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WHAT I THINK ABOUT GIRLS.

I never did think much of girls—never! Either they are lanky and leggy things, and think they can play games just as well as boys, or else they are flirty and silly, and think one ought to be always making love to them. Love, indeed! Such rot! Well, I don't mind telling you that last term, when I caught Stewart M., writing a love letter to his cousin Grace, I gave him the jolliest thrashing he'd had in his life. The cheek of him? Stewart M., who had only come out of the prep. the year before, and wasn't even in the junior footer team, he to be presuming to write love letters! Besides, we'd allowed him to join our brotherhood—our grand, mysterious society that some chaps would give their ears to be allowed to join, only we don't allow it to become too cheap—the "Brotherhood of the Gory Hand"—and one of the vows we have to make is not to let ourselves be mixed up in any nonsense with women. We are all to be either detectives, or pirates, or discoverers of unknown countries when we grow up, and in any of those noble professions one is sure to come to grief if one doesn't steer clear of the women.

No, I never did think much of girls; and after the episode I am about to narrate—doesn't that sound grand and "booky"?—after the episode I am about to narrate, you may bet your bottom dollar I think less of them than ever.

But it really did seem as if Marjorie Verschoyle was more decent than most of them. She was older, for one thing—quite grown up; and she could talk quite sensibly—for a girl—about cricket and hockey and golf, and other things that are really worth talking about, and she saw me bring a gun into the garden without shrinking back and crying out—"Oh! do take care! Are you sure it isn't loaded?"

So I wasn't quite so stiff and standoffish with her as I am with most girls—on principle—and I explained to her one or two things about the university sports that she had got a little muddled with, and she tried her very best to understand, and wasn't really so stupid, for a girl.

So I really liked to talk to her, and you may imagine how disgusted I was when I came upon her one evening in the garden with that solemn ass, Leonard Ashwell, and I do believe he was talking poetry about the moonlight; faugh!

As I came near I saw Marjorie's Aunt Henrietta. (Meanwhile, Ashwell had sneaked off down the shrubbery.) "I am so short-sighted, but I really thought—" "Mr. Braddon is giving me a most interesting account of the cricket match," said Marjorie. She knows what is due to a fellow who is in the first eleven, and will, if the mathematical master is not too beastly prejudiced, be in the upper fifth next term.

We had quite a good talk, she seemed to want to get the taste of Ashwell's poetry and moonlight out of her mouth; but half an hour after, when I strolled down the garden to have a surreptitious cigar, blessed if he wasn't at it again! looking at her as sentimentally as—as a cat at a saucer of cream! But there wasn't much sentiment after I joined them, you bet!

Then that Ashwell began trying to make friends with me—asked me in his room to have a quiet smoke, and so on. I suppose he saw that Miss Verschoyle thought no end of me, and so he wanted to get on my right side. But I'm not so easily fooled.

Miss Verschoyle was quite interested to hear that I had been in his rooms, and asked me heaps of questions about the furniture and ornaments, and especially about the photographs.

"Was there one of Miss Disart?" she asked. Miss Disart was a girl who was staying at my home, too—a handsome girl, but not my style, who was making a dead set at Leonard Ashwell.

"No," I told her, "there wasn't one of Miss Disart, but there was a portrait on his writing table he was always gazing at when he thought I wasn't looking."

"What—what was it like?" she asked.

"Well, I think it was an actress," I said. (She quite shuddered.) "She had a star in her hair, and stars on her dress, and a great deal of bare shoulder."

Miss Verschoyle blushed. Fancy blushing because I talked of an actress's bare shoulder! But I like girls to be simple, don't you? For as men it's quite different, but a girl can't be too simple for me.

"And you're sure there isn't one of Miss Disart?" she asked again.

"Sure, I said. 'I've got one of her, though, if you want to see one. Her brother is in Watson's House—that's mine, you know—and he swapped it with a lot of other rubbish for my old camera.'"

"Look here," said Marjorie confidentially. "I wish you would offer to give it to him in exchange for the—for the actress, you know. I should like just to know what he would say."

"By Jove! I will," I cried; "but I'm sure he's too far gone on that actress." She actually blushed again.

Next time I saw her she said, "Well, what success?"

"It is just as I expected," I said. "He would not hear of parting with that photograph."

And then she was nicer to me than ever. And she would hardly speak to Leonard Ashwell that day and the next. And he seemed quite low-spirited about it.

And in the evening I heard him trying to persuade her to come with him down to the lake. She seemed hesitating, so I just whispered to her as I happened to pass, "Remember the actress!"

She looked at me and smiled. "Thank you, Tommy, I will."

Just then her Aunt Henrietta came out. "Where are you going Marjorie?" She was always following Marjorie about and noticing whom she was talking with.

"I was going down to the lake," said Marjorie. "Mr. Braddon will take care of me, won't you, Mr. Braddon?"

Of course, I walked off with her, leaving Leonard Ashwell standing there, and jolly well served him right!

But we hardly got to the lake when Marjorie began to shiver, and asked me to fetch her a shawl from the house.

Well, of course, I had to go and fetch it; and when I came back she didn't seem to need a shawl not much, for Leonard Ashwell's arms were round her, and she had her head on his shoulder.

As you may imagine, I was speechless with disgust. And then he actually had the audacity to kiss her before me and to say, "Congratulations, Tommy. You've been our best friend all through."

As if I wanted to be a friend to a pair of spoony lunatics!

And the actress? Well, it turned out to be a photograph of Marjorie herself in fancy dress, and flattered out of all recognition.

And if a girl who once seemed to have some glimmerings of sense in her can make such a fool of herself as that, can you wonder that I think less of the sex than ever?

In a discussion of the brutality of football Morris Wood, the skating champion, said the other day:

One of my friends told me that last fall as he was walking down a certain street he saw a crowd collected, and in the centre two lads fighting like mad.

The older lad, as my friend approached, downed the younger one and then began to kick him.

To this treatment the younger lad objected thusly:

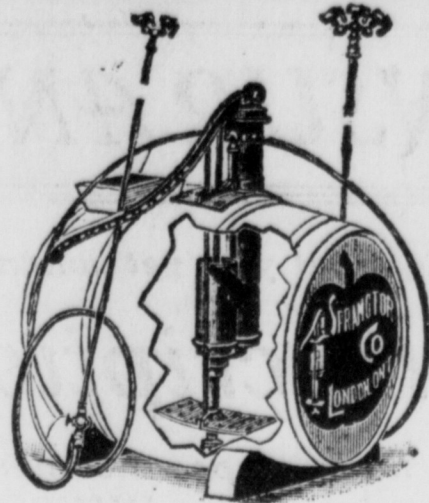
Here, Jack, he shouted, squirming under the kicks, mind what yer about. This is only a fight. It ain't foot ball.

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GOING DATE AUGUST 7TH, 1906.

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An Editor's Apology.

The editor who can please every one is not suited for this earth, but is entitled to wings. Human nature is so constituted that some of our readers would like to have us feed them on scandal; some would like to have us tell the unvarnished truth about them, while others would kill us if we did. It is a comforting thought to the editor to know that the Lord himself did not please every one while on earth. We labor hard to entertain and please our subscribers. But that we should occasionally fail is to be expected, but you will always find us willing to be forgiven.—Old Town Enterprise.

The two men on the back platform of the suburban trolley car were talking about the little woman in the blue sun-bonnet, who was watering flowers by the roadside.

"The biggest gossip in the county," said the tall man. "I detest gossipers."

"So do I," replied the short man, "and she is certainly the queen of them all. But, them, maybe she is worried and gossips for pastime. They say her first husband ran away with the cook."

"You don't say! Well, I heard that her second husband rolls home at dawn and you can hear him singing a block."

"He must be a bird. The iceman told my wife they only eat two meals a day, and her daughter is going to marry a lad who only makes \$4 a week."

"Well, I'll declare! But I certainly hate gossipers."

"Yes, so do I."

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