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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25 1906

ELEVEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL IS DIVORCED

IOWA CHILD WIFE RECEIVES DECREE OF SEPARATION.

MARRIED TWO YEARS AGO.

Husband Over Seven Times Her Own Age—Is Once More Enjoying Life with Dolls and Young Playmates.

Brighton, Ia.—Gertrude Trusty Leeper, an 11-year-old girl, of this village, has just been granted a decree of divorce from John Leeper, 65 years of age, to whom she was married two years ago.

The child, who became a wife when she was only nine years old and has become a divorcee at 11, still is in skirts that fall scarce to her knees, and wears her luxuriant brown hair in "pig-tails" down her back, and she is as fond of dolls and takes as keen delight in playing with them as any other child of her tender years, despite the fact that she stood up at the altar and solemnly took the vows which made her the lawful wedded wife of a man seven times her own age.

When two years ago "Certy" Trusty promised to "love, honor, cherish and obey" the man who was old enough to be her grandfather, a man gray-haired, gray-haired and bent with the storms of well-nigh three-score years and ten, she presented an odd sight to those who witnessed the ceremony.

The bridegroom looked his age, and the bride looked hers as she stood by him with her head scarcely coming up to his elbow.

Gertrude is an orphan, and had no brothers or sisters to look after her. She had friends, for everybody in Brighton loved the sweet, sunny-tempered, winsome child, but those friends were passive rather than active, and when Leeper made the shocking proposal that she marry him, none of them did aught to save her from so unnatural a fate.

Never had a man a more trustful, obedient, diligent wife than had John Leeper. She accompanied him from Brighton to Arkansas soon after the marriage, and there, in a little village, she assisted him to establish and main-



SOLEMNLY TOOK THE VOWS.

tain a home. It must have been a dull, lonesome life for the child-wife, but never did she complain of her lot, never did she meet her husband when he came home at night with other than a bright, smiling face; never did she fail to have his meals cooked, and on the table promptly at the appointed hour; never did she fail to keep her house clean and tidy; never did she fail to darn the holes in his socks, sew buttons on his clothing when that was necessary, or to discharge any of the other wife's duties it fell to her lot to do.

Other children passed by her door on their way to school or on childish pleasure bent, but Gertrude never thought of going with them or having aught to do with them or their sports, for she was a wife.

Leeper remained in the southwest for something more than a year, when, in company with his wife, he returned to town. He went to Washington, in this state, and there Gertrude made friends who persuaded her to file a petition for divorce.

The child did not fall in readily with the proposal. It is true that she bore him none of that love which wives commonly bear their husbands. She did not love him when she became his wife, and he had not inspired her with love, but he had not been cruel to her; he had given her a home and she felt in duty bound to stand by him. Her friends insisted, however, and finally she yielded to their importunities and did so.

It did not take the judge long to decide what he should do. When he learned from the evidence offered by the plaintiff the circumstances under which the marriage had been solemnized, he quickly signed a decree of divorce. Leeper offered no defense.

Thus, Gertrude Trusty, after being two years a wife, has become a child again.

What was to become of her when she had been granted the decree of divorce was a serious question. But it was soon settled by a kind family in Brighton. The divorce is now in the name of R. L. Davis, of this village,

and there she will be cared for till she attains her womanhood. Mr. and Mrs. Davis have not legally adopted her, but they have practically done so, and she will be treated by them as their own child.

GIRL IS SEEKING HER FATHER'S MURDERER

Pretty California Maid Follows Trail in Nevada Wilds Looking for Clues to Slayer.

Oakland, Cal.—For more than three months pretty Annie Ahern, of this city has been in the mountainous wilds of Nevada, near Derby, attempting to gather evidence which will lead to the detection and conviction of the murderers of her father, Michael Ahern, whose body, bearing unmistakable evidence of foul play, was found in the Truckee river, near Derby, last July. The plucky girl returned with the remains of her murdered parent, and after seeing them decently buried returned to take up the trail which she hopes will lead to the



SEEKING CLEWS TO MURDERER.

discovery of the criminals. In her role of detective she has met with many vicissitudes in the "manslaughter hell hole" of Nevada, as the girl declares Derby is termed. Not alone have the thugs in the camp put every obstacle in her way, but the very grave in which her father had been buried had not been marked, and the daughter was forced to undergo the ordeal of having the coffin opened in order to identify the body.

Michael Ahern, employed as a gang foreman in the construction of the government canal between Derby and Wadsworth, was last seen alive July 19, 1904, at Derby. At that time he cashed \$800 worth of pay checks at Buckman's store, but retained uncashed additional checks to the value of \$95. Two days later his body was found in the Truckee river at Peterson's ranch, a deep gash on his body showing where he had been felled before his body was thrown into the water. The uncashed checks were still upon his person, but the currency was gone. The remains were taken to Wadsworth and buried there.

The family of the murdered man was at a loss to know what to do. No effective steps being taken by the Nevada authorities to run the criminals down, Miss Annie Ahern, one of the three daughters, resolved to take matters into her own hands. She is a determined young woman of four and twenty and does not know what fear is. She went to Derby. There, procuring a pony and a rifle, she has spent three months in the canal camps, and she believes that she has unmistakable clues to the identity of the murderers.

MANICURE BY GIRL SAINTS

Unique Establishment Maintained in London by Young Society Women.

London.—A London morning paper prints a remarkable story of a manicure establishment maintained by society women with a leaning toward the high church doctrine, which has been opened in a fashionable street off Piccadilly. Outwardly the shop does not differ from the ordinary establishments of its kind, but inside it is to be found a private chapel where the fair manicurists are encouraged to perform their daily devotions.

The clientele includes many women of title, but only a privileged few are ever allowed to penetrate the recesses of the chapel. Fresh cut flowers and lighted candles bedeck the altar, and the light falls on the kneeling group of manicurists through windows of stained glass.

In solemn procession the manicurists, clad in perfectly fitting black gowns and white embroidered collars, pass into the chapel each morning before manicuring the fair fingers of a single patron.

The manicurists' assistants are all girls of good birth. All of them have made a solemn vow never, under any circumstances, to manicure a man. The girls who belong to this saintly select band of beauty doctors may not even beautify the hands of their brothers. A forfeiture of £500 is mentioned as one of the penalties for disobedience to this eleventh commandment of the manicurists.

Rakes Child from Death in Cistern. Chicago.—While crossing the wooden cover of a cistern in pursuit of her pet dog, Mildred, seven years old, daughter of Jacob Greenhour, Greenwood street and McDaniel avenue, Evanston, fell into the cistern and was with difficulty rescued by her father, who drew her out with a rake. The cistern contained about three feet of water and a temporary cover had been placed over the mouth until a pump could be put in.

Left Death Note to Scare Girl. Maynard, Mass.—Ernest Nerto, who disappeared from Maryland about two years ago leaving a note to the effect that he was tired of living, has returned. Nerto worked in Michigan on a farm and as a brakeman on a railroad in Minnesota. He says that his strange exit from Maynard was meant to frighten a young woman.

An Apprehension. "I suppose you are pleased that your daughter is to marry so distinguished a European nobleman." "Well," answered Mr. Cumrox, "I

don't look at my picture, I can't suppose they will ever argue me out of wearing a big feather on my hat or a tin waist coat, so as to look like a regular ancestor."—Washington Star.

Studying Economy. He—I think we had better be married in the day time. She—Why? "It's more economical. We can save on the gas."

"Well, look here! We've been economizing on the gas all during our courtship days; it's a pity if we can't blow a little in on gas on our wedding day!"—Yonkers Statesman.

Also His Train. "Hey, mister!" yelled the urchin, as Subbuss rushed by with his arms full of bundles.

"What is it?" asked the nervous commuter, stopping to examine his bundles. "What have I lost?" "About two minutes," replied the boy, flogging out of the way.—Philadelphia Press.

His Friendly Scheme. Little Brown Belligerent—I thought you were my friend. Yet you are furnishing arms and ammunition to the honorable enemy!

His Robust Ally—Hilt! Not a word! I am selling them to him so that you can capture them and get the stuff for nothing, don't you know!—Chicago Tribune.

Advantageous Obesity. The Bantam—now in the world did you, the fattest turkey in the yard, escape being killed for market?

The Turkey—Why, you poor little simpleton! evidently you have been reading the comic papers. Who ever heard of a genuinely fat turkey found on sale at a market?—Judge.

It Was Stationary. Youth—I've brought back the alarm clock you sold me yesterday. Shopkeeper—What's the matter—didn't it go off at the proper time?

Youth—Just stood right still and raised thunder when I wanted to sleep some more!—Cleveland Leader.

Conflicting Emotions. "What are you crying about, my dear?" "I have just been reading the old love letters you sent me before we were married."

"That's funny. I was reading them the other day and they made me laugh."—Kansas City Star.

Wise Robinson. Robinson Crusoe had just named his man Friday.

"If it had been Wednesday or Saturday," he explained, "he might have become a matinee idol."

Thus, with keen foresight, did he try to save him from the perils of civilization.—N. Y. Sun.

Futile. "Wasn't it scandalous, the way old Bullion's relatives wrangled over their claims to his property, even before the doctors had given him up?" "I hadn't heard a word about it. What was the result?" "Nothing. He got well."—Chicago Tribune.

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