

Mrs. Corbin Reads the Riot Act.

By JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD.



I AM RATHER tall. She came just up to my shoulder and wore a provokingly big black hat that hid her face from view. She had caught me by the arm, and I could feel the anger that was throbbing within her as her little fingers tightened their grip. I wasn't quite expecting it.

"I won't stand it any longer!" she de-

clared, and I could almost feel the tremble in her voice. "I won't stand it—John Corbin! The way you flirt is something abominable! The way you rubber at every pretty face you see is an insult to me! It has got to end! If you do this when your own wife is with you, what don't you do when you are alone? You think I don't see, but I do! I saw you wink at that—*that little cat* back in the cigar store, and when we went into the department store you kept behind me purposely—so that you could make eyes at every girl who would look your way. You!"

"Pardon me, madam," I began coldly. "I may admire pretty faces, I may—" "You may!" she interrupted. "You do, John Corbin! You're fit for nothing but a Turk or a Mormon. You're actually getting cross-eyed! That's why

your buttonhole!"—"See here"—I expostulated.

"I won't!" she declared, tightening her grip on my arm. "I'm going to have it out now—once and for all. And you bought that razor strop! It cost you a dollar—a *dollar*—just for a smile from a little minx with a lot of curls! And to-morrow I suppose she'll get a box of candy. And then—what then, John Corbin? Don't tell me that hair I found on your coat got there from a street-car seat! Don't I know better? And that handkerchief in your pocket! Do you suppose I was fool enough to believe you when you said



LOOK BEFORE YOU SIT

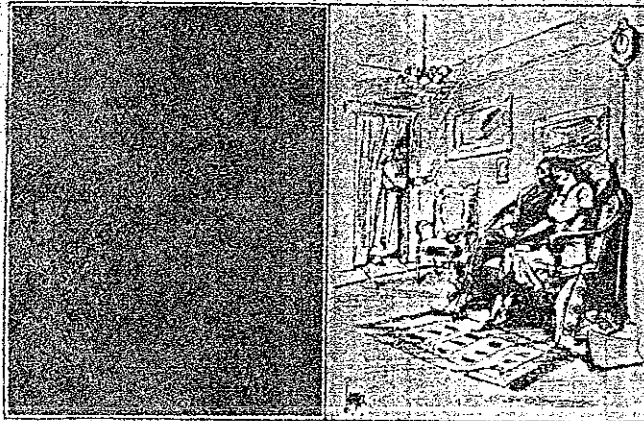
Woman—Hello! What's the matter? Little girl—Boo-boo! I left my bread and butter on that chair, and you're sitting on it!

you found it and brought it home to me? No, sir; it was forgotten, John Corbin! Ha, ha! Careless of you—very careless!

"But let me explain!" I begged.

"I don't want you to explain," she snapped. "I've had enough explanations. How do you suppose you're going to explain about that black little cashier who said 'Hello!' when you paid for the baby's undershirts? She didn't see me. Thought you were alone. And *that's* why you didn't want to go in and said you thought they had better baby shirts over at Skinner's, was it? Pretty clever! Ha, ha! But I'm onto you now. You can't fool me any more. I'm!"

(Continued in advertising section.)



ASLEEP AT THE SWITCH

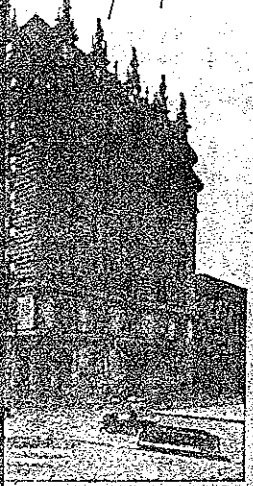


THAT EMBARRASSING MOMENT

When your wife finds one of her letters to you, unopened, in your last summer's suit.

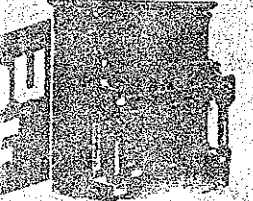
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Mrs. Corbin Reads the Riot Act.

(Concluded from a preceding page.)

"If you'd let me explain"—I en- treated.

"I tell you no explanation is need- ed," she went on, interrupting me fiercely. "I understand everything now—those 'business engagements' that take you downtown nights, when you ought to be home with baby and me, and all the other things. Oh, if I was only a man, that I might choke the whole truth out of you! Only last night you came home with powder on your coat, and when I asked you about it you hemmed and hawed and turned red, and said it was billiard chalk. You might as well have said it was soft soap. Didn't I know? I could smell it. And your clothes! You're getting worse and worse! I hate loudness—in a man. You can't help attracting the attention of every flirtzy girl you come near, be- cause they can hear you even when their eyes are turned in the other di- rection. That coat you've got on, that hat, and those pants! I knew you when I was half a block away, just by those gaudy checks in your trousers. No gentleman would wear such pants, no!"

She gasped for breath. I took ad- vantage of my opportunity.

"My dear madam," I began, as calmly as I could, "your husband may admire pretty girls. Your hus- band may be an abominable flirt. Your husband may buy razor strops when he oughtn't to, and he may come home with powder on his coat. But, my dear madam, I am not your husband. I am sorry that we wear the same kind of pa—of trousers—and that they have misled you. Doubtless you lost your husband back in the crowd. Or it may be that, in his admiration for some pretty face, he lost you. However that may be"——

And I caught my first and last glimpse of the horrified face under the big black hat.

Her Retort.

Tight Wad—"If you lost me, you'd have to beg for money."

His wife—"Well, it would come natural."

A Good Example.



Wh

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