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PUBLISHED AT PORT TOBACCO, MARYLAND, EVERY FRIDAY MORNING, BY COX & DALEY, EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS, AT ONE DOLLAR PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE.

Established in 1844. PORT TOBACCO, MARYLAND, FEBRUARY 8, 1884. Volume XL.—No. 35.

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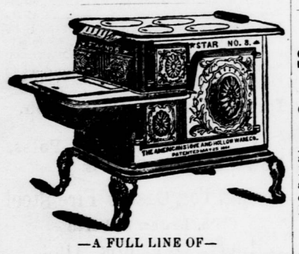

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A Select Story.

A WOMAN'S INSTINCT.

Pretty Mrs. Valery was a merry, light hearted little creature and very charming. This was nearly enough to make her detested of her sex; but add to this that her husband was devoted to her, and that all the men of her acquaintance admired her, and there is quite sufficient reason for the enmity felt towards her by all women less fascinating—or, as they would have said, less clever.

In truth Mrs. Valery was the innocent little woman in the world, and it was very easy for her to walk in the path of virture, as she had the exceptional advantage of being in love with her husband But, of course, her female friends could not be expected to believe that, though the men had all found it out long ago, and admired her all the more for it. She accepted their admiration with an ease and grace all her own; she had been a great deal abroad, and possibly this gave her manners brilliance and gaiety. Half her girlhood had been spent with her relations in St Petersburg, and she spoke Russian as if she were herself a Slav. From that gay city perhaps she had brought her love of social life, and the vivacity which delighted her male friends All these things were enough to make the ladies of her acquaintance quite convinced that she was 'improper,' and only needed to be found out.

Lady Lynx lived just opposite Mrs. Valery in Wilton Place. This was one reason why she was tacitly elected as detective in-chief to spy upon Mrs. Valery. But there was a much stronger reason for the lady's willingness to fill that post. Her husband, Sir George Lynx, was a confirmed globe-trotter, a lover of almost any land but England, and he seldom returned to the wife of his bosom. In his absence men treated her with but chilly politeness, though she painted and powdered, and dressed to perfection. Yet Mrs. Valery, though her husband was a stay-at-home, had a constant train of admirers. Lady Lynx was convinced that there was more in this than met the eyes; she devoted herself to Mrs. Valery, became her most intimate friend, and resolved that some day she would outwit and expose her.

On a certain afternoon, when the season was at its height, Lady Lynx came into Mrs. Valery's drawing-room.

'Sir George is coming home to-day,' she said.

Mrs. Valery looked up with an air of interest.

'Indeed!' she said; 'I shall be glad to make his acquaintance.'

'I don't know at what time,' said Lady Lynx, 'or I would go and meet him. But I must sit at home and watch from my window for the wandering knight's return.'

'Will he come to Charing Cross?' asked Mrs. Valery.

'Yes,' said Lynx. 'Why?'

'O, nothing,' said Mrs. Valery carelessly; 'only that I have to go and meet a friend there this afternoon I must start soon,' she added, looking at her watch.

'You have to meet a friend there?' said Lady Lynx.

'Yes,' said Mrs. Valery; then with a laugh, 'or rather, I should say, a stranger. It seems absurd, but I have to meet a gentleman whom I have never seen.'

'It does seem absurd, indeed,' said Lady Lynx, echoing the laugh mechanically. Her thoughts went ranging back over Sir George's frequent absences; had Mrs. Valery been abroad when he was away? Yes, a hundred times. Doubtless they had met at many a Continental resort, and were old acquaintances.

'It is absurd, yet true,' said Mrs Valery, indifferently. "You know I have a great many old friends in St. Petersburg. Well, one of these writes me that a certain Russian gentleman will arrive in London this afternoon, and will be utterly lost unless I take pity on him and go to meet him. He believes that no one in England speakes anything but English. To a certain extent he is right; he will find it difficult to get on with the cabmen and porters at Charing Cross, they don't generally speak French. So I must go, and at least send him to a hotel where he will be understood.'

'What a queer thing to ask you to do!' said Lady Lynx, looking at Mrs. Valery with an expression which said as plainly as possible, 'Do you think I'm an absolute fool? And are you really going to meet him in the station, and shake hands with all the men in the train on chance?' she asked.

'No not quite that,' said Mrs. Valery, with another laugh. 'He will go to the Charing Cross hotel to-night. I will ask for him there, bring him home to dinner if he looks nice; in any case, give him some little information about this wilderness of London. Mr. Valery has found me some addresses for him; one or two hotels where the people are French. It's a pity Frank can't go with me.'

'It is, indeed!' said Lady Lynx, drily.

'I really must run away!' said Mrs. Valery, again consulting her watch; 'I'm very sorry to seem rude.'

'Oh! not at all,' said Lady Lynx, rising to go. Her mind was working busily. Why had Sir George said that he would be at home some time in the evening, probably to dinner? He had mentioned Charing Cross. It is absurd to suppose that he did not know what train he should come by. The thing seemed more ridiculous the more she thought of it. Of course he knew when he would arrive—but he did not want her to know. That seemed clear.

She walked up to the top of Wilton Place, took a hansom, and told the man to drive to Charing Cross hotel. Arrived there, she entered and said she expected a gentleman to meet her in a few moments, adding that she would like to wait in the coffee-room. Her heart beat high with excitement as she went in. Was she about to discover something? Was the amateur detective about to be rewarded by a great success? She gloried in the thought of how instantly she had seen through Mrs. Valery's absurd story, which she concluded had been told her in case by any mischance she should come to meet her own husband.

No one was in the coffee-room. It was an hour at which meals were not wanted. So much the better, thought Lady Lynx. She went to an arm-chair in an obscure corner of the room, and established herself there, providing herself with a newspaper with which to screen her face. She was now prepared to wait for what time might bring forth.

Meantime Mrs. Valery had put on her bonnet and driven down to the same place in her little brougham A very short time after Lady Lynx had settled herself in the coffee-room Mrs. Valery walked into the hotel, and inquired whether a Count of an unpronounceable name had arrived. After considerable consultation and much mental effort the waiter informed her that a foreign gentleman, whose name was like a sneeze, certainly had come to the hotel, taken a room, and gone to it. But he had not said that he expected a lady to see him, for the very good reason that he could speak no language but his own. which no one in the hotel understood.

'O, nonsense! he speaks French,' said Mrs. Valery, with a laugh. 'However, he expects me to interpret for him I will write him a line on this card, if you will take it up to him. I will wait in the coffee-room, and when he comes down show him in there.'

Mrs. Valery wrote a line in Russian beneath her name, and then gave the card to the waiter. It was sent up stairs and she was shown in the coffee-room. She went in and stood still a few moments; then began to walk to and fro rather restlessly, her eyes on the ground. She was a little nervous about this meeting with a man she had never seen. It would be quite easy if he were nice; if he were not, it would be horrid. She thought to herself, as she waited, that if one of her dearest friends had not asked her to do this, she would have refused.

Probably her sudden dislike of her task merely arose from the depressing effect of being stranded alone in the midst of a great hotel coffee-room, and having to remain there. At all events, she resolved that she would be cordial, if the man looked at all nice; she would not let him be chilled, as most foreigners are, in the first hour he spent in England. And then she began to think what his friends had been to her when she was in Russia. That gave her new courage; but O, how long he kept her waiting. She glanced round the room. She could just see the top of a black bonnet over a distant arm-chair; a lady was there, reading a paper. She felt glad there was no one to observe a pretty woman waiting in a public coffee-room for some one who did not come.

At last the door opened, and a gentleman entered quickly. Mrs. Valery saw in a single swift glance that he was handsome, tall and distinguished looking, and that he had that air which one is compelled to describe as 'foreign,' for want of a better word. That is to say, though he was not very Russian in appearance, yet he did not look like an Englishman. Mrs. Valery called up all her courage and pretty manners, and, with an extreme nervousness which no one but herself could perceive, advanced eagerly to meet him. She held out her hand, and began to talk rapidly in Russian. He did not answer her; but then she gave him no time to, for her nervousness made her talk rather more than she intended. He held her hand in his and gazed admiringly into her face, which, with its slight flush of embarrassement, was even lovelier than usual. This went on for two or three minutes; then Mrs. Valery tried to draw her hand away, and looked about her for a chair. But her new friend held her hand fast, which discomposed her a good deal, yet it did not startle her so much as the sight greeted her eyes as she looked around. Lady Lynx had advanced stealthily, and stood beside them. Her face as awful. Mrs. Valery uttered an inarticulate cry of astonishment. This made the gentleman look around also. He immediately dropped Mrs. Valery's hand.

'Now,' said Lady Lynx, before any one else had time to speak—'now Valery, I know you for what you are!'

This speech produced a different effect from what she intended. Certainly, it started Mrs. Valery as much as she hoped it would; but, before that lady had time to speak, the handsome gentleman said, in an easy manner, and with a knowing twinkle in his eye:

'Then my dear Kate, I wish you'd tell me. I took her for an amiable and very pretty lunatic. Was I right? Perhaps you can tell me also if she speaks any language but Hindostanee, or whatever the unknown tongue is that she's been talking.

'That frivolous tone is useless now, Sir George,' said Lady Lynx, with iron dignity; 'it has been tried too often. Perhaps you will kindly tell the waiter to call me cab.'

'Certainly, my dear,' said Sir George, with an exaggerated good humor. At that moment a waiter came in, carrying a salver on which was a goblet of brandy and soda.

'That's right,' said Sir George; 'perhaps this will clear my brain. for I'm dreaming. Waiter, call a cab for this lady.'

'Waiter,' cried Mrs. Valery, 'where is the Russian gentleman you took my card to?'

'He is here, madam,' said the waiter, as, at that moment the door opened, and a swarthy, yellow skinned man, evidently with Jewish blood in his veins, entered the room. He looked inquiringly at the two ladies. Mrs. Valery roused herself; she advanced toward him, and without holding out her hand, asked him in Russian if he was Count So and-so. He said 'Yes,' and Mrs. Valery moved away a few paces to speak to him more at her ease. But she found it difficult to re-enact the warm welcome which had been wrongly given. She was shaken and unnerved, too, by Lady Lynx's face and words.

'What does all this mean?' asked Sir George, in a low voice, of his wife.

'How can I tell?' she asked; 'You know better than I do. This is some further development for the farce, I suppose. I am going home; you need not trouble yourself to accompany me!'

And she turned away, but he caught her arm

'Look here, Kate,' he said, 'this must be explained What are you talking about? You seem to know that lady, but I don't.

'Nonsense!' cried Lady Lynx.

'I never set eyes on her before. You don't mean to say you imagine we met here on purpose!'

'What else can I imagine?'

What grounds have you for imagining it.'

'That I saw you affectionate meeting.'

Sir George laughed. 'Deuced affectionate? Why, I thought she was mad! Don't be absurd. What else?'

'Why didn't you say what time you were arriving? What did you mean to do before you came home?'

'Not meet her, I assure you. Who is she?'

'Frank Valery's wife.'

'Then take me over, and introduce me to her and apologize. And another time don't choose a lady to insult when you are jealous.

Lady Lynx stood irresolute. She knew Sir George was in the right, and she felt he was speaking the truth. And as she looked at Mrs. Valery and the Russian as they stood talking together, she saw that she had made a mistake amateur detectives are apt to fall into. She had too readily concluded that Mrs. Valery was telling her a made up story. She saw that there was nothing to be done but apologize. But she could not bring herself to do it.

At that moment Mrs. Valery turned round, and, meeting Lady Lynx's look of mingled emotions, she smiled. Her sense of humor had come uppermost. After all she could afford to forgive Lady Lynx; her enemy was so very plain.

Lady Lynx summoned all her knowledge of the world to support her, went to Mrs. Valery and made a humble and hearty apology. Mrs Valery's eyes sparkled with demure amusement.

'You must both come and dine with us,' she said by way of answer. 'Frank will be delighted to see Sir George; I know they are old friends. You must—the Count is coming.'

'Sir George made haste to accept this invitation. After dinner Mrs. Valery told the story of the scene in the coffee-room, making but one change in it—she left out Lady Lynx's unfortunate speech. Everybody laughed, even Lady Lynx herself.

And so Mrs. Valery disarmed a bitter enemy, and made a new ally. For Sir George became one of her faithful admirers, and Lady Lynx had to put up with it, whether she liked it or not.—*London World*

A Fair Dentist.

'And it is really true that you are studying dentistry?' asked a Philadelphia dude of a pretty girl who has entered a dental college.

'Yes,' was the reply, 'and I intend to practice.'

'Deah! deah!' ejaculated the dude, 'it is too awful for anything; but do you know if you were a dentist I would not mind having my teeth attended to?'

'Are you in earnest?'

'Oh! yes indeed; your office is to be.'

'I will,' was the reply, 'and I hope you will place your case in my hands.'

'But when shall I start?'

'Just as soon as your second teeth begin to come.'

Care of the Teeth.

It is not the frequency of brushing that best preserves the teeth, but the degree of thoroughness with which it is done. The time for performing this duty most effectively is just before retiring for the night. During the twelve hours' interval from the evening meal to morning repast, particles of food retained about the teeth and subjected to the warm humid condition of the oral cavity, cannot fail to become decomposed or fermented, thus breeding an insidious foe that, night besieges the enamel wall, which, unless of extraordinary compactness, will sooner or later give way to its destructive forces. There is no objection to cleansing the teeth when making the morning toilet, yet if thoroughly cared for the night before, they require comparatively little of such attention in the early part of the day. To brush them more frequently than this is a needless task.

Select Reading.

An Executive Phenomenon.

An old fellow from Bear Wallow visited the executive office the other day to talk with the Governor and secure something for his neighborhood.

'Come in,' said a pleasant-looking gentleman.

'Are you the Governor?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Wall, then, I've allus been mistaken about you I had heard that you left one of your legs on a battlefield, but I see that you've got two legs.—How do you account for that?'

'Easy enough.' When I took my seat as Governor I only had one leg with me, having. as you say, lost the other in battle. A short time after I took my seat I noticed that another leg had begun to grow out. At first I was alarmed, having never heard of such a performance, but after a while I decided to await developments. The leg kept on growing until the ankle was reached. It stopped then for a few days, and I thought that the resurrection business was entirely suspended, but I was wrong. The leg was only gathering material with which to build a foot. After a while the foot began to make its appearance. It reminded me of an old woman knitting a sock. It would have tickled you to death to see how skillfully and human-like the work rounding off the heel went on.—Occasionally it would drop a stich, but sir, it would hop back and pick it up. I was very anxious about the instep, but my fears were soon allayed, for it were shaped off as perfect as anything you ever saw. As last when the performance reached the toes, hanged if I didn't think that I would itch to death, but I couldn't scratch for that would have spoiled the work. When the job was completed I could walk as well as any man in town, and I even ran a race with an old negro down on the river bank.'

'Did you walk around while the growin' was goin' on?' asked the man from Bear Wallow, regarding the Governor with a curious gaze.

Oh, no! I had to remain perfectly quiet and allow my leg to lie on a kind of cot which I had prepared for the occasion.'

'Did you talk to any of the doctors about it?'

'Yes; but they did not regard it as remarkable. One of our leading physicians said that the election to office was very frequently the cause of legs and arms growing out, and gave it as his opinion that this was the reason crippled men were always after offices.'

'It may not have seemed strange to the doctor, but dinged if it don't seem mighty strange to me.'

'It did to me at first, but I soon got used to it; and let me here remark that when a man is elected Governor of Arkansas he will soon get used to a number of things he never heard of before.'

'Now, when I go home an' tell the folks that the Governor's leg has growed out they'll believe it, for they don't think anything's impossible with him; but when I tell 'em that I've seed the Governor, an' sot down an' talked to him familiar like, they won't believe it. Can't you give me some sort of receipt, showin' that I have seed you? Jes say, 'This here is to certify that John Kilprune of Bar Waller has this day hil a conversation with me. I axed John to sit down and make himself at home. which he done, an' I found him mighty entertainin' an' wush he'd come again an' fetch his folks.' Jes draw up them words exactly, an' sign 'em please.'

'I'll do it, sir,' and the receipt was drawn up and signed. Greatly elated the man from Bear Wallow went down At the State-House gate he met the watchman. who asked:

'That feller gone down from up yonder yet?'

'What feller?'

'That feller in the Governor's room.'

'Ain't that the Governor?'

'Governor, the duce. He's a jack-leg lawyer from up the country, and is here trying to get a pardon for a hog thief. The Governor's been dodgin' him all day.'

Giving Him a Reception

'Oh. some one is coming up the steps ma!' exclaimed Miss Pyrkins to her mother, who keeps a boarding house. 'Shall I go to the door?'

'No, indeed!' answered Mrs. Pyrkins bustling around. 'It's a young man who is probably looking for board.—Go down into the parlor and be playing a dreamy air on the piano, when he comes in.'

'Yes, I know; but some one must attend to the door. There goes the bell now.'

'Well, I will run to the kitchen and send Jane to open the door, and while you are playing and Jane is showing him in, I will be pounding on the table with a rolling pin.'

'But, what for, ma?'

"It will sound as if we had two servants, and were going to have beefsteak for lunch.'

She—I am fond of poetry. He——re you indeed? So am I. Do you like Burns? She—No, indeed; they are so extressing. But, then, I am not troubled much with them, as ma does all the cooking.

A man always finds out when there is a hole in the bottom of his stocking. He makes the discovery when he takes his boots off at night and puts his feet down on the hot register to warm. He rarely forgets to speak right out about it.

A Memorable Horse Race.

The biggest quarter race that was ever made in Georgia, was that race in Augusta a number of years ago between the Stamper mare and a horse from South Carolina. The Stamper mare was considered the fastest quarter nag in the country and her owners had plenty of money to back her. The South Carolinians came over with the full determination to win or get broke. Several gentlemen from Athens went down to the race and fortunately backed the right horse and came back with wealth. From one of those who attended we learn that it was the most exciting race ever ran in Georgia. The South Carolinians bet all their money and then commenced putting up their watches, horses and other valuables, all of which the Stampers took, putting up $100 against a watch and chain and $150 against a good horse. The race was run and the Stamper mare won by about a length. The South Carolinians were very much crestfallen and our informant tells us he saw one young man who sat down in a fence corner and cried like his heart would break, for his father had just died and left him $10,000 all of which he had staked on the South Carolina horse and lost. The young fellow remarked that he had lost every cent he had on earth and did not have money to get home with. The Stampers gave him enough to supply his wants. The day after the race the Stampers came up into the city with watches and watch chains hanging all over them, and also with thousands of dollars that they had won on the race. It is often said now by men who run quarter races that the Stamper mare was the fastest quarter horse ever known in Georgia.

They Made Her Warm.

As the car stopped at the Opera-house crossing, several men got in. A lady was seated at the front end. She had on a light wrap, a bonnet which covered only four inches of her head, kid gloves and only a bit of lace at her neck. The car windows were iced over and every breath spun out half way across the car.

'Hanged if I ain't near frozen!' said one of the men in a big beaver overcoat and fur lined overshoes.

'Never felt the cold so in my life!' added another whose clothing must have weighed thirty pounds.

'Bet you 10 to 1 I've frozen my ears!' said a third, as he lifted off his sealskin cap and removed a heavy muffler from his neck.

There were two other men, each in a heavy overcoat, muffler, overshoes, and warm gloves, and yet they stamped their feet and blew on their fingers and declared they were freezing. The lady sat there calm and serene, and as warm as toast. She saw the men glaring at her, and wonder why on earth the marrow in her bones didn't turn to icicles, but she was not disturbed. As the last one settled back with a shiver and a groan, she pleasantly asked:

'Will one of you gentlemen please open the door? It's hot enough in here to fry fish!'

Cards in the Odd Place.

'Clubs are trumps!' That is what I heard in the war time, in the lull between two battles, away down in Chattanooga. I was in an old Southern cemetery. It was a December day; the roses were not gone, and butterflies, the symbols of immortality, were slowly opening and closing their large wings in the last warm sunshine of the year. I looked around, but nobody was in sight. All was still. Again there came a voice, 'The ace of hearts takes the trick!' At last I saw, a little way off, a vault. Three steps led down to it and the door was ajar.—Descending the broken stairs I put a hand on the unwilling door. It yielded and a curious interior was revealed. It was a little room, dimly lighted, whose only furniture consisted of coffins, and around one of them, that rested upon trestles, were three soldiers. There were only four sound arms and five legs to divide among them. They had pulled two coffins from the wall to serve for seats and were in the midst of a game of cards. They looked at me an instant and went on with the deal and the play. Nothing equals the nonchalance of veterans in the front, where the hum of bullets is as familiar as the hum of bees among the clover. I looked on awhile and stepped up and out into the fresh air.

Curing a Bad Memory.

Your memory is bad, perhaps, but I can tell you two secrets that will cure the worst memory. One is to read a subject when you are strongly interested. The other is not only to read but to think. When you have read a paragraph or a page, stop—close the book—and try to remember the ideas on that page, and not only recall them vaguely to your mind, but put them into words and speak them out. Faithfully follow these two rules and you will have the golden keys of knowledge. Besides inattentive reading, there are other things injurious to memory. One is the habit of skimming over newspapers, all in a confused jumble, never to be thought of again, thus cultivating a habit of careless reading hard to break. Another is the reading of trashy novels. Nothing is so fatal to reading with profit as the habit of running through story and forgetting them as soon as read. I know a gray-haired woman, a life-long lover of books, who sadly declared that her mind nad been ruined by such reading.