

The Oxford Democrat.

NEW SERIES, VOL. 5, NO. 35.

PARIS, ME., FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1854.

OLD SERIES, VOL. 21, NO. 45.

MISCELLANY.

KATE'S EXPERIMENT.

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Kate Harbell, a high spirited girl, who had a pretty strong will of her own, was about being married. Like a great many others of her age and sex, who approach the matrimonial altar, Kate's notions of the marriage relation were not the clearest in the world.

Ferdinand Lee, the betrothed of Kate, a quiet, sensitive young man, had, perhaps, as strong a will as the lady herself, though it was more under the control of reason. He was naturally impatient of dictation or force, and a strong love of approbation made him feel keenly anything like satire, ridicule or censure. To point him to a fault was to wound it not offend him. Here lay the weakness of his character. All this, on the other side, was counterbalanced by kind feelings, good sense, and manly principles. He was above all meanness or dishonesty.

Of course, Kate did not fully understand his character. Such a thing as a young girl's accurate knowledge of the character of the man she is about to marry, is of very rare occurrence. She saw enough of good qualities to make her love him with tenderness and devotion, but she also saw personal defects that were disagreeable in the object of her affections. But she did not in the least doubt that all these she could easily correct in him after she became his wife.

From a defect of education, or from a natural want of neatness and order, Ferdinand Lee was inclined to carelessness in his attire, and also exhibited a certain want of polish in his manners and address that was, at times, particularly annoying to Kate.

"I'll break him of that when I get him," said the young lady to a married friend, alluding to some little peculiarity both had noticed.

"Don't be too certain," returned the lady smiling.

"You'll see."

Kate tossed her head in a resolute way.

"I'll see you disappointed."

"Wait a little while. Before I'm his wife six months, you'll hardly know the man, there'll be such a change."

"The change is far more likely to take place in you."

"Why do you say that, Mrs. Morton?" inquired Kate, looking grave.

"Because I think so. Men are not so easily brought into order, and the attempt at reformation and correction by a young wife generally ends in painful disappointment. If you begin this work you will in all probability find yourself tasked beyond your ability. I speak from some experience, having been married for about ten years, and having seen a good many young girls come up into our ranks from the walks of single blessedness. Take my advice, and look away from Frederick's faults and disagreeable peculiarities as much as possible, and think more of his manly traits of character, his fine sentiments and honorable principles."

"I do look at them and love them," replied Kate with animation. "These won't mar my heart, and now unite me to him in bonds that cannot be broken. But if on a previous gem there be a slight blemish that mars its beauty, shall we not seek to remove the defect, and thus give the jewel a higher lustre? Will you say no?"

"I will, if in the act there be danger of injuring the gem."

"I don't understand you, Mrs. Morton."

"Reflect for a moment, and see if my meaning is not apparent."

"You think I will offend him, if I point out a fault, or seek to correct it?"

"A result most likely to follow."

"I will not seek to partly of his good sense," answered Kate, with some gravity of manner. "The suggestion half offended her."

"None are perfect, my young friend, don't forget that," said Mrs. Morton with equal seriousness. "To think differently is a common mistake of persons unacquainted as you are."

"It's no mistake of mine, let me assure you, replied Kate. I can see faults as quick as any one. Love can't blind me. It is because I see defects in Frederick that I wish to correct them."

"And you trust to his good sense to take the work of correction kindly?"

"Certainly I do."

"Then you must probably think him more perfect than he really is. Very few people can bear to be told of their faults, and fewer still to be told of them by those they love. Love is expected to be blind to defects, therefore when it is seen looking at and pointing them out, the feeling produced is, in the very nature of things, a disagreeable one. Take my advice, and let Frederick's faults alone, at least for a year after you are married, and even then put your hand on them very lightly and as if by accident."

"Do you think I could see him lounge, or rather, slide down in his chair in that ungainly way, and not speak to him about it? Not I! It makes me nervous now, and if I won't attend he might take it unkindly, would call his attention to it."

"Do you think he will be less likely to take it unkindly after marriage?"

"Certainly. Then I will have a right to to speak to him about it."

"Then marriage will give you certain rights over your husband?"

"It will give him rights over me, and a very poor rule that is which doesn't work both ways. Marriage will make him my husband; and, surely, a wife may tell her husband that he is not perfect without offending him."

"Kate, Kate, you don't know what you are talking about, child!"

"I think I do."

"And I know you don't."

"Oh, well, Mrs. Morton, we won't quarrel

about it," said Kate laughing. "I mean to make one of the best of wives, and have one of the best husbands to be found. He will require a little fixing up to make him just to my mind, but don't you fear but what I'll do it in the gentlest possible manner. Women have more taste than men, you know, and a man never looks and acts just right until he gets a woman to take charge of him."

Now Kate Harbell meant all she said, and a little more. She had no thought of yielding her will to that of her husband-to-be, but purposed managing him pretty much to suit herself. Not that she designed to tyrannize over him, or make him a mere subject of her will. But she had a good opinion of her own taste and sense of propriety, and believed that it would be the easiest thing in the world to make them the governing law in carrying out the new arrangements about to be made.

A happy bride Kate became a few months after this little conversation took place, and Lee thought himself the most fortunate of men in obtaining such a lovely, accomplished and right-minded woman for a wife. Swiftly glided away the sweet honeymoon, without a jar of discord, though, during the time, Kate saw a good many things not exactly to her mind, and which she set down as needing correction.

One evening, it was just five weeks after the marriage, and when they were snugly settled in their own house, Frederick Lee was seated before the grate, in a handsome rocking-chair, his body in a position that would have required a stretch of language to pronounce graceful or becoming. He had drawn off one of his boots that was lying on the floor, and the leg from which it had been taken was hanging over an arm of his chair. He had slipped forward in the chair—his ordinary mode of sitting, or rather lying—so far that his head, which, if he had been upright, would have been even with the top of the back, was at least twelve inches below it. To add to the effect of his position, he was swinging the footless leg that hung across the arm of the chair with a rapid, circling motion. He had been reclining in this inelegant attitude for about ten minutes when Kate, who had permitted herself to become a good deal annoyed by it, said to him rather earnestly—

"Do, Frederick, sit up straight, and try, and be a little more graceful in your position."

"What's that?" inquired the young man, as if he had not heard distinctly.

"Can't you sit up straight?" Kate smiled, but Lee saw it was a forced smile.

"Oh, yes," he answered indifferently. "I can sit up as straight as an arrow, but I find this attitude most agreeable."

"If you knew how you looked," said Kate.

"How do I look?" asked the young man, playfully.

"Oh, you look—you look more like a country eld-hopper than anything else."

"There was a sharpness in Kate's tones, that told unpleasantly on his ears."

"Do I indeed?" was his rather cold remark. Yet he did not change his position.

"Indeed you do," said the wife, who was, by this time, beginning to feel a good of irritation, for she saw that Frederick was not inclined to respond in the way she had hoped to her very reasonable desire that he would assume a more graceful attitude. "The fact is," she continued, impelled to further utterance, by the excited state of her feelings, although she was conscious of having already said more than was agreeable to her husband, "you ought to correct yourself of these ungraceful and unbecoming habits. It shows a want of—"

Kate stopped suddenly. She felt that she was about using words that would inevitably give offence.

"A want of what?" inquired Lee, in a low firm voice, while he continued to look his wife steadily in the face.

Kate's eyes fell to the floor, as she remained silent.

"Ungraceful and unbecoming. Humph!"

Lee was evidently hurt at this allegation, as the tone in which he repeated his words, clearly showed.

"Do you call your present attitude graceful?" Kate asked, rallying herself under the reflection that she was right.

"It is comfortable for me, and therefore ought to be graceful in your eyes," was the young man's perverse answer. Not the slightest change had yet taken place in his position.

This was beyond what the high spirited lady could bear, and she retorted with more feeling than discretion. "Love is not blind in my case, I can assure you, Frederick, and never will be. You are very ungraceful and untidy, and annoy me, sometimes excessively. I wish you would try to correct these things."

"You do!"

There was something cool and provoking in the way Lee said this.

"I do, Frederick, and I'm in earnest." The cheeks of Kate were in a glow, her eyes lit up and her lips quivering.

"How long since you made the discovery that I was only a country eld-hopper?" said Lee, who was particularly annoyed by Kate's unexpected charges against his good breeding.

"I didn't say you were only a country eld-hopper replied Kate."

"I believe you used the words. My ears rarely deceive me. I must own to feeling highly complimented."

"Do sit up straight, Frederick! Do take your leg from over the arm of that chair!—You make me so nervous that I can hardly contain myself."

"Really! I thought a man was privileged to sit in any position he pleased in his own house."

The excitement of Kate's mind, had by this time, reached a crisis. Bursting into tears, she hurried from the room, and went

sobbing up to her chamber. Here was a fine state of affairs, indeed! Was ever a man so perverse and unreasonable!

Did Frederick Lee follow quickly his weeping wife? No, his pride was too deeply wounded for that. "A country eld-hopper! Undignified and ungraceful! Upon my word!" Such were some of his mental ejaculations. And then, as his feelings grew excited, he started up from his chair and began pacing the floor, muttering, as he did so—"It is rather late in the day to make this discovery!—Why didn't she find it out before!"

Meanwhile Kate had thrown herself across her bed, where she lay, weeping bitterly. What a storm had suddenly been blown about their ears! It was fully an hour before Frederick Lee's disturbed feelings began to run at all clear. He was both surprised and offended. What could all this mean! What had all at once come over his young wife! "A country eld-hopper!" he muttered to himself over and over again. "Ungraceful, ungenteel, and all that! Very complimentary indeed!"

When Lee joined his wife in their chamber, two hours after she had left him, he found that she had retired to bed and was sleeping. On the next morning both looked very sober, and both were cold and distant. A few words only passed between them. It was the same when they met at dinner-time, and the same when Lee came home in the evening. During the whole of this day, the thought of each was upon the other, but it was not a forgiving thought. Kate cherished angry feelings towards her husband, and Lee continued to be offended at the freedom of expression which his young wife had ventured to use towards him. Of course, both were very unhappy.

The formal intercourse of the tea table having ended, Lee feeling little inclined to pass the evening with his reserved and sober-looking partner, put on his hat, and merely remarking that he would not return until bed time, left the house. This act startled Kate. With the jar of the closing door came a gush of tears. The evening was passed alone. How wretched she felt as the hours moved slowly on.

It was nearly eleven o'clock when Lee came home. By that time, the mind of Kate was in an agony of suspense. More than once the thought that he had abandoned her, intruded itself, and filled her with fear and anguish. What a relief to her feelings it was when she heard the rattle of his night-gear in the lock. But she could not meet him with a smile. She could not throw her arms around his neck, and press her cheek to his. No, for she felt that he was angry with her without just cause, and had visited with unjust severity a light offence—if, so far as she was concerned, her act were worthy to be called an offence. And so they looked coldly upon each other when they met, and then averted their eyes. The morning broke, but with no fairer promise of a sunny day. Clouds obscured their whole horizon. Coldly they parted after the brief and severely tasted meal. How wretched they were!

During the forenoon, Mrs. Morton, the friend of Mrs. Lee, called in to see her young friend. "Why Kate? What has happened?" she exclaimed, the moment she saw her. Mrs. Lee tried to smile and look indifferent as she answered—

"Happened? Why do you say that?"

"You look as if you hadn't a friend left in the world!"

"And I don't know that I have," said Mrs. Lee, losing all at once her self command, and permitting the ready tears to gush forth.

"Why, Kate, dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Morton, drawing her arm around the neck of her young friend. What is the meaning of all this? Something wrong with Frederick?"

Kate was silent.

"Been trying to correct some of his faults, ha!"

No answer, but the sobbing became less violent.

"Ah, Kate! Kate! I warned you of this."

"Warned me of what?" Mrs. Lee lifted her head and tried to assume an air of dignity as she spoke.

I warned you that Frederick would not bear it, if you attempted to lay your hand upon his faults."

Kate raised her head higher, and compressed her lips. Still she did not answer.

"A young husband, naturally enough thinks himself faultless—at least in the eyes of his wife."

"Very far from faultless is Frederick in my eyes," said Kate. "My love is not blind, and so I told him."

"You did!"

"Yes, I did, and in so many words," replied Kate with spirit.

"Ah, silly child!" returned her friend. "Already you have the reward of your folly. I forewarned you how it would be."

"Are my wishes, feelings and taste to be of no account whatever?" said Kate, warmly.

"Frederick is to be and to do just what he pleases, and I must say nothing, do nothing, and bear everything. Was this the contract between us? No, Mrs. Morton!" The bright eyes of Mrs. Lee flashed with indignation.

"Come, come, Katy, dear! Don't let that impulsive fire of yours end too far from the path of prudence and safety. I am sure that Frederick Lee is no self-willed, exacting, domestic tyrant. I could not have been so deceived in him. But, tell me the particular cause of your trouble. What has been said and done? You have given offence and he has become offended. Tell me the whole story Kate, and then I'll know what to say and do for the restoration of your peace."

"You are aware," said Kate, after a brief pause, and with a deepening flush on her cheeks, "how awkward and untidy Frederick is at times."

"How he lounges in his chair, and throws his body into all manner of ungraceful attitudes."

"This, as you know, has always annoyed me sadly. Night before last, I felt so worried with him, that I could not help speaking right out."

"Ah! when you were worried?"

"Of course. If I hadn't felt worried, I wouldn't have said anything."

"Indeed! Well, what did you say? Was your tone of voice low and full of love, and your words as gentle as the falling dew?"

"Mrs. Morton!"

There was a half-forgotten, indignant expression in the voice of Kate.

"Did you lay your hand lightly, like the touch of a feather, upon the fault you then designed to correct, or did you grasp it rudely?"

Kate's eyes dropped beneath those of her friend.

"You were annoyed and excited," continued Mrs. Morton. "This by your own acknowledgment, and in such a frame of mind, you charged with faults the one who had vainly thought himself, at least in your eyes, perfect. And he, as a natural consequence, was hurt and offended. But what did you say to him?"

"I hardly know what I said, now," returned Kate. "But I know I used the words ungraceful, undignified, and country eld-hopper."

"Why, Kate! I am surprised at you! And this to so excellent a man as Frederick, who, from all the fair and gentle ones around him, chose you to be his bosom friend and life companion. Kate, Kate! That was unworthy of you. That was unkind to him. I do not wonder that he was offended."

"Perhaps I was wrong, Mrs. Morton," said Kate, as tears began to flow again. "But Frederick's word of order, grace and meanness, is dreadful. I cannot tell you how much it annoys me."

"You saw all this before you were married."

"Not all of it."

"You saw enough to enable you to judge of the rest."

"True; but then I always meant to correct these things in him. They were but blemishes on a jewel of surpassing value."

"Ah, Kate, you have proved the truth of what I told you before your marriage. It is not so easy a thing to correct the faults of a husband—faults confirmed by long habit."

Whenever a wife attempts this she puts in jeopardy, for the time being at least, her happiness, as you have done."

A man is but little pleased to make the discovery that his wife thinks him no better than a country eld-hopper; and it is no wonder that he should be offended, if she with strange indiscretion and want of tact, tells him in plain terms what she thinks. Your husband is sensitive, Kate."

"I know he is."

"And keenly alive to ridicule."

"I am not aware of that."

"Then your reading of his character is less accurate than mine. Moreover, he has a good opinion of himself."

"We all have that."

"And a very strong will, quiet as he is in exterior."

"Not stronger, perhaps, than I have."

"Take my advice, Kate," said Mrs. Morton, seriously, "and don't bring your will in direct opposition to his."

"And why not? Am I not his equal? He is no master of mine. I did not sell myself as his slave, that his will should be my law!"

"Silly child! How madly you talk!" said Mrs. Morton.

"Not for the world would I have Frederick hear such utterance from your lips. Does he not love you tenderly? Has he not, in every way sought your happiness, thus far in your brief married life? Is he not a man of high moral virtue? Does not your alliance with him rather elevate than depress you in the social rank? And yet, forsooth, because he lounges in his chair, and permits his body, at times to assume ungraceful attitudes, you must throw the apple of discord into your pleasant home to mar its beautiful harmonies."

"Surely a wife may be permitted to speak to her husband, and even seek to correct his faults!" said Kate.

"Better shut her eyes to his faults, if seeing them is to make them both unhappy. You are in a strange mood, Kate."

"Am I?" returned Mrs. Lee, very querulously.

"You are; and the quicker it passes away, the better it will be for both, yourself and husband."

"I don't know how soon it will pass away," sighed Kate, moodily.

"Good morning," said Mrs. Morton, rising, and making a motion to depart.

"You are not going?" Kate glanced with a look of surprise.

"Yes; I'm afraid to stay here any longer, was the affected reply."

"I might catch something of your spirit, and then my husband would find a change in his pleasant home. Good morning, May I see you in a better state of mind when we meet again?"

And saying this, Mrs. Morton passed from the room so quickly, that Kate could not arrest the movement. So she remained seated, though a little disturbed by her friend and monitor's sudden departure. What Mrs. Morton had said, although it seemed not to impress the mind of her young friend, yet lingered there, and now began, gradually to do its work.

As for Frederick Lee, he was unhappy enough. The words of Kate had stung him severely. "And so, in her eyes, I am no better than a country eld-hopper!" Almost every hour was thus repeated—sometimes mentally and sometimes aloud; and at each repetition, it disturbed his feelings, and awakened an unforgiving spirit. "A eld-

hopper, indeed! Wonder she never made this discovery before."

This was the thought of Lee, as he left his place of business to return home, on the evening of the day on which Mrs. Morton called upon Kate. Why would he not look away from this? Why would he ponder over and magnify the offence of Kate? Why would he keep this ever before his eyes? His self love had been wounded his pride had been touched. The weapon of ridicule had been used against him, and to ridicule he was morbidly sensitive? Kate should have read his character more closely, and should have understood it better. But she was ignorant of his weaknesses, and bore heavily upon them ere aware of their existence. It was in this brooding, clouded and unforgiving state of mind that Frederick Lee took his way homeward.

On entering his dwelling, which he did almost noiselessly, he went into the parlor, and seated himself in the very place where he was sitting when Kate began, so unexpectedly to him, her unsuccessful work of reformation. Everything around reminded him of that unfortunate evening—even the lounging position he so naturally assumed, sliding down, as he did, in the chair, and throwing one of his legs over the arm.

"It is comfortable for me," said he, moodily, to himself; "and it is my own house. If she don't like it, let her!" He did not finish the sentence, for he felt that his state of mind was not what it should be, and that to speak thus of his wife, was neither just nor kind. Unhappy young man! Is it thus you visit the light offence—for it was light, in reality—of the loving and gentle young creature who has given her happiness, her very life into her keeping? Could you not bear a word from her? Are you so perfect, that her eyes must see no defects? Is she never to dare, on penalty of your stern displeasure, to correct a fault, to seek to lift you by her purer and better taste, above the ungraceful and unmanly habits consequent upon a neglected boyhood? What if her hand was laid lightly heavily upon you? What if her feelings did prompt her to use words that had better been left unsaid? It was the young wife's pride in her husband that warmed her into undue excitement, and this you should have comprehended.

If Frederick Lee did not think precisely as we have written, his thoughts gradually inclined in that direction. Still he felt moody, and his feelings warmed but little towards Kate. Thus he sat for some ten minutes. At the end of this time, he heard light footsteps coming down the stairs. He knew them to be those of his wife.

He did not move nor make a sound, but rather crouched lower in his chair, the back of which was turned towards the door. But his thoughts were on his wife. He saw her with the eyes of his mind—saw her with her clouded countenance. His heart throbbled heavily against his side, and he partially held his breath. Now her footsteps moved along the passage, and now he was conscious that she had entered the room where he sat. Not the slightest movement did he make—not a sign did he give of his presence. There he sat shrinking down in his chair, moody, and gloomy and very angry with Kate in his heart.

Was she aware of his presence? Had she heard him enter the house? Such were the questioning thoughts that were in his mind. Footsteps moved across the room. Now Kate was at the mantle-piece a few feet from the chair he occupied, for he heard her lay a book thereon. Now she passed to the back window, and throwing it up, pushed open the shutters, giving free entrance to the waning light.

A deep silence followed. Now the stillness is broken by a gentle sigh that floats faintly through the room. How rebukingly smote that sigh upon the ears of Lee! How it softened his heart his heart towards Kate, the young man and loving wife of his bosom. A slower movement in the current of his angry feelings succeeds to this. Then it is still. There is a pause.

But where is Kate? Has she left the room? He listens for some movement, but no sound meets his ear.

"Kate!" No he did not utter the word aloud, in tender accents, though it was in his heart and on his tongue. Nor did he start up, or move. No, as if spell-bound, he remained motionless down in his chair. All at once she is bending above him; and in the next moment, warm lips touch his forehead, gently, hesitatingly, yet with a lingering pressure.

"Kate! Dear Kate! He has sprung to his feet, and his arms are flung around his wife."

"Forgive me, Frederick, if I seem unkind to you," sobbed Kate, as soon as she could command her voice.

"There was no unkindness in my heart—only love."

"It is I who most need to ask forgiveness," replied Lee. "I who have—"

"Hush! Not a word of that now," quickly returned Kate, placing her hand upon his mouth. "Let the past be forgotten."

"And forgiven too, said Lee, as he very eagerly pressed his lips to those of his wife."

How happy they were at this moment of reconciliation. How light seemed the causes which had risen up to mar the beautiful harmony of their lives. How weak and foolish both had been, as their acts now appeared in eyes from which had fallen the scales of passion. Both were wiser in the aftertime. Kate tried to look away, as much as possible, from the little faults, which, at first, so much annoyed her; while her husband turned his thoughts more narrowly upon himself, at the same time that he made observation of other men, and was soon well convinced that sundry changes in his habits and manners might be made with great advantage. The more

his were opened to these little personal defects, the more fully did he forgive Kate for having, in the beginning, laid her hand upon them, though not in the gentlest manner.

"Six months have passed since you were married," said Mrs. Morton, one day to Kate.

"Yes, six months have flown on wings of perfume," replied the happy wife.

"I saw Frederick yesterday, and I knew him at the very moment my eyes rested upon him."

"Knew him! Why shouldn't you know him?"

"I thought he was to be so changed under your hands, in six months, that I wouldn't hardly recognize him."

"There was an arch look in Mrs. Morton's eyes, and a merry flutter in her voice."

"Mrs. Morton! Now that is too bad!"

"Your experiment failed, did it not?"

The door of the room in which the ladies were sitting opened at the moment, and Frederick Lee entered.

"Not entirely," whispered Kate, as she bent to the ear of her friend. "He is vastly improved—at least, in my eyes."

"And in others' eyes too," thought Mrs. Morton, as she arose, and returned the young man's smiling salutation.

Sensible News of a Sea-Snake.

It is comfortable to get some account from a trustworthy naturalist of a sea-serpent that is neither a bunch of seaweed nor a bunch of lies. Mr. Peach, a gentleman whose name is familiar to all working men of science, as possessing the property of an accurate and intelligent observer, tells us that a few weeks ago a specimen of a singular and rare serpentine fish was cast on shore in Sinclair's Bay, a few miles from the town of Wick in Scotland. This water monster certainly is a very fine sea-snake, though not perhaps the well-known sea-serpent of fiction.

When it was brought in it had been much mangled and cut about by the fishermen; who styled it a Ciel-lion—a name very apt to be corrupted into Sea Lion by those who have caught, from time to time, only glimpses of the head, which displays a sort of mane.

Only a few specimens of the animal have hitherto been described as having been found on the British shores. Those which have been described were all of considerable size; but the last caught is the monster among monsters. Its length is fifteen feet six inches, from the eyes only, to not quite the tip of the tail. The two ends of him are immeasurable, because the tail has been much injured, its tip broken off, while the whole of the head up to the eye has been knocked to pieces, partly by the fishermen and partly by the creature itself in its death struggles. Another foot might therefore be added to the measurable length. The greatest depth of his body is one foot two inches, and it would require a skewer three and a half inches long to transfuse him breadth-wise in the thickest part. His eyes are perfect, an inch and a half across, having the pupil dark and iris silvery; these eyes are so placed, near the top of the head, that they would be conspicuous objects while the creature swam upon the surface of the water. The head, as before said, is mutilated so much that little can be said about it. There are, visible upon it, stumps of a cluster of spine-like fins, well adapted for the support of a long crest, which probably existed until a boat-hook dealt about the snake's head its destructive blows. Upon the ridge of his back, extending along the whole length, is the dorsal fin; but the top part of it is nearly all rubbed off. The skin is of a beautiful silvery color, with fine dark bands that pass down from head to tail. The vertebral column is not of bone at all, but gristly, and not three quarters of an

