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A YOUNG GIRL'S WOOING.

BY E. P. ROE,
Author of "His Sombre Rivals," "From Jest to Earnest," &c., &c.

When she returned to the hotel she found that Mrs. Muir was worried about Jack, who was worse, and that a Dr. Sommers had been sent for. She could not help smiling when a little later, the hospitable usher of the chapel came briskly in. She eventually learned that the doctor provoked smiles wherever he went, as a breeze raises ripples on the surface of a stream. He smiled himself when he met people, and every one took the contagion. He examined the baby, said the case would require a little watching until certain teeth came through, and then that there would be no further trouble. He spoke with the same confidence with which he would announce that July was near.

"You watch the case, then," said Mr. Muir, decisively. "I must be in town. If you can look after the child and save my wife from worry, my mind will be easy as regards this end of the line at least."

"All right, sir. We'll manage it. Healthy boy. No trouble."

"Has you lived long among dem mountains, doctor?" Madge ventured to ask.

"I should think so. As long as I have lived. Was born and brought up among 'em."

"It must be dreary here in the winter," Mrs. Muir remarked.

"Not a bit of it. It's never dreary."

"How far among the hills does your practice extend?" Madge pursued.

"As far as I'll go, and I'm usually going."

"Perhaps you can give us, then, some advice as to drives and walks."

"Oh! lots, free gratis. I carried Mr. Muir of a troublesome cram or two, also."

"Doctor," said Madge, laughing, "I am very ill. I shall need much advice, and prescriptions of all the romantic walks and drives in the vicinity."

"And like most of the advice from doctors, it won't be taken. A stroll on the piazza is about all that most ladies are equal to. You look, however, as if you should not fear a steep path or a rough road."

"You shall see," cried Madge.

"Yes, I will see," said the doctor, laughing and bowing himself out. "I've seen a great many ladies who could dance miles, but were as afraid of a mountain as of a bear."

At the dinner-table Mrs. Muir said, laughingly, "In Dr. Sommers, Madge has found a kindred spirit,—another oiler of machinery. If between him and Madge things don't go smoothly, the fates are indeed against us."

"When life does go smoothly, it is because of just such good, cheery common-sense," Mr. Muir remarked, sententiously. "I'm in the financial centre of this part of the world, and schemes involving millions and the welfare of States—indeed of whole sections of the country—are daily brought to my consideration, and I tell you again men are often in no condition to act wisely or well because the wear and tear of their life is greater after business hours than during them. Business maniac as Madge thinks me to be, little Jack is of more consequence than a transcontinental railway. I must face the music—the discord, rather—of Wall Street to-morrow. There is no use in protesting or coaxing; I must be there; but it's a great thing to be able to return with my nerves soothed, rested, and quieted. Heaven help the man who, after the strain of the day, must go home to be pricked half to death with pin-and-needle-like worries, if not worse."

"Please imagine Madge and myself making a profound courtesy for the implied compliment," said Mrs. Muir. "But can you not spend the week with us?"

"No. Graydon will soon be here, and there is much to be seen to. He writes that he has worked very hard to get things in shape so that he can leave them, and that he wishes to take a vacation. As far as possible I shall gratify him. He can be with you here, and come to town occasionally as I need him. It's all turning out very well, and I am better off than many in these troublous times."

The remainder of his stay passed quietly in absolute rest, and on the following morning he was evidently strengthened for the renewal of the struggle.

* * * * * * *

"Stella!"

Miss Wildmere remained absorbed in her novel.

"Stella!" repeated Mr. Wildmere, impatiently.

"What is it?" she asked, fretfully. "I'm in an exciting scene. Can't you wait awhile?"

"Oh, throw down your confounded novel. You should be giving your mind to real life and exciting scenes of your own. No, I can't wait and don't propose to, for I must go out."

The words were spoken in a small but elegant house, furnished in an ultra-fashionable style. Mr. Wildmere was a stout, florid man, who looked as if he might be burning his candle at both ends. His daughter was dressed to receive summer evening calls at her own home, for she was rarely without them. If the door-bell had rung she would have dismissed her exciting scene without hesitation, but it was only her father who asked her attention.

"Very well," she said, absently, turning down a leaf.

Her father observed her listless air and averted face for a moment with contracted brow, then quietly remarked, "Graydon Muir may return at any time now."

Her apathy disappeared at once, and a faint color stole into her face.

"Haven't you had enough of general attention and flirtation? I know that my wishes have little weight; you have refused not a few good offers and one on which I had set my heart, but let the past go. The immediate future may require careful and decisive action. I speak in view of your own interests, and to such considerations I know you will not be indifferent. If you were taking a natural and intelligent interest in my affairs you would have some comprehension of my difficulties and dangers. The next few months will decide whether I can keep up or not. In the meantime you have your opportunity. Graydon Muir will share in the fortunes of his brother, who has had the delusion of being very wealthy and eminently conservative. I have learned, however, that he has invested largely in the enterprise that now appears to be very dubious, now largely no one but himself knows. If this affair goes through all right you couldn't do better than develop Graydon Muir into an impatient suitor; and you had better keep him well in hand for a time anyway. He is a good business man and far more to be depended upon than rich young fellows who have inherited wealth, with no ability except in spending it. If the Muirs pass through these times they will become one of the strongest and safest houses in the city. Remember that the *if* is to be considered. Mr. Arnault, too, is a member of a strong, wealthy house. I would advise you to make your choice between these two men speedily. You are not adapted to a life of poverty, and you would not enjoy it. An alliance with either of these men might also aid in sustaining me."

Miss Wildmere listened attentively, but made no comment, and her father evidently did not require any, for he went out immediately. He understood his daughter sufficiently to believe that she needed no further advice. He was right. The exciting crisis in her novel was forgotten, and her fair face took an expression that did not enhance its beauty. Calculation on the theme uppermost in her mind produced a revery in which an artist would not have cared to paint her. It was evident that the time had come when she must dispose of herself, and the question was, how to do it to the best advantage.

To Graydon she gave her preference. He was remarkably fine-looking, and could easily be a leader in society if he so desired,—"and certainly shall be," she thought, "if I take his name." As far as her heart spoke in the matter it declared for him, also. Other men had wooed and plead, but she had ever mentally compared them with Graydon, and they had appeared insignificant. She had felt sure for a long time that he would eventually be at her feet, and she had never decided to refuse him. Now she was ready to accept, but for this ominous "if," which her father had emphasized. She could not think of marrying him should he become a poor man.

She neither liked nor disliked Mr. Arnault. He was a man of the world, reported wealthy, established in a large but not conservative business. He had the name of being a little fast and speculative, but she was accustomed to that style of man. He was an open suitor who would take no rebuff, and had laughingly told her so. After his refusal, instead of going away in despondency or in a half-tragic mood, he had good-naturedly declared his intentions, and spent the remainder of the evening in such lively chat that she had been pleased and amused by his tactics. Since that time he had made himself useful, was always ready to be an escort with a liberal purse, and never annoyed her with sentiment. She understood him, and he was aware that she did. He took his chances for the future, and was always on hand to avail himself of any mood or emergency which he could turn to his advantage. In various unimportant ways he was of service to Mr. Wildmere, but hoped more from the broker's embarrassments than from the girl's heart.

"I might do worse," muttered the beauty.—"I might do worse. If it were not for Graydon Muir, I'd decide the question at once."

The door-bell rung, and Graydon was announced. Even her experienced nerves had a glad tingle of excitement, she was so genuinely pleased to see him. And well she might be, for he was a man to light any woman's eyes with admiration. If something of his youth had passed, his face had gained a rich compensation in the strong lines of manhood, and his manner a courtly dignity, from long contact with the best elements of life. One saw that he knew the world, but had not been spoiled by it. That he had not become cynical was proved by his greeting of Miss Wildmere. He was capable of hoping that her continued freedom, in spite of her remarkable beauty, might be explained on the ground of a latent regard for him, which had kept her ready for his suit after an absence so unexpectedly prolonged. Through a friend he had, from time to time, been informed about her; and there was no ring on her hand to forbid his ardent glances.

Never before had she appeared so alluringly attractive. He was a thorough American, and had not been fascinated by foreign types of beauty. In his fair countrywoman he believed that he saw his ideal. Her beauty was remarkable for a fulness, a perfection of outline, combined with a fairness and delicacy which suggested that she was not made of ordinary clay. Miss Wildmere prided herself upon giving the impression that she was remote from all that was common or homely in life. She cultivated the characteristic of daintiness. In her dress, gloves, jewelry, and complexion she would be immaculate at any cost. Graydon's fastidious taste could never find a flaw in her, as regarded externals, and she knew the immense advantage of pleasing his eye with a delicacy that even approached fragility in its exquisite fairness, while at the same time her elastic step in the dance or promenade proved that she had abundance of vitality.

Nothing could have been more auspicious than his coming to-night,—the very first evening after his arrival. It assured her of the place she still held in his thoughts; it gave her the chance to retire, in the glad hours of his return, the impression she had made; and she saw in his admiring eyes how favorable that impression was. She trusted that he found her so well prepared. Her clinging summer costume revealed not a little of her beauty, and suggested more, while she permitted her eyes to give a welcome more cordial even than her words.

He talked easily and vivaciously, complimented her openly, yet with sincerity, and rallied her on the wonder of wonders that she was still Miss Wildmere.

"Not so great a marvel as that you return a bachelor. Why did you not marry a German prince or some reduced English countess?"

"I was not driven to that necessity, since there were American queens at home. I am delighted that you are still in town. What are your plans for the summer?"

"We have not fully decided as yet. Their go to the Catskills. Our ladies are there at the Under-Cliff House, and I fear will stay there. It is a charming place, and we will want to manage to see you sometime during the season. Papa is now talking of a trip to Long Branch, but he will be too busy to go out of town much."

"Why, there, the Catskills is fine, and a place accessible to the city, you know. That is the reason we have chosen it. I propose to take something of a vacation, but find that I must go back sooner than he had anticipated. Just and forth a good deal, and so shall escape the bore of a long journey."

"You have given two good reasons for our going there. The place cannot be stupid, since we may see you occasionally, and papa could come oftener."

"Persuade Mrs. Wildmere into the plan by all means, and promise me your first waltz after your arrival!" and there was eagerness in his tone.

"Will you also promise me your first?"

"Yes, and last also, if you wish."

"Oh, no! I do not propose to be selfish; Miss Alden will have her claims."

"What Sister Madge? She must have changed greatly if she will dance at all. She is an invalid, you know."

"I hear she has returned vastly improved in health,—indeed, that she is quite a beauty."

"I hope so," he said, cordially, "but fear that rumor has exaggerated. My brother said she was better, and added but little more. Have you seen her?"

"No. I only heard a short time since that she had returned."

Madge had not gone into society, and had she met Miss Wildmere face to face she would not have been recognized, so greatly was she changed from the pallid, trembling girl over whom "the beauty" had enjoyed her petty triumph; but the report of Miss Alden's attractions had aroused in Miss Wildmere's mind apprehensions of a possible rival.

Graydon's manner was completely reassuring. Whatever Miss Alden might have become, she evidently had no place in his thoughts beyond that natural to their relations. No closer ties had been formed by correspondence during his long absence.

Further, *tete-a-tete* was interrupted by the appearance of Mr. Arnault. The young men were courteous and even cordial to each other, but before half an hour had passed they recognized that they were rivals. Graydon's lips grew firm, and his eyes sparkled with the spirit of one who had not the faintest idea of yielding to another. Miss Wildmere was delighted. The game was in her own hands. She could play these two men off against each other, and take her choice. Mr. Arnault was made to feel that he was not *de trop*, and as usual, he was nonchalant, serene, and evidently meant to stay. Therefore Graydon took his leave, and was permitted to carry away the impression that his departure was regretted.

"Mr. Arnault," said Miss Wildmere, quietly, "we have decided to spend some time at the Under-Cliff House in the Catskills. So you perceive that I shall be deprived of the pleasure of your calls for a while."

"Not at all. I shall take part of my summering there, also. When do you go?"

"In a few days—sometime before the fourth. How fortunately it all happens!" she added, laughing. "When did you decide on the Catskills?"

"That's immaterial. When did you?"

"That also is immaterial. Perhaps you would like to ask mamma?"

"I'd rather ask papa—both, I should say," he replied, with a significant shrug.

"Do so by all means. Meanwhile I would suggest that a great many people go to the Catskills,—thirty thousand, more or less, it is said."

"I had another question in mind. Is Graydon Muir going there in order to follow the crowd?"

"If he is going I suppose he will follow his inclinations."

"Or you?"

"Were that possible, I could not prevent it. Indeed, women rarely resent such things."

"No indeed. It is well you do not, for you would become the embodiment of resentment. How large is your train now, Stella?"

"You can diminish it by one if you choose," she replied, smiling archly.

"I should be little missed, no doubt."

"I didn't say that."

"I'm more afraid of Muir than of all the train together."

"That's natural. The train has little chance collectively."

"Don't pretend to misunderstand me. There was unmistakable meaning in Muir's eyes."

"I should hope so. He means to help me have a good time. So do you, I trust."

"Certainly. You may judge of the future from the past," he added, significantly, as he rose to take his leave.

"Then the future promises well for me," she said, giving him her hand cordially; "for you have been one of the best of friends."

"And a good deal more. Good-night."

"Mamma," said Miss Wildmere, stopping at the nursery on her way to her room, "we must get ready to go to the Catskills at once."

"Why, Stella! This is the first I've heard of this plan. Your father has said that he doesn't see how we can go out of town at all this summer."

"Nonsense! I'll insure that papa agrees."

"I don't see how I can get ready soon. The baby is fretful, and I'm all worn out between broken rest and worry. Won't you take Effie for a little while?"

"Where's the nurse?"

"She's out. Of course she has to have some time to herself."

"You just spoil the servants. It's her business to take care of the child. What else is she paid for? Why can't one of the other maids take her?"

"Effie is too nervous to go to strangers so night."

"Oh, well, give her to me, then."

The sensitive little organization knew at once that it was in the hands not only of a comparative stranger, but also of one whose touch revealed little sympathy, and its protest was so great that she tired mother took it again, while the beautiful daughter, the cynosure of all eyes in public, went to her room to finish the "exciting scene" at her leisure.

But the scene had grown unreal. Its hero was but a shadow, and a distorted one at that. The book fell from her hand; she again saw Graydon Muir coming forward to greet her with an easy grace which no prince in story could surpass, and with that expression in his dark blue eyes which no woman fails to understand. It assured her that neither in the old world nor in the new had he been her equal.

"I wish it could be," she murmured; "I know it can be; were it not for that 'if' it should be so."

Then, after her own fashion, she put this doubt upon Graydon.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MEETING.

Graydon had completed his final transactions abroad with more expedition than he had anticipated. Art

NEWS ITEMS.

The reported betrothal of the Prince of Wales' eldest daughter is officially denied.

It is believed that the submission of the Scott Act in Essex county will be delayed till next year.

MADRID, Sept. 7.—There were 2,132 new cases of cholera and 619 deaths in Spain on Sunday.

SIR Andrew Clark has diagnosed Mr. Gladstone's condition, and reports that he is sound in health.

The expulsions from Eastern Prussia are now estimated at 10,000. Nearly 9,000 Jews have been expelled.

A proclamation has been issued for an election for the Scott act in Peterboro. The voting will take place on Sept 24.

It is stated that the Sultan has expressed his willingness to send 5,000 Turkish troops to Egypt whenever he is requested to do so by England.

Cape Town advices state Congo cannibals have attacked several stations of the African Association and roasted and devoured a number of white.

Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, in his speech at Warrington on Tuesday, said the Radicals now formed the great majority of the Liberal party, and they would oppose Mr. Parnell tooth and nail.

In Newport slang a misfit wife is one who has found herself so mismated that she has had to part from her husband. They no longer speak of grass widows or divorced persons, but always of misfits.

Canada has secured three diplomas of honour, thirteen gold medals, thirty-one silver medals, thirty-three bronze medals, and thirty honorable mentions at Antwerp. This is a good showing.

POTATO CROP.—It is feared that the potato crop will be spoiled if this cold wet weather continues. The soil is now very wet, and if we do not get some days of warm, dry weather to dry it the potatoes can hardly be otherwise than bad.—St. Catharines News.

By an automatic tea or coffee pot used by the French army, it is impossible to collect a drop of coffee unless the water is boiling. The water is underneath the coffee, but when it boils it rises up through a central tube and falls over the coffee or tea, percolates, goes down to the lower part of the apparatus, is warmed again, and once more travels upward.

Mr. C. E. Riggins, Beamsville, writes: "A customer who tried a bottle of Northrop & Lyman's Vegetable Discovery says it is the best thing he ever used. You quote his own words, 'It just seemed to touch the spot effected.' About a year ago he had an attack of bilious fever, and was afraid he was in for another, when I recommended this valuable medicine with such happy results."

The annual meeting of the Agricultural and Arts Association was held last week in London. An interesting feature of the meeting was the awarding of prizes in the farm competition and for essays on agricultural subjects. A resolution was also adopted pledging the association to do all in its power towards securing a good display at at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London next year.

Henry Kemp writes to Bradstreet's that the average wage per week for agricultural laborers in England, during the 25 years ending with 1846 and 1884, at present it is 16s. In the 25 years referred to the average wages of a mechanic was 20s., against 32s. at present. Though the price of meat has increased enormously during the past 40 years the consumption in the United Kingdom has increased from 72 pounds per capita in the decade ending 1850 to 105 pounds per capita in 1881-82.

NEW MATERIAL FOR PAPER.—Paper is made in France from hop vines, and it is claimed that the fibre secured is the best substitute for rags yet obtained, as it possesses great length, strength, flexibility and delicacy. It may be to the advantage of paper-makers near hop-growing districts to investigate this matter, for the vines are now a waste product, and if they are properly adapted for fine paper, as is claimed, a valuable stock has been running to waste. Bean and pea vines belong in the same category.

There was intense excitement in London on Monday on the opening of the trial of Mr. Stead, of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and Mrs. Jarrett, for the abduction of Eliza Armstrong. A special which gives a very graphic description of the scene at the Bow street Police Court, says the defendants were hissed going to their trial, and the mob became so violent that on leaving the court they had to be placed under police protection.

It is believed in official circles in Madrid that the dispute with Germany over the occupation of the Caroline islands will be amicably settled, but the opposition party is less hopeful. A special says it is learned in London by private letters that at nearly all the meetings there were frequent cries of "Down with the Uhlan Colonel," referring to King Alfonso, which, of course, carefully suppressed in the telegrams submitted to censorship.

The Globe suggests that a plebiscite be taken each general election on the prohibition question. The temperance people would probably endorse the scheme. They would be certain to achieve a most advantageous showing on paper, which might be utilized from year to year with excellent effect. As for the liquor party, and the moderate drinker, and the apathetic people who look askance at prohibition, they wouldn't trouble themselves to engage in a sham fight which could in no way benefit them. The scheme would be worthless, or rather misleading, so far as any intuition of showing the real strength of the parties is concerned.—Toronto Town Talk.

A. CERKEY, VACCINATION DODGE.—The *Monetary Times* says:—A representative of the *Monetary Times* met, in the county of Waterloo the other day, a stirring agent for one of the Old Country life companies. This philanthropic agent had better look out lest he shares the fate of Dr. F. B. McCormick, of Pelee Island, who was fined last week by the Medical Council of Ontario for practicing without a license among the 400 dwellers on that sportsman's and vinegrower's paradise, and scorning to pay his fine chose to go to Sandwich gaol, where he is now undergoing durance vile. Soliciting insurance, this agent had provided himself with a supply of vaccine points, and meeting a condition with any intending insurer that the latter must be vaccinated, the agent performing the operation, and charging therefor before delivering the policy. We may hear of a fire agent proffering hand grenades to his patrons, or insisting on their buying Fire-king extinguishers before he will take a risk on their property. Surely the Montreal smallpox scare has been "bounced" enough without extending its range 400 miles west.

TO BE CONTINUED.

ANOTHER SURE CURE FOR SMALLPOX.—The following paragraph was clipped from a British paper printed about twenty years ago:—An effectual remedy for smallpox is said to have been recently found by a surgeon of the British army in China. The mode of treatment is as follows:—When the preceding fever is at its height, and just before the eruption appears, the chest is rubbed with an ointment of tartaric ointment. This causes the whole of the eruption to appear on that part of the body, to the relief of the rest. It also secures a full and complete eruption and thus prevents the disease from attacking the internal organs. This is now the established mode of treatment in the English army in China and is regarded as a perfect cure.