BEING THE WIFE OF A CHAMPION

Mrs. James J. Corbett Describes Her Married Life With the Prize Pugilist—The Pathetic Story of a Lonely Woman Whom Other Women Used to Envy—How Success Brought Her Sorrow—As Her Husband Climbed the Ladder of Fame Her Life Became Harder and Harder to Bear.

Per the San Francisco Examiner in a New York letter, the domestic affairs of a great man are always of much interest, and no one can deny that James J. Corbett is, until Mr. Fitzsimmons or someone else defeats him, truly great. At any rate a story told by the wife of the man who is acknowledged to be the silver lining fighter is of value. It has a peculiar interest at this time, because the wife is suing her husband for alimony, the divorce upon statutory grounds.

While Mrs. Corbett was staying in New York and living very quietly, indeed she read in the papers that Mrs. Corbett was traveling with her husband, and that the energetic and enthusiastic officials which they were bestowing upon each other was adding much to her popularity. About that time the real Mrs. Corbett thought it was time to disabuse the public mind and assert herself.

It may be said in the beginning that few men have received as much attention from women as Corbett. Ever since he became famous as a fighter they have flocked to see him, and bestowed upon him most extraordinary adulations. There are no doubt many hundreds of foolish women all over the country who would like to be the wife of the able fighter. It might be a long ways toward consoling these zealous women to read the experience of the pugilist's wife.

To those who know Mrs. Corbett it may be said that just now she is looking better than she ever has in her life. She weighs more than she ever has and it becomes her. Moreover, she says that she no longer cares for Jim, and she is not making herself sick worrying about him.

She became Mrs. Corbett before he was a famous man. She happened to be here in Amsterdam, New York, while her parents were visiting relatives, but she was raised in Santa Cruz, Cal. She had a childhood like most girls. She decided that she would become a teacher, and she was graduated from the State Normal school at San Jose, securing a teachers' certificate when she was only eighteen—a first-grade certificate. She was the youngest in a class of thirty-two, and only four passed. This teachers' certificate is now one of the most prized possessions of the prize-fighter's wife.

"I never had an opportunity to take advantage of that certificate," said Mrs. Corbett today. She was sitting in her home at 42 west eighty-eighth street, where her father lives with her. "I expected to begin to teach in the fall, but that summer Jim came to Santa Cruz and that changed everything.

"He was a big, handsome boy then. I met him one night at an entertainment, and he began to pay attention to me at once. We used to go to hops and drive together, and had lovely times. Jim was one of the best dancers I ever saw. He was a bookkeeper in the Nevada Bank then. I was fond of him from the very first. I did not know that he was a boxer. Of course I heard that he was one of the Olympic Club, but that is a athletic club as well as athletic club in San Francisco.

"Before the summer was over we became engaged," Mrs. Corbett continued. "My father and mother did not like it at all. They did not have any particular objection to him, but they thought I was too young to think of getting married. During the winter my sister went to San Francisco to study music. I used to drive to there to visit her, and I saw a good deal of him. He used to take me around. He took me to the Olympic Club and I saw him box. That was the first I knew that he was a boxer. I did not object to these exhibitions very much.

"My father was so opposed to my marrying Jim that he brought me east for the summer to get me away from him. Jim wrote to me to come back and get married. He told me that he was offered a position in Virginia City at a enormous salary and he wanted to get married at once. I felt a sick heat in the east and went to him, without telling my father know where I had gone. I met Jim in Salt Lake City and we were married there just one year ago two days from the time we first met. (The ceremony was performed by Justice Piper who was at that time city justice of Salt Lake City. Jim gave exhibitions in Salt Lake City. I did not like it much.

"I was so much in love with him and he was so good to me that I did make much difference. He told me that he had resigned from the bank. He thought he could make more money as a boxer. His father heard about his giving exhibitions and he came to Salt Lake City and took back his son to San Francisco.

"Ten days or three months we did not do anything. We lived with his father. For part of the time I worked in the Hall of Records. I earned $5 or $6 a week. I was glad to do it for him. That was the only time in my life that I ever worked.

"We all persuaded Jim to give up the boxing. He secured a place in the Nevada Insurance Company. He was well to do for a little flat. At that time I think Jim received $200 a month. I know I did my own work.

"It was not long after that when he resigned the place of instructor in the Olympic Club at a larger salary than he was getting. I was rather glad that he resigned, because he was sick of boxing, and I thought he would be happier in a place like that. Jim always had the greatest confidence in himself. He used to say: 'I will be a great fighter some day. I feel it. I don't know that I will make a great deal, but I know that I shall be great.' And I was sure of it as he was.

"It was I was living with Jim's father I began my study of the Catholic religion. I was a devout Roman Catholic, as are all his people. After six months' preparation I was confirmed. Jim and I used to go to church every Sunday. We used to go early mass, and once a month we went to confession. We never dreamed of neglecting our religious duties.

"When the Olympic Club arranged the exhibition between Jim and Jack Burke I didn't like it at all, but Jim said it was part of the business of the instructor and, I thought that anything the Olympic Club did was all right. Jim was looked to death about it. The night of the boxing I stayed at home, and Jim came home and stayed with me. We were all very nervous. Jim came home when it was over. He hugged and kissed me and I was as happy as he was. He seemed to think that it was the struggle-some.

"After that he drifted into professional fighting so easily and naturally that I hardly knew it. When the match was made with Choynski he was so delighted that I knew it had a strong hold on him. I was hardly worked up that night. I stayed at home, as I always did, and waited in fear and trembling for the news. When Jim came in I nearly fainted. It occured to me that he was in a horrible condition. The side of his face was all cut up. That was the only time that he was punished at all.

"He didn't stay at home long. The gang of fellows came around and carried him away to celebrate the affair. That was the beginning of the situation which was discussed upon him, and which was, through it, turn the head of the fellow, most exhilarating man that ever lived. Sometimes after a fight he would be gone three or four days. I have always hated the fighting. I would have been glad had Jim never made a name for himself. After each of the fights I begged of him to give them up. He half promised. I used to persuade myself that each fight would be the last.

"When the match with Sullivan was arranged he was crazy with delight. He had long been anxious to meet some of the big fellows. He was very confident he could win. And then I knew that his mind was set upon the fighting and that nothing would ever turn it. When he left his own town to fight I felt sure that his future was settled. It never occurred to me that he could fail to win. Jim would not take me to New Orleans with him when he went to fight Kilrain. He would never take me. He always said that I would be in the way.

"I was at home waiting for the news as usual. He came back as happy as a school boy and there was a big celebration. He came to New York to box McCaffrey and have a big time. Then he was taken ill and went to Michigan. He sent for me to come on and nurse him. Then he came back to San Francisco to act as instructor in the club again. He was paid $225 a month, and then I was very happy. But Jim had made a name for himself and men and women were anxious to do him honor.

"Women have always been particularly fascinated by him, and the manner in which they have pursued him is almost beyond credence. This became especially noticeable after his match with Jackson. I felt dreadful over that match. I did not like to have my him, big husband box with a colored man, and I feared, as he did, that he would not be given fair play. It was after this contest that Jim formed the Thatcher, Primrose and West minstrels, and from that time we have been but little together.

"I made up my mind that I would no longer stay out in California alone, so I came east as well. We had a church, but we speedily made it up. As Jim's fame increased we were together less and less. He has never liked me to travel with him. He has insisted upon his freedom. And yet I know that he was very fond of me. He never begrudged me anything. Most of the money I wanted. He has always been very generous. I know how he was besieged with attentions at women and that he was too gallant to fly from them.

"He is a curious mixture. He has some noble traits that most people see nothing of. For the last four years we have not been together more than two or three months in each year, except when he was training for the Mitchell fight. When he met Sullivan I was in New York. He would not permit me to go South.

"It may be remarked that on the night of the Corbett-Sullivan fight Mrs. Corbett received the news by bulletins. When the fight began she was perfectly calm, while those with her were very nervous. "Why should I worry about it," she asked them with a smile. "There is not the slightest possibility that Jim will lose. He never loses." But when news of the victory came she went into transports and cried joyfully.

"When Jim was training for the fight with Mitchell I was with him for six months; he would not have any one else around. After we went to Florida I used to get up at 5 o'clock in the morning to go to Jacksonville, two hours away to see the morning papers. I kept everything under lock and key. During the three days before the fight I prepared every particle of food that Jim ate with my own hands, and I watched over him night and day. When the fight was going on I was asleep. Never mind.

"When Jim went abroad last year I wanted to go along, but he objected. Twelve days after he arrived there he cabled for me to come over, but we were not much together. Before I sailed back home I met Jim. He never saw it until after he returned. He has lived here only two months. I have never liked the boxing. I had to love and it. Jim merely talked about something else, except theatricals. We have not many mutual friends. Many evenings we have entertained me because I was Jim's wife, but I have had to meet many persons whom I did not like. It is not strange that so much adulation should have turned Jim's head.

"I think Jim received the slightest idea of the number of women who run after him. But when he took up with the woman who is named as correspondent, when he flaunted his relations with her and publicly passed her off as his wife, I could stand it no longer. To have such a creature as she be passed off for myself was outrageous. I felt as if it will toward her. He is a strange mixture, and few can understand him. I hope that he may be very happy with her, but I fear for him. As for myself I shall live here quietly. If the divorce is granted I shall resume my maiden name and try and forget all about fighters and fighting."

The house in eighty-eighth street stands in Mrs. Corbett's name, as well as other New York property which Corbett bought. When the separation papers were signed in March it was agreed that she was to have the house and $300 a month, while she released him other property to Corbett. If the divorce is granted it is agreed that the fighter shall pay her $300 a week alimony as long as she lives.

A LETTER FROM ENGLAND.

Experiences of a Missionary in Sheffield.

Editor Deseret News:

Having many relatives and friends in Zion, I now take the time to write to the readers of your valuable paper that they may be informed concerning the labors of the Elders in the Sheffield conference which is held at 102 Bramah street, Doncaster. We are all possessed with the spirit of unity and love. The Saints all seem to have this same spirit and they all try to live their religion as well as they can although it is hard for some of them to get labor where the people know that they are Mormons. This causes some to neglect their duties in order to keep their work. We have one young man that accepted the Gospel last spring and is now out of work. The parties he was working for turned him away because he had joined those wicked Mormons.

It seems as though the devil is at large, on the alert to darken the minds of the people, but I think the Elders in this part of the vineyard are doing a good work in getting the Gospel message before them. There are Elders John Batty and Alexander Street and myself laboring here in the Sheffield branch and we have distributed good tracts during the month of June. We find that is the best way to get the Gospel before the people. When we make the first visit we kindly ask them to please read one of the tracts and we will call again in a few days, with another one and will be pleased to answer all questions they wish to ask.

I have been in England eighteen months and I have labored in this part of the conference nearly one year now. It is a very dark and smoky place and is very unlovely for us Elders who are used to the pure mountain air. My health has been very poor here but not so bad but that I could get out and do my duty as a servant of God. There are a great many people living in this place. The population is 343,000 greater than that of Utah. It is a great manufacturing place for iron and steel such as cutlery and file cutting and plates for war ships. Other things are also manufactured. There are about 2,000 saloons in Sheffield and a person can see more drunkenness in one week here than he would in some parts of Utah during his whole life. The people drink even though their children have to go hungry. Men and women can be seen in saloons on Sundays just the same as on other days, in act more so because they are at work during the week and spend most of their earnings on Sunday. This is true though there may be some who read this that may doubt it. But the people tell us that they are saved and cannot sin. They say that all they have to do is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and they will be saved.

The children have so much tradition drilled into them while they are young that it is hard to get them to listen to the truth after they become older. They are getting further away from the Gospel of Jesus Christ every day, and yet they cry unto the Lord to save them instead of repenting and being baptized for the remission of their sins that they will be in subjection to salvation.

Jesus plainly tells us that unless we are born again we cannot enter into the kingdom of God. When we hear them they say that their ministers do not teach them that kind of doctrine. We tell them that it is because they have not got the authority to act in the name of Jesus Christ and administer in the ordinance of the Gospel. When they claim the authority we ask them if they have been called of God as was Aaron, and again why does not the Lord reveal His mind and will to men now as He did in former days, why does He not talk to men as He did to Abraham, Moses and other inspired prophets, why does not the Lord call men directly by His voice as He did Moses, Samuel and Paul, why does He not send angels to deliver heavenly messages to men now as He did to Gideon, Lehonies and Cornelius, why should not the Lord enlighten men to tell of Heavenly visions now as to did Jacob, Peter, Paul and John; why does he not now inspire prophets to lead and guide the people in these the last days and to portray miracles and show signs of coming events, and to declare his will and interpret dreams and visions and unknown languages as did Daniel. When we ask the people these questions they say that they are all done away with now and that they are no longer needed for the people have become so intelligent that they can get along without the assistance of the Lord.

They say that the Gospel has never been taken from the earth, but then it is, has always been on the earth, why does John say in Rev. 14, 6, and I saw another angel fly in the midst of Heaven having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred and tongue, and people. Again when we quote this they say that the angel John saw has not been yet and that there is no need of his message in these days, and if they read the Bible and believe in Jesus Christ they will be saved. Now we tell the people that the Gospel has been restored to the earth in these the last days, and the angel that John saw has already appeared and that he has spoken to a young man whose name is Joseph Smith and revealed the Gospel of Christ to him. There are a few who have a desire to investigate the principles of the Gospel.

A number has joined the Church during the last six months, and we have a few that are almost ready for baptism. So I can say that the worship of the Lord is progressing here as well as it is in other lands, and I am thankful to my Heavenly Father for granting me the privilege of preaching the Gospel to a land that will listen to me. The young men of Zion should seek faithfully the principles of the Gospel and prepare for missions for there is a great work to be done in the nations of the earth. Our tithes are getting old and we will have to take the work of the Lord upon our shoulders.

There is one more subject I wish to write about. I have learned from the Saints that some of the Elders who have been here have made promises that they would write to them when they get home, some have promised to help them out to Utah, but in many cases these promises have been unfulfilled. Now I hope that the Elders will fulfill any promise that they have made to the Saints in these lands, and those who are waiting for letters should not make too many promises.

Well, I will bring my letter to a close, Time praying for the welfare of Zion and that the blessings of our Heavenly Father will be with all of His people, I remain your brother in the Gospel.

JOHN H. PARK.

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