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Victorian Romance Ideal, Broadway Love a Sham; Florence Nash Tells Why

Young Actress, Broadway's New Singer of Love and Author of Sentimental Verse, Has Her Own Ideas of How and Upon Whom a Girl Should Bestow Her Heart's Affection, and Here They Are.

By Marguerite Mooers Marshall.

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"NEVER again, however we endeavor,
Shall you or I find any love like ours;
When we were young we wove it out of fancy,
Nor broidered it with passion's purple hours.
We were content with Rapture's pastel shadings,
Fed love on sunsets or a poet's line,
Held hands and wept at Pagliacci's ending—
The comedy that's ended now is mine."

Thus Broadway's new singer of love, whose name is Florence Nash and whose charming volume of lyrics, "June Dusk," has been published almost coincidently with her starring in her play of mingled gaminerie and tender sentiment, "Remnant."

"Don't," a sapient and sophisticated New York editor warned Miss Nash, "don't publish your poems until after you're married!" For the sake of Miss Nash's royalties, I hope that any one who is thrilled by this criticism will go straight out and buy her book. I confess that I find nothing in it to bring a blush to the young person's barometrical cheek—although editors, perhaps, blush more easily than she, nowadays.

What does abound in "June Dusk" is a half sweet, half sad sentiment, a rosebud love, tenderly and musically expressed. Miss Nash is a Puritan Lawrence Hope, dreaming and singing the soul of love as fervidly as the gifted author of "India's Love Lyrics" expressed its bodily incarnation. From physical attraction, the madness of the senses, she draws away delicately—as in the following poem, which she has called "Bewildered":

FLORENCE NASH

"I never felt so far from you
As when you held me in your arms
And I awoke to mine own self,
Roused by my pulse's mad alarms.

"I never felt so self-engrossed
As when your kiss fell on my lips,
And I grew fevered, as one must
Who Aphrodite's poison sips."

And when I asked Miss Nash, Broadway favorite and star, to tell what love really means to her, I found her ideals far enough from the practices of Broadway—of Broadway, at any rate, as outsiders see it and make it.

"Broadway love," declared Miss Nash, earnestly, "is not real love at all. I am not speaking of the love affairs of persons who have business on Broadway, the New Yorkers who, as I told a friend of mine, never can keep up the pace with the outsiders on Broadway. But what they think of as Broadway love, the cynical and utterly brief physical attraction between persons who have nothing else in common, is no more romantic than the expensive dinners these persons eat or the jazz dances in which they take part.

"Love, to be real, must have in it something spiritual. And I know that the great love in every woman's life contains something of the spirit, something which makes her love the man of her choice as purely and idealistically as she loves goodness, generosity, honor. Love must take two lovers up on a mountain, far above the world, or it is a weak, imperfect, quickly vanishing little god."

"But, after all," I protested, "I am not a disembodied soul and neither are you. Do you think a love is perfect which satisfies souls alone?"

"No, indeed," said Miss Nash. "The absolutely ideal love is divided into three exactly equal parts—one part physical, one part mental, one part spirit." But I think so many persons marry for physical love and nothing else, for the superficial attraction of broad shoulders or brown eyes with curling lashes. My father used to have a saying about vaudeville which is just as true about love—'The eye is satisfied in two minutes.'"

Just at this point I ought to mention that Miss Nash, despite the name of her present part and play, is anything but a "remnant" in physical attractiveness. She has beautiful big blue eyes; a supple, rounded figure, a clear, fresh comeliness of skin, teeth and brown hair. There is nothing the least bit sour-grapesy in her criticism of the allure that is merely physical.

"I think," I told her, "that, despite your years in New York and on the stage, you are a bit of an old-fashioned romanticist."

"I am," she confessed, smilingly, "even despite my sense of humor.

"One can't think too much about love, for it is not of the brain. When one tries to say what it is—sometimes it isn't! But personally, I believe the ideal romance is the Victorian romance, when two very young persons fall in love utterly and completely, when he thinks she is an angel, she knows he is a prince, and they marry and live happy ever after.

"The trouble is"—and here Florence Nash, humorist and realist, took possession of Florence Nash, romanticist—"the trouble is, that when a very young girl loves a man she stifles him with veils of her own dreams and illusions and ideals; to change figure, she freezes him to death on a pedestal of perfection. At first he is flattered at being considered such a young god, but in the end he is frightfully, humanly bored. I can't blame him! Then, when the girl goes on caring and he stops, he is more bored. I cannot imagine anything so tiresome as to be loved by a person whom one does not love in return. At first, perhaps, one admires the good taste of the other, but admiration soon turns to ennui of the deadliest."

"But do you think one should make love on sales slips," I protested, "so much goods delivered for so much value received?"

"The woman who gives love on the 'so much for so much' plan does not give it at all, because she does not know what it is," Miss Nash replied decisively. "Often, without doubt, a woman's love outlasts a man's. But what of it? If she is very young"—the speaker's blue eyes twinkled naughtily—"she will enjoy her broken heart tremendously! On the other hand, if she is a woman with individuality and character, there is so much else in the world for her, even after her lover has loved and ridden away. There is a line in 'Remnant' which illustrates what I mean: 'Some day I am going to paint a picture of a smiling woman and call it "Sorrow."' The brave woman locks up an unhappy love affair in a secret room in her heart, and smiles all the harder for the world.

"The woman who gives all she can give may be cheated by her lover but not by Love."

And as I left Miss Nash I thought of her poem which wistfully reiterates this truth, the poem I like best of all:

"Pshaw! I had bartered my common-sense
(And that's the best of me)
For a foolish love that was not worth while,
But the gods protected me.
And yet, there are times when I almost wish
That the gods had neglected me."

Facts to Remember

A motorcycle with a sidecar on each side is an Indiana motorcyclist's idea.

* * *

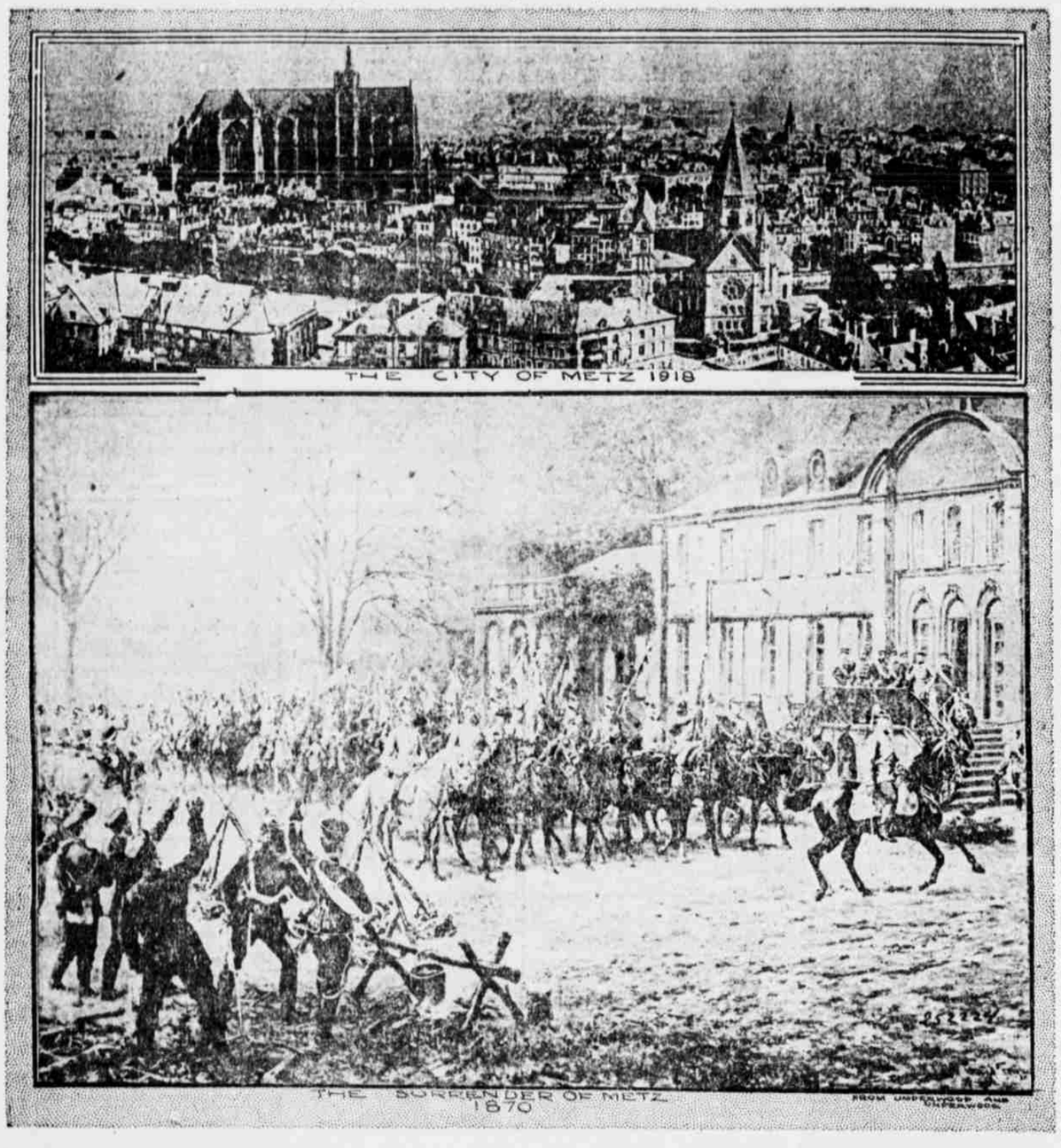
A novel electric light reflector can be used for either direct or indirect lighting.

* * *

For the protection of vehicles which strike signs placed in roadways, a New York man has invented a resilient post for the latter.

When the Germans Marched Into Metz

The Painting Reproduced Below Shows German Troops Entering Metz After Its Surrender in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. Now the Former Conquerors Are the Conquered, and Metz Has Again Surrendered, but to Another "Army of Occupation"—the Friendly Soldiers of France and America. The Upper Photograph Shows the City as It Appears To-Day.



THE CITY OF METZ 1918

THE SURRENDER OF METZ 1870

FROM UNDERWOOD AND UNDERWOOD

Husbands and Wives We Know

No. 6—The Average Couple

By Nixola Greeley-Smith.

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WE have heard there is no such being as an average man.

But we are all certain there is an average couple, for we number many such among our friends. And a very nice couple they are!

NIXOLA GREELEY-SMITH

The balance of power among average couples has always interested me. By the unwritten laws of the household, it has been established that the wife's views on religion, prohibition and the keeping of dogs shall have the finality of a decree of the Supreme Court, while the husband retains at least the technical right to decide where the family shall live and what it shall spend. We all know how seldom he exercises it.

We all know too with what flattering attention the average wife receives her husband's opinions upon such mysterious matters as shipbuilding, the tariff and the income tax.

Only recently a woman thirty-five years old informed me that she never knew the difference between a Republican and a Democrat until her husband had "explained all about it just before the election."

I wish I had been present at that enlightening session, for I have never been able to see that there IS much difference, and would as soon think of proclaiming myself a fire worshipper or a Rosecrucian as a member of either political faith. But then, of course, nobody has ever explained all about it to me. With what touching assiduity the average wife invites her husband's views on the peace terms or the next Presidential slate, and with what fidelity to the text does she repeat them on all occasions? You may venture—if you are very inexperienced with average wives—to dispute these assertions now and then. With what triumphant finality she crushes you with her declarations of lovely faith. "But John says so—and of course he knows all about it."

Unimaginative persons inquire now and then what great books women have written, what master pictures they have painted, what splendid inventions they have struck from the rock of infinite ignorance—my answer is that it is the love and faith of women which have wrought all these miracles of human thought.

Indeed, I believe that there would never have been any save average couples in the world if the sublime confidence of the average woman had not compelled the average man to turn into a superman just to keep from disappointing her.

Let us consider the single question of inventions—since women have been reproached so often with their inability to produce any that would compare with man's.

When a woman has anything to do she rushes upon it with the fury of the American devil hounds taking a trench. She either gets it done or gives it up with the idea of consulting the domestic oracle about it—of course, he will know.

Confronted by the problem, whatever it is, the oracle can't admit that he does not know. So to maintain his infallibility he invents the printing press, the steam engine, the spinning jenny, any and all the ingenious devices which are alike monuments to masculine genius and womanly faith.

The moment woman stopped believing in man man would stop being great. Some philosophers in considering the question of religion have suggested that even if there had been nothing to warrant it in the beginning, so much faith must have called into being justifying existences. This is certainly true of woman's religion of the heart—her credo in man. Just because the average wife believes she has domesticated a demi-god the average husband often turns into one.

He may fool some people into believing that he was always different. But I know it was a woman's sublime confidence that made him great.

"U. S. as She Is Wrote"

The following lines occurred in letters received by the Army Intelligence Bureau from soldiers or their families. They show that the "Melting Pot" boils linguistically as well as racially, and that the best humor is, after all, the "unconscious" sort:

I AINT got no book learnin and I am writing for inflamation.

She is staying at a dissipated house.

Just a line to let you know that I am a widow and four children.

He was inducted into the serface.

I have a four months baby and she is my only support.

A lone woman and parsely dependent.

I was discharged from the armory for goitre which I sent home for.

I did not know my husband had a middle name and if he did I do not think it was none.

As I needed his assistance to keep me enclosed (in clothes).

Owing to my condition which I havent walked in three months for broke leg which is No. 75.

Kind sir or she.

I enclose lovingly yours.

I am left with a child seven months old and she is a baby and cant walk.

I received $61. I certainly am provoked tonight.

Your relationship to him? Answer: Just a mere aunt and a few cousins.

In the service of the U. S. Armory.

And he was my best supporter.

I received my insurance polish and have since moved my post office.

I am his wife and only air (heir).

You ask for my allotment number. I have four boys and three girls.

Please correct my name as I could not and would not go under a consumed name.

I am pleating for a little more time.

Please return my marriage certificate, baby hasnt eaten in three days.

Now Mrs. Wislon I need help bad see if the President can't help me, I need him to see after me. Both sides of our parents are old and poor.

Extract from a letter from a boy to his mother: I am writing in the Y. M. C. A. with the piano playing in my uniform.

Please send me a wifes form (application form).

I have been in bed thirteen years with one doctor and intended to try another.

Hello Mr. Wilson War Risk Insurance How are you. I am well and nope you are the same.

Dear Mr. Wilson I have already written to Mr. Headquarters and received no reply.

If I don't get one I am going to write to Uncle Sam hisself.

We have your letter I am his grandmother and grandfather and he has been kept and bred up in this house according to your instructions.

I aint received no pay since my husband has gone to nowhere.

You changed my little girl to a boy. Will that make any difference.

Please let me know if John has put in an application for wife and child.

I am writing to ask you why I have not received my elopement (allotment).

His money is kept from the elopement which I never received.

You have taken any my man to fight and he was the best fighter I ever had.

My boy has been put in charge of a plattune, will I receive mere money now?

My son is in the 158 infancy (infantry). Please let me know is he living or dead and if so what is his address.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1918

Dere Mable

Love Letters of a Rookie

BY LIEUT. EDWARD STREETER

(Illustrated by Corpl. G. William Breck)

This is the first of a series of "Dere Mable" Letters which The Evening World will publish on this page.

"THE ONLY PLACE THERE FLAT IS ON THE MAP"

(Copyright, 1918, by Frederick A. Stokes Company.)

Dere Mable—

I guess you thought I was dead. You'll never know how near you was to right. We got the tents up at last, though, so I got a minit to rite. I guess they choose these camps by mail order. The only place there flat is on the map. Where our tents is would make a good place for a Rocky Mountain goat if he didn't break his neck. The first day the Captin came out an says "Pitch your tents here." Then he went to look for some one quick before any one could ask him how. I wish I was a Captin. I guess he thought we was Alpine Chasers. Eh, Mable? But you probably dont know what those are.

Honest, Mable, if Id put in the work I done last week on the Panamah Canal it would have been workin long before it was. Of course there was a lot of fellohs there with me but it seemed like all they did was to stand round and hand me shovels when I was to em out.

The Captin appresheates me though. The other day he watched me work awhile and then he says "Smit." He calls me Smith now. We got very friendly since I been nice to him. I noticed none of the other fellos had much to say to him. I felt kind of sorry for him. Hes a human bein even if he is a Captin, Mable. So every time I saw him I used to stop him and talk to him. Democratic. Thats me all over, Mable. "Smith" he says "If they was all like you round here war would be hell, no joke." By which he meant that we would make it hot for the Boshes.

I been feelin awful sorry for you, Mable. What with missin me and your fathers liver gone back on him again things must have been awful lonesome for you. It isn't as if you was a girl what had a lot of fellos hangin round all the time. Not that you couldn't have em, Mable, but you don't an theres no use makin no bones about it. If it hadnt been for me I guess things would have been pretty stupid, though I dont begrudge you a sent. You know how I am with my money. I guess you ought to anyway. Eh, Mable? Never talk of money matters in connexion with a woman. That's me all over

Now I got started an found a fountain pen an the Y. M. C. A. givin away paper like it does Im goin to rite you regular. They say there goin to charge three sents for a letter pretty soon. That aint goin to stop me though, Mable. There ain't no power in heavin or earth, as the poets say, as can come between you and me, Mable. You mite send a few three sent stamps when you rite. That is if your fathers able to work yet. And willin, I should add.

Of course it aint nothin to me but Id keep these letters what you get from me as a record of the war. Some day you can read em to your granchildren an say "Your Granfather Bill did all these things." Aint I the worst, Mable? Serious though I havnt found none so far what has thought of doin this except the newspapers. I guess Ill get a lot of inside stuff that theyll never see. So this may be the only one of its kind. But it doesnt matter to me what you do with them, Mable.

Later Ill tell you all about everything but I guess you wont understand much cause its tecknickle. Lots of the fellos are getin nitted things and candy and stuff right along. Dont pay no attenshun to that, though, or take it for a hint cause it aint. I just say it as matter of rekord. Independent if nothin. Thats me all over.

Yours till the war ends.

BILL.

The complete series of DERE MABLE Letters is published in book form.