

Somever, I'll rise Michael for you, and that in double-quick time."

If Michael was anywhere this side of Kingdom-come my yell now at the broken pane would have fetched him.

After the usual parley, Michael was on the point of assuring me that he'd be with me "immaijetely," when I interrupted him with: "Michael, *ahasky*, don't hurry yerself; we're goin' down here to Charlie Murphy's to have a treat, and ye needn't mind rising till we come back."

"Hould on ye, ye bla'guards!" said Michael. "Don't dar go there till I'm with ye!"

In ten minutes we had the shoe fastened and were leaving Michael and his concern behind.

Phil now said that the first cart they overtook the firkins we were carrying would have to be transferred to it; for it was against the "mather's" ordhers to lift firkins. We soon came up with Peter Cassidy, who had a load of firkins on his cart.

"Pether, *avic*," said Phil, pulling up, "ye'll hev to put another couple of firkins on. I hev too big a load."

"Och, the sarra wan more!" replied Peter. "It's too many I hev already."

"So you won't oblige me by puttin' on a hungry firkin?"

"The dickens take ye for a stupid *bosthune*! Don't ye see I can't?"

"Och, well, niver mind, ye ould cadger ye!" said Phil, who wasn't going to be outdone in abusive language. "If ye wanted to be disobligin' at self ye might larn to keep a civil tongue in yer head. If ye don't, maybe some wan 'ill be afther goin' to the trouble of taichin' ye manners some of these days, ye ill-tongued rapsallion, ye! Troth, it's little could be expected of the lakes of ye anyhow, ye yallow, ould, bog-throttin' niggard ye, that niver had as much manners as would carry mate to a bear! An' as for your ould rickle of a horse, small wondher ye wouldn't put a load on him—he's for all the world like a delf-erate on four props, an' it baits me to know why the polis lets ye dhrive him about, ye ould profligate ye!"

I perhaps should have mentioned that Phil took care to get some little distance ahead of his victim, before he turned the flood of abuse on him.

We soon overtook another cart.

"Can ye take a couple of firkins?" said Phil to the driver.

"I can take wan."

"Off wid yous, now," said Phil, addressing the owners of the firkins that were on the car; "and pitch your ould firkins on there. Off wid yous quickly, or I'll heel all into the *shough*."

The cartman put on the first firkin willingly, the second under protest; but when it came to the third he said he was blown if he'd put it on. The owner of the rejected firkin thereupon started back to deposit

it on the car; but Phil vetoed this, and there the poor fellow stood, affectionately hugging his little firkin, and looking appealingly from carman to cartman; but

"No kind emotion made reply

No answering glance of sympathy."

"What'll I do?" said he at length.

"Ye'd better be afther doin' somethin', an' that quick," said Phil: "I'm not goin' to stan' here all day lookin' at ye coortin' your firkin there like the *omadhaun* ye are. Are ye comin' on?"

"Yes, if ye let on the firkin."

"I won't let on the firkin."

"Will you let it on then?" addressing the cartman.

"I wud see ye," said he, "in Hongkong, where they grow the black hatten, first."

"I'll tell ye, Phil," said the perplexed one, suddenly brightening as an idea struck him, "I'll get on the car, an', as ye say the mare has weight enough on her, I'll hold the firkin on me knee till I get to the town."

"*Musha*," said Phil, after the roar of laughter at this proposition had subsided, "but it was the pity they didn't make ye 'Torney-Giniral, ye've sich a gran' head. Get up here, ye misfortunate divil, an' throw the firkin into the well of the car, an' if iver ye ax me put a firkin on the mare again I'll taich ye to dance a reel that yer fiddler niver larnt ye."

And so we rolled into Enniskillen. And our car-load melted away like the morning mists. And I bade farewell to Phil M'Goldrick.

# A Romance That Never Fades

It is a mistake to keep old letters. One must read, enjoy, and destroy before the passing years make them priceless; for unless your relentless fingers burn or tear them, the day comes when some one else is forced to do this for you, and it is unjust to require another to do what you would not.

Yet, knowing this, we all do keep letters, few or many according to our experiences and our natures, and when every year or two we open the polished box and read them, what familiar stories are unolded, stories both sweet and bitter! Each one would furnish the plot for a romance or a tragedy, and the series tells the short and simple annals of our own life.

First come the formal, funny letters from school-girls, precious they were in those days when a letter of your own was a new and delicious sensation. And at the bottom of the packet a school composition, torn, dirty and written in a scrawly hand, but marked "Excellent" in one corner.

A letter from Cairo. The Egyptian stamp is torn away; for you were making a collection of postage-stamps. It was your first foreign letter, and what pleasure it gave you because the writer, a grown-up young man, put into it descriptions of scenery and stories just as he would have done in writing to another grown-up!

How proud you also were of the note from the man who was your parents' friend, and then yours, too! Had he been writing to the greatest woman in the land, he could not have turned prettier phrases, yet he was only thanking you for a box of candy that you had made for him.

In one corner of the polished box bound together is a packet of letters that you never can bring yourself to open. They represent your first sorrow, and the sorrows of the young scar deep. She was such a fine girl, so tall, so fair, with the promise of splendid womanhood! The letters are postmarked in Florida and California, whither they sent her, goaded by their fear of the dreaded disease which had robbed them of other dear ones.

On top of the other letters is a type-written one beginning: "Margaret fell asleep this morning," and ends: "I dictate because I cannot write," and her father's name is signed to it.

Your letters from the boys who went off to college are amusing—boys who were older than you, and you felt their generosity in writing to you as an equal, in telling you of their life, of being "rushed for fraternities" and of joining glee clubs. Perhaps they asked for a photograph, and doubtless being greatly flattered, you sent it.

Then come the letters belonging to your own, joyous, never-to-be-forgotten college days. The whole story is there: your mother's interest and admonitions, your father's monthly checks and advice, notes of invitation, and letters from the girls written during vacation.

The girl who was in love alternately raves and thanks you for listening to her ravings, calling you "the sweetest confidant a love-sick girl ever had." Often you sympathized with their lovers' quarrels, listened to them both, and then brought them together again; but they never were meant for each other, and while you intended your interference for the best, you regretted it afterward and were honestly glad when it all was over. Now, he is married to another girl, the simple, understandable kind best suited to him, and year by year the girl you love is growing into a splendid,

By EUPHEMIA HOLDEN

self-supporting, well-poised woman. She will marry some day; but she will not make another mistake.

The girl who went to Europe after her graduation wrote you letters which filled you with a wild desire to see all the beauty she told you of. And when it did come your turn to visit Rome and Venice and Paris, how their wonders were interwoven with her clever and charming personality!

You perhaps have a little series of engagement notes: one from Edith telling you she is to marry a man you never heard of; another from Sally, inviting you to her engagement luncheon; and a third from the man who is to marry a girl you love. It is his highest ambition, he says, to make her happiness perfect. How glad you are that he has never forgotten this ambition!

Marion writes to thank you for the wedding gift that you embroidered for her. She has gone out of your life now; for she married a man whose work took him to China. Yet you do not forget her grace and her sweet nature, and you rejoice that she has many children to inherit these things from her.

The record of your own love affairs composes a little separate history.

How your heart beat and your face burned as you read your first love-letter! He was in college, and he sent you a banner and told a pretty story of a Northern girl who loved a Southern officer—it all had something to do with her kissing the flag, and ended with the comment that "the finest flag in all the world is none too good for you." He married young and never has been happy. You are sorry; for he deserved a far better destiny.

The youth who wrote verses to you since has become a full-fledged poet, and his name is in all the magazines. You are a bit proud to have been the inspiration of such lines as these:

"When lo! from out the embers shine,  
Bright eyes of one who doth combine  
All grace and loveliness divine—  
I sleep to dream of her."

Next, come the letters of the man you met at the summer resort. He was thirty, you were seventeen,

## MODERN

By Lurana W. Sheldon

The modern maid has modern ways  
Which her modern boudoir well displays,  
And which, could ancient maid behold,  
Would seem to her exceeding bold.  
For instance, note beside her jacket  
A fishing rod and tennis racket,  
And underneath her modest pallet  
Observe a well-worn croquet mallet.  
Her golf-sticks stand beside the door,  
Her camera is on the floor,  
Her dumb-bells occupy a nook  
Together with the latest book;  
And all too temptingly distended  
Her punching-bag is low suspended;  
And here, behold, where she can grab it,  
Her bifurcated riding habit.  
But what in all this modern crush  
Would make the ancient maiden blush  
Is what in all boudoirs we see—  
Pajamas—madras or pongee.

and your mother did not like it; neither did the foolish little woman who wanted him to fetch and carry for her when her

husband had gone to the city. He has gone out of your life completely—you do not even know where he is; for after he had written you two letters, you, instead of answering them, sent him an outrageously rude message through some one else, and he never wrote again.

One little note you never cease to handle caressingly. It is from the boy you suspect of having really loved you. It reads: "If you want me for anything—that is, of course for a time—just send me a note, and I will be at your command."

Generous lad! You had refused to go about with him because people said you were engaged. You would not now be so sensitive to public opinion. How you love him yet, with that combination of sisterly, motherly and womanly affection which is too mixed an emotion to lead to anything but a lifetime friendship!

Then, there is the note from the one you loved—differently. It came with some roses sent to acknowledge a service that you had done him. He thanks you for your unselfish, good fellowship. That was all. He was in love with another all the time. And when he married her your dear chum wrote you that "there are plenty far better for you, and he's not half good enough anyhow. Some day you'll laugh at it all—!" How right was the dear, little chum! Many's the time you have laughed at your unrequited passion.

Perhaps you have in one corner of your box a thick packet which shows signs of hard wear. By moonlight and candle-light and sunlight you have turned these over, opened and read and re-read. Yet why you needed to do this is a mystery; for every word in them was graven deep on your memory after the first reading. Or there may be a gap in your box where some day such a packet will rest—only you do not recognize the gap, because it is filled in with other, perhaps less beautiful, but just as absorbing, interests.

You may have had literary ambitions, and you will find and read over letters of criticism—one from your father, who says that the story you sent him "lacks point," or another from a celebrated literary person who offered to criticize your early efforts. How strangely dark the world was for days after you read his criticism! He saw no promise in your work, thought it only what any well-educated young person might produce, and— You may have a few of the efforts tucked away, and how willing you are to agree with him when you read them now! Stilted, conventional, imitative scraps—yet how firmly you believed that they were just as good as those you saw in print!

You also may have other letters with famous names attached—people that you or your parents or your grandparents knew; while filling in the crevices are letters—just letters, messages from the mother you adored, from friends, from the father whose greatest happiness in life was your happiness. The pages breathe unselfish affection, and your heart swells as you read. You haven't deserved it all—no, not half—but you have tried to, and you will try again to be worthy of the love which has made sunshine in your path.

Tears? Well, it is better—far better not to keep old letters. After all, they do nothing but take up space, and—

How glad you are you have not the courage to destroy them!