

COURTED BY PROXY.

When Lennox Butler went away to Europe he said he should write once a week to Lilly Elwyn. That pert young lady informed her mother that he might do as he pleased, but as she did not fancy him she did not propose to answer his epistles.

In vain did Mrs. Elwyn expostulate, for she saw in Mr. Butler a model son-in-law, who was fascinated with her daughter.

The letters began to pour in after the first European mail, and as Lilly still refused to begin a correspondence Mrs. Elwyn answered them herself, signing her daughter's name.

Mrs. Elwyn having written one letter with Lilly's signature, no longer felt any scruples in writing more.

Two of the brightest and best educated people in society matched their wits against each other, their knowledge of literature and human nature, their experience in life.

"Great heaven!" said Lennox Butler to himself, as he read those he received, "what a wonderful being is that little girl with flaxen hair and baby blue eyes. She is a companion for any man. The beauty of a child, the mind of a mature woman, the soul of an angel. What could be more delightful than a wife like that? And by degrees the descriptions, the remarks and epigrams of his letter were intermixed with compliments, and finally with more than compliments. Mrs. Elwyn scarcely observed the change. She enjoyed her correspondence tremendously, and it was now a long while since Lilly had even opened the letters. She read and re-read with delight; and thus it came to pass that Mrs. Elwyn sat locked up in her room, actually trembling with agitation, for the letter which had arrived that morning from Mr. Lennox Butler, ended thus:

"We have not known each other long, I know; but our long and frequent correspondence has made us better acquainted with each other than years of mere social intercourse could have done. I always thought you beautiful, but—pardon me—I never dreamed your mind was all that it has proved to be—your ideas of life so true, your ambitions so lofty. It is this that has won my heart, and made my love for you a thing that must endure while my life lasts."

Poor Mrs. Elwyn! the situation almost made her ill. It seemed to her that there was no creditable extrication from this dilemma to be hoped for.

"You must accept him, Lilly," she kept repeating. "I am sure you will be mad not to do so. Oh! how can you laugh? I am sure you have encouraged him. I see now that the letters have really given him hope!"

"Your letters, not mine, mamma," said Lilly. "Remember that."

"As if I could forget it!" cried Mrs. Elwyn, bursting into tears.

Then Lilly went to her and kissed her.

"I will answer this letter, mamma," she said. "Don't cry. I will refuse Mr. Butler, and he will not wish me to do otherwise when he has once seen my literary effort."

Then she seated herself at her mother's desk and wrote rapidly, for she had really something to say.

"Dear Mr. Butler," she began, "I have your letter here. In it you are flattering enough to offer me your hand and heart. However, you do it without knowing me in the least. You say you like my books. Thank you, so do some other people; but as for those letters, they cannot tell you what I am at heart, for I never even saw them. Yours came. I hate long letters, and I asked mamma to answer for me. I did not even read the next. You have a very fine collection of letters, no doubt. Mamma is all I am not in mind and education. As to heart, if I have any, I suppose Will Melton has it, for I am engaged to him. So, you see, it is only a fancy about me. Mamma is desperately serious and blames herself terribly. I hope you won't blame her. It really seems a good joke to me. I remain, your friend, Lilly Elwyn."

Lilly posted the letter, and Mrs. Elwyn took to her bed in despair. No answer came from Lennox Butler, who had now been abroad for two years. But one day Mrs. Elwyn, coming in from the street in her most becoming walking costume, found him waiting for her in her reception room.

She gave a little cry of surprise; but he came to her and took both hands in his and held them tight, and bent his head and kissed them.

"Say that you are glad to see me back, and want me to stay," he said.

And so it was Lilly's stepfather who gave her away when she was married to young Will Melton. And there were at least two happy couples in the world that evening—four people who felt that they had chosen well and wisely.

Likes Vienna Bread.

Queen Victoria has a fancy for Vienna and French bread and rolls in all sorts of odd shapes. Besides having it made up in a score of fancy twists and curls, she always has some baked in the form of little dolls. These are for her grandchildren when they eat at her table. Her private baker is S. Petrozywalski, a Polish refugee to whom the Princess Consort took a great liking.

mand Sunday bakings, when some of Mr. Petrozywalski's customers have grumbled that the didn't get fresh bread on Sundays her majesty's forbearance was quoted, and this usually stops their complaints. The same baker also supplies the Princess of Wales and other members of the royal family. The Queen doesn't like freshly baked bread, but always a little stale.

"HORICUS," THE FATAL 63.

A Notion that the Climacteric Year Is a Dangerous Period.

Certain years in the life of man have been from great antiquity supposed to have a peculiar importance, and to be liable to singular vicissitudes in his health and fortunes. Where or how this belief originated is unknown, says the St. Louis Republic, but it is supposed to have been founded on the teachings of Pythagoras. The well known notion of the climacteric year—63—supposed to be particularly dangerous to men of that age, in a letter to Augustus Caesar, evinces its prevalence among the Romans. Some astrological writers have called the sixty-third year man's "horicus," because of a mythical notion that it was or is fatal to great men. The sole cause of its blighting influence is supposed to revert to the fact that it is a multiple of the 7 and 9, both of which are mystical numbers. It is a remarkable fact that all nations attach particular importance to 7 or any multiple of that figure. Thus, at 14, twice seven, the male and the female are supposed to have arrived at puberty; at 21, three sevens, the male becomes "of age," while many writers, Aristotle in particular, fix 35, five sevens, as the height of bodily vigor, and 40 as the year of maximum mental activity. At the age of 63, when a man is 9 times 7 years of age, the most trivial diseases are likely to cause the death of the most robust old man, while the ten 7's (70) has been ascribed as the limit of his earthly career.

PEOPLE WITH PREJUDICES.

They Have More Character and Are More Useful than Those with None.

Persons without prejudices are generally insipid. They are very nice people morally, but usually lack force of character.

We like men who have decided opinions of their own on all important subjects, and who make a stout fight for them even when in the wrong, for in the sharp attrition between minds of opposite professions many a brilliant spark of truth is struck out.

Every human being is, or ought to be, prejudiced in favor of his native land, according to the New York Ledger. We have no sympathy for the cosmopolitan who says that all countries are alike to him. It is not necessary that the Englishman who loves England should hate the French, or that an American who insists that the United States is "the most enlightened under the sun" should depreciate the "mother country." To believe there is no place like home is wholesome, Christian partiality; but to laugh another man's home to scorn because it is not a fac simile of one's own is illiberal and ungentlemanly.

There is no harm in being prejudiced in favor of one's country, one's family, or one's friends; but your people who will quarrel on the ninth part of a hair, out of sheer obstinacy and litigiousness of spirit, we most cordially despise.

A Horse Attacked by a Lion.

The other morning as Luther Evans, a son of L. L. Evans, went for his team on Barber Darling place, near Soquel, says a Santa Cruz paper, he discovered that an animal, which he supposed was a dog, was worrying one of the horses. As he drove nearer he saw that the animal was not a dog, but an exceedingly lively specimen of the California lion, which was making a vicious attack upon the horse, biting and scratching with leonine ferocity. The horse was making the best defense possible, rearing and kicking, and was aided by his mate, but the lion was very evidently getting the best of the fight, and would soon have secured an equine breakfast. As young Evans, who was on horseback, rode up the lion crouched on the ground for a moment and then ran off into the woods. The horse had been badly bitten on the flanks, neck, and belly, and was nearly exhausted from loss of blood, but under proper treatment is expected to recover.

The Spread of Leprosy.

According to Dr. Morrell Mackenzie, leprosy, the scourge of the Middle Ages, has not become practically extinct among Europeans, but is really spreading. It has between ten and twelve hundred victims in Norway, is found also in Portugal, Greece and Italy, and is rapidly spreading in Sicily, in the Baltic provinces of Russia and in France, while the British Islands are not exempt from it. In the United States cases have been found in California, in some of the States of the Northwest, in Utah and Louisiana. Many cases exist in New Brunswick. In the Sandwich Islands the disease first broke out in 1853, and there are now 1,100 lepers in the Molokai settlement alone. The disease is extending in the West Indies.

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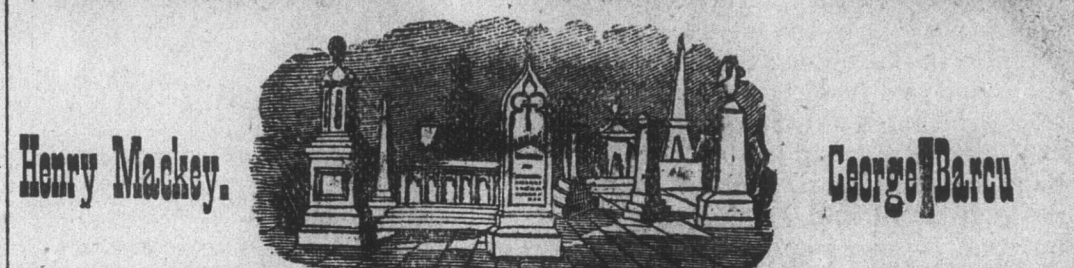
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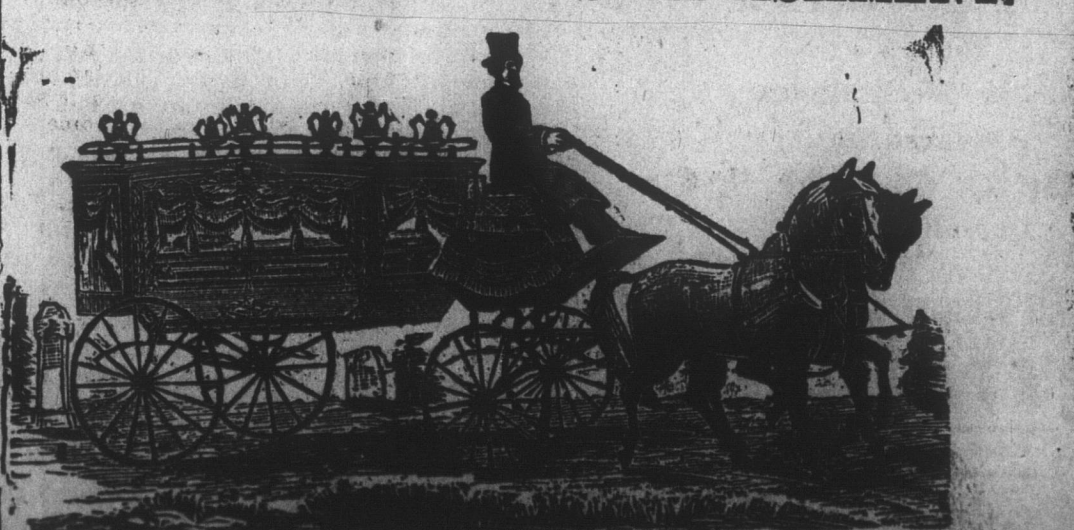
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