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THE RIVAL MINSTRELS.

Raven-si-Ranchit loved his harem's models,
He loved his gardens, with their winding shades;
He loved to watch his crystal fountains play;
He loved his horses and his swallows gay;
He loved all royal sports that please a king,
But most he loved to hear his minstrels sing.

And so it happened that his fame had brought
Two rival singers to the caliph's court,
Who pleased him best, full well each minstrel knew.
Would he proclaimed the greater of the two,
So well they pleased him that they found him both
To choose between them, for he loved them both.

"Let all the native lodges," at length said he,
"Who please best my people please me."
Through all the land the rival poets rose,
Their names and music were on every tongue,
Until at last they never reached a door
Where Fame had not sung all their songs before.

Ben Olaf sang of deeds the caliph wrought,
The victors and the splendors of his court,
The mighty warriors every nation beaten,
And armies vanquished by the prophet's hosts,
How Islam's value was believed and feared;
And when he finished, listening thousands cheered.

Mustapha's songs were all of simpler things,
Forgotten was the pride of earthly kings,
He sang to music of home and truth and love;
Of dish wedded his children from above,
Then to their hearts the poet's music crept,
And when he finished, all the people wept.

For though Ben Olaf charmed them with his art,
Mustapha's songs had reached their hearts.

—James G. Burnett in Harper's.

ENGAGED PEOPLE.

THOUGHTS ABOUT THE CHANGES IN TWO FAMILIES.

The Commonplace Engagement Announcement and How It Is Received. Speculation About the Feelings of the Parents of the Young Woman.

"Miss Eleanor's engagement is announced." The commonplace words fell trippingly from the tongue of a chance passer by on the street, who was discussing with a friend in friendly fashion the happenings of their common world. Who Miss Eleanor might be, whether just out of the schoolroom or the belle of many bright seasons, rich or poor, idle or busy, popular or the reverse, the waited listeners to all this scrap of talk gave no intimation of personality to the casual and unbounded outside interest. She was Miss Eleanor, a girl whom somebody called "daughter," and whom somebody else would one of these days call "wife."

Going on her way the listener, who had unintentionally picked up this fragment of gossip, found herself thinking, first vaguely, and then sympathetically, about the unknown girl and the people who belonged to her. Were they pleased, she wondered, and satisfied with Miss Eleanor's choice? Did the girl's father feel the usual natural paternal jealousy that his petted darling should turn with loving eyes and words to another man, giving to him the dower of sweetness, of which, in the to her's secret heart, he doubted any man or the younger generation to be worthy?

Did the girl's mother hide a heartache that her love was no longer sufficient to her child; that henceforward another must be nearer and closer to that child than her self? Had Eleanor no secret misgiving? Was she ecstatically happy as she took the first step toward the new and different stage of development, leaving girlhood and its freedom behind her, and accepting with the new happiness so much responsibility, not alone for one, but for two lives?

Then the listener thought of the man. Miss Eleanor's choice, and of his people. His mother, to whom this John or Hugh—in her capricious imagination Eleanor's mate was at once christened Hugh—how did his mother regard her future daughter, and was the large enough, gracious enough, and wise enough to accept the new relation, and adapt into her love the wife whom her son had selected?

As society is constituted, the necessary adjustment of parts which takes place to every new arrangement produces little visible friction. All that is disagreeable and trying is decorously offensive to good taste, and is kept decently in the background, while only that which is bright and pleasant is put in evidence. But as each new family emerges from two former families, as each husband and each wife is the product of two different training schools, brought to their marriage the ideas, the standards, the habits of mind, and the ingrained beliefs and convictions of totally diverse people, it is easy to see that a wedding, with all its gayety and glamor of rejoicing bells, is as serious an event as any other in which humanity can participate. It is fraught with tremendous possibilities, harmonizing for evil or for good.

Engaged people are therefore interesting to all who look beneath the glittering social surface and forecast days to come. Hugh and Eleanor respectively have no right to be engaged unless they love each other truly, loyally, tenderly and exclusively. The compact they seal with the diamond dewdrop sparkling on the girl's taper finger is a compact indissoluble while life lasts. Far off, in solemn undertones at every glad betrothal and every happy wedding, sounds the faint and knell of a dirge—"Until death us do part!" Nothing but death should separate those whom love has made one; and the love that hallows an engagement should be of strong, enduring stuff, warranted to stand rough usage and hold its colors fast and its wood intact amid the storm and stress of varying weather. People should love one another enough for marriage, and for all that marriage means, when they enter into that state of glamor, felicity and graceful distinction called betrothal.

Engaged people may be pardoned if they are somewhat occupied with one another, and disposed to survey the rest of the world from a little eminence all their own. Yet the them between of selfishness. Hugh's mother and Eleanor's father still have claims, though the son of one and the daughter of the other have discovered a happiness which parental love was powerless to bestow.—Harper's Bazar.

Butter and Candy Do Not Injure Children.

Dr. J. C. White, of Harvard university, in a lecture touches on the old wives' fable that butter in liberal quantities will cause children's faces to break out with butter worse. He declares, what intelligent people have long known, that good butter unsoaked is perfectly harmless food, as far as the skin is concerned, and he might have gone much farther, for the limitation was unnecessary.

He says:— [illegible] the nation alike to peculiarly come from the fact that the use of impure butter in food otherwise indigestible may have disturbed the stomach and produced impure blood in some cases. It is some likely to come from the efforts of parents of limited means to curb their children's intelligence in an expensive dainty. It is certain that much of the prejudice against candy came from this particular cause, though with candy as with butter the prejudice is entirely justifiable in reference to adulterated and impure grades.

Nothing is more common than to hear parents tell their children that eating candy will ruin their teeth, but no educated dentist will indorse the statement.

The notion that buckwheat cakes and oatmeal are producers of skin diseases is also attacked and pretty thoroughly demolished by Professor White, as well as that absurdity about tomatoes which was started by Dio Lewis a generation or so ago. He said that tomatoes were productive of cancer and that they loosened and destroyed the teeth.—Pittsburg Bulletin.

Why People Like Mrs. Brice.

"One reason," said an Ohio representative's wife, "that Mrs. Brice is so greatly liked is because there is no false pride about her. In spite of her husband's great wealth she is just as sociable as she used to be when she was only the daughter of a workman in a little Ohio town. Mrs. Brice's relatives still live there, and one of them is a mason by trade, but Mrs. Brice inquires for them with just as much affection from all her friends who visit the town as if they were merchant princes. There's no nonsense about her. When her father left the town they moved into the northern part of the state, where Mrs. Brice taught school. She was known for her beauty all through the neighborhood, and also for her intelligence and brightness."—Washington Post.

The Eyes of Greek Statues.

Professor Ernst Curtius, the famous Greek scholar and archaeologist of the University of Berlin, announced a few months ago that he had discovered that the Greek sculptors always made the eyes of men fuller and rounder than those of women. The alleged discovery was considered important, as it was believed that it would lead to a proper classification of many of the unidentified heads of Greek statues. The hopes, however, seem to have been premature, despite the fact that Curtius, who has been called "The Modern Greek," favored them.

Dr. Graef, of Berlin, in a recent lecture delivered before the Prussian Academy of Science, declared that Curtius' conclusions were wrong, as he had found flat, narrow eyes—those of women, according to Curtius—in the heads of Greek statues of men. He had also measured plastic representations of women with large, full eyes. In nature, he added, there was no difference between the eyes of men and women. He had examined recently in Berlin the eyes of a hundred members of each sex and had found that they were the same in shape, size and form. He then upheld the theories of Zien and Bonnacerius that the Greek sculptors who gave a greater fullness to the eyes of men than to those of women did not follow the conditions of nature.—New York Tribune.

Plenty of Game in Maine.

There has not been a year for some time when game was as plenty and, when so little game has been killed and destroyed as during the past winter. One reason is that the snow in many localities has not been deep, and at the same time it has been hard, holding up the deer and caribou and giving them a chance to protect themselves by flight. Another reason is that the guides and loggers have learned that it is for their interest to leave the game alone, especially during the deep snows. I have made it a point to see many of them in the early part of the winter and tried to make them understand that it is for their interest for us to keep a good stock of fish and game, as they would get more business during the guiding season.

The hand of the game that has been killed the past winter has been killed in the back settlements, hunters using dogs to catch deer. There has been a story of ninety moose killed near our border line, in township 5, range 16. I believe the most of this yarn is false. I have been within a day's walk of the township this winter and I did not learn of any such business. In fact there are not moose enough in that locality. I near the Canada line, and this same report comes from there every year.—Cor. Portland (Me.) Press.

Beekeepers and the Government.

Foreign bees without pedigrees may be admitted to the United States free of duty. The secretary of the treasury has so decided. Until the last tariff bill was passed bees from abroad came in free as "animals imported for breeding purposes." The McKinley law declared that this ruling should only apply to animals "regularly entered in recognized herd books." Accordingly, bees were assessed 30 per cent ad valorem, because they had no pedigrees. The beekeepers protested and carried their point.

Some time ago the painoffice department declared that bees were "unmailable," on the ground that they would be likely to sting people if they got loose. The beekeepers secured the recall of this regulation, by proving that the packages employed could not be broken.—Washington Cor. New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Little Fear of Indian Troubles.

A gentleman at Rosebud agency writes that the reports of dissatisfaction among the Indians there have been greatly exaggerated. Since his arrival there two weeks ago he has traveled quite extensively through the various Indian camps, and thinks the Indians never exhibited a more peaceful frame of mind than at present. Never did they take hold of work more readily or more extensively and never did they take more interest in the care of their stock than the past winter, as can plainly be seen by the condition of their horses and cattle. Changing So far as dissatisfaction with rations is concerned, if there is any such, the white employees hear nothing of it.—Cor. Minneapolis Journal.

Confederate Coins.

There has recently been some inquiry as to whether the Confederate government coined any gold. The question was referred to the Hon. Charles C. Jones, Jr., of Augusta, who telegraphs as follows: "The Confederate states, as I now remember, coined and issued no gold. A few experimental half dollars in silver were struck, but they could not pass into circulation."

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