

WHY OLD MAIDS EXIST.

A THEORY ADVANCED BY GEOFFREY CUTHBERT STRANGE.

There are 30,000 in the State of Massachusetts—The Reason Why There Are So Many—Long Engagements Play the Very Mischievous Part in the Affections.

One of the crying questions of the day, indeed I might say, two of the howling questions of the present age, seems to be, "Why don't more people get married?" and "Is matrimony going out of fashion?" No! my lords and gentlemen of the jury! who are always so ready to settle other people's affairs, it isn't going out of fashion and what is more, it never will. Just as long as it continues to be the correct thing to have two eyes, and the nose is worn between them, marriage will be fashionable among the select few who can afford it, as well as among the large majority who can't.

It is useless for the statistician to loom up in the middle distance, clouding the sunny landscape of possible engagements and bridal tours with his wretched little scrap of paper and stubby lead pencil with the end chewed off, to thrust these weapons in our unwilling faces and insist on proving by figures that will not lie that there are at the present time 30,000 old maids in the state of Massachusetts alone. Even if there are so many, who knows that they have not refused some 60,000 old bachelors in their day? After all, unless those old maids are immortal, or a perennial growth, at least one half of them must have died long ago, for I have been hearing about them ever since I was a child, and like a standing army, their ranks never seemed to diminish—they never even increased. It would have been a relief to society at large to hear, any time during the past decade, that there were either 29,000 or 31,000; but no, they still keep up the number to the desired standard, and say nothing of the hordes of bachelors who literally swarm in the north west—bachelors who are cooking their own dinners, darning their own socks, and exhausting the muscular forces of their bodies and the grey matter of their brains trying to reconcile the differences of opinion between a 22 calibre button and a 32 calibre needle.

Why not effect some arrangement by which the great question of supply and demand can be regulated, and the eastern spinsters and western bachelors brought into communication with each other? Nobody looks forward with cold-blooded deliberation to living a single life. We all think we are going to get married some day, though perhaps just not yet.

"Hope springs eternal in the human breast, Man never is, but always to be, blest."

But there is one obstacle which the marriage-is-going-out-of-fashion-people seem with all their wisdom, to have overlooked. We are supposed to be a law-abiding people, and as long as the powers that be have declared all lotteries to be illegal, how under the sun are we going to take chances in the greatest lottery on earth, beside which the famous Louisiana pales and fades into insignificance? For, if we should draw a blank from the latter, we can at least throw it into the fire and try to forget our folly, but in the Great Marriage State Lottery we must keep the blank ticket all our lives, love and cherish it, put it in the best parlor, and try to make our neighbors believe it is a first prize.

But laying aside all jest, and looking at the matter with due seriousness, I have struck out a theory of my own, which—to me at least—is a new one. The prevailing strain in any article on the subject that one chances to pick up, seems to be that we don't give the all-important subject sufficient thought, that we ought to "think very seriously about it, look well before we leap," etc. I stand alone on a pinnacle of wisdom up to myself, after repeated tumbles on the way, and lift up my lone-voice, to say that the trouble is, we think too seriously about it altogether; in fact, we waste the best part of our lives in thinking, and so we don't do anything. Is your grandmother alive, reader of PROGRESS? If so, just lay this paper down for a moment, go and ask her how long she was engaged, and how many thousand dollars a year your grandfather had when they began housekeeping? She will be very likely to laugh at first, and then if she finds you are in earnest will probably tell you that they met first in the winter at a party and were married the following September, and that it was a long engagement for those days. Also, that her husband did not have any particular income at all; that he was just a struggling young lawyer or doctor, or farmer, as the case may be, and had just what he could earn, but that they were both young and strong, and preferred to climb the hill together; that it was ten years before they had their parlor furnished, or a carpet on their spare room, but what was lacking in furniture was less housekeeping to look after and more time for enjoyment.

Now-a-days, if a young man feels himself falling in love with one of the charming girls of his acquaintance, his first impulse is to resist the feeling—to draw back while there is yet time; in short, he acts very much as if he found himself coasting rapidly down a toboggan slide, the end of which projected over Niagara Falls. If he finds that he really cannot stop, he clutches the first tree he can reach, the strong young

sapling of an engagement, and holds on! He holds on very much—indeed, he maintains that attitude for the next few years. He has secured the prize, and he wants to keep it from anyone else—but he isn't in the least hurry. When he is able he intends to marry, but a wife is an expensive luxury. He does not want to see Edith spending her life in the kitchen, and he supposes it must cost an enormous sum to dress her as she dresses now. Thus "the years glide by," and the lady of his love begins to get a little shopworn, just a trifle frayed round the edges. There is a cluster of little wrinkles under her eyes when she laughs. And the other fellows are not so attentive to her as they used to be, and don't seem to envy him as much; worst of all Edith's temper is not so angelic as it used to be. She is irritable at times, and one day he tells her so, and she answers that he is right—she is irritable. She has found that a long engagement is a great mistake. If they had married at once, she has no doubt they would have been happy, but as it is they have both grown a little tired, she thinks, and would be better apart. So each scrambles back again to the neutral ground of freedom, and, ten chances to one, there is one more bachelor and one more old maid in the world in consequence.

Now, I am not foolish enough to imagine that I can effect a resolution single handed, but if a few young people would take the advice of one who has been through the mill himself, and knows what he is talking about, and instead of waiting until they are in affluent circumstances, get married on a little, and work together to make it more, we should soon cease to hear that marriage was going out of fashion.

GEOFFREY CUTHBERT STRANGE.

THE COUNTRY EDITOR.

A Pen Portrait from an Occasional Sanctum Visitor.

He must always be suave itself to all classes and conditions of men. If he isn't, they may possibly stop their paper and induce their neighbors to do the same, on the score of the editor's "stuck-upishness and sass." So that, when he has settled down some morning to the laborious task of writing "answers to correspondents," with a gazetteer, a book of quotations, and a large dictionary by his side, a bandage of ice on his head, and a whole ream of paper within easy reach, or, worse still, to face the weekly ordeal of evolving an editorial on some of the living questions of the day—about which he has no opportunity of knowing anything whatever—from his inner consciousness, much as the industrious spider draws the web from his internal economy, should the door open at this trying moment to admit an old farmer, who has the entire morning on his hands and nothing to do, who has called "to look around and see how things were gettin' on," he must receive the unwelcome intruder as if he were a long lost brother, offer him the best chair in the office, endeavor at least to answer all the questions that only the rural mind seems capable of propounding; and when at last the sound of the town clock striking twelve reminds the visitor that he "must go and get his bite," the editor must bid him a reluctant farewell, with the cordially expressed hope that he will drop in soon again. Sadly removing the limp bandage, from which the ice has long melted, the literary giant of the village puts on his coat and responds to "That all-softening, overpowering knell. The tocsin of the soul, the dinner bell."

But still life, even the life of the country editor, is not without its compensations. He is a great man at committee meetings, and a power at agricultural exhibitions. He is always called upon to make a speech at public dinners, and he has the power so many public speakers yearn for, of reporting his own talk, and even describing it as "an eloquent effort." He is sometimes referred to by a brother editor as "our bright contemporary of the weekly Howler." There are times when subscribers pay up their long-standing bills, and all looks bright and prosperous. I have known as many as ten bushels of oats and three of white beans to pour into the editorial exchequer in one day, not to mention two raw calf-skins and a load of buckwheat straw. What matters it that my long suffering friend does not possess a horse to fatten on the oats and beans, or sleep peacefully on the buckwheat straw? that he has no market for them, close at hand, and cannot hope to trade them off with his neighbors. These are trifles beneath the notice of all right-thinking people; and surely when any man finds himself in the very unusual position of having more property on his hands than he knows what to do with, he should feel that he has not lived in vain.

WANTED. A hat for the head of a fountain, A glove for the hand of fate, A shoe for the foot of a mountain, A link from the chain of debate. A spoke from the wheel of fortune, A chip from the "pole" of the south, A drink from the fountain of knowledge, A word from the river's mouth. A drink from the cup of sorrow, A look from the frow of the storm, A stroke from the arm of justice, A ring for the finger of scorn. A knock at the door of repentance, A throb from the ocean's heart, A glance from the eye of a needle, From Cupid's bow a dart.

Now-a-days, if a young man feels himself falling in love with one of the charming girls of his acquaintance, his first impulse is to resist the feeling—to draw back while there is yet time; in short, he acts very much as if he found himself coasting rapidly down a toboggan slide, the end of which projected over Niagara Falls. If he finds that he really cannot stop, he clutches the first tree he can reach, the strong young

SOCIAL AND PERSONAL.

[FOR ADDITIONAL SOCIETY NEWS SEE FIFTH AND EIGHTH PAGES.]

SUSSEX.

[Progress is for sale in Sussex by R. D. Boal and S. H. White & Co.]

JUNE 19.—Last Thursday a large and fashionable wedding took place in the Methodist church. The contracting parties were Mr. Frank McCully (Moncton) and Miss Lavinia Ryan, second daughter of the late Mr. James Ryan. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Mr. Lucas, assisted by Rev. A. McCully. The hour appointed for the event was 8 p.m., and, shortly after it, the bride entered the church, leaning on the arm of her brother, Mr. Fred Ryan. She was attended by three bridesmaids, her sister, Miss Alice Ryan, and the little Misses Freddie Hallett and Ethel Davis. The groom was attended by Mr. J. M. Knight, of Moncton. The bride looked lovely, in a beautiful cream silk, with the usual veil and orange blossoms, and carried a handsome bouquet of white roses. Miss Alice Ryan looked remarkably pretty, in a cream embroidered mill, over cream satin. Her bouquet was pink and white roses. Miss Freddie Hallett wore pink and white. Miss Ethel Davis cream sables, and carried dainty little baskets of flowers. The ushers were Mr. A. S. White, Dr. Johnston and Dr. W. Sharp. Miss Ada McLeod presided at the organ. After the ceremony, a reception, with luncheon, was given at the residence of Mrs. James Ryan, mother of the bride. A large number of guests were present, among whom were Mr. and Mrs. S. Hayward, (St. John), Mr. and Mrs. B. Trices, (Petitcodiac) Mr. and Mrs. Palmer, (Moncton) Mr. and Mrs. McLaughlin, (Hampton) Mr. and Mrs. E. Fenwick, (Millstream) Dr. and Mrs. Ryan, Mr. and Mrs. Allison, Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Stockton, Mr. and Mrs. C. Stockton, Miss Bessie McKeown, (St. John), Miss Annie Thompson, Miss Maggie Ruddick, the Misses Keith, the Misses Amble, Lulu and Nellie Ryan, Mr. Gordon Mills, Mr. W. Noble and others. The bride was the recipient of many valuable gifts, the groom's gift to her being a handsome gold bracelet. Mr. and Mrs. McCully left at 10 p. m. on an extended tour, in which they will visit Boston, Niagara, Toronto and other places of interest, and return by way of Hudson River and New York. On their return they will reside in Moncton, where Mr. McCully has a practise, being one of the firm of Porrier and McCully, barristers. Miss Ryan was a great favorite and her loss will be very much felt, especially by the congregation of the Methodist church, as she was the organist and also a teacher in the Sunday school.

I hear that in the near future there are to be several more of these pleasant events.

A most enjoyable picnic, arranged by Miss Etta Arnold, was held last Thursday in a beautiful grove on Kirk Hill.

Mr. A. A. Stockton (St. John) was in town on Thursday.

Rev. W. Hancock (Rothsay) was in town on Saturday.

Mrs. R. E. Arnold spent a few days in Bathurst last week and returned Friday evening accompanied by her sister, Mrs. E. Hickson.

Mr. C. Hazen spent Saturday in St. John.

Mr. George and Miss Eva Clarke (St. John) are the guests of Mr. H. Arnold.

Rev. Canon and Mrs. Medley left on Monday for Fredericton, where they will spend a few weeks with bishop and Mrs. Medley.

Mr. H. E. Arnold, of the Bank of Nova Scotia, (Moncton) spent Sunday with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Arnold.

Rev. Mr. Prince (Moncton) is visiting his daughter, Mrs. George Barnes.

Mr. Cyrus Ryan, of Amherst, was in town on Monday.

Miss Cleveland (St. John) is the guest of Mrs. George White.

Rev. A. and Mrs. Lucas leave today on a trip to England to visit relatives. They expect to be gone about four months. During Mr. Lucas' absence Mr. Derby will officiate in his place. RONALD.

SHEDIAC.

[Progress is for sale in Shediac at H. Stewart's store.]

JUNE 19.—Sunday being a very fine day, brought a large number of visitors from Moncton to spend the day.

Miss Hall, of Sackville, is here visiting Miss Maggie.

Mr. John W. Scovill, who has been working in Montreal, is home for the benefit of his health.

Miss Smallwood, who has been visiting the Misses Webster, has gone to Woodstock to spend the rest of her vacation.

Shediac is to have a lawn tennis club at last. The young ladies of this place, with Miss Mabel Morrison as their bearer, are about organizing a club here. No doubt with such a leader as Miss Morrison, it will be a success.

Miss Nettie Evans, of Sackville, is here visiting her sister, Mrs. W. A. Russell.

Dr. E. A. Smith is home again to stay. Dr. Murray having returned to take his own office again in Moncton.

Mr. Bliss Ward and his bride spent Sunday with his mother and sister.

Conductor Milliken, of St. John, has moved his family here for the summer, to breathe the pure air of the country for a while.

The Weldon House is crowded with summer boarders, and lots of people are taking houses for the season.

Mr. John J. Fairbairn and wife were in town on Sunday. Mrs. Fairbairn intends remaining in Shediac for a couple of weeks.

Mr. F. S. Parice, of Sussex, was in town on Thursday. JAKE.

ANNAPOLIS ROYAL.

JUNE 19.—Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Gillis returned from their wedding tour on Saturday, and in the evening the Hillsdale cornet band serenaded them at the Ritchie house, their future abode. The members of the band were afterwards invited in to partake of cake and wine. I presume the band is looking forward to another evening's enjoyment on the return of Mr. Augustus Fullerton, who is expected back the latter part of the month. The wedding took place on Tuesday last, June 11, at the Church of the Messiah, Boston. The happy couple left for New York, and will visit the principal cities in Canada before their return.

I am sorry to record the death of one of our most esteemed townsmen, Mr. James Gates, who passed away on Thursday evening, after a lingering illness of consumption. His funeral took place on Sunday afternoon, and was very largely attended. The service was conducted by the Masons, of which order Mr. Gates was an honored member. Mrs. Gates has the deepest sympathy of her numerous friends.

Miss Locke was in town last week, visiting her sister, Mrs. Jamieson.

Mrs. Otto Weeks, of Halifax, is the guest of Mrs. William Malcolm, "Hawthorne villa."

I believe very enjoyable evenings were spent, last week, at the "Moorlands," "Hawthorne villa" and the rectory. A lively interest is taken in tennis in our little town by the young people. Besides a number of private courts, among which may be mentioned those on the grounds of Mr. Mowat, Mr. G. H. Remicman, Mr. E. Gates and Mr. T. S. Whitman, a fine court is being prepared by the A. A. C. C. on their new grounds, and I believe will be ready for use next week. JONES.

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FOR WASHADEMOAK LAKE!

THE above first-class swift, staunch and comfortable steamer, having been rebuilt and furnished under the strictest government requirements, will, until further notice, leave her wharf at Indiantown every TUESDAY, THURSDAY and SATURDAY, at 10 a. m., local time, calling at all intermediate landings. Returning is due at Indiantown at 1 p. m., on alternate days.

J. E. PORTER, Manager.

N. B.—EXCURSIONISTS going up Saturday can return Monday free. This steamer can be chartered for Excursions on afternoons of Monday, Wednesday and Friday at much less cost than any other time.

1889. SEASON. 1889.

ST. JOHN, GRAND LAKE AND SALMON RIVER.

And all Intermediate Stopping Places.

STEAMER "MAY QUEEN," C. W. BRANNEN, Master, will, during the present season, run between the above-named places, leaving her wharf, Indiantown, every WEDNESDAY and SATURDAY MORNING, at EIGHT o'clock, local time. RETURNING will leave Salmon River on MONDAY and THURSDAY mornings, touching at Gagetown wharf each way. Will run on the West side of Long Island.

The owners of this reliable steamer have put her in the best repair during the past winter, and are now running her strictly under Dominion Government inspection, which, combined with qualities for speed and comfort, make her one of the best boats now plying on the St. John River or its tributaries. This "Old Favorite" EXCURSION STEAMER can be chartered on reasonable terms for Picnics, etc., on Tuesday and Friday of each week.

All FREIGHT must be prepaid, unless when accompanied by owner, in which case it can be settled for on board.

A careful person in attendance to receive freight. Freight received on Tuesdays and Fridays.

SPECIAL NOTICE—Until further notice we will offer inducements to excursionists by issuing tickets to all regular stopping places between St. John and Salmon River, on Saturday trips up, at one fare, good to return free Monday following.

No return ticket less than fifty cents.

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COMMENCING THURSDAY, June 13, the HAMPTON every THURSDAY morning, at 9 o'clock, stopping at Clifton and Waddell's. Returning same day will arrive at Indiantown at 7 p. m.

ROUND TRIP 50 CENTS.

N. B.—No Excursion on rainy days.

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WILL LEAVE "HEAD OF BELLISLE" every MONDAY, WEDNESDAY and FRIDAY morning, at 7 o'clock, for Indiantown.

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JETTED GIMPS. Our stock of Dull and Bright Jetted Section Gimps and Passanteries includes all the latest designs.

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