

PRETTY WIDOWS.

Rich Wives Found in the New York Crowded Court Rooms.

Fortune Hunters in Search of Money—An Old Man's Story.

(New York Herald.)

The probate court room was very quiet Friday afternoon. Judge Knickerbocker sat in the easy chair which answers for a bench, listening to the testimony of half a dozen people who were trying to prove the last will and testament of their deceased relative. Their voices were low, as befitted the solemnity of the proceeding. Two old lawyers were sitting in a far corner of the court room with a bundle of legal documents on the table between them. They were whispering to each other. A very pretty young woman with dark eyes, a pale face, black dress and a long crape veil, sat just inside the space reserved for lawyers and their clients. She was alone and appeared to be thoughtful, but not one of the court proceedings. She looked at no one. There were five young men in different parts of the court room, all of whom looked extremely neat and eminently respectable. One of them was looking at a manuscript he held, and two others held papers in their hands. The other two made some pretense of listening to the testimony. They might have been law students or young lawyers. Neither of the five exactly stared at the pretty woman, but each one of them glanced in her direction about six times per minute.

The minute-clerk sat at the left of the judge, making entries in a big book. Two other clerks were writing in other big books near by. The Herald reporter walked half-way down the room until he caught the eye of the minute-clerk. The minute-clerk solemnly shook his head. That shake meant that there was nothing in the book worth publishing, and the Herald reporter turned to go out.

"Come with me," whispered a little, old, fat, white-haired man, with a smooth and smiling face, as he jumped up from his chair and thrust his finger through the button-hole of the reporter's coat.

"Certainly," said the reporter, and then the two walked over to the southeast corner of the court house. The little old man took one chair and the reporter took another.

"If we are going to talk," whispered the reporter, "let's go somewhere else."

"No," whispered the little old fat man, "I want to show you something right in this room. You reporters fancy that you have sharp eyes, and that you see every thing that is worth seeing, but you are blind, sir, positively blind. Now, I would bet any thing you can't tell who those young men are, what their business is, nor what they are doing here?"

The little old man whispered this in a kind of triumphant way as he pointed at the five neatly dressed and eminently respectable looking young men who were glancing in the direction of a very pretty young woman.

"They are probably law students or young lawyers who are probably getting acquainted with the practice in this court?" whispered the reporter.

"Just what I expected you to say, but you are all wrong. They are fortune-hunters. The little old man leaned over until his smooth, fat face was very near the reporter's ear as he whispered this last sentence.

"You will always find five or six of them hanging around this court," he went on. "They are after widows with fortunes. Some of them only want the fortunes, and will take almost any kind of a widow, but others are fastidious and insist upon having the widow pretty. You see, they can take a look at the widow here and find out within three minutes just how much property her husband left her. Then they make their plans to get the widow and the property."

"But do they ever succeed?" whispered the reporter.

"Succeed! I should say they did. All of them succeed. This is comparatively a new lot you see here. The oldish young man that is looking at the pretty young woman now has been hanging around this court house longer than any of the others, and has only been here about eight months. He would have been married long ago, except that he is too particular. His widow must have at least \$50,000, and besides that she must have dark eyes and a pale face, be young and very pretty. I shouldn't wonder if this one would suit him," whispered the little fat old man, as he looked long at the pretty young woman.

"She may not do, though," began the little fat old man again, after a pause. "He is so confidentially particular that he insists that his widow must have married her husband after he was fifty-five years old. I don't know exactly why he requires that, but I suppose it's some nonsense about first love. I've got no patience with such foolishness."

"But how do they manage to marry the widows after they find out about them?" whispered the astonished reporter.

"Nothing easier," whispered the fat little old man. "You must know that these are shrewd fellows. Of course they get the widow's name and residence here, and they probably find out something about her friends here. The next thing is to get an introduction, and that is simply a matter of scheming. The easiest and most common way is through a church. Most widows, even though they have not been very pious before, will go to church quite regularly for several months after their bereavement. The young man who pursues her, watches her house on Sunday morning, follows her to church, and immediately becomes a steady member of that congregation. He even joins the church if necessary. It is not long after that before he is invited to some church social, Sunday school celebration, or some one of the many social affairs which the pious people provide for their own recreation. Then he gets his introduction, and he isn't much of a man if he doesn't win after that. If the widow is a teacher in the Sunday school, the affair is greatly simplified. He is one of the teachers within a week, and a regular attendant at teachers' meetings."

"Don't these young men ever clash? What happens when two or three of them go after the same widow?"

"That doesn't happen very often.

You see, these young men are all acquainted with each other, and I believe, though I am not sure, there is a kind of association, and small pool of money, to which every new man contributes something when the association takes him in. That is for general expenses. Then they help each other. Of course, every one of them has a circle of acquaintances, and frequently an introduction is managed at once through these. Then when the young man gets his introduction to his widow he may find that she can not like him. He may be a blonde, while she is partial to brunette. He doesn't, of course, give up the suit at once, but when he finds that her predilection is deep-seated and not to be overcome, he simply introduces another member of the association whose complexion and temperament are more to her liking. Then he comes back to his court-room again to wait."

"But don't these men have any business to attend to? How can they spend all their time here?"

"This is the only business they have. They are not the kind of young men who work. They know that there are handier ways of getting a living than by working for it. I told you these were shrewd fellows, and they are. Some of them have got a little money, but most of them have none."

"Then how do they pay present expenses?"

"Genius, dear boy, genius like theirs does not suffer. Almost any tradesman will trust one of these young men, and his good clothes need not be paid for two years. By that time he has got some tens or hundreds of thousands by marriage."

"How about board?"

"He picks out the right kind of a landlady, and tells her the whole scheme. She, of course, promises not to tell, and is so tickled with the plan that his credit is good for any length of time."

"Tell me about some of the men who have found coins in this queer way."

"I wouldn't want to mention any names, you know, but I could surprise you. There is one man in congress now from this state who would probably have been a book-keeper all his life if he had not married a widow worth \$75,000. He first saw her in this room. One of the wealthiest dry-goods merchants in Chicago got his start from the widow's fortune which he learned about from these books. I know of a young man who is now in Italy with his handsome young wife, enjoying every possible luxury, with true love thrown in, as I honestly believe, who eighteen months ago, owed his tailor, his boot-maker, his hatter, and his landlady and didn't have a dollar in his pocket. He met his wife in this room. Her first husband was a member of the Chicago Board of Trade, and was worth a quarter of a million when he died, childless, at the age of sixty-three. They had been married but eight months. I could tell you of scores of others, but these are enough to satisfy you."

"May I ask you are that you know so much about these people?" whispered the reporter to the little old man.

"I am Napoleon Bonaparte, and I must go back to St. Helena next week," sighed the little old man.

"Who is that little old fat, white-haired man with the smooth and smiling face?" whispered the reporter a few minutes afterward to the minute clerk.

"He's a harmless lunatic. His children are going to have the Judge appoint a conservator for his property. That's how he happened to be here," whispered the minute clerk.

WEATHERFORD.

A Serious Accident—Excitement About Small-Pox—Other Notes.

Special to the Gazette.

Weatherford, February 20.—A serious accident occurred near the depot this morning. As J. W. McCarthy, a respected citizen and well-to-do merchant at Poolville, this county, was leaving the city, his team became frightened, and before Mr. McCarthy could control the runaways he was thrown to the ground and the wagon, loaded with green lumber, passed over his body, inflicting serious if not dangerous injuries. Dr. Everett was summoned, and administered medical aid. Upon examination it was found that the lungs were involved, and recovery is doubtful.

Considerable excitement has prevailed among Weatherfordites today occasioned by the report of a case of small-pox in the city. Morgan Green, a young man whose parents reside here, has been in the employ of a restaurant at Fort Worth. While in that city he was vaccinated, and paid his parents here a visit last Sunday. He was taken ill and showed symptoms of small-pox and Dame Rumor was quick to spread the news as a settled fact. Your correspondent called on City Health Officer J. R. McKenzie, who has visited the patient, and learned that it is the opinion of the physicians that the trouble is caused from vaccination. At any rate, the case cannot be determined before morning. Our city authorities are on the alert and will take every precaution to isolate the disease if a single case is developed here.

R. W. Kindel and W. J. Carson, contestants for the old Commercial Printing Company's material, are about to compromise. If perfected, Mr. Kindel will receive pay for his rents, Mr. Carson's pay will become sole owner of the material, and establish a job office, or, perhaps, a newspaper business here, while the printers of the defunct concern meditate over the visions and promises of one J. E. Borman.

Our cotton buyers have had a harvest today. More than an average number of bales have been thrown on the market, and found a ready sale at 8 1/2 cents per pound.

R. P. Crockett, of Hood county, the only surviving son of Texas' honored Davy Crockett, was in the city today.

D. C. Crowell, a merchant at Granbury, and B. H. Dennis, a cattle king of Stephens county, are among the late arrivals at the Sikes House.

THE GAZETTE continues to be the popular daily in this city, and its many readers here are rejoiced to see it again in its original form, filled with interesting reading matter.

Mr. Talmage says "money is a gold-en-breasted bird with silver beak." He must have been near enough to it to throw salt on its tail.

The local administration in Ireland, "The Irish Government," he said in

A ROMANCE

Told Concerning One of Chicago's Luckily Millionaires.

Youngstown, O., February 18.—There is a romance connected with Herbert Ayer who failed disastrously at Chicago yesterday. When his father, John V. Ayer, was a poor man he taught school at New Orleans, where he wooed, won and secretly married an heiress prominent in society. Her parents were angered, repulsed efforts of reconciliation and got their daughter out of the way so effectually that Ayer thought her dead. Shortly afterward he went to Chicago where by one iron firm of John V. Ayer & Co. Believing his wife dead he married again and several children were the fruits of this union. The war of the rebellion proved the financial ruin of the parents of his southern bride, but added immensely to his wealth. Thirty years after leaving New Orleans Ayer accidentally met and recognized his first wife whom he supposed dead. She had married again, supposing him dead, and the second husband was still alive. She introduced to Ayer a handsome young man of twenty-nine as his son Herbert C., whom he now met for the first time. Herbert had served in the Confederate army, and was promoted to a colonel for gallantry. The old gentleman was favorably impressed with the son, took him to Chicago and introduced him into the firm. At his father's death Herbert succeeded to the management, and has recently constituted the firm of John V. Ayer's Sons. His mother, after her husband's death, lived for many years in this city, supported in luxury by her son. She now lives in Baltimore.

That He Who Ran Might Read.

(Chicago Times.) A young man sat for several hours on a straight stretch in the waiting room at the Union depot at Milwaukee the other day with a pretty young woman on his lap. The parties were evidently a rural bridal couple. The girl was a rosy faced, cherry-lipped blonde, and she seemed to enjoy the picnic immensely. Every once in a while the man would nestle his face down against the cheeks of the girl and kiss her passionately. There was a crowd of people in the room watching the saccharine proceedings with great interest. The young people did not in the least take any notice of anything or anybody, and seemed perfectly oblivious to all surroundings.

Nothing but an Empty Dream.

Two little girls, one eight years old, the other six, sleep in the same chamber. In the morning the eldest one says: "Oh, I have had such a nice dream." "What was it?" "I was in a large pastry cook shop, and I ate as many rum cakes, Strawberry tarts and bon bons as I wanted." "Was I with you?" asked the little one. "No." And the little one began to sob.

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The next regular term begins February 1, 1894, but pupils who wish to go on new year will be received, free of charge, for board and tuition for the month of January.

These wishing catalogues or further information will be glad to send them. Catalogues of this city. W. G. Latham, Jr., 111 N. 2nd St., Fort Worth, Texas. Nov. 24th 1893

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