WHEN WOMEN CONVENE.

THE STRANGE THINGS THEY DO NOT SO STRANGE AFTER ALL.

The Newspaper Woman at the Meeting of Federated Feminines Enlightens Mrs. Van Klevver on the Strange Doings of Men, and Draws Parallels.

It was the last day of the Convention of the Federated Feminines. Mrs. Van Klevver and Miss De Korus were trying unsuccessfully to get something to eat, for the restaurant was crowded with be-ribboned, be-badged, and be-buttoned delegates. It was a woman's exchange place, and, of course, as such had received a free advertisement from the platform of the Convention. The waitresses were hopelessly bewildered, and one poor old thing, who had been assigned to the special duty of cleaning the tables, was so excited that she feverishly took away everything she could lay her hands on, even though a waitress had just brought it.

For this reason the few women whose orders had been filled were eating with as much speed as possible, keeping a cautious clutch on their plates the while. Mrs. Van Klevver had been trying for at least five minutes to get the attention of a waitress. She sat on the edge of her chair and said: "I beg your pardon!" and "If you please!" as one flew by, but it was of no avail. She tried to signal them across the room, and was getting thoroughly out of temper. Miss De Korus feebly cleared her throat meanwhile as her contribution to the general attempt to attract some one's attention.

Just as Mrs. Van Klevver was beginning to pat the floor impatiently with her foot, a newcomer made her way down the aisle and took the third chair at the table. Mrs. Van Klevver gave Miss De Korus a little kick and promptly ceased paying any attention to the waitresses. Miss De Korus returned the foot thrust, and the two exchanged a meaning look. It was the Newspaper Woman! There had been a number of women reporters at the Convention, but they belonged to the local newspapers, and had paled into insignificance beside a certain other one who came from New York. The local reporters took the convention very seriously, and worked extremely hard. They copied long extracts from all of the reports, and tried to be present from the first tap of the Chairman's gavel to the last.

This attention flattered the delegates exceedingly, but, by the same token, they were not a little piqued by the conduct of the Newspaper Woman from New York. They spoke of her in that way whenever they mentioned her, and that was often. She seemed to take them so calmly. She was often late, would stroll out for half an hour at a time, would read newspapers during the speeches, and was frequently observed to stifle a yawn. She knew all of the head women personally, and used to scribble notes and hand them up to the President, who always answered them in one way or another. At other times the Newspaper Woman would turn her back to the stage, lean her head against the front of the platform, and study the audience long and thoughtfully with a half smile on her face. Occasionally she would turn from this long scrutiny and write a word or two on some paper that lay on the table beside her. On one of these occasions a front-row delegate made haste to get up and walk past the Newspaper Woman's table and look at the paper.

"There wasn't a thing on it," she confided to some of her acquaintances a little later, "except 'mouths' and 'mitts.' Now, what in the world do you make of that?"

The puzzled delegates made nothing at all of it, and were therefore considerably surprised a few days later to find that the Newspaper Woman had made fully a quarter of a column of it.

Occasionally, however, the Newspaper Woman would have a sudden attack of energy. A remark, or a hint, coming in somebody's speech, would seem to fire her, and for a few minutes she would make her pencil fly. The investigating delegate declared that the result was absolutely illegible, but it was observed that the Newspaper Woman's newspaper always touched every vital note of the session and that her quotations of the speakers were word for word. The other reporters soon gauged themselves a good deal by the Newspaper Woman. They adopted a little cynical way she had of speaking of the Convention, and they never failed to take as many notes as they could, whenever she had one of her energetic spells. Thus, in one way and another, the Newspaper Woman had attracted a good deal of interest and curiosity at the Convention, and Mrs. Van Klevver was secretly delighted when the object of this curiosity took a seat at their table.

The Newspaper Woman looked about the place for a while, then she got up and walked a few steps along the aisle without making any effort to avoid the collision which speedily occurred between herself and one of the wildly wandering waitresses. Immediately she took the girl by the sleeve and returned to her seat. Mrs. Van Klevver saw the quick slipping of a quarter into the girl's palm and the beatific expression which followed.

"Have you ordered?" the Newspaper Woman said to Mrs. Van Klevver.

"I haven't had a chance," she laughed.

"We might as well take advantage of this one, if you will," and they sent their orders in together.

"Free advertising is a noble thing," said the Newspaper Woman, sententiously, taking another survey of the crowded room.

"Have you ever been in the Woman's Exchange in New York?" asked Mrs. Van Klevver. Somehow she wanted to show this girl that she was a Gothamite herself.

"Yes, occasionally," said the Newspaper Woman. "It was there that I saw you for the first time."

Mrs. Van Klevver's eyes opened wide.

"Saw me! When did you see me?"

"Last May. You had a headache and wanted some strong tea."

"Why—I didn't see you! Were you there?"

"Another headache to-day?" asked the Newspaper Woman with a smile.

Mrs. Van Klevver blushed.

"Of course you must have been there!" she said. "I don't know what made me ask that.

"The force of example probably," with another smile. "A convention like this will undermine the strongest common sense. Conventions are demoralizing to everything except one's sense of humor."

"You mean women's conventions."

"And men's."

"Why, I thought——" Mrs. Van Klevver hesitated.

"Yes, I know," said the Newspaper Woman. "You thought that men's conventions were always harmonious, interesting, to the point, that the men were all sensible, keen, well dressed, diplomatic. Well, human nature is human nature, whether it carries its manuscript in its overcoat pocket or in a black satin bag. Personally, and as a reporter, I prefer the bag species, because they always have their papers with them. The overcoat variety has a way of delaying the proceedings while the speech is hunted up in the cloak room."

"But you don't suppose that men——" Mrs. Van Klevver paused, as if she felt that she was about to accuse an innocent person and could not bring herself to do it. Then she gathered courage. "You don't think that men squabble the way women do?" she blurted out.

"In the same way? No. Their methods are different. With women, in a convention, the approach of trouble is evident by a little added 'manner;' with men, by a good deal added meanness. Again, personally, I prefer the manner. As a reporter, however, I favor meanness. It reads better."

"But," began Mrs. Van Klevver, "in spite of the 'manner,' you can always tell that the women are angry."

"Of course. That is what they intend. They are protesting, probably, against some course they don't approve. Well, you wouldn't have them defeat the ends of justice by giving the impression that they were pleased with the course? No, they have the true diplomatic instinct. They wish to defeat the enemy, but they want to do it so that future friendship with that enemy will not be impossible. Now, a woman rarely forgives an open blow. She hasn't been brought up to take one, and it simply crushes her. You will find that when two women have come to open and plain hard words in a convention there is no future amnesty possible between them. They take those things seriously, and they can't wipe them out. Consequently the more antagonistic they feel, the more instinctively they try to guard against an open breach.

"With men it is different. They have been brought up to knock each other down and then get up and shake hands with perfect friendliness. If they have a difference of opinion in a convention, they work themselves into a blind rage, swear with perfect abandon, and hurl epithets and ink stands at each other as long as the supply lasts. As I said before, personally I prefer the other method."

"But how about the—the women we read about? You know, those shrieking hens call each other names and—all that sort of thing?"

"They are like the individual in the poem. They dwell apart. They are newspaper traditions. I have read of one convention, or rather board meeting, when, according to the papers, a woman cried, but I wouldn't believe it unless I saw it with my own eyes."

"But—I thought," Mrs. Van Klevver hesitated again. "I thought," she said desperately, "that you found this affair as amusing as I do, and, it seemed to me," apologetically, "that in your reports of it in the papers you—well, you brought out the funny side of it."

The newspaper woman laughed.

"Now you flatter me," she said with a return to her cynical attitude.

"But don't you think it's funny?" persisted Mrs. Van Klevver.

"Why, to be sure! It has its funny side, just as a funeral has or a Presidential inauguration or a parade or a horse show or life, in short."

"Then you don't think it is any more ridiculous than a man's convention?"

"Not a bit."

"But the newspapers are always making fun of women's conventions and not of men's."

"That is easy. Things get about so much space in the newspapers. Men's conventions, as a rule, are on affairs of wide public interest. Consequently, it is the subject of the convention, not the manner in which it is conducted or the peculiarities of the members, which is reported in the papers. But who cares about some unknown woman's opinion of Robert Browning and the report of the delegate from Squeedunk? Evidently no one except their personal friends and enemies, and the number of these is not large enough to command the columns of a big newspaper. But in the club woman, in the abstract, thousands of people are interested. They are curious to know how these club women 'run things,' how they talk, dress, look, and act. And that is why their manners, aggregate and individual, come in for so much attention at the reporter's hands. As the public likes to be amused, furthermore, it is the humorous side of their proceedings which is emphasized."

"I see," said Mrs. Van Klevver, meditatively. Then, after a pause, "Are there just as queer-looking persons in men's conventions?"

"That disappointment seems to rankle," laughed the newspaper woman. "I'm sorry to shatter an illusion. But I cannot deny it. Yes, there are. Queerer, I should say. You'll find the same types, too, not to mention several which are unknown in women's meetings." She paused to take out her watch. "I have an appointment with the President," she said, "and am overdue, now. I'm afraid I must run away from talking this over, for I wish you to go and talk it over with her. I didn't mean to deliver such a lecture, but I suppose my mind was on the subject, because, you see, the President asked me to tell her why I have been so persistent in 'guying' womens' clubs and conventions. That was her very incorrect expression for my attitude toward them."

This remark seemed to recall to Mrs. Van Klevver the fact that she had been talking freely with the almost dreaded newspaper woman of New York. As the newspaper woman rose Mrs. Van Klevver had a sudden recollection of all the dreadful things she had read of the guild. She blushed violently, but did not flinch.

"You won't," she said appealingly, "you won't—put—me—in—the paper!"

The newspaper woman laughed without a trace of cynicism.

"This is refreshing!" she exclaimed. "Since I arrived the other day I have had enough material laid at my feet, with the request that it be printed, to have filled our Sunday edition twice over, but this is the first time I have been asked to keep any one or anything out of the paper. Don't worry. You shall be as safe as the dullest reader of the most insignificant report."

Mrs. Van Klevver blushed still more violently, but she stood her ground.

"I don't care!" she said. "How did I know you wouldn't consider me one of your club-women 'types' and write about me? Won't you hunt me up again and tell me about those types?" she pleaded.

"Of course, if you want me to. In that case, au revoir."

"Au revoir."

HOW MAINES GOT A WIFE.

He Selected One of a Hundred Applicants and Kept Her One Day.

From the Chicago Record.

JEFFERSON, Ia., Nov. 16.—If there is a man in all Iowa who has alternately raised and then dashed the fond hopes of a hundred confiding females that man is John P. Maines of Menlo, Guthrie county. Mr. Maines is considerably beyond the "shank" of life, and for the past two months has put in the greater portion of his time seeking a wife. The desire for a helpmeet has become chronic with the man, and matters such as the accumulation of land and collateral stock and a mortgage—features of farm life which are so alluring to the average tiller of the earth—have no charms whatever for Mr. Maines.

The natural supposition in a case so desperate as this would be that the anxious one would not set his ideal too high, and that the common run of women—tidy, industrious, good-tempered, and of fair physical and intellectual attainments—would measure up to the standard which a 55-year-old male, not burdened with personal charms, had a right to expect. However, Mr. Maines was doing the marrying, and as he was to pay the freight also he proposed to make a choice that would find an answering twang in his own bosom.

Having determined to divide his lot, Mr. Maines set about the usually easy task of securing a housekeeper a good deal after the manner of a town which wishes to dispose of school-house bonds. He resorted to the use of printers' ink, and he spread it on without stint. Advertisements were inserted in papers East and West, in which Mr. Maines set forth the alleged facts that he was possessed of acres of picturesque, rolling lands by the hundreds; personal property galore; that he was 55 years of age, but apparently as good as at 35, and that he wanted a wife.

One hundred women responded to the advertisements, the larger number of them intimating that he was the gentleman upon whom they had all the time had their hearts set, but of whose exact whereabouts up to this time they had been ignorant. Of these letters sixty were from Des Moines and the rest were from Chicago, Marshalltown, and Peoria, with a few "scattering."

It is alleged that a letter from Buffalo particularly struck Maines's fancy, and that he mentally said that the writer was the woman for whom all these years he had patiently waited. It is also alleged that the gentleman went to Buffalo, met his correspondent, arranged the details of alliance and even went so far as to purchase for his intended bride the trousseau which was to figure in the ceremony. Then, alas, there was a hitch. The woman balked just before the clergyman was called in, and although the expectant groom threatened to consecrate the trousseau in the event of failure to proceed, the coercive measure fell flat; the trousseau was handed back and the disappointed farmer-lover turned Chicagoward.

In Chicago Mr. Maines called upon the fair ones who had responded to his advertisements, but the results were not tangible. Chicago females did not measure up to his standard and he purchased a ticket for Peoria. Although the wife-hunter found evidences of thrift at Peoria he found nothing in the companion line that pleased him, and he started homeward. At Des Moines, with his sixty letters conveniently arranged and accessible and a city directory in his hand, Mr. Maines began the task of selecting one wife from among three-score of women who would make that delectable farm home near Menlo their abiding place. It was no easy matter, and nearly a month was occupied in the work. Finally, after much earnest thought and deliberation, Mr. Maines decided to unite his destiny and share his fortune with Mrs. S. Valeria Watson, a widow of 38. Following the wedding, which was solemnized without unnecessary delay, the happy couple wandered to the Rock Island depot, congratulating themselves upon the surprise that they would give the people of their home town. But alas for human calculation! Some one had come into possession of the main facts in the transaction and had telegraphed them ahead. When the train arrived at Menlo half the town was at the station to do them honor. And so, amid the plaudits of the multitude, Mr. and Mrs. Maines drove home through mud and rain—but they were happy, and a little matter of a crowd at the depot and a little mud and rain were of no consequence.

It is impossible to describe the thoughts of the bride as she pictured the advertised farm, with its rolling fields and orchard and stately residence. Neither is it safe to attempt to portray accurately any of the details of the next twenty-four hours at the Maines home. But this little dash of uncertainty gave place to evidence of a character that would convict, then, on the following day, Mr. and Mrs. Maines drove into town, headed for the railway station. The look of sweet contentment visible the day before had vanished from the countenance of the bride. There were traces of tears upon her cheeks and a look of "I want to go home" pictured in her eyes. Mr. Maines was apparently completely subdued, and his facial expression was that of a man who has been requested to resign.

Neither would give utterance to a word explanatory of the difficulty, but the groom purchased two tickets for Des Moines, and as the train was pulling out the was heard to mutter that "the d——was to pay."

Since his return enough has been pumped out of Maines to justify the assertion that he could write a book that would make "mighty interestin' reading," to use his own expression. He is now worrying along in a state of single blessedness, and incidentally he remarks that it is a fair sort of life.

ONE COUPLE MADE MISERABLE.

Deceit Practised Upon Passengers with Regard to a Young Man and Woman.

When a through New York express on the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad pulled into Binghamton the other day, a party of young men and women bustled into one of the cars with a young couple who were going away. They stood around and chattered all sorts of wishes that the departing couple might have a good time until the passengers made up their minds that there had been a wedding and this was the bridal couple, starting out for the honeymoon journey. When the conductor shouted "All aboard," the friends of the young couple ran for the car door and began to get off the train. A young woman was the last to leave the car. Just as she reached the door she called out in a tone of pleasant assurance:

"You don't look a bit like a bride and groom."

Then she fled. The other passengers smiled and the young couple looked acutely, miserably self-conscious. The girl blushed clear around to the back of her neck, and the young man stared out of the window and drummed on the pane. For a long time after the train started they had not a word to say to each other.

Now the joke of it was they were not bride and groom. At Scranton the young man got up, said good-by to the girl, took his grip-sack, and left the train. She came on to New York alone and was met by a smart young fellow, who called her by her first name and took her away in a carriage.

THE WISDOM OF THE WITS.

SOME OF THE FUNNY THINGS OUR CONTEMPORARIES PRINT.

The Man Who Wouldn't Speak to His Wife—The Lover Who Proved His Love—What Spoiled the Party at the Joneses'—A Load Lifted from a Lover's Mind.

From the Chicago Daily News.

One was a country friend who was visiting the other girl, probably a stenographer, as a long streak of typewriter ink ran across her hand. The country girl was delighted with everything she saw, and made audible remarks about whatever caught her fancy. Suddenly her eyes fell upon two people at an adjoining table, and, leaning forward, she whispered:

"Say, Nell, look over there."

Nell, turning her head, replied somewhat languidly:

"Well, Bess, what is it?"

"See that man and woman?" Bess returned, upsetting the ketchup in her eagerness.

"Yes."

"See how they are sitting there without saying a single word to each other. They are evidently husband and wife, ain't they?" asked Bess, growing excited.

"I guess they are, but what of it?"

"Why, it's just as it always is," was Bess's whispered answer. "As soon as a man's married he ceases to care for the woman he raved over before they were united. Just look at that man."

Nell suggested that perhaps the man might have talked himself out, but Bess would not admit that this was the case.

"I should say not," she retorted angrily. "Why, if some other man would come in you'd see how quickly he'd find something to say. It's all of a piece with the actions of the sex. Don't you think so?"

"Think what?" Nell asked, mystified by Bess's denunciations.

"That men are horrid creatures, anyway?"

"No, Bess, I can't say I do," Nell returned warmly. "I know too many nice men to think that. You've been reading some articles on woman's rights, I suppose," and she laughed a little sneeringly.

"Yes, I have, but even if I hadn't I'd have eyes in my head. How would you like your husband, if you had one, to treat you that way?"

"I wouldn't like him to act that way," Nell returned, her cheek flushing as she thought of the one who was destined to occupy that position, "but then I'd try to make myself a little more pleasant than that woman is doing. She hasn't said a word, either."

"I wouldn't talk to such an old bear!" was Bess's answer.

Neither of them had any idea of how loud they were talking and so were considerably annoyed when the man in question said to them as he rose and started for the door:

"The reason why I didn't speak to the lady at the same table with me was because I never saw her before 18 my life."

Proved His Love.

From the Chicago Daily Tribune.

They were two working girls and they happened to meet the other day at the restaurant where they eat luncheon. The brunette ordered baked beans and lemonade, and the blonde selected fruit cake and coffee. "To-morrow is pay day, you know," she said, in reply to the inquiring look of the other.

"Oh! Well, have you heard the news about Mary? She's resigned."

"I know," said the blonde. "I was in hopes I'd be the first to tell you. She's going to be married."

"Yes; in a lovely blue silk. I forget the name of the man she's going to marry. He isn't very good looking, they say, but Mary says he's intellectual. She says——"

"Oh, pshaw! You can't tell from Mary."

"No; but Sadie's seen his photograph, and she says he wears glasses."

"Does he? Well, Mary's lucky, if she is red-headed. Why, he would just do anything in the world for that girl."

"Humph!" said the brunette. "That's the way she talks now, but you can't tell a thing about it until after they're married."

"You can tell it easy enough in this case; he's proved it already," said the blonde warmly.

"Said he'd die for her, I suppose," returned the brunette scornfully. "Lots of 'em talk that way before they have to pay the butcher."

"This isn't talk, anyhow; he's proved his love, I tell you."

"How? Did he save her life—or tell her that her hair is golden?"

"Neither; he sold his bicycle to buy her an engagement ring."

Spoiled the Party.

From the Chicago Times-Herald.

"You weren't at the Joneses'," said the girl with the brown cape.

"No, I wasn't, and I'm awfully sorry. You see, I would have been there, but you——"

"Well, you ought to be glad that you weren't."

"Why, what was the matter? I always thought everybody had a good time when they went to the Joneses', for I believe——"

"It was the dullest thing I ever saw. You know it was to be a sort of talk party."

"Yes, everybody was to get in groups and talk about things. Now, for my part, I like——"

"But it wasn't. We just sat and looked at each other all the evening, and everybody went home feeling uncomfortable."

"You don't say! Why, what was the matter? Did anything happen?"

"I am not sure whether to say yes or no. You see, it was this way: The pianist didn't come, and there wasn't anybody there who could play the piano, so, of course, we couldn't talk, and we all sat there bored until it was time to go."

A Great Load Lifted.

From the Chicago Times-Herald.

She had agreed to become his wife. For a long time he had sat in silence, too full of emotion to say anything, so great was his happiness at having at last achieved the fondest dream of his life. At length his face, hitherto wreathed with smiles, became clouded. A scowl of annoyance settled upon it. She, who had been attentively watching his countenance, was quick to observe the change.

"What is the matter, George?" she asked in alarm. "You are not sorry you asked me to marry you and that I consented? Oh, George, I hope that is not it."

"No, dear. You know that I love you as never woman was loved before."

"Then what is it that causes you distress? Tell me that I may console you. It is the duty of a little wifey to comfort her husband in affliction, and I am going to be your little wifey. Ain't I, George?"

"Yes, darling, you are."

And there was silence, during which no sound fell upon the air except a noise like the popping of champagne corks.

"Well, George, now tell me all about it."

"Well, dear, I was wondering what your father will say when I ask him for your hand. You are such a precious jewel that I dare not ask him for you. I feel as if I were robbing him of a priceless treasure by doing so."

"Well," she replied, "if that's all that's the matter with you I might as well tell you that father and I rehearsed the whole act last night after you left, and I am sure he will reflect credit upon my lessons when you speak to him."

And a great load was lifted from his heart, while he deposited another in his lap.

Service a la Bowery.

From the New Orleans Times-Democrat.

A waiter from "de Bowery" drifted into town the other day and got a job in a Royal street restaurant. He was dressed in a check suit, walked stiff-kneed, with his chin out, and yelled out his orders like a Mississippi mate. His first customer was a gentleman of delicate appetite. The waiter struck a prize-fighter attitude, leaned his head slightly down toward the guest, and said:

"Well?"

The guest looked up in surprise. The waiter glanced down at him.

"Well, what can we do for yer, sport?"

Regaining his control, the diner said: "Ah, I'd like something light, waiter."

"Sumtin light? How would a fedder do yer?"

"A what?"

"A feather. Maybe you might get your whiskers trou a lamp, or p'raps a cup of barber's ladder might fit yer mug."

Having delivered himself of these pleasantries the waiter smiled broadly, and tapped his customer lightly on the cheek.

"Dere, whiskers, don't get yer peppers on. Dat's a josh to git up yer appetite, see? No stringin', wouldn't an omelet suffiay tickle de cove in yer bread baskey? Say, I can rush it jute yer face before yer finish goin' up against de pickles, see?"

The delicate gentleman nearly fainted, and was rescued by the head waiter, who gave him another attendant, and put the Ganymede from wicked New York on the dishwashing list.

Getting His Name Up.

From the Detroit Free Press.

Two young men whose clothes were such as to make it probable that they would at any minute fall into picturesque attitudes and execute a song and dance, stood watching a big building that is nearing completion.

"It's a great piece of work," commented one of them.

"Taint nothing else," was the reply.

"I wonder who's the guy that got it up. He oughtty have his name to it."

"I reckon he has somewhere. When a feller makes a bit like that it's hard luck if he doesn't get his name on the programme."

"What does that say up there?"

His companion slowly read the letters: "MDCCCXCVI."

"That's it!" he exclaimed, as soon as he had spelled it through.

"That's what?"

"The name of the gent that designed the stone pile. I reckon he's some Russian or Welshman that's just startin' in in this country. I never heard of him before, but's he's good."

Forthcoming Information.

From the Chicago Daily Tribune.

Parishioner—Doctor, what is the exact nature of the union between the soul and the body?

The Rev. Dr. Fourthly—My dear brother, there are some mysteries I have never attempted to penetrate. But I have a young friend, the Rev. O. Howe Wise, a recent graduate of our theological seminary, who is writing a sermon on that very subject, and will deliver it one week from next Sunday. Don't fail to go and hear him.

Not Good Evidence.

From the Detroit Free Press.

"Get any ducks?"

"Well, I should say so. Here's a photograph we had taken at the club house with all that we——"

But the questioner turned away. He was a sportsman himself and knew all about that kind of game.

His Appropriate Attitude.

From the Indianapolis Journal.

He stood as if carved from stone.

Those who knew the circumstances manifested no surprise.

He had just been chiselled out of his rocks.

Just the Reverse.

From the Somerville Journal.

First Prisoner—So the detectives found you out, did they?

Second Prisoner—No; they found me in.

Old-School Politeness.

From the Chicago Record.

"Uncle Simon, what is old-fashioned politeness?"

"It is a way people used to have of asking a man about his health and then listening until he got through replying."

Machinations That Machinated.

From the Detroit Tribune.

"Nothing shall part us," she murmured.

An hour elapsed. "Go," she said. In that brief hour she had grown cold through the machinations of a cruel father. You see he machinated with the furnace, cutting off all the heat from the front parlor.

The Other Meaning.

From the Cleveland Leader.

"They say Brown is married to a new woman."

"Yes, I believe this is his fifth."

Sufficient Explanation.

From Brooklyn Life.

"I don't quite see why you call Mr. Biggs lantern-jawed."

"Why, because his face lights up so when he talks."

Her Very Good Reason.

From the Detroit Free Press.

Mother—Why did you accept Charley from among all the young men who have paid you attention?

Daughter—Because he was the only one that had the good taste to propose.

Relationship.

From the Indianapolis Journal.

"She is a Daughter of the Revolution!"

"Sister, I believe."

Not His Full Title.

From the Indianapolis Journal.

"Hungry Higgins?" said the kind lady. "Of course that is not your real name?"

"None," answered Mr. Higgins. "It's wot might be called a empty title."

Reason Enough.

From the Philadelphia Record.

Packer—That sailors' chorus was awfull What was the matter?

Stage Manager—The tars couldn't get the right pitch.

Surely.

From the Chicago Daily Tribune.

"You think Noah had a pair of every kind of animal and insect in his ark, do you? Where did he keep his bees, for instance?"

"He kept them in the ark hives."

Substantially the Text.

From the Chicago Daily Tribune.

"Willie, what was the preacher's text?"

"Somethin' about havin' faith like a grain of some kind of seed, an' sayin' to the mountain 'git a move on you!' an' it'll git."

BUCKLES AND BELTS.

Gorgeous Bits of Ornament for Women with Ample Purses.

Buckles, belts, and girdles form a very striking part of woman's toilet this fall. The young woman with the trim waist, the middle-aged woman who begins to have to hunt for her waist, and the old woman who has entirely lost hers all strap their garments in with either a plain narrow leather band or a gorgeous jewelled girdle, such as the Roman women wore when the empire was in the height of its glory. They go so far as to wear them with garments that don't need any holding in. Color and richness form the keynote of even the minutest details of the feminine toilet just now, and especially is this true in the matter of belts and buckles.

The silver houses are bringing out some very elaborate designs in girdles for the Christmas trade. One, noted for the originality of its designs, is showing many styles in the chain girdles. These are made of solid silver gilded and elaborately studded with turquoise, carbuncles, amethyst, topaz, and other comparatively inexpensive stones. However, one of the handsomest has no settings. It is made after an old Roman girdle, the design being executed in silver with the Roman gold finish which has the appearance of having been burnished by time. The jewelled girdles are far more showy. One is made in the daisy pattern. Each daisy is studded with an amethyst, a topaz, and an olivine alternately and the flowers are joined at top and bottom by tiny but substantial chains. The buckle is a large square one studded with the different colored gems. Scroll designs, squares, and rounds are put together and set in the same elaborate way. In addition to being ornamented with jewels, most of these girdles are first gilded, then enamelled in the richest colorings. Some remind one of the kaleidoscopes of our childhood days, while in others the one color scheme is carried out. For example, one particularly noted is not gilded, but the plain silver is enamelled in the old reds and blues seen on some of the old Roman pottery. Each link is set with a large turquoise, and the buckle is of solid silver. The prices of these plain sterling and much-bejewelled buckles vary from $25 to several hundred. The single stones used in some of them cost as much as $50, and the more ample a woman's waist the more links she will need. In short, the price goes according to the size.

The buckles displayed by the jewellers are as handsome and some of them almost as costly as the belts described. The newest thing is a silver buckle enamelled in real delft blue. The favorite designs are those used on blue delft ware. Ribbon webbing is usually used with these buckles. They have already attained great favor. Very large gilded buckles in curious sheaf, shield, and scroll designs are enamelled and set in the centre with one very large gem. Green jade is quite the fad of the hour. Other buckles in similar designs are of burnished gold finish and thickly studded with small gems of all colors. The poster buckle is something quite new and very unique. It is invariably square and has a poster design enamelled in the brilliant blues, greens, yellows, and reds which mark French posters. These buckles have failed to take well except with the schoolgirls, who have poster collection on the brain.

The cheapest really up-to-date buckle obtainable in solid silver costs $10, and the styles change in buckles and belts so frequently that it does not pay those with limited allowances to indulge in them. Besides, the art of enamelling metal has been reduced to such a science that it is impossible for the untaught eye to tell what is done on silver or gold at a glance. So the cheaper material answers every purpose. Then, too, mock gems are now made in such perfect imitation that it is possible to carry out the designs of the most expensive girdles at small cost.

Will not the very severe tailor-made girl, who never gives way to the fads for gay gewgaws, still belts in her Norfolk jacket or tight-fitting coat with a narrow leather band or one of the newer metal belts made in exact imitation of lizard skin, her more pliable sister preferring to her tailor-made gowns a with an Egyptian girdle, as fetching as any ever worn by Cleopatra, or one of Roman design. A cut-steel girdle, coming down to a point where it fastens in front is one of the latest French importations, and is very effective on the velvet and cashmere waists worn so much. These metal girdles can be had as low as $3, but it takes at least $10 to get one altogether satisfactory, and from that they advance in price to $25. The miniature design is the favorite in the metal buckle, costing from $5 to $15. Some of the heads are set in mock gems, and give a chic touch to a house gown or light silk waist.

AROUND THE WHIST TABLE.

THE SECOND WEEK OF THE MONTH WAS WOMAN'S WHIST WEEK.

The Washington Short-Suiters Carried Off All the Honors at the Woman's Inter-City Tournament—The Original Lead Considered—Club Notes.

The second week in November should go down to history as the women's week in whist. The first shadow of the coming events was when a fair visitor from Syracuse took the captain of the short-suiters for a partner and walked off with the first prize at the Brooklyn Whist Club. The same player with Mr. Henriques for a partner rolled up a plus of ten tricks on twelve hands against some of the cracks from the New York Club. That was on Monday. On Wednesday a team of twenty ladies took issue with a team of twenty men at Toledo, O. A spectator tells THE SUN that he judged from the appearance of the competing teams that the ladies had been selected entirely on account of their good looks and the men because they played the best whist. Mr. Packard was the only first-class player in Toledo who was not on the men's side. When it was all over it was found that the ladies had made the top score, both N and S and E and W. Mrs. Harrison and Mrs. Day were 7 plus N and S, while Mrs. Hubbell and Mrs. Dyer were 5 plus E and W. Mrs. Lloyd, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Sisson, and Mrs. Colton being each 3 plus; the best the men could do being 2 plus. As Toledo will be a prominent factor in the next congress, it will not be surprising if one or two of its best teams are women players.

On this same Wednesday the first inter-city tournament for teams composed exclusively of women began in Philadelphia. The moving spirit in this new departure was Mrs. Thomas H. Andrews, who presented the trophies and opened her house to the competing teams. She had forseen and provided for every detail, and the three days' play went off without a hitch of any kind. Mr. Milton Work was referee, and several prominent whist players were daily visitors. Eleven teams of four entered, seven of them being local teams. No. 5 was the Otis Club of Pottsville, Pa., which had been carefully drilled by the teacher whose name it bears. No. 8 was from Camden, N. J. No. 9 was from the Woman's Club of Washington, D. C., and had been coached along the lines of radical short-suitism by Harry Low and Jules Wooten. No. 11 was from Brooklyn, and had taken a lesson or two from a famous Brooklyn teacher, whose wife was captain of the team. The Philadelphia players had had the benefit of last winter's tournament, all through which they were coached by some of the best players in Philadelphia, notably Messrs. Work and Remak. The captains of teams Nos. 1 and 2 are themselves teachers of wide experience and their teams had made great progress. Every team in the tournament were strictly long-suiters, except the Washingtons. Harry Low had impressed upon them that long suits were all very well when there was any chance to make them, but that otherwise no suit could be so bad that it was not worth leading. The New Yorks, he told them, did not go far enough, and were afraid to lead short suits only six-spot high. He advised them to avoid mincing matters, and when they were going to open a short suit, to do so, no matter how bad the suit was.

This advice they followed, and they not only carried off the trophies, but all the individual prizes for out-of-town players; so that the championship of the first inter-city tournament exclusively for women goes to a short-suit team. Here is the full score, showing matches won:

Rank.	Team.	Captains.	City.	Tricks. Plus.	Tricks. Minus.
1	No. 9	Mrs Hawley, Wash'g'n.	8	16	..
2	No. 1	Mrs. Newbold Phila.	7½	21	..
3	No. 2	Mrs. Andrews Phila.	7½	19	..
4	No. 5	Mrs. Snyder, Phila.	7½	9	..
5	No. 7	Mrs. Fox, Pottsville,	5	1	..
6	No. 6	Miss Gatchell Phila.	4	..	5
7	No. 8	Mrs. Will'ms Camden,	4	..	5
8	No. 11	Mrs. Baker, Brooklyn	4	..	6
9	No. 3	Mrs. Johnson Phila.	3½	3	..
10	No. 4	Mrs. W'rnw'g Phila.	2	..	20
11	No. 10	Mrs. White, Phila.	2	..	29

The winning team was: Mrs. J. R. Hawley, Mrs. J. W. Pilling, Mrs. J. F. Leech, and Miss de Sibour. The Woman's Club, which they represent, is well known as the leading literary and social club of the capital, and their success has naturally created quite a stir among the local experts. They will have to defend the trophies against challenges, pretty much on the same plan as the A. W. L. trophy matches. The first will be against Mrs. Newbold's team on Dec. 2. This team held the trophies up to the time of the tournament, and finished second to the Washingtons, getting top score for tricks, 21 plus. Mrs. Wister of this team also made the best individual score, 17 plus.

The system adopted by the winners caused quite a little discussion, and, as usual, the vanquished were good enough to say that they were outplayed, regardless of the system used. Before going into the tournament the Washington players had defeated the strongest team of women players in their own city, a team which had won matches from several good men's fours. One of the team writes to THE SUN: "After some practice with Messrs. Low, Wooten, and Hingham, we became thorough converts to the short-suit game, and we believe that our success is largely due to its consistent use; never losing sight of the fact that when we have a long-suit hand, we try to bring the long suit in." Before the tournament began, Mr. Low wrote to THE SUN to keep an eye on Mrs. Hawley's team. "We have been coaching them, and they attain the ultra short-suit attack, no moderate or modified or conservative short-suitism, but a short lead from the majority of hands. I think the trouble with the New Yorks is that they don't stick to their guns. They relapse to their old long-suit ideas. I don't believe the best game is long suits with a slight admixture of shorts, but the out-and-out short-suit game itself."

THE ORIGINAL LEAD.

One of the stock arguments against the short-suit game is that the opening lead of a hand makes no difference; that all the tricks are won or lost in the end play. This is one of the greatest fallacies ever entertained by a whist player. It has been particularly noticed by all the best writers that the opening first lead is by far the most important in the whole hand. Pole puts this statement in italics on page 28 of his "Theory of Whist." Deschapelles indulges in a lot of fine writing on the possibilities of the opening lead, and all of the leading authorities have regarded it as the key to the entire hand. It must be remembered that the opening lead is the only play which is made absolutely in the dark. The moment the first card is led in any hand the three other players at the table know more than the leader. They know whether or not he has a great strength in trumps; they know if he has a high-card combination in the suit he leads, and if he is a long-suiter they know the suit led is his best, however poor it be.

The original leader should open his hand entirely regardless of the probabilities of tricks in his own hand, because he knows nothing else. In deciding on its probabilities his chief difficulty will be to distinguish between hands which justify him in playing a strong game, and those with which he should at once assume the defensive, and strive to so play as to protect his partner. This is a matter requiring judgment, not only as to the intrinsic value of a hand, but as to its probable value, and the exercise of this judgment is the keynote to the short-suit game.

The long-suiter takes no thought of probabilities. He would just as soon start out to play for an absolute impossibility as not. If a thousand since-pure long-suit openings are examined, it will be found that in the majority of them the player has an object in view which defies every conceivable odds to accomplish. This is contrary to common sense, and THE SUN has maintained from the first that the time would come when the great mass of whist players would realize that fact, and would vary the opening lead according to the possibilities of the thirteen cards held by the leader himself. To say that this statement was contradicted would be putting it mildly; it was howled down by every whist writer in the country who could get into print.

What are the facts to-day? A year or so ago all that was necessary was to count the number of cards in each suit, and if one contained five, and no other more than three, the five-card suit was the lead, no matter what the rest of the hand might be. To hold a singleton, even with six trumps, was to write the gallows for oneself. At the first whist congress, in Milwaukee, a delegate asked a well-known writer on whist whether he had ever led a singleton. On being informed that he always led one when he had six trumps and nothing in his hand, the delegate left the congress. When THE SUN began to advocate short-suit leads, if any one had ventured to predict that within a year such players as those on the Hamilton team would lead singletons and two card suits, he would have been looked upon as a lunatic. Yet we find Milton Work publishing such leads to-day as a matter of course, not even stopping to give a reason for them. For instance: In deal No. 23 in the A. W. L. match with the Boston Duplicate, the Hamilton player held three trumps, ten high; three diamonds, ace, king, high, six spots, and the solus queen of spades. Of course, he led the fourth-best club? Not a bit of it. He led the singleton, and gained two tricks by it.

A little more than ten years ago a number of the best players in England were invited to specify the card they would lead from ten example hands. These hands were as follows, the heart six being turned in every case. And the score love-all, so that the player would play for every trick in sight.

No.	Hearts	Clubs.	Diamonds.	Spades.
1	K 8	10 9 7 6 4 2	A K Q	J 10
2	9 8	9 8 7 6 3	A K Q	A K Q
3	5