

WHEN IS SHE HAPPIEST?

A PERTINENT QUESTION IN THE LIFE OF WOMAN.

What Some of the Brightest of the Sex Have to Say About It—Love Said to be the Secret, but There Are Other Theories which are Worth Considering.

The Ladies' Home Journal, of Philadelphia, recently submitted to a number of well known women the question: "Which is the happiest hour of a woman's life?" Some of the answers, as might be expected, are unique, and all are interesting. Here is what Louise Chandler Moulton thinks:

When Love is Born.

When she begins to feel that, with one man in it, the room is full, and empty when he is gone no matter how many others may remain, she begins to be tremulously, deliciously, deliciously happy. But that is only the beginning; and if Love holds Happiness by the hand, Fear stands at the other elbow. A word too many or too few—a smile that does not go her way—and the girl suffers as much as she has just enjoyed. Her very soul hangs within her for some dear certainty. And when that comes—when her troth is pledged—is that her happiest moment? She does not think so then; for she is looking forward to her bridal morning.

Ah, I think, after all, the happiest moment is when Love is a sweet, shy new-comer, and Hope leads it by the hand.

This is very pretty, and as Mrs. Moulton speaks from experience it is undoubtedly true in her case and in that of many others. But it is not true of all, for all women do not grasp the significance of love. They "like" one man, and lose him. Later, they like another. They may call it love, and think it is so, but it is not. The answer is not true in a general sense.

Nor is This True of the Majority.

Rose Terry Cooke appears to have been suffering from indigestion when she penned her reply. It is too Byronic and unnatural to assert, as she does, that there are "few happy hours in any life, specially a woman's." It all depends on temperament and environment. Here is part of what she says:

I believe the happiest hour of a woman's life is her last; the hour when she knows that her toils and troubles are over; that the bitter herbs of dead love and out-worn friendship will no longer be offered to her ever-hungry heart; that at last she will be appreciated and regretted, though her ear will not hear the kind and tender words she has longed for all her days. Then, in that latest hour, she must be deeply glad in the consciousness that her time of tears is over; her mortal weariness will be changed for eternal rest; her discouraged soul cease to be daunted and dismayed by the terrors and obstacles of living; that her meek faith will be merged in full sight; her tremulous hope dawn in the glory of fruition; her longing be satisfied forever.

The Ship That is to Come In.

There is a vast deal more of practical, worldly common-sense in the brief answer of Mrs. Adeline D. T. Whitney, which we quote in full:

I think the happiest hour depends upon which woman it is. The difference would lie not only in the experience, but in the taking of them. What to one woman would be the dearest and highest, might to another be quite incomprehensible. And then, we often know so little of what a happy moment has been until it is all over. I am afraid it will continue to take a world full of women, generation after generation, to reach a full conclusion upon the matter; and that is the reason, among others similar, why the old world has had to last so long!

For myself, I do not think I have had my happiest hour yet; I fancy it is in expectation with almost everybody. I must go on and finish my life first; then, well—then—if you can ask me again, perhaps I can tell you.

The Secret is in Love.

Mrs. Hungerford, "the Duchess," gives first an essentially cruel idea suggested by a friend. Here it is:

I have had it suggested to me by a friend staying in the house at this time, that the happiest moment in a woman's life is when, having brought the man of her heart to the point of proposing, she makes him wait a minute or two for her answer. To know and feel his anxiety—to understand that the anxiety is all caused through love of her—this would constitute a bliss not to be rivalled, a bliss the sweeter for being so short-lived, and because of the fact that it can never occur again.

This is more cat-like than woman-like. Yet there are women of this kind. "The Duchess" has a better grasp of the idea when she says:

To the woman standing over the sick bed that contains the one being dearest to her on earth, can there be an hour more rife with thankful happiness than when the doctor declares that there is hope? Oh, magic word! Hope that the adored one will be given back to her from the very jaws of Death!

And yet, after all, I think Love, "that great Master," as he has been justly called, has more to do with a woman's sweetest hour than anything else on earth. To love and to feel one's self beloved—that is, to know the best of life.

When Self is Lost.

Jennie June is somewhat doubtful whether there is such a time as the "happiest hour," though there are many happy ones. While giving some of her own experience, she crystallizes the answer in this paragraph:

Life indeed has many happy hours in the society of friends, in the companionship of books, in the performance of daily tasks which lead to good results. But, "happiest" experiences are those in which self is lost, and there is entire absorption in an exalted idea in the fulfillment of a hope in the realization of a duty well performed.

When the Lover Returns.

Mrs. Frank Leslie has an idea that the grasping of what she terms "the top brick of the chimney" is what makes the happiest hour. She defines it as that preceding the return of a lover after a long absence to the girl or woman of whose life he is the light. She describes the preparations on the day when he is expected down to the hour when

The shades and the curtains are lowered and draped to just the most becoming light, until finally he rings at the door, she takes one last furtive glance at herself, and her surroundings, and then—the door opens, she has the top brick of the chimney, and the Happiest Hour of Life is over!

A Mother's Idea.

Sarah K. Bolton is very brief. She says:

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Among the happiest hours in my own life have been those spent in witnessing the development of my only child. My idea of happiness in this life is plenty of congenial work, and an attempt to realize, in life, Emerson's motto—"Help somebody."

A Christian Worker's View.

The recent visit of Miss Frances E. Willard to St. John will give an interest to the few and characteristic words she has to say:

The happiest hour of my life was the one in which I was least conscious of myself, and most uplifted into holy thoughts and purposes. What is my idea of happiness? Painless, constant and beneficent activity.

The Purely Christian Idea.

Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher has more to say than any of the others. She pictures several ways in which woman thinks herself happy, but decides that the happiest hour is when those who have led moral but worldly lives are brought to a conviction of their sin:

Hopeless, and well nigh despairing, they cannot lift their eyes to the hills from whence cometh their help. But our Saviour is near, and as He hath promised, even before they call, He answereth; He sees their great sorrow; He knows their true penitence. A still, small voice speaks of hope, of forgiveness. A light from on high dispels the darkness. Pardon and peace are freely offered; and joy, unspeakable, now fills the heart that was tortured and despairing.

Surely, to all who have found Jesus so near in their time of greatest need, no hour can ever bring them such happiness as this!

Perhaps some of the bright women who read Progress would like to give their ideas on the happiest hours, if they have any not expressed in the foregoing quotations. We will be glad to hear from them, in brief and pointed letters, on this subject which must interest all of them.

THE CRUET STAND

As an Index to a Woman's Character, Compared with a Bureau Drawer.

Some philosopher, with a natural turn for housekeeping, has crowned himself—always supposing he is a man—with deathless fame, by announcing that the condition of the castor, or cruet stand, in a house is an unfailing index to the character of the house mistress. If it was bright and shining, with polished silver and sparkling glass; if the bottles were always well filled, and the stoppers came out easily, you might rest assured that everything else in that house would be in corresponding condition.

But should the silver be oxidized, the glass opaque and the bottle stuck fast to the bottom of the castor; should they be half full, or altogether empty, and should you find your utmost strength inadequate to effect a divorce between the firmly wedded stopper and bottle, so will everything be en suite there also. And if there should be girls in that house, and you should chance to be an eligible young man looking for a wife, heed not their wiles, charm they never so wisely; flee from them as from a pestilence, for surely will they be addicted to the curl papers in the morning and slippers that have a way of slip-flapping as they walk.

If I ever have a wife, and she ever appears in curl papers, I swear a mighty oath that the very next day I shall wander about in my shirt sleeves and "sock feet." But this is a digression. That cruet stand reformer created a ripple on the placid breast of circumstances, which was not only wide spread but lasting. A lady of my acquaintance confided to me that she forthwith laid down the paper containing those words of fate and held an inquest on the castor. "I was so afraid that some one else might have read it too," she said, "and I knew they would all begin to inspect people's cruet stands at once."

So much for the philosopher! but in my humble judgment the castor is not to be mentioned in the same breath with the upper bureau drawer, described a week or two ago, as a true record of the inner life of its owner.

A Tribute to Moses.

Damien Govang was on the Buctouche lightning express. On the same train was Dennis Murphy. The versatility of their conversation struck me as remarkable. Damien had once been a resident of Dorchester, but for the past four years had not been seen. Now, however, he was on his way home from the States and wanted to know how things were at Dorchester.

"Bill Hickman liv' dare yet?" he asked.

"Yes," said Dennis.

"He's nice feller," said Damien, pensively. Then he inquired—"Bill Turner liv' dare yet?"

"Yes."

"He's nice feller."

And then by way of variety:

"Bill Backus liv' dare yet?"

"Yes."

"He's nice feller."

I forget how many illustrious names had thus been passed in review and stamped with the seal of Damien's approval, when there came a sudden jerking of the car which threw everybody in it heels over head. For a moment both Damien and Dennis were stunned by the shock. As Dennis revived he shouted: "Howdy Moses, me head, me head!"

To which Damien, who was just regaining consciousness responded: "He's nice feller!" BILDAD.

Harmless Suicide.

"Well, now that you have rejected me for the third time, Phyllis, I suppose I might as well blow my brains out." "Oh, don't do that, Jack! Drown yourself; you're such a good swimmer."—Once a Week.

To Cure Dyspepsia and Indigestion, don't keep K. D. C.

WOMAN'S TRUE SPHERE.

IT IS NOT IN FOLLOWING ONE OF THE PROFESSIONS.

Thoughts Provoked by a Paper Read Before the Medical Association—Women's Duties are Clear and Well Defined, but Apart from Those of Men.

A meeting of the New Brunswick Medical Society took place in Moncton about a fortnight ago, and on that occasion amongst several papers read before the society was one by Dr. J. S. Bridges, a young physician practising in Moncton. The subject with which it dealt was the ability of lovely woman to sustain the arduous role of a physician in general practice. It was entitled "Women as medical practitioners," and was, I am assured by a prominent physician who heard it read, the most clever paper which came before the board. I have a little doubt that the young doctor was intensely gratified at the favorable verdict passed upon it by his older brethren in the profession, little dreaming of the fate which awaited his masterpiece at the hands of a discriminating public?

Unfortunately this misguided young medico dared to make the assertion, that women were not noted for inventive or creative genius, and added insult to injury by making the monstrous assertion, that the fair sex had been specially intended by nature for the perpetuation of the race—that to them had been coupled the sacred charge of bringing up the men and women of the future.

I believe the doctor was not alone in his opinion. It seems to have been shared by others, notably by at least one famous poet who was a woman herself. Her name was Jean Ingelwou, and she said, speaking of God's noblest work:

Her lot to bear, to nurse, to rear, To love! and then to lose.

Singularly enough this woman, whose genius was sufficiently great to prove a refutation of her own—and Dr. Bridges' theory seemed to consider that lot the highest seal of approval that the Creator could place upon woman's brow. It is much to be regretted that the public in the immediate vicinity of Moncton is not composed exclusively of Jean Ingelwous. It is perhaps owing to this fact that the public in question came down upon the hapless doctor's head like a wolf on the fold.

The paper in question was never meant for general perusal. It was written for the discussion of an assembly of medical men. But if the one sentence which seems to have raised the tempest was published, why was not the cordial tribute to woman's noble qualities of mind and heart, her many points of superiority to man, to which the author draws attention at the conclusion of his paper, also given a place? Nothing can be more unfair than to present a one-sided view of any subject.

I cannot say that I altogether agree with the young doctor. As far as woman's capacity for invention and originality of thought are concerned, surely he must have forgotten George Eliot, Harriet Martineau, Elizabeth Lazenby and Lady Mary Wortley Montague, not to mention the late Lydia E. Pinkham. Joe, the wife of Heber, the Kenite, invented a method of putting an unwelcome guest out of the world that casts the electrocution machine into the shade, and Elizabeth Mallet, of London, printed the first daily paper ever published. But, at the same time, the fact remains that the patent office in Ottawa does not contain the name of a single woman on its list of inventors.

If I ever lead a blushing maiden to the altar, I don't want to feel that the little hand I clasp with all a lover's fervor is expert in severing joints and tendons! that the shell-like ear into which I pour a lover's tenderest vows has listened through the stethoscope to the beating of some other man's heart; that the liquid eyes I gaze into so rapturously have inspected the furry tongue of yet another suffering specimen of the genus homo; and, worst of all, that my wife may some day take to somnambulism, and while in that state, carve me into fragments, under the impression that I am "a subject."

No! Stay at home girls, so far as the medical colleges are concerned! Learn how to do something else. There is a great deal of work in the world waiting to be done, and much of it you can do; but the scalpel is not the weapon for a woman's hand, nor the dissecting room her proper sphere.

I think I should feel like shaking my wife if I heard her scream when a mouse ran across the floor, but I am sure I would rather see her faint at the sight of blood, than know she had passed through the sights, and sounds of the operating room, the dissecting room, and the hospital ward.

As a nurse, woman is invaluable, and what is more she is in the right place, provided she is strong enough to undergo many hardships, but as a physician and surgeon she is not and never can be in place. Of course there are many female physicians in the world, but in proportion to the population, I fancy they stand about one to ten thousand, and long may they remain there.

GEOFFREY CUTBERT STRANGE.

His Proper Name. No, Clarinda, the fellow who plays in the brass band is not called a bandit, but he ought to be.—Burlington Hawkeye.

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DUE TO THE HEATED TERM.

The Melancholy Musings of One of the Men who Write Funny Things.

According to the N. O. Picayune, "Emma Abbot is growing fat." In regard to Patti, where will adipose next season?

Tightening his arm one more notch, Geo. Orville Short turned his curly head towards his affianced, and whispered: "Are you sure, Eliza, that your father's name is William?"

"Why, certainly, dear—but why do you ask?"

"I thought it might, perhaps, be Ananias."

"Why, Jawdey, what do you mean?"

"Well, dearest, you know," and here he gasped while he continued in a hoarse whisper, "Ananias is the father of 'Lize'" and the ensuing silence exhibited so painful an absence of sound that you might have heard the engagement-ring, on its way back from the "fire."

"'Tis distance lens enchantment to the view," as the camera said to its victim.

A Philadelphia college has been presented with an Egyptian mummy 3000 years old. In the right hand was found a primitive pen and an unsigned check for ten dollars, while in the left was a leaf of MS. making special reference to a summer-girl's ice-cream storage capacity. He was evidently an editor of a humorous paper.

An enterprising western journalist got up a competitive ballot among his readers to decide who was "the leading American humorist." He is very busy now preparing a four-page supplement containing the names voted for. They will be arranged in alphabetical order.

A Georgia colored woman has named her triplets Cleveland, Hendricks, and Queen Victoria—but don't, for goodness sake, let Editor Stead get hold of the fact!

According to a dramatic journal, "Wm. D. Howells and Mark Twain are going to put their teeming intellects together and write a play."

Going to work double-team as it were.

A BURST OF AGONY. As day draws to a close, and night begins to frown, The laborer's bell doth blithely ring, While the gasbill from his bough doth sing, "I'll meter when the sun goes down!"

They were discussing a certain religious sect, one of whose tenets is that only persons of their particular belief can enter the eternal kingdom, "That's hard on the rest of us," observed a listener, "as there are only about twenty-five of them in St. John," and the feeble-minded humorist of the party felt called upon to chime: "Well, after all, twenty-five from St. John is not so bad!" And the fair-haired young lady at the piano played the "Tempest of the Heart."

Blank verse—Poetry that fails to get the \$100 prize.

Flash jewelry—Electric scarf-pins.

Horace Greeley once said, "Any man with more than a million is a nuisance." If certain friends of mine would kindly paste that statement in their hats, they might possibly be more circumspect in their opinions of me.

A fellow in Montreal deadheaded his way among the newspaper fraternity of that city upon the strength of the assertion that he "wrote constantly for the leading American periodicals." It afterwards leaked out that his "writing" consisted of sending post cards to the various editors, requesting a sample copy.

A million dollars weigh 1 1/2 tons, in gold, and 26 2/3 tons in silver. The testing of this statement will afford infinite amusement on rainy days to Canadian poets and authors. (To be spoken bit-terly.) CASEY TAP.

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