COURTSHIP OR MARRIAGE?

Marriage is an ordered garden,
Courtship, a sweet tangled wood;
Marriage is the sober summer,
Courtship, spring, in vapors mood;
Marriage is a deep, still river,
Courtship, a bright laughing stream;
Marriage is a clear prosaic story,
Courtship, a perplexing dream.
Which of them, my wife, shall be
Crowned as lord by thee and me?

Marriage is the blue day's beauty,
Courtship, the capricious morn;
Marriage is the sweet rose gathered,
Courtship, bud still frosted with thorn
Marriage is the pearl in setting,
Courtship is the dewy-eyed gem;
Marriage, the full cup of honey,
Courtship, the new brimming hem.
Which of them, dear wife, shall be
First preferred by thee and me?

Oh, the tangled maze was lovely,
When we found it, in our play,
Parting curiously the branches
White with mazes of the May,
Eagerly the paths exploring
Where we knew not whence or where,
Sure that million flowers edged them,
And that bird sang till the air,
Vibrated by melodious waves, seemed
Still more exquisite despair.

How we wandered! Now our will went
Here become a garden plot,
Beautifully adorned of that strange overtures
In the method of our lot.
Desired walks and formal borders
For the rude paths strange and wild.
Rose myrtle and stately lily,
Where the rudest wood flowers smiled,
Summer grass and silver mistress,
For young spring, the super child.
Where, on which paths preferred shall be
Twelve years' wife, by thee and me?

Nay, the garden lay its glory,
Stately flower and fruit mixture
And the wild wood had its treasures,
Strange delights and wonders pure
And the summer has fulfillment,
If the spring has promise sure
And the river is the deeper
If the young brook babbled more
And the roar joy shakes
When the mating dreams are o'er.

And the broad blue sky has glories
If the morn was windy fair;
And the distant wood hides
If the birds more piquant were;
And the pearl is rare and precious
If the olive was full of glee;
And we would not change our honey
For the flower gem of the bee.
Roses in courtship, cared in marriage
Green thorn, fading, equally.

—J. H. Vernon in Leisure Hour.

MY BABOON BEDFELLOW

It has been said by the wise man of old that "there is no new thing under the sun." If this means that the adventure I am about to relate was only a repetition of something that occurred to some other lay to dwell in the pre-historic ages I herewith record her my sincerest sympathies.

The intelligent reader must be kind enough to understand, as preliminary, that I am legitimate, and apt to endorse opinions with a degree of precision and a total disregard of all adverse arguments, however weighty, that is truly feminine. When, therefore, shortly after leaving school, I, as my brother says, "took up" evolution, and read various abstruse treatises upon the "development of species" and the "descent of man," it was in no half hearted manner that I rode my hobby, but so thoroughly that I became a thorn in the flesh to most of my relations and friends, and my schoolboy brothers, denouncing the theory boisterously, but forcibly, as "awful bosh," bestowed upon me the contemptuous appellation of the "baboon," and made unkind allusions to my frequent visits to the Regent's Park gardens as being paid to "next of kin."

Certainly I did resort often, almost every day, to the monkey house to study the attributes of its interesting occupants. Perhaps some lingering, infatuated idea possessed me that it might be my brilliant mission to discover the "missing link" at any rate, my notebook of that period contains many finely worded desires to "watch the agile monkey in its native habitat," and to "trace the simian likeness to the human amid the primeval forests of southern Amphiphone."

At length I was enabled to partially fulfill my dreams.

Having received a warm invitation from an old school friend to spend some weeks with her at her home in the west of Ireland, I started, with my maid as escort, for Ballynaglader. My friend, Marian Edwards, had married there years before an Irish gentleman of some property, and I had never seen either her husband or herself since her marriage, so that it was with delightful anticipations of renewing an old friendship and forming a new one that I set out on my journey. My brothers accompanied me to the station, and sped me on my way with a unanimous wish that I might meet a gorilla or a chimpanzee while taking my walks abroad in what they persisted in calling the "wilds."

My maid, Hannah, was an estimable woman, second to none, and was my mainstay and support during the tedious journey, for I had to change twice, and was very much confused by the bustle and hurry of the London termini, and was very much relieved when we at last found ourselves safely in a compartment to ourselves, and I could settle my bonnet and shawl, and feel that I was really on my way to Ireland. I generally have a nervous headache after the excitement of a long journey, and I felt very much inclined to indulge in one on this occasion, but the thought of my mission to Ireland, and the necessity of being in good spirits to do it, kept me from giving way to it, and I succeeded in keeping it at bay.

We had a very pleasant journey, and I felt very much better when we had left London behind us, and I was able to enjoy the beauty of the green fields and the hedgerows, and the cattle and sheep, and the cottages with their thatched roofs and their gardens in front, and I felt very much better when we had left Dublin behind us, and were fairly on our way to the west of Ireland. We had to change twice, and we had to wait for our luggage, and we had to wait for our car, and we had to wait for our horses, and we had to wait for everything, and I felt very much better when we had left Ballynaglader behind us, and were fairly on our way to Ballyroughadder, where we had to sleep, and I felt very much better when we had left Ballyroughadder behind us, and were fairly on our way to Ballymore, where we had to change cars, and I felt very much better when we had left Ballymore behind us, and were fairly on our way to Ballynaglader, where we had to change again