

## "The Blooming Idiot"

By HELEN R. BARTON

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IN THE book "Atlantis," an unnamed philanthropist is quoted as saying: "And man slept his last repose away, awakening to find Eve created in his rib."

And such might be said of this case, tempered a bit by a slight difference. For when Chief Engineer John Waring slipped off to a dreamless slumber that last afternoon just off of Singapore, he awoke—oh, assuredly not to find a wife created divinely of his spare ribs, but to find the most distracting vision of feminine loveliness his much traveled eyes had ever encountered. For a long breathless moment he stared at her. Then John Waring wrenched his eyes away from the distracting vision and sighed a ponderous, lusty sigh and was shocked to see the sudden change in the girl at his side. She turned, swiftly, and, opening wide her pensive eyes, stared at his handsome face a long moment and then said: "You sound weary. People do not sleep that long when they're tired, or discouraged or beaten."

"A lot," remarked John daintily, "you know about being discouraged or weary or beaten, I'll bet."

"Oh—but I do know a lot about all of 'em! I'm Sheila Livingston. And the way she said it implied that she had just tossed off: "I'm engaged to the prince of Wales" or "I'm Miss Vanderbilt!" But for once in his well-informed career, John Waring failed to recall the name nor did his memory associate the latest significance to it. So he smiled his irresistible smile and said softly: "Ah yes, I see. And in reality he didn't see at all, couldn't have seen anything but the adorable face of the girl beside him in the long deck chair.

Dinner time found them placed at the same table. After dinner, a light was cast upon the mystery as they walked slowly along the deck in the dim light, too interested in each other to dance.

"Oh, Miss Livingston," gasped a pale, sickly youth who fancied himself a panic among the ladies, "I saw you in your last picture and I thought you were wonderful! I liked 'Flaming Hate' best of all your pictures." John chuckled as Sheila bent her warning smile upon the youth and thanked him sweetly.

"I hope," said John Waring seriously, "that you won't act with me. I'm afraid I'm going to like you too well to suffer that."

"That what?" teased Sheila, catching herself deftly as she slipped on the smooth hard boards, and gently removing the protecting arm he had thrown about her as she slipped.

"Oh—never mind. You know what I mean." And John, who stood six feet tall in his socks and weighed close to a hundred and eighty, felt acutely uncomfortable as Sheila turned her strange blue eyes upon him and continued:

"It's sinful for any man to be so good looking as you, Captain Waring. You'd deserve any disaster that befall your unhappy lot—even a bit of acting, which you seem to dread so much."

And before John Waring could divine her intention, a pair of warm young arms went around his neck and he felt his head dragged lower until his lips met those of the girl with the perfect face. And after a light laugh, and a swift patter of running feet, he was alone on the deck, staring with unseeing eyes at the wide path of light dripping from a great tropic moon across the waters!

Next morning he breakfasted alone and was busy until noon, still no sign of the alluring, Miss Livingston. Not for three days more. Then, as he lounged disconsolately on the upper deck, alone, for it was chilly and blowy, he was startled by the appearance of the girl who had ruvied him from his lethargic calm. She slipped into the chair next his and snuggled her fingers childishly into his outstretched, lean brown hands.

"I was sorry. I was afraid you'd hate me. It was a beastly thing to do. But I had to find out."

"Find out what?" he asked idiotically.

"Whether it was acting or the real thing, real love, real kisses!" she explained, gently.

"Well? You haven't told me whether it was or not."

She opened her book and slipped some clippings into his hand. They were photographs and articles about himself, back when he was on a coast guard ship! Four years ago! There had been a thrilling rescue of which he had been the hero, and she had cherished these clippings ever since.

"It wasn't acting then?" he said joyously, under his breath, as he stood over her, lithe and handsome and eager as a boy; drew her irresistibly up from the chair and into his arms, and she said into the rough, tobacco-scented blue of his uniform: "No! It wasn't acting!"

"Prove it then! Kiss me again. And I'll tell you, after I get my breath!" said the chief engineer as he crushed her close in a far from acting embrace.

### Quick Service

"My aunt lives exactly according to the book 'How to Live to a Hundred.'"

"And the result?"

"Wonderful! She looks exactly as if she were a hundred already."

### Tasters Carry Their

#### Fortunes in Throats

The tea and coffee tasters of the big importing and jobbing houses are paid large salaries. The sole duty of many of these experts is to taste the brews of many varieties of tea and coffee. And their palates are their fortune—if it's palates that register flavor. Whatever it is, it must never fail in its due discrimination; a taste that it requires years of practice and experience to attain. The president of a well-known coffee importing company, is an expert in the selection of different varieties and combinations of coffee and almost any day may be found as the sole attendant at a little afternoon party peculiar to his own.

From a casual cupful of the brew that is put before him he has no difficulty in telling the name and age of the berry from which it is made, the country in which it was grown, and in fact, all the family history of that particular blend.

Tea and coffee tasters in the large importing houses are said to daily consume several cups of clear strong coffee with apparently no deleterious effects. In a measure this may be due to the fact that, for fear of impairing their coffee "taste" they must take no other stimulant of any kind nor use tobacco in any form.

### Universal Belief in

#### Horseshoe as "Lucky"

Almost everyone at some time has found a horseshoe. And almost everyone who found one has either proudly hung it up or tucked it away for safe keeping.

What then could be more appropriate than to use the horseshoe as a beautiful door knocker to adorn the entrance of your home? Or to use it as a door stop, or book end, or as an ash tray for your living room?

The horseshoe has been accepted and recognized as a symbol of good luck almost universally for many centuries.

Ancient mythology credited the horseshoe with threefold powers of good fortune. The shape suggested the saintly halo. It was made of iron, a metal of unusual strength, and its relation to the horse, a favored animal, gave it extraordinary power.

Washington adorned a doorway at Mount Vernon with a horseshoe. Lincoln cherished this treasured find of his early youth. Lord Nelson hung one on the mast of his great ship Victory.

Everywhere in England, Europe, and even in far-off Hindustan, the horseshoe stands for just one thing—good luck.

### The Jacana Dance

In tropical South America and on some of the islands in the Pacific is found the beautiful bird known as the Jacana. It is famous for its so-called love dance, which is executed by the males to increase the admiration of the female friends.

When the mating season approaches the Jacana will single out its favorite lady and try to win the admiration of the attentive female by all its bewitching manoeuvres. In the dance the wings are spread and worked in such a manner that the beautiful colored feathers produce a brilliant effect.—Washington Star.

### Welsh Race Vanishing

That the Welsh as a distinct and separate race, with its culture, literature and art, will be practically out of existence in the next 50 years, is the prediction of students of Welsh nationalism. They point to figures showing that in Wales today there are more English, Irish and Scotch than there are Welsh. Cardiff, with 250,000 population, having only 45,000 native residents. It is estimated that only 5 per cent of the population of Wales can speak, read and write Welsh.

### Foot Index of Character

It is astonishing how much may be interpreted of human character from the foot, says Nathan Hack of Hack's boot shop. Modern detectives, Hack claims, relying on this hypothesis, can guess from the footprint the size and weight of the man to whom it belongs. They can go further and speculate as to the strength of the man, and as to little peculiarities regarding his physical make-up. The Indians knew this, as did the most ancient of peoples, Hack said.—Boston Herald.

### Traitorous Words

It appears there are 1,100 "traitorous words" in the dictionaries of the French and English languages which are essentially alike, but with shades of difference in meaning. A French lexicographer compiled a list of 400 such words, and then a collaborator, at his request, found 700 more. They had a lawsuit as to whose name should appear first on the title page of the book, and the court ruled they should appear side by side, the originator's on the left.

### Die-Hards

Perhaps no fresh water fish is more tenacious of life than the bullhead or horned pout. This fish takes a long time to die outside its native elements. Bullheads may still be detected breathing in the bottom of a punt hours after they have been caught, whereas most fish die in a few minutes. Many fishermen have thrown bullheads on the ground at night to discover in the morning that they still show a flicker of life.

## The Damaged Car Easily Fixed

By FRANK BELL

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"I'M AFRAID the car's hopelessly broken down," said Richard Harris to his companion, Winifred Davis. "I can't seem to make anything go."

"But, Dick! What'll we do?" Winifred was anxious. She knew from the country that they were a long way from home and on an unfrequented road. Moreover, she had accepted Richard Harris' invitation for a motor ride with misgivings. She did not like him, and said so; but her family hoped for a marriage, and had insisted on her being at least nice to him. So she had resignedly said "yes" when he asked her to go with him.

"Can't you do something?" she asked. "I'm afraid not—Winifred!" She started at the tone of his voice. She tried to step him before he got started.

"Now, Dick, I've told you that I don't love you and can't love you. You know you've asked me many times, and I've always said no, and always will. I'm sorry, for I don't want to hurt your feelings, but that's all there is to it."

"Winifred, I know you're just teasing me—leading me on. I love you, and I'm going to have you—." Before she could struggle free from the robes he had caught her in his arms and was trying to kiss her.

"Let me go!" she cried. "You cad!" One arm came free and she planted a stinging slap on his face.

"You'll pay me for that!" he ground out, and tried to seize her again; but a hand that seemed made of iron wrenched him out of the car. He fell to the ground. Over him was standing a man he knew.

"Billy Vantine!" Winifred's voice was full of thankfulness. But Billy looked only at the prostrate man at his feet.

"Get out of here!" he snapped. Richard Harris rose.

"I—I won't leave Winifred—"

"You have forfeited any right you ever had to be with her. Get out! I'll bring the car home. Go, now, before I—"

But Richard Harris was already slinking away. He had no stomach for a battle with the husky Billy. When he had disappeared Winifred's overstrained nerves gave way and she sobbed unrestrainedly. Billy, the wise man that he was, let her have her cry out and then gently led her to tell him the story. When she had finished he flushed a dark red. "The low bound!" he said between his teeth. Then he added: "Let me look at the car."

"I can fix it so we can stagger home somehow."

He made her comfortable on the seat and went around to the front of the car. For awhile she heard him tinkering. Once he asked her where the screwdriver was. Her face lit with hope.

"Can you fix it, do you think?"

"I don't know—but I'll try."

He returned to his tinkering. In a few minutes he straightened himself, a peculiar expression on his face.

"Win," he said, "I don't know whether or not I can fix this car—but there's something else I want to fix—and fix for all time. Win, dear, you know, don't you; that I've loved you for ever and ever so long? I know that your family want you to marry Dick Harris, but tell me—don't there any hope at all?"

Winifred Davis refrained from looking at him and toyed with the corner of one of the rugs.

"Billy," she said at last, "I know you've loved me; and Billy—I love you!"

In a moment he was in the seat beside her, with his arms around her, telling her all the things that lovers have to say; and she did not seem averse to hearing them; in fact, she said a number of things herself, for Billy Vantine's homely comeliness lit with joy as he heard them. Neither of them noticed the passing of time till suddenly Winifred gave a start. "Billy," she cried. "Look! the sun's going down, and we're twenty miles from home! If I don't get there in time for dinner mother will nearly die! She'll think all sorts of things! Oh, what will we do?"

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