

How Would You Size Up this Position?



One competitor remarks, last week's is really a delicate problem. The sympathies of all of us, of course, are with Miss B. in her double misfortune, but, in spite of all the hard names that Mr. A. is called and undoubtedly deserves, I confess to feeling a little sorry for him. It cannot be anything but distressing to him to know that his love has failed so signally to stand the test, and that he must deal a further blow to one already suffering so keenly.

I think, however, that he is called upon to play the man as far as may still be possible, and to end the affair.

I disagree most strongly with those who suggest that he should slacken his attentions until Miss B. is forced to take some action. Probably she is aware already of the change in his feelings, and to leave her in suspense, dreading to take the step that must alter her whole future, would be cowardly and cruel. Such a course would only make her despise him still more, whereas, by putting his case before her, he can at least hope to retain her respect to some degree. It is he who has failed her, and it is for him to deal with the matter.

I suggest, however, that he should take what may appear to some to be a cowardly way out, and that is, to write to Miss B. instead of seeing her, to ask for his release from the engagement: not to save his own feelings, but, as "Vivat" suggests, to enable Miss B. to recover her poise alone. Apart from the fact that the stress of emotion or possible recrimination might induce Mr. A., who is evidently something of a "Sentimental Tommy," to prolong the situation that could not endure, she should not be called upon to expose her distress.

Nor do I think that the help of any third party, even that of Miss B.'s mother, should be enlisted by Mr. A. Those of us who have been obliged to face real trouble know that it is oneself that must first be mastered, and Miss B. should be given the opportunity of facing her trial unwitnessed even by the most sympathetic.

In my opinion, therefore, Mr. A. should write to Miss B. making no reference to her disfigurement (of which probably she is only too keenly aware) saying that he has felt for some time that his feelings toward her have changed, and that he cannot give her the affection to which she is entitled if she becomes his wife. He should ask her to release him and suggest that she announces that she has broken off the engagement. "Vivat's" answer, I consider, the most nearly perfect received.—"Savoir-Faire."

Mr. A. would be tactful in avoiding Miss B.'s company by visiting his men friends as much as possible at his club if he has one, and by taking up any sport he is interested in. He might take measures by which Miss B. would be only too glad to break off the engagement, as by getting drunk several times and feigning even that he is in a worse condition than he is by playing some card game of which Miss B. disapproves.—"Deerfoot."

"To avoid an unhappy marriage, Mr. A.'s most tactful measure would be to

A Weekly Competition in Tact

EACH week a problem in social relationships—just such as might confront anyone—is set, and our readers are invited to send in their solutions, for which marks are awarded. Prizes are offered to those obtaining the most marks over a series of ten. First prize, £2/2/-; second prize, £1/1/-; third, 10/6, for each series.

In the event of any competitor, who has already taken a prize, winning another of the same value during the same year, such competitor will be expected to give way to the next highest score. For example, a second or third prizewinner may take a first prize, a first prize may take a second or third, or a second prizewinner may take a first or third, but not one of the same value during the same year.

Competitors may send in their own problems for publication and solution and a prize of 7/6 will be given for the best one sent in during each series, and 2/6 for each contributed problem used. Those sending in problems are, of course, entitled, with other competitors, to send in a solution of same. The right is reserved to publish part or the whole of any solution sent in.

A non-de-plume may be used, but names and addresses must be sent. The same non-de-plume must be retained throughout the series. All replies must bear a post-mark not later than the Thursday after the date of the journal in which the problem appears, and should be addressed to "Savoir-Faire," Radio Record and Electric Home Journal, P.O. Box 1032, Wellington.

Savoir-Faire's decision must, in every case, be accepted as final.

PROBLEM 3.

A certain honorary position is vacant in a social institution, and volunteers are called for. One applicant is approached by the president and consents to take over the position.

When the matter is discussed "in committee," a very good reason is given by a committee woman why that person should not have such a responsible job. The position is still vacant, but how can the president convey to the person he first approached that she is not suitable? It is not wished to hurt her feelings as the matter does not reflect upon her character at all.—Suggested by "Sue."

Answers must be postmarked not later than May 29, 1930.

PROBLEM No. 4.

Miss A is a teacher in a small country school and boards with Mrs. B. She teaches one of Mrs. B.'s boys, who thinks a great deal of his teacher.

One afternoon, arriving home a little later than usual, she overhears Mrs. C. (Mrs. B.'s married daughter, who is housekeeping in Mrs. B.'s absence) speaking rather angrily to the boy. She hears the words: "She may be your boss at school; but I'm the boss here." Upon Miss A entering the house, Mrs. C. seems most embarrassed.

Miss A. cannot call to mind any incident or reason to account for the words, and as she has always been very popular, both with scholars and parents, she is at a loss to understand the implication. What action, if any, should Miss A. take in the matter?—Suggested by "Apple Pie Mary."

Answers must be postmarked not later than June 5, 1930.

REMARKS ON PROBLEM 2.

"JEAN'S" answer to Problem No. 1 was not received until May 24 (and then from another correspondent), and therefore too late for marks to be awarded. The other correspondent, who will, no doubt, recognise this, is informed that nothing further came to hand. "Unomi's" answer was received too late also, but bore the correct postmark. Unfortunately, it failed to score any marks. It will be quite in order for her to keep that non-de-plume throughout this series.

THE most tactful method Mr. A. can adopt is to write to Miss B. in as kindly a manner as possible; of course, not mentioning her disfigurement, but to the effect that loath as he is to admit it, he has been mistaken in the depth of his affection for her, and he thinks it fairer to her for him to be straightforward about it now, before it is too late, than to expose her to the unhappiness and disillusionment that must inevitably follow marriage in the circumstances, and asking her to release him from the engagement.

Poor Miss B. would naturally be upset, but the shock would be easier to bear in private, and give her time to think it out clearly and to recover her poise; whereas in a personal interview she might break down and say things she would be sorry for later.

Moreover, in writing the case can be put forward clearly rationally, and in well-chosen words, which it is very hard to do in person."

—"Vivat."

write Miss B. in a straightforward like the following fashion: 'Dearest Belinda,—Six days have passed since the tidings of your terrible accident reached me, and my attendants say that I have had only three or four hours' sleep during the interval. Although my worst fears have been allayed, I still look eagerly for your doctor's reports. My friends tell of shocking facial injuries, but I beseech

you not to be cast down by any more superficial derangement; your steadfast soul and loving nature will, I am confident, continue to manifest themselves. Rather give thanks that your seeming dreadful experience has brought with it a result which you will come to regard as really beneficent. Throughout my life I have brought nothing but ill-fortune to all whom I have felt intimately drawn, and I have determined that you, at least, shall not run the hazard of my further malific influence. Accept your freedom, my dear Belinda, but believe me I shall ever cherish the kindest affection for you. With the heartiest wishes for your ultimate great happiness, I remain, your devoted friend, Amadab Asinnubus."

—"Abasuerus."

"Mr. A. appears to be a bit of a cad, and could not have truly loved Miss B. or his love would have stood the severe test. He will not let Miss B. see that he no longer loves her until she has quite recovered from the accident and become more reconciled to her disfigurement. Mr. A. will then try for a transfer or another position in another town or country. His letters will become fewer and farther apart until they cease altogether. He will not return. Miss B.'s pride will keep her from following him, so he will pass out of her life."—"Ivy Sen."

Marks Awarded.

Anon, 3; Amarylilis, 3; Anice, 2; Artful, 0; Apple-pie Mary, 4; Abasuerus, 0; Ben, 3; Miss Rachel Baker, 0; Bonza, 3; Barbara, 2; Clare, 0; Clericus, 3; Camp-fire, 3; Deerfoot, 0; Duplex, 3; Diabolo, 2; Devon, 0; Ecanan, 4; Elkay, 3; Equity, 3; Fanny, 0; Frances, 3; Flirt, 2; Flora, 0; Ginger, 4; Grace, 3; Gunga Din, 0; Haven, 0; Heather, 3; Hopscotch, 3; Iota, 3; Ivy Sen, 0; Irene, 0; Iambic, 3; Miss N. Johnson, 4; Jonquil, 2; Jimmy, 2; Mrs. Jones, 0; Evelyn Johnston, 4; Jean, 0; Kummell, 3; Kate, 0; Kia-Ora, 3; Lucie, 0; Lambton, 3; Michael, 4; Mrs. Mason, 0; Myra, 0; Mavis, 3; Magpie, 3; Maybelle, 5; Nono, 4; Nintz, 3; Natural, 4; Nomen, 0; Norah, 3; Never-never, 2; Nippy, 0; Mrs. Oldman, 0; Olivia, 3; Octopus, 0; Open Door, 3; Pat, 3; Pumpkin, 0; Pansy, 0; Query, 3; Quince, 3; Radio, 3; Rosa, 0; Richmond, 3; Sardonyx, 4; Sue, 4; Scylla, 0; Summixt, 3; Thames, 0; Tuner, 0; Topaz, 3; Tommy, 3; Undine, 0; Unomi, 3; Vivat, 5; Viator, 4; Viola, 0; Verity, 3; Wynward, 0; Weaver, 3; Waterway, 3; Watchful, 0; Xerxes, 3; Xylonite, 3; Yum-Yum, 3; Youngster, 0; Zenobia, 3; Effie, 3.

TRADE NOTES

CRED A MIDGET IRONS, 50 watts, 2 voltages, 100/150 and 200/250. Weight, only just over 1lb. These delightful little irons, although light and compact, will do a surprising amount of work, and are ideal for ironing silks, stockings, or even for pressing an evening frock. For travelling use they should prove invaluable. Fitted with 3 yards of silk cord and a lamp adaptor, they are offered in three colours—red, green, and blue, enclosed in compact little leather readers, for pressing ties and so on.