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PURPLE LILACS.

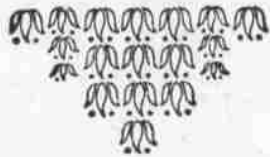
By MINNA IRVING.

A pretty maiden rose one day
Ere day began to glow,
And in the amber brook washed out
Her lilac calico.
All in the morning and the dew
A youth came riding by,
And saw her on a tall green bush
Hang up the dress to dry.

A look, a kiss, a word, away
They went by tower and town,
She followed him across the sea,
And so forgot her gown.
Look yonder by the garden gate,
Its flowery purple, see,
Is hanging where she left it yet,
Upon the lilac-tree.

—Lippincott's.

EVERY INCH A MAN



I.
HOW she ever came to join the society was as great a mystery to herself as to her friends. Of course, a lovers' quarrel was at the bottom of it all. But even then, for a young and attractive girl of twenty-three to join the Spinsters' Society, and adopt the vows of eternal celibacy like the rest of its members, whose ages gave them some excuse for so doing, was an admittedly extraordinary proceeding.

When Sibyl Cathcart found herself fully installed into the sisterhood of the Spinsters' Society, she began to ruminate as to whether, after all, she had acted wisely. True, he had been seen leaving the theatre with another woman, and what made matters worse was the fact that the other woman was young and pretty. Rumor had it, too, that he had been seen to publicly kiss the other woman at the railway station. So Sibyl, with the usual impetuosity of her sex, sat down immediately and penned a short and formal note giving him the conge. He demanded an explanation, first in person and then by letter. She refused to see him when he called, and upon receiving his letter, tore it up and then cried over the fragments.

But once she had set her hand to the plow she did not intend to go back. All the other members, to the number of seventeen, were at least a quarter of a century older than herself, despite their allegations to the contrary, and their business aptitudes were not brilliant. The pretentious building in which many of the members dwelt, and which was recognized as the society's headquarters, required judicious management, in view of the small amount of money forthcoming for the purpose. One day Sibyl found herself in the presence of her chiefestness.

"My dear," began Miss Tabbs, as she surveyed the girl from over her spectacles, "do you think you could become one of us altogether? I mean, could you come and live on the premises, for instance?"
"I—I think so," Sibyl replied doubtfully, well aware that her friends would think her more eccentric than ever.
"Now that is nice of you! Well, the fact of the matter is that Miss Franklin has come to the conclusion that the position of secretary to the society entails more work than she can undertake, and if you will, we want you to take her place. You are young and energetic, and with all due deference to Miss Franklin, I might say that you would be able to manage the society's small income more beneficially to ourselves. You must know, my dear, that the greed for money of the opposite sex is horrible, and unfortunate creatures like ourselves are therefore robbed of what justly belongs to us. You will, of course, have your board and lodgings for nothing and a grant of £8 per annum. Will you accept the post?"
"Certainly. With pleasure."
"That is good of you. But mind, you must do your utmost to thwart the machinations of the opposite sex. Never patronize a tradesman, or any business conducted by a man, and if you ever find that either of the servants has a follower, sack her, my dear, sack her immediately!"
At this point a gray-haired lady, anything but prepossessing in appearance, entered the room, and was greeted by Miss Tabbs.
"Ah! here you are, Miss Franklin. Miss Cathcart has promised to act as secretary from this day forward, and I have just been giving her a few wrinkles."
"Thank you so much, dearie," re-

sponded the ex-secretary kindly. "But do you know what has happened? The landlord has come himself for the rent. What are we to do? We have no money, and the rent is months overdue."

"How fearful to be in the hands of such a money-grabbing brute!" interposed Miss Tabbs.

"Men were always brutes!" volunteered Miss Franklin.

Sibyl thought the same and remained silent.

"But where is he now?" asked Miss Tabbs.

"Oh, he's on the doorstep. I spoke to him through the letter box. I could not have the house polluted with his presence inside. It's bad enough for the neighbors, knowing our principles as they do, to see him here at all. He says he must have the rent at once, or a bailiff will be put in. Think of it! A male bailiff here—here!"

Miss Franklin was perilously near fainting, and her tears were running fast.

"Shall I go and try and reason with him?" asked Sibyl, by way of putting an end to a painful scene.

"Oh, if you would be so kind; but be sure and treat him like an animal, or at least as an inferior, because he's a man, you know."

Sibyl ran down stairs and threw open the door. She had intended asking his business in a civil but firm manner. Instead she drew back with a start.

"Sibyl!"

"Jack—Mr. Allingham!"

"I heard of your escapade, and that is why I came in person, though I did not expect the pleasure of meeting you."

He held out his hand, and she turned away contemptuously.

"You are spying upon me," she cried, her anger rising. "How dare you come here like this?"

"You forget the house is my own."

"Oh—er—so it is. You—want the rent? I am afraid I cannot pay you just yet. If you will give us time, a few days, or—"

"In a few days, nay, in a few hours the bailiffs will be in unless the rent is paid at once," he replied, firmly.

"But, Ja—Mr. Allingham, you would not be so cruel?"

"Cruel? Were you never cruel? What was my fault, and how much mercy did you show me? Now it is my turn, and no mercy will I give. Can your companions or whatever they call themselves pay me now?"

"No, they cannot."

"Very well. Good morning."

He turned away and she slammed the door.

"What did he say?" asked Miss Tabbs, anxiously, when she entered the room.

"He is every inch a man!" replied Sibyl, significantly.

II.

Before two more days had passed the Spinsters' Society were acquainted with the worst. The members were not afraid of the opposite sex, antagonistic though they might be, but they had to acknowledge a terror of the law. When one morning the housemaid answered a knock at the door, the landlord promptly pushed himself into the hall. He was accompanied by a man, who held in one hand a brown paper parcel and an official document in the other.

"Good morning, Miss Cathcart," he said, as she came out to meet him.

"You expected me, of course?"

"I don't understand you."

"Really? There is nothing much to understand. I am, in fact, my own bailiff, and only immediate payment of the rent will prevent my being quartered upon you. This gentleman here

will prove the truth of my assertions, as he represents the law. Just run over this paper, please."

"You brute!" she ejaculated.

"Sorry to inconvenience you—very. A debt's a debt, you know. But I don't think you'll find me a very troublesome tenant. I shall come at 9 in the morning and leave at 6 in the evening, until the money is paid. That parcel, Jenkins, please," he added to the man, and discharged him.

The girl hid her face in her hands and burst into tears.

"I always knew you were a coward!" she sobbed. "And now you've proved it."

"I hope not. If I come as my own bailiff you should congratulate yourself upon having escaped so lightly, for a commoner man might have made his presence intolerable. And besides, I have brought my own food, which no ordinary bailiff would have done."

The bursting of this bomb in the headquarters of the Spinsters' Society did not tend to draw the members toward the male sex, and immediate steps were taken to realize the money, a matter of some difficulty.

"It's nothing short of a scandal," piped Miss Tabbs, between fits of hysterical weeping, when the news was conveyed to her. "It will be the talk of the neighborhood. If it had been a commoner man it would have been different, but him! And to have to cook his mutton chops—ugh!"

"And he stands in the doorway for ten minutes wiping his boots so that the neighbors shall see him enter!" gasped Miss Franklin, to the groans of the other members.

But the calamity fell more severely upon the head of Sibyl, though no one dared to imagine that she had once nearly become the wife of the obnoxious individual. Her one thought now, as she sat in the little study set apart for her own use, was how to get rid of him. Giving open battle only ended in signal defeat, therefore, why not try strategy? He had always been swayed by her influence, so, perhaps, might be still amenable to persuasion. And she could continue to hate him all the same. The experiment, at any rate, was worth trying.

She rose to put her plans into execution, when the two domestics entered without knocking. They were dressed in their outdoor things and appeared anything but pleasantly disposed toward her.

"We're goin', miss," said the cook, shortly.

"Going? Where?"

"Ome; anywhere out of this 'ere 'ouse. We 'ain't agoin' to run all over the place for a man like that, an' knowin' there's no wages for us. You be all as poor as church mice, an' the funniest set o' females as we've a-seen, barrin' yourself, miss. Our chaps is waitin' for us outside, so wiv our best respects to you, miss, we'll git out."

"Are my chops ready?" came a voice from the dining room.

"Ark at 'im," said the cook. Then putting her head outside the door she shouted: "Yes, your chops be ready an' waitin', an' gettin' cold, an' may go bad afore we brings 'em to you, you great lanky bouncer!"

"Silence!" commanded Sibyl. "You may go at once, and your wages will be sent to you. We do not keep money in the house."

"So that bloke seems to think. Well, good-day to you, miss. An' mind you don't fall in love with that bewitchin' young man."

With this parting shaft the servants withdrew, and Sibyl, having seen them off the premises, entered the dining room.

"Good morning, Jack," she said pleasantly.

"Jack, eh? Why, yesterday it was nothing but Mr. Allingham, with plenty of emphasis on the 'Mr.' Want to ask a favor, I suppose."

"Now, Jack, why will you be so horrid?"

"It must be a legacy I got from you. The same term might be very well applied to your treatment of me, mightn't it?"

"Oh, I don't know. You see I had a reason."

"A reason? What reason?"

"Don't stand there and pretend you don't know," she retorted. "You never went to the theatre with another woman, I suppose, and you never kissed her at the railroad station, did you? And a pretty woman, too—a pretty woman, I repeat, and I am not pretty."

"But, pardon me, you are very pretty, especially when you're angry. Yes, I have been to the theatre with another

woman, and kissed her at the railway station—my sister-in-law!"

"What do you mean?"

"George's wife. You've heard me speak of my brother George, who's in Australia. He was home some months ago with his young bride. We all three went to the theatre, and—oh! I see it, now. You—ha! ha!—thought it was some one else!"

He dropped into a chair in a fit of laughing. "You thought I was flirting with another woman?" he said, at length.

"Of course. Any one would have thought so," she replied, crestfallen at the absurdity of her blunder.

"But, you silly thing, why didn't you find out before you became so unreasonable? And are you still cross with me?"

"No—not very."

"Then atone for it all by leaving these stupid companions of yours, and prove that you do not agree with their views by marrying me—me, the bailiff!"

He bent down and kissed her as she did not reply.

"Miss Cathcart!" came a shrill voice.

"Here comes the old hens," he said.

"No, you shan't get away, so don't struggle."

Miss Tabbs peered through the open door and dropped into one of the hall chairs preparatory to fainting. Her shriek of "Murder!" brought all the other occupants to the spot in an instant, prepared for the worst.

"Now, then, my good ladies," said Allingham, coming forward. "Don't get hysterical. I have a right to claim anything in the house for the debt owing, so have decided to claim Sibyl and write 'paid' across the account. She's going to be my wife."

"Wife! The vixen, the sly little rat, she—"

"Yes, we quarrelled some time ago, but now she's forgiven me and I've forgiven her, though I don't know why I should," he added, jocosely.

"Because," she answered, with eyes full of joyful tears, "because, you old dear, you're every inch a man."—The Penny Pictorial Magazine.

Roses in Open London.

It would be interesting to know the nearest spot to Fleet street where roses still blow in the open. That spot is very near, indeed, writes a correspondent, for it is in the Temple Gardens, but a few yards from the old Rose Tavern, that eighteenth century hostelry which took its name from its rose gardens. The Temple Gardens lie open to the sun, a broad sweep of green turf, edged with flowery borders, in which the roses are now shyly putting forth their leafy shoots. A passing fancy suggests that some of those roses may be the direct descendants of the very trees from which Richard Plantagenet and his companions took their emblems of the strife which was to "send a thousand souls to death and deadly night."

Nor are these the only roses within sound of Fleet street's whirr and hum; Lincoln's Inn still keeps its gardens, sorely tried though they are by smoke and grime, and it is but a few years since the little garden square of Clifford's Inn could have shown a few modest blooms. Now, alas, Clifford's Inn seems likely to vanish forever; the garden is all but gone, the few remaining trees have already begun to feel the remorseless axe, and in front of the towering masonry of the Record Office a dismal black notice board asserts the rights of the crown to a share of the scanty light and air which still penetrate the threatened space.—London Chronicle.

Queer Little Church.

One of the queerest and most isolated churches in England is a little gray edifice in the valley of Westdale Head, Cumberland. It was over four hundred years old, and has only two windows and eight pews. The pulpit is lighted by a slit of glass in the roof. A little bell hangs loosely in the open belfry and on stormy nights drearily mingles its tones with the wind and thunder.

Shipwreck Victims.

During the last forty-nine years as many as 31,271 persons perished from shipwreck on or near the coasts of the United Kingdom. During the same period the number of lives saved by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution totaled 33,900.

To Be Sure.

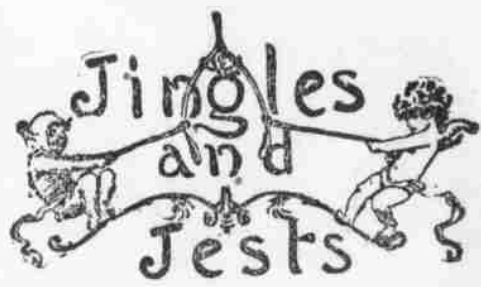
There are only two kinds of children—your own perfect little cherubs and the ill-behaved brats wined by other people.—Town Topics.

A CAMPAIGN PROGRAMME.

My Uncle Jim's a candidate;
They chose him from the lot,
He says they will elect him
To the office, like as not.
It ain't his wondrous learnin'
Nor his talent that commands,
He hasn't got much money,
But he's great at sakin' hands.

There's somethin' awe-insirin'
In the way he clears his throat
And stands with one hand stuck inside
His new Prince Albert coat.
It's finer than the music of
A dozen big brass bands
When he says "How-dy-do" an' goes
To work a-shakin' hands.

He ain't a-makin' lengthy talks,
Like he made in the past;
I honestly believe he's got
The right idea at last.
He smiles with patronizing pride,
His bosom broad expands,
An' he don't say another word,
But keeps a-shakin' hands.
—Washington Star.



The American is never more energetic than when he tries to be idle.—Life.

"Is he opposed to capital?" "He is, when any one else has it."—Chicago Evening Post.

"Is Brainard well fixed?" "You bet! He's stuck on a girl worth a million."—Town Topics.

"Foiled!" muttered the yeast cake as it was being wrapped in its glittering cover.—Yale Record.

He paid her compliments, before,
But now he pays her bills,
It's just to say that marriage
A man's devotion chills?
—Puck.

He—"I suppose you think smoking is hurtful?" She—"Not always. It is quite an improvement to pork products."—Boston Transcript.

Willie Peebles—"The horse was goin'." Teacher—"Don't forget your g. Willie." Willie Peebles—"Gee, the horse was goin'."—Puck.

In stealing kisses if you're caught
Red handed with the smack,
You should in restitution
Pay double measure back.
—Hebrew Standard.

Tessie—"I wonder if I'm getting to look passe?" Bessie—"Why?" Tessie—"I've been asked twice within a week to be a bridesmaid."—Chicago Daily News.

Mr. Flip—"There seems to be a problem in this play." Mrs. Flip—"The problem is how to get your money's worth out of it."—Chicago Daily News.

"His wife is an ardent temperance worker isn't she?" "Yes; she won't travel in the West because she heard that the climate is stimulating."—Cleveland Leader.

"What do you think of this idea of having dogs for caddies?" asked the old golfer. "It's a good idea," replied the beginner; "the dogs can't laugh at you."—Yonkers Statesman.

The hurdy-gurdy man is not always mercenary. In Germany he does not grind for pennies but, like our long-haired brethren in college, he grinds for marks.—Harvard Lampoon.

Farmer Medders—"But I thought Widder Jones wa'n't goin' ter take no more summer boarders." Farmer Whiffletree—"Wall, she took one of 'em fer better or wuss last year an' now she's ter take more ter support him."—Puck.

"What did the preacher say about your essay?" asked Mrs. Gudley. "He said it was very tautological," answered the girl graduate. "Gracious! me! To think of your doin' anything like that, almost the first time tryin'!"—Washington Star.

Old Lady (who has given tramp threepence)—"Don't think I am giving this for charity's sake. It's only because it pleases me to do so." Tramp—"Make it three shillings instead of threepence, and enjoy yourself, mem!"—Glasgow Evening Times.

Has Long Family Tree.

Joseph Bowne, a well known farmer of Bedford township, Calhoun County, Mich., has a remarkable family record. It is an unbroken genealogical record reaching back for 300 years to his ancestry in England. From that time to this every member of the Bowne family has been a Quaker. Every family has had a son named Samuel.