

My LIFE in a
Love Cult

A Warning to All
Young Girls

Fifty
Cents



Exposing
Get-Acquainted
Clubs and
Criminal
Clairvoyants

My
True Life
Story By
Marian Dockerill
High Priestess of Oom

MY LIFE *in a* LOVE CULT

A Warning to All Young Girls

*Marian
Dockerill
at the age
of 51. Still
beautiful
and loved*



My True Life Story By
MARIAN DOCKERILL
High Priestess of Oom

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My Message to the

IT is always a little mad to trifle, in words, with the emotion of Love.

It is madder yet, without the excuse of the novelist, for me to tear away the protective covering of privacy and expose to you my own large share of the thrills that, since the beginning of time, have made the world go around.

But is it not brave?

I have lived and loved; and, living, loving, have learned!

Most sincerely I believe I have had revealed to me the glory and beauty of Naturalness; have, in living life according to Nature's dictum, found that Fountain of Youth for which so many a Ponce de Leon has sought in vain.

Would it not smack of fear not to pass that on?

Because Life has taught me to have no fear of convention, and has taught me also the value of frankness and moral courage, I can give you this story of my life. I want to tell of all its blissful, palpitating moments.

I want to confess—and why not?—to events and consequences which conventional fools have tried to condemn or hide.

Always, my passionate search has been for Truth! Knowledge! I believe I have gained both—and with them Happiness! More, I believe my life itself to be an answer to problems which have disturbed the ages, and am impelled, in spite of the disapproval with which I may be met in some quarters, to give to others what benefit there may be in this revelation.

Have you ever asked yourself, as I have:

"What is carnal sin?"

"Does it, after all the controversy, really exist?"

"Has one individual, or a group of individuals, the right to set itself up in judgment of physical acts alone, knowing nothing of motivating impulses—to say to that one, or this—'This is right; that wrong?'"

"What is virtue?"

Youth of America

My life echoes this last answer: Virtue is a state of mind; no more, no less; and I feel that by offering this free and frank story I can best prove this; prove, too, that impulses, which alone count, are the true secret of life and love and eternal youth.

The pulse of Nature can make of Life a dance of youth to the very brink of a joyous eternity.

For you I will recall my life which certainly has been hectic, but which has been brimful and interesting. I will withhold nothing, baring my loves, my disdain of kill-joy convention, and the startlingly happy, unexpected results.

A tingle of delight passes through my body now at the first memories—a luxurious ache for a recurrence of many of the exotic thrills I have

known, and to which, in some cases, only tragedy put an end, while in others satiety served its purpose.

And ever you must keep in mind, as I do, that this revelation is with the fixed intent of teaching the youth of today, as well as all the unseeing, unknowing multitudes for whom I have ever felt pity for their blindness, what joy may be found in true, untrammelled love.

It may be theirs for the reaching out of a hand; a forgetting of some conventions that are so useless and repressive. The adjuration comes from one who knows; from a woman past the half century mark, but who, because of Knowledge, is as young and eager in body, mind and soul as she was the day her awakening adolescent eyes first looked on a potential mate and found him good.

June 1, 1928⁸

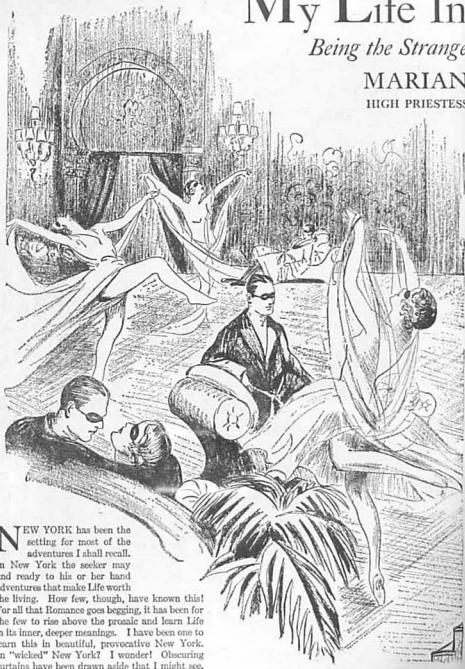
Marian Dockett

My Life In

Being the Strange

MARIAN

HIGH PRIESTESS



NEW YORK has been the setting for most of the adventures I shall recall. In New York the seeker may find ready to his or her hand adventures that make Life worth the living. How few, though, have known this! For all that Romance goes begging, it has been for the few to rise above the prosaic and learn Life in its inner, deeper meanings. I have been one to learn this in beautiful, provocative New York. In "wicked" New York? I wonder! Obscuring curtains have been drawn aside that I might see.

a Love Cult

Experiences of
DOCKERILL
of OOM

Abandonment! Abandonment raised to the sixth power! His hand groped for and found mine. He bent his head, searched out my lips and drank deep! See page 25!



Of what I have witnessed, experienced, I shall tell you. And if you withhold from me all other mead of praise, I know you will say for me this—"She has not feared to tell the Truth!"

My Childhood

New York, though, is a place of dizzying difference from that where my life had its beginning. It is a far cry from this staccato City to the mountain mist blanketing a Swiss valley, and the quaint, picturesque inn where I was born.

But I can recall that mountain home with no touch of homesickness. I remember—my father; my mother; my horde of eating, drinking, mouthing little brothers and sisters.

Our inn stood on one of the prettiest mountain passes imaginable. It was the pride of my middle-class father's heart; tolerated by my mother, for to her, being as she was of the aristocracy, there was no glamour in being the chateleine of a Swiss mountain inn.

Father

I distinctly recall how often I listened to my father's boast that the hostelry of his heart was headquarters for all the best in Switzerland; for judges, diplomats, wielders of political destiny. And of his complacent assurance they frequented the place solely to benefit, not only from his hospitality, but from his own great erudition and acumen and thereby solve great problems.

Poor father! I see him there on the shrub-sheltered porch that looked out over the valley, but—too often, even now in memory, I see his drink-blurred eyes that often could not even see across the valley.

To put it bluntly, my father's convivial habits were his ruin. Without attempting to disguise it, he was a drunkard; at the last, a sot. So much so, that my gently bred mother was compelled to leave the cloud-tipped mountains and take with her the six girls whom she could no longer bear having see their father in his besotted condition.

It all seems so banal. Yet, through all the misery of it, there was one compensation.

Our Highly-Sexed Natures

Time has taught me that no matter how bad things may appear on the surface, there is always somewhere, somehow, compensation. The compensation for my father's bibbery is the emotional, sensitive, highly-sexed natures that have been the heritage of my sisters and my brothers and myself.

I understand it now, after these years. I understand why we are what we are, emotionally, when I say we were each conceived when my father was in his cups,

or rather, during those highly sex-sensitive moments following on the heels of an overindulgence in drink, when the senses are keenest.

I Learned Much

Having the run of a hotel as a child, I was not, even at the start, exactly a shrinking violet. I learned much. But always I wanted to know more. More, and more, as time went on.

I shall not dwell on those early days, though, for at most, they could only be the basis for a narrative of dawning consciousness. My real education, in what Life meant, began after my aristocratic mother was at last compelled to leave my drunken father. He went off to South America with my three brothers. My mother brought me, with my five sisters, to New York.

As I grew older and matured, I began to look about me and my eyes widened and deepened with the desire for that one kind of knowledge I was determined to have. But alas for my chances, it seemed! I grew restive.

I Want to Know

Could it be possible I was condemned to learn only from musty volumes, while the warm blood pulsed vitally through every fibre of my being? In our New York home, there were not even brothers, or a father. Nothing masculine. Only hateful, hateful femininity. And I wanted to *know!*

Girls! Girls! Everywhere girls! What cared I for them? I could only look on, pitying, at the namby-pamby friendships of the other girls of my age, as I, myself, lived high above them in the romances and life problems of which I read, philosophizing, imagining, castle-building.

"She'll Be Seduced!"

My lips quiver with amusement as I recall the horror with which some of my early sallies were received by other girls, by my ultra-conventional little mother, and her ultra-conventional little friends.

"She'll be seduced before she's fifteen!" was the gist of all the prophecies.

How could I tell them or make them understand that

this, under a name far less repelling, was exactly what I hoped for. I could not, for the life of me, look on what I considered a much-to-be-desired adventure with the horror they professed. To me there was too much that was alluring.

I Want a Lover

A lover! What was terrifying, unnatural, in that? Nor have I, as the years have passed, had cause to reconstruct the ideas that came to me as a girl, in regard to what seemed to me then—what seems to me,

TRUE, I knew but little, but they seemed to know far less than I—a girl who had learned only from books. And—I meant to know more!

*We were going up
those stairs one day—he
and I—he behind me.
Would he remain stupid?
[See page 12]*



now, one of the most beneficent courses of Nature.

What did—what *could* these doleful shudderers know about Life, anyhow? True, I knew but little, but they seemed to know far less than I—a girl who had learned only from books. And—*I meant to know more!*

Such frankness as mine was unmaidenly, unseemly, I was told in shocked tones. But what cared I—the romantic, fiery, impulsive seeker that I was; the beautiful (they told me I was, but only too well I knew it), attractive, magnetic seeker after Life's truths.

Futile Efforts

Ah, those dim days and the futile efforts made to keep me herded among the girls—away from men; all men; any men. My fearful, guarding mother who, with all her own sex-life and experience, still did not know. My dotting sisters who did not then understand. How they would banish me whenever young men came to call on my elder sisters!

I sigh with a smiling, indulgent understanding of the voluptuous, budding woman who was I in those days and who, banned from the craved masculine proximity and society, hung out of her bed-room window on star-hung, honeysuckle-breathed nights to yearn over passing lovers. And dream of—what?

First Glimpse at Sex Life

My first chance at first-hand knowledge of Life's secrets came when a newly married sister came to live with us on Long Island. With joy and a stab of excitement at my heart I realized my new brother-in-law had friends who sometimes stayed overnight.

How terribly annoying, though! None of these stupid young men could seem to realize how much I

wanted to find out. I couldn't even learn much by surreptitious observation.

A Naked Man!

But once—ah! Once! I saw him. A man—a nude man! Even now a warm thrill pulses through me at the memory of the ecstasy of that stolen look.

Little I imagined how soon the joy from feasting my eyes on that particular male figure would stagnate. How soon I was to wish never to see that white-skinned, satiny-muscle form again! For, as Fate would have it, the first male nude I ever saw was the man who became my husband.

And he was the man who never could understand! Marriage? The thing farthest from my thoughts. I did not want to be married. What I wanted was a lover. Some one to initiate me into the mysteries of the bliss of which I had so avidly read in all the romances which had been my daily bread.

Slumbering Passions

More and more did I want a lover—after the first sight of that masculine vision had enamored me to a blindness toward all else till even everyday duties were blurred. Slumbering passions and sex had taken the bit in teeth and run amuck to the point that I, though carefully watched, did all I could to bring about the much-desired denouement, from a futile lifting of skirts as men walked behind me up the stairs to all but flinging my throbbing body into astonished arms.

As though it were yesterday I recall those stairs we passed up and down. There had been disappointing near-adventures with other visiting young men, but, after I had seen this one man nude, I had singled him out as my particular prey. There was something vital in him, it seemed to me, that must answer to the call of Nature; I felt its aura about me.

I Get Him

We were going up those stairs one day—he and I—he behind me. I pulled up my dress as far as I dared, showing my legs. Would he remain stupid?

Oh, stupid! Asinine! I choked; I knew he knew. I heard him laugh, throatily, felt his fingers tingle up the back of my leg, heard choked words, felt his arms tighten around me.

Bliss! Hot lips against hot lips. I would not, could not, let go.

And why should I? I did not know, then, but I was merely following those impulses which have been a guiding force with me through life—that Naturalness that has made me, a woman of fifty, still a girl.

As a Future Mother

What I have wanted, I have taken. Hypocrisy and prudery have had no part in my life.

How could I know or even imagine, a man could be of such cold blood that he was not as anxious to give full vent to his love as I was? How could I think that, in recognizing the untouched passion of the

woman in me, he was only calmly considering me, not as a mate for the fulfillment of desire, but as the future mother of his children, a healthy, well-trained young animal who would be able to make a comfortable home for him?

I Know Now

I know now—I knew before I had been married to him many hours—that that was the way he considered me. This explains quite clearly why he always denied me my gratification until after we were married.

It was all so confusing, then; not in the least like stories of lovers of whom I had read. Now, in the light of fuller and riper knowledge, I can only thank this once lord and master of mine—he from whom I once thought I should drink all the nectar the gods had provided for those athirst like me—for his coldness.

Because of that very coldness I have come to know Life in its fullness. Had he given me all I desired, there is small doubt but that I should have subsided, like thousands of other women, into a prosaic, satisfied wife; no longer seeking; never knowing all I had missed.

His Coldness Drew Me

I cannot find it in my heart to give him one word of blame. I can only thank him. For it was his frigidly, cruelty, if you like, that drove me to my first lover, to that first real ecstasy that opened the gates of a Paradise I have never since allowed to close, or, if closed, never with me in the outer darkness.

Love! Love! I have known it, felt it, experienced it in its every keenest impulse. Truthfully, I can say that while real love is the compelling force of life, its false counterfeits, with their forced simulations which are encountered in the many cults of love with which New York is honeycombed and the whole country abounds, are but ashes in the mouth.

The Whole Truth

I have said I would tell the whole truth in this story; withhold nothing. Naturally, that means I shall tell you what happened to me in those cults. Quite so. I shall tell you of my forays into the mystic realms of the erotic thrill seekers, the self-termed love cultists. For, to me their secrets are no secrets; their mysteries not mysterious. I have searched them out, seeking, ever seeking, to discover if by any chance such disciples of the glamorous emotion had really discovered anything I had missed.

For those excursions I will be blamed. For myself, I think of them only in terms of my further education. And through those very experiences I am better fitted than one who has not had them to say to you—"Seek not the counterfeit!"

Nothing Else Can Satisfy

Nothing in this wide, wide world can equal the ecstasy that can come from the answered call of mate to mate.

Nothing is more cloying, more bitterly disillusioning

than the forced search for thrills that lie deadened through satiety.

Not that there is not thrill of a kind, an aroused exaltation for the moment, an allure from erotic rite and passion-urging environment which are the stock in trade of the love-cultists.

It is only that it does not, can not last! It is not real.

And Love, true Love, above all else, is real!

My Impending Marriage

You may marvel that the coldness of a thoughtless husband could drive an eager wife into the arms of other men; drive her to extremes in search of her rightful thrills. Of that I will tell you. To make you more fully understand, I go back to my wedding night.

I had, as I have told you, been rather hurt that my husband-to-be had shown no desire to know me better than he did during the days of our short courtship. But I, always natural and truthful, could not ascribe this lack of courage (as I saw it) to anything more than ultra-conventionality and, well—yes, I called it hypocrisy, for I could not believe he was not quite as anxious to revel in the delights of love and sex as I.

After what seemed cons of time, so feverish with desire was I, our wedding day arrived. I recall it now with tolerant amusement for the poor little illusioned creature of Nature I was.

My Nuptial Night

How the women petted me; fussed over me; tried to excuse my nervousness, for as the day went on that nervousness was more and more palpable. I tried to tell them why I was nervous—they would not believe me—put it down to further maidenly confusion. But the fact was I could hardly wait for the distractingly long ceremony and the necessary fol-de-rols to be over, so anxious was I to be alone with my husband; so curious to know more of him.

Somehow the long day was got through. He had brought me to an attractive little home, but I had small time to consider it. All my thoughts, my ideas, were on the bridal chamber. And then, at last, we were within that chamber, with the door closed. I

waited for the attentions I had supposed a bridegroom would bestow. They did not come. While I hastily removed my bridal finery, I saw him sitting idly, rather patronizingly contemplating me while he smoked a cigar and with maddeningly slow movements occasionally flicked the ash aside.

I Await His Embraces

My astonishment was too great for words. I wanted all the thrills I believed a normal young girl had the right to desire. He seemed perfectly satisfied to sit and watch me, a half smile of amusement twitching his lips. I could stand it no longer. I stamped my foot in rage.

"Are you—are you going to sit there all night and—and—and—smoke that old cigar—and not get undressed and come to bed?" I demanded.

He answered with that infuriatingly slow smile, but got up lazily, and with the greatest deliberation I have ever seen in a human, got out of his clothing and—turned out the light.

What a Disappointment!

I shall not dwell on the disappointments of that night's revelations, not the bitter disillusion I experienced at my husband's approach and treatment of me. I shall simply pass it by with the remark that all my ideas of romance fell crashing to earth—it seemed never to be resurrected.

Love was not what I had thought. Nothing was worth while. Hard it was for youth—but I know better, now.

Begged Him to Love Me

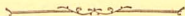
That first night was not the only time I had to beg my husband to love me. I was cheated. I knew it; but knew no answer to my problem. Even the advent of my three children within the shortest possible periods of each other did not bring from him the tenderness and thoughtful care I believed I had a right to expect. But always I held to hope, and the thought he must come to care.

What he cared about, though, was not me, as I came too well to know as days passed into months. So little did he care that he almost brought about my death at the birth of my second child through his adherence to a fanaticism of which I shall have more to say in later chapters.

NOTHING in this wide, wide world can equal the ecstasy that can come from the answered call of mate to mate.

Nothing is more cloying, more bitterly disillusioning than the forced search for thrills that lie deadened through satiety.

And Love, true Love, above all else, is real!



IT was shortly after our marriage that he became editor of "Leaves of Healing," the weekly organ of John Alexander Dowie, the famous "Elijah" of Zion City. He was a firm believer in the teachings of the white-bearded, benign, self-appointed "prophet." Naturally, he was a believer in Dowie's theory of "divine healing" which, as any one will recall, was the one strict tenet of the Dowie faith.

Divine healing! And because of it my husband thought himself competent to deliver my child himself! No medical attendance, or—

Well, I'm here! Perhaps there's something in "divine healing"—perhaps—; but no power on this earth will ever make me believe that the divine healing accorded me was anything but my own firm-set jaw and avowed determination to pull through in spite of the worst they could do.

Starved My Sex Craving

My husband was firmly of the opinion I was

thoroughly compensated for any physical inconvenience when my daughter was consecrated by Dowie himself, as the first Zion City baby.

I look back on some of that time with wide-eyed wonder. How could it be possible that a man believed himself aught but cruel and unnatural when he consistently starved his wife in her divine right to a full sex life? What were a good home, good food, good clothing, an apparent refinement and culture in a husband when I was being starved of all that made life worth living? I was no more than a sort of sublimated servant in his home, and the monotony and cruelty finally goaded me to the point I had to threaten to tell his friends of his unnatural conduct if he could not bring himself to lead a more normal existence.

It was all so soul-searing. I shudder even now, to recall those days, but some of it has been necessary to explain what follows. Enough of my husband, however—for the time being. I have something more joyous of which to tell.



Even above my sobs, I could hear his little chuckle. For a few minutes he did not speak. Then: [See page 16]

My First Lover

It came about, as do so many of the most astonishing things of life, from the most prosaic of beginnings—this first real love of my life. In this case it was a toothache. I was sent by a friend to a dentist.

It is not unnatural for one to feel a sort of drawing back on the threshold of a dental office, but this of which I am to tell you, was something different. I had not the fear of physical pain which the comic artists so delight to depict, nor any thought of running away at the threshold for a reason of that sort.

Yet—as I stood there at that dentist's door, waiting for my ring to be answered, there came over me the most unaccountable feeling. Call it premonition, presentiment, what you will. The fact remains I was not thinking of my aching molar when the door did open, but was trying to still a small voice that urged me to "Go back! Go back!" as though I were on the brink of an unseen danger.

He Thrills Me

I had no more than seen the dentist, though, before all that vanished. I laughed at my timidity, my presentiments. How absurd! So gentle, yet withal so masterful he was!

As I sat in the chair, the nearness of his body instantly thrilled me. The faint body aroma that came from his nearness as he bent over me was like a heady perfume. It flashed over me how much I would like to pierce that dignity and suave conventionality of his, to know for myself the male human beneath the surface.

Naturally, I gave no idea of this in words. For, since when have words been necessary when sex calls to sex? I was the aggressor, though, I grant you that—but you may put it down to my starved condition, that the proximity of a man so different from my husband had awakened me to the savageness of desire.

I Give Myself to Him

There came a day . . .

He kissed me. I knew he would. I doubt if he had had any such idea, though, but of course he could know nothing of the progress in my mind of a mad romance with him which I knew that one kiss would begin to make real.

Does not that tell you the next part of the story?

He became my lover. I was delirious with happiness; lived only for those times we should be passionately near together, and they were oftener and oftener.

From Distress to Peace

From a distressed, unhappy, neglected wife, I blossomed into a peaceful, good-tempered woman,

more capable than ever in my life of being a good wife and mother. But never, not even when the course of passion has run most feverishly, have I ever allowed anything to interfere with my duties as a mother.

I must interpolate right here, though, that this is the LAW; one that can never be changed or gainsaid:

No woman alive can be normal or happy if she is not well-mated—if her sex-life is neglected.

With life flowing along in this peaceful, even channel, you would have thought I would have been content. But a little devil was at work who was to toss all my new-found happiness into the discard. A little devil of mistaken conscience who, had I been able to know and recognize then as I would today, would never have found harbor.

But then suppose . . .

"All is for the best in the best of all possible worlds," we are fond of whimsically quoting with Voltaire. Had I gone on content with my dentist lover, I might never have had the compensation of knowing those other and greater loves which have come into my life, always to bless, never to ban.

I Confess

I was so young. I had not yet fully brought myself from under the spell of the Dowie teachings with which my husband had imbued me through the first of our married life.

I learned of a meeting to be held by a Dowie apostle in New York. Nothing would do me but I must go. And nothing would do the little devil of interference save that the sermon I heard should be about Mary Magdalene.

Mary Magdalene! Marian Dockeril! Mary Mag . . .

The words insistently pounded themselves, a knell, through my consciousness throughout the hour I sat and listened.

And at the end I stumbled forward, and with tears, whether of repentance or frazzled nerves it would be hard to say, I confessed to that apostle my love affair. Naturally, the man of holiness was aghast. There was nothing, he said, for me to do, but to confess to my husband and forsake my sin.

I Am Not Ashamed

Not so good! My repentance flagged almost at the beginning, though it hadn't been a very healthy repentance at any time—more of a hysteria, you might say.

For I am frank and free to confess that all through that—what you may be pleased to call my first illicit love affair—there was never one moment when I was ashamed of myself or felt I was doing anything in the least wrong.

Yet here I was! "Tell your husband, and forsake your sin," he had said.

Truly, I did not mind the telling my husband part of it at all. What I did not want to do was to give up my dentist. He was my first romance, and I wanted him.

An Adulteress

There seemed nothing to do but go through with the matter, though, and I thought I might as well do it in the most approved dramatic manner. I was quite in the mood for it, too, for after my experience with the Dowie adherent, I was worked up to most anything.

So, when I arrived home, I did not beat about the bush. Quite as Mary Magdalena herself might have done, I threw myself at my husband's feet and condemned myself.

"Do with me what you will!" I moaned. "I have sinned! I am an adulteress! Forgive me! Oh, forgive me!"

Even above my sobs, I could hear his little chuckle. For a few minutes he did not speak. Then:

"Get up off the floor," he said. "That's a new white frock. It cost money. What have you got for dinner?"

He Doesn't Care

And that, as they say today, was that. No other word. He simply did not care. Only once more did he refer to the matter that day—as he was finishing dinner.

"How much do you owe this dentist fellow?" he mused.

I told him.

He was silent, considering, before he spoke.

"H-m-m!" he said, insinuatingly. "Here's a bit of luck. I won't have to pay him. A little short now. Has he got any money? Perhaps I might look him up in a day or two."

I Lose Him

He did, too, I discovered. And, though it was only for an amicable conversation, ending with an invitation to our house for my dentist, it was enough to spoil things for me. In the vernacular of the day, friend dentist got cold feet.

Alas for Romance! I had followed the apostle—but lost my lover.

I Cannot Forget

Ah, well! As I look back on it, he wasn't such a good lover after all. It was my imagination made him one, more than any great romanticism on his own part. So often that has been the case in my life. So often have I wondered if the best and greatest of my thrills have not come through the exercise of my own vivid imagination rather than in the realization that has been vouchsafed me.

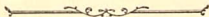
But I could not so easily forget. That romance had meant so much to me. Its denouement was so sordid. It hurt.

I called on my pride, tried to tell myself that if my lover had cared one whit as much for me as he had told me when I lay in his arms, that nothing—nothing, not even an outraged husband (and mine was certainly far from being that) could keep us apart.

Eating My Heart

There wasn't any doubt about it, however. My dentist lover had had enough. He was afraid of my husband, if I was not. Never shall I forget his peevishness and his berating me for telling of our relations. It was the final touch to make what had seemed so glorious, entirely sordid.

As is always the case, though—a trite, true old saying—it was the woman who paid. I paid. Not with the dramatics and hysteria that might have been expected, but through an eating at my heart at the breaking up of romance so necessary to my life.



I SUFFERED a nervous breakdown. Again Fate had taken a hand in my affairs, though little could I realize it.

For as surely as we puppets move in answer to the guiding strings in the hand that manipulates them, just so surely was it Fate, smiling, a bit sympathetically, more ironically, who guided my footsteps to the door of Dr. W. R. C. Latson. He is forgotten now, by all but a few, but he was on the topmost rung of the ladder of fame then in New York, a neurologist, author and editor of a health magazine that was widely read and accepted as an authority.

Certain it was that when I went to see Dr. Latson, on the advice of a friend, there was in my mind no remotest idea that my feet were being guided toward a

meeting with him, served to bring back a bit of my normal spirits, I was to be initiated into my first experience with a New York love cult. It would have seemed absurdly wild to have intimated that this suave, courtly, dignified gentleman, famed for his erudition, his knowledge of the rather newly discovered theory of psychiatry, was himself the head and



I kept back nothing, words tumbled over each other in my eagerness to bare my soul, my innermost thoughts.

love affair that should be real, earnest. A love as far different from anything I had ever experienced as day from night. A love that was to reach palpitating heights, plumb the depths of despair and disillusion.

My First Love Cult

Nor could I have any suspicion that through this man with his wonderful magnetic personality, his great gift of understanding which, even on my first

forefront of one of the most astonishing exotic cults New York has ever known.

Had I known this truth, it would have, at the very beginning, put a different construction on the perfect understanding with which he listened to the story of my single indiscretion. It would have been obvious why he knew so well the effect it had had upon my well being.

He understood. Yes. Why not? You shall hear.

I Tell Him All

"I shall treat you by suggestion," he told me, after quietly listening to the history of tribulation I poured out. I do not believe I realized, even as I spoke, how completely I opened my heart to this great-souled, understanding man who, but a few minutes before, had been an utter stranger.

I kept back nothing. Words tumbled over each other in my eagerness to bare my soul, my innermost thoughts. I told him of my childhood, my longings, my marriage, my disappointments, my early environment. It was as though he had the power, with no word spoken, to draw from me each thought I had ever had in my life, even those forgotten or subconscious.

And always he sat there silently, his eyes plumbing the depths of my soul—eyes that held even then, and were later to hold still more, what seemed the power of life and death over me. I could not resist. Strangely, I did not want to.

My Master

For, from my very first meeting with Dr. Latson, I knew what it was to submerge my will in that of another, to feel the deliciousness of having a master. Womanlike, I reveled in it, though, at the start, I had no notion that what drew me to him was no other force than the all-compelling one of sex which never can be denied.

"I shall treat you by suggestion," he repeated, and added: "Each night I shall send to you vibrations that will make for peace and harmony."

I bowed my head, content. I heard myself murmuring strange words that somehow came unbidden to my lips.

"Yes, Master."

I saw his slow, sad, sweet smile; heard his soft-voiced protest.

Secret of Life

"There is no master; no real master. All of us are groping, groping... but if I, out of my wider experience, can help... a little ant trailing on the ground knows more of Life and Death than you or I, for he is simpler; humbler. That is the secret of Life—humbleness; service."

In such language, which exalted me so that I looked up to him as a superior being as time went on, did

Dr. Latson gain possession of my soul. Gladly would I have laid it at his feet had he asked it.

He had said he would treat me and my life difficulties through suggestion. What those suggestions were to be I could not have, in my wildest dreams, imagined that first day I stepped into his consultation room in his magnificent offices in his palatial home on

Riverside Drive. This was as staid and conventional a room as may be provided for a dignified practitioner. It was presided over by a beautiful, soft-voiced assistant whose very air breathed efficiency and superiority.

He would treat me by suggestion? What suggestions?

You will may ask.

More Sex Secrets

He began with me early, and I was an avid pupil and patient. He explained to me all the matters that had confused me since the early days when I had sought to know a man through peeps through a keyhole. Sex, he told me, was the greatest force in life. Its pleasures should never be prostituted, but should be engaged in with the most beautiful, idealistic love, abandonment and understanding.

I was an eager listener as he recounted to me the life stories of patients of his—people I knew well through their fame and accomplishments—whose lives had been wrecked because of wrong sex conditions. To them he had given life, he said, for through his advice and admonition they had been brought back to their highest powers.

Sex and Nature

There was nothing sordid about Dr. Latson's revelations; nothing to injure the most delicate mental organism. As though I had been a child in the kindergarten of love he taught me to know sex and Nature through his comparison with the blossoming of flowers, the matings of birds. My head swam as I listened. I was enthralled. I, too, wanted to know of all the delights he pictured as the right of all human beings.

The time was soon to come, when I should participate in many rites that were beautiful, others that

were a little terrifying, in that palace on Riverside Drive. I was to know the mysteries concealed by secret rooms barred from prying eyes. But, as I first listened to the man who soon gained supremacy over me, soul and body, there came to me no premonition of that fate.

It Seems Worth While

All I knew, at the start, was that Dr. Latson had gained a fame that was second to none for his mastery over the nervously dis-

tressed. If he could do such wonders as they told for the famous authors, actresses, musicians and society people who flocked to him, then he was the man I wanted to lift me out of my own slough of despond. I wanted help to make life worth living again. After the defection of my dentist lover, it had come to seem so little worth while.

HE began with me early, and I was an avid pupil and patient. * * * * * Sex, he told me, was the greatest force in life. Its pleasures should never be prostituted, but should be engaged in with the most beautiful, idealistic love, abandonment and understanding.

It was hard to persuade my husband I needed the services of such an expert as Dr. Latson. I count it as one of the triumphs of my life that I did. He never said so, but I have often thought my husband early forgave me for that initial expense I was to him. He had good reason to. For it was through my acquaintance with Dr. Latson that my husband, too, came to experience a love affair such as he had never known with me.

Tastes Real Love

Never did he penetrate the portals of the secret chambers where I learned of so many mysteries and forbidden delights. He did not need to. For she who gave him a taste of the joys of real love was not hidden behind them.

She was, in fact, that beautiful, wavy-haired Russian secretary I saw in the conventional physician's office on my first visit to Dr. Latson—the Alta Marhevka the public came later to know when she was accused of the murder of the doctor. She was the Alta Marhevka whom I, unknowingly, deposed from her throne as favorite in the love harem the famous neuropath had established for himself.

My husband! Her lover! A fair exchange?

Ah, well, as I have pointed out, Life has its own way of adjusting the balances.

The "Bee Harem"

In many ways, the rich and brilliant Dr. Latson's love cult, his "Bee Hive," or "Bee Harem," as it was known to the initiated, was one of the most astounding that ever flourished in New York, where its like do flourish as the green bay tree. I cannot, even now, find it in my heart utterly to condemn the man who founded it and brought it to its heights of fame. Or of infamy, depending on the point of view.

I, who so intimately knew Dr. Latson, knew him for the idealist he was. He was too great an idealist, for far too literally did he take as his life motto: "To the pure all things are pure." Like all who allow idealism to run away with them, he could find no middle ground. To him, all humans were as the plants and animals, following a given course, with free will only to choose the mate instead of gravitating to it. But mating, inevitably—and often.

Body and Soul His

I had not made many visits to the mystic doctor before I had fallen completely under his sway. I was passionately, unreasoningly, in love with him. I did not stop to ask whether or no he had fallen in love with me. All I knew was I had given my all to him. My soul and body were his to do with as he chose. Whether or not he wanted them, I did not ask. Always there was the insistent feeling that he did.

It was not long before I learned that his offices with

their conventional air were but a small part of his establishment. The whole magnificent dwelling was filled with women! Literally filled!

Sinners and Saints

Beautiful women! Lovely women! Women of all types of beauty, with all variations and nuances of mind and soul. Saints, some; sinners, others. But all regarding the master of the house as a Superman from whom they begged the boon of the nearness of him that they might sit at his feet and learn of the mysteries of Life which they believed he alone knew.

Most of them had come to his home as students of the esoteric teachings in which he was deeply learned, and most of them were tragically sincere. It did not take me long to learn that the lives led by most of these "nurses," as they were known for the benefit of prying neighbors, were utterly beyond reproach.

Most of them, I say, advisedly. For there were some who were all too willing initiates into that cult of love of his of which even I, who confidently believed myself honored above the other women by the master's favor, did not know for months after I first began my visits to the house on Riverside Drive.

Hindu Philosophy

I was just beginning to learn something of the true state of affairs in the place when, one day, I was discussing with the doctor the beautiful conception of Maeterlinck about bees. In his wonderful, compelling voice he was telling me of a passage in Hindu philosophy he adored which compares the soul to a bee—the wings, the flight, the sipping of honey from beautiful flowers.

"Bees express it all," he said to me, after he had thus led up to and finally told me of that inner circle of his which flourished somewhere in the subterranean caverns of his home, and asked me to become a member of the cult. "That is why I have chosen to call this cult of mine my 'Bee Hive.'"

I Haven't Seen All

As he talked, I was recalling what I had already seen. I had not been so backward and unobserving as he had imagined. My ears are keen, too, and there had been whispers. I had watched and taken part in the beautiful aesthetic dancing in which the members of his household invited their souls. I had reveled in the harmless Hindu rites. But gradually it had been borne in on me that what I had seen was far from being all there was to see. I guessed, and truly, that all this was little more than camouflage for something deeper, more vital—sort of outer circle for a more secret cult.

Now I knew. He, himself, had told me. I smiled

I F I have ever regretted any of my experiences in his home, that regret has never reached out to include my love life with him. That was pure and natural. It was a thing inevitable.

as I recalled the women, women, everywhere. It was so like it had all been in my earlier days. Yet all so different. Now I had no fear of women, or of being shoved into the background. I was too confident of my "man."

I laughed as I recalled all those eager dancing women, and heard him speak of his "Bee Hive."

I Become Queen Bee

"Wouldn't 'Bee Harem' be just a bit more explicit?" I asked, flippantly.

He did not laugh, though. His eyes merely lighted up with pleasure at a new idea. He nodded, as he came over and slid an arm about my shoulders, and stroked my head as he drew me to his breast.

"We'll call it a 'Bee Harem,' then, beloved, if you wish," he said. "And you shall be Queen Bee."

Which, because I have said this shall be a true confession, I am now prepared to admit is exactly what I became.

My Search for Truth

I did not consider any of that experience in the light of vulgar license. Far from it. Too well had the doctor imbued in me his belief that to the pure all things are pure—had patiently taught me from his brimming store of Oriental lore and Brahmanism. I was more sure it was right for me to be one of his plurality of loves and that our relationship was sacred than I had ever been about the relationship between my husband and myself.

I have gone through fires in my search for the Truth. If those fires have not purified me in the usually accepted sense of the term, they have done one thing. They have burned away dross and at least left one shining virtue—to me the greatest of them all—Truthfulness. I mention this merely to impress that, did I feel I had done wrong in my relationship with

Dr. Latson, I should, nevertheless, say so. I would not gloss or gild myself.

Instead, I can tell you, with all candor, that I did not then and I do not now believe I did wrong. There was no violation of the sacredness of love. I was not tricked by him, or fooled. I went to his arms with my eyes wide open.

Love Pure and Natural

If I have ever regretted any of my experiences in his home, that regret has never reached out to include my love life with him. That was pure and natural. It was a thing inevitable.

Strange experiences lay in wait for me in that home within a stone's throw of Grant's Tomb. It was there I was to learn more of the strange quirks that human nature thwarted of its rightful heritage in a passionate effort to find expression than had ever occurred to me as possible in the small circumscribed circle that had been my life's orbit.

Thrill Seekers

No longer was it to be circumscribed. I was to issue forth, some months later, a thorough initiate into the secrets of one love cult, at least. Though sated, disillusioned by that secret band of thrill seekers, I was destined to go onward with an eager curiosity to know what other erotics had done and were doing. It was a quest that took me eventually into the far corners of the earth and into strange environments, which opened my eyes to the wide-spread activity of cult fanatics, ranging from misguided "helpers of humanity," through the gamut of scoundrels, blackmailers and thieves to appalling degenerate fiends. I was to learn of cults that flourished under the name of "religion"; others consecrated to diablerie. But, all—under whatever name—pandering, in the end, to the god of love—and to sex.



EVER so often there seeps out to an unbelieving world amazing tales of some of those mysterious bands. There are awed whispers of pagan rites and devil worship; of mystic shrines and practices of diabolical magic; of free love; of all the eroticism that warped minds can invent in offering up to their chosen gods of self indulgence an incense that shall pander both to the lowest and the highest of a worshiped sex desire.

Senses Swoon

It is the custom of the careless, secure in their feeling of normalcy, to scoff at such reports. I say to you—don't! Such reports are not exaggerated. They are restricted. For there are few who really know such secrets who dare expose them.

I, who tell you this, know! For I, who was first initiated into a cult that was heady with a sex perfume in which the senses swooned, have searched out the truth. Deliberately I set for myself the task of delving into the mysteries of other cults of the sort into which I was first introduced. With what results I shall tell you, frankly, fearlessly.

Once more, before I tell you more in detail of my first adventure, I must repeat my warning: "Be not deceived by love's counterfeit!"

Love Much; Love Often

Love much; love often. That is the LAW. But love, in pure Truth.

If one can find true love, a true mate in matrimony, so much the better. I am not deploring the monogamous state. I uphold it. I insist it is the only state of true happiness—where true mating exists.

But—*Love* is the only basis for the sacred union of individuals. *Love* is the only lasting tie.

You may go through all the conventional and civil ceremonies society may devise as necessary, but where there is no love, no marriage exists. Retroactive, no civil or other ceremony is necessary for a truly God-given union where *Love* does exist.

Which is all in passing, and an aside. I wanted to give you an idea of my mental reaction at the time I was initiated into the Riverside Drive "Bee Harem."

Dances Symbolize Love

I had been a patient of Dr. Latson's for six months before he brought me into his private classes to which his resident "nurses" belonged. They were classes,



I did not stand long there, thinking. Slowly I began to disrobe . . . The doctor crossed the threshold, and the door swung to behind him.

[See page 22]

BEFORE me there had been but one other Queen, though Dr. Latson had never been niggardly in the distribution of his affections or sex attractions. That latter had all been very well and in keeping with his polygamous Brahmanist belief.

I was informed, where aesthetic dancing was taught for the beautiful development of the body. The dances were the symbolism of love.

There was a double meaning to that latter term. To those women who had eagerly accepted initiation into the secret love cult, the symbolism of love meant only an expression of sex and desire. To those others whose poor fuddled brains were in the clouds, the symbolism expressed a love for all humanity.

Half Sexless Humans

Dr. Latson was clever in teaching that philosophy, and also his philosophy of humbleness. He was sincere, too, I think, in so far as he went. Wise man that he was, he knew only too well there do exist poor, half-sexless humans to whom the desires of the flesh have no appeal, but must get their satisfaction from mental exaltation.

Of course I was interested in these classes, interested in belonging to them. But I must confess I held toward the other members—women, of course—a sort of patronizing attitude which I did not try to disguise.

Did I not have the right? Was I not already the chosen one of the Master and teacher they all adored as a superman?

Inexperienced Though Married

I had gone to him willingly; eagerly. In looking back on it, I wonder he did not laugh at my naiveness, for all of the fact that I had been married and was a mother. I was like an untried girl at my first realization of what was to come.

It had been lovely; lovely to hear him praise me—to muse over my beauty, exclaim over my shapeliness. It had been keen delight to hear him, in that drowsy, dreamy voice of his speak of my eyes, my lips, my hair. But that had been at arm's length.

I Disrobe Before Him

Never will I forget the first day he asked me to disrobe. What a quick stab of unreasoning maidenliness there came over me! Why should I feel like that? Why fear anything he asked me to do? Did

I not love him? I knew I did, though as yet no word of love had come from his lips.

He was so considerate. His request to me was under the cloak of his calling. It was necessary, he said, that he, as my physician, make a most thorough physical examination of me.

He opened a door leading from his big front office, and his glance was understanding, if compelling, as he told me to go into that other room. In the middle of the floor of the great chamber I stood for a few minutes, wide-eyed, like a girl who has been ushered into her bridal chamber to await her bridegroom. I was hesitant; uncertain. I did not understand myself. But I did not know all that was in store for me.

I Am Sexually Starved

I did not stand long there, thinking. Slowly I began to disrobe. I stood, a somewhat shrinking September Morn, when the door opened. The doctor crossed the threshold, and the door swung to behind him.

There was nothing for which I was sorry when, later, I left him, with his assurance that his choicest vibrations would follow me till we should meet again. I knew that what he had told me after that thorough examination was right. I had known it before he told me, but had not put it into words. I was sexually starved, he said, and even those experiences I had had were worse than none. There would be no more of that.

Society Leaders

And so, when I eagerly joined in the dancing I was assured would make my body even more desirable than it was, I rejoiced. I felt pity of a sort for those who were not favored by the man of all their hearts as I was.

At first I looked on those "students" with surprise. What a wonder my Dr. Latson must be to have drawn to him people such as I saw there. Society leaders (I recognized many from having seen their pictures in the papers); famous actresses; writers; a galaxy that would have graded the most exclusive functions.

Life of Sex

How inspiring it was to watch those disciples of his, clothed in their filmy veils, dancing, swaying to haunting Oriental music while the master—my master—drilled them, posed them, illustrated for them movements, ideas, postures to develop grace, poise, co-ordination.

Nor was he backward in his explanation of the uses and meanings of his dances. He was not chary of words to express his meanings. His haunting voice, seldom lifted above a monotone, urged them to expression—sex expression.

"Dancing is the life of sex," he said. "One must know dancing to know the best of life's gifts . . ."

I danced. The hours flew by on rosy wings. I was happy. The place exuded happiness. But gradually, as the days went by, there came those hints of which

I have already spoken. Meaningful words reached me; suggestions were made. It was not hard for me to discover the true meaning of all the dancing and happiness.

Only Outer Circle

For that dancing class was, in fact, the outer circle of Dr. Latson's Oriental Love Cult. It was his training school for those who should prove their right and trustworthiness to go further.

There was need for culling. One who entered the secret portals must be allowed to enter only when it was known she could keep to herself all that therein might be revealed.

And then came the time of my triumph. The time I was asked to be the Queen Bee.

Shall I ever forget that day? Or shall I ever, as long as life shall endure, or into the beyond, forget the eagerly-awaited night when I took my proud place as the favorite of the head of the cult. That was a position to which not even the richest, most influential or beautiful of the cultists had yet aspired.

Before me there had been but one other Queen, though Dr. Latson had never been niggardly in the distribution of his affections or sex attractions. That latter had all been very well and in keeping with his polygamous Brahmanist belief.

A Queen at Last

But a Queen! One to rule beside him on his velvet and marble throne. Ah! That was different. One other Queen there had been, then I—obscure, knowledge-seeking I! And that other had held her throne since she had been sixteen years of age. She was that beautiful, raven-haired maid of efficiency who posed as secretary—gorgeous Alta Marhevka, the Russian mystery girl whom Dr. Latson called his "psychological study."

What did she think of this usurpation? At first I had no idea. I did not know I was an usurper. Alta had been trained as are few women in this world. She knew what it was to worship. But she knew what it was to bow before the will of her master—to utter no word of complaint or reproach.

All I do know is that she was not present on the night of my own ascension to the "Bee Harem" throne. I know she was not, for, even had she been there, masked as were the rest of us, I should never have mistaken that wonderful beauty of hers, that proudly-held head, weighted with its heavy coils of midnight hair.

My Coronation

There seemed to be a sort of suspense in the very air

when I entered the house that night. It was as if, in closing the door on the broad Drive and on New York, I was snatched up on a magic carpet to another land.

Dr. Latson was waiting for me.

"We've prepared a great reception for your initiation, little one," he whispered. As he helped me remove my wraps his arm slid around me and he held me close to him for a moment.

"All is ready for you," he went on eagerly. "Even your robe of state. Don't fear, love—there is nothing to fear. There is nothing but Love! All you'll have to do is to obey what the other initiates tell you."

My Slaves

He was gone, and I turned to face a smiling young woman whose subservience of attitude I could not fail to note. She was glorying in the honor of being chosen to serve as hand-maiden. She told me to follow her.

In a sort of dreamy daze I followed my guide down the stairs and into the basement of the house. It was a part of the establishment into which I had never gone before. I did not know where she was leading me. I cared less. All I knew was that he had told me to go. And with that order nothing in all the world could have held me back.

The Secret Shrine

At the end of a basement hallway we stopped. It looked to me like a blank wall, but the white-robed girl who led me fumbled at the side of it and a door slid back into the wall. A secret door, such as I had not believed existed save in the romances I had read as a girl. I had had small time for those romances in these later years, though. I had been too occupied with being wife and mother.

We entered. The door swung to. We were in darkness only for the flickering taper the girl had paused to light. We were in a long, vaulted



passageway of some sort, and the flickering of the taper made its shadows eerie.

In we went under the surface of New York till we reached another door—a great bronze affair with grinning Buddhas and dragons and queer animals in bas relief on its metal surface. I had no time to examine it, for at a signal it was thrown open. I could only fall back and gasp my awe and surprise at the unexpected scene before me.

My Dream Realized

Could it be I was on Riverside Drive? Only that stone's throw from the tomb of the great general?

No! Not possible! I had only dreamed the New York part of it. This was a strange land, but—stranger still, it seemed to me it was the land where I belonged.

Somewhere, in my dreams—perhaps in another life—I had known such a scene. It was far from being as unfamiliar as one would have expected it to be; as I believe my guide confidently thought it would be. I did not disappoint her in my expressions of astonishment, however, nor in my eager drinking in of all the beauties revealed.

It was a scene of Oriental splendor unbelievable. Like a starlit lake, the polished floors reflected the subdued rays of tall, faintly tinted candles which diffused, in burning, an intoxicating incense from which my senses reeled.

Beyond All Expectation

One moment I was drowsy with the headiness of it; the next my heart leapt with a strange exaltation, an awakening of desires not even suspected.

The walls were hung with tapestries whose colors and patterns had been ravished from the East, and they brought with them all the magic of India. Arranged about the broad floor, so cunningly that when occupied, those on one could not see persons on another, were huge divans, piled high with pillows, swathed with bright-hued silks and draperies.

I did not fail to notice, though, that however much the occupants of the couches might be hidden one from the other, that all could be seen from the high dais which was reared at the far end of the great chamber.

My Throne

So that was the throne. I knew it without being told. The throne! My throne! At least for tonight! For longer? Who could tell. Not I—I knew not how long I should even desire it. This night was enough.

Though maids of honor were waiting my pleasure, I could not follow them until I had looked long on this throne I was to occupy with Dr. Latson. Steps led up to it, and it seemed, as I gazed, that the gilded dragons that decorated the shining seat of gold writhed and twisted themselves in an ecstasy.

Two of the huge gilt chairs there were, set in state on an Oriental rug, the like of whose beauty I had never seen. Its gleaming golds and scarlets on the background of deep azure, too, seemed alive, and the

crimson velvet hangings that reached to the tessellated marble floor were splashes of vivid blood.

The Queen's Robe

A whisper roused me. The Queen's robe was ready. Would I come?

Still in a daze, I allowed myself to be led through the great hall into a luxurious dressing room by still another waiting woman, this one, it seemed, of more exalted rank. As a matter of fact, I was informed later, the woman who was chosen to put me into my robes on the night I became Queen of the "Bee Harem" was a woman of wealth whose status in New York society was beyond cavil or question.

I have often wondered what were the thoughts of this woman, accustomed as she was to an attendant on her every whim, as she humbly led my humble self for my arraying, and with her own hands placed on me the robes which proclaimed me the queen of all the women who sought the joys of love in Dr. Latson's mystic cavern.

Its Sacred Meaning

Naturally, I was intensely interested in the robe which had been provided for me. Feminine instinct saw to that. I could have imagined nothing more beautiful. Of purest white, of the most marvelous texture, it was truly more robe than gown, and its folds draped clingingly about my form.

There was a sort of cape which formed a hood to fasten snugly about my head with a band of gold, while the sides of the cape drooped over the shoulders so that, with arms extended, there was given the semblance of wings. A sash of gold, drawn over the breasts, and crossed in the back to the loosely over the hips, fastened the gown, the ends of the long sash falling almost to the floor in front. In my hand was placed a golden scepter; a writhing serpent. About my neck my handmaidens clasped another serpent of slithery gold. I was ready.

She stood back to admire her handiwork, if not to admire me.

"You have been told the meaning of that robe?" she asked casually.

I had not been. She was a little surprised, but glad to supply the deficiency in my knowledge.

The Fire That Purges

"You are now wearing the garment that is emblematic of the fire that purges," she confided. "May your desires be purged to your heart's content."

As I glanced at the pure white robe, the symbolism was at first a little confusing. Had it been red, scarlet, I might have sooner understood.

"The Fire that Purges."

And then I remembered. As Queen, a scarlet flame would not do. For me there was the flame of pure white—the hottest flame known. "The Fire that Purges!" Would it? I wondered.

On other occasions while I reigned as Queen Bee in that room I wore other and far more gorgeous costumes

than that furnished for my initiation. But none of them ever afforded me the ecstasy of that, the first.



My Soul Thrilled

True to the Orientalism of his adoption, Dr. Latson was fond of vividly gorgeous colors, of jewel-like gowns and robes. I remember there was one gem of a gown I wore on one occasion. Never have I seen that surpassed even in the most gorgeous of stage costumes. That was my peacock gown. I must admit my feminine soul was thrilled and sated at the thought of the picture I must make on that gilded, velvet-hung throne in that abbreviated garment which, even in its abbreviation, managed to catch and hold all the tints of the most gorgeous of that gloriously tinted bird, the peacock. And my head nodded under its headdress of feathers from the same strutting fowl, as I idly waved my peacock-feather fan.

It was shortly before midnight, and I was in a fever of expectancy—having been ready in my "Fire that Purgas" gown for some time—when Dr. Latson came for me.

We Mask

He had with him a mask which he bade me don. It was their custom, he said. There were still those who clung to conventionality to such an extent that they were unable freely to abandon themselves to the delights of the cult if their identity were known. So those who participated in the reception and rites of the "Bee Harem" were masked.

There was, of course, another side to this, for—well, what one does not know, one cannot tell, no

matter how peeved they may become.

As we crossed the floor toward the throne, the doctor stopped to introduce me to several beautiful, masked women as his Queen Bee. Their vari-colored costumes lent an added air of gorgeousness to the scene I had believed already as colorful as one might be. The women, he explained to me, were those who had passed the experimental stage, and were now full fledged disciples of the great love expression of his cult.

Half Hypnotized

Wondering, half dizzy, half hypnotized, I docilely let him lead me up the steps of the throne.

With all the ceremony that might have been accorded a real queen of a realm no more real than was this to me, I was seated on my throne. All about me music began to play. At first I could not

place it. It was fairy music. This was a fairy court. It was weird music; cloyingly sweet; exotic music, different from any I had ever heard.

As my eyes grew less blurred with dizziness, I placed the musicians. They were the doctor's Hindu servants, playing stringed instruments, softly thrumming muted drums. The music was like, yet unlike, that with which I had become familiar in the classes above stairs.

The Hindu Dance

With one accord the brilliantly robed women who had been strolling about or posturing as though awaiting a signal, swung into one of the perfected rhythmic dances they had been taught by the doctor when they were serving their apprenticeship in the outer circle.

At the other end of the room a door silently swung open. Men filed through it, their bodies, too, swaying to the music. They were men in gorgeous-hued robes, their faces masked. Sinuously they moved forward until each had selected his divan and sunk into the cushions.

The Significance

Not so much as by a single movement, by a quiver of mobile lips, did the dancing women show they were aware of the entry of the men. They swayed on to their dancing, gyrated to the sensuous rhythms till the music ceased. As by a preconcerted arrangement or understanding, each woman had, at the conclusion of the dance, maneuvered herself so that, with the dying away of the last note, she could sink down on a divan beside the man who awaited her.

But only for a moment. I was watching the master at my side. His slumberous eyes swept over the room, losing no detail of any occurrence.

He lifted his heavily jeweled hand in an imperious

gesture, and the music again started. Softly at first, as in the opening dance. Then, gradually—oh, so insinuatingly changing—it swept to a maddening crescendo. And with it were swept the occupants of the divans to a quickening emotional orgy of which I had never imagined the possibility.

We Drink of Love

Abandonment! Abandonment raised to the nth power! I heard a sigh of satisfaction from the man beside me, as his hand groped for and found mine. He bent his head, searched out my lips and drank deep.

Ah, well named was this "reception."

"The Fire that Purges," or "The Abandonment to the Desires," my loved whispered to me he called it. But of that abandonment and its climax I may no further speak. Certainly I may not write it, no matter how great my desire to tell the truth of all I have seen.

There were little flames of sated passion that shot from beneath the lowered lids of my lover's eyes, though, as he whispered some explanation to me.

Necessary to Existence

"There is no need to be shocked, dear one," he told me. "You'll come to know—to understand—even as I. This is necessary for these people; necessary to their vital existence. They have here the abandonment needed to counteract the restrictions of their everyday lives. That is a necessity for all people of imagination.

"These people you see, love, are society women, artists, actors, musicians, writers—all who need and cannot otherwise procure a medium for self-expression."

So matter-of-fact was he that I could but believe him. Though it would have taken a great deal more than anything I then witnessed to keep me from believing anything, everything, he said, so great had become his hold on me.

The King Is Mine

Nor did I care much what others did or were doing. I had my own king. I felt his warm breath on my cheek, the tingle of his flesh against my flesh. I was Queen!

Surely it would have seemed that this reception which was given in honor of my ascension to a throne would have been the ultimate. But no! There was far more to know, as I learned as time went on and reception followed reception and ritual followed ritual.

The first reception I had attended was merely, the doctor explained, the first step in the development of his pupils of the inner circle, and though an important phase in their education, the rites through which they had gone as I watched from my gold throne were only, in reality, elemental or foundational steps.

Just the Beginning

Those higher steps of his were the undoing of the man who had founded the order. His circle grew.

His pupils got beyond his control. Liquor took a hand, especially absinthe, of which the doctor was inordinately fond. The insidious hydra of drugs reared its ugly head.

The glamour of being Queen lost its glamour for me. I may have loved Dr. Latson. I believed I did. I believe now that I did, at the time. But the tinsel wore off as it would have from the golden throne had it been exposed to biting gales.

The time came when I returned no more. The high office of Queen Bee I resigned freely and fully. Once more I breathed a sigh of relief, free from the cloying incense of the Hindu room.

In extenuation of myself, if you think that needful, I can only say to you what I said to my own mother when my infatuation for Dr. Latson was at its height. Dear Mother! How little she could understand any beauty there might possibly be in any creed that was not monogamous.

"How could you! How could you!" was the burden of her moan.

Attuned Soul and Body

It was with pride that I could answer her:

"I would rather have a tithe of a great-souled man whose soul and body are attuned to mine than all of a man I do not love or want!"

I do not believe that the realization that came to me later of my usurpation of the rightful place of Alta Marhevka had anything to do with my gradual dropping away from the "Bee Harem." I do know, however, that from the moment I knew of her heroism in abasing herself in favor of a new favorite at the behest of her master, things did not look exactly the same to me.

I could not help but put myself in her place. How would I have liked all that? I did not know. I do not know now.

Poetic Justice

For never, in all my love life, have I ever been called on to take a second place for anyone. Except by my husband.

There may have been, in the minds of some, something of poetic justice in the fact that it was with my husband that Alta Marhevka consoled herself while I was Queen. But I know—only too well—how little it consoled the Russian to whom Dr. Latson was life itself.

I thought I loved the doctor. I *know* Alta did. Taking her, as he had, in her early youth, he had become her life; her very soul.

Latson a Suicide

The time came for payment. In all the times I have watched the activities of love cultists, that time has always come. It came for Dr. Latson. In the heyday of his popularity and fame, he was found dead one day—a pistol beside him, a bullet through his head.

Suspicion pointed to Alta Marhevka as his murderer.

and she was tried for it. I do not believe any greater justice was ever done than when she was finally acquitted, freed. All evidence had been so strongly for suicide. She did not kill the man she loved. That I know. That she proved when she tried to end her own life when she knew he no longer lived.

She Loved Him

That is love! Through life that Russian girl loved the man she called master. She did his bidding, even to the torture of humiliating herself in favor of another woman. In death she chose to join him. He was her "god-man," her "master," her "guru."

To him she wrote what she believed her last words and, dressed in her most beautiful garments, lay down to die. This she wrote:

"He knows no stress or pain,
The spirit freed from its earthbound chain
Has found its bright abode at last—
Is back to its sacred heaven again."

Her God-Man

And then, when she found that Fate had foiled her, that she *couldn't* die and join him, when her white hands beat futilely against the bars of her prison cell and she sobbed to be allowed to go to him, it was this her frenzied pencil told:

"My god-man is floating through the cerulean blue on beautiful wings. He spoke to me often of suicide. But what is that? Simply ridding the imperishable soul of its base and earthly habiliments. We had always intended to go together some day. We were simply waiting. I tried to join my master. I could not. I consider his suicide a noble end. I did not kill him, as they try to say, but if he had lacked the physical courage when the time came to free his soul, I would gladly have done it for him, had he so commanded. I glory in the courage of my guru. He died as he lived, a matchless man."

Yes, it was Alta Marhevka who loved Dr. Latson. For her he was all in all. There was not, could never be, another.

Did I, too, love him?

Well, there have been others in *my* life. If I loved then, I have loved again.

As the greatest commentary of all on the futility of what had been his life, there were those few words of Dr. Latson which were the last he wrote.

I Did My Best

Neither to me, to Alta Marhevka, nor to any other woman who had contributed to the joys of his aesthetic, polygamous life, were those words penned. Instead:

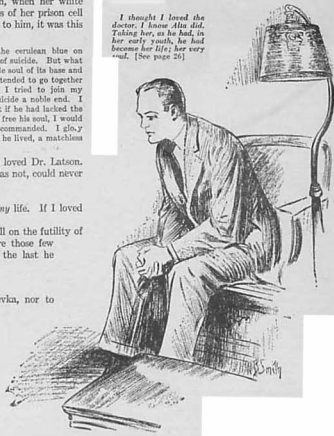
"Mamma—
I did my best."

In some respects a great soul—an idealist; in others mis-

guided through the indulgence of his own sex-impulses—
—Dr. W. R. C. Latson.

He who sought to trench control to others—who could not himself control. He was the man whose life and death are proof of some of the contentions I make. His misguided life and his tragic death point the moral and are two of the great reasons for this story I tell you. For it was first through him that I learned that the sweetest fruits and most lasting joys of true love cannot be forced through the unbridled license of a love cult.

I thought I loved the doctor. I know Alta did. Taking her, as he had, in her early youth, he had become her life; her very soul. [See page 26]



I HAVE been emphatic in my contention that there is but one excuse for the physical relations of sex—that that is Love.

I am wondering if I may not qualify that, and still be within the standards I have set for myself as those of true morality.

May it not be that, given love on the part of one of the contracting persons, respect and admiration on the part of the other, and a sufficiently *unselfish* motive for the existence of intimate relationship, the resultant intimacy can be pure? And *right*?

Far more so than the thousands of daily intimacies between husband and wife who avowedly do not love each other, are not true? And in many cases make no secret of the fact that the tie that binds was entered into as a matter of expediency or self interest or some other equally wrong motive?

Truth Prevails

I say motive advisedly, but of course I mean soul motive. That is the only one that would ever have any meaning if Truth *alone* prevailed.

I am going to tell you of a different episode in my life. I believe it illustrates this argument I am trying to make. In this instance, in my own mind and soul—which are all that count—I was right.

Will you think so?

Will I be able to make it clear to you?

Will you not, after hearing me, search your own soul for the answer and, discarding all the fotsam of convention that so clutters up issues, tell me: "Yes, you were right?"

Can you do otherwise?

I can not think so.

Wildier, Weirder Orgies

I had thought, after my experiences in the "Bee Harem" that I had learned all that was to be learned of life's eroticism. I had, I believed, about reached the saturation point. Ah, had I known! As mad as had been those experiences, they were but mild episodes in what was yet to come.

For, when I later delved into the mysteries of other cults as I had promised myself I would do, I was to come to know of madder, wildier, weirder orgies existing under the guise of the worship of love than even my own hectic, cubistic imagination could embrace.

Those experiences, though, were in the future. Of them I shall tell you—tell you of things you may well hark to with bated breath and a hushed whisper of: "Can such things be?"

New Experiences

They can be. They are. They exist. I, who have seen them, have taken part in the most fantastic rituals, will tell you of them; tell you of things I believe but few who have ever known of them have dared whisper to an unbelieving world.

I shall tell you of Devil-Worshippers and black magic; of paganism and the horrifying practices of those who follow, in secret, the grinning god Pan; of astounding secret rites and fantastic religions; of the weird orgies and brain-twisted habits of the apostles in colonies of "free love." When I have concluded, their secrets shall all be yours. I am under no bond of secrecy, and I do not fear threat or menace from any one of them.

In the meantime I shall tell you another kind of story. It is the tale of that interlude in my life before I came to know of weird rites or the existence of teeth-bared bathers in blood in the name of worship. It is a story not so fantastic. But it is one far more human.

It is a tale of everyday happenings in my own life, the same that may have come to you. May it not be that this recounting, this analysis of my own reactions, will help you to solve some such problem of your own?

I have that hope.

A Reaction

For a long time after I had broken away from the feverish life of the "Bee Harem," it seemed to me

there was nothing on earth I wanted quite so much as the quiet humdrum life of my home. I wanted to be where nothing was happening; where nothing was likely to happen.

Everyday duties took on a new interest. Their prosiness was restful; peaceful.

There was no indication on the part of my husband that he ever intended to treat me as a wife should be treated, but I was willing to forego even that. At any rate, I was willing to forego it for the time being. Home and all that went with it seemed so sort of—well, clean—after all I had seen and experienced at the Riverside Drive place.

Ready to Settle Down

Of course this was only the result of a reaction that was to be expected, but at the time that never occurred to me. I only knew I was quite ready to settle down quietly to the daily routine of wifely and motherly duties, and let who would revel in velvet and marble splendors and heady Hindu music.

How long, under ordinary conditions, this state of mind would have lasted I am not prepared to say. I know myself, you see, and I know that there must have been, even then, deep down in my subconscious

MAY it not be that, given love on the part of one of the contracting persons, respect and admiration on the part of the other, and a sufficiently *unselfish* motive for the existence of intimate relationship, the resultant intimacy can be pure? And *right*?

the realization that some day I would again feel the urge for questing. It was not left to me, though. Fate had ordained that I was not to be one to whom the joys of quiet home making should be given for restful interlude.

My Husband Unbearable

Daily my husband grew more cruel and abnormal. It was not that he resented any of my experiences with Dr. Latson. In fact, there was little he could really know, or even guess.

He could only have known anything at all from Alta Marhevka, and her loyalty to the doctor was of that high order that she would have been drawn and quartered before she would have revealed any of his secrets—even in a fit of pique.

The actions to which I refer were merely the true self of that husband of mine. They were "the nature of the brute." He was essentially abnormal, sexless. At least he was as far as I, his wife, was concerned.

He took out his meanness in bitter little cruelties which made life with him an unbearable ache. His was always a mental, rather than a physical cruelty, and, as is always true in such instances, it was all the more difficult to bear. Little pin-pricks of irony; little stabs intended to impress on one a sense of inferiority. What can equal those for mental anguish?

No Love Life

We went along, some sort of way. He was not at home a great deal, which made it, in a way, a little easier. He had his own love affairs, such as they were. I cannot but feel a sort of pity for the objects of those affections of his, knowing as I do, his great deficiencies. That he did have love affairs, though, was no secret to me. He made no attempt to hide them.

At that time he had but one interest near home. He had become friendly with a man who had sublet the apartment of a neighbor of ours. That friendship grew into a real palship. I was glad. If I thought of it at all, I had never known my husband to have many men friends. Perhaps too many saw beneath the enameled surface of him, or instinctively felt those petty qualities he believed so well hidden.

Another Man

The time came when the man in question must move out of his sublet apartment. That did not suit my husband. He had known too few men who thought him all right and fine.

If he had wanted this particular man to go on thinking so, however, I will state right here that he took the most possible method of doing so. For nothing would do him but that the man should come to live with us, share our apartment, be a member of our family.

I was opposed to the plan, as I had never met my husband's friend. As always, though, he had his way. The friend came to live with us and—what was probably in my husband's mind more than anything else all the time—to share our expense.

I was attracted to him from the start. Do not misunderstand me. That attraction was what I would have felt for any man so handsome, gentle, kind and good as he.

I could not understand the violent friendship between him and my husband. In every way he was all my husband was not.

No Sex Attraction

I could understand the attraction on my husband's part, though, for, as I have said, I, too, was drawn to him. It was an attraction of the mind only, though—one of admiration for his excellent qualities.

Certainly he possessed no sex attraction for me. I could look him steadily in the eyes as I could any good, true friend, and there was no slightest thrill that has always warned me of the upward surge of sex instinct.

I was not well at the time—more reaction, possibly—and went out little in the evenings. The new member of our household was a homekeeping body and it followed as a matter of course that we should become rather more than friendly, spending our evenings together as we did, acquiring the same interests, discussing together the same little problems of daily life.

It did not take much of this enforced intimacy for his deep admiration for my husband to begin to wane. Only too well he could see how badly I was treated. It would have taken a man blind, deaf and a little more than half paralyzed not to have sensed the real conditions in our cross-purpose home.

I Become Ill

Matters did not reach anything that might be considered a climax, however, until I was taken quite ill one night. I was in agony. I could not stifle the groans that just would come.

I might have groaned to have aroused the neighborhood so far as my husband was concerned. Not the slightest attention did he pay to me. Not once would he exert himself, even to ask if a doctor were needed.

Little did he care!

I tried to choke back my groans of pain.

He lay and—snored! And snored. And snored.

He Decides to Help

How long it was before the new member of our family decided it was time for him to take a hand I do not know. Perhaps at first he thought it was no business of his. But I have told you he was gentle and kindly and good.

At last he came into my room to see what he could do. I disliked to bother him, but never in my life was I so grateful as then for much-needed, soothing, tender ministrations.

All night, or at least until much of my pain had subsided, he tended me, performing the most homely offices, eagerly, sympathetically. When at last he saw that, exhausted, I was ready to drop off into a drowse, he tucked me in and left me.

And my husband—snored! And snored. And snored.

Doctor Advises Sanitarium

I was so ill that, when the doctor did arrive the next day, he told my husband it was most necessary for me to be sent to a sanitarium. He was emphatic about it.

He had scarcely gone through the door when I glanced up to see my husband towering over my sick bed, his face glowing.

"Where does that fellow think the money is coming from for any such pampering, I'd like to know?" he growled. "Well, you can just make up your mind to this, my lady. There'll be no fancy sanitariums for you—not with *my* money!"

He started to stalk away, but was stopped at the door by his friend. I could see from the expression of the man's face that it would have been truer to have said, "former friend."

Cannot Understand

Being the character he was, this man could not understand my husband's attitude. He was hesitant, rather apologetic for having anything to say, but explained that as he could not avoid having overheard the entire matter, he felt he must put in a word of protest. It was my husband's duty, he urged, to do as the

LOVE has always been too serious a matter with me for me to trifle with it as so many do, dipping lightly here and there into forbidden delights, flitting from this light-o'-love to that, all in the day's doings and the course of life.

Wherein lies the hypocrisy? When I have loved, I have loved freely, openly. I have not been ashamed. I have been no dilettante.

doctor advised. My husband sneered. "All right," he said, with that old, familiar, insinuating drawl of his, "if you are so interested, if you think she ought to lay up in luxury for a while, why don't you pay for it yourself?"

"I will!" There was not the slightest hesitation in *that* answer. My friend—my husband's no longer—meant what he said.

To me, lying there, it sounded fantastic. Surely my husband, in his wildest flights, could not mean anything of the sort.

Friend Pays

But he did. And when I was sent to the place which was my only hope of regaining my health, it was not my husband who footed the bills. It was the friend who had come into our home at his invitation.

That was but the beginning. Because of my vitality and unusual recuperative powers, I was not long compelled to remain in the sanitarium. When I did come home, it was with express orders from the sanitarium head that I should not, for some time to come, take up household duties.

More grumbling.

"What good is she, I'd like to know?" my husband whined. "Can't cook; can't attend to the children—can't—"

"But you *can* give her a chance, can't you?" expostulated his quondam friend, more and more surprised and disgusted at the heartless attitude.

Afraid

"A chance? For what? Next thing she'll be wanting to take a trip somewhere or something like that. Say!" He turned to my new-found friend with a leer. "There's an idea! Why don't you take her on a trip? I can do without her."

Surely, surely he could not mean *that*! Again he *did*. And I, miserable unhappy I, sick and forlorn, had reached the stage where I would have gone away with anyone just to get away from the man who taunted me and added to my misery.

I was in terror of my husband. Afraid! Afraid! I wanted to go away.

If that kindly man had not so readily acquiesced to the suggestion, I think I should have gone on my knees and begged him to take me away—anywhere—just away! It was joy to go with him. For remember, he was the *only* man who, with no sex idea at all, with no suggestion of love between us, had ever shown me true consideration, sympathy and understanding.

He Loves Me

We went on our trip. We found a quiet seashore place and a nice little

hotel. There we remained for some time, but always our conduct was above reproach. Not because my husband would have cared what happened, but because of my benefactor's consideration for me, we had separate rooms at the hotel. We made no pretense at being man and wife.

This constant companionship and intimate daily life, coupled with the knowledge he had of all through which I had passed and which had aroused his sympathy (and there is nothing to urge love like sympathy), had its effect.

He did not speak to me while we were away, but when we came back to New York he told me what was in his heart.

He loved me. Wanted me. It was a great love, he said—the love of his life.

I Cannot Return His Love

How I wished that I might return it! How gladly I would have done so if I could!

Because of the very goodness of him, I disliked to offer him a counterfeit of what he craved, but—I wonder if it is really all counterfeit—that semblance of the real passion one sometimes perforce must offer when there is a great desire to bestow the real thing, but one cannot.

I do not think he ever knew what I gave him was not real. I so much wanted it to be. I would have given my soul to have felt for him one single thrill that had

passed over me in such prodigious waves in the house on the Drive, or when I was in the arms of my dentist.

I cared for him, too. Cared in a way different from that in which I have ever cared for any man. He was so true, so noble. I felt so secure, so peacefully serene in his presence.

I Love Him

When we returned to New York, I found I could be happy only when I was near him. This, too, mind you, without any suggestion of sex.

I was not in love with him. I *loved* him.

Strange anomaly. You may figure it out for yourself. I have so often tried to do so—unsuccessfully.

He gave me the courage to do what I should have done long before. I told my husband I was through with him. I had stood his cruelties for the last time. No more! I wanted a divorce. *Would* have it!

Divorced

My legally wedded mate was as complacent about that as he had been about everything else that could be made easy for him. He was willing—quite. Provided my benefactor, his one-time friend, would pay all expenses. And this, mind you, without any reason for his doing so.

On the day I first held those divorce papers in my hand, I think I breathed the first deep breath of satisfaction I had known since that time I had first seen my husband standing nude in our Long Island home.

Free At Last

Free! Free! And free I would remain. Not even the arguments of the man who had paid for my divorce, who, as soon as I had obtained it, eagerly urged me to marry him, could move me to exchange that blissful state of freedom for more marriage ties. The wounds of my recent and only experience in matrimony were too fresh and too raw. No, I would not be married again.

What, then, to do? I was trained for no business, had never done anything but make a home for my husband and children.

My benefactor solved the problem. He put the matter up to me calmly. He believed he was doing right, for never did he have any idea I did not love him as deeply as I have cause to know he loved me. Would I be to him what he wished, then, without the marriage ceremony?

Free Love?

I considered. A long time I gave the matter careful thought. Had there been only myself to consider, I should not have hesitated. The answer would have been an emphatic, "No!"

I believed then, as now, that true love, physical love, is the only excuse for a sex union—unless—and here is the "unless." It is the motive of which I spoke in the beginning of the relation of this episode as being an unselfish one.

There were my children. This man who loved me

could give them a comfortable home. He could give them education, all that they never would have had from their own father.

What Shall I Do?

You may say, then, that I should have married him. I answer you that to have done so would, I believed, and believe, have prostituted me far more than an acceptance of his attentions without benefit of clergy. The marriage bond presupposes too much. I had to be honest with myself, at least.

My children needed good surroundings, environment and care. He could give it to them. He had come to love them; came to love them as his own in the years that followed. They or no one need know from whence came the bounty that provided for them.

I, alone, with my hatred of conventions, would never have cared who knew. For them I was compelled to think.

I ask you now to believe that it was because I could not be a hypocrite and accept the worldly protection of a wedding ring when all my heart did not go with it, that I did not marry the man who was my lover during the years my children were growing up; the man who to them was as a father.

My Children

I do not regret one minute of the years I gave to him in this, what some would call, illicit relation. To me he was one of the finest men who ever came into my life.

He thought I loved him. Yes. In a way, I did. But not in the way I knew true love *could* function.

I made him believe I loved him? Well, why not? I respected him, admired him. And there were my children.

Does it not say something for me that I deliberately broke up the relationship when my children had grown up and could fend for themselves? Is it not a bit to my credit that I refused, for myself alone, to further accept his bounty—something I might have gone on doing to the end of my life, just as I might have married him at any time?

Conventions

It is a problem, but I have felt that I have solved it. I have, to my own satisfaction, at least.

He, too, is happy now, for he is married, as he always wished to be. He would wed no other, though, while he thought there remained the slightest chance I might change my mind and become his wife in fact as he believed me to be in spirit.

In this episode of my life which I have just concluded, I can say, as truly as I have in other cases, that I did nothing of which I am ashamed. I broke the laws of convention. But—I can look convention in the face—and laugh!

Love a Hypocrisy

Love has always been too serious a matter with me for me to trifle with it as so many do, dipping lightly here and there into forbidden delights, flitting from

this light-o'-love to that, all in the day's doings and the course of life. I have seen much of that among married women whose lives were considered conventionally above reproach.

Wherein lies the hypocrisy? When I have loved, I have loved, freely, openly. I have not been ashamed. I have been no dilettante.

It was after my children had grown up and I was once more in the world alone, free to do as I chose, that I made the astonishing discovery that I was not old. Not in the least. The fires of youth burned as fiercely within me as they had before I had held a babe in my arms.

Could I Love Again?

I thrilled at the thought of it. If Adventure should come again! I should not, of course, go in search of it, save in the course of the love cult investigations I was determined to make some day.

But what if *Love* came again! To me!

Somehow I felt confident it would. I was prepared for it; ready as any young girl waiting for her mythical Prince Charming. Who or what my Love would be I did not know. I only knew that instinct told me I would once more experience the thrills that had always made life worth the living. Perhaps many times.

As has ever been the case in my life, my instinct was true.



For, when I later delved into the mysteries of other cults as I had promised myself I would do, I was to come to know of madder, wilder, weirder orgies.

He quit his work at once as I entered and came over to me. Said he:
"So my little student has come to me."
[See page 35]



CHAPTER VI

I AM going to tell you of a still different kind of love affair from any of those which preceded it. In many ways it was the greatest of my life. Perhaps it was most worth while because I was more mature; because suffering and disillusion had prepared me for a keener enjoyment of all love's delights, the brimming cup of which had more than once been held to my lips for a long, sweet draught; the bitter dregs, too, forced down my unwilling throat.

At the home of a mutual friend I met HIM.

From the moment my eyes rested on him, I was convinced he was one of the most interesting people I had ever seen. I was sure acquaintance would not fail to prove him quite the interesting personality his physical attributes promised.

Like a Statue

It was much they promised, too. I saw him first as he sat, still and quiet as a statue, beneath a soft light which outlined his profile, his chiseled features like those of a god. But withal, it was the spirituality of his countenance which most deeply impressed.

So drawn was I by that first glance at him that my breath came sharply with that well known warning of what was coming.

Quiet and reserve were his distinguishing characteristics, and a poise and dignity that emphasized his tremendous magnetism. It seemed to me, too, that his face was made still more spiritual by marks of suffering I believed I could discern. There was a kindliness, too, that softened his expression.

I Must Know Him

The query leaped to my mind. Of what did he make me think? Was this man sage, or boy? Or both?

It took me just five seconds of considering to know that there was a man I wanted to know. *Must know.* For me he held a tremendous attraction, one that I had felt for no one in years. It was an urge that was not to be denied. I felt, recognized, my impulses at work. I should not hesitate.

To know him, though, was not as easy as to decide to. That reserve and quiet his face depicted were not idle promise. Topic after topic I tried after I had been introduced to him, but with scant result. There seemed nothing in which he was particularly interested. His attitude toward almost everything was not anything so rude as bored. It was more of a lassitude, a don't-care-ness.

His Eyes Tell

But I must know him. I must! I had felt the urge. There must be some ground on which I, with my own wide experience, could meet him; something I could find in which he would take an interest. That he was capable of interest I knew well. I could tell by his eyes.

His face never lost its immobility, but his eyes! Ah, his eyes! Restless, eager, searching eyes. Eyes never still. Eyes roving, moving; eyes that forever seemed seeking what they could not find. Surely there was, behind eyes like that, interest in something and to spare.

It was not until our conversation at last drifted toward psychic subjects that I got any response from the man I so madly wanted to know. Casually I mentioned several experiences of my own which had been mystifying, and expressed my belief in the existence of powers, in knowledge of which the world is so far only beginning to lift a corner of the veil.

I saw his face light up. His body straightened. His lassitude dropped from him. I had found the subject near his heart.

I Interest Him

Words began to flow. I listened spellbound. I did not care to speak. I only wanted to hear. Here was a chance for more knowledge, and I was a seeker.

To this day, after all our intimacy, I do not know that man's real name. Nor does anyone else, so far as I know, save himself. But in the world of mystics and clairvoyance there is none better known than the man called Alein De Lysle, the name he had taken from a sixteenth century alchemist.

It was this man, clairvoyant, sensitive, a man of quite enough supernatural powers to have become a real force in the world of psychological researchers had he been content with his real powers alone and not turned to chicanery when money tempted him who was to become my lover. He became the lover who meant more to me than all those who had come before.

Still Honest

When I first met him, he had not as yet prostituted his gifts. He would have gone far in the scientific world had he never done so. Even as it was, though, I can say this for my clairvoyant lover. In his long career he did far more good than harm, even when it was only his own self on whom he depended, asking nothing from mystic powers which do not come to aid those who misuse a God-given gift.

When first I knew him, occultism, all that was mystic,

clairvoyance, were his life. His eager discussions fascinated me. I wanted to know more from him.

Gradually I drew from him that he had traveled all over the world in his search for knowledge, and had given his clairvoyant readings to many celebrities. One thing was certain. Even had he never possessed any occult gift whatever, his knowledge of human nature was deep and profound.

Not the Usual

For what was worthy in all psychic phenomena he professed great admiration and interest. For the usual medium he had nothing but the greatest contempt.

In that, of course, I agreed with him. For, with Conan Doyle, I believe that if there is one kind of contemptible criminal on earth worse than another, one who deserves no mercy, it is the medium who deliberately "fakes"; who preys on the most sacred feelings that God has given to humanity.

And I, who have dabbled in such fakery, have lent myself deliberately to it, say this. For this one thing I can beg for forgiveness as the only thing I have done in my life of which I am ashamed. But all that, of course, was long before I knew much of what I know today.

TO this day, after all know that man's real name. Nor does anyone else, so far as I know, save himself. But in the world of mystics and clairvoyance there is none better known than the man called Alein De Lysle, the name he had taken from a sixteenth century alchemist.

Science has gone a long way. The law helps. Gradually, I believe, the "fake" medium will be driven out of existence.

My Man

Before I left the home in which I had met my remarkable man, it was mentioned to me that he had especially honored me. It was seldom, they said, that he was ever known to talk to any one, even though many desired and hoped he would.

I was all the more elated because he had promised me he would tell me more, if I so desired—much more of the mystic lore he had acquired during his travels.

"Come to my studio tomorrow," he suggested, and I consented.

Impatient

It had been a long time since I had so impatiently waited for the time to pass—when I might once more see this man who had tremendously attracted me. You may be sure I was prompt in my appointment.

It was an interesting place, that studio of my clairvoyant friend. It eloquently expressed the personality of the man who, though neither of us had guessed it, was so soon to be my lover.

Why is it, I wonder, that the Oriental has always dogged my footsteps? Always, whenever I have entered into an affair that has held particular verve, there has been a flavor of the East somewhere in the offing. That was so now.

De Lysle's Studio

De Lysle's studio was rich with Oriental rugs and hangings. A seductive incense hung heavily in the air. There were mystic pictures, too, pictures that were beyond my ken, and ornaments that breathed the artistry of the mysterious land of the Hindu and Brahmin.

I particularly noticed the lighting which was most artistic, the result of a cunningly arranged system which made lights here, dim shadows there. They brought the center of the room close as a focal point, and the corners faded away into midnight shades.

A line of Kipling flashed across my mind. It had nothing whatever to do with the studio, but it did so well express the atmosphere. If ever I was in a place where "the silence hung that 'eavy I was 'arf afraid to speak," it was there.

His Private Study

He did not keep me waiting long, and I was glad that he did not come to me in the awe-inspiring chamber. Instead, a turbaned servant silently indicated I

should follow him, and I was taken into De Lysle's private study.

He sat in front of a black-velvet-draped table, clad in a richly embroidered robe of gorgeous hues. As I entered, he was bending over a huge chart upon which were drawn the signs of the Zodiac. Engaged, no doubt, it occurred to me, in drawing up the horoscope of some client. For he had told me that, among other things, he was a deep student of astrology.

Eastern Courtesies

He quit his work at once as I entered and came over to me. With the most courtly of deep Eastern obeisances he bowed over my hand, and in his deep, thrilling voice said:

"So my little student has come to me."

He smiled as he spoke, a smile that spoke volumes. I remembered then that it was the first time I had seen his smile. Not once during the previous evening had his face lighted up so. I was to come to know, though, that smiles with him were rare and infrequent, and that I was especially honored that he had favored me with one.

He led me toward a chair, saying: "Well, now that you're here, we'll see what we can do for you."

I Hear Silence

I sank into the deep, comfortable chair he had drawn up for me. He sat opposite. I did not fail to notice that he had not neglected his lighting in this room, either, for most of the light fell on me where I sat. He was partially obscured by shadows.

He took my hand. For a few minutes he held it, and I again heard the silence, as his eyes closed and he seemed to drift away from me.

He began to speak. His words came slowly, forcibly, but each one accented itself on my brain and heart. I was astounded. I had not believed it possible, but every word he told me was true.

How was it possible he should know me so well? What was there in this mysticism of his?

He Knows Me

For, as I sat there, awe-struck, listening, that man gave me the most remarkable character reading of myself to which I had ever listened. That settled the matter in my mind. If there had been a doubt before, there was none now. The man who *knew* me, understood me, was the man for whom my soul had been seeking. I knew I had found him; knew, too, that it was only a matter of time until

I SAW his arms flung out to me. Half choking, I felt myself stumble toward him, felt him draw me to him in a wild embrace of discovery. Hot tears blinded my eyes as his kisses of passion rained on my face.

I heard, as from a distance, his eagerly repeated whispers: "Mine! Mine! At last! At last! You shall never leave me!"

I should find in him fulfillment.

How short a time that was to be I did not guess. Once Fate has made her decision, she does not wait,

though. The heights were reached by De Lysle and me with a suddenness that was deliciously cataclysmic.

One moment I stood with outstretched hand, ready to leave him, though painfully reluctant. The next . . .

For one long, understanding minute, eyes looked into eyes, probing, questioning—wistfully longing, too. The next . . .

Mine At Last!

I saw his arms flung out to me. Half choking, I felt myself stumble toward him, felt him draw me to him in a wild embrace of discovery. Hot tears blinded my eyes as his kisses of passion rained on my face, drank the tears that damped my fevered cheeks. I would have swooned had he not upheld me. I heard, as from a distance, his eagerly repeated whispers: "Mine! Mine! At last! At last! You shall never leave me!"

I felt myself half lifted, half carried—where, I did not care. I, too, had but one thought. At last I had found him! At last! At last!

We had not hesitated when the call came. We had answered that most mystic, most, wonderful of all summons—the call of flesh to flesh, the demand of Sex.

I Belonged

When the dawn, forcing its way through Oriental draperies, awoke me, I felt no wonder that I was not at home in my own cretonned room. The Oriental perfume I breathed did not seem strange. It belonged. Even as I belonged to the man who still slumbered beside me. I felt no sense of wrong-doing. I felt only exaltation. I was right; not wrong. I had found a true mate.

In the light of this confession, you may think that what I may have to say about De Lysle is biased. Not so. As cold-bloodedly as I have set myself to analyze for you my own acts, emotions, reactions, I analyze him. He was such a thorough exemplification of that saying—just how does it go?—about "something good in the worst of us; something bad in the best of us?"

Not a Faker

There are many reasons that give me the right to make the assertion that Alain De Lysle was far from being all fake. In the beginning of his career, I believe, he was honest. It was just that, later, his cupidity was too much for him; the promises held out by a questionable fame too alluring.

But, whatever he may have done later, I know that he *did* possess some mystic powers. That character reading which prefaced my giving myself to him was enough for me to know that.

What a pity he should not have devoted himself to science! To which you may answer, when I have told you of all I did during the time he was my lover: "And what a pity you went along with him in his perfidy."

Body and Soul

Perhaps you're right. Perhaps. Once more I have only the excuse of a love so compelling it would do anything, anything, that was demanded of it by the beloved. That is what it is to love with body and soul! To give all!

So much he told me was true. There was this, in which he was right. He told me my neglected education had been balanced by a knowledge given me through psychic forces. A thousand times has this been proven to me. I know it, and because of it, I know of the protection those forces can, have, and do give me. They have aided me too, in having no fear.

A Universal Mother

One other thing he told me, the truth of which I believe I am even now proving. May it not be that this very document of confession and advice which, because of experience, I am given the right to proffer, is proof of one statement of Alain De Lysle's?

I am, he said, a "Universal Mother."

Am I?

Is that what I am doing now?

"Mothering" humanity? Trying to guide to happiness all you who may read what I have to say? Trying to help you escape the pitfall I have, through travail, investigated for you?

To Tell All

It may be. I know this: That I have felt such compulsion to offer, at whatever sacrifice, such crumbs of knowledge I have gathered in these years that no thought of condemnation can have the slightest effect on my determination to tell all!

With other experiences as criterions, this love affair with De Lysle was something quite new to me. As great as was his physical attractiveness to me, sometimes sex seemed to be overpowered by the spiritual. I exulted in the intimacy that grew closer day by day.

Love Born Anew

Once again I was desperately, violently, passionately, in love. I seemed to have been born anew. Each day was a new birth.

I could not do without him. The times I was away from him were lost moments in my short life span. He became my life, in more ways than I had imagined possible.

The day he told me he was leaving New York I thought my heart would break. This, I told myself, is the end. How can I ever bear it! How can I let him go! For, in spite of all the love I had for De Lysle, there was my pride to consider—a matured pride. I could not, *would* not ask him to take me with him.

To Leave New York

Imagine my joy, then, when it was he who made the suggestion. I might have spared myself some miserable moments, for he had never given thought to leaving

New York for fresh activities in the Middle West and leaving me behind.

Even the thought of a short while away from him was almost too much for me. But oh, sweet, how sweet!—to hear him whisper, while he held me close:

"It will only be for the shortest time possible, dear heart. I know we cannot live without each other. We are necessary to each other's completion. Just as soon as I can find out how I stand, and can make arrangements for you, I will send for you. You will come?"

Could I Wait

Would I? Would I be able to wait?

What long, long, eternally long days they were after he left me. Disconsolate, I wandered here and there, but could find no peace. Nowhere could I find any interest. Would the time never pass?

And, horrors! I clutched my breast to still the wild beating of my heart at the thought! Suppose, just suppose, he should change his mind? Suppose he should find he did not want me? I could not believe that.

I can't say exactly how it happened. I don't know how it did. My first realization that things were different came when my keen eyes discovered the fact that she was looking at my lover too long and too often. All her passionately confessed interest in her married innamorato seemed to be on the wane. [See page 43]



LONG as the time seemed, though, in reality a fortnight had not passed when I received his eagerly-longed-for letter telling me he was ready for me. My hands trembled so I could hardly get my packing done. Someway I managed it though. And the first train, after I had received his letter, found me on my way to Ohio and to HIM!

I knew little of his financial status, and cared less, but when I arrived in the Ohio town where he had set himself up in the clairvoyant business, I discovered I was not to be treated in any small way. He intended that I should have everything of the best. The first night after my arrival we spent in a luxurious suite in the best hotel the place afforded, which is saying no little when one considers the up and coming towns of the Middle West of today.

A Home of My Own

The next day we went home hunting. I was eager, joyous, as excited as a bride. A home of my own! And with the man of my heart!

I went along, my eyes on him, adoring, worshipping. I saw him instead of the town which, under ordinary circumstances would have excited my curiosity, since it was to be my home. What town, where, it did not matter. Just so long as I was with him.

In spite of this home hunting in a dream, we found the most ideal sort of place in which to live. It was a bungalow, rather far out from the town proper, and half hidden in trees and perfume-bearing shrubs. Vines lovingly smothered the walls. Climbing roses clambered up trellises and peeped, with the unblushing curiosity of roses, into the diamond-paned casement windows.

A Love Garden

There was a tiny flower garden, too, musky with the fragrance of old-fashioned posies, and I exclaimed with delight. I have always worshipped flowers. I think, too, that those blossoms had much to do with my lover's final decision on the place, for he, too, was passionately fond of flowers.

Often was I to have a vision of him, as I now have in memory, wandering among the roses in the dusk, his head bent in silent contemplation. Or, at dawn, bending over some perfumed new bud, its head heavy with the morning dew.

What were his thoughts? Could they have been other than beautiful?

Hardships

Because of the very nature of our business, there were difficulties and hardships to endure. The hardships, however, were never of a financial nature. I early learned that if a clairvoyant cares to, that it is possible for him to get money more easily and quickly than one in any other profession. This, of course, applies only to those whose minds run to cupidity, who do not hesitate to "fake."

I am not speaking, at any time, of the truly supernaturally gifted who do exist, and who are giving their

lives in a sincere effort to aid humanity, in many cases being barely able to live and carry on their work. They are those whom scientists, interested in furthering a knowledge that will have a greater bearing on the world's store than all that has gone before, are now trying to aid. The sincere ones. They deserve it. Of those who are not using their powers for material gain I shall not, in this confession of mine, speak further. Except to say that theirs is one of the greatest missions of all times. I honor them.

He Loves Money

In so many ways Alain De Lyale was sincere. But he loved money. He loved the luxury it would purchase. He longed for life to run along smoothly, easily, though none knew better than he, who had delved into its mysteries, how fleeting it is at best.

While he lived, though, he wanted the best the material world could offer. What is more, I think, he wanted to give all those things to me.

He did. There was nothing on earth a woman's heart could desire in a material way that I did not have. Clothes, jewels, servants, my own car—I had them all.

Happy!

How happy I was! Happier than I had ever been in my life. For, not only was I smothered in luxury, but for the first time in my life, I was living in daily intimacy with a man who thoroughly understood me. Instinctively he knew how to treat me.

No more starvation for me! I had all that heart and body could desire. I blossomed like one of the voluptuously beautiful roses in our own garden.

It was not long before I begged to be allowed to become his assistant. There was much I could do, I pleaded. He had taught me much. Surely there was some way in which I could aid him. At first I had thought that I might, in some humble capacity, aid in his real occult work.

I Aid Him

He considered the matter. At last he consented to my suggestion. But it did come as a surprise to me to learn then that all his activities were not confined to legitimate clairvoyance and its attendant studies of which I knew him to be a master. Already he had branched out, with a sort of harmless charlatanny on the side. Which was, nevertheless, most lucrative.

It was in this that I could aid him. I did. If it had been far worse and he had asked it of me, I do not believe I would have hesitated. But there really seemed so little harm in what I was asked, as his assistant, to do; so little harm in what he did himself.

Not His Fault

The people who were his clients were so much more to blame than he. Of that I became more and more assured each day. I came to see and know a lot of various kinds of human nature during the time I worked with De Lyale, and I must say that my opinion of it

as a whole was not greatly raised. I was not edified by my knowledge of one slant of the human mind.

If people really knew what temptations are thrown in the paths of clairvoyants, even those who are utterly sincere, I wonder if there would be so much blame for the man or woman who "takes advantage" of the unsuspecting public. In my opinion, the public usually wants to be "taken advantage of," or, if not that, each one certainly wants to take advantage of all the rest of the public through the services of a clairvoyant.

Barnum Was Right

I saw so many instances of that. De Lysle and I used to have a little joke between us. It was just the humming of a bar or two of a popular ditty when some particularly freaky client would appear. I wonder if any of them ever recognized the gay little tune we hummed. It had, for the burden of it: "Barnum was right."

I will recall an instance for you.

A prosperous business man walked into our Ohio home one day and asked to see the professor, as De Lysle was called. He would not tell me anything of what he wanted. I tried to draw him out, for that was my business. It was my duty to talk to clients and, in any way possible—

by an interpolated remark here, a suggestion there, an idle query—gain from them, while they waited, any and all information I could. I was always able, in some way, to pass this on to De Lysle before he saw the client.

I Became Clever

I got rather clever at that. In fact, I gained a reputation that went over the grapevine telegraph with which the clairvoyant and fortune telling profession is provided, for being an exceedingly clever assistant. That reputation once got me into deep waters, and is responsible for me having done that one thing in the world for which I have already professed shame—helped shocking "fakery." But of that more later.

I have told you that from this particular client of De Lysle's I could obtain nothing. His business was exceedingly important, it appeared; more than exceedingly private.

It was seldom, almost never, that De Lysle ever told me one slightest thing of what went on in his consultation room. To him its secrets were inviolable.

What Does He Want

In this case, however, he did. I think, perhaps, it was because he was so nauseated with the man who

had come to him with a terrible proposition that he just *had* to speak out his mind to some one.

What, do you suppose, did that prosperous business man, that conventional pillar of society, want with Professor Alain De Lysle?

You could never guess; never imagine. Not unless you have yourself been a clairvoyant's assistant and know others of the wild, weird things they are requested to do.

The Triangle

There was a wife. There was a girl. The wife was—well, not so young. How could she be when she had gone through all the years she had of helping to make that man prosperous? She was no longer slender, and he—liked them flat.

The girl? She was young. She was slender and lithe and, if she was not exactly of his social world, her conversation was not too ungrammatical. It was conversation full of life, too, as was the girl herself. He was fascinated by the flamboyancy and flippant carelessness she had acquired working with other young folks in a nearby factory.

Really, said the man, something ought to be done about the matter.

A plodding, stodgy wife. A dancing Carmen.

Would Pay Well

Couldn't the professor do something about it? He would pay well. He could. Perhaps the professor knew something of his financial status? He was—he named several big corporations which were outstanding in the community and with which he was connected.

He didn't know much about this occult thing, but—well, he had been told. There were ways and ways, folks said. Wasn't occultism something Eastern, like the Chinese, say, or something like that, ha! ha! The professor would know what he meant.

That writer fellow, Stevenson, wasn't it, had said something about the Chinese; something about "for ways that are dark and tricks that are m-m-m-m"—and so forth. Ha! Ha! That was it—what he wanted. Something in the line of a dark trick, you understand.

Foul Play

To come right down to it, the professor probably knew what he was getting at, what?

Suppose—suppose his wife should get—well—er—hypnotized, or something like that—some trick or other. Suppose she wandered off and a truck ran over her. Nobody would be to blame, would they?

And then—well, the professor knew, of course, that

HOW happy I was! Happier than I had ever been in my life. For, not only was I smothered in luxury, but for the first time in my life, I was living in daily intimacy with a man who thoroughly understood me. Instinctively he knew how to treat me.

he could name his own figure.

I did not hear De Lysle answer him. I did not need to picture and hear it all, though he told me of it himself.

De Lysle Agrees

I can see his piercing, restless eyes boring into that man, can hear his deep voice rumbling out of the semi-darkness after an impressive pause:

"I think you can safely leave it to me sir. I can promise you this: I will do all I can to bring about a right state of affairs in your case according to the 'Higher Wisdom.'"

A Suicide

A few days later the girl was a suicide. Was that coincidence? Or was it, in reality, an example of the "Higher Wisdom" at work—of course in favor of the poor deluded wife? I have often wondered.

When, some time later, that man came back and thanked the professor for having straightened out his affairs, saying he and his wife were once more on the best of terms, there was no single intimation in his manner that he thought for an instant there had been anything criminal in his request that De Lysle lend himself to a woman's murder.

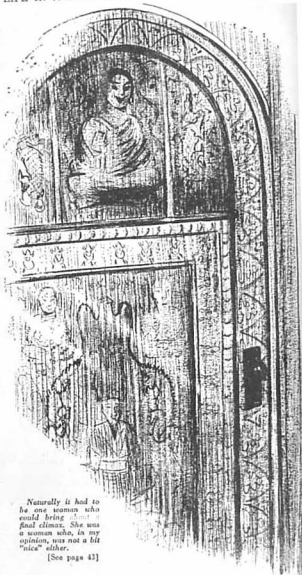
That is only an instance. It is illustrative. One sees so much of the seamy side of human nature in the clairvoyant business.

Many Fakers

De Lysle was no criminal. No one knew that better than I. But it never occurred to that "conventional" man who came for his aid that he would hesitate, for a minute, to use any powers he had for good or evil, indiscriminately. Provided money was forthcoming.

To my knowledge there are now in this country many thousands of self-constituted clairvoyants, mediums, fortune tellers and so-called "psychics" fooling or merely entertaining the public, though in many cases doing things absolutely criminal. This, in spite of all the law can do and the fight put up against them by sincere investigators of psychic phenomena.

I am going to tell you of some of those tricks, tell you of what I learned of their methods when I was one of them, show, in a few exposes, how simple are the methods used in beguiling the public with tricks that are apparently so inexplicable that to the easily duped they seem only possible through supernatural agencies.



Naturally it had to be one woman who could bring about a final climax. She was a woman who, in my opinion, was not a bit "nice" either.

[See page 43]

Beware

Some of them are harmless charlatans. They do little damage. Others are entertaining fools and give you your money's worth.

But there are others! Be warned! For of all the ruthlessly dangerous criminals in all the world there are none worse than those who prey on the public under the cloak of the supernatural.

It has been my lot—my misfortune, you may call it, and rightly, in some cases—to know many of the latter. If anything I can say will aid in their expose,

an expose in which so many earnest men and women with scientific truths at heart are interested, then I shall count it time well spent.

Can't Be Too Careful

Even the most profound investigators of psychic phenomena (and I have been closely associated with many of the foremost) first of all warn their new

Charlatan you may have called him, too, but certainly he was the most harmless sort. I want to repeat, too, that I know of many, many times where he did more good than harm. I know, too, he *did* have some supernatural powers, and the pity of it was that he was not satisfied to go on developing them.

He could have become a great man. Instead, he preferred to become a rich one.



members of the dangers to be encountered from "fakes." One cannot be too careful.

I have in mind one case alone which should serve as a warning to all who would dabble indiscriminately in the supposed lore of the advertising "psychic." My knowledge of that case is painfully personal. You will know that I know whereof I speak.

Life With De Lysle

First, though, I want to go on with the story of my life with De Lysle.

His Physical Attraction

There is no doubt that had he cared to he could have become a far richer man than he did. That was because of his wonderful physical attractiveness, a quality of which I have already had much to say, and of the havoc it wrought in my own heart.

It was but natural that what had happened to me when first I saw the magnetic man who became my lover should inevitably happen to many another impressionable woman.

It happened to many a woman of great wealth, too. I know of more than one case where De Lysle could have had all the woman possessed for the lifting of a finger. Just as I know how often he could have had a thousand women, body and soul, for the asking.

Sex Starved Women

He was in a position where women who came to him were ready to throw themselves at his feet. In most cases, the same women were ready to throw themselves at the feet of most any man of physical attraction, even though the man should have none of the magnetism which covered De Lysle as with a mantle.

From my own deplorable experiences, I realized that that condition of affairs with the vast numbers of women we came to know was the result of the same old trouble. They were sex-starved. Rarely knowing what was really the matter with them, knowing only a restlessness and dissatisfaction that gave no surcease, it was natural that women, mystic and superstitious as they are by nature, should turn to one they believed had occult powers to help them.

Their own diagnoses of their cases were sometimes amusing. They were especially so to De Lysle and me.

Usually Married Women

We knew what was troubling the restless femininity who flocked to our doors with hands full of gold and open check books. *They* did not. But each vaguely believed that, in some manner, her trouble was a matter of the heart.

Usually they were married women. This one no longer loved her husband. What should she do? That one never had loved hers. What should *she* do? This one wanted a love affair. That one wanted to know how to get out of a distasteful one.

Oh, they had all kinds and sorts of problems of the "heart" which, translated, always came down to being affairs of sex.

Couldn't Resist Him

You can see that the emotional stage was all set for them. So they would come to our place with minds troubled, full of turmoil. They would go away with a greater turmoil, but filled with elation.

What each woman wanted was to be in love. It was the professor with whom she fell in love. Without always quite meaning to, I am sure, he cast a spell over women. They could not resist him.

Our place was besieged. A woman in love is never a reasoning being. A woman unreasonably in love is far worse. I have seen women, high and low, rich and poor, cultured and moronic, highly intelligent and abysmally ignorant, alike fall beneath the spell of Alain De Lysle, and I know.

They Hated Me

How they did hate me, those women who never allowed our doorstep to cool!

And what of me?

Ah, I, too, am a woman. You shall hear.

It was not as if I had gone to De Lysle as I had to Dr. Latson, knowing of a frankly polygamous nature. No, I had gone to this man with a frankly monogamous idea in my own heart, and I had no intention of dividing. He was my man.

Never Played Second

I never have, as I have told you, played second. I had no intention of taking a back seat now, of effacing myself as did Alta Marhevka. I would not see any woman revel in affections I considered mine alone.

Jenlousy was the serpent that entered our little Eden. Not all at once, for my confidence in De Lysle, my assuredness that all he wanted was my love, was too great for that. It was a gradual, but deadly, realization that crept over me.

That Look!

It came about first when he refused to tell me all that occurred between him and the women with whom he was closeted in his private room, sometimes for hours. I would see them come out and go away, often with that unmistakable faraway expression of love-exaltation on their faces. Ah, well, I knew that look! Sometimes they would not even see me.

Harder to bear were other meaning smiles of patronage. I knew what those meant, too—only too well. Those smiles of triumph came from women I knew were ready to throw themselves at my loved one's feet, to whom his slightest wish was law, whom he could have taken, body and soul by snapping his fingers.

Had he taken the proffered gifts? Many? Any woman at all?

I Must Know

The questions insidiously rang in my soul and turned the honey of my happiness to gall. I could not stand it. I would not bear the suspense. I must know.

But they were my questions, my demands, if you like, that caused the first rift between my love and me. It grew and grew, as is ever true, until there was a fissure beyond mending.

Ah, the hours I have spent leaning against the doors of his inner sanctum, my heart palpitating pitifully, so loud it seemed its very beating hid what sounds I thought I might catch of what was going on inside! The bitterness of those hours!

Open Charlatantry

I repeat that this state of affairs did not come about all at once. For a long time I lived joyously, lulled in peaceful security and happiness.

It was during that time we carried on our business which grew into an open charlatantry. As I look back on it now, I do not know whether to laugh at or feel sorry for the dupes that could be so foolishly gullible as to be taken in by many of the childish things we offered them.

Life would have been most amusing and entertaining. If a bit unethical, had it not been for that fly in my

The Women!

The women! Oh, the women!

Naturally it had to be one woman who could bring about a final climax. She was a woman who, in my opinion, was not a bit "nice" either.

How could she be when her mind was filled with murder and sudden death? They seemed to be an obsession with her. She didn't like this one. Off with her head! That one interfered with her plans. Shoot him at sunrise!

Such a young girl, too, and languorously beautiful, with sloe eyes that looked out at the world so innocently one would not have believed her capable of hurting a fly. Maybe she didn't want to hurt a fly. But she did want De Lysle to get pretty busy and wipe off the face of the earth a few people she thought cluttered up its surface.

Her Murderous Thoughts

I knew much of her case, for, unlike other conferences, I was often present at those with her. It made me shudder to hear her calmly discuss her latest ideas for extermination.

Her particular *bete noires* were the wife of a man with whom she was in love and her own *fiancee*. I don't know why she had become engaged at all, unless it was for the beautiful diamond that had been given her.

She did not keep that long. It went to De Lysle. Along with a good many of her stocks and bonds, too, that she gave him in the course of her murder discussions.

A Warped Soul

De Lysle never had any more idea of taking her seriously about the matters of which she came to him than I did myself. But De Lysle was never one to put his hands behind his back when one came proffering gold.

I don't think he even liked the girl—at first. He was interested in the peculiarly warped soul she displayed. He rather enjoyed dissecting her mental processes. As did I.

I can't say exactly how it happened. I don't know how it did. My first realization that things were different came when my keen eyes discovered the fact that she was looking at my lover too long and too often. All her passionately confessed interest in her married innamorata seemed to be on the wane.

Wants Personal Interview

I couldn't help wondering just what she had in mind for me behind those long, sleepy eyes of hers. Was she considering boiling me in oil, or was I merely to

be cut up into little pieces and thrown bit by bit to the piggies?

It got to be too serious with me for humor, though. There came a day when I was not invited into the consultation room. Her interview, she said rather freely, was to be a personal one. She would see the professor alone.

My fury did me no good. Nor did it accomplish anything when, later, I tried to have it out with De Lysle. He would tell me nothing of what had gone on; would give me no satisfaction.

Did He Give to Her?

I openly charged him with being fascinated by the potential Borgias. He did not affirm. Neither did he deny. He just looked at me and smiled—slowly.

With a stricken heart I recalled that smile as it had been bestowed on me the day I first became his.

Was he giving it to another?

Did she feel his nearness, breathe the delightful masculine perfume of him, know all those delicious thrills?

Were his arms placed about her as they had been about me so often—so often!—and did his warm lips cling to hers with their ripe red voluptuousness?

My Love Dies

It was all unbearable. Day after day I had to undergo the agony. Day after day they were closeted alone. Human nature could bear no more. There must be a show-down.

To have one with De Lysle was more easily decided upon than accomplished. He would not quarrel. I could not work up one bit of rage in him. Which to my mind was more proof positive that love was tottering than anything else he could have done.

I felt my own love was dead. I know I felt outraged.

Ah, if I had only known how foolish I was! If I had only known, as I did long after, when it was too late for love's resurrection, how he had longed to take me in his arms when I was in one of my tantrums and whisper to me that I was and always would be the only real woman in his life!

I Decide

But he felt I was acting like a petulant child. He thought I should be disciplined. He knew he could infuriate me more by refusing to tell me what I demanded to know of that woman's business with him alone than he could in any other way.

Not one remotest idea had he that I would take the matter seriously. He could not guess I would take a step we both would regret the longest day we lived.

I had decided. I knew what I would do. He would

I NEVER have, as I have told you, played second. I had no intention of taking a back seat now, of effacing myself as did Alta Marhevka. I would not see any woman revel in affections I considered mine alone.

not tell me of his exact relations with his Borgia? He would not tell me what went on between them?

Very well!

The Letter from Kansas City

White with anger, I delved into a pile of letters and found one that had come for me one day. It was a letter over which we had laughed. When he had read it he had been so boyishly pleased by what he considered the honor done me and his coaching.

It was a letter from a clairvoyant in Kansas City, a man whose fame was high among the brotherhood, but of whose real activities we knew nothing. The "psychic" had heard, he wrote, of my cleverness and my ability as an assistant. He was in need of just such a one as I. If there should come a time when I wanted to make a change he would be glad to have me with him. He could assure me that . . .

He ended up with a financial offer for my services that seemed to me fabulous. It was, for one who had never earned a cent on her own account in her life.

To Kansas City

We had laughed over the letter because, well—it had seemed so ridiculous a thought, so impossible that De Lyale and I could ever be apart. Now . . .

That letter gave me a fierce feeling of independence. I could snap my fingers at my lover and at her who, if not already his mistress, most certainly wanted to be.

I did not wait even for a final talk with the man who had been one of the real loves of my life. With no word to him, I left his house. Before he had any idea I was gone, I was on a train, being whirled Kansas-City-ward, away from the man I loved and heading blindly into what I could never have guessed.

For his victims were women. They were innocent, if foolish, women. They were all innocent and gullible.



THAT I was spared as much as I was I know to be due to those forces which have watched over this heedless, passionate me through all my life. For I was headed straight for the den of as despicable a criminal as the country has ever known—toward "Ugolino, the Great," that Adolphe Matthieu Herge-

whether his offer to me still held good or not. I was not in a mood to care. I felt that I could fend for myself somehow if I did not go to work for Ugolino.

He Was Waiting

I simply sent him a telegram that I was coming. He

Such was the infamous "Bed of Roses" on which a hundred women willingly lay their naked bodies with thorns stabbing their tender flesh.



mann, the expose of whose activities as a "mystic" shocked a nation, a man who left in his wake a trail of despair and heart-break.

When I started for Kansas City I did not know

was waiting for me. Ah, if only I had heeded that small voice that once more in my life warned me, "Go back! Go back!" when first I saw him.

Not that he was repulsive. Far from it. He would

not have been the successful criminal he was, would never have been able to gain his ascendancy over duped women had he not been handsome.

But his was a diabolical attractiveness. He was so different from my Alain. From the start he repelled me. With good reason, as I shall tell you.

Blackmail and Thievery

It has ever been to my infinite regret that I did not walk out of that luxurious home of his and to which he took me on my arrival, one minute after I entered it. No wonder I could not sleep. The warnings were pleading with me—warnings that I, still infatuated with De Lysle, secretly longing for him—would not heed.

I had been assistant to Ugolino but a short time when his true calling was revealed to me. All his "mediumship," his "seances," his mind reading and the rest of his flummery were only masks for a criminality of the most horrifying type.

Blackmail, thievery and reduction were his real business.

The Horrible "Bed of Roses"

And here was I hired to assist him! I had to get out of it. I must. I hope it goes without saying that I did, and that right hurriedly. Not, however, before I saw with my own eyes and heard with my own ears things that are almost past belief.

There was, for one thing, his infamous "Bed of Roses," many of the details and descriptions of which were made public when he was finally arrested, tried, convicted and given a most richly deserved life sentence.

I tell these things to accent my warning to women, in particular, of what frightful risks they run by becoming clients of a clairvoyant of whom they know nothing and who is, more likely than not, especially if he is of the advertising order, a criminal of the most appalling sort.

All Yearn for Something

Ugolino was a suave talker. That was the principal power he had over women.

Women are ever yearning, longing; most of them longing for what they do not know. The clever charlatan knows this and this knowledge is his "meat."

I admit that his discourses on Hindu lore and the mysticism of the East did have an allure. It was not hard to see how many women, nervous and neurotic, bored society women, disappointed women with no object in life and with too much money, had come to sit at his feet and learn.

A Taste of Paradise

Having listened, learned, too (as they supposed), all that they could learn from verbal instruction, the next step, of course, was actual experience. What the mystics had known and experienced, they, too, must know and experience.

Ugolino could help them to such knowledge. He told them so. They believed him.

It was possible, he said, for true initiates to have in this prosaic day and generation as astounding experiences as those ever vouchsafed the mystics of the East from whence his own lore and power had come. He was the chosen apostle of all that was deep and mysterious, they were assured. Through his powers he could arrange it so they could float off into infinite space, recalling past incarnations, visioning the future, gaining a taste of Paradise itself.

The Fateful Bed

In his own high-sounding phrases, he was prepared to add his students to "attune themselves to the infinite."

All that was necessary was to submit to his will. All each knowledge-seeker need do was to admit willingness to sleep upon his "Bed of Roses."

How eager some were! And how I shuddered as I saw each victim prepare herself. I knew what was

in store, but did not then dare, for fear of what consequences there might be to myself, to expose the man for whom I was acquiring a horror.

Lie Naked

I saw him prepare his "Bed of Roses." Many times. So, for the matter of that, did the women who were to submit their naked bodies to it—recline on it, and never again be the same.

But they knew nothing of what was behind the scenes, as I did. They knew not what really awaited them.

It took bushels of roses, literally bushels, stems, leaves, thorns and all, for the preparation of the bed on which a woman was to lie and believe that her soul left its body and floated off into the cerulean. The flowers were piled almost a foot deep on a black hardwood couch, a plain, stark bed without upholstery. As though for aesthetic reasons, however, there was a dainty, filmy drapery thrown over its monastic hardness, and around it were drawn curtains of thick, heavy velvet of midnight blackness.

Diabolical Joy

I, who knew the mysteries of that couch, knew there was deep purpose in having that filmy drapery. I

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knew there was cunning in the idea of the fringe-weighted black velvet canopy that could shut out light and air. I had seen that couch in all its diabolical nakedness.

Sometimes I have seen dainty women shiver as they saw the thorns protruding through the green leaves and heavy-odored roses, but their shudders turned to sighs of ecstatic joy as the clairvoyant spoke soothingly to them.

"There will be pain," he said, "yes—a little, of course. For when has one been able to acquire joy without first a little pain? Above all, there must be some pain if there is to follow the holy and disembodied joy that will be yours. You think these few thorns will hurt. Behold! Observe this!"

The Pain Will Pass

Dramatically he would produce a photograph of a Hindu mystic, an expression of unutterable joy on his bearded face, lying on a couch of iron spikes.

"They," he would urge, "they are those truly holy ones who have attained to the highest astral plane. For days on end they lie, not on a bed of roses with a few puny thorns, but on their iron spikes, neither knowing them to exist or feeling them.

"Be not afraid. The pain soon will pass. The joy to come will be unutterable."

Deadly Drugs

With the astral marriage bed all ready, the victim eager, it was the custom of Ugolino to drink with her a glass of wine, a toast to a happy journey into the beyond. But in the glass of the woman who had, only too willingly, paid him from hundreds to a thousand dollars or more for her experience, he always managed to slip a few drops of a dangerous, vision-making, habit-forming drug that would not put her entirely to sleep but which would aid in his further plan to make his word good. With that drug like hashesh doing its drowsy deadly work, it was not likely she would for long feel pain from the thorns piercing her nude body as she lay on the bed of roses.

That, in itself, was criminal enough. What will you think of what is to follow?

Secret of the "Bed"

I told you I knew the secret of that couch. It was this: So cunningly as to defy detection save of the most minute, even if the couch had not been covered, hundreds of tiny holes had been bored into it. Beneath them sprays were attached to a rubber tubing which went through a hole in the floor to the room beneath where it, in turn, was attached to a bellows.

Can you imagine my horror when I learned what really was in those atomizers? For the first of my stay in the house I had thought, of course, that they held only the frankincense, musk and other heavy Oriental odors which permeated the room. I was quite familiar with such aromas. They are part and parcel of every such "clairvoyant's" outfit.

Dreams!

But no! Nothing so innocuous. Ugolino had promised his clients "dreams." He had arranged that there would be no doubt of their having them.

For, besides the perfumes, there was a mixture of ether and chloroform in those sprays which, while it would not stupefy the duped and deped woman lying on the couch, would put her in that dangerous pathological condition brought on by drugs—a condition which is neither sleeping nor waking, but when dreams do come. Fantastic dreams. Of course, it goes without saying that as she floated off into those dreams she no longer felt the thorns.

When she would come out of her stupor, she would be more sure than ever that Ugolino was the greatest man in the material world, a god, a superman who could make dreams come true.

Had a Sex Basis

He was certainly the greatest in one way—the greatest villain unhung.

Such was the infamous "Bed of Roses." Such was the couch on which a hundred women willingly lay their naked bodies with thorns stabbing their tender flesh while they thought they drifted off into the unknown. But they had only had wild dreams while under the influence of a combination of hashesh, chloroform and ether, diabolically disguised with Oriental scent! And also under the influence of a pain ecstasy that Ugolino knew had a sex basis!

Before I escaped from the horror of being assistant to such a man, I learned of still other of his criminal activities. These were finally the cause of his unmasking, and subsequent jail sentence for life.

Gullible Women

He was a blackmailer. Of the worst possible description.

For his victims were women. They were innocent, if foolish, women. They were all innocent and gullible and absolutely of the opinion that the man had occult powers. And they wistfully wanted to know from him the secrets of life that have puzzled poor groping humanity since first it was able to think and want to know.

It was a mean little trick he had. Low.

It was so easy for him to make a woman in the state of mind of those who became his clients fall in love with him. Or imagine she had fallen in love with him, for the time being, at any rate.

Had Hypnotic Powers

He had hypnotic powers. Of that I am sure. He never tried any of his Svengali tricks on me, but I have often wondered if that were not because he knew I knew too much of him and his kind.

Yet—I can't forget the way he looked at me the first night of my arrival in Kansas City. I recall that premonition of mine; that warning. I was on my guard. I knew I had to be. There was that in his eyes that told me that.

It was his hypnotic power he used in his blackmailing trick. Though it was no trick at all for him to put across the first part of it.

The Badger Act

He would manuevre it so that the women he had picked out as victims would, in a half hypnotized, half hysterical state, after a long "conference" with him, throw their arms about his neck in a way that suggested complete abandonment. That was the cue for an assistant in the next room to get busy and take as many snapshots of the amorous scene as possible. The lens of the camera was fitted into a hole in the wall, and, with all the modern equipment of the photographic trade, no flashlight was necessary.

When I was asked to be the "assistant" at this rite, was when I rebelled. It was the beginning of the end for me.

I knew what Ugolino wanted with those photographs. He was blackmailing no less than a dozen women at one time, and they feared him as they would the Dark Angel himself.

Pay-Pay-Pay!

I hate to think of the disillusionment of some of these women when those photographs were first shown them. There were tears, wails, pleadings.

Usually there were wild efforts to grab the tell-tale reproductions of folly and destroy them in rage. Ugolino only smiled at that. He would insinuatingly suggest that the plates remained and that his safe was strong. There was nothing to do but pay—and pay, and pay.

Goes Too Far

He went too far once, though, when he had forced one woman to give up all she had. When all her



That would never do, I knew my little sister could have no idea of the danger in a man like Crowley. But I knew.

[See page 51]

money was gone, her last Jewel, and even the moderately high priced replicas with which she had replaced them were rapidly disappearing, she rebelled.

Things could not be worse than they were, she argued. She had reached the point of despair anyway. She no longer cared what happened.

She told her husband. The arrest and consequent downfall of Ugolino Adolphe Matthieu Hergemann followed.

I WAS not there to see it, though. I had flitted. I was getting along quite nicely, thank you, trying my own fine Italian hand at "mediumship" and with quite good results. I had readily learned the tricks of the trade, and for a while practiced them all, from "materializations" with the aid of French bridal-veiling and luminous paint, juggling tambourines and talking in the dark through trumpets with garden hose attached, myself blindfolded and tied (simple enough

to come back to him. Once or twice I thought I might. On second and better consideration I realized the futility.

Our romance, while it lasted, had been perfect. It had been truly ideal. But it was over. The bloom was off the peach. It could never be the same.

No one knows better than I how deadly can be that pitiful attempt to revive romance, once it is dead.

Nothing makes Fate grin more broadly and ironically than to have two who have once cared try to revive the thrills of a yesteryear.

No, I would not go back. I had had my romance. I had my memories. I would keep them. Tender memories were infinitely preferable to trying again to breathe life into the little Eros when he lay dead in a winding sheet.

My Sister's Love Cult

There was in the back of my mind the anticipation of that time when I should wander the world and investigate those cults of which I had first come to know in Riverside Drive. The more I heard of them the more my eagerness increased. The time was ripe for my investigations.

I had thought this was my own decision. I had not taken into account that Fate

might have decided to take a hand in this, too. But already she had set the stage for the first new knowledge of cults that was to come my searching way.

Things I am going to tell you now are among the most astounding of this narrative. If they do not concern me quite as personally as some that have preceded, I think you will agree I have been closely enough concerned to speak authoritatively.

Aleister Crowley

It was in no roundabout way Fate led me to the inside story of those drug orgies, the worship of Satan as a deity, and the terrible pagan rites with which



tricks when known, and explained too often for me to go into details here), to fortune telling by crystal gazing and public "mind-reading." That was the easiest trick of all, since all I had to do was conceal a small microphone in my ear under my hair and listen to what my confederates had to say.

Though a remunerative business, it was one of which I soon sickened. It had no appeal, with me doing it alone, either. There was no fun in me fooling the public all by myself as there had been when De Lyale and I were together.

All Over

I had had a good many appealing letters begging me

the brilliant English poet and explorer, Aleister Crowley, stirred the world as no one else in his time. Knowledge of him and his cult dropped like a plummet into my lap.

I am going to tell you the true story of that internationally infamous character who once, on a mountain-climbing expedition, claimed to have had a vision, and, like a satanic Moses, came down from his mountain to lead his followers, not aright, but astray.

The "Anti-Christ"

Proclaiming himself an "Anti-Christ," naming himself "The Beast of the Apocalypse," he sallied forth to become the head of the most notorious cult of his age, the infamous O. T. O. Though every effort has been made to suppress it, it flourishes even now—in secret—in many parts of our country and in Europe.

His teachings may have been discredited through the notoriety that followed his exposure, and by the shock when there followed in his wake the trail of death and despair that ever does, but not entirely. His teachings have not been buried.

Weird Tales

Even now, ever so often, there come weird tales from this, that, or the other part of the country of startling occurrences and appalling consequences directly traceable to Aleister Crowley. I am going to tell you many things of him and his love cult activities that have not, before, been brought to light.

You ask how this may be?

How is it that I, who have been so busy with my own life and loves, can know so much about that satanic Englishman who is beyond doubt one of the outstanding figures in all the secret cults of the world? And one of the most devastating?

My Own Sister

This is the reason: The woman who became known all over the world as his favorite high priestess, his "Scarlet Maiden of the Apocalypse," the "Dead Soul" he revived, was none other than my own sister.

Why should I not know of all his devilish Satanism and practice of black magic?

Often I have bitterly blamed myself for the relations between my sister and the man she followed to perdition. It was I who made it possible for her to meet him.

But I am not Fate. That meeting was destined, and I was but a tool.

Their Son

I know that what I did was not deliberate, and that I have since done what I could to atone, at least by helping to bring their son, precocious little Hansie, to normalcy and right living. He would never have been normal had he continued to live with her and his father, Aleister Crowley, that faithful follower of the Devil, and worshiper of evil.

My discarded lover, the clairvoyant, had written me in New York that I must not fail to see Crowley. A most interesting character, he averred. He was sure I

would find amusement in delving into such queer mental kinks as Crowley possessed.

Crowley's Functions

He enclosed introductions that would make it easy for me to attend one of Crowley's functions in his studio in Greenwich Village. Invitations for such affairs were eagerly sought when Crowley was at the height of his fame in this country.

Not caring to go alone, I suggested, more as a joke than anything else, that my sister, Lea, should go with me. It never occurred to me she would.

Not Like Me

She was not like me. A mouse-like little creature, pure and sweet, caring nothing even for the usual feminine foibles of personal adornment, her only interest was in her work as a school teacher in the Bronx. I knew she had never attended a party resembling even the mildest of Greenwich Village affairs.

To my surprise, she consented to go. Destiny was not to be denied.

It is one of Life's queer quirks that it is the man of lurid reputation, the roue, the gambler, the man of sinister character, who holds the most fascinating appeal for romantic young girls. The more innocent the girl, the more naive, insouciant, the greater her danger.

Sex Slave Complex

It is the age-old slave complex which makes its appearance at the first awakening of sex. To be so "different" the man must, the girl argues, possess superior qualities; mastery. The slave complex bids her bow to one who is stronger.

I am going to tell you, you young girls yearning for such hectic romance, what happened to my own sweet, pure little sister. I have the hope it may serve as a "stop, look, and listen" sign if you should meet some suave devil in human form like Aleister Crowley.

We had not been long in his studio before I was conscious of that shivery feeling one uncomfortably gets when being stared at. I glanced curiously about. Then I saw who was responsible.

Lea Attracts Him

It was Crowley. He stood in the center of the room, arms folded, his thick brows drawn together as he stared. It was not on me his gaze was bent, however. It was on my sister.

It was vastly uncomfortable; annoying. I hoped she would not notice it. I feared it would frighten her, shy as I knew her to be. Undoubtedly, I thought, she must have attracted Crowley because she is so different.

And surely she was as different as the dawn from midnight from those who thronged the heavily perfumed studio. In her quiet little gown, she was like some timid little crocus trying to force its head up between serried ranks of flaunting tiger lilies.

She Returns His Stare

Uncertainly, as though a bit reluctantly answering a

strange summons, I saw her glance up. I saw her gaze wander about, wavering, searching. At last it came to rest on the man whose basilisk stare had never wavered.

I started to put out my hand in a little reassuring gesture. She did not notice it. For all she knew of me then I might have been a million miles away. All she saw, knew, in the world right then, were those commanding eyes of "The Beast of the Apocalypse."

For minutes their gaze held steadily, my shy little sister, to my astonishment, giving him back level stare for stare. It was outrageous. It was uncanny.

She Is Dazed

The man shifted his position. My sister's eyes dropped. I saw her shrink back into her seat with a little quiver of her whole body. I heard her sigh of half bewilderment, half ecstasy.

I spoke to her. She did not hear me. Her eyes were filmed, dazed, and her face, always spiritually pale, was like a mask of wax or marble as her eyes shifted, following, following every move of the man who seemed to have bewitched her.

That would never do. I knew my little sister could have no idea of the danger in a man like Crowley. But I knew.

Was Always Shielded

She had never known the world. She had been sheltered, content, in her own small circumscribed orbit. Even I, advocate of following impulses wherever they might lead, had always been careful to shield Lea. I felt that much that would not be wrong for me would be terribly harmful to her.

I was uneasy; I wanted to get away. The place suddenly seemed to be filled with unspoken horrors.

She turned on me like a tigress when I suggested going. Her mouth was set in the stubborn lines I knew as her chief characteristic.

I Shall Not Go!

"I shall not go!" she declared. "I will not move one step until I have talked to Aleister Crowley."

I tried to argue with her. I had no idea we should have an opportunity for conversation with the man who was so eagerly surrounded by an admiring crowd. They were interested in him, not alone for his peculiarities, but also for his culture and learning. There was nothing he could not talk about with any of them. He was as much at home discussing Whistler's "Etchings" as he was in a debate about the poems of Araby.

Lea was firm, though. She had always been very conventional. Now it seemed, she was just as determined to break through conventions. It was as if she was answering some mentally telegraphed command.

Beauty and the "Beast"

It was but a minute after she had refused to go that Crowley left his famous guests and came over to us. I tried to tell myself it was nothing more than the frank curiosity of opposites that made those two forget all else to continue their stares—Lea, the quiet little nun;

Crowley, "The Beast of the Apocalypse," whose very countenance showed the beast he was at heart. I could not shake off the uncanny feeling that gripped me.

He offered us wine, and Oriental cakes he brought himself. I barely sipped my wine, but my sister . . .

She Remains

I was amazed when she drank glass after glass of

blood red wine with Crowley. Again I said we must go. She shook her head most decidedly and told me she would not go. Not then. She told me to go on home. She would come later. She did not want so soon to leave her first studio party. She was petulant.

She taunted me, tried to anger me, told me she was old enough to take care of herself. At last some of the things she insinuated did infuriate me so that I decided to go without her. If she got a good fright it would be good enough for her.

I could not imagine that anything could happen to her in that crowd, unconventional though it was. I thought when Crowley added his urging to let her stay a while longer if she wished that it was a mere gesture of hospitality.

I Cannot Sleep

I left, none too pleased with my Quaker-like sister. She had embarrassed me with her school girl conduct.

Had I had one faintest conception of what was to be, what would have been my thoughts as I went home-ward? And left that girl child, so close to my heart, in a studio filled with chattering people and—with Aleister Crowley!

I slept fitfully. I would not have slept at all had I not been lulled into a false security. I was sure that, shortly after midnight, I heard her close the hall door. I thought Lea was safe at home. Though my anger had cooled when it had had time to switch to anxiety, I was still too annoyed with her to leave my bed to see if she was all right. She was at home, that was enough.

Lea Doesn't Return

I lay awake with whirling thoughts. It was possible, I had to admit, though I did not relish the thought, that this innocent sister of mine would some day have a lover. Even as I. But I refused, most emphatically refused, to consider any devilworshiper as an aspirant to that honor.

SHE had never known the world. Even I, advocate of following impulses wherever they might lead, had always been careful to shield Lea. I felt that much that would not be wrong for me would be terribly harmful to her.

You may imagine my horror when, on arising, I found that Lea had not come home! Her cloister-like little room, with all its prim fittings, and her little white bed had not been occupied.

I was hurriedly flinging on my clothes when the telephone rang. It was, as I had suspected, a call from Crowley. Yes, my sister had spent the night in the studio with some other women friends of his. Certainly she was all right. Did I want to speak to her?

To His Studio

"I'll be right down!" I shouted at him and hung up.

What an insane thing for her to do. Of course, though, it was all right. I wouldn't have given the matter another thought in any one else but Lea. I was still more annoyed than alarmed when I arrived at the studio.

In spite of the warmth of the morning, of the ecologically scented heat waves that flowed out to meet me when the black servant opened the door of the dimly lit studio, I shivered.

Was that premonition touching me with its clammy fingers? Had anything happened to Lea? I caught my breath sharply.

What Could Happen?

Nonsense! What *could* happen? Here in the middle of New York with a dozen policemen to heed a lifted voice. I would not let such fear thoughts possess me.

And yet—

I glanced around me. It was all as it had been the night before. It was little different in the morning light, what if it could find its way through the heavy, weirdly colored draperies hung before the long windows of the high-ceiled room.

On the walls were "The Beast's" own eerie paintings. There were the wide couches, piled high with great, soft pillows, the Oriental hangings and the swinging braziers wafting their incense.

My Baby Sister

I dropped onto a couch to wait. I was inexplicably uneasy. I wanted to occupy myself and reached for a gold-tipped cigarette on an elaborately carved tabourette.

Will, I hoped the little idiot had seen enough to satisfy her. My little school-mar'm sister! Fancy her "acting up" at her first studio party.

With a sort of grudging pride, annoyed with her as I was, I recalled her as she had sat there in her modest little gown—no jewels, no bare, shining, white voluptuous limbs like other women of the party. I pictured her pale aloofness as she had seemed utterly unable to keep her eyes off Crowley.

Keeps Me Waiting

I smiled a little wryly as I recalled his "strutting" his best sinister glare for her benefit. He had succeeded in dazzling her all right. I anxiously hoped not too greatly, but I would certainly see she had no other opportunity.

I puffed at my cigarette and waited impatiently.

What could be keeping her? I began to be peevish again. What did she take me for? A "Patience-on-a-monument" chaperon?

I sat up as the heavy drapery at the rear of the studio was drawn back and there glided in the reed-like, half-somnolent figure of a woman. She was nude, save for the blood-red robe of silk she held lightly about her with one hand.

The Scarlet Maiden

In the half-light of the incense-filled studio I did not recognize her at first. Not until, with noiseless, bare-foot steps, she crossed the room and stood in front of me. I glanced up inquiringly.

A queer, half-mocking smile from eyes which but a few hours before seemed dead to all emotion, greeted me. No words.

I rose, tottering, hands groping toward the blood-red apparition.

"Lea!" I choked. "You! What—what—"

She nodded, and there crossed her face the most beautiful smile I ever hope to see.

"Not Lea," she corrected softly, in the monotone of one repeating a well-learned lesson. "The 'Scarlet Maiden of the Apocalypse'—the 'Dead Soul'—dead no longer, for he, the Master, has breathed into it Life!"

Are You Mad?

I fell back on the couch, too shocked to speak. Twice I tried, before:

"Lea!" I moaned faintly. "In Heaven's name what does this mean? Answer me! Have you gone mad?"

Her smile was inscrutable; far away. Her words, too, seemed to come from a distance.

"Mad?" she repeated. "Were you? Did you call yourself mad when you lay in the arms of the first man to whom you gave yourself? Or did you not think Heaven had showered on you an ecstasy beyond belief?"

She Knows My Love Life

Choked with emotion, I could not utter a word. She went on:

"You should know. Why did you never tell me what it meant? Who knows but that you and I were born to be the high priestesses of a high cult of love—the chosen companions of chosen interpreters? Oh, don't protest, Marian! Have you thought your life a secret from—me?" She threw out one bare arm in an expressive gesture.

My head dropped. A pang shot through my heart. I had, indeed, thought my love life secret, especially from my sister who, to me, was the embodiment of all the conventional, homely virtues I privately scorned; this quiet, repressed sister, satisfied for so long with being school teacher of the middle-class children of the Bronx.

Her Virginal Body

I could have understood the metamorphosis in myself. I was ever on the search for something new. I

could have understood it happening to me, even though Aleister Crowley, the infamous "Beast," repelled me. I had come to know how close the shade between repulsion and love.

But Lea!

My voice was a husky whisper. "Has—has this gone—far?" I asked.

She pulled herself up proudly before me, like a queen, and threw aside the crimson robe that only partially concealed the once virginal white body I had known.

She Is Branded

There, branded deeply on the snow-white of her skin, was a great star inside a double circle. The anger of the outraged white flesh flamed redly at me. My sister swayed and spoke dreamily.

"I—I am his High Priestess! I am his 'Woman of Babylon!' Not the scarlet woman of the putrid-minded, but the scarlet maiden of the Apocalypse, forever bound to him by this, to him, my Beast, my lover, my Anti-Christ! Here—right here," and her arm dramatically described an arc toward the center of the studio floor on which I could see a faint chalk-line circle, "is where he made me his own. Inside this circle I knelt, adoring him. With his own dagger, white-hot, he branded me his chattel forever! Ah, the exquisite agony! The joy!"

Had Taken Her Body

It was true, too horribly true. That devil-man had, in a night, taken her body. Had he, too, taken her mind? She swayed, about to fall. I sprang toward her.

I was too late. The curtains were flung violently aside. The beast-eyed Crowley leaped across the studio. It was into his outstretched arms she fell. He laid her on a couch and stood over her glaring his defiance at me.

I hate, even now, to glimpse in retrospect the scene that followed. Never before, never since, had or have I been so beside myself. I raged, I tore, I threatened, I pleaded, I cajoled. All to no avail. They laughed at my tears. In their love-crazed condition, all arguments were useless.

To Aid My Sister

I realized at length, as my passion wore itself out, that, if I were really to aid my sister, to bring her back to sanity, I must try to remain on as good terms as possible with Crowley. I did my best to get a grip on myself. That was my idea throughout the luncheon I had with them, and at which appeared another masculine devotee of Crowley's Great God Pan.

When I left them, "The Beast" was seated at a table,

absorbed in a game of chess with a boon companion. At his feet lay my sister, sound asleep, completely nude, curled up in cushions like a drowsing kitten.

Poor little "goddess!" Neither "The Beast" nor his companion paid the slightest heed to her who had been dubbed "Goddess" and "High Priestess," but who seemed, now, more like a pet animal or docile slave.

The Transformation

I had been the unwelcome witness of one of the "miracles" Crowley boasted he could, with the help of his Satan, perform. For that twenty-four-hour transformation of my innocent little sister was the strangest thing I have ever witnessed—a miracle, truly diabolic!

The most striking thing about that man was his belief in himself, that he was an actual devil-god. The burden of his chant, that which he taught his followers was: "Love is the law. Love under will."

I think in that neurotic mind of his he really believed he was going to raise humanity to a higher plane, but he certainly went about it in a most peculiar way.

The Right of Wrong

Once, when I attended one of his public lectures, I saw how his teachings were received by people of normal minds. So wild were his ideas, so warped, that the hall which had been reasonably well filled, was more than half empty before he had concluded.

He believed that whatever anyone wanted to do was right, regardless of whom he injured.

You may think there was scant difference between this teaching of his which I condemn and my own ideas of following impulse, defying convention.

There was this great difference: Crowley believed in the "right of wrong." To him the worshiping and following of Satan and evil were the highest to which one could attain. His idea was: "All is evil. Evil is right. Let evil prevail!"

All Is Good

And I? My belief is that "all is good, for all is God." There is no right or wrong in the Universal Plan, but there is free will to follow impulses and, what is more important still, to control them.

The difference between Crowley's freedom and mine is the difference between following impulse in the belief of its right, in mind and motive, defying convention because of honest belief, and the following of evil for evil's sake, defying all for the sake of defiance.

It would never occur to me to say that anyone could successfully defy the laws of Nature. Aleister Crowley

"I—I am his High Priestess! I am his 'Woman of Babylon!' Not the scarlet woman of the putrid-minded, but the scarlet maiden of the Apocalypse, forever bound to him by this, to him, my Beast, my lover, my Anti-Christ!"

"With his own dagger, white-hot, he branded me his chattel forever. Ah, the exquisite agony! The joy!"

tried to. That was where he went wrong—especially in his notorious drug orgies.

Not Harmful

He taught his students, in his strange "Holy Abbey of Thelame," in Cefalu, Sicily, where he established a most astounding colony after he left America, that, if they trained their minds sufficiently, there was no possible indulgence in which they could not revel. Indulgence could do them no harm. Drink and drugs that would injure most people would be to them, after they had learned sufficient control, harmless as water. He admitted the danger of this to ordinary persons, but—those who were disciples of Aleister Crowley, the "Anti-Christ," could not be ordinary, according to him.

They were not. They were extraordinarily extraordinary, in many ways. Especially in the docile way they gave up all their worldly goods to Crowley when they entered his order; in the way they went on their knees to him, vowing to obey him, to be his slave in all things.

His Collegium Spiritum Sanctum

He had some queer ways of making his disciples "master their souls." I don't think anything was more insane than that story related to me by the beautiful American actress, Jane Wolf, who became a member of his colony in Sicily, his "Collegium Spiritum Sanctum," or "College of the Holy Ghost," as he blasphemously called it. It was there he declared he was making a race of supermen and superwomen from "weak mortals."

When I listened to what Jane Wolf had to say, I thought if there was ever a "weak mortal" on earth, it was she—to have obeyed Crowley's outlandish orders. So thoroughly did he make her "contemplate her soul" that she almost lost her life. He said she could not be sufficiently disciplined until she had spent thirty days and nights in the sunshine and rain on the top of a bare rock on a mountain peak, clad in sack cloth, without food or shelter. She did it, and almost died of exposure.

Not I

If Crowley and his baleful eyes succeeded in subduing my sister, though, he found there was one in our family who would do no knee bending. That was I.

Once, after listening to him lecture, I told him:

"Your ideas are false. There isn't one single thing to recommend them—or you. And you needn't call yourself a High Beast, either. I'm not blind."

He laughed. He pretended not to care what I thought, but he was too vain for that, too eager for encomiums.

"I'd like to have you for a priestess," he said. "It would be interesting to bend you to my will, as I would. You'll come to me, yet. You'll be wonderful, after I get through with you."

Never!

Join him? Never!

I never have been broken by anyone. I never in-

end to be. The prospect of worshipping the Devil with Crowley had no appeal for me.

Before I finished with him, it was he who was afraid of me. I gloried in making him fear me. I am sure it was due to fear of me that he hastened his departure from America and set up his Sicilian colony.

She Goes

In one thing he bested me. I was determined he should not take my sister with him. He was determined to take her. She went.

The family was all wrought up, as might be expected, but, wanting no publicity, and realizing Lea was of age, we never called in the authorities, in spite of all the crazy doings in that studio on Washington Square.

There was little I could do, after all. I did have the pleasure once, though, of breaking one of his magic sticks over "The Beast's" august back. I can see him now. How he grabbed up the broken stick and shook it at me, his beast eyes spitting fire.

I'll Get You

"I told you I'd get you," he raged, "and I will! You'll come to me! You'll be my slave! I'll b-r-r-e-e-a-k you!"

He was wrong in that prophecy. I was never swayed to the O. T. O. I am no devil worshiper.

For the indignity of the stick he put a most violent curse on me. I might add that it came uncomfortably near being carried out, too.

In spite of my indignation over the affair of my sister, I attended one of Crowley's weird "religious" ceremonies a short time after she went to him. Broken up as I was over the whole thing, I was nevertheless curious to see how this sister of mine with the Madonna face would conduct herself as a high priestess of Satan.

His Ceremonies

Crowley did not "invoke the devil" or "arouse the Great God Pan" at that ceremony. I saw him do that later and of all the wild, frightful panderings to excitement I ever saw, that was about the limit. Blue lights, puffs of smoke, hoarse bleatings, as of goats, from human throats—he had the whole works.

For, of all the people who have ever made whoopee in Greenwich Village (and there have "sure been some!") there has never been one who, for pure devilish, erotic imagination run riot, could touch Aleister Crowley with the proverbial ten-foot pole.

As I entered the dim room the first thing that drew my eyes was my sister's face. It seemed purer, more spiritual than ever as she sat on a high dais-like throne in front of long black velvet curtains. Except for the scarlet robe, drawn aside so that her life sign of the star and circle of the O. T. O. could be seen, she was nude.

Crowley, in a robe of black, wearing a strange head-dress in which was one fiery eye, and carrying a tall scepter, stood in front of the throne. In his hand he held a silver cup filled with blood-red wine.

Men and women, as devotionally kneeling as though

in a cathedral, were ranged about in semi-circles. Their eyes were bent on Crowley in adoration.

There was a long, strange ritual which it must have taken him, prolific poet as he was, much time to compose. The burden of it was the two outstanding tenets of his faith.

Love Is the Law

"Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law," was the all-important one.

And so, throughout the ritual:

"Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law," chanted "Anti-Christ" Crowley.

For "Amen" his followers answered:

"Love is the law. Love under will."

To which: "Every man and woman is a star," announced the leader firmly, and with a conviction that the last word in all that was desirable in life had been said.

The Chant

I knew my sister had a good memory, but I had never thought of her as an elocutionist. She was far too modest for that. It had always been I with the "yen" for the stage.

But it was not without dramatic power that she repeated a chant Crowley had written for her. It was too long for me to remember off-hand, but she later wrote it down for me.

"I am Nuit, lady of the starry heavens. Come forth, Oh Children, under the stars and take your fill of love. I am above you and in you. My ecstasy is yours. My joy is to see your joy.

"Be ye goodly, therefore; dress ye all in fine apparel; eat rich foods and drink sweet wines, and wines that foam. Also take your fill and will of love, when, where, and with whom ye will, but always unto me—that your every act may be a ritual, an act of worship, a sacrament.

"Live as the kings and princes, crowned and uncrowned, of this world have lived, as masters always live, but let not this be self-indulgence.

"Keep pure your highest ideal; strive ever toward it, without allowing aught to stop you or turn you aside, even as a star sweeps upon its incalculable and infinite course of glory, and all is love. The law of your being becomes light, life, love and liberty.

"Is not this better than the death-in-life of the slaves of the slave-gods, as they go oppressed by the consciousness of sin, wearily heaving or simulating tedious virtues?"

The Spectacle

There was more of their ritual flummery; much more. I shall not here put it down. It did not differ greatly from that of other secret societies. Not that "service" anyhow, for, as I told you, Crowley forebore at the time from setting off any of his devil-invoking fireworks.

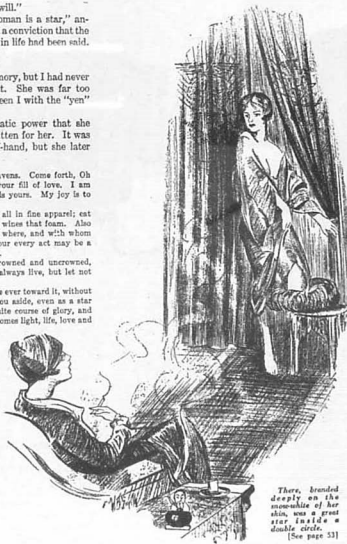
I was to have one shock I would never forget. Before the ritual closed, with Crowley dip-

ping his pointed scepter into the goblet of wine (an old magical symbol as anyone knows who has delved into ancient cults), I was treated to an astonishing spectacle.

Entones To Her Man-Devil

I saw my once nun-like sister, no longer with a hint of the cloister, stand, her eyes alight with her newly awakened love, her arms flung out to the man who had taken her, her body swaying as in answer to a hypnotic spell as she intoned to her man-devil:

"Sing the rapturous song unto me! Burn to me perfumes! Wear to me jewels! Drink to me, for I love you! I love you! I am the blue-lidded daughter of sunset; I am the



There, branded deeply on the snow-white of her skin, was a great star inside a double circle.

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naked brilliance of the voluptuous night sky. To me! To me!"

You ask me a question?

Yes, there was much to remind me of a house on Riverside Drive. But Dr. Latson did not believe in "devils." His was a worship of gods.

He Was Convinced

Aleister Crowley was convinced, and was spending his life trying to convince others, of the actual possibility of invoking and producing in some physical form demons, imps, the Pan he adored, or Satan himself!

"I am like a dead soul come to life," my sister had told me that morning I knew she belonged, body and soul, to "The Beast of the Apocalypse." Fatalistically she added: "Whether for good or evil, I do not know. It does not matter."

Because evil sometimes flourishes like the green bay tree, it seemed at first that Lea was not to suffer in a material way. The first we heard of her after she and Crowley left America were extravagant tales of the luxury in which they were living in Sicily.

Crowley's Colony

Crowley's colony had attracted an odd and rather interesting coterie, most of them with money they gladly poured into the coffers of the "Anti-Christ." I will only speak of two others of the colony, besides the American actress, Jane Wolf, whom I have already mentioned.

It was the connection of these two, Raoul Loveday, a brilliant young Oxford student, and his wife, Betty May Loveday, a famous beauty, which finally brought about the downfall of the "abbey" and Crowley and sent him with his "scarlet bride" scurrying into the Great Sahara Desert until the horror of the affair had died down.

The Children

I want to tell first, though, of what I considered the worst horror of the whole abbey affair. The children. There were a number of them among the "supermen and superwomen" who were learning contempt for "weak mortals." The children ranged in age from two to twelve or so. They, too, were all avidly absorbing the bilge about "true wills" and being "masters of their souls."

Chief among these children was my sister's child, Hansie. He was only a little over two when the colony was started, but, like a duck to water, he took to the theory of no restrictions whatever, of absolute freedom.

An instance will illustrate. Lea told me this gleefully, with much pride in the wisdom of her "man."

Gives Child Brandy

Hansie had been pestering to taste some brandy he was watching his mother and father drink. Without hesitation, Crowley handed him the whole bottle.

"Take all you want, youngster," he said, and turned his back as if the matter were of no consequence.

Hansie did. He took a long, full drink. He howled with rage at the burning of his mouth. Of course he became terribly sick.

Again He Indulges

He got over it, though—poor little baby! As soon as he was on his feet again, white-faced and wide-eyed, Crowley brought the brandy bottle to him and told him to take all he wanted at any time.

"If it's your true will, Hansie, to get drunk and sick and burn your mouth, go to it! Don't let me stop you."

So effective was the cure that Lea was sure Crowley had solved the problem of child upbringing. She was not able to see far ahead where he was concerned.

The Outcome

It never occurred to her, I am sure, what terrible harm she was doing her child by allowing him such unbridled license at Crowley's behest. So Hansie ran about naked, like a little savage, because it was "not his will" to wear clothes.

He contracted the cigarette habit at the age of five and was such a "fiend" you never saw him without one in his mouth. He was growing weak, ill, stunted, in spite of all his outdoor life and primitive ways.

Another of my sisters, visiting in Europe, went to see if matters with the child were as bad as they had been rumored. She found things even worse.

Beast Number Two

Crowley and Lea were away when she arrived at the "abbey." Hansie was running wild. She hadn't expected him to be very human, with such a father, but she was not prepared to find what she did. She was horror-stricken at the way in which the poor youngster behaved himself, following Crowley's precepts.

"You just leave me alone!" he shouted, brandishing a stick at her. "Don't you know I am Beast Number Two and can shatter you? I will, too! I'll bust you wide open and throw you into the ocean. Don't you dare touch me or try to get fresh with me! I'm getting ready to be the Great Beast of the Apocalypse when Crowley dies, and I'm going to split the world wide open!"

My elder sister, his aunt, good, noble, thoroughly conventional and old-fashioned, was jolted. She could do nothing whatever with the child.

She Kidnaps Him

But she could see the end ahead for him; how little life could hold. She did the only decent thing, kidnapped him and brought him to America. She had to. She had already found out how useless would be an appeal to Lea and Crowley, for when she telegraphed them about Hansie's condition, they telegraphed back for her to mind her own business.

Luckily for little Hansie, she thought his welfare was her business. Still more luckily for him, his father's reputation was such he was unable to put up a fight that would get the child back. There was nothing in the line of threats he did not try, though.

The Letter

Here is a letter I received from Crowley soon after Hansie reached America and we started undoing all the terrible harm of his early life. It is a reply to one of mine, trying to pour some oil on the troubled waters:

Marion:

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law.

Thank you for your friendly letter. Philosophy and literature are interesting, but their study must be suspended in the presence of crime.

Beware!

In some states of the Union—and these not the least worthy of respect—kidnapping is punishable with death. There is no capital punishment in Italy; also your sister, Mrs. Billes, may consider it the most fortunate day of her life when she is safely in jail in that country. Love is the law, love under will.

Yours,

ALKESTER CROWLEY.

Taming a Wild Beast

It was like taming a little wild beast to bring Hansie to the normal life that is the right of all children. The story of that struggle would make a book in itself. However, by patient and unceasing struggle, by appeals to a latent manhood which we brought out, it was accomplished. He is now a manly young chap of whom we are all proud.

Only a few months later Crowley had enough troubles of his own to last a while.

Raoul Loveday, the Oxford student, died at the "abbey." As was afterward proven, his death was, however, from natural causes.

Loveday's Wife

Nothing could make his heart-broken young wife believe that. She raved. She raged. She accused Crowley of everything under the sun. Crowley, with his abominable teachings, had killed her husband! She knew it!

There was no stopping her. The worst of it for Crowley was that she went off and said what she thought—in printed words in a London daily. She accused "The Beast" of practicing the most ugly, abnormal rites.

Her husband had died, she solemnly vowed, because the "Anti-Christ" of the "Holy Abbey of Thelme" had compelled her husband and her to cut the throat of a male black cat and drink its blood.

The Uproar

Horrible! Gruesome!

Any wonder there was an uproar? An outcry against "The Beast" and all his practices?

Any wonder the "college" and all it stood for was driven out of existence? Or that priest and priestesses must flee to the desert to hide in its burning sands?

Little has come out publicly about Crowley's O. T. O. cult in this country. Though I recall an instance. It happened in Detroit not so long ago. It so profoundly shocked the Middle West that all the branches of his cults Crowley had been at so much pains to found, personally, were disbanded by the police.

The O. T. O.

The connection of Crowley and his cult became known when a wealthy publisher was divorced by his wife who declared she could not live with him since he had become a member of the O. T. O.

As his second wife he married a red-haired girl of fiery disposition, who was being instructed by him, under the name of "Bruce of the O. T. O." (her name was Bertha Bruce) to become a priestess of the cult.

The Gruesome Details

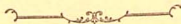
To "do what she wouldst"

was to leave the magnificent home of her aging husband in mighty short order after a few noisy scenes which brought much comment from the neighbors.

The downfall of the rich devil-worshiper, as well as that of the cult his money was keeping up, came when all the details of what occurred during his third marriage of twenty-nine days became known. The bride told. She was Mazie Mitchell, a beautiful artist's model. From her a shocked public learned that the principal thing she found to be the "will" of the man of wealth and neuroses she had married was to beat her with a snake whip till she could not stand, and then work his will on her tortured body.

"He wanted me as his 'mystic bride,'" she haltingly told. "I wasn't sure what that meant. I know now. It means horrible torture."

IT was the connection of these two, Raoul Loveday, a brilliant young Oxford student, and his wife, Betty May Loveday, a famous beauty, which finally brought about the downfall of the "abbey" and Crowley and sent him with his "scarlet bride" scurrying into the Great Sahara Desert until the horror of the affair had died down.



People Do Worship Devils

WOULDN'T you have thought that all I learned from that Crowley crowd would have taught me sense?

Wouldn't you have thought I had had just about enough devil-worship and black magic to last me a lifetime?

Could there be any greater depths of infamy to plumb?

Why, my appetite had only been whetted!

Who and what were these real devil-worshippers of whom I was hearing so much, anyway?

I wanted to know. More, I was going to find out. And my knowledge was not going to be second hand.

It was in Europe where I knew they flourished. The time was propitious. I had learned that there were fearful and wonderful things about them to be learned in Germany. I went to Germany.

Was I able to reach to their inner sanctums?

Crowley Mild In Comparison

In Berlin I saw, I participated as High Priestess, in Diabolist rites concocted by diabolical minds for the gratification of abnormal fantasies which were terrifying beyond belief. Beside them Crowley and his O. T. O., for all its devastation, was but a mild variation in worship of His Satanic Majesty.

I am going to tell you what I saw and learned of devil-worshippers in all its nakedness. I am not going to cover up or slur. I shall lay bare all the details of that "Black Mass" I saw and in which I participated in Germany.

Do not think I mean that the practice of worshipping the devil is confined to Germany. Far from it.

Devil-Worshippers

I have attended "Black Masses" in America several times. One of them was in a fashionable home in lower Fifth Avenue, under the shadow of Washington Square Arch and beneath the reflection of the benign Christian cross which nightly flames above the square. Another was in an apartment in Central Park West. Still another was an outdoor ceremonial. I was taken to it in a motor boat from Bar Harbor where I was spending a vacation.

We, who like to call a spade a spade, plainly call the followers of such cults "Devil-Worshippers" in this country. In France they are "Les Diaboliques;" in England, "Satanists."

In Germany

In Germany? Ah, I wish I were free to say. It is an expressive name they have, and eerie, far more so than any of the others. But, you see, some time I hope to go back to Germany. Perhaps some day I may want to know more about their "Black Masses."

And so secret is the name by which the worshippers of the Black Angel are known in that country, so awesome, that if I dared breathe it, even in a whisper, I should never dare show my face there again. They take their devil-worshipping seriously in Germany.

I have been taking for granted, of course, that you know what a "Black Mass" is. Perhaps I had better explain its meaning.

To begin with, the practice of devil-worshiping is as old as the history of the world itself. Libraries are filled with musty tomes describing their rites which have existed from the most pagan time.

But that is of the long-ago, you say? It is not!

Those same rites, those same cults, exist today! I have seen them. I know what I have seen is no secret society playing, no meaningless mummerly.

People do worship the devil. Their horrible, sinister cults do exist.

Most Horrible

Of them all, the true "Black Mass" is the most horrible. When I have told what I have seen, you will believe me.

The cult which practices it is so strange one can hardly imagine its members outside an insane asylum. Where it not that most of those members are of tremendous influence, wealth and culture, the ranks of the inmates of asylums of this and other countries would be vastly augmented.

That is the pity of it. But, as more than one famous psychologist and criminologist has pointed out, the line of demarcation between sane and insane is too close for the layman to distinguish. Criminal insanity and high culture and genius are often so closely allied that could not the latter find some means of outlet for criminal tendencies, they would soon pass over the line.

Many Famous People

I tell you this—many of our most famous people have been devil-worshippers. Many are today.

Whispers about some have become open accusations. Then there is no further need for secrecy. That is so with the former Crown Prince of Germany. He was openly accused even in his own country of being a devil-worshiper.

Rasputin, the infamous Black Monk, can be mentioned. He is dead. It can do him no harm. Who knows he is not still participating in rites he made an earthly habit?

Orgiastic Peoples

And the poor Czarina! She, too, is past harming. It is only too well known how she was forced to attend "Black Masses" by that same Rasputin who was the evil genius of the Romanoffs.

The roster of others would fill volumes—blue books. However, they may not be told.

What I may tell you is of what Satanists really are. And of their "Black Masses" and orgiastic revels which I saw with my own eyes. I am not bound to secrecy. It would not make any difference if I were. I should tell. What I know others should know—for their own protection.

Fundamentalism

In recent months there has been so much controversy about fundamentalism, what with all the furore about Ku-Kluxers, and trials of believers in evolution for heresy or what not, that it is hardly possible there is a person in this country who does not know what a

fundamentalist is.

There are too many such—thorough believers in a God who made heaven and earth in six days, in hell fire and damnation, in a Jonah that was swallowed by the whale, and in the literal acceptance of all the ancient Hebrew and Chaldean lore with which the Old Testament is filled.

Well—Satanists are just the opposite!

Do Not Fear the Devil

Like fundamentalists, they, too, believe in a personal Devil. But he is not a Devil to fear if he is worshiped.

He is a creature to be exalted! He is king of the world and the regions beyond!

At his behest the angels of the fundamentalists turn on their wing batteries and flap off to hide their heads behind clouds.

He is ruler of this and all universes. He has supreme power over all material things, over wealth and desire and love and all that is coveted.

Has Great Power

Oh, he's a great old person—is the Devil of the Diabolists!

He groans and the world shakes. He grins and beautiful flowers and beautiful women

He had some queer ways of making his disciples "master their souls."



spring up magically.

All that is, is his. The God of the fundamentalists has nothing; is nothing. The Universe is Satan's to keep for his own or to shower on his devotees.

So believing, who wouldn't, if he or she was a Satanist, fall down and worship him? Who wouldn't sacrifice to him?

Pure In Mind and Body

It has taken the mind of that all-powerful Devil himself to have thought up all the rites with which he is worshipped. But then—there has been more than one devil in human form in this world. More than one opportunity for that mind to function in a human brain. The results are awesome.

For a true "Black Mass" such as is practiced now—not hundreds of years ago—three things are essential. There must be a maiden "pure in mind and heart and body," a sacramental wafer that has been consecrated in a church or cathedral, and a priest who has been ordained a minister of God, but forsaken Him to serve the Devil. There must be an altar, too.

A Naked Girl

An altar, you ask, surprised? Certainly. But the altar of the Satanists is—the unclad body of the maiden pure in soul and body.

One of the most important parts of the ceremonial is the consecration of that "altar." It was in this that I helped in that "Black Mass" in Berlin. As an added, almost unbelievable detail, the maiden selected for "consecration" to the Devil was the daughter of two of the worshippers!

The mass was "celebrated" in the studio of a wealthy member of the cult. The room had been specially decked for the occasion, though, and black and crimson hangings were draped to give the effect of a chapel.

The Consecration

There were no glaring lights, but blue and brimstone yellow and crimson flares winked and blinked like messengers from His Majesty's nether domain. Men and women, the men robed in black, the women in white, their heads hooded much as the familiar American Ku-Kluxers, sat on benches as though they were in church.

As the "meeting" progressed, they knelt when occasion demanded; they stood at the proper times as in the rituals of orthodox churches. Sometimes they prostrated themselves with groans and wailings.

Such groans and wails, I am told, are the custom, too, of ultra-fundamentalist sects scattered throughout the more ignorant rural districts of this country.

The Hidden "Altar"

"Black Mass" celebrants, however, have not the excuse of ignorance.

Soft, insinuating music on muted instruments was played as the ceremony was begun. At its start, the human "altar" was hidden behind a curtain of dull ebony hue.

With solemn, measured footsteps, in came the "priest." At first sight he might have been any priest in any church. His vestments were the same. Until—

When he turned around, there glared out from the back of his surplice the most devilish, scarlet token of Satan that could be devised!

The "High Priestess"

After him came the "high priestess," swinging her censer of incense, her body swaying rhythmically to the Latin chant the priest intoned, her hair hanging loosely over her bare shoulders. As I recalled in the case of my sister Lea on a somewhat similar occasion, this "high priestess," too, wore nothing but a silken scarlet robe which swung loose and displayed her bare body.

She was the acolyte. One would have had to have been thoroughly versed in Latin to have "got" all the chant of that black-robed limb of Satan. Enough of it was recognizable to me to know, however, that it was filled with terrible blasphemies. It was a paean of praise to Satan and the power of evil.

How my flesh crept when I heard their "Litany." Curiosity or no curiosity, I wished then that I was a million miles away from any Devil worshippers.

The Reversed Litany

What a terrible thing it was! Almost word for word it was the Litany of the Christian church I had been taught as a child, but always "Satan" had been used instead of "God;" "evil" replaced "good."

That was a mere beginning. The worst was yet to come. While the Litany was being repeated, the curtains about the living "altar" had not been drawn back. They looked ominous, and the effect was accentuated by the tall candles at the side, and the huge crucifix of gold, standing on its head.

The Human Altar

Slowly, as the chanting grew louder, to moaning and groaning accompaniment, the curtains were drawn aside.

Like a person hypnotized (I have always been sure she was) the chosen maiden lay on her back on a black-velvet-covered catafalque, her body in such a position as to half drape it. On her breast was a golden chalice, filled with wine of deepest crimson.

She might have been a sacrifice in truth, except for the slight breathing which showed she lived. She did not move throughout all the time the worshippers followed their "priest" and "priestess" through an intoned ritual, anything more profane than which it would be difficult to imagine.

The Wine On Her Breast

When the men and women who had been writhing in the most emotional abandon had about reached the stage of complete exhaustion, the "priest," with a final dramatic gesture, lifted the goblet of wine from the girl's breast.

For a slight moment he allowed the lip of the cup to touch his lips. Then, with a wild gesture, he flung it from him.

The goblet clattered hollowly to the floor. The wine itself splashed redly on the white body of the girl "altar." It trickled over her like drops of living blood.

The "priest's" voice rose to a shriek.

"Redeem us from virtue!" he cried.

"Black Mass" Over

His cry was taken up and echoed through the room. The sounds died away in moans. The "maiden pure in soul and mind and body" had been consecrated to Satan and all his works. The "Black Mass" was over.

Over, did I say? A mere figure of speech. Over for that one night, I meant. That consecration ceremony was a preparation only for what was to follow the next night. They meant it to correspond to the rite of sacrament in the Christian church.

Only Mildest Part

I had yet seen only the mildest part of a "Black Mass." I was soon to see the orgies with which true Devil worshippers pay their respects to the Great God Pan. With them, as with the ancients before them, Pan and the Devil are one—Pan, the mythical god of Nature, he of the man-goat body, the cloven hoofs, the horns growing out of his head above the face that in all picturizations, has held a demonic leer that well might make him the Devil of the Middle Ages as he is of those who adhere to belief in him today.

Not long ago there appeared in a popular weekly magazine a story in which Pan was pictured as materializing in human form and raising a lot of havoc among the respectable members of a fashionable house party.

Blood Thirsty Demons

People laughed and shrugged their shoulders at the fancy. What an imagination the author had!

I can tell you it was not all imagination. I believe Pan can and does come back to earth. I have reason to. I have seen the tracks of his cloven hoofs. I have witnessed humans being turned into blood-thirsty demons.

Hear what happened the night following the "consecration" I saw.

The "Best" People

The affair took place in the ball room of the palace of a notorious beauty known throughout the world for her dallying with love. I felt, as I first saw the guests arrive, that I might have been witnessing a brilliant society function. There were representatives of all the highest social lights and culture of Europe.

There were poets and painters; society women and men whose names were high in the financial world, but whose personal reputations were none too savory.

There were former soldiers and famous lights-o'-love; politicians notorious for their cruelties, and many, many members of a decadent and dying aristocracy and nobility.

There were—but it would take a society column in a newspaper to recount them all.

On the surface they looked so innocuous, ladies and gentlemen in conventional evening dress, suave, cultured, low-voiced and with brilliant *mots* at tips of tongues.

Drugs In Bulk

Not for long, though. As soon as the last guest had arrived (and I noted that most particular care was taken to tabulate them) they were taken to dressing rooms. There, for their choice, were laid out costumes of tiger and leopard skins, white loin cloths or long, monastic-looking garments of scarlet or black.

Even in the dressing rooms, an alarming quantity of liquors was provided, including the choicest champagnes and high-powered brandies. What was more alarming—astounding—was the chief decoration of the principal dressing table.

That was—you could never guess in your wildest flights—an opened physician's kit, completely fitted with all the drugs that lawmakers of all countries have been striving for years to make impossible to obtain.

They were there, not in minute quantities, but in bulk. Heroin, morphine, cocaine—even lusher. And plenty of hypodermic needles.

The Wild Dancing

The dancing had begun when I reached the ball room. Such dancing! Gyration that the most twisted mind in an asylum for the incurably insane could never have hoped to emulate.

People dancing together; people dancing alone. No rhythmic dancing, that, but wild leaping and posings.

Savage animal dancing, growing madder and madder as insane music waxed louder and the shivery "thum-thum-thum" of a hidden tom-tom made its insistent way into already drug-, liquor-, and emotion-crazed brains.

And all in a brilliant, glaring light, for there were no dim blue, red or yellow lights here. The grinning, teeth-bared Pan-worshippers seemed to glory in the baring of their bodies and souls.

The Symbol of Pan

On a raised platform in the center of the ball room chained so he could not escape the human fiends who tortured him, was a poor, ugly goat—symbol of Pan. He was all the more hideous because of his fear.

In the electric light, his eyes seemed to emit sulphurous fires. In his terror, he would open his wide

WHAT a terrible thing it was! Almost word for word it was the Litany of the Christian church I had been taught as a child, but always "Satan" had been used instead of "God;" "evil" replaced "good."

mouth with its shaggy beard, as the wildness about him, and the monotonous thrum of the tom-tom increased his fright, and bleat out his hoarse protests.

Were they noticed? Only by further shouts. And gibing attempts to utter laments like his.

In the midst of the hubbub a woman with tossed hair and with a leopard skin thrown, Eve-like, across her shoulders, leaped to the platform beside the goat and began to sing. She was a famous opera singer, I was told.

To Revel Herself

She had not come to entertain the crowd, though, but rather to revel in the orgies herself. I can see her now as she sang with head thrown back. I can hear the weird music and weirder words that issued from her golden throat.

Ordinarily, I could not have got hold of a copy of that song to pass on to you. But even the most wily are not their cautious selves under the stress of emotion. Or filled with drugs and champagne.

So here is the song, the song that was taken up and flung backward and forward across that ball room by maddened, hysterical men and women, leaping and swaying, howling and baring their teeth like enraged animals.

To Pan

"Give me the sign of the open eye,
And the word of madness and mystery.
Io Pan! Io Pan!
Io Pan! Io Pan! Pan! Pan! Pan!
The gods withdraw;
The great beasts come, Io Pan!
Goat of thy flock, I am gold, I am god.
And I rave and I rip and I rend,
Everlasting, world without end,
In the might of Pan.
Io Pan! Io Pan! Pan! Pan! Io Pan!"

As though the end of the song were a signal, the party resolved itself into an orgy of unbridled fury and license.

Diabolical Orgy

Men dragged women about the floor by their hair till they shrieked in agony. They pulled them to them to kiss them brutally and fling them to the floor. Knives flashed, whips cracked, as male and female demons leaped wildly at one another and slashed and cut at naked skins.

Scraps of fur and cloth that had served as garments

were thrown aside. Naked men and women leaped and howled in wild abandon.

A woman threw herself on a man and her strong white teeth closed on his bare shoulder. She would not let go till she had drunk deep of his blood.

Whipped to Unconsciousness

In one corner of the room a girl had had herself struck up by the thumbs. Nor would she let herself be cut down till she had swooned with the agony and that of the flaying whip wielded by a frothing-mouthed man-devil.

From all came shrieks and wails and screams:

"Io Pan! Pan! Pan! Pan!"

I had to shut my eyes a moment on a scene too terrible to describe. I opened them on the climactic horror.

Drink Animal's Blood

A woman, naked, blood-streaked, dark patches of her own blood caking on face and body, dagger in hand, made a bound to the platform on which the bleating, stricken goat stampeded. With a blood-curdling, long-drawn-out wail she raised her hand. Viciously it fell to slash the animal's throat from ear to ear.

All hell, indeed, broke loose. A concerted rush was made for the platform. Nude and battered men and women fought and tore at one another, cut and clawed, in their devil-eagerness to wallow in the spurting blood and to drink it: from blood-smeared, cupped hands.

Dawn found those revelers not too exhausted still at their Devil worship. Others lay as they had fallen, naked, overcome with drink, drugs and insane emotion. Heavy curtains had kept out that dawn which would have fled in fright at the scene disclosed.

I, too, must draw the curtain. I may not tell more. Those orgiastic rites were too frightful for any description of mine.

Horrible!

There is only one word in which fully to describe them—a word which, through overuse, has lost much of its value. I use it here in its true, primary meaning—horrible!

For participants in such Devil orgies there can be only the excuse of insanity. It is the only possible charity. It is a reality, too, for it has been seldom that a reveler in the inner circle orgiastic rites of the Satanists has not ended up by becoming a pitiful drug fiend, by self-sought death, or locked securely in the madhouse they so richly merit.



WHEN that first experience with the outrageous cult was over I felt as did the famous French novelist, J. K. Hays, after he had seen the like. Nothing could purify him, he felt, save to retire to a monastery and spend months in petitionings for pardon. Which he did.

I would have liked for the gates of some pure, clean cloister to have opened for me. I could gladly have lain my shamed face on its cool stone floor till the memories of what I had seen had been blotted out, and I had been forgiven.

My Mission

That was not to be. Life called me. Though I did not then know what it was, I had a mission. There was much I must do to help save many a young girl in my own country from ruining her life through the seductive beckoning of secret cults or other luring combinations of circumstances.

This frank word of warning was to be given to the world. I was to guide the world through this exposure.

For I was investigating the facts of all these secret cults. Let us now, however, consider those in this country. I have already told you of some of them. I know of others, and, while in all instances, what I know has not come through personal experience, it has come from unquestionably authoritative and intimate sources.

Dowie—Oom—and Others

I have known cults from Dowie to De Lysle. I know much of the true story of the ultra-exclusive "Tantrik" cult of Pierre Bernard, the famous "Oom, the Omnipotent" of his wealthy and aristocratic adherents, for I was his High priestess.

I can tell you secrets of the wealthy Charles Garland who refused the millions he inherited because of his beliefs, and of his widely heralded "April Farm."

This is a book, but what I could tell you of sects and cults and societies and clubs, had I the space, would fill many volumes. I can touch but lightly on some. I only hope you may profit by what I have seen and known and avoid the pitfalls that lie in wait for unwary young girls (and older women, too) in more places and in more insidious manner than you dream.

All in the Name of Love

And all of them in the name of that greatest, most filly-treated, but most truly beautiful of all emotions—Love!

I was, of course, too young to know what a cult really meant when I knew John Alexander Dowie. He was the "Elijah" who was so confident he was a mouthpiece

of God and an incarnation of the Divine Spirit that he was able to found a real City in Illinois, of believers, all sworn to his creed of self-abnegation.

As far opposite as day from night was the creed of Dowie from that of the Devil worshippers. To him all virtues were summed up in that big precept of his, denial.

His Denials

No tobacco, no drinks, no theatres. No music except that passing the censorship of the head. No pork, no dainty gowns. Nothing that could be construed as amusement; nothing that could be called worldly. Even physicians were tabu. There was no need of them among a people acknowledging the complete power of God and Dowie.

Full of abnormal strictures as it was, Dowie's was a creed that died hard. Its founder has long since gone, a broken man, disheartened and disillusioned.

His beliefs exist today, though, and the same Zion City of the Dowieites. It is at present under the rule of that curious fanatic, Glenn Voliva, who bobs up ever so often with some new fantastic assertion or other to match his long-protested argument that the world is flat.

Woman His Downfall

For all his religious fervor, it was the world-old story with Dowie. A beautiful woman caused his downfall.

I am in a position to say this more freely than the public prints ever have, for I was in Zion City at the time, having been taken there as a bride by my husband who was a thoroughly converted Dowieite.

Because I was so young and impressionable, I confess I was rather awed by the white-bearded old man. I rather thought it might be true that such a benevolent, patriarchal person could heal or perform other miracles by the laying on of hands.

Hand Healing

It was by the laying on of hands—though not in healing—that he came to the end of his tether.

Too often had he pored over what the Old Testament had to say about the prophets and the kings of old.

Was he not one of them? What reason he should not follow them in all things as he did in some?

There was polygamy. All the prophets and the kings he read about had at least a couple of dozen wives or concubines.

He looked about him. Here he was, a prophet! And he had but one wife!

ALL hell, indeed, broke loose. A concerted rush was made for the platform. Nude and battered men and women fought and tore at one another, cut and clawed, in their devil-eagerness to wallow in the spurting blood and to drink it from blood-smeared, cupped hands.

Many Beautiful Women

She was—not so young. Her eyes no longer sparkled as eyes should sparkle for the prophets and the kings. Zion City was filled with beautiful young women, too—pretty, ignorant young women who adhered as by the law and gospel to the teachings of Dowie. To them his word was as the word of Holy Writ.

He looked again. There was one—

She was a beautiful Swiss girl. Her name was Ruth Hofer, and she was wealthy. It was said she was engaged to Dowie's son, Gladstone, the famous "unkissed son" who became such a laughing target for New York chorus girls who were determined to ruin his reputation.

Engaged to His Son

Perhaps Ruth may have been engaged to Gladstone, tentatively. But to us who knew, Gladstone was merely a camouflage for his father's affair with Ruth.

Ruth had taken her place among the women of the Old Testament who had been chosen by prophets.

That might have gone on indefinitely had not Mrs. Dowie been so modernly matter-of-fact. It might be true enough that she was far past forty, wore store teeth and specs and was fat, but she had no intention of being anybody's Sarah. How could she be? She had borne her prophet children.

She discovered some passionate missives written by "Elijah" to Miss Hofer, and—fireworks! There can be fireworks, even in the house of a prophet.

Ordered to Divorce Wife

So long had Dowie been complete master of Zion City and his own household, so much was he accustomed to being obeyed when he passed out his ukase that God demanded he do this or that, he could not at first get it through his head it would not work this time. When there was no longer any possibility of concealment, he came out boldly one day with this pronouncement: "God has ordered me to divorce Jane, with all speed."

Wherein somebody erred. Apparently God had mislaid His order papers and Jane had neglected to get hers. As a matter of fact, Jane just wouldn't do it. She "didn't want to be no Sarah."

Grieved Himself to Death

There was no argument. It was plainly up to Dowie, if he wanted to continue being prophet in Zion City or anywhere else, to go along with Jane till death should them part. It did, not long after.

I am sure that, for all his faults, Dowie grieved himself to death. For two causes. One was the tragic death by fire of the young daughter he adored. The other was the failure of New York City to take him at his own valuation, his self-deluded idea that he was a Messiah.

New York Ignores Him

He came to New York to the accompaniment of as great a blare of publicity and flourishing bands as any

circus that ever entered the same Madison Square Garden he made his headquarters. But New York did not want to be led out of any wilderness. Not by Elijah John Alexander Dowie. New York made that plain.

Dowie's campaign in "Babylon" ended in as abysmal a failure as has ever been known in such attempts at redemption. He retreated without particular grace or dignity to end his days in Zion City where they appreciated him.

But Dowie is of the long ago.

Oom

I do not know why writing of him should remind me (but it does) of another cult leader who has brought religion—of another variety—to combine with the love on which his cult is based.

Dowie has long since gone to be with the other prophets. The man of whom I am thinking is very much alive—and not kicking. There is no earthly reason why Pierre Bernard, for he it is of whom I am now going to tell you, should kick at the way Fate and the cult he founded has treated him.

I have known many a cult since those very young and guileless days when I was among the Dowieites. But I do not know of any that has been so successful or received such wide advertising as the "Tantrik" cult of Bernard, and the exclusive colony he has set up.

Has Greatest Society Followers

It may be you do not know of whom I speak when I say Pierre Bernard. Well, then, let's call him "Oom, the Omnipotent." That, probably, has a more familiar ring. It is by that resounding title he has chosen to call himself and by which he is addressed by his enthusiastic followers.

Some of the greatest names of New York society and finance are connected with the activities of Pierre Bernard these days. It was not always so.

In those early days, when I first knew Bernard, I would have been as surprised as any one to have been told that some day he would wield the influence he does over the highest in the land. Even then, though, I more than once had an inkling of the business ability of the man—the acute sense of business values which I am sure that, more than anything else, is the reason for his success.

Peerless Promoter

He is a teacher of Hindu lore and Hindu religion, and he is good! Good at his teachings, shall I add? I don't presume to pass on any one's private worth, you know. But before being teacher he is a man of business. As a promoter, Pierre Bernard has no peer.

And from what humble beginnings may a great cult leader come! From hall bedroom to marbled halls. That might be the story of Pierre Bernard.

I am going into detail to tell you what I know of his early beginnings as well as what I know of what occurs in the privacy of his vast domain out near Nyack, New York. And those are things that are seldom told. For,

Many Beautiful Women

She was—not so young. Her eyes no longer sparkled as eyes should sparkle for the prophets and the kings. Zion City was filled with beautiful young women, too—pretty, ignorant young women who adhered as by the law and gospel to the teachings of Dowie. To them his word was as the word of Holy Writ.

He looked again. There was one—

She was a beautiful Swiss girl. Her name was Ruth Hofer, and she was wealthy. It was said she was engaged to Dowie's son, Gladstone, the famous "unkissed son" who became such a laughing target for New York chorus girls who were determined to ruin his reputation.

Engaged to His Son

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Ruth had taken her place among the women of the Old Testament who had been chosen by prophets.

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On her breast was a golden chalice, filled with wine of deepest crimson.
[See page 60]

unlike so many other cult leaders, Oom, the Omnipotent, has marvelously been able consistently to maintain the secrecy which is the very backbone of success in cults.

Just Pierre, Then

It seems like such a long time ago that I first knew Oom. He was just Pierre, then.

My acquaintance might, in a way, be said to lead directly from the secret chambers of Dr. Latson. There are so many ramifications in any cult—so many times those who have been associated with one are likely to run into a former fellow member most unexpectedly.

I have told you of the young women who were studying aesthetic and Hindu dancing at Dr. Latson's. They were not all society women, either, though so many of them were of that leisure, bored and sensation-seeking class.

Taught Hindu Dances

One day I ran across one of the young women who had been a student at Latson's while I was being "Queen Bee" of the "Bee Harem." She greeted me most enthusiastically and was eager to learn more of the details of the doctor's suicide which she thought I must know.

She was, she told me, on the stage—in vaudeville. She was successful after a fashion, too, for her act then was rather a novelty. She had capitalized what she had learned from the doctor and was giving some Hindu dances.

She had become more than interested in everything Hindu during her dance course at Latson's, and was anxious to talk about it with me.

I Meet Pierre

She had a plan in mind—wouldn't I come over to Jersey with her for lunch and let her tell me about it?

There was some one she had in mind, too—

Her enthusiasm roused my curiosity. I went. I met Pierre Bernard, for it was he of whom she had spoken.

I believe I was one of the first to know anything of the plan this vaudeville dancer had in mind for Bernard and herself—a plan which has grown to such proportions today that the quiet, unobtrusive, rather bald young man I met that day is today looked up to by his own cult followers as a "superman."

Was a Barber

Not long ago I was returning from a visit to his Nyack place, lolling luxuriously in one of his soft-cushioned, purring, foreign automobiles, driving through his own private park, and the memory of that first lunch with him in that Jersey boarding house came back to me.

And I laughed. Laughed, as I recalled how utterly he had forgotten those early days. Laughed as I considered how his blue-blood colony must have to bring to their aid all the Eastern concentration he has taught them to make them forget and ignore his humble beginnings.

For—in the beginning, "Oom, the Omnipotent," the "loving, Tantrik guru" of New York and Nyack was—a barber!

Was Broke

Not such a successful one, either, for when he first met that little vaudeville dancer who was to turn his life course into a stream of gold, he was frankly "broke," a little bewildered as to what to do next, a not even good-looking hair-cutter come out of the West. It was a lucky day for him when a pretty dancer's footsteps strayed to his boarding house.

She had ideas, that girl. Good ones, too, for she had kept eyes and ears open while she had been studying among the Hindus and had learned much of what is really good in their teachings. At least, the ideas of the Hindus, so different from those of the Anglo-Saxon, have always seemed good to me.

That young Oriental dancer had had her ideas in mind for some time. Oh, there was a lot under that lovely mop of blonde hair of hers! She explained it all to me as we three leisurely ate the boarding house lunch off in a little corner.

We Call Ourselves Civilized

She had not found any one to her taste to help carry out her ideas, though, until she met Bernard. And he was such malleable material, with no place to but out.

"Oh, if I were only a man!" she declared dramatically, as she outlined her plan. "I'd show them! But Pierre, here—he's just the one to do what I can't. Watch us!

"I've learned a lot since you were Queen and I was a dancer at Latson's, and I'll say those Hindus can surely tell you a thing or two. Why, just think of it! We call ourselves civilized in this country! Look at our divorcees, our suicides, murders, other tragedies that follow in the train of mismatching!

Don't Know About Love

"That should not be. It's all because American women and men don't know the first thing about love! Not the first thing!"

Her hand came down emphatically on the table, then she looked at me and smiled apologetically.

"I mean most of them," she amended. "I was almost forgetting our doctor—and you! But you're unusual. You already know how much the Hindu can teach the Anglo-Saxon.

"That's just what I intend to do—teach them," she went on, "—with Pierre's help."

He Is Willing

He said not a word; just grinned and nodded assent as it seemed that sometimes what she had to say about Hindu ideas of love and marriage and about polygamy and monogamy was quite over his head.

However, Pierre was willing. He was willing about most anything that promised steady meals, and he was persuaded there was a good deal to be said for the art of Swami-ing.

It wasn't going to be too easy, the actress said. They would have to learn, and Pierre would have to study. They must learn all the Hindus could tell them about the gentle art of love, and then—

He Is Serious

"Then we can teach the Anglo-Saxon *how* to love!" she said eagerly. "At least Pierre can. I'm only a woman. The Hindus don't think so much of women as teachers. Women are only the receptive ones in the love line. Think you could do a lot of loving, Pierre?" she teased.

He nodded solemnly, but I could see then, that if he went into it seriously, he would go into it seriously.

He has.

That he was impressed and "sold" on her idea I found out not long after; that Pierre Bernard had been studying most earnestly. How much he believed himself, I did not know then, and I do not know now, but he was impressed by the idea of teaching Hindu love at so much per teach.

THAT he was impressed and "sold" on her idea I found out not long after that Pierre Bernard had been studying most earnestly. How much he believed himself, I did not know then, and I do not know now, but he was impressed by the idea of teaching Hindu love at so much per teach.

To Teach Love

He was not going to teach music; nor china painting. He was going to teach love. The girl saw money in it, and he believed her.

So he went about steeping himself in Hindu lore, mysticism and polygamous theories with all the earnestness that is his most salient characteristic. So much so that I doubt if today there is a better exponent in this country of the Hindu cults than that same Pierre Bernard I saw that day in the boarding house solemnly nodding his head over the prunes.

That's good business. And didn't I say he is a business man?

He Becomes All Hindu

He studied—hard. I didn't see him or his actress friend for some time after that. When next I did, he was all Hindu. He had neglected nothing.

Some way the two had managed to get together enough funds to start what Oom called a "Sanskrit College" on West Eighty-second street. It was there, at their invitation, that I next saw him. I wouldn't have known him.

The rather inconsequent, solemn-faced barber had let his hair grow and had put on a Hindu turban. He had shed his pants and taken to flowing robes.

He had forgotten the name of Bernard, and was "Oom, the Omnipotent."

The Tantrik Cult

He was head of the "Tantrik" cult, its "loving guru," its "loving, Tantrik guru."

Those were some of the first words I heard his first pupils use toward him, pupils he had managed in some way to get, from the start, to idolize him. The words were familiar to me when I heard them again when I attended one of his Hindu meetings rather recently in his exclusive colony in Nyack. For part of the ritual there is, chanted in unison:

"Be to me a loving guru,
Be a loving Tantrik guru."

I don't know but what it was more fun, though, after all, in the Eighty-second street place than at the marvelously beautiful, Orientally splendid Nyack estate. Pierre hadn't become such a great man in the Sanskrit College days.

Almost a God

Why, they look on him almost as a god, these days. Imagine being loved by a god! He was then, well—er—more natural, in a way, you might say.

It was rather too bad that first experiment of his had to be given up before it really got going well. Neighbors

are such nosy things. They had a lot to say about what went on in the Sanskrit College, and really, what did they know?

There was a lot of talk about young girls dancing nude. Somebody or other had seen—and Pierre Bernard was an awful polygamist, they said. And they said, and they said.

Not Wrong

Well, what of it? What's wrong with pretty women dancing *au naturel* if they want to so express themselves? Isn't the wrong in the mind, only? Those were aesthetic dances. Don't I know?

As for polygamy—well, after all, it's best to confine oneself to what one actually *knows*. I've been rather busy with my own love affairs—it didn't concern me then—it never has

—what Oom or any one else was doing that was not right in front of my eyes.

How can I say positively what else than dancing and some wonderful Hindu rites went on in the Hindu College? Or what others than I did?

Into Court

But they said, and they said, and they said so much that finally all Oom's mystic lore didn't keep him out of the West Side court. A sordid sort of thing—after all the beautiful dancing in the college, and the soft music and incense and Hindu teaching in the Oriental environment with which Pierre and his vaudeville dancer had surrounded him.

I have often wondered just what Oom's thoughts were when they brought him up there in court. He didn't say much. He never has; he never does. But I knew he was thinking. I could see it.

Was I there? Of course!

Something Pretty Spicy

The authorities were looking for something pretty spicy to come out of that arraignment of the "loving guru," so they did not hold the hearing in open court, but adjourned to one of the judge's chambers. It was good fun to see the long, disappointed faces when they learned—exactly nothing!

Not one of those pretty young women who frequented the Sanskrit College would appear against their adored Oom. And he said—nothing.

Not one, did I say? Yes, one—they got her with a subpoena before she could get all her clothes on. I wonder if the rapacious reporters who sat with eagerly poised pencils waiting for the sensation they believed was to come can recall that quiet, gray-clad figure on the witness stand, and how she was stricken with loss of memory.

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only? Those were aes-
thetic dances. Don't I
know?

I Don't Remember

No? Well, *that* was I. For days after I kept repeating to myself that monotonous: "I don't remember,"—"I forget."

I believe it was the first and last attack of that kind I ever had in my life. I've always been proud of my memory.

"I don't think you can call it at fault, can you? I know my friends do not.

One of them reminded me, when I said I was going to write of my love life, withholding nothing, telling all, of the old chorus girl story. Do you recall it?

The Chorus Girl Story

A chorus girl had just been married and three of her companions were talking about it. One of them said: "She told me she made a complete confession to him of all the indiscretions of her whole life."

"What touching confidence," remarked one, bitingly.

"What a lot of trouble for nothing, I should say," came from the second.

"What a wonderful memory!" cried the third.

Something Was Wrong

However, Oom's court experience did one thing. It showed him he must be on the wrong track. Too, it gave him a chance to look about and discover that all the gold the dancer had promised would be theirs was not materializing. Something was wrong. What?

He retired to think it over. Nor did he appear for some time after that, and then it was with a come-back that has never been excelled. He certainly has solved the problem he set out to solve if his affluence of today is any criterion.

There was no more Sanskrit College; no more New York hit or miss. Pierre was through with that.

Following Headed by Vanderbilt

One day he bobbed up serenely in the news as the master of a brand new cult and Hindu colony in New York, and already (it has never been explained how) he had as his clients some of the wealthiest and best names in New York.

They say he had to borrow the money to buy his Nyack place and set up his exclusive colony. Perhaps. At any rate, today he has a following headed by no less a personage than Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt whose daughter, the former Barbara Hatch Rutherford, "cured" of nervous ills and the effects of a most disastrous matrimonial venture through Tantrik teachings, is married to W. K. Nichols, one of Oom's assistants.

It's Different

Exclusiveness and secrecy have done wonders for Oom. It is so difficult to join the Nyack colony! Almost impossible. Or at least, it is much like joining one of those exclusive clubs where one must be put up for membership twenty years before he is born. It is just as hard to know what actually goes on in that house set far back from the highway, most efficiently guarded from vulgar public scrutiny.

Oom personally imparts his knowledge of Hindu lore to those who sit at his feet. Besides his lessons in love, others of his teachings have a sound and moral logical basis. The body and the mind must equalize, he believes, and there is nothing in psychology or physiology he has neglected toward that end.

As a shrewd psychologist, he is most successful. He knows human nature. Most of all, he knows women.

He Knows Women

He knows their complexes, unsuspected by them. He knows the urge of a woman to be "Queen."

Do I not myself know that from my experience as "Queen Bee" in the "Bee Harem?"

He knows the insistent feminine urge to be a slave. I had an example of that in my own sister, Lea.

He knows, too, the child in the grown-up, the unrest of those who have forgotten how to play. He owes much to that knowledge.

Little girls like to "dress-up." So do big girls. Oom, the Omnipotent, knows that.

So he dresses them up. And when he does, they believe they are actually the figure they represent. Which is the best reason for the success of his spectacular costume balls of which so little has ever leaked out to the public.

Gorgeous Balls

I was present at one of those balls during the winter, and a more gorgeous spectacle cannot be imagined. Earlier in the day there has been a Hindu "service"—nothing, no matter what, would induce Oom to pass those by. They are attended not only by those who are at the time residents of the colony but by many devotees who regularly journey to Nyack.

There is little resembling the Pan-worshippers, though, for Oom has gone in for austerity. In the simplest of robes his pupils sit grouped on the floor at his feet. Only he is attired in a gorgeous robe of Eastern workmanship and he sits above them on a dais-like seat as his calm voice rumbles on.

His Creed of Love

To the swaying of incense censors, in the dim light of the tapestried and velvet-hung chamber, Oom repeats his creed of love as the moving force of the world. And ever and ever, in recurring litany, comes back that monotonous chant:

"Be to me a loving guru,
Be a loving Tantrik guru."

And then, to swaying, nerve-ensuing dance measures, to the music of muted, hidden instruments, those who have literally sat at the feet of Oom to learn, complete their ceremony with a slow dance, and the lesson for the day is over. Here and there, seated on the floor, with downcast eyes that never glance up, are a few who do not join in the dance. They are clad in a single course garment and still as statues, save for the slight movement of lips. They are those who are serving a novice—
—are still contemplating their souls.

The Time Draws Near

There is something soothing in it all to restless, tired nerves. Oom has not overlooked that, either.

There was excitement enough, though, as the time for the dance drew near. The great house was filled early in the afternoon. Society men and women from New York and even from as far as Chicago and Pittsburgh had come on to unburden their souls to Oom and find out from him just who they should be for the evening to fully express their desires for the moment.

You must give the man credit. Probably if most of those women (and men, too, for society men are no different from "tired business men" and want to play, too) had been given their heads the great Oriental ball room with its mirrored floors and jeweled, faceted lights would have been filled with more kinds of queens and slave girls than history has ever known. In some

way he maneuvered them until, when I finally entered the room, I was dazzled by the variety and brilliance of the costumes.

Queens and Slaves

Certainly there were queens—one can never escape them—and plenty of slave girls—but Oom had managed to make his clients believe they each wanted to be queens and slave girls of such different eras and climes and colors and varieties that one queen wasn't stepping on another's toes or prerogatives.

Nor were they all. There were nomads and dancers; show girls and bathing beauties; Indians and Zulus and mincing Chinese ladies. Oh, a conglomerate host of femininity of all degrees and states, and each woman was subconsciously representative of just the person she would like to be, but wasn't.

As were the men, from Romeos and pirates bold, to Beau Brummels and diplomats and admirals to apaches and East Side gangsters.

Oom Smiles

And no one but Oom knew the secret. He alone had drawn from each his soul's desire. They rioted and were happy in being for the night what each wanted to be.



A woman . . . blood-streaked, dark patches of her own blood caking on face and body . . . made a bond to the platform.
[See page 62]

My Message to the

IT is always a little mad to trifle, in words, with the emotion of Love.

It is madder yet, without the excuse of the novelist, for me to tear away the protective covering of privacy and expose to you my own large share of the thrills that, since the beginning of time, have made the world go around.

But is it not brave?

I have lived and loved; and, living, loving, have learned!

Most sincerely I believe I have had revealed to me the glory and beauty of Naturalness; have, in living life according to Nature's dictum, found that Fountain of Youth for which so many a Ponce de Leon has sought in vain.

Would it not smack of fear not to pass that on?

Because Life has taught me to have no fear of convention, and has taught me also the value of frankness and moral courage, I can give you this story of my life. I want to tell of all its blissful, palpitating moments.

I want to confess—and why not?—to events and consequences which conventional fools have tried to condemn or hide.

Always, my passionate search has been for Truth! Knowledge! I believe I have gained both—and with them Happiness! More, I believe my life itself to be an answer to problems which have disturbed the ages, and am impelled, in spite of the disapproval with which I may be met in some quarters, to give to others what benefit there may be in this revelation.

Have you ever asked yourself, as I have:

"What is carnal sin?"

"Does it, after all the controversy, really exist?"

"Has one individual, or a group of individuals, the right to set itself up in judgment of physical acts alone, knowing nothing of motivating impulses—to say to that one, or this—'This is right; that wrong?'"

"What is virtue?"

And Oom smiled and smiled. And said—nothing.

I think it is the play, the make-believe, in which Oom urges his followers to indulge that makes for a great deal of his success. Especially if the play is in any sense bizarre.

I call to mind one rather weird episode in the playing of his followers. Not long ago a happily married pair who had first met at the Nyaek colony celebrated a wedding anniversary in Oom's house set in the midst of its forests and private golf courses.

Funeral Wedding Ceremony

The ceremony was a replica of a funeral cortege. A procession followed the bride and groom who were dressed as they had been at their wedding. All the rest of us were garbed as nuns and monks. We carried tall candles and chanted mysteriously.

One would have forgotten the gay dance that was to follow had it not been that, as the procession moved forward, glimpses could be had of gay, brilliantly colored costumes covered by the drab garb of nun or monk.

The high light of the whole affair was that two coffins, black and sombrely draped, were carried behind the bridal couple as they moved solemnly along with the procession.

The Dead Past

Why was that? It would have been hard for the

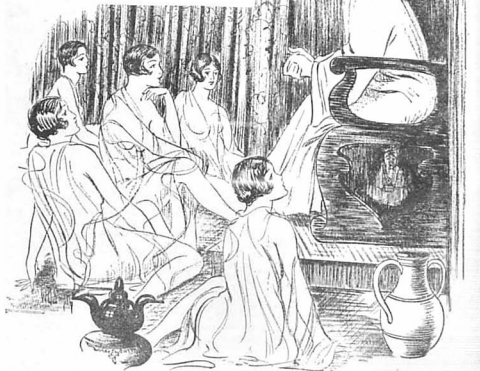
uninitiated to make out. Coffins don't seem like any kind of a symbol for a wedding anniversary. But Oom had explained it all to us. It was one of his brilliant ideas.

"We'll make this wedding the funeral of the dead past," he had announced. "And the dead past can bury its dead."

I must confess, though, that I felt a little creepy and did not have a lot of appetite when the banquet was served later, for the coffin I had followed so solemnly with the rest was used as a banquet table, black drapery and all.

Plays Up Hindu Beliefs

Pierre Bernard has made no mistake in carrying on his cult affairs. He plays up to the Hindu beliefs—strong. And, right or wrong, there is so much that is beautiful in them. It is their beauty which "Oom, the Omnipotent" principally teaches.



THE Hindus I have talked about are frankly polygamous.

Is our modern trend in that direction?

"I am reminded," thinking of the recent vogue of "companionate marriage," a term that has caught on like "soul mate" once did.

Honestly, now, I want to ask you. Isn't my idea of frank freedom of will and impulse a lot better than any such juggling of the marriage vows as companionate marriage presupposes?

Memory harks back to when I first heard of soul mates.

Bundling

Long before these sophisticated days there appeared on the American scene a man who profoundly shocked the conventional with what they chose to call his polygamous ideas.

He shocked them as they had not been shocked since the days some venturing soul brought over a sofa from "decadent" France and suggested it replace "bundling."

You know, of course, what "bundling" was in the "good old days?"

No? I will explain, briefly.

It was the custom our Puritan New England ancestors had of "bundling" a pair of cooing lovers into the nice, big, fat feather bed that was the chief article of furniture in the cold "parlor" and leaving them to their "sparkling." Or to their fate.

The Immoral Sofa

That was considered highly moral, but when that sofa was brought along, what an uproar about its immorality! What a sputter about putting bad ideas into young folks' heads by letting them sit so close together! The dominies bowled against it from their pulpits each week.

In such a way did this man of whom I speak shock the offspring of those Puritans. He dared to think it immoral to live with one woman when he loved another.

Ferdinand Pinney Earle

The man was Ferdinand Pinney Earle. His name is still known and his theories discussed where the names of great scientists and other benefactors have been forgotten or never known. And why not?

Pinney Earle, through his theories and his courage to carry them out, opened up for discussion a subject that is highly important. His idea was that for every man or woman in the world there is a "soul mate." There are two souls somewhere thoroughly attuned and understanding each other—could they be brought together. That conventional marriage, as he insisted, does not always mate them, cannot be denied.

Took a Soul Mate

There was certainly a hubbub when he openly took to himself his "soul mate" even before his divorce. The press erupted with indignant protests and condemnation. There came demands from the people that the man be suppressed.

They were for any method at all, from choking him to reviving the rack. Earle, who was a Nature student and believed in no interference with it, had never shaved or cut his hair. With his pale, saint-like countenance, he resembled the pictures of the Christ on a stained glass window. He would have looked well on a rack.

Forerunner of Companionate Marriage

But he got away with what he started. Pinney Earle, poet-idealist, pioneer in free love and trial marriage, and forerunner in companionate marriage theories, was one of this country's aristocracy. He had plenty of money. That always helps.

There are instances, however, where this idea of sloughing off the old wife in favor of the new cannot so readily be understood or condoned. There was William E. Corey, the fabulously wealthy steel man.

His wife had risen with him from poverty to affluence, had endured all life's worst hardships with him. Of course she had not remained either young or beautiful. Nor had she kept step with his social ambitions.

For a Beautiful Singer

So he simply shed her as he would a worn-out garment and took to himself the ravishingly beautiful Mabelle Gillman, comic opera singer. One would have thought, with his social-climbing ambitions, he would have chosen one of the socially elect.

No sooner had the fair Mabelle been ensconced in her beautiful Fifth Avenue home than she, too, grew ambitious. She high-hatted her former friends unmercifully, even her own middle-class father and sister.

She succeeded, too, in reaching the highest social plane, though not in this country. When she did, then William E. Corey himself got sloughed by her in turn and it was no more than what he deserved.

Trial Marriage

Still beautiful, though no longer so young, Mabelle is spending these days in lavishly entertaining European nobility in the wonderful chateau in France which was one of her husband's gifts. I was present at one of her receptions, and I felt rather like a fish out of water. I could hardly help wondering how I got in, for it certainly appeared that I was about the only person present who hadn't some fancy handle or other to her name.

THERE have been many "trial marriages" since that did not acquire their more modern appellation of "companionate marriage" until the daughter of a wealthy western publisher, took to herself a "companion." Her example has been swiftly followed by our flaming youth.

Trial Marriage—Daddy Browning

There have been many "trial marriages" since the days of Ferdinand Pinney Earle. They did not acquire their more modern appellation of "companionate marriages" until Josephine, the daughter of Haldemann-Julius, wealthy western publisher, took to herself a "companion." Her example has been swiftly followed by our flaming youth.

But if you can tell me the actual difference between "companionate marriage" and free love, I wish you would.

Daddy Browning

Perhaps, though, if I may digress a while, even trial marriage is better than to have no trial at all. There is the much-maligned Edward West ("Daddy") Browning. At least to me he seems maligned.

Poor "Daddy" Browning! He never even got a chance to have a try at making his marriage a success. His young wife, Frances Bell, "Peaches" of the tabloids, saw to that.

I must tell you of my experiences with those two.

Garrish Publicity

I shall tell you what actually happened during my short acquaintances with the Brownings. You will agree, I think, that for once in my life at least, I was pretty badly treated by another woman and by the newspapers which printed her libels. What *will* not publicity seekers do!

As human as thousands of others who read of the Browning affairs, I was rather curious to see and talk to "Daddy" Browning. I could not get away from my feeling that he was a most misunderstood man. You see, I had so many of my own experiences from which to judge. I had a more open mind about his impelling motives, I think, than had the majority.

An Expert Numerologist

It occurred to me I might prove my theories about him through a numerology reading, a science in which I have always been interested and in which, I may confidently say, I am expert.

When I was introduced to Mr. Browning one day by a mutual friend in his Seventy-second Street office, I suggested he let me do the reading.

Poor man! He has been so badgered he doesn't know who to trust. He was suspicious, even, of me, despite my good intentions.

He Is Cagey

He was interested in the reading, but he was cautious. His experiences with those who had had eagle eyes out for his pocket book have not left him with the highest opinion of humanity.

He was apologetic, repeatedly assuring me he knew there was no reason for it in my case, but he had me sign a statement that my reading was voluntary and that there would be no claims on him, financial or otherwise.

Perhaps you may get something out of it at that, he laughed. "The newspapers might like to see what the numbers say. Go ahead, if you like. By all means, sell it to them."

That, to me, was further evidence of his courage, for he had no idea whether the reading would be good or bad. Courage, I think, has been the secret of his success. He has not even been afraid of being misunderstood. That is because he is sincere and has the courage of his convictions. I know, because it has been so with me.

His Father-Complex Misunderstood

As an evidence of how he is misunderstood, take his "father complex." He can no more help being drawn to young people than a magnetic needle to the north.

Never for a moment was I ever alone with Browning, in spite of what an intoxicated tabloid reporter who talked "Peaches" into being his accomplice for the furtherance of her own publicity had to say about my efforts to lure "Daddy" away from her and into my cult. It was all so ridiculous.

I met her when he called her down to his office to hear the numerology reading I had given him. I remember his exact words:

"Peaches, I want you to come right down and meet the youngest woman for her age I ever saw in my life. She says she is fifty. See what you think."

"Peaches" No Fool

I spent rather an interesting half hour with "Peaches." I told her some of my mental and physical aids to keeping young at fifty.

"Peaches" is nobody's fool. Even then she realized she would not always be young herself: already she was too fat. She was avid to hear what I had to say.

She invited me to dinner with them at Kew Gardens. Afterwards we went to a flying field to carry out some publicity stunt about "Peaches" going to christen a plane and be the first passenger.

That didn't happen, because the plane had been christened almost as long ago as "Peaches" herself. It was that good old standby, the familiar plane the United Cigar Stores are now using as an advertisement.

It was quite good enough to pose in. "Peaches" and I accommodated.

I Am Forced to Sue

That brought us together in the public mind. That reporter did the rest. When he came to see me in my home I was foolish enough to show him some articles I had written about love cults. He carried their ideas away with him in his head, and some of my most cherished photographs in his pockets. He got those while I failed to watch him, for a moment.

That was all there was to all that hullabaloo about my weaning "Daddy" away from his more or less blushing bride.

I had to bring legal suit against "Peaches" and against the tabloid to stop them. That was not pleasant, but it had to be done.

He Is Honorable

One thing I am sure of. He may be as greedy for publicity as they say he is, but I am sure Browning had nothing to do with my unpleasant experience. He is too honorable a gentleman.

I have wandered far afield from love cults, but I must not forget to tell you something of the Sinclair and Garland experiments.

Upton Sinclair

Upton Sinclair, the famous socialist and novelist, has gone a long way since the days he thought up his Jersey Utopia. In many ways, in spite of his being the Nemesis of "the capitalists," he is, these days, one of the most conventional of the conventionals.

He has been most happily and conventionally married for several years. He also objects now to being termed a writer of obscene books. That, despite the famous "Fig Leaf edition" of one of his recent novels in which the parts of the book to which the Boston police objected are covered with a fig leaf. Which reminds me—if I may digress for a moment. He bet a reporter he could make one of the objecting police buy a copy of his book. He won his bet—sold it to him with a Bible cover on it.

Not Always Smug

Sinclair was not always so smug in his ideas. Many will recall the colony he set up across the river. To it flocked many of the "intelligenzia" who were interested in Sinclair's theories of freedom and communal living. Each person had to do his or her share of work to become worthy of being a member. There was no flummery or ritual; no luxury.

In fact, it was said that at times there was so little to eat on the communal pine board that all the high-brows were in danger of starving to death.

Nature put an end to that experiment when the whole place went up in flames one night and the novelists and the artists and the philosophers and the freaks barely escaped with their lives in their high-necked night-gowns and their shirt tails.

Wife Runs Off

He tried another experiment of setting up a single tax colony in Arden, Delaware. A different sort of colony. But, after getting himself arrested for playing baseball on Sunday, he had to face a real climax one day when his wife, the former Meta Fuller, daughter of a New York court attache, ran off with Harry Kemp, the tramp poet, declaring he was her "soul mate."

That incident seemed to put a quietus on Sinclair's

ideas of free will, or free love, or what have you. He has changed so much that, when he was on the witness stand a short time ago in defense of one of his books (in which, incidentally, he condemned promiscuous "petting," and with which I agree), he had this to say:

Believes In Love

"I believe in love, but not in sex as that word is understood on Broadway. I do not believe in promiscuity or license. I do not teach or glorify it. My first wife, during our divorce trial, called me 'an essential monogamist.' My socialist friends call me an 'old fogey.'"

Sinclair says many interesting things about sex and marriage. I think he sums up the matter, as it stands today, when he says:

"Marriage used to be a sacrament; now it's a lottery."

Charles Garland

If you are looking for something more lurid, I am going to give it to you now. There has been plenty of it in the career of Charles Garland, another violent socialist and radical, since he first appeared on our horizon. He was first heard of when he refused his inheritance of millions.

Impossible, they said! There must be some catch in it.

There wasn't. Charles Garland positively, firmly declined to accept the money because he had not earned it, because it was the "fruit of a greedy system."

He Refuses Inheritance

If he had been looking for a way to get publicity he could not have discovered a better one. Only one other, at any rate. That was the one he took. The idea of a man refusing a million dollars may have been a nine days' wonder, but they haven't quit talking about all of Garland's

startling activities. Wild tales have come from some of the various colonies he has established; some almost unbelievable.

It took the young man four years to get rid of the fortune which, in spite of all he could do, just would keep piling up. In the end the socialists and the radicals and the "working class" did get it. What it has done for them has not as yet been recorded.

Free Love Farms

But Garland was free to work as hard and as constantly as ever he pleased on the free love farms he set up.

He followed his intention of giving away his money in spite of the fact that, once or twice, he showed signs

I SHALL tell you what actually happened during my short acquaintances with the Brownings. You will agree, I think, that for once in my life at least, I was pretty badly treated by another woman and by newspapers which printed her libels.

of weakening. Those were the times when children were born to his one legally wedded wife, the former Mary Wrenn, aristocratic Boston society girl. For, as Lady Astor says: "Women come and go, but mothers go on forever."

He finally did consent to accept a third of his fortune. He settled that on his wife.

A Love Cult Propagandist

His defection from the ranks of the love cultists did not last long, and though he persuaded his wife to join his colonies two or three times, the time came when, what with this and that and the other soul mate calling for attention, Mrs. Garland decided enough of Charles was "sufficiency." She had been loyal, through a lot, but she finally divorced him.

Strangely enough it was the teaching of his own mother that made Garland a love cult propagandist. She was Marie Tudor, of Boston, a lineal descendant of King Henry III of England who had six wives, who went by the axe route and who had an unrecorded number of soul mates. Her son came by his propensities honestly.

When other little boys were playing duck-on-a-rock, Charles Garland was listening to the Sapphic Odes with their extreme ideas of love freedom. His mother also taught him that money was a curse and the root of all evil. She never gave away any of her own millions, though.

Freedom to Love

He was to be a great man, she said. He would lead the multitude out of the money-worshipping wilderness and into the promised land of freedom of mind, body and soul.

Surely he has done his best—or worst. If a long succession of soul mates who have followed him uncomplainingly into poverty, content to labor in garments of sackcloth and live in hencoops, is any proof, he has been successful.

There has been nothing of the esoteric or aesthetic in Garland's love colonies. It has been work, work, work, with heart, head and hands, and extreme denial in all things—save in the perfect freedom to love who, when and where one would. And as often as the impulse came.

Was Lovely at First

His original ideas that attracted his first adherents were more idealistic. Of course there was to be work

in his colony. But there were to be compensations.

Work would make virile men who should wear little else than their own beautiful thoughts. Work would make lovely, healthy women who would milk the cows and feed the chickens, and cook and perhaps sit on the bare floor and sew a more or less fine seam.

They could dance in the eventide to the music of lutes, in their bare feet and with garlands in their hair. They could make and live their own poems. It didn't sound so bad.

Love Baby's Death

Except for the work part, it seems to have gone the way of all dreams. Garland has discovered what other love cultists have known, that if he would carry out any original ideas, money—plenty of money—is necessary. And he gave all his away.

The high point in his career was reached recently through the death of one of his "love children." It was the baby of Bettina Hovey, a former Massachusetts newspaper woman and his latest soul mate. The child died a natural death. But that did not stop investigation.

Oh, the pity of the story that was told!

The Fruit of Illicit Love

I can vision what happened. The dark, eerie night. The father and mother, tears streaming from their eyes, (for they loved the poor little mite) plodding through wind and rain and darkness to the edge of a deserted cemetery. With his own hands Garland dug the grave. He and the sobbing mother silently, furtively, buried the fruit of their illicit love.

They were afraid of what might happen when the death of the child became known. Only a broken branch struck into the earth marked the spot where Bettina Hovey's baby lay.

The dream he had! Think of it!

The actuality?

April Farm

I wonder if there came over Garland and his soul mate as they plodded sadly in the darkness and rain any reminder of what he had once visioned of happy little "love children" running around in the Eden he had planned to be without money, without marriage.

That last episode likely writes "finis" to Charles Garland's "April Farm," as he named the Pennsylvania love colony.





CHAPTER XIII

YOU youngsters will not recall—an older generation will, however—the famous “personal” columns that ran for many years in the old New York Herald. They were legally squelched finally, the chief objection to them being that they were media for communications between crooks, abetting criminality through the code letters they used.

The “Herald” Personals!

How amusing were some of those “personals!”

I was not interested in the non-committal ads, but had many a laugh over such as “Charming widow wants to meet gent who grinned when she tore her

petticoat at Forty-second Street,” or something of the like.

Many and many an unconventional acquaintance was acquired through those “personals.” I imagine that more than one dire misfortune to exploring youth could have been traced to them. They still exist in England, and are one of the lurid features of a famous London daily.

There has recently sprung up in this country, in some of the tabloids and queer magazines, a mushroom growth somewhat resembling those columns. In danger to unsuspecting, romantic youth, though, they are as a roaring lion to the lamb of the old “personal.”

Get Acquainted Clubs

Even at their first appearance, my curiosity was aroused by certain of these "Get Acquainted," or "Lonesome" clubs.

Just what was behind them?

To what sort of people did they appeal?

I knew there was many a young girl alone in the city so desperate she would seize almost any opportunity to "get acquainted" with some of her own kind.

Did a girl like that answer those letters which appeared daily?

Did she meet "her kind" through them, or—

To get the answer, I knew I must find out for myself.

Leave Them Alone

I began by picking out a few letters to answer. Before I was through I had answered many. My experiences were varied, in some cases innocuous; in some rather interesting. I found out enough in the majority of cases, though, to say to girls everywhere:

"Leave them alone, girls! Keep away! You had better be lonely all your lives than to run afoul of some people such as I ran across. You are probably not as able, as I certainly was, to look out for yourself."

An instance or so will suffice, I think. Here is one.

One Incidence

I had picked out, for answering, a letter that rather amused me. It seemed to have something out of the ordinary, something back of what the words said.

In answering any of those letters I tried to follow the lead of the writer I was answering. I made my replies as peculiar as their letters.

I must say, though, that had I been a man and received from a woman some of those fearfully and wonderfully concocted epistles I evolved, I should have thought twice before taking the lady at her own valuation.

My Letter to Him

Here is what I wrote to one man from a suburban town who signed himself "Union" and who expressed a desire to meet "A lady—object matrimony."

Dear Editor, dear sir:

Would be interested to correspond with party who signs himself "Union."

Am a cultured attractive young widow in reduced circumstances and long for a home and would like to make some man happy.

Am a capable housewife and very congenial and have unusually good disposition, etc.

Can give you best of references as to my character as I know many prominent people.

Would be pleased if you would give "Union" my address for correspondence.

We Become Engaged

I had expected almost anything from such a beginning, but I never could have imagined what actually did occur. I met the man. He came to my house often.

In the course of time we became engaged—oh, I was going to go through with all the fixin's to find things out.

We had an engagement party. I did not hesitate, at

his insistent request, to pose for him in a bathing suit, during the party.

"You want the chap to know what he's getting, don't you?" they all agreed with my "fiancee."

Well, why not? What's wrong with a bathing suit? What's wrong with the human form?

I noticed he did not show much enthusiasm for marrying though, even while being pleased at the idea of being engaged.

Was a Pervert

Then I found out why. The man was notorious in his own town as a pervert. He had taken this means of trying to pull the wool over the eyes of his friends and associates. He wanted to cover his true nature by becoming engaged to some woman. Preferably to one who knew nothing about him. He didn't want to be married. All he wanted was to be engaged!

He didn't like it a bit when I called the engagement off. He wanted to sue me for breach of promise. Imagine! He *did* have the feminine complex!

Then there was a peculiar experience in Baltimore.

Another Experience

I answered the letter in a "get-together" magazine that read like this:

If you have any eligible ladies in your Get-Acquainted club who would care to write to a forty-year-old bachelor, please tell them about me.

I am medium in height and weight and have gray eyes.

For several years I have been a public accountant in Baltimore. I have a very comfortable apartment and all that I wish for except the genial companionship of a sweet girl.

I am a graduate of Harvard so it is only natural I prefer intelligent girls of the better class. Can you help me out!

JOLLY OLD SPORT.

I "took my pen in hand" to see if I could manage an answer of the sort that might be expected from an "intelligent girl of the better class" of the kind I felt sure Jolly Old Sport meant. Here is what I finally got out of my system:

To Fill His Requirements

Dear Mr. Editor:

Noticed in your column of "Get-Acquainted" club a letter written to you who is anxious to find a woman of the better class. Well, that's me, all right. He signs himself Jolly Old Sport, Baltimore, Md.

I think you must know me by name as I have written to you quite often.

I am confident that Jolly Old Sport would like my companionship as I am a *real individualist* very human, full of pep and strikingly good looking. However, I do not suffer from *superiority complex* despite my vivid description of myself.

Will you give the gentleman my address to write me?

I'm afraid I suffer from a *complex* for your magazine as I am a very enthusiastic reader and recommend it to all I come in contact with.

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could write—to the most enthusiastic outpourings of passion.

They were the sort of letter that might well have impressed an unsophisticated girl. I, myself, confess a curiosity to see the perpetrator of such purple epistles.

I decided to see the matter through. At last I told him I would come to Baltimore, as he begged me to. It got so that letters were too slow for him. He resorted to long distance and to the telegraph.

I went to Baltimore to meet him.

A Prayer On Women

My first sight of him should have been enough, for, when I saw my letter-writing Romeo, behold! He had a fat neck, a paunch, puffy cheeks, and small rat eyes that showed him to be what he was—a prayer on the souls and bodies of young girls and women.

I don't know why I didn't get right back in the train. I didn't, though.

I went to dinner with him. All through that meal and in spite of the words of adoration for me that fell from his lips between stuffed mouthfuls of food, my mind kept reverting to my childhood in the Swiss mountains, and something I had learned as a child. I could hardly forbear opening my mouth and letting out a loud call of: "Ooooooeeee! Pig! Pig! P!g!g!"

Why wasn't that enough?

I cannot tell you. I do not know. Insatiable curiosity, I suppose.

He Tries to Subdue Me

I wondered just how far he would go. I wondered what his course of action would be if I accepted his persistent invitation to look over his apartment.

I found out, and if I had been less able to look out for myself, I would have regretted that to the last day of my life. I draw a careful curtain over his ugly efforts to subdue me.

Finally it was I who got the upper hand. Before I got through I had him grovelling at my feet on his best rug, tears streaming from his fat-lidded eyes, pouring out his fat soul. If I would only stay there with him! Just this one night! Jewels, gold, fine raiment—just as soon as he could get into his safety deposit box—he would shower them on me! In the morning we should be married—

I Get Away

It was his last stand. He had tried force, had tried the threats of an infuriated animal. He knew what it was to get his face slapped when he tried to fondle me.

Somehow I got into my hat and coat, grabbed up the new bag I had bought to help create a "doll-up" im-

pression on the man who could write such dreamy letters. Somehow I got out.

I can see him now, as he sank back into his chair, defeated, a miserable lump of fat humanity, a disappointed leer on his face, hands twitching, and breath coming asthmatically. Angry? Furious!

Dangerous Dance Halls

In the course of my investigations I answered a good many letters in the magazine that sent me to Jolly Old Sport. I got many letters from the editor, always assuring me his club was "just one big family." If they were, their progenitors had certainly been most curiously mated. He wasn't nearly so enthusiastic about me when he learned later on that my extraordinary interest in his club had been for the purpose of investigation.

I broke up several affairs in which innocent young girls were involved.

I believe that the danger from "get acquainted" clubs is second to none, except perhaps to those dance halls with which New York and other cities are honeycombed. With the interest of young girls at heart, I have looked into many of these, too.

Many of the unfortunate dance hall "incidents," which happened in

spite of the splendid work of women police and social workers, will only become known in that day of judgment when all is known. Many of the pitiful stories are written in the morgue and in Potter's Field. The newspapers print stories of some disasters which I believe do good work in warning girls.

Girls Never Believe

But youth is careless. Girls never believe that what has happened to others may happen to them. They do not stop to ask what may be the outcome when, as so often does after they are exhilarated from jazz and gin, some dance partner they have never met before whispers:

"Come on up to so and so's apartment, kid. We're going to throw a real party. You needn't be afraid. Tell you what we'll do! We'll take along the hostess here. All right, huh?"

They Are Seduced

How little do such girls know that in more cases than I like to think of the "hostess," if she were called by her right name, would be "procuress." Naturally I am not talking about any of the better known night clubs or dance halls. They have dangers enough, goodness knows, but they draw the line somewhere. It is the smaller, more obscure "club" or dance hall, the haunt of the working girl, eager for pleasure, of which I write.

Notes dropped from windows have sometimes told

THEN I found out why. The man was notorious in his own town as a pervert. He had taken this means of trying to pull the wool over the eyes of his friends and associates. He wanted to cover his true nature by becoming engaged to some woman.

the end of such stories. They have told of girls kept prisoners after all they valued in life had been forced from them.

More often there is silence. Only another report to the police of a girl "missing." Only another recruit for some *palais d'joie* in a far-off city or foreign land.

Victims of Gigolos

That the danger is not all for the poor girl who falls victim to such "gigolos" is well known. The dance halls, the night clubs of every city, abound with "gigolos," as the patent-leather-haired men "with-no-visible-means-of-support-but-dance-well" have come to be known.

The term of course, originated in Paris. It is likely to end in Paris, too, if one can take seriously a clever little jibe I heard the other day as true.

"They say the government is going to class you gigolos as working men," an acquaintance told one of them.

The "gig" as they are familiarly termed, groaned.

"Working man? Me? Then the jig is up!"

War Brought Them

"Gigolos" came into being after the war when Paris swarmed with fallen nobility who found themselves without a means of support save their nimble feet and society manners.

They found their services readily in demand by an aristocracy-worshiping feminine American public who had not got over the habit. There were many such women who loved to boast of having had Lord or Count or Duke this or that as her dancing partner. Willing to pay well for the privilege, too.

Naturally such a remunerative occupation to which so little work was attached was bound to attract others. "Gigolos"—"gigolettes," too, sprang up by the score.

She Loses All

The practice of paying for dancing partners grew, became quite the thing. So much so, I understand that recently, in London, it has become the custom for even the best restaurants and night clubs to furnish dance partners, male or female, on order as they serve the soup or caviare.

I call to mind one well known case in this country. You may recall that wealthy woman who fell in love with her "gigolo." She came out of her experience a sadder and wiser woman. A poorer one, too, for while her own "gigolo" was not to blame for it, others who envied him laid elaborate plans and succeeded in robbing the woman of jewels worth a quarter of a million dollars. This was in the papers about two years ago.

Which was not all she lost. She lost an adoring husband; she lost her social prestige. In the end, she lost her "gigolo," for she showed no better perspicacity than to marry him.

She probably thought she would gain a great experience in love. Others have thought the same.

The Flower of Love

Especially have those thought so of whom I have written—those who have thought to get love through association with love cults and other erotic organizations.

The women—oh, how often—have found that the flower of love so sought is at best a death flower.

The men—I can say best by quoting for you what Gabriele d'Annunzio wrote about Mona Lisa in his prologue to "La Gioconda."

"Her kiss is death; her love red flame
That scorches like a white-hot brand;
But luring lightning in her eyes
Beckons to that forbidden land
Where blasted lives, like hollow skulls,
Lie whitening on the sun-cut sands."



I BELIEVE I have kept my promise to tell you all my experiences in life; to withhold nothing.

I wonder if I have not earned the right to interpolate a little sermon? It will not be a long, or a cut-and-dried sermon. It will be bits culled from the best of the philosophy which Life has taught me.

I have known the bitter and the sweet. I told you in the beginning there was nothing in this world—nothing of good or bad—but had its compensations.

That repayment in my case has been Knowledge.

My Creed

This is my creed:

I believe we are all put on this material plane for development. We cannot develop without self-expression. Isn't it better to express almost any way than not at all?

I believe emotions should never be stifled or suppressed. They *should* be controlled.

I believe in experiment. All the great things of life have come only as the result of experiment. No great movement or discovery was ever started that did not carry with it the possibility of failure or destruction.

I believe the *big thing* in life is faith and courage to go on, trusting in the materialization of the goal of our dreams and ambitions, through inspiration and belief.

Greatest Gifts

I believe the greatest gifts given to man carry with them the responsibility for their proper use.

I believe in a great love for all humanity, because all are struggling for the peace and serenity necessary for development, growth, understanding.

I believe that soul-consciousness, sympathy, understanding and love for humanity are the greatest gifts of a Universal God, though book knowledge and education are of great necessity in this material world of ours.

I believe, I *know*, we are all victims of caprice. Each wind that blows, blows us from our course. But there is a broad highway strewn with flowers for all who obey the dictates of the soul.

Love Shall Point the Way

I believe the inner voice of conscience should be our only guide, and that love should point the way. For when courage fails, as it often must, love is the sentinel.

With this credo, I have also come to know:

That when one adopts any certain standard of conduct and moral code, thereby deciding all others at fault, the result can only be inharmonious and destructive.

That as all human judgment is but relative, we can-

not adopt a criterion of right or wrong to stand the test of time.

That only those who are guided by their honest intuitions find a true standard.

All Is Good—All Is God

That there is no right or wrong in the Universal Plan. All is good, for all is God.

That, since the purpose of all life or energy is greater development, we *cannot* stand still—we *must* not go back.

That it is never the thing itself, but our attitude toward it, the use to which we put it, that brings us joy or sorrow, happiness or misery, harmony or inharmony.

So much for what Life has taught my mind and soul. I believe that I, myself, have had most to do with teaching my body.

King Canute commanded the sea to go back. It would not.

I have done something greater than driving back the sea. I have said to my body: "Stay young!" It has obeyed.

Body Still Young at Fifty

How I made my body, at fifty, behave as it did at twenty, I shall tell you.

No one may live forever, but it is my contention that no one need be anything

but young while living.

Years have a way of swiftly passing, and I urge even you, so young you have not yet learned that Life will not always be May, to heed what I have to say. The day will come when you will not regret it.

I have written many articles on the care of the body through exercise and a proper mental attitude, but here I shall merely epitomize a few of the most important points. I shall not epitomize to a degree, however, that any shade of meaning may be lost.

Knew Coueism Long Ago

F I never had cause to learn of Coue and his slogan: "Every day in every way I'm growing better and better." I knew that long before the name of Coue was flashed across two continents with what was called his "discovery."

I *know* that all that reflects from without must come from within, and have always practiced the proper frame of mind. I have been optimistic, youthful, happy, before all else.

Think Youth

Thousands of women go daily to beauty specialists for face liftings and goodness knows what without knowing this vital fact. I have had no need of beauty treatments because I have not feared age. Age is, after all, only a delusion, if you can come to believe it. *Think*

I BELIEVE in experiment. All the great things of life have come only as the result of experiment. No great movement or discovery was ever started that did not carry with it the possibility of failure or destruction.

youth! That is the first law.

There is a sound physiological basis for this as well as a psychological one, for it is known that emotions effect those important ductless glands. Persist in the right emotions. Have beautiful thoughts. You can have them, as easily as those deadly ones of hate, envy or malice.

Important as it is, I do not consider mental hygiene to be all in keeping young. For years I have followed a strict regime of body building. I have no hesitancy in recommending it. It has certainly been efficacious with me. I shall, you will note, give you as many "dos"

Bathe in warm water, following it with a shower of cold water or by an alcohol rub, and waken the skin fully with a good rubbing with a coarse towel.

Don't loiter around all morning in a bathrobe. You'll get lazy, and laziness is deadly to beauty.

Eat a tempting breakfast, but not too heartily. As long as I can recall I have always eaten sparingly. I have accustomed myself to periodical fasts, too, which I believe are greatly responsible for the slenderness of my figure.

Wear Few Clothes

Now for a homely suggestion, but to my mind one of the most important. By all means do your own housework if you would keep young and beautiful. For twenty-seven years I have kept house, and have done



How I made my body, at fifty, behave as it did at twenty, I shall tell you.

[See page 79]



as "don'ts," something a little different from the advice of many specialists.

Learn to Stretch and Breathe

Do not jump out of bed immediately on wakening in the mornings. Allow your body to wake gradually. Stretch every muscle many times before you rise. Breathe deeply, too, as you stretch, and open your eyes slowly that they may become gradually accustomed to the light of day.

all my own work, even to scrubbing floors, washing windows, making beds, sweeping—all the spurned homely duties. For real efficacious results I would not change that exercise for all the golf, tennis or other sports in the world.

There is another advantage in housework as exercise. I can do almost all of it wearing no clothing at all and let the sun and air get at my body and vitalize it. I do not believe such a costume would win entire approval on any of our best regulated golf courses.

Deep breathing with the chest and bust are essential. I always sing doing my housework and this has the double advantage of giving me deep breathing exercises and putting me into the right frame of mind. Quite often I stop in the midst of some duty and turn on the victrola and improvise my own dances for a time.

Learn to Relax

Relax. Relax properly. Animals can teach you that better than any human. My pet bulldog taught me the art. The instinct of animals can always be relied on. Birds taught me how to sing and to open my throat.

To have splendid eyesight, bathe the eyes frequently in cold water and exercise them by closing them tightly, then opening them to stretch the muscles.

But after all this, the greatest factors are not following any physical regime of beauty culture, any plastering on of beauty clay to tighten the skin (though I am a great believer in this Egyptian method and used it long before it became popular), not face massage, or face lifting or monkey glands, but living and thinking thoughts of youth. Being without fear of age. At fifty I have no signs of a menopause because I do not fear it. I am better sexed than I was years ago.

Naturalness, too, is vital, as I told you early in this story, and a getting far away from stupid conventions, prudery and hypocrisy.

Take a Lover

Because dignity and crippled joints go hand in hand, throw dignity aside. If wives and mothers of middle age could cast aside their cherished "respectability" and become natural, there would be more youth and contentment. In fact, I want to go so far as to advise all unmarried women to have lovers. The sex-starved

are never those who have the white, rounded bodies, who blossom as the rose.

I say this, knowing whereof I speak, for at fifty I have the body, romance, sentiment, aspirations and ambitions of a young girl. I am filled with pep and vigor and never have "that tired feeling."

It is my contention that Life's greatest triumphs are saved for middle age, that if one *expresses* and does not repress, at fifty Life has just begun.

Have I a Lover Now?

You may ask if I have a lover now.

Have I not said I am never without a romance? What would life be without it? I cannot imagine.

Madame De Stael was sixty when she had the world of men at her feet. Sarah Bernhardt, Eleonora Duse, George Eliot and many other famous women had love affairs in the late days when they were far from being young or beautiful.

Why not, though, be young and beautiful always? It can be done.

My Present Romance

Of my present romance, however, I shall not tell you. It is too sweet, too dear. Perhaps some day I shall tell you of it. Not now. It is being lived now and being inscribed on my heart.

At fifty I am happy. Supremely happy. I have but one ambition in life.

The remarkable Ninon De l'Enclos was beautiful and surrounded by handsome young lovers when she was seventy. It is my ambition to surpass that famous French beauty.

And so I hope to be able to write for you what is then my latest love affair—at eighty!



A Warning to All Young Girls

Marian Dockerill's Confidential Advice

YOU have read of the interesting, adventuresome life I have led. You, who have read this story of my life and love experiences, can appreciate how well I have learned about the pitfalls and trials of life.

It is the birthright of every girl to know real love—that love which thrills us to the very core of our being. Many of us, even as I have, find our true loves only after the most disappointing experiences which at first seem so real, but finally prove to be only poor imitations, like tinsel instead of gold.

Do not be afraid of love! Do not be afraid to love! When you feel that love has come to you, you must not hesitate, because, as our wiseman said so many centuries ago, "he who hesitates is lost." Lost shall be

that opportunity which comes but once in a life time.

Of course, you are thinking in your mind about ways and means to make sure that it is a true love when you see it. How can you tell that it is safe to forget all restraints and give yourself over to that irresistible flood of passion?

For years, I have been giving this sort of advice to my multitudes of young girl friends all over the country. To guide you I have published, below, letters with their answers from me touching upon as diversified a group of cases as I could select in hopes that these letters might prove valuable advice to you. These letters are yours and my advice free for you to take as guidance for your own problems.

IF you have some particular problem which has not been answered, and this might likely be the case because all of our lives have unique difficulties, different from everyone else's, write me a letter, telling me just what your situation may be and I will answer you immediately. To cover the cost of postage, stationery and mailing, you may enclose ten cents in stamps with your letter and I will study your problem and advise you immediately.

You must be very careful to tell me the full truth and not hold back anything because it will not be fair to the other girls to whom I would rather give time than those who are not entirely frank with me and I do not think anyone should take up my time unfairly or abuse my confidence. Write me care of Better Publishing Co., Dunellen, N. J.

Marian Dockerill

Very Much in Love

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I am seventeen years old and very much in love with a fellow who is a few years older than I. After going together several months, we became engaged. We decided to get married when I'd be about 19 years old, and as this is a long time to wait we thought we'd break the engagement, with the understanding that some day we would marry.

I have always been true to him, and told him everything. He has promised to do the same, and I believe he is pretty true so far. Other fellows have asked me to go with them, but I refused because my thoughts go back to the one I love. He does not go out with different girls. He has told me often that he loves me. Do you think he loves me if he waits till I'm of age? Everybody tells me that he is not worthy of my love, and that I'd be foolish to marry him. But I love him and no one else.

BOBBIE.

Dear Bobbie, if you love the young man and no one else, you should marry him no matter what your

friends think. Unless, of course, your parents object. Your letter seems to indicate that he loves you.

In fact, your letter seems to describe a particularly beautiful and complete love on the part of both of you. Good luck, Bobbie!

How to Win Him Back

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I am a young girl of fourteen and I dearly love a young man who is twenty. I have been out with him once or twice, and talked with him a few times. He seemed to care a lot for me then but now it seems to me that he cares for another girl.

He treats me all right as far as I know. What can I do to win his love?

ELIZABETH.

Dear Elizabeth, perhaps the young man thinks you are too young for him. At any rate, be as sweet and gracious and considerate as you can be when you are

with him—make yourself as adorable as possible, and perhaps he will come to adore you!

It is perfectly proper for him to see other girls, as at his age very few young men care to tie themselves up definitely with one.

And as for you—do not moon about him, but go about having as good a time as you can. Have many friends and like them all. Don't let him make you miserable!

Better Study

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I am engaged to a young man who seems to be very nice, and has always treated me with great respect. I love him dearly, and he tells me that he loves me. My love affair with him seems to be different from all others I have ever had although I am only seventeen years old. He is twenty-one. Do you suppose this is a "puppy love affair" or true love?

In the meantime I have planned to finish school and go to college, but he objects to this. He says it will be too long to wait. Which do you think is best for me to do, give him up and go to school, or do as he likes? Will he wait for me if he loves me truly?

PEGGIE.

Dear Peggie, I think you should continue your studies. At least finish school even if you do not go to college. The young man will, I believe, wait for you if he really loves you.

You will have many advantages if you continue school and I am sure you can get the young man in question to realize that. Show him how sincere your desire for education is.

Explain to him that you feel you can be a better wife and mother if blessed with the advantage of a good general knowledge.

I'm sure if you reason with him, he will promise to wait for you. Do not be defiant about it, but hold your ground as well as you can and he may come around to your way of thinking.

A Tardy Correspondent

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I am a boy in my senior year in high school. I like a girl very much. Each time I write her she waits three or four weeks to answer, giving some foolish excuse.

What could you advise me to do? Do you think she cares very much for me? I do not love her enough ever to marry her.

A. M.

Dear A. M., you seem to be quite puzzled, but can't you stop to realize that many people always delay an-

swering letters, and that this does not necessarily mean anything? Some people answer letters as soon as they get them, others keep putting off answering.

There is nothing about her delay in writing that should make you think she does not write because she does not care for you; on the other hand, if you do not love the girl enough ever to marry her, and are positive of this, why be so concerned?

As long as you and she are just good friends, there is no reason why you cannot pardon a little tardiness in answering your letters.

Two Brothers

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I have been going with a boy almost a year. He is nineteen years old and I am only sixteen. He has a brother, seventeen, whom I have gone out with several times, but he does not want me to go out with his brother. He is not jealous, but does not like me to go out with other boys.

The older brother doesn't like to go out in society, but I do. The younger likes society and seems to be more lively and to care more about pleasure than the older.

My best girl friend's sweetheart chums with the younger boy and she wants me to go with the younger.

Please advise me which one to go with, as they are both nice boys, and both seem to want to go with me.

SALLY.

Dear Sally, if I were you I would continue to go with the older boy. There seems to be little reason why you cannot be friendly with both, but since the older brother objects to your seeing the younger, you should hearken to his wishes out of deference to your long acquaintance with him.

From your letter I gather the impression that the older boy is much more settled and sensible than the younger, who seems to be out only for pleasure. The older boy probably has a deep feeling for you.

It would be rather unfair to shift your attentions from the nineteen-year-old boy to his brother just because the brother is more gay. If you loved the brother, it would be a different matter.

I really think, Sally, that the older brother is a better friend to you than the younger. Of course I say this purely out of reading between the lines of your letter.

A Bashful Blonde

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

Please tell me how I can overcome bashfulness. I am ashamed before nearly everybody. Before some persons my bashfulness has weakened but before others it has increased.

My friends always tell me I will get over it, but I

have little hope. Do you think I will? I do not know whether I am growing more bashful or not.

I am fourteen, four feet and ten inches tall. How much should I weigh?

A BASHFUL BLONDE.

The only way to overcome bashfulness is to think less of yourself when in company and more of the people you are with. Just forget yourself and you will overcome your fault.

Of course you will get over it! It is only a temporary manifestation of the period of life that you are in.

Do not fear; all will be well if you just try to take a great interest in the people around you and dismiss all thoughts of self. The only way to forget being bashful is to exercise your will power—make up your mind you simply will not be bashful. And keep yourself in as healthy a general condition as possible, for very often poor health has a relation to mental conditions such as bashfulness.

I think your weight should not exceed one hundred pounds.

Sees Another Girl

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I have gone out with a boy for six months. He is nineteen years old and I am only seventeen. I love him dearly and he tells me he loves me. Recently he met another girl and he quit coming to see me as often as before. He says he still loves me. Please tell me how I can gain his friendship again, for I am worried all the time about him. The girl he goes with doesn't seem to care anything about him.

BLUE EYES.

Dear Blue Eyes, just try to forget the other girl and increase your friend's affection by being as sweet to him as you can be and displaying all your good qualities to him. If the other girl does not care about him, he will in time come back to you completely. He has possibly just a temporary interest in the other girl, and by being as sweet and interesting as you can be, you may be able to prevent him from becoming too interested in her.

But do not show him that you care about his seeing the other girl. In my opinion, that would not be wise. It would only flatter his self-esteem and do no good.

He says that he still loves you. If he is a truthful boy, you have little to be worried about. He is certain to come back to you if he loves you. If you were engaged to him you might insist that he does not see the other girl, but as you are not engaged to him—at least your letter does not say you are—you have only

to wait and see what happens. Perhaps all will turn out for the best.

Wants to be Popular

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I'm in my third year in high school, nearly eighteen, and called pretty by some of my friends. I don't powder and rouge as much as some girls.

What is troubling me is this: I can't be popular. For instance, there is a foreign girl I know. She is about seventeen or eighteen, and she was born in the United States. You see, she is more popular than some of our real American girls. But maybe it is because she has a baby doll face and figure. I know some girls who are prettier than she is, though, and they are not as popular as she.

She seems something of a mystery. She can speak plainer and better English than we do, and she dresses cutely too.

I know right now that some of the boys would be glad to marry her any time. So please tell me how I can become more popular, and what you think of this foreign girl.

UNPOPULAR.

Dear Unpopular, you tell me the girl is foreign, but I don't know just what you mean when you say she was born in the United States. That makes her an American girl. She could not be American-born and yet foreign. She seems from your letter to be a very nice, cultured girl.

The way to be popular is to be considerate and pleasant whenever in company. Develop your personality. Become interested in literature, plays and current topics and talk about them in an intelligent way. Do not envy others who are popular. Make yourself one of them by your sheer personality, cleverness and pleasantness.

Three Girls

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

We are three girls, thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen years old, of black hair, blue and brown eyes, fair complexion. We wear short dresses and wear knickers to school. We use rouge and lipstick and have bobbed hair.

Do you think we are old enough to make dates with the boys? Should a girl invite her sweetheart to dinner? Should a girl go riding with a boy at night if she loves him? And if not?

Should a girl fourteen or fifteen love a boy or write to him? Should a boy come to see a girl any day in the week and should a boy love two girls? How old should a girl be when she marries? Do you

think the boy should be older than the girl? Do you think a boy should be jealous? Should a boy of fourteen go with girls? Do you think a boy should give a girl a birthday present, and should a girl give a boy one?

BROWN AND BLUE EYES.

Dear girls, you certainly are curious about a lot of things, but I am going to try to answer all your questions. Of course it is proper for you to have friends, both boy and girl friends, but you seem to be a little too young to think of the boys as sweethearts. It is very nice to invite a boy for dinner. It is proper to go riding with a boy at night unless parents object. Your parents should be asked before you make an appointment with a boy whether or not they would object to your being with him.

A person loves or does not love; there is no such thing as deciding whether or not to be in love! It is quite nice to correspond with a boy. A boy may come to see a girl as often as he likes if she does not make known to him that she would prefer him to limit his visits. That is up to her. I don't see how it is possible for a boy to love two girls. If he can "love" more than one, it is not love at all. Just a liking that he thinks is love.

As a general rule, I think a girl should be at least eighteen when she marries, and the boy ought to be the same age or more—but there are many cases of happy marriages where the boy was younger than the girl. Jealousy is never a good quality. A boy of fourteen may have girl friends. Why not? An exchange of gifts is always a sweet and thoughtful thing.

But, dear girls, at your ages I think you should regard your boy friends with the same emotions that you regard your girl friends, rather than thinking of such things as love and marriage. These things will come later.

Shall She Propose?

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I am of a good, respectable family, but the boy with whom I am in love is the son of a bootlegger. I have been going with him for nearly a year and we love each other very dearly. He has never spoken of marriage to me. Please advise me whether or not you think it proper for me to propose marriage to him.

SUNSHINE.

Dear Sunshine, the business of your sweetheart's father should not influence you against him unless he is also mixed up in the business. If he has no connection with the bootlegging activities of his father,

I cannot see how you can hold them against him. But make sure of this. This being Leap Year, you have a traditional right to propose marriage to him—but look before you leap!

Try to Mend Matters

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

When I was seventeen years old I was married. I have been married three years and have one little son fifteen months old. For the last year or so my husband has wanted me to leave him and let him have the baby but I couldn't part with the baby.

Do you think it wise to leave him and go to work and take care of Sonny myself?

Dot.

Dear Dot, before leaving him you should try in every possible way to make some other adjustment. The old rule about marrying "for better or for worse" still holds true. Perhaps the difficulties between your husband and yourself can be adjusted and your marital troubles smoothed over. As you have not confided in me just what seems to be the trouble between your husband and yourself, your letter is very hard to answer.

However, I would not advise you to leave—with or without the baby. Try to make the best of it. Some passage of time may mend everything.

It will be very difficult for you to make a living for your son and yourself, unless you have some special training. Your letter gives me no idea of what you are fitted for or what you intend to do.

Do special things to please your husband; go out of your way for him. Be as kind and good to your husband as you can be, and as unselfish about everything as you can be, and just see whether or not he will appreciate it. I think he will.

Too Early for Presents

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

Is it considered proper for the girl to assist her escort when he is putting on his coat in a lunch room or any other public place?

Is it ever considered proper for her to pay for the "cats" or the entertainment?

Would it be proper to have him to her home for dinner when they had not been "dating" a month and were not engaged?

What would be a desirable birthday or Christmas gift for her to get him? What would be considered a reasonable sum to pay for a gift under the above circumstances? Also, should the girl pay as much, or

more, for his gifts as he pays for hers?

MISS N. B.

The answer to the first two questions is "No," except under unusual circumstances in the case of the second question. It is proper, I believe, and a very nice courtesy, to invite a young man to dinner at home even though the couple are not engaged and are new friends.

As to gifts, the matter of money does not enter at all into the question, as the gift should always be judged by its thoughtfulness rather than its monetary value. But I think in the case outlined above, it would be out of place to exchange gifts so early in the friendship. Get better acquainted before making an exchange of gifts.

Better Wait

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I am a girl of sixteen in love with a man of nineteen and we want to get married but our parents advise us to wait. We know each other for about four months. What shall we do?

NANCY.

Dear Nancy, I think your parents know best. Wait perhaps a year or two before taking the step, and meanwhile become better acquainted with the young man. You are both very young and may be mistaken in each other, and only time can prove whether your love is a true love. Meanwhile I think you can have a very beautiful friendship with the young man, and it will be wisest for both of you to know each other much better before thinking of becoming life-mates.

How to Win Him

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I am twenty years old and I really love a boy who is twenty-one. I have only been with him two or three times but know him about a year. What can I do to win his love? I am very unhappy without seeing him or being with him. He is the man of my dreams. He is very charming. Please advise me how I can win him.

M. E. B.

Dear M. E. B., by no means run after him—be more subtle. On those rare, sweet occasions when you see this charming man, be so very, very nice to him that he will want to see you again soon. Look your best and act your best. Take a lively interest in his conversation—be a good listener. Invite him to parties whenever you get a chance. Do everything you can to see him more often, but do not be obvious or

obtrusive about it. Just be as nice as you can be to him—but don't give him the idea that you are pursuing him. That would spoil everything, most likely. Slowly and persistently, make him aware of all your good qualities and show by your manner rather than by your words that you care for him.

Desperately In Love

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I am a girl of seventeen and am very desperately in love with a man of twenty, whom I've been going with for three years. We have been engaged for nearly a year and he seems to care less for me every day.

I am heartbroken and don't know what to do. Please give me your advice.

M. R.

Dear M. R., perhaps you are mistaken. Perhaps he cares as much for you as ever. You have not told me how he manifests his gradual loss of interest.

I am sure that if you are as charming as you can be toward him, and constantly show him how much you care for him, he will return your love. Perhaps unconsciously you may be acting indifferently toward him.

It may be that he is not as demonstrative in expressions of affection as formerly because he has become rather accustomed to you. Make yourself a constant surprise; do things differently than he expects you to do them, and his interest may be quickened.

"Another Girl"

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I have been going out with a young man whom I love very dearly. He once seemed to care more for me than for anyone else, but now he goes out with another girl. Although he says he cares more for me than he does for her, I am heartbroken and don't know what to do.

L. M.

Dear L. M., I don't know just what to advise you to do; in fact "doing" anything in particular might not alter the situation. The young man says he cares more for you than for the other girl; perhaps he is interested in her only for the moment.

Until you are engaged to the young man you would not be exactly fair to insist that he see no other girl. Just be as nice as you can to the young man, and try to hold your place in his affections by sheer charm.

Try not to show your concern about the other girl. Make the young man feel that you are sure she is just

a passing fancy, and that you know no one has a surer place in his heart than you.

Two Boys

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I am eighteen. I am corresponding and going with two boys. One boy is in my home town, one about 150 miles away, in a large city. With the boy in my home town I have been going out for six months, and he has found out that I correspond with the boy in the big city and wants me to stop. I feel that I like the boy in the big city the best. What shall I do?

JUST ANN.

Dear "Just Ann," if you like the boy in the big city the best keep right on writing to him no matter what anyone has to say about it. Do not let the boy in the home town influence you too much unless you feel you would like to marry him. If you are not serious in your intentions toward him, let him know, and tell him you are going to write the boy in the city as often as you like. I know it will be hard for you to tell this to your friend, but I am sure it is necessary for you to do so, if you really like the boy in the city best.

Whom to Marry!

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

We, like others, come to you for advice. We are three girls ranging from the ages of twenty-one to twenty-eight. We are good looking, good cooks, can sew quite well, and neither smoke nor drink, and have all the fellows we want; so you see we are quite popular with the men, and with both sexes for that matter.

But we never seem to find a man we care to marry, as we've had a lot of proposals from well-to-do fine gentlemen.

We like these men quite well to go with, but not to marry. That is, we do not love them. Do you think we should marry them anyway, and take a chance, or should we wait till the right one comes along?

Everybody tells us we are getting to the age to marry, and that it is time for us to be settled with a home of our own, as in later years we might not have such good chances. But we want to be sure of our happiness when we marry.

IN DOUBT.

Dear girls, of course you should wait for the right man—but perhaps each of you knows the right man already, but has not sufficiently examined her emotions.

If this is not so, the right men are sure to come along, if you have the eyes to see them. Analyze yourselves and make sure just what you want.

By no means marry anyone that you are not in love with—but don't make up your mind that you are not in love when perhaps you may be and would find it out if not unconsciously determined to be indifferent. Ponder on the good qualities of the men you meet, think of them affectionately, find more and more things to like about them and soon you may find yourselves in love.

Invite Him to Your Home

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I am a girl, fourteen, going with a boy, seventeen, and my parents object to my taking car rides and having a nice time with the boy. Do you think my parents are treating me wrongly? Please answer this letter.

BLUE EYES.

Dear Blue Eyes, you are a very young girl and so no doubt that is why your parents object to your actions. They feel you are too young to spend your time in the way you mention. You should obey them, for they know what is best for you. I am sure you can have very nice times with your friend if he calls on you and spends the evening in your home rather than taking you away from home and perhaps making your parents worry.

ObeY Your Parents

DEAR MISS DOCKERILL:

I am a girl of seventeen in love with a boy, and my parents object to my going with him. He says he loves me. Would it be proper to take my parents' advice? I have brown eyes and fair complexion.

MACY.

Dear Macy, it certainly would be proper to take the advice of your parents. They must have some good reason why they do not want you to go out with the particular boy. Have a long heart-to-heart talk (not quarrel) with your parents and find out just what their attitude is and why they hold such an attitude. Perhaps during the course of this talk, too, you may convince your parents that they should change their minds. However, I think it would be very, very wrong to defy the attitude of your father and mother.

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