

'Eulalie,' Chicago Record, October 11, 1899.

There was a square envelope in the roll of mail which little Patricio brought from the station and delivered to Mr. Washington Conner, who was under a tree, as usual, smoking a cigar, as usual, and idly chatting with Eulalie, as usual.

The missionary first read several formal letters, some of them from department chiefs of the Bureau of Benevolent Assimilation, advising him how to go about it to convince the Tagalos that the road to happiness lay parallel with the path of meek submission.

Also, Mr. Conner tore the wrappers from several newspapers and glanced along the solid columns. He noticed that in several large cities tumultuous gatherings in hotel dining halls had applauded the sentiment that the Flag was the Symbol of Freedom. From this he gathered that the United States was still determined to confer the blessings of liberty on the Tagalos, no matter how many had to be piled in the trenches.

He read that Admiral Dewey had arrived in New York and had declared in no uncertain tone for and against the Tagalos. In one interview he said the Tagalos were more nearly capable of self-government than were the Cubans. The missionary took good care that Mr. Kakyak did not see this interview. He had been telling Mr. Kakyak that the congress of the United States had recognized the independence of Cuba and declared her worthy of a trial at self-government, because the Cubans were a superior race, who, by their close proximity to the United States and their free intercourse with Americans, had become partly assimilated! And now Admiral Dewey had said that the Cubans were inferior to the Tagalos. He knew very well that Mr. Kakyak would ask, "Why do you deny us the opportunity you have pledged to the Cubans?" and he was not sure that he could give a proper and convincing answer.

Mr. Conner was beginning to learn the Tagalos. A Tagalo is a very suspicious and exacting person. He prefers a definite assurance to a flight of oratory in regard to a star-spangled banner.

While Washington Conner was mediating lazily upon the difficulties of his position he uncovered the square envelope and opened his eyes a little wider. The envelope was a light blue and the address was in that tall and angular writing affected by the women of his native land.

Eulalie sat a few feet away gazing thoughtfully at the big missionary and hesitating to speak while he was intent on his mail. She observed the sudden change of expression when he saw the square envelope and with a women's intuition she knew that the letter was not official.

When Conner split the envelope and withdrew the folded sheets, Eulalie caught the faint odor of perfume and her extremest suspicions were confirmed.

The missionary grinned as he read one page after another. It was a letter from a girl in his college town. She was that rare exception--a friend who does not allow time or distance to weaken an obligation. Nine years before she had promised Mr. Washington Conner, the senior valedictorian, that she would write to him occasionally, and she had kept her

promise, although Conner had been woefully tardy in answering and his letters had been brief and colorless compared with her entertaining resume of affairs in and around the college.

This letter, coming to him unexpectedly on a hillside in Luzon, served two purposes. It helped to remind him that at one time he had been a college senior with a flapping frock coat and an abnormally high silk hat. Furthermore, it had the effect of arousing curiosity, not to say jealousy, in Miss Eulalie Kakyak.

"You seem pleased with your letter," she said, watching him keenly from under her long, downcast lashes.

"I--ah--yes:" he exclaimed, suddenly finding himself, for he had been 10,000 miles away, once more helping to plant the class ivy. "Oh, yes, it's a very interesting letter."

"Why did you smile?"

"When was that?"

"While you were reading the letter."

"Did I smile?"

"Yes, you smiled all the time."

"The letter is rather amusing."

"It is from a woman, isn't it?"

"Why do you think so?"

"Oh, well the color for one thing, then the perfume, but most of all the way you smiled."

"Yes, it's from a girl at home, one of my old school friends."

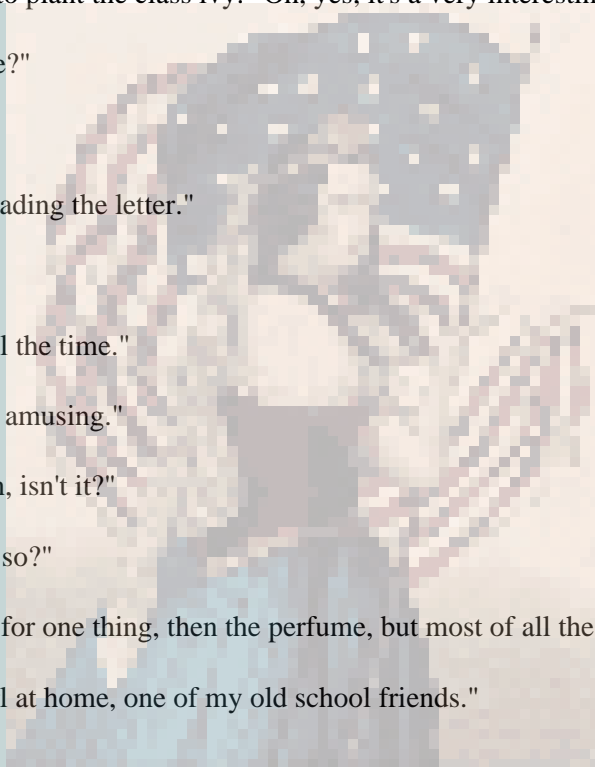
"Is she beautiful?"

Conner had to laugh aloud.

"No, Henrietta is not beautiful by any means," he replied. "She is a good soul, and one of the cleverest girls I ever knew, but she is far from being a beauty. She is what we call at home a good fellow. She used to chum with the men in the class, and we called her 'Hen' for short."

"How old is she?" asked Eulalie after a pause.

"I'll declare, you're taking an unusual interest in Henrietta. Let's see, how old is she? Not very old--about thirty."



"Thirty!"

"Yes--why, are you surprised?"

"But you spoke of her as girl."

"Oh, well, at home a girl is a girl until she marries." "And do some girls wait until 30 before they marry?"

"It depends on what luck they have."

"But a woman is so old at thirty, I shouldn't think any one would marry an old woman.

"My dear child, it wouldn't be safe for you to use such language in several women's clubs that I happen to know about. Why, a woman at 30 is simply in full bloom. We don't speak of a woman as 'old' until she is past 50, and she doesn't speak of herself as being 'old' until she is past 70."

"Then you have in your country one thing I would like to would like to know the secret of preserving one's possess. youth."

"I don't think there is any secret to it. It is all due to climate and heredity."

"The same as your peculiar civilization?" suggested Eulalie.

"Yes," said Conner, hesitatingly. "I understand, of course, that in this climate and under the conditions which have evolved your branch of the human family the women develop into full womanhood very early in life, and then ." He stopped.

"And then fade and wrinkle into old women almost as rapidly as they grew into beauty," said Eulalie. "There is no need of denying it. The woman who wrote you the letter is 30 years old, and yet you spoke of her as a girl. When I am 30 I will be thin and have bony arms and wrinkles, the same as mother has now. Isn't it horrible?"

"If you adopt our civilization you may learn how to conceal the marks of advancing age," said Conner.

"Now you tempt me for the first time. It is the dread of my life--the loss of my youth and to know that it should come so soon."

"Nonsense! You are merely a little girl."

"I arrived at the marrying age two years ago. Mother has chided me again and again for not marrying as soon as I had the chance."

"Oh, you had a chance, had you?" he inquired, in a startled tone. "Well, why did you refuse him?"

"Who said that I refused him?"

"OH!"

"You are very fortunate," she said, looking at him quizzically. "When you go back to your home you will marry some girl who will be just as pretty year after year, as when you married her. But if I marry, in ten short years I will be--ah, dreadful, an old woman."

Conner was nervously distressed by Eulalie's sad forecast. He tried to reassure her. "I don't think you ought to worry about anything that is going to happen to you ten years after you are married," he said. "So far as my observation goes, a man doesn't judge his wife by her personal appearance after they have lived together for ten years. They are considerably past the honeymoon by that time."

"Ah, but you wouldn't marry a girl if you knew she would be old and ugly in a few years," said Eulalie, half in a questioning way.

"I might," said Conner, decisively, and Eulalie laughed.

