she is far too good for him and has done him an honor which can never be repaid.

Such a marriage, founded on the inevitable superiority of the bride, is bound to drive the unappreciated worm to the society of his stenographer or some other human creature, whose estimate of character is more accurate and less lofty.

I have only briefly outlined the high lights of the college I have in mind. The plan is perfectly practicable, and I am sure there would always be enough applicants for divorce at Reno to keep the students busy.

Why not let science have a trial at divorce?

## How Fish Families in Layers Fill Ocean Depths

WHEN a disaster occurs at sea, and people read that some leviathan vessel has gone down to the utmost depth of the ocean, imagination is stirred in wondering what conditions surround her.

According to Sir John Murray, one of the greatest authorities on oceanography, the bottom is a desert of pitch-black darkness, penetrating cold, and eternal silence. Worms, sea puddings, and coral polyps sluggishly crawl or away in the almost currentless depths, and only two species of fish, both of them small, with much head and little body, have been found deeper than a mile and a quarter down.

The range of fishes in the sea is as though it were divided into layers, one above the other, and no fish can live above or below this layer. Thus many of the deeper fish—three-quarters of a mile below the surface—have been found floating at the top; they had swallowed a fish as large or larger than themselves and its buoyancy had lifted them out of the straits to which they were accustomed.

The physiology of a bottom fish is almost impossible to know, because they are built to resist a tremendous pressure of water, and when this pressure is released—as when they are brought to the surface in a net—sometimes the fish has burst; the organs are crushed beyond reconstruction.

Similarly, if a fish of a higher stratum attacks a bottom fish in

the neutral zone where both can live, and—as sometimes happens—his teeth become entangled so that he cannot let go, and he is dragged into deeper water, he struggles instantly, for his breathing arrangements are of no use to him under the pressure of water in the lower strata of the sea. As a rule, however, the fish of the various depths rarely feed on those above or below them.

There have been brought to light an astonishing number of forms of fish, and especially of prawns of a brilliantly red color, living in the ocean at a depth of 3,000 feet. But, astonishing as it may seem, these brilliantly colored fish and prawns, instead of being conspicuous in the water at that depth, are almost invisible, when brought to the surface, color could be easily seen.