

THE MODERN BRIDE.

Mrs. Harrison Says Girls Should Choose Their Own Husbands.

ENGAGEMENTS MUST LAST A YEAR.

Inter-tribal Matrimonial Talk With a Dozen Washington Society Women—The Right Are to Marry.

Washington, Jan. 18, 1890.—[Special correspondence of THE HERALD.]—What should be the age of the modern bride?

This question forms the subject of my interviews with the leading ladies of Washington this week. Of the two hundred mothers of daughters whom I saw at President Harrison's last evening White House reception, 50 per cent. were married before they were twenty. The sweet, bright girls whom they chaperoned ranged in age from twenty to twenty-eight. Their mothers married at seventeen, but they are in no hurry to settle at twenty-four and twenty-five. The prettiest and most popular girls at the capital, Miss Mattie Mitchell, the two Miss Maurs, Admiral Porter's daughter Ellen, Miss Katy Beach, and a score of others, have been out from three to five seasons. The popularity of early marriages is dying away, and the wives of our statesmen now decidedly disapprove of their girls being mated when they are still in their teens.

Of the harbor's daughters of madames whom I met, only Mrs. General Logan and Mrs. Senator Mitchell have anything to say in favor of old time marriages. But I will let the ladies speak for themselves.

THE WIFE OF THE PRESIDENT.

Mrs. Benjamin Harrison has decided views on the subject, and she has evidently given this question some thought. She is very fond of young girls, and her advice to them is worth taking. Said she: "Instead of waiting until you are of proper age to marry, I should make it twenty-five. As a rule, a woman is married two-thirds of her life, and she can easily lead two or three out of those years to what ought to be a happy period with every girl, the years between school days and marriage.

"Physically and essentially a woman is at her best at twenty-five, and that is the time she should marry."

"But your marriage took place at a much younger age, did it not?" I asked. "Yes, I did, my dear young man," she answered, "but I was twenty, and in those days a girl's education was finished at sixteen or seventeen and there was so little for her to do as compared with the present."

"Should a girl choose for herself?" I said. "Yes, as a rule," replied Mrs. President Harrison, "but when a girl is very young, marriage cannot concern any but the parties to it, and they should decide, although I must confess, that they sometimes make poor work of it."

"The first duty of a girl has this to say about marriage for position: "Love and respect but never position should decide a woman's choice of a husband."

"Never before twenty and rarely before twenty-three," was the reply of the post-master-general, "and the question of a girl should travel, meet many men indifferently, and when she does decide that she loves any one she should put that love to the test. When girls leave school they are susceptible to kindness from anyone they meet and they should never mistake that feeling for love."

"This is the reply of the mother of the girl who is confessedly the daintiest of the debutantes and whom half the society men of Washington already admire. Yet she was a wife before she was twenty. At that age she is a debutante."

"A girl is not at her best physically until she is twenty-five, and, therefore, should not marry much before that age, as the housekeeping duties require their best energies. Women who marry before twenty often find themselves broken down at thirty, just when they are enjoying life the most. For health alone an early marriage is inadvisable."

"In answer to the question whether a girl should ever marry for position, Mrs. Miller put the case in a nutshell when she said: "No; for she has to set opposite her husband at meals three times a day, and position doesn't count in every-day intercourse."

"What a splendid daughter she is!" Miss Florence, the prettiest daughter of the attorney-general's house, "I spent a week at the White House a short time ago, and when I saw how much more the public had thought of the President's daughter, Harrison did think that I should never marry for it. What is it, anyway?" she made a suggestive gesture of catching a handful of air and letting it dissipate, "after you grasp for it you do not want it."

"There are times, however, Florence, when a girl should marry for a home," said the mother. "Not just to have a roof over her head, but for the sake of a good man who will always give to his wife. She should not marry for love alone, for matrimony requires a more solid foundation than capricious love."

"Can a girl afford to marry a poor man?" I asked. "Of course she can," replied Mrs. Miller, "if he is frugal, good habits and of some business ability."

"I tell all the girls I know," said Mrs. Justice Field, who, although she has no daughters of her own, always has half-a-dozen girls in her drawing room, "to fall in love with the one whom she selected at all. I do not think she can follow her first fancy. She may think she loves at eighteen, but is wise to wait until she is twenty-two, and then, as a rule, she does not marry the one whom she selected at first. Washington girls either marry very young or quite old, say at twenty-eight, but they generally marry well."

"Should the position of the lover affect her choice?" I asked. "A girl who has been properly bred," replied Mrs. Field, "will always give a thought to the position in life of the man she marries. While she should decide her choice, it is her right to weigh in her own mind whether her future husband could give her anything like the home her father has given her."

Mrs. Senator McMillan, of Michigan, will have half a dozen million-dollar beauties under her care this winter, but she is against the "dear girls" and their little love affairs. She said: "I consider the two or three years after a girl leaves school the happiest of her life, and if she can live it independent of any engagement she will be able to make a much better choice at the end of that time. Suppose a girl's fancy is caught the first year she is out; her whole position in society is changed. She passes among her friends as the 'engaged girl,' and must altogether be a refuse. It is much better for her to be a free lance and meet any number of men agreeably, than to be engaged to one who might possibly want to marry her. Circumstances and place have much to do with these affairs of love, and the mother who wishes to keep her daughter a while should see that she met many men, especially if she notices that she is slightly taken by any one. I cannot conceive how a girl can marry against the wishes of her friends, nor can I see how she can marry anyone repellant to herself on a matter how

DRAMATIC AND LYRIC.

A Little Surprise Party at the Grand.

GOING AFTER THE GONDOLIERS.

"Hassie Helena Indulgences in a Shakespearean Repast—The Old Folks at the Theatre—Latest Notes in Amusement Circles.

A big gathering came out at the Grand last evening to hear George Thatcher's witticisms and behold the other features of the Boston Howard Athenaeum show. They were somewhat paralyzed when the curtain went up to have a stout gentleman appear and announce that the Howard Athenaeum was somewhere in the neighborhood near Truckee, and that Miss Helen Blythe would fill the gap with the emotional drama of "A Mother's Love." Any one who wanted his money back could have it. A number availed themselves of the opportunity, but the greater portion, including a big gallery, stand to see it out.

The story of the play, which was a variety show, we think it would have been somewhat better if they had been; the audience would certainly have preferred it, and the box office would have stood a better chance on the three remaining nights of the engagement. "A Mother's Love" is about as dreary a piece of dramatic hodge-podge as I have ever seen. It is a forgery, with Mary Anderson for the permanently weeping mother, with Lawrence Barrett as the bibulous doctor, with Susan Wallace as the young girl, and Louise Dillon as the sobrette with the wind mill arms—it might be possible to galvanize the piece into some sort of temporary interest by the Helen Blythe company, it is a hopeless task. There is nothing bright enough about the whole thing to call for criticism; the players are as mediocre as the plot, and while it might succeed in a small town, it is not up to the standard that Salt Lake is accustomed to require for her dollars' worth.

"The Gondoliers" has been seen and been slated. The American managers who paid heavy sums down for the eastern, western and southern rights to the opera, purely on the strength of the success in London, will probably wait next time till the American public has a chance to put forth its little fiat. And get it is impossible to say for a certainty. The main trouble with the American production seems to be the English company, and when Francis Wilson gets a chance at it, they may reverse the verdict. There are some excellent songs in two cities' opinions. "The New York Herald" says:

"In all my dramatic experience, which extends over a respectable period, I can recall no complete more complete or disconcerting than that of the Gondoliers in the Boston production. The confident assurance of Mr. D'Oyly Carte in London, and the presentation of Gilbert and Sullivan's opera, he believes him, his artists were well equipped for the work. They could sing—oh, they could sing—and several of them were competent actors."

"The company, which included Arthur Forrest, Carter, and the chief soprano part will be played by a young girl, Miss Estlin, who is a native of Philadelphia. Miss Agnes Macfarlane, a debutante of great promise, will fall to the lot of the first soprano, and the part of the Grand Inquisitor will be in the hands of another of my old friends, Miss Estlin. The opera is a very sweet voice—so good, indeed, that Sir Arthur Sullivan says he wants no better for his grand opera than the one he has just seen."

"I quote from an interesting interview with Mr. Carter, which appeared in the edition of the Herald. How Mr. Carter can ever have ranked his manager, Arthur Forrest, as a first-class actor, I cannot understand. If he believed what he was saying, would he not think of his judgment? And if he did not, why are we to think of it?"

"Need I complete the sentence? This failure of the London company to redeem their manager's pledges has done more harm to English art in America than will be done by the success of the Boston production. The prestige of the London stage no less than the prestige of Sir Arthur Sullivan; and it has put a weapon in the hands of those who would wish to see the work of which they will not be slow to avail themselves."

"All this, however, does not detract in the least from the intrinsic worth of the opera, and if, as Mr. M. P. Wagner could replace a few of the present company, and if they were to have no doubt at all, "The Gondoliers" would be like whittles."

"The libretto, like all Mr. Gilbert's librettos, gains on closer acquaintance. The literary beauties and humor of the dialogue are often enough to stand on their own merits."

"The Morning Journal" says: "The mere fact of such a report getting out as that Mr. M. P. Wagner had been engaged by Carter for sending such a company over to play 'The Gondoliers' as the one we saw for the first time last Tuesday morning, is a very good proof of the suppressed indignation that gentleman is perfectly right in feeling. But there is not likely to be any such result. On the other hand, if we are to have a company of third-class people, but he really gave no guarantee of their ability. He proposed to very much to the contrary. It is good enough for the third-rate towns of England were good enough, for, in the same top-heavy manner, they were in the habit of assuming toward the states."

"Yet Mr. Carter had been here before and ought to have known better. It is not even true, as he stated, that Mr. Gilbert had ever released the company that he had sent over. It is true that he never saw a single individual among those who are."

"At the same time it was a great misfortune for the piece that George Thorne, who was to have played one of the two principal parts, fell sick and was obliged to leave the company left London. He is a strong favorite here and would undoubtedly have pulled up the representation to some sort of decent level."

"The popularity of Gilbert and Sullivan here, and the hold they have upon American audiences, in spite of the fact that they are shown in the fact that business at that wretched little New Park theatre has been most remarkable since they came over. The receipts have been held in money all that could possibly get into it. On the second night the receipts were close upon \$400, and on the third night they were about \$500 more than this. By that time, too, though the performance was still far from being what it should be, it had become the first night that it almost seemed a different piece."

"And so by all this the American managers who have purchased out-of-town rights for the opera are vastly encouraged in their undertaking. It is not, however, safe for them to rest too much upon the money success of the first few weeks in New York. With 'Ruddy Pals' and 'The Gondoliers' the receipts were phenomenal for the first two or three weeks. There are always enough people in New York to support a play for a month or two, for even a failure, if curiosity has been properly whetted in advance. Thus with 'The Yeoman' and 'The Gondoliers' the success of the business as they ever know for a month at the Casino, though every body knew the opera to be a failure, the public went one and never again."

"Chicago and Boston went up one good night's receipts to either 'Ruddy Pals' or 'The Yeoman,' and though the companies that are now being organized here in America for the Eastern and Western representations of the work will be infinitely better than the one New York has seen, it is not at all probable that the opera is going to duplicate the success of the first several of the early successes of Gilbert and Sullivan. The lack of a really funny part in the opera is the worst thing against it. Even with excellent acting it would seem to be dry and a trifle tedious. The subject is not particularly inviting, and there is nothing to recommend itself to bring forth any very favorable comment."

"The town of Helena, Montana, got it into its little head that it would be a capital thing to celebrate statehood with a Shakespearean festival, and in a rash moment it closed with that venerable play, 'The Merchant of Venice.' The festival was just taken place, and the Helena Journal thus appreciatively discourses upon it: "Last night Daniel E. Bandman, the County Treasurer of the Missoula county state, presented Hamlet at the opera house. We went to see Ham, and owing

THE GRAMMATICAL BOY.

Bill Nye Shows the Difference Between the Old and the New Style.

Sometimes a sad, homesick feeling comes over me, when I compare the prevailing style of anecdote and school literature with the old McGeuffey brand, so well known thirty years ago. Today our juvenile literature, it seems to me, is so transparent, so easy to understand, that I am not surprised to learn that the rising generation shows signs of lawlessness.

Boys today do not use the respectful language and large, huzzar words that they did when Mr. McGeuffey used to stand around and repeat their conversation for his justly celebrated school reader. It is disagreeable to think of, but it is none the less true, and for one I think we should face the facts.

I ask the careful student of school literature to compare the following selection, which I have written myself, with great care, and arranged with special reference to the matter of choice and difficult words, with the flippant and common place terms used in the average school book of today:

One day as George Pillgrimage was going to his task, and while passing through the wood, he espied a tall man approaching in an opposite direction along the highway.

"Good morning, my fine fellow," exclaimed the stranger, pleasantly. "Do you reside in this locality?"

"Indeed I do," retorted George, cheerfully, doffing his cap. "In yonder cottage, near the glen, my widow mother and her thirteen children dwell with me."

"And is your father dead?" exclaimed the man with a rising inflection.

"Extremely so," murmured the lad, "and oh, sir, that is why my poor mother is a widow."

"And how did your papa die?" asked the man, as he thoughtfully stood on the other foot of a while.

"Alas, sir," said George, in a large, hot tear stole down his pale cheek and fell with a loud report on the waxy surface of his bare foot, "he was lost at sea in a bitter gale. The good ship foundered two years ago last Christmas, and no father was foundered at the same time. No one knew of the loss of the ship and that the crew was drowned until the next spring, and then it was too late."

"And what is your age, my fine fellow?" quoth the stranger.

"If I live till next October," said the boy in a declaratory tone of voice suitable for a second reader, "I will be nine years of age."

"And you provide for your mother and her large family of children?" queried the man.

"Indeed I do, sir," replied George in a shrill tone. "I tell, oh, he said, sir, for we are very, very poor, and since my older sister, Ann, was married and brought her husband home to live with us I have to toil more assiduously than heretofore."

"And by what means do you obtain a livelihood?" exclaimed the man, in slowly measured and grammatical words.

"By digging wells, kind sir," he replied, George, picking up a tired ant as he spoke and stroking it on the back; "I have a good education, and so I am able to dig wells as well as a man. I do six day times and take in washing at night. In this way I am enabled barely to maintain our family in a precarious manner; but, oh, sir, should my other sisters marry, I fear that some of my brothers-in-law would have to suffer."

"And do you not fear the deadly fire that is kindled in the streets of our cities?" "Not by a damp sight," answered George with a low purring laugh, for he was a great wag.

"You are indeed a brave lad," exclaimed the stranger, as he repressed a smile. "And do you not at times become very weary and wish for other ways of passing your time?"

"Indeed I do, sir," said the lad. "I would fain run and romp and be gay like other boys, but I must engage in constant manual exercise or I will have no bread to eat, and I have not seen a piece since papa perished in the moist and moaning sea."

"And what if I were to tell you that your papa did not perish at sea, but was saved from a hullabaloo?" asked the stranger in pleasing tones.

"Ah, sir," exclaimed George, in a genteel manner, again doffing his cap, "I am too polite to tell you what I would say, and besides, sir, you are much larger than I am."

"But, my brave lad," said the man in low, mellow tones, "do you not know me, George? Oh, George!"

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"Where is the dashing border who used to be the life of the table when I was before, Mrs. Livermore?" asked an old patron of the house, addressing the landlady.

"I married him," was the quiet reply. "Indeed! He was one of the spiritliest fellows I ever met, always bubbling over with spirits and chock full of stories. He's away from home, I suppose; I haven't seen him since I returned."

"He's at home; he has never been away." "Indeed! where is he, then?" "He's in the kitchen washing dishes,"—Boston Courier.

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