

How FRENCHMEN

By WINIFRED REEVE

Make Love

A Random Few Pointers From The Idol Of Paris, Chevalier

"HOW you do, Madame?" Maurice Chevalier beamed upon me with professional cordiality.

"Bon jour, m'sieu," said I.

An electrical change swept Chevalier's face. He gazed at me with delighted amazement.

"Ah-h-h-h-l! Vous parlez francais?"

But my greeting had used up my entire French vocabulary. Now Chevalier took me for granted: I was not a stranger but a friend. A stream of voluble French poured from him as he drew me into his dressing-room. His smile was warm. Perhaps I might even be a Frenchwoman. At all events I made an excellent listener; I can listen in all languages. I couldn't help myself, for by this time I was afraid to open my mouth. I didn't want to break the spell. I'd have given a lot at that very moment to be able to understand what Chevalier was saying. Everything in a foreign language sounds thrilling, sensational.

When finally Chevalier comprehended the limitations of my vocabulary, he regarded me with an element of regret and reproach. However, he was French, even if he does look like a big blond, very He-ish Englishman, and he politely turned his disappointment into a bow.

BEYOND PUBLICITY

"YOU don't like interviews, do you?" I asked.

He made an expressive motion with his hands, slightly shrugged. At least, his gestures are typically Latin.

"In France," he said, "I am no longer interviewed. My fame is establish' I am Maurice Chevalier. It is



Hommel

It is testimony to Maurice's knowledge of women that he chose so very charming a wife as Madame Chevalier. And testimony to her knowledge of them that she came with him to Hollywood

enough, for Paris. But here—everything is publicity—yes?"

At this juncture, we were interrupted by Director Wallace, a large, handsome young dynamo, who thrust his head in, in passing. "Publicity is a get-famous-quick method," he bellowed. "Fame is a female. You've got to chase her."

"How you catch her?" asked Chevalier.

"All sorts of ways and means. Some people make a profession of notoriety. Now as for you—well, you might divorce your wife and that'd get you on the front page."

"Ah no! I do not like the front page. I like better my wife—even if obscurity."

Director Wallace went off laughing. "There's French gallantry for you," was his parting shot. Chevalier, with a wry smile and a shake of his head, said:

"He likes poke joke."

HOW FRENCHMEN END IT

BUT Frenchmen are naturally very gallant, aren't they? What better subject to talk to 'a Latin of than love?

"It is their birthright," said Chevalier. "It is in the bone and blood of the Frenchman. He is courteous even to a scrubwoman. When he terminates a love affair, he does it with finesse. He leaves a regret behind—it is fragrance of memory. Is not that better than a bitterness?"

"He makes an art of love. It is done in little, fine ways, you understand. His attitude to women is always deferential, tender, admiring. It makes the ladies feel very good."

"But is it not insincere?"

"No, not insincere, for while he speaks or looks at the

(Continued on page 116)

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How Frenchmen Make

Love

(Continued from page 50)

woman, he means what he looks and speaks. His heart is impassionable. He loves for the moment. All his life, the Frenchman loves—even when little boy. When he grows to man, he is in chronic love. Maybe he has many little love affairs. He does not despise—"Un Peu d'Amour." You know the song, Madame? It is French. It means "A Little Love." Not the *grande passion*, you understand, which comes but once in a man's life—but—"un peu d'amour." Chevalier beamed. He was feeling very pleased with himself I think, and he began to tell me of the little gallantries and courtesies that women love. It may be only a look of admiration—perhaps the gift of a bouquet; the manner in which he lifts his hat; his deferential bow. A woman loves a compliment as a kitten does cream. To say to a woman: Ah, you are looking charming today, mademoiselle, is to make her feel better for all the rest of that day. Dainty, fastidious, exquisite, unobtrusive little attentions—a woman will always react to these. Yes, undoubtedly, the Frenchman was the supreme lover of the world.

AS TO KISSING HANDS

"THEY are great hand-kissers," I observed.

"No, that is a mistake. I have seen more foreigners—Americans and Englishmen in Paris—who kiss the hand than the French. That is a custom only upon formal occasion—or maybe in some high society. To me it seems like affectation—artificial."

"But Menjou does it."

"Ah! Menjou. But he is a movie Frenchman. Pardon! I mean that in the movie picture perhaps he makes the kiss on the hand. I very much admire Menjou. He is an amiable and charming gentleman and a talented actor."

He changed the subject and began to talk of Hollywood. Like everyone else when he first comes here, he had heard the tales of the wild parties and sex escapades. For his part, Chevalier had not seen that side of Hollywood, but then, he was a Frenchman, a man of simple, even bourgeois, tastes. He was not very fast, he admitted almost apologetically. Money, so he thinks, is not important. It comes—it goes. We should not make a fetish of it. The most desirable things in life are security, tranquility, peace of mind—love, love of wife and dear ones—love of friends. Like most foreign stars, he referred to Douglas Fairbanks and Mary, his wife, as the ideal pair. They had set a standard of living that those less famous might well emulate.

"Assuredly, Madame," he added "it is finer to make an art of living rather than merely succeed upon the screen or stage."

Didn't he think, I hinted, that American girls are the most beautiful in the world?

THERE ARE MANY BEAUTIES

"MADAME," said Chevalier. "No country has secured a corner on beauty. There are beautiful women everywhere. But—the United States, she is a remarkable country—very great—very rich."

"I have heard you described as the Al Jolson of Europe," said I, beginning to gather up gloves, bag, vanity, the impedimenta of the feminine interviewer.

"Ah, no, no," he denied quickly. "Al Jolson is supreme in America. I lift my hat with respect to such an artist. As for me—I am just—Chevalier. But I hope America will like me a little. If so, I shall stay here—but every summer I will return to my Paris. We have a popular song—Ah, qu'il était bon, mon village—mon Paris!" How beautiful my village is—my Paris."