

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1901.

## LIFE PARTNERS:

Woman, would you have a rich husband, or one not so wealthy, even poor, but handsome; or, rather than either, would you have a life partner of title, one from the old world?

Man, would you have in marriage a woman of beauty and poverty, or, if you be poor, a voluptuous widow, with half a million left by No. 1, or a spinster somewhat passé and drawn, but possessed of a heart and gold?

All over Philadelphia there are matrimonial agencies, and at the rate these shops are increasing they must be making money. However, the tying-up bureau has not the standing in this country that it has in Europe, where it has an established social status, and, though conducted with a show of privacy, is as well recognized as any other business. Of the merits of matrimonial agencies, here or anywhere, that is a matter that the people who stop to give them thought must judge of themselves. But that there is a humorous as well as a serious side to the business has been proved by a visit of a reporter, who went in search of a husband.

Since the club idea has become so popular agencies are frequently advertised in the personal columns of some newspapers as matrimonial clubs, and in this way many people are attracted to the match-makers-for-revenue—only on serious business bent as well as out of curiosity. The woman reporter made her way to one of the most prominent of Philadelphia's agencies, one which boasts of a quarter-century record of uniting couples who might otherwise still be unpaired.

Arriving at a plain brick residence on an uptown street, running off Broad, the place advertised is found to be without any sign on the outside to indicate that the marriage or any sort of business is carried on inside. After looking carefully up and down the street, to see that she was unobserved, the visitor mounted the marble steps and timidly rang the bell.

The door was promptly opened by a pretty but somewhat untidy young lady with soulful brown eyes and a wealth of dark hair, presumably her own. She wore fancy slippers very much down at the heel and smiled encouragingly as she ushered the caller through a long hall into the back parlor. The door between this and the front room was partly ajar and the slippers one closed it hastily, but not before the visitor had heard a woman say in answer to a query in a deep-toned masculine voice:

We have just the lady to suit you. She is a beautiful young widow, whose kind husband died and left her with a brewery business worth over a half a million of dollars, and—

But the door closed, and the slippers young lady turned to the newcomer with a regretful look in her eyes, and said in the sweetest tone imaginable:

'I am so sorry that Madame is engaged for a few minutes. But I am her private secretary. Won't you please tell what you wish and let me try to help you. I am sure you need not be afraid to trust me. And again the brown eyes did what was meant to be effective work.

The visitor stated that she had seen the Matrimonial club advertised and called to learn all about it.

'Of course you wish to know more about the club? How very nice! Well let me tell you for I am sure you will want to join. You see, we have on our list over ten thousand very nice people who would like to get married. We are very particular indeed, and we never register any one who is not very nice, and of course, the object of the club is to promote matrimony by introducing two nice people to each other.

'For instance,' the private secretary continued, 'a lady like yourself has, of course, lots of chances, but you haven't met any one yet who exactly suits you. But in the club we have thousands of men we can introduce to you, and it is quite impossible that you do not find your ideal among them. When you belong to the club you don't have to take any one unless you are satisfied. If the first man we introduce does not please you we introduce another and another until you are perfectly suited. Now

a nice-looking lady like yourself, could easily marry a rich gentleman very soon. We have plenty of these. Or, perhaps you might like a title. So many ladies do.

As the visitor seemed to assent to the last sentence the secretary continued effusively: 'Oh, I know we have just the gentleman for you. He is fine, grand, magnificent! No lady could help loving him. He is an Italian count, but he speaks all languages. He is a superb musician, and it is a delight to hear him converse. Oh how I wish you could meet him!

'But the foreign nobles always want rich wives.'

'Oh, no. All gentlemen with titles do not want money. Now we have a German prince, a perfectly charming man, but he quarrelled with the emperor, so he lives in this country now, though, of course, he will go back some day. He has no end of money, and he does not want a rich wife, only some good American girl who would love him. How would you like him?

At this juncture madame appeared upon the scene, looking complacent over the ten dollars she had secured from the man interested in the widow with a half-million dollar bank account. She gave even a broader smile of encouragement than her young assistant as she greeted the newcomer.

'Have you told the young lady about the gentleman from Germantown. Marie—the one who has the lovely home ready to take his wife to? He keeps his carriage. I think he just suits her.'

'I was telling her about the prince.'

'Yes; that is good. He is a very fine gentleman. You think you like the prince? turning to her visitor.

'Perhaps I should like an American better.'

'Well, we will see. Now, we have some photographs here. We do not show them to many people, but with a nice lady like you there can be no harm. Marie, get that gentleman that belongs to the Union and the one I was speaking of and the young millionaire from Chicago. Let her see his home; also the prince, and the count, and the rich young dentist, the sculptor from New York, and—' but madame paused for want of breath. Marie placed an armload of photographs before the visitor, several of them almost life-size.

The count was in evening dress and wore his hair long. He had rather a lack of chin and correspondingly large amount of nose. He might belong to the Royal Italian Band.

His Royal Highness from Germany had rather an anarchistic cast of countenance and showed considerable 'lager beer flesh,' while a man in the uniform of a United States admiral looked as though he had been accustomed to still stronger liquid refreshments.

The man with the palatial looking home, with the carriage standing in the driveway, looked as though he had begun life as a bricklayer, but on the whole the pictures made a very good showing.

Now that you have seen what kind of gentlemen we have, said madame, at the conclusion of the exhibition, I am sure you will want to join our club. Now, we take nice ladies for five dollars, but gentlemen have to pay ten to belong, and, of course, after marriage we always expect a nice little present. Marie you take the lady's name.

But the lady was not quite ready to give this.

Oh, I see, you feel just a little bit afraid, said madame. Ladies do sometimes, but that is all right. Why, I have some of the finest ladies in the city. Two of them now live on Walnut street. One is very rich.

'But how do you know that gentlemen are to be trusted?'

Madame laughed an assuring little laugh.

'Oh, my dear; that is what I make my business. Surely, you do not think I introduce a gentleman to a nice lady like you unless I know him to be all right. Oh! no. I keep one, two, three private detectives, and I always investigate all my gentlemen in a quiet way, so that even their friends do not know anything about it; but I always know. If you do not like

to be introduced by your own name, we will call you Miss Smith or Miss Jones, and then when you find the gentleman that suits you, you can yourself explain it to him. Many of our ladies do that. Now let us take your name, lady, for we have just the gentleman you want, and I take great happiness in introducing people who love each other. You just give your name and one little payment for the expenses of the club, and I will find you a gentleman who will make you very happy.'

But, despite the persuasiveness of the madame, the visitor decided to give the matter further consideration, and was finally ushered out through parlor and halls, which were evidently planned with a view to arranging as many secluded nooks for private interviews as possible. Screens and draperies were abundantly displayed and convenience rather than harmony of colors was the evident object.

The brown-eyed secretary accompanied the visitor to the front door, parting with the words:

'Now, do come back real soon. Come tomorrow evening. There is a wealthy young manufacturer coming over from Brooklyn then, and I am sure you would just suit each other. Now, do come and let me introduce you.'

### The Readiness of Stevens.

A trait which has always distinguished Mr. Walter B. Stevens, who has been selected as Secretary of the coming St. Louis Exposition, is his trained power of observation, combined with a rare discernment of the philosophic bearings of every thing observed.

Mr. Stevens is now about fifty years old and has been a newspaper man for some thirty years, having begun as a reporter on a St. Louis paper. Since 1885 he has

been a newspaper correspondent in Washington, except for intermissions now and then during which he has gone to various parts of the country or to Cuba on important assignments. On one occasion the late Joseph B. McCullagh, editor of the Globe Democrat, was entertaining some visitors in his office, when the conversation turned upon the difference between men of equal intelligence in this very matter of seeing more than appeared on the surface of common things.

'Why, I have a man in this office,' Mr. McCullagh declared, 'who can beat the world at such a game. I'll show you what he can do.'

He called through a speaking-tube, and Mr. Stevens responded in person.

'Mr. Stevens,' said the editor, 'I have got to have something to fill about a column and a quarter in tomorrow's paper. I wish you would go out into the street and write up the first thing you come across. Don't stay more than thirty minutes. I need you for another assignment after you are through with this.'

At the stroke of the half hour in walked Stevens with a batch of copy in his hand. 'I haven't quite finished that article,' he remarked, 'but it will take me but a little while more.'

'Oh, very well,' said Mr. McCullagh, winking slyly at his guests; 'but be as quick as you can about it.'

It was not very long before Stevens returned, laid the finished manuscript on his chief's desk, took his further orders and retired, whereupon Mr. McCullagh and his friends examined what he had written.

Mr. Stevens, it seems, had walked as far as the nearest corner, where a new building was in progress of erection. Apparently there was nothing to be seen more than one

could see in any unfinished building. He was probably the only passer by who stepped and watched proceedings, and he talked with the contractor on the curbstone about the little dummy which was running up and down by steam, supplying the bricks and mortar to the masons on the upper floors.

His article was a light, but thoughtful, essay on The Passing of the Hod Carrier.

### Mr. Choate Didn't Know Her.

A very well known lawyer and his wife were in London this summer, and the wife had to be operated on for appendicitis as soon as she arrived. They were great friends of Mr. Choate, and the Ambassador sent at once to inquire of her condition and kept her room supplied with flowers.

The first day she was able to walk out husband and wife met the Ambassador on the street. Mr. Choate quickly jumped from his hansom and joined them with eager protestations of delight at meeting his friend again.

He warmly shook both the hands of his comrade and asked a dozen questions about his health, his address and his probable stay in London. The wife, who had been standing by waiting for her turn, finally said with a pout, Why, Mr. Choate, you don't take any notice of me. You haven't spoken a word to me yet. I really believe you have forgotten me.

My dear madam, said Mr. Choate, I must confess that I did not recognize you with out your appendix.

M. Victorien Sardou was trained to be a doctor, but drifted into playwriting and had very hard early struggles. He is now however, a very rich man, and resides in a summer residence that cost him \$150,000.

