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A WOMAN'S BARGAIN.

You will love me? Ah, I know
As men love—no better, dear
Worship? Yes, a month or so.
Tenderness? Perhaps a year.

After that, the quiet sense
Of possession, careless care,
And the calm indifference
That all married lovers wear.

Blame you, dearest? Not at all.
As Fate made you, so you stand;
As Fate made you, so you fall.
Far below Love's high demand.

Yet how strange is Love's deep law!
I can look you through, and through,
Tracing plainly Nature's flaw
In the heart she gave to you:

Knowing all my heart must stake,
All the danger, all the fear,
And yet glad, even so, to make
This, my losing bargain, dear!

ROMANCE OF A PIPE.

P—l—ff, Minnie! It's a horrid smoking carriage." "So it is, Maud. Well, it couldn't be helped. There was no time to choose our carriage; in fact, we had luck in catching the train at all. These underground trains scarcely give one time to wink."

"What dreadfully vulgar expressions you do pick up, Minnie!" "Sling is the go nowadays, my dear. You cannot be smart without it. But, I say, do you really object to the smell of tobacco?"

"Yes, especially when it is stale. The scent of a carriage like this clings to one's dress for hours." "What do you mean? It is rather chic than otherwise. For my part, I greatly prefer a smoking carriage." "What extraordinary taste!" "Not so much for the sake of the tobacco, as because you meet the best-looking men in smoking carriages, and—"

"Minnie! Don't be so inexpressibly vulgar." "And the wickedest." "Are all smokers wicked, then?" "No, but all wicked men are smokers."

"And you like wicked men best?" "Rather! Don't you?" "Of course not. How can you suppose such a thing?"

"Charlie Bidding is a little wicked, my dear" (with laughing malice). "I—I—don't believe—I—I—I don't see how that bears on the subject, Minnie."

"Humbug, my prim old coz. Don't I know you sent you that pretty little gold watch for a valentine the other day? There was no letter with it and you couldn't imagine from whom it came—eh? Oh, you jolly old hypocrite!"

"You—shouldn't talk such nonsense, Minnie. You let your tongue run away with you." "Perhaps I do. But it's not nonsense, all the same. You know that Charlie Bidding is in love with you, my dear; and I know that you entertain a weakness for him. I also know that if he wasn't a little bit wicked you wouldn't care for him a straw—not you! Suppose he had been" (with infinite scorn) "a good young man, he would never have sent you that pretty gold watch at all—seeing that he isn't engaged to you; he would never have danced seven dances with you at Lady P—'s ball the other night, when he nearly engaged Aunt Agatha into a fit; he would never have stolen that kiss from you in the corner of the conservatory, when—"

"How can you say such things, Minnie?" interrupted Maud, blushing a rosy red. "I—I—don't know what you mean."

"Yes, you do, my dear, very well," laughed Minnie, saucily. "These little eyes of mine are awfully sharp. But what a pity the Hon. Charles is only a younger son, with a limited allowance. His brother, the earl, is tremendously rich, too; might endow poor Charles with affluence, if he liked, and never in the least miss it. But, of course, he doesn't, stingy curmudgeon! Cares for nothing, they say, but his stupid politics and blue books."

"I—I—really Minnie, you speak as if Ch—Mr. Bidding's affairs had something to do with me. Haven't I told you fifty times—"

"Yes, you old darling! And I've never believed you once. Hilloa, what's this?" "What's what?" "Why, this," said Minnie, stretching across and picking up some article from the opposite seat. "By Jingo, Maud—a pipe!"

"So it is. Some man left it behind him. Ugh! The horrid, smelly old thing. Put it down at once, Minnie." "You're no judge of pipes, my dear," said Minnie, stily. "If you were, you would never abuse a pipe for being old. Now, this is a regular clinker; quite a gentleman among pipes. Look at it. Amber mouthpiece, silver collar, beautifully colored bowl, and" (bringing it close to her dainty nose) "smells de-licious!"

"Fugh! I call the smell atrocious. It nearly makes me ill—even that distance." "Ah, that's your prejudice, dear, old-fashioned coz. I—I say" (inspecting

the inside of the bowl) "it's—actually charged!" "Actually what?" "Charged, you darling simpleton; loaded—filled with baccy. And I do believe—yes, yes, it is—I am sure of it—it's Old Carolina!"

"Pray, what is Old Carolina, Minnie?" "Old Carolina, Maud, is a particularly scrumptious kind of baccy. My brother Jack always expects me to give him some for a Christmas present. It tastes just about heavenly, I can tell you."

"Tastes!" cried out Maud. "You do not mean to say that you have ever smoked it?" "Rather. I've had stealthy whiffs from Jack's pipe many times. I should like a pull at this one now!"

As she spoke—to Maud's unutterable horror—she placed the pipe in her mouth and made believe to draw at it. "Good heavens, Minnie!" exclaimed her sober cousin, aghast. "How can you! That horrid, dirty, strange pipe? Take it out immediately!"

Minnie only laughed. "If I had a match with me," she said, "I should shock you still more; for I should light up."

"Allow me to oblige you." It was a man's voice, and it came from behind. Both girls turned hastily round. Maud's face was crimson. Even Minnie, who was usually equal to most situations, showed some signs of confusion.

The stranger was in the next compartment, looking at them over the partition. How long he had been watching them they did not know, for they had sat with their backs to him, and would never have observed him at all unless he had spoken. He was not an ill-looking man—rather the reverse. He had a pleasant, good tempered face and twinkling eyes, which were now regarding the two young ladies with evident amusement. But he had no business to be spying over the partition at all, still less to address girls with whom he was unacquainted. So Maud felt, and she drew herself up as stiffly as she could and affected to ignore him.

That was not in Minnie's line at all. After the first shock of the stranger's voice she began to enjoy the joke, and she said, with a wave of her hand toward his proffered match-box: "Thanks, awfully. We are getting out at the next station, else I should certainly have availed myself of your kindness."

"Then if you are really not going to use it yourself, perhaps you can spare me my pipe now," suggested the stranger, smiling.

"Oh, it is yours, is it? Here you are," she said, handing it to him.

"Thank you very much. I ought to explain. My intrusion must otherwise seem rather unaccountable. I got out at the last station for a paper and jumped back into the wrong compartment. Recollecting that I had left my pipe—an old and valued friend—upon the seat, I stood up to look for it over the partition. I was rejoiced to find that it had fallen into such appreciative hands."

"Oh, I know a lot about pipes," laughed Minnie. Then, as the train pulled up, she turned to her cousin, exclaiming: "Hilloa! here we are; Gloucester road. Out with you, Maud."

The stranger raised his hat by way of a farewell.

"I shall never forget," he said, demurely, "that so great a connoisseur in pipes as yourself has pronounced mine to be a regular clinker!"

When they had alighted from the train, Maud, who had been frowning at her cousin all through the above conversation, at once took that young lady to task for encouraging the stranger's familiarity. But Minnie treated these remonstrances very lightly.

"All right, dear old Propriety. No harm done. Only a bit of a joke. What do you think Aunt Agatha will say when she hears about it?"

"Surely you won't tell mamma?" exclaimed Maud; "she'll be terribly angry if you do."

"Oh, I shall tell her, certainly," answered Minnie, "if only for the sake of watching her face during my recital. It will be better than a play."

And Minnie did tell her. And Aunt Agatha's face—as a genuine study of emotions—was decidedly better than a play. No actress could quite have produced that horror-struck expression.

"Margaret," she said, scathingly, "I do not know which to condemn the more, your outrageous conduct with that impertinent stranger or your flippant manner in relating it. It is hard for me to believe that you are my own sister's child."

Minnie affected to look very much crushed. She bent her eyes over the tablecloth. Aunt Agatha could not see their roguish twinkle, or she might have found it harder still to believe that the girl was her own sister's child. In truth, few things daunted this harum-scarum young lady, and no reproofs weighed heavily upon her soul.

A few mornings later the two girls were sitting in their little upstairs room, where they painted, and mended and practiced untidiness to their hearts' content. They were talking now; though, to be sure, Maud did hold a palette in one hand and a brush in the

other, and made occasional reckless dabs at a canvas in front of her. Minnie had thrown her implements of art upon the floor beside her, and was lounging with crossed knees, in a basket chair near the window. She was in one of her high-spirited moods, and was rattling away like the proverbial smallest hour.

"If I were you, Maud, I should assert myself, defy Aunt Agatha, and marry Charles Bidding—tomorrow!" "Hush! Minnie. How can you?" "Yes, I should. If I loved a man, I shouldn't care a twopenny—I meant twopenny, whether he was poor or rich. All the mothers, or fathers, or brothers, or aunts in the world might try to stop me. But I shouldn't let them. If a man, I say, whom I loved, asked me to marry him, I'd do it, in spite of 'em all."

"Ch—Mr. Bidding has never asked me to marry him," said Maud, blushing.

"But you know that he wants to. You know that you are only to give him the opportunity to ask you. Are you daunted, because you're afraid of Aunt Agatha. If I was in love, which—Good heavens, who's this?"

A hansom had drawn up at the door. Minnie watched the occupant alight. She clapped her hands merrily.

"Talk of angel," she cried. "Oh, Maud, here's fun. Who do you think it is?"

"Who?" exclaimed Maud, springing to the window and peeping out. Her face suddenly flushed the rosiest of reds. She recognized the athletic form of Charles Bidding.

"He has come to ask Aunt Agatha for your hand," laughed Minnie. "Poor Charles, I do not envy him the interview."

"Oh, I'm sorry he's come," faltered Maud, looking rather distressed. "I—I'm afraid mamma will—will be dreadfully rude to him. She was—was horrid to him the other night at Lady P—'s ball. It is of no use his coming either; no use, whatever. He—he—only has £500 a year, and he's in—in debt. Mamma would never let me marry him."

"Fiddlesticks, dear old coz," said Minnie, putting her arm around her and giving her a kiss. "Aunt Agatha can't prevent you. Girls are not slaves nowadays. You only have to assert yourself, you darling goose. My motto is, if a man is worth loving, he is worth marrying, marry him. For men worth marrying do not grow on every bush."

In this half-jesting strain Minnie ran on. But Maud did not hear much of it. Maud's attention was obviously distracted. Her eyes constantly wandered to the door. She seemed to be listening for something outside. At last there came a footstep. A maid entered.

"A message from missis, please, Miss Maud. Will you go down to her in the drawing-room?"

Maud sprang up and smoothed her hair with her hands. Then she ran downstairs to obey her mother's order with a very nervous, frightened expression upon her face.

It was nearly an hour before she came back. Minnie looked up at her questioningly. It was clear that something unexpectedly good had happened.

"Oh, Minnie, I have something so wonderful to tell you. Mr. Bidding—Charles—has had an extraordinary piece of fortune. He has—has—come into—two thousand a year! And mamma has allowed us to be engaged. Such was so kind, Minnie, and said such—such—beautiful things about my happiness being her one consideration. I—I think I have misjudged mamma, Minnie!"

Just for a second a queer, quizzical twinkle flashed in Minnie's eyes. The idea of Aunt Agatha saying beautiful things was rather novel. However, that was soon forgotten in her genuine delight at Maud's happiness. With all her harum-scarum ways, Minnie was a warm-hearted, unselfish little creature. She hugged and kissed her a dozen times. She used every term of congratulation—of endearment. Had it been her own engagement, she could not have displayed more heartfelt and unaffected joy over it. Maud found her sympathy very delicious. Girls in Maud's condition are particularly susceptible of sympathy. It adds 75 per cent to their bliss.

At luncheon Aunt Agatha was more than agreeable. Her face was wreathed in smiles throughout the meal. Minnie indulged in many vulgarisms unrebuked. It was altogether an unprecedented luncheon in that house. Aunt Agatha said some more beautiful things and Minnie managed to keep countenance. It was an effort. But she did it.

In the afternoon the elder lady went out alone to pay calls, and, no doubt, to discuss Maud's engagement with her friends. It was 5 o'clock before she returned. She came into the drawing-room, where the two girls were having tea. They saw at once by her face that something had happened in the interim. She had gone away in a sunlight of smiles and good humor. She came back in a storm of angry scowls. Even Maud had never seen her mother's face more ominous. The poor girl shuddered. What could it mean?

Could it have anything to do with her engagement? But it was not against Maud that her mother's anger was directed. "Margaret," she said, in an awful voice. "Margaret!" "Yes, aunt," replied Minnie.

"I—I—hardly know how to address you—you—shameless girl. Do you know what I have been told of you this afternoon? That a few evenings ago you were seen, after dark, in a deserted street near here, walking arm-in-arm with—with—a man!"

"Quite true, aunt," answered Minnie, in a low voice.

Her eyes were bent upon the carpet. She was altogether very shame-faced and confused.

"And a strange man!" continued Aunt Agatha, her voice rising with increased anger.

"Yes, aunt. At least I had never seen him till—I picked up his pipe the other day on the Underground."

"Picked up his pipe?" Aunt Agatha's voice had risen almost to a scream. "Is that the fellow? That counter-jumper? A nice companion for my niece to walk arm-in-arm with in the public streets?"

"I did not t—t—take his arm," faltered Minnie in a slight ill-used tone, "until—I had promised to marry him."

"Promised to marry him?" Aunt Agatha's expression was now appalling. "Marry him! Some common cad whose very name we don't know and—"

"I do know his name, aunt," interposed Minnie.

"What is it, pray? Tom Jones or Jack Robinson?" scoffed the elderly lady with an unparalleled effort at sarcasm.

"Not quite either, aunt. It is the Earl of Northover—Charles Bidding's brother."

So, you see, Charles owed his fortune to the earl, his brother. The earl owed his generous impulse to Minnie. And Minnie owed her opportunity to the pipe. If you took the opinion of these three persons, adding Aunt Agatha and Maud, you would probably find them to concur in Minnie's original verdict upon the said pipe—that it was a regular clinker—London Truth.

Can Never be One People. That the two hundred and eighty million inhabitants of the continent of India should ever become one nation is so wild an improbability, and, even if possible, a matter of so many centuries, that its assumed realization cannot be made the basis of practical politics. England and Ireland are an example of the slowness of growth of a common national sentiment in closely allied peoples forming one state, and the national unification of medieval Europe would have been a problem analogous to that of India to-day. For Latin then, as English now, in India was a common tongue for the educated classes, yet the former did not supplant, as the latter is now destroying, the popular language. And the ideal of a holy Roman Emperor, with its attendant aspirations, was a sentiment counteracting local or tribal feeling stronger than any that has yet arisen in India from the superimposed authority of the Queen's Government, while there is nothing in India to correspond with the religious unity of Europe under the Popes. For Hinduism and Islam show no signs of decay, and the antagonism between their followers is on the increase.

In the traditions of history, one of the most powerful elements of national sentiment, the pride of the one is the shame of the other. The Mussulman glories in Aurangzeb; the followers of Gobind Singh and Sivaji detest his memory. Intermarriage is impossible, and is a sin even among the myriad castes of Hindoos. There is no historical example of such a miracle as the amalgamation into one nation of such a multitude of diverse elements, and if it is to be effected the first steps have yet to be taken.

Wet Boots. When boots are wet through, do not dry them by the fire. As soon as they are taken off, fill them quite full with dry oats. This grain will rapidly absorb every vestige of damp from wet leather. As it takes up the moisture, it swells and fills the boot like a tightly fitting last, keeping its form good, and drying the leather without hardening it. In the morning shake out the oats and hang them in a bag near the fire to dry, ready for use on another occasion.

Coke as Fuel. Tests in the use of coke as a fuel for locomotives in place of coal have been made by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad on some of its Virginia lines during the past few weeks, and have proved very successful. With the heaviest freight trains equally good results have been obtained from coke as from coal, with the great advantage of an avoidance of the smoke and cinders attendant on the use of coal.

Tobacco-Growing States. Tobacco is grown in forty-two States and Territories, but nearly half the crop comes from Kentucky, Virginia, Ohio, North Carolina, Tennessee, Pennsylvania and Connecticut.

GOWNS AND GOWNING.

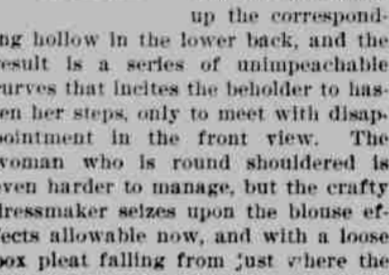
WOMEN GIVE MUCH ATTENTION TO WHAT THEY WEAR.

Brief Glances at Fancies Feminine, Frivolous, Mayhap, and Yet Offered in the Hope that the Reading May Prove Restful to Wearied Womankind.

Gossip from Gay Gotham.

New York correspondence:

FALLY fine figures should be as perfect in the lines of the back as in those in front, and while a woman should not be blamed, perhaps, if she is not pretty in front, there is no excuse for her being anything but graceful and attractive in the back of her. If she won't stand well, the dressmaker cannot help the fullness that ruins all contour in front, but she can build up the corresponding hollow in the lower back, and the result is a series of unimpeachable curves that incite the beholder to hasten her steps, only to meet with disappointment in the front view. The woman who is round shouldered is even harder to manage, but the crafty dressmaker seizes upon the blouse effects allowable now, and with a loose box pleat falling from just where the ugly curve at the shoulders begins an appearance of straightness is secured, while the closely fitted sides, and perhaps a line or so given by a strap or



FOR TRAVELING OR THE STREET.

ery are festooned about the biggest sleeves; if a gown is already covered with ribbon, one can safely put on more; four colors having blended into acceptable harmony, a couple more may be added and the demands of the waning season be met. Skirts resist this tendency to highly wrought effects with considerable success, but above the belt the standards are such that the batiste garniture appearing on the third pictured dress is but moderately elaborate. It is used upon a blouse of blue silk crepon having a gathered front and plain back. The yoke of embroidered and spangled batiste is banded with dark blue satin, the collar and belt being of the same. Then there is a double collar of the batiste deeply pointed at the edges, and fluffy chiffon rosettes set off the collar.

Even traveling dresses are affected by the general demand for elaboration, though, of course, they escape the tidal wave of fluff and other crushable dainties. Whatever may be said against overdoing the trimmings of dresses for ordinary use, there is an advantage in making the traveling rig ornamental, for it will then be also serviceable as a street dress. So, for once, a fashion has been set by wealthy women that can be copied by less fortunate ones, to the latter's advantage. Two



AN UGLY BACK MADE SLIGHTLY.

ribbon drawn from the shoulder to the waist at just the right angle complete the perfect back.

The set out of the skirt from the waist in the back also assists in giving the needed out-curve where the figure lacks it. The woman who has actually no end to her back, but whose clothes would slip to her heels with nothing to stop them, has an artificial waist line made by hooking up skirt to bodice, and by the out-sweep of the folds of the skirt from this point. Other women are horribly short waisted in the back, without any curve to complete the back either, and they go on being wide and flat till the dressmaker is obliged to "draw the line." Such a woman usually lacks at the hips and is the same all the way down both sides and back. She can be greatly improved by a skirt very full on the band and by a bodice finished as in the first picture. Right in the center of the waist line at the back the bodice fits down in a little point, while the roll of silk that edges it is actually allowed to lift a little above the apparent waist line under the arms, setting down low again in front to do battle with ugliness there.

The second figure shows a gown adapted to the woman whose waist

examples of these jaunty costumes are presented in the remaining pictures. The first is sketched in navy blue mohair and is made with a very full and deeply pleated plain skirt. Its bodice is made of gathered taffeta shot with violet and blue, and is trimmed with mohair straps, three in back and front with shorter tabs at the tops of the latter, all studded with tiny steel buttons. The standing collar and belt are also of the mohair with button garniture, and the sleeves, which have immense puffs and fitted cuffs, are of the same.

Silver gray cashmere is the fabric of the second rig for journeying, and, like the first, its skirt is plain, and pleated with accurate nicety. Any sort of silk or shirt waist may be worn with this, for the cape is heavy enough to furnish the necessary warmth. It is made of alternate white satin and gray cashmere bands and fastens with a gray strap piped with white. Its collar is high and warm and is also piped with white.

Pliny says of a Roman gentleman whom he does not name that he was able to repeat the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," the whole of the "Æneid" and most of the poems of Horace from memory.



SHOWS EFFECTS IN SPANGLED BATISTE.

slides down to her heels. Note the value of the little upstanding bow, and observe the taper produced by filling the back at the shoulder line and