

THE LARK

NUMBER 23

10 CENTS



The bonny Lark, companion meet! Burns.

The Lark; No. 23

by Les Jeunes:

Gelett Burgess, Editor:
24 Montgomery St., San Francisco

Florence Lundborg

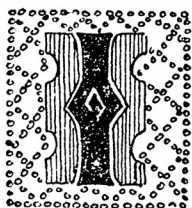
With Number 24, the Second Book of *The Lark* will be completed, and the further issuance of *The Lark* will be suspended. There will, however, be published an *Epilogue to The Lark, or Memoir*, containing certain phases of the intimate history of *The Lark*, with Reflections thereon. This will be ready about April 15th.

The Editor regrets that the '*Black Cat*,' containing a story by Katharine Kip, similar in motive, if not in treatment, to the Fable in this issue, came under his notice too late to prevent the publication of his version of the tale of the remarkable discovery, and extends his apologies therefor.

SAN FRANCISCO MARCH FIRST
1 8 9 7
PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM DOXEY
631 MARKET ST. ISSUED MONTHLY
SUBSCRIPTION ONE DOLLAR A YEAR

Entered at the Post Office in San Francisco as second-class matter.

THE PROTEST OF THE ILLITERATE.



*SEEN a dunce of a Poet onct, a-writin'
a little book,
And he says to me, with a smile, says
he, "Here's a pome,—d' you want
to look?"*

*And I threw me eye at the pome; says
I, "Wot's the use o' this here rot?"*

*"It's a double sestine," says he, looking mean, "and
they're hard as the deuce,—that's what!"*

*"There's blood in your ink-well,—I do'nt think," says I,
beginnin' to preach;*

*"O, there's not much force," says he, "o' course, but
there's plenty of figgers o' speech!"*

*"Why write about maids, and violet shades?" says I,
"wot's the matter with MEN?"*

*"That fad's played out," says he with a pout, "and
Beauty's come in again."*

*"Did ever you go out into the snow?" says I, "or feel like a
fight?"*

*Did you read in books how the sunrise looks, or did you
learn o' the night?*

*Your bloomin' 'flowers' they rhyme with 'bowers,' but they
smell o' the hot-house blend.*

*Wot's love and kisses and such like blisses,—good God!
had ye never a FRIEND?"*

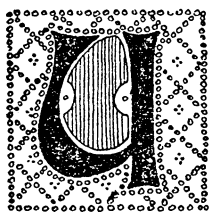
*"There's more than enough that can write the stuff that the
women like to read,*

*They'll mark a line that they think is fine, if that is the
praise you need!*

*But show me a verse that's a blame sight worse, if it has but
an honest look*

*And the pages are worn and thumbed and torn, I'll believe
you've written a BOOK!"*

"IN THE SPRING THE YOUNG MAN'S FANCY



UNDOUBTEDLY the most logical, if the least interesting method of opening the discussion of a thesis, is like that employed by the skilful carver who dissects his duck according to the natural divisions of the subject, and proceeds therewith analytically.

This is the system encouraged in academic courses, and is said to enable any one to write upon any subject. But such an essay is mighty hard reading; unless a writer is so hungry for his subject that he forgets his manners, and falls to without ceremony, the chances are that his efforts will receive scant attention. So few essayists write with a good appetite! And yet, see how I restrain myself, and perforce adopt the conventional procedure as one too proud to betray his ravening hunger! I must be calm, I must be polite,—and you shall know only by my forgetfulness of the salt and my attention to the bones of thought, how the game interests me. And in speaking of love, I must make my head guard my heart, too, for it is in the endeavour to misunderstand women that we pass our most delightful moments. They will not permit men to be too sure of them, either, and what you learn from one, you must hide carefully from the next. So I begin my fencing with a great feint of awkwardness, like a master with a beginner, knowing well enough how likely to get into trouble is any one who pretends innocence.

For a long time, I believed it was all a conspiracy of the novelists, and that love, so ideally depicted, was but a myth, kept alive by the craft to furnish a backbone for literary sensation. But, in any case, there are undoubtedly many bigoted believers in the theory. The women, however, admit that it is a lost art, and complain piteously of the ineptitude of the other sex. I confess that few men can satisfactorily acquit themselves of the ordeal of making love without some tuition, but once having acquired the

LIGHTLY TURNS TO THOUGHTS OF LOVE."

rudiments of the art, it seems inconsistent to taunt them with the experiments of their apprenticeship. It is too much to require a man to make a gallant wooing and then twit him with the 'promiscuousness' by which he won his spurs! Yet some, doubtless, have learned also to defend themselves against this last accusation; it is the test of the Passed Master. For the others, poor dolts, who never see the opportunity for action, however adroitly presented, who speak when they should hold tongue, and leave undone all those things that they ought to have done,—the girls marry them, to be sure, but most of the love-making is on the wrong side. There are more yawns than kisses; the brutal question satisfies the yop, and he bungles through the engagement, breaking doggedly through the crust of the acquaintance, witless of the delightful perils of thin ice. And yet the subject might be mastered in four lessons with a good teacher, so that a man of ordinary capacity could make good way for himself. This is by no means a new theory, but the foundation of many a comedy of errors. But go not to school of a maid, for she will fool you to the top of your bent, nor to the married woman either, but to a man like my younger brother, here,—no Lothario, but one who can keep two steps ahead of any affair he enters.

But if a man be agile and daring, with sufficient ardour to assume the offensive, having an audacious tongue and a wary eye, with a fine sense of congruity, and tact withal, 't is a different matter, and he needs no pilot to take her over the bar and into the Port of Love. He must be bold, but not too bold, carry a big spread of canvas, luff, reef and tack her with no shuffling, cast the lead on the run, and never lose headway when she comes about. He must bear a sensitive hand at the tiller, keep her close up to the wind, with no tremble in the leach of the sail, and gain advantage from every tide and cross-current. Better dash against the reef than run high and dry upon the shoal!

"CUPID HATH CLAPPED HIM O' THE SHOULDER,

It is a pity, is it not, to dissect Love in such a fashion? I should have him quite at the mercy of the gale and be swept forward, he cares not how, nor where;—he should lose his wits and take an insane delight in the fury of the storm, and know no spot upon his horizon. And yet I dare not be warmer, for some time I may decide to fall in love myself, and I would not have my chances wrecked by any genuine confession of faith, set in type to which she might refer with a beautiful taunt. No,—it is better to phrase and verbalize; the subject is too dear, and near done to its death already; I would but suggest the cross-references, and under a mien of the most atrocious conceit, throw my female readers off their guard and leave my fellow-men to read between the lines. For I hear that men do fall in love with women, and women fall in love with loving. So be it. I have known them, too, to take both vanilla *and* strawberry in their soda-water, which proves them not altogether simple in their beliefs. The best of them will talk volubly upon love in the abstract, while the average man (to which category I hope I have the honour of not belonging), keeps his mouth closed on the matter, with his ideas, an he has any, inside him.

So if I avail myself of the feminine franchise, it must be done cautiously, for many are the difficulties of the young man who would love a girl today, and only a precious few of the old school would understand, if all were explained. Many are the misfortunes in the *Lovers' Litany*, from which the modern maiden sighs, "*Good Lord, deliver us!*" A man must take her in earnest, but he must by no means, take himself too seriously; it is proper to treat your passion cavalierly,—indeed, he jests at scars who has felt most amorous darts, nowadays,—but he must never make himself, or her, ridiculous. He may take whimsical amusement in his own conquest, but must beware "the little broken laugh that spoils a kiss." And above all, mind you, the *mise-en-scène*; the stage must be set so and

*BUT I'LL WARRANT HIM HEART-
WHOLE."*

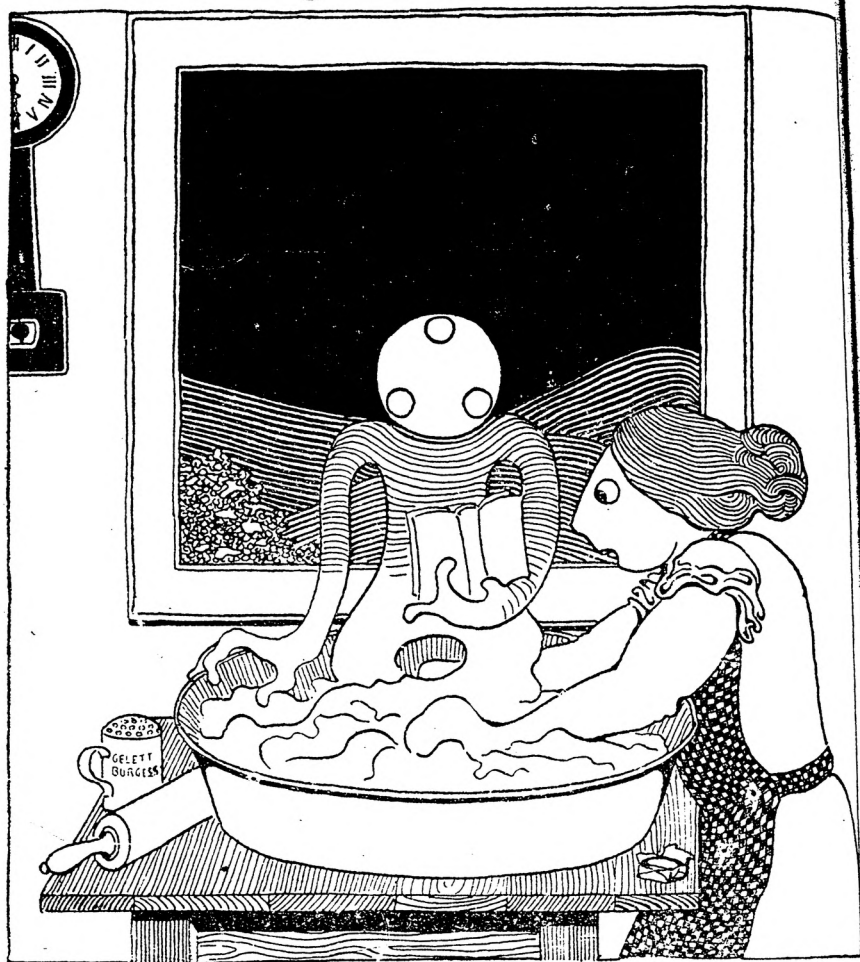
so, the sun must not see what the moon sees; sometimes you must have your heart in your mouth, and sometimes on your sleeve, and oftener she must have it herself. It is very perplexing.

The best a man can do, in this practical age, is to mean business while he is about it, and hold over as much for the next day as will not interfere with his commerce elsewhere. The woman may take it to bed, or keep it warm in the oven against his return, while he must be out and downtown to earn his living as well as his loving, but among dollars and pounds and percentages, when she enjoys the traffic in pure abstractions. And both must hide and manage as if it were a sin, lest Mrs. Grundy undo them. Such are the victims of super-civilization!

There was a time, the poets say, when it was not so difficult, and a man might wear a lady's scarf on his sleeve and be proud of the badge. It takes much more complicated machinery than that simple love to make the world go 'round nowadays,—perhaps because it goes so much faster. There was a time when an elopement might be picturesque, and not necessarily followed by divorce; but where now shall I find the hard-hearted parent that shall justify my ideals of such a romance? The modern mother is too often like Mrs. Brown,—“a foolish, weak, but amiable old thing.” She reposes a trust in her daughter that does more credit to her affection than to her knowledge of human nature.

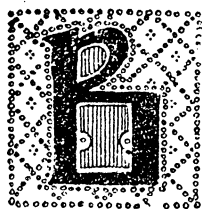
But, Whoa! I believe I have forgotten my manners, after all! I have insulted my fellows, guyed the girls, and here I am on the high road to disqualifying myself with the more respectable generation! So I will cease, but I shall not apologize, for though I came to scoff, I shall not remain to pray. For I believe I am not more than half wrong, after all; there's Love, and there's loving, and if you have followed me, you know which is which, for was it not Rosalind who said — “Some Cupid kills with arrows, — some with traps!”

*The Sun is Low, to say the Least,
Although it is well-Red;*



*Yet, since it rises in the Yeast,
It should be better Bred.*

VIVETTE'S DÉBUT:



BEYOND the Plaza, on a little thoroughfare that, crossing Echo Street, traverses the Latin Quarter and climbs the hill, stands the Apollo Theatre, a queer little hall, where we went often in search of amusement; and here, one night, Vivette satisfied a stage-stroke that had

long affected her spirits.

We happened in, this time, to learn of the ticket-man at the door that the house was impatiently awaiting the arrival of a troupe that had been delayed on the road; he was, in fact, almost ready to announce the fact, and to refund the entrance fees. Vivette, who had taken a hasty look at the audience, came back, with her brown eyes dancing.

"Get around behind, Robin," she said, swiftly, "for I am going to make my First Appearance!" In thirty seconds she had colloqued the Manager, and within the minute she had met me on the stage, and while the change of programme was being announced, reconnoitred the house through the curtain peep-hole. She dragged me to the Green Room, where the properties and costumes had already arrived, and began a ravishing toilet, as she explained the plot and wheedled me out of my last objection.

"Listen here," she said, with her mouth full of pins, "it is a perfectly lovely audience to try the game on!—the cream of the upper lower classes, ready for anything we can give them. If they were a grade higher, it would n't do at all, but they're a very human sort, and good work won't be lost on them, either. Now you can tell a be-autiful story, Robin, such as you used to tell me, and you must go on first, and make them laugh till I finish dressing, and then—well, I'll tell you about that later. Hurry up, now, for the orchestra has stopped playing!"

Well, I went on, in an outrageous rig, the only suit that fitted me. It was not for nothing that I was Director of the Romance Association, and I did my prettiest for Vivette's sake first, and then for the hungry folk in front of me, for I soon

WHAT ONE CAN DO

realized that there's not much difference between children and grown-ups, when it comes to telling a story. I had often wondered why this amusement couldn't be done here as well as in the East, where professional story-tellers go from town to town and divert the street-farers, and I worked in somewhat that way, quite naturally and with so little manner, that I wondered at their interest. It was the "Holiday Romance" that I told them; their big eyes followed me like dogs, and they shouted like infants when the drop fell.

Vivette met me at the wings, and hugged me. "It was blessed!" she sighed, "but wait till I astonish them!" She had got herself up in a bewilderingly fetching costume, but it was impossible to say just what she had on, for over her was laid a charm and a starry beauty that was so strange as almost to trouble one, yet it drew one too, like a loadstone. Her presence filled that dingy stage as might a goddess. "It was the people that did it, they made me give the best of myself, that was all," she said, afterward. I held my breath, and wondered what was coming. There were so many things she might have done, yet who but Vivette would have dared to be so simple — who else could have trusted and touched an audience like this? Yet I believe that not until she had come down the stage, and kissed her hands to the house, had she decided what was to happen. There was a hush like a prayer when they saw her, and, after the first rustle, not a sound for fifteen minutes. You would not believe me if I told you all the magic of that pantomime. The tears came to my eyes as I wondered if I had ever half known her before. It was the simple story, told in the most delicious gesture, of a young girl in love, alone in her boudoir. Her entrancing raptures over the love-letter hidden in her frock, the ecstasy of her reply, and the affection with which she sealed her note — her reverie with the photograph beside the fire — the little dances of joy with which she hailed the hurrying hands of the clock — the very way her hair came down and went up again — her coquetties with the mirror and the rose — with such trifles as these she wove a bewitching drama without words. And then she rehearsed the expected interview with a

WITH A GOOD REHEARSAL.

serious grace, and pretended to disguise her regard : she became shy and reserved,—he might kiss her hand, but that was all,—and then, when the bell sounded, she gave herself up to her emotion, and flew to the door and out, with a happy little laugh that promised much for the loved one outside. Ah, I know how much ! for that young man was I, waiting for her there in the shadow.

There was not a man silent, no, nor a woman either, when she left the stage ; and after the encore, while the orchestra tried to drown the tumult, she came down to me like an angel out of Heaven. “How is this for a first night ?” she sang ; “are you ready for the finale ?” “Ah, I’m ready for *you*,” I said, trembling. “Then do you really love me, Robin ?” she whispered. “I’ll show you,” I cried, wildly. But she held me at arm’s length. “No, you must show *them*,” she said. “Don’t be shocked, Robin; don’t think I do n’t honour it and you, dear; but we must show them what love is. Authors write themselves into their books, why should n’t we act it for these poor souls? They will *feel* it. But no one will know it is real, and we will be safe. You must propose to me, Robin ; indeed, you must do it all over again! Have you forgotten ?” And she smiled the heart out of me, as I hesitated. “Not a word !” I cried, for all the madness of my first love for her swept back to me. She gave me the cue, and, while we were still burning, she rung up the drop.

If it had been before any other audience I could never have done it. If we had been alone, I never would have been keyed up to the pitch to which those eyes inspired me; but then and there we went over that day of days, from the moment I found her at the window, to the end. Every word came back to me, as I looked into her eyes. We did not act, we lived it again, and the heart of me grew young.

“Robin,” said Vivette, after it was all over, and we had left the darkened hall, “forgive me, if it was not right, and if it has hurt the memory of that first time, but now I know how much you love me,—and I’d like to do it all over again !”

A FLIRTATION EN RÈGLE:



HIS Indenture, made herewith between

and.....

Witnesseth: that the said parties hereto, in consideration of the trust and confidence they have and do repose in each other, and the natural propensities of each of the said parties toward the other, and for divers and sundry other good causes and considerations, the said parties to this Agreement thereunto especially moving, **Have** concluded and agreed, and by these Presents do conclude and agree to be joint Co-partners for the purpose of conducting a Flirtation, in accordance with the terms of this Agreement, to wit:

The aforesaid parties mutually agree that each shall and will be just, true and faithful to the other in all and every matter and thing touching, or in anywise concerning the said Flirtation, except as is otherwise provided in these Articles, and to hold the other first and paramount in love, honour and esteem while and so long as this Co-partnership remains in force, and until the proper release of the same, and to fulfil in every way the office and relation of partner to the other party to these Presents, and to contract no other alliance, or enter into no other joint Flirtation limiting, qualifying, or nullifying the terms of this Agreement, or affecting them in anywise whatsoever, without the special licence, consent and agreement of the other of the said parties to these Presents, under his or her hand thereunto first had and given.

And that each of them, the said parties to these Presents, shall and will at all times during the continuance of the said joint Co-partnership, upon reasonable request, there notify and declare all such letters, accounts, writings and other things which shall or may come unto his or her hands or possession, in anywise touching or concerning the said Co-partnership.

And it is agreed and covenanted by and between the said parties to these Presents, that each of the said parties shall, and by these Presents does, waive any and all rights and claims

UPID-IN-THE-POUND.

to any knowledge or interest in the past life, habits, or relations of the other party, except so far as they affect the true intent and meaning of these Presents and the relations thereby established.

And it is further also covenanted, granted, conditioned, concluded and fully agreed by and between the said parties to these Presents that no promise, vow, declaration, or expression of regard shall be construed as a lien upon the permanent affections of the party uttering the same, nor shall it be held as binding, except under the duration of this Agreement.

Provided, always, and it is nevertheless agreed by and between the said parties to these Presents, that in the event of the alienation of the affection of either or both the said parties, or if this Agreement shall prove at any time restrictive to the natural development of any stronger regard than is contemplated in these Presents, or for any other reason whatsoever, either or both of the said parties thereunto moving, this Agreement shall be rendered null and void, and the said Co-partnership dissolved upon the written notice of such, his or her desire, from either of the said parties to the other party thereof. And in which case, it is further covenanted and agreed that any and all manuscripts, letters, poems, or other documentary evidences of regard or affection, or gifts, donations, or presents of any nature not edible or perishable, shall revert to the possession of the original owner of the same.

In Witness whereof, we have set our hands and seals,
this.....day of.....18.....

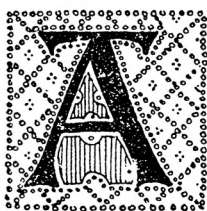
L. S.

L. S.

In the presence of

L. S.

THE INVISIBLE PAINT:



T last, after many long and earnest years of research, the Scientist had come suddenly upon the discovery that was to complete his life work and write his name among the most famous benefactors of the race. It was from the reaction of pure cardium upon certain orgainc salts of the superhydrated nitrous oxide of hypofenyltrybrompropionic acid that the wonderful precipitate appeared, and at the advent, his dream focussed and Ambition leaped onto the dry ground of fulfillment. Like an expectant parent he had chosen the name—the commercial name under which the product should be marketed—long before the result was brought forth; and, being less versed in Rhetoric than in Chemistry, he had fancied that INVISIBLE PAINT would prove an attractive appellation for the ware that was to remunerate him. For this marvellous substance possessed the unique virtue of rendering permanently invisible any body to which it was applied. He had proved this upon his own laboratory floor, to the eternal consternation of his house-keeper in the room below.

But, as pure Science concerns itself little with the practical application of its discoveries, the Scientist called to him representatives of the various Arts, with a view to confer the boon to mankind upon the most deserving. There appeared, therefore, at the symposium, an Artist, a Soldier, an Artizan, a Poet, and a Woman.

Of these, only one possessed the courage to walk across the invisible floor.

The Scientist turned first to the Artist: "You," he said, "who are continually prating of Beauty, and who hold that virtue the sole excuse for Woman's existence, buy my invaluable recipe, and erase from the world the features and forms that cannot claim your approval; I grant you the privilege of the first offer!"

A USELESS INVENTION:

"I would gladly avail myself of the right," replied the Artist, "yet I have of late suffered so acutely by the unwelcome visits of female intruders in my studio, that I cannot bear the thought that they may be enabled to be present without my knowledge. I have no doubt, however," he continued, "that they would willingly submit to an operation which would permit them to so easily gratify their curiosity."

"You might paint only their faces," suggested the Scientist. The Artist shuddered.

"To you, then," said the Scientist, turning to the Soldier, "I submit this remarkable means of revolutionizing the art of war! Your uniforms, coated with this paint, would be invisible to the enemy, and your manœuvres would be accomplished unseen."

The Soldier blushed, and with an apologetic gesture toward the lady replied: "The spectacle of battalions of naked men marching upon the foe does not accord with the accepted traditions of civilized warfare."

"True," said the Scientist, "I had not thought of that! But although I had hoped to promote first the æsthetic or humanitarian development of our people by the use of my Invisible Paint, I now see that its proper field is in a more strictly commercial territory, and I have thought that the Artizan might simplify architectural construction by the application of the liquid to solid masonry walls, thus avoiding the complications of window-building."

"In that case," said the Artizan, "we should doubtless be liable for damages every time a head was broken in trying to look out the apparent aperture. Even if it was used for aquariums, the impossibility of repairing the walls should render it inexpedient as well as dangerous."

"Do you, also, reject the proffer?" said the Scientist sadly to the Poet.

"It is certainly not consistent with the Scheme of Things as I understand it," he responded, "and, except for the allegorical value of Invisible Paint, I can see no adequate reason for its existence."

A FABLE—I DON'T THINK.

"If you please," interrupted the woman, "I have often wished for invisible hairpins, and if no one else can use the paint, I will gladly buy your invention."

"But you know you are always losing your hairpins!" exclaimed the infuriated Scientist, "how then would you ever find them if they were permanently invisible?"

He seized the vial of priceless liquor and walked sadly toward the window. Right across the invisible floor he walked, then stood in the centre of the room, hung in mid-air, lost in thought, overwhelmed by his disappointments. But, as he stood there, the floor gathered form and colour; the boards began to be dimly shadowed forth and grew more and more visible. And the group of spectators rose and screamed as one man, "Hurrah, the paint is only *temporarily* invisible, after all! Sell me the stuff!" And they rushed in a mob at the Scientist. At the cry, he awoke from his reverie, and beheld the labours of a lifetime had been as nought, his paint was but a semisuccess after all, and conquered by despair, he fell, and the sublime reagent dashing upon the floor, flooded him in an invisible puddle that made his lifeless body seem floating, suspended in space.

* * * * *

"How beautiful is his death, and this victory he called defeat," mused the Poet, "behold, the merest child may understand its Moral Significance."

"But I cannot see that!" said the woman.

"Madam," responded the Poet, "I believe you! It was long ago that your sex first discovered the true Invisible Paint, and to this day Woman guards the secret of its use."