

the butler turned a white face toward his master.

"Here is the thief, your lordship. He was trying to escape, and I shot him."

Harold Stuart Eyre

The Bald Truth

"WHY, you're a young man yet, judge!" said Major Gibson.

"Feel just as young as I ever did," returned Judge Wilson.

"I don't understand what made you get a gray one. Of course, gray hair is all right when it's natural, and I admit that this is becoming to you, but—"

"In my particular case," interrupted the judge, "it was quite natural for me to select a gray wig." He tilted his chair to a more comfortable position and continued: "To begin at the beginning and tell you the bald truth, my hair began coming out about the time I quit going to Sunday-school, and by the time I was twenty-eight there was a bald spot on the crown of my head. I used to laugh and joke about it myself, but it tortured me to have any one else refer to it. One time, when I first began calling on the girl I afterward married, the bell was answered by her little niece, and after I was seated in the parlor I heard the child's voice say:

"'It's that nice bald-headed man, Aunt Mary, and he wants to see you.'

"Bald-headed! The word fairly stabbed me. I was then under thirty.

"When we were on our wedding-tour, some one in speaking to Mary referred to me as her father. She is three months my senior. The incident pleased her, and she never tired of narrating it in my presence.

"A few years later, when I got into politics, I was frequently called out to make speeches. Meantime the bald spot had grown larger, and had extended up over the top of my head, leaving only a fringe around the back and a few hairs in front. These lingering locks—you could scarcely call them locks—I oiled with vaseline and guarded with a tenderness I cannot describe. A few strands of long hair above my left ear I combed up over the top of my head, and on special occasions applied a little mucilage to keep them in place.

"One day, in a town where I went to deliver an address, I was proudly threading my way through a crowd to the speakers' stand, escorted by a committee of prominent citizens, when a newsboy yelled out:

"'Now Old Baldy's goin' to give us a spiel!'

"I discovered that the mucilage was not working well that day, and I was half way through my speech before I knew what I was saying. On my return home, I told my wife that I thought of giving up politics. I said that this stumping the country would be the death of me, for whenever I went out to make a speech I always got into a draft, and, lacking hirsute protection, I caught heavy colds.

"'Get a wig,' she suggested.

"It was exactly what I wished her to say. I wanted one badly enough, the Lord only knew; but I wanted her to tell me to get it, so that I could say it was to please my wife. It didn't take much urging to make me buy one; but it took lots of courage to wear it the first few days. You ought to have heard the remarks at the post-office and the court-house when I first made my appearance in a wig. Finally, however, the town became accustomed to it. I had no trouble in keeping it in place and was truly thankful that I had adopted it, for not only did it save me from much embarrassment when meeting strangers, but it also proved to be a great protection.

"When I bought the wig, my wife charged me to get a good one, and I purchased the best that could be had. The dealer assured me it was an absolutely fast color; that it would never fade or turn gray. His guarantee was good. Year after year that wig held its own—all through my term as prosecuting attorney, while I sat on the circuit bench, and when I was honored with a place in the State Legislature. Meanwhile Mary's golden hair took on a silver tint. For a while she 'touched it up' a little, but then she washed it out, and soon everybody in the town remarked:

"'Have you noticed how gray Mrs. Wilson's hair is getting?'

"Last summer, you know, we took a

little outing, and went to Denver. From there we made some excursions into the mountains. On one of these trips, when we passed suddenly into a dark tunnel, Mary gave a nervous little scream. Afterward, a young man across the aisle, with whom I entered into conversation, remarked, loud enough to be overheard by Mary:

"Your mother was frightened when we went into the tunnel."

"You should have seen her expression! It was fortunate for the young man, perhaps, that he left the train at the next station. It was my turn to laugh. I repeated our fellow passenger's remark whenever I wanted to tease my wife, till I found that she was really disturbed about it.

"Not long after our return home, she remarked that she thought my wig was beginning to look shabby, and that gray hair would be more becoming to me now.

"Instinctively I walked to the mirror. The brown hair looked all right to me. I was satisfied; but as I read her thoughts and didn't want a dispute, I merely remarked, as I took up my hat:

"You're right, Mary; one of these days I'm going to get a gray wig."

"Several weeks passed, and every time she brought up the subject I evaded it. Last night, as I sat before the grate, enjoying my paper, she began, and, as usual, I changed the subject. But she was not to be put off any longer.

"When are you going to get a new wig, dear?"

"Oh, perhaps the next time I go to the city," I replied indifferently.

"When are you going to the city?"

"Probably some time after the holidays."

"I guess you'll go before then," she said, as if she meant to compel me to go.

"Now, I can't be made to do a thing until I get ready.

"No; I'll not go before the holidays," I insisted. "Perhaps I'll not go until spring."

"Not till spring!" she fairly shrieked. Her hand was on my head, and before I realized what she was doing my wig was in the fire—yes, in the fire, where it sizzled and curled up and smoked. All that remained of it was a black spot on the glowing coals. 'Now you'll not

wait till spring!' Mary remarked quietly but confidently as she left the room.

"Well, I got up early this morning and caught the first train to the city, and—and so you see it was quite natural for me to get a gray one."

Anna Hosea

A Misplaced Decimal

Note (on a postal card) from Bronson Madison to Miss Sarah Orville, Landscape-Painter

MY DEAR MISS ORVILLE: You may remember meeting me at the Arts Club reception. You remember, I guessed you were an artist because you used your thumb in pointing out the good qualities in a landscape. Yesterday I saw a landscape of yours at Roberts's studio, and it took my fancy. What do you value it at?

I am using a postal because writing-paper is my pet economy. I save something like a hundred dollars a year by using postals.

Let me know at once, please.

BRONSON MADISON.

Letter from Miss Sarah Orville to Joseph Roberts, Artist

DEAR JOE:—I have just received a postal from a man named Bronson Madison, asking me what I'll take for the landscape he saw in your studio. Please send it to me. I do not remember him except in a very hazy way. I think he's hard up, for he says he always uses postals. I'm going to let it go at the ridiculous price of twenty-five dollars, for I really need the money. Excuse my horrible writing. Oh, and tell me something about Mr. Madison.

SARAH ORVILLE.

Letter from Miss Sarah Orville to Bronson Madison

DEAR MR. MADISON:—I am glad you liked the little landscape. I feel I ought to get 2500. for it, because it is the best thing I've done so far.

SARAH ORVILLE.

Letter from Joseph Roberts to Miss Sarah Orville

DEAR SARAH:—Jim carried the picture around to your studio in my absence, or I would have sent a note with it.