

CHAPTER XXX

THE MARRIAGE BUREAU

One of the most entertaining episodes of the Poynton eating club grew out of a "marriage bureau" which was organized in Grandfather's Junior year. In that day there were some cheap magazines which contained letters from both men and women who were seeking mates, extolling their own virtues, explaining what kind of mates they wished and inviting correspondence with reference to matrimony. Three boys of Grandfather's class who ate at the Poynton Club amused themselves by getting into an active correspondence with these advertising love seekers, writing sometimes as men and sometimes as women. This might never have leaked out except for the fact that one of the three, Mors by name, never could keep anything to himself and soon there was whispered conversation around the Poynton Club that Mors and Joyce and Doherty had organized a marriage bureau.

One day the editor of the Badger Board (The Badger was the University annual which printed the pictures of University organizations and spicy news concerning student happenings) received a letter from one of the waitresses of the Poynton Club saying that she had overheard table conversation about the marriage bureau and thought the Badger Board might be interested in a paper which she had found on the floor after dinner. The Board might use the paper if they thought best, but please never write to her or speak to her about it or in any way ever indicate that she knew anything about the marriage bureau. The document was indeed a spicy bit of news, bearing obviously genuine signatures of a large number of

students. The Badger Board had no doubt as to the genuineness of the letter and the accompanying document, refrained from talking with the waitress as she had requested, had a plate made to reproduce in facsimile form the signatures and printed the document in the Badger. The document read as follows:

We, the undersigned, solemnly promise to preserve, protect, defend and promote the interests of the Marriage Bureau of the University of Wisconsin.

P. F. Joyce Pd.
J. T. Lindley Pd. 10¢
J. J. Cunningham
J. F. Doherty Pd.
G. A. Kinsman
E. F. Munger
George C. Mors
E. Piper Pd.
C. R. Barney
J. J. Blake
Aug. Reders
Theo. Bonfey Pd.
E. J. Frawley Pd.
F. F. Showers Pd. 15¢
G. H. Stanchfield
J. E. Webster Pd.
C. E. McMullen
Thomas H. Ryan
Herb. Piper Pd.

Text and Signatures

Again this story would have been short except for the fact that Mors could never keep anything to himself. The day before the Badger went on sale Mors let a good sized cat out of the bag. He allowed it to leak out that Joyce, who was an expert penman, had drawn up a pledge for the marriage bureau, had forged the names of a large number of outstanding men, chiefly those who ate at Poynton Club, had written a letter in

woman's style, had forged the signature of a Poynton Club waitress to the letter and forwarded it to the Badger Board. (Parenthetically it may be said that Joyce had not included the name of your grandfather or Grandfather's roommate, Fred Jackson, probably because he knew that George Katz, who was one of the most active men on the Badger Board, was very friendly with your grandfather and if the name of your grandfather or his roommate were on the list, George might some day start "kidding" your grandfather on the marriage bureau and might get his suspicions aroused as to the genuineness of the document.) The revelation by Mors caused a sensation of major proportions in the Poynton Club. It was too late to recall the Badger. Books had already been distributed to newsstands and would go on sale in the morning, but there must be retaliation.

A law student, Tom Ryan, whose name had been included, drew up papers for the arrest of Mors, Joyce and Doherty, charging them on a complaint issued in the name of the unsuspecting waitress of the Poynton Club with forgery of waitress's name to the letter mailed to the Badger Board. Ryan fitted up a newly arrived short-course agricultural student with a policeman's uniform and instructed him how to serve the papers. This pseudo policeman first caught Mors, took him down to city police court, where Judge Keys held forth and directed Mors to go in and sit down among the drunks until the judge called Mors's turn. The pseudo policeman beat it up to College Hall, summoned Doherty out of his class and placed him under arrest. "By what authority do you arrest me?" asked the sophisticated Doherty, who was a prospective lawyer and judge. "In the name of the State of Wisconsin," said the well-coached agricultural student.

Doherty's friends (those whose names had been forged to the marriage bureau pledge and were not out for sweet revenge) came to the rescue - they would accompany Doherty down to court and do what they could for him. On the way to court, they talked it over and it was decided that Doherty's case was so hopeless it would be best for him to plead guilty and throw himself on the mercy of the court, to which Doherty agreed.

Meanwhile, interesting events were happening in Judge Keys' court. The judge, having disposed of the morning's crop of drunks, gathered up his papers and started to put on his overcoat. Mors, who had a bad stutter, approached the rail and said: "Ju-ju-Judge, wh-wh-what are you go-go-going to do-do with m-m-me?" "Why, what is the matter?" asked the judge. "I was arrested for for-for-forgery," stammered Mors. "Young man," said the judge, "that is a very serious charge." The judge removed his overcoat and began looking over his paper. Then, noticing unusual doings in the back of his courtroom, the judge smiled and said: "I guess it is only a practical joke." As Mors turned to go, a camera clicked and soon a press syndicate story of the Marriage Bureau was on the wires.

Shortly after Mors had gone, the pseudo policeman reached the courtroom with Doherty. The agricultural student seeing that he must make a quick get-away, told Doherty to stand where he was while he (the pseudo policeman) went after Mors. When the policeman left, Doherty's friends advised him to run away and hide until after dark and then beat it across the State line. So Doherty hid in the hayloft of a friend's barn and remained there until evening when his friends relented and

pulled him out of the hay and took him to the Poynton Club for supper, to stand his share of a razzing which the three original marriage bureau conspirators were in for. After a hilarious supper which failed to get a smile from Doherty, he suddenly declared in his frank and impressive manner: "Gentlemen, this may look funny to you, but I see nothing funny in it. I shall never again play a practical joke."

Grandfather does not know how long Doherty kept this resolution but at least he played no more jokes on members of the Poynton Club.