

WHAT IT IS TO BE FORTY.

To discover a sprinkle of gray in your beard,
And a thinness of crop where the upland is
cleared;
To note how you take to your slippers and
gown,
And hug to the fire when you get home from
town;

Ah, that's what it is to be forty.

To find that your shadow has portlier grown,
That your voice has a practical, business-like
tone;
That your vision is tricky which once was so
bright,
And a hint of a wrinkle is coming to light;

Ah, that's what it is to be forty.

A sleigh ride, a party, a dance or a dine,
Why, of course you'll be present, you never
decline;
But, alas! there's no invite, your not young
folks, you see;
You're no longer a peach, but a crab-apple
tree;

Ah, that's what it is to be forty.

A daughter that grows like a lily, a queen,
And that blooms like a rose in a garden of
green.

A dapper young clerk in an ice cream saloon,
Both a dude and a dunce is to carry off soon.
And a boy that is ten, and the prickle of your
eye,

Is caught smoking vile cigarettes on the sly—
Ah, that's what it is to be forty.

At twenty a man dreams of power and fame;
At thirty his fire has a soberer flame;
At forty his dreams and visions are o'er,
And he knows and he feels as he ne'er did be-
fore

That a man is a fool till he's forty.

Mrs. Ockdyne's Fright.



WHEN JOHN OCKDYNE lay insensible from the apopleptic seizure which terminated in his death, his wife acted as though she was a singularly heartless and deceitful woman.

Taking advantage of the temporary absence of the doctor, who had solemnly pronounced that a fatal issue of the sick man's malady, was humanly speaking, inevitable, Mrs. Ockdyne possessed herself of her husband's keys, and crept stealthily down to his study, where she unlocked a drawer in his escritoire, and took from it a bundle of documents, which she carefully concealed about her person. She then returned to the sick-room, replaced the keys with a trembling hand beneath the pillow on which the dying man's head rested, and resumed the anxious and watchful position by the bedside which she had occupied for many hours previously. But she looked so pale and agitated that the doctor, who made his appearance a minute afterward, accompanied by his assistant, glanced keenly at her, and said, in a peremptory tone: "You must really obey my directions. Please go to your room and rest, and take some refreshment. Your husband may remain in his present state for hours, and you are already over-wrought and fatigued. If the slightest symptom of a change occurs you shall be sent for instantly."

"I would rather remain," said Mrs. Ockdyne, with decision.

The doctor shrugged his shoulders irritably, and turned his attention to the patient, whose labored and stentorian breathing rendered inaudible the whispered consultation which ensued between the medical men. This was interrupted by the entrance of William Ockdyne; the younger brother and partner of the invalid, a tall, stern, elderly unsympathetic-looking individual, with cold, steel-blue eyes, which, after a quick glance at the unconscious form upon the bed, he directed with suspicious scrutiny upon the pale face of his sister-in-law, as she advanced to greet him.

"How long has he been like this?" he inquired, abruptly.

"Since midnight," answered Mrs. Ockdyne.

"Why did not you send for me before?" he demanded in a harsh, unpleasant voice.

"I sent for you as soon as Dr. Thorne pronounced the case to be hopeless," said Mrs. Ockdyne, tremulously.

Mrs. Ockdyne evidently resented this cross-examination for some weighty reasons, and her handsome features hardened while her brother-in-law spoke. William Ockdyne, whether consciously or otherwise, evaded her glance, and his cold, blue eyes ranged round the apartment with a look of cunning suspicion. "Come, Mrs. Ockdyne," said the doctor, removing his fingers from the sick man's pulse, "now that your brother-in-law has arrived, you need have no hesitation about going to your room. We will remain here, and I will remember my promise."

Either yielding to the doctor's persuasion or in consequence of the uneasiness and aversion which the presence of her brother-in-law evidently caused her, Mrs. Ockdyne no longer persisted in her objection, but rose from her chair without a word, and left the room with an air of suppressed agitation. Walking quickly along the passage and down the staircase, she entered a small sitting-room on the half-landing, and having closed and locked the door behind her, she fell in an almost fainting condition upon the nearest sofa.

Very different was now the aspect of Mrs. Ockdyne from that of the proud, cold, self-constrained woman of a moment ago. All her energy and spirit seemed to have deserted her, and she looked the picture of helpless misery and apprehension. The hard lines about her face had disappeared, revealing a character of weakness, irresolu-

tion, and even feebleness. Her features were no longer handsome; but rather showed the remains of a soft, tender, girlish kind of beauty, half obliterated by a life of hardship and unhappiness. She presented, in fact, a glimpse of her true self; the Mary Bannerman who had married John Ockdyne ten years ago; a woman designed by nature to be a gentle, tender, loving wife and mother, but transformed by harshness and tyranny into the semblance of a strangely dissimilar character.

Ten years ago! It seemed a century! And yet it was, in fact, less than ten years since that fatal day when her husband's rough kindness—for it would be profane to dignify his selfish affection for her by the name of love—was turned into relentless distrust and tyranny. The visible cause of this transformation she now held in her agitated hand—a bundle of letters written in ink which was now faded. Alas! if they had been written with her heart's blood she would have suffered less.

There is no occasion to rake up the details of her unfortunate flirtation with Allan Graham. It was not generally supposed to be of a serious nature by those who knew of it at the time. A weak, giddy, thoughtless girl, married, against her will, to a man of twenty years her senior; a young soldier-love of former days, culpably reckless of a woman's reputation, but meaning, perhaps, no harm; a fiercely jealous husband, of a disposition cruel and vindictive—common ingredients these, in blighted lives and domestic misery; and as Mrs. Ockdyne's story contains nothing novel or entertaining, we will pass it over lightly—as the world did for a wonder—without imputing blame to anyone.

John Ockdyne, however, neither forgot nor forgave. His brother William, whether from basely selfish motives, or from real suspicion bred of the proneness of some contemptible minds to disbelieve in innocence, helped to keep alive this resentment. He did not separate from his wife; indeed, he had no evidence to justify an extreme course. But he gave rein to his harsh, overbearing, suspicious nature; he crushed and humbled to the earth the unhappy woman whom he had sworn to love and cherish. He thought himself justified, perhaps, in making her repent bitterly of her indiscretion, and, perhaps, it may in charity be doubted whether his vulgar, coarse-grained temperament enabled him to realize the full extent of the suffering he inflicted. He kept Allan Graham's letters, and in savage moments produced them and taunted her with them. He held them in terrorism over her—threatening to show them, even; though his wife, cowed as she was, could never believe him capable of this baseness. Still, the very fact of these compromising documents continuing in existence had always haunted Mrs. Ockdyne with an uneasy feeling of insecurity, and she had appealed over and over again in vain to her husband to destroy them.

"It is what I expected," said Mrs. Ockdyne, quietly, when the lawyer had finished, imagining, from the way that he and her brother-in-law stared at her, that she was expected to say something.

"No doubt, madam, it is what you expected," said Mr. Bogle, briskly, as he folded up the document, "and now, if you please, will you kindly hand me the original?"

"The original will, do you mean?" inquired Mrs. Ockdyne, innocently. "Is not that it?"

"No, madam. This is the draft of the will which I prepared for the testator, and which I saw him execute," said Mr. Bogle, shaking the document at her impressively. "The testator took away the original, and kept it himself."

"Why do you suppose that I have the will?" exclaimed Mrs. Ockdyne, in surprise.

The lawyer looked slightly embarrassed at the question and glanced up at William Ockdyne, who had remained standing in front of the fireplace during the scene, watching his sister-in-law intently. He now came forward and said, slowly and distinctly:

"Because you took it out of the escritoire yonder when my brother was dying."

Mrs. Ockdyne half rose from her seat at this startling accusation, but dropped back into it again, as she realized that the occasion referred to was when she abstracted Allan Graham's letters.

"I never saw the will, and know nothing about it," was all she could say in her agitation and alarm.

"Did you burn it, madam, in your room that day when I interrupted you with the news that your husband's last moments had arrived?" said William Ockdyne, leaning forward and addressing her in a harsh and menacing tone.

"I—I—No, certainly not!" gasped the poor lady, fairly overwhelmed with this fresh accusation.

"One of the servants can prove that you left your husband's bedside when you thought you were unperceived, and came in here with your husband's keys in your hand. Another can corroborate my evidence that immediately afterward you burnt a document in the fire in your room. Some of the ashes have been collected and will be put in evidence," continued her brother-in-law, evidently seeking to convince her of the hopelessness of denial.

"The case is quite complete," added the lawyer, in a self-satisfied tone. "Probate will be granted on this draft, upon the strength of the evidence—the strong evidence—which we can produce to prove the destruction of the original."

"What do you suggest, could have my object in destroying the will, supposing I were capable of doing such a thing?" inquired Mrs. Ockdyne, recovering her presence of mind sufficiently to be conscious of the necessity of realizing her position.

"The motive is obvious," replied Mr. Bogle, with a smile. "If your husband had died intestate, you would have been entitled, as his widow, roughly speaking, to half his property instead of £2000 only."

The significance of this reply had a crushing effect upon the poor lady, whose perceptions, naturally far from dull, were rendered doubly acute by the danger of her position. She realized that the very act of proving her innocence of the monstrous accusation brought her would reveal the secret

which she had fondly hoped was now forever buried—the story of her supposed shame. If brought to trial, it mattered not whether she might be found innocent or guilty of the principal charge; in either case the miserable story which had wrecked her life would be dragged forth and published to the world.

"You doubtless perceive madam: that your attempted fraud will not avail you. The destruction of the will is a crime in itself, which renders you liable, I believe, to penal servitude," resumed William Ockdyne, glancing at the lawyer. "I am unwilling, however," he added, "for the sake of my brother's memory, and for the sake of our family name, which you have the right to bear, that scandal should be caused. If, under Mr. Bogle's directions, you will sign the necessary documents to enable me to administer to my brother's estate and retain possession of his property which I am entitled to under the terms of his will, I will be content to let the matter rest."

Having said this, William Ockdyne resumed his former position upon the hearthrug, while the lawyer proceeded to explain the details of the proposed arrangement. The poor lady's first impulse was to accept the conditions offered, but the sense of justice to her self fortunately restrained her.

"I will consider your proposal," she said tremulously, "because, so far as the money is concerned, I am absolutely indifferent. But I must have time for reflection."

"How long do you require?" said her brother-in-law, reluctantly.

"A week," said Mrs. Ockdyne, rising with dignity from her place at the table.

William Ockdyne exchanged glances with the lawyer, and seemed on the point of remonstrating with her; but apparently he changed his mind, for he permitted his sister-in-law to retire from the room without another word.

As a matter of fact, however, Mrs. Ockdyne had already resolved to comply with his demand sooner than incur the odium and scandal involved in a public trial. It was absolutely true, as she had stated that she was indifferent to the pecuniary aspect of the question; for she was not an avaricious woman, and she possessed a few thousand pounds of her own. It was only her proper pride and self-respect which had suggested to her to take time for consideration. It was impossible to doubt, from her brother-in-law's demeanor, that he seriously believed that she was guilty of the charge he brought against her; and this led poor Mrs. Ockdyne to wonder uneasily whether she could really have destroyed the will. Allan Graham's letters formed a bulky packet, and it had certainly not occurred to her to go through them in order to ascertain that there was no other paper tied up with them. Her husband's will was a short document, and it would have been characteristic of his brutally vindictive disposition if he had placed the letters with his will, as a sort of grim explanation to her of the cause of the meagre provision he had made for her. This idea, far-fetched as it might have appeared to her in calmer moments, nevertheless tended to strengthen her decision.

Having arrived at this conclusion, Mrs. Ockdyne was almost relieved at receiving a second visit from her brother-in-law, who called later in the evening, to urge her to sign the necessary documents, waiving her legal claims, without delay. He had brought the papers with him, and Mrs. Ockdyne could not withstand the temptation of disposing of the whole miserable business without the worry of further harassing reflections. William Ockdyne's manner, moreover, though peremptory and overbearing was nevertheless more conciliatory than it had been in the day, and he evinced a desire, which poor Mrs. Ockdyne in her trouble appreciated, to spare her feelings by avoiding any unpleasant allusions. She had actually taken her pen for the purpose of signing away her interest in her husband's property, when a maid-servant entered the room, and rather mysteriously requested her to come outside at once.

William Ockdyne impatiently asked her to sign the papers before she left, but his sister-in-law, resenting his inter-

ference, laid the pen aside and rose in response to the servant's summons. Outside the door the girl whispered that a gentleman was in the dining-room, who would not give his name when he heard that she was engaged with Mr. William Ockdyne, but desired to speak to her forthwith.

Considerably mystified and vaguely alarmed, Mrs. Ockdyne proceeded to the dining-room, where she found waiting a queer-looking, rosy-cheeked, gray-haired, old gentleman, who, advancing toward her with a paternal air, held out his hand and said his name was Parchment.

"I am deeply grieved, my dear madam, that, owing to absence from town I did not hear of your husband's

death till my return to-day. His strict injunctions were that should he ever be suddenly taken ill, which he seemed to apprehend, I was immediately to communicate with you. Hearing from the servant that you were engaged with Mr. William Ockdyne, I thought it advisable to ask you to step out and see me," he added, confidentially.

"May I inquire the object of your visit?" said Mrs. Ockdyne, staring at him.

"Your husband called upon me, my dear madam, a few months back on the subject of his will. He showed me the will which his former solicitor, Mr. Bogle, had prepared for him, and I told him that it was a wicked, cruel and unjust will," said the old gentleman stoutly.

"Did my husband explain—" murmured Mrs. Ockdyne, with rising color.

"He explained everything, and explanations did not alter my opinion," said Mr. Parchment, looking at her nervously. "To make a long story short, I prevailed upon him to destroy his former will and to make another, which does justice to you, his wife, madam."

"And you have this will?" exclaimed Mrs. Ockdyne, clasping her hands together.

"Here, madam, in my bag," said Mr. Parchment.

"The facts," he added, "that your husband was considerably influenced by his brother, and, I think, secretly afraid of him. At all events, he asked me to take charge of the will and to look after your interests when occasion arose."

"I am accused of having destroyed the will prepared by Mr. Bogle!" cried Mrs. Ockdyne, almost beside herself with mingled thankfulness and emotion.

"He destroyed it himself, my dear madam, in my office," said Mr. Parchment, soothingly.

"William Ockdyne has come to-night for the purpose of getting me to sign papers renouncing all claims to my husband's property. He is in there—in the study," exclaimed the poor lady, hysterically.

"Let me have five minutes with him," said Mr. Parchment, briskly, as he moved toward the door. "The scoundrel," he added, under his breath. "Bogle must have received my message this afternoon. I expected something of this kind."

A FEMALE BANDIT.

Unaided She Robbed a Stage, and has Killed Many Men.

The death is just announced of one of the most remarkable women that Mexico has ever produced. Notwithstanding her strange and perilous career, she attained a ripe old age, and became one of the wealthiest women in the republic. This woman was Senora Amastin Bahi de Pascadero. In her early womanhood she devoted her time to robbery, and half the reports regarding her career are true, it is no wonder that she left a fortune at her death. One of her notable exploits was a stage robbery in the State of Zacatecas. One night she dressed herself in men's clothing, and mounting a horse, rode from San Antonio to the Zacatecas and Agues Calientes stage road, where she waited in a grove for the south-bound stage to pass. As the postillions came up she commanded them with revolver in hand to halt, put out their torches and fall to the rear of the coach, which was a few yards behind them. She then advanced upon the driver and keeper, who were made to dismount, expecting every moment to be shot from ambush, as she kept saying, "Don't shoot unless they resist."

The passengers, eight in number, who were inside the stage, were led to believe from the female road agent's talk, that an armed party was in the brush, and when she came up and demanded their money, watches, and jewelry, they lost no time in obeying her. She then bade the passengers good night, and, after admonishing them not to move within half an hour, disappeared in the grove.

During her career she killed a great many men, and for many years was a terror to the people of Sinaloa, Jalisco and Sonora. Government troops and State troops chased her, but could never entrap her. It was said that the reason she gave for adopting such a mode of life was the murder by Federal troops of her intended husband years ago, when she was in her teens. She then made a vow that she would kill or ruin five men for every year she lived. She was one of the most noted bandits Mexico ever produced, although she was a woman. Before her death she related her strange history and bequeathed her immense fortune to charities. At her request she was buried beside her dead lover in her native town, San Antonio.

A Monument to Americans.

A graceful act on the part of an officer of the United States steamer Marion is worthy of mention in these columns. It seems the officer in question had been wandering through the cemetery in Shantung-road, where he came across the graves of some of those who had served in the United States Navy, in years gone by. The headboards have very much rotted away, will in the course of a few years entirely disappear, the names on them now being in most cases very difficult to decipher. By diligently following the lines the names were made out, and to perpetuate the memory of the departed the officer had erected in the cemetery a Chinese white marble tablet, and on it are cut the names of those whose remains are lying in the cemetery. Some of these deaths date back to 1851, and at the top of the stone are these words: "Erected by an officer of the United States steamship Marion in memory of the following men-of-war-men, the headboards originally placed over the graves, having become effaced." The stone was put up recently.



"She thrust the packet of papers into the fire."



"A maid servant entered the room and rather mysteriously asked her to come outside."