

THE BLUE PARCEL.

"The very place for me," thought Miss Hester Drake, as she folded the morning's paper. "Companion to an old lady, living alone. Only a pious, respectable person, with the habits of a lady, need apply." Well, I'll apply as soon as I can get there, and if I don't suit the old lady nobody will. Whatever she wants me to think I'll think. It is just as easy to express one set of opinions as another, and I'm sure I'm ladylike."

And Miss Drake, who had been tossed about the world considerably, and had occupied many positions, none of them peculiarly lucrative, but all eminently genteel, took the measure of her neat figure with her eye, and regarded her slim foot with admiration.

No one had appreciated the figure of the girl sufficiently to make Miss Drake Mrs. Anybody, but really at 40 she had seen so many other people's husbands turn out badly that she felt that fact was not very lamentable.

"Companion to an old lady is the very thing," she said to herself, as she set aside the bonnet with the yellow ostrich tips, which became her, and put on the gray one, which did not, and deliberately brushing out her "crimps," did her hair in three little rolls on each side of her forehead. "I know what old ladies like, and I won't risk anything for vanity's sake," she said.

Then placing in a prim reticule of Russian leather her card-case, her references from clergymen and officers' families, well-known merchants and stately senators, she proceeded to take her way to the nearest station of the elevated road, and entered a car in safety.

As she sat in one of the central seats and looked down into the crowded avenue, she rehearsed many carefully worded speeches and practiced deportment as far as possible. Holding her head erect, folding her hands at her belt, repeating the well-known governess formula of "prunes and prisms" in order that her mouth might assume the proper primness, and wondering what manner of old lady she was about to encounter.

Meanwhile the car gradually filled, and the seat beside Miss Drake was taken by a gentleman in a large light overcoat, who brought with him the odor of cigars, and who had a neat white parcel tied up with pale-blue cord, which seemed to inconvenience him, and which he shortly placed upon the cushion beside him, while he began to read some article in a newspaper which seemed to be of absorbing interest.

"Forty-second street!" shouted a conductor at the door.

The gentleman read on.

"Forty-second street!" shouted a man at the other door.

The gentleman took no notice, but turned the sheet and began to go down another column. New passengers entered.

"Next stop 33d street!" shouted the conductor, banging his gate.

"Thirty-third next!" roared the other voice, and at this instant the gentleman started up, leaving his parcel on the seat, and dashed toward the door.

"Comme out, I say!" he was heard to yell.

"Gate's closed," was the reply.

"Don't care; lemme out!"

Then came a clatter—a whack. The male passengers all started to their feet, to see the irate gentleman stagger headlong out from the platform, and being rescued from a sprawl by the ticket-taker, shake a large, white fist after the car, on the platform of which the conductor was performing a pantomime expressive of a desire for vengeance.

"That's the way they kill themselves," said one passenger.

"All the conductor's fault," asserted another.

Meanwhile, Miss Drake's eye never left the white parcel. If any official were aware of it, it would be taken possession of at once, she said to herself; but how was any one to know it was not hers? It looked valuable. Perhaps it contained a jewel-case, and a large reward would be offered for it.

"And I might as well have it as any one else," thought Miss Drake, as she spread the skirt of her dress partially over the parcel. In fact, when she left the car at 22d street she carried it with her. It was a tidy package that in no way disgraced her neat toilet.

"Mrs. Bolus," whose name was on the old-fashioned plate which graced the door at which Miss Drake rang, was in the parlor. She was a large old lady, with pale, flabby face, who wore a widow's cap on her gray hair and a dress well covered with crapes.

"I see you have been a companion before," she said, having examined Miss Drake's credentials. "Bishop speaks highly of you, and really Mr. Deem of Deem & Dixon could not say more of you. I like your appearance."

Miss Drake simpered—"but we must have a little talk. I am so hard to suit. I am old-fashioned, and people are so frivolous nowadays. Now, I shouldn't like one who was fond of reading what I call doubtful works—books of today, which are not quite the thing. I have my library of standard works. No novels whatever—nones, indeed, those

of Walter Scott. I should like my companion to satisfy her mental hunger from those shelves. I dismissed my last companion because I found a silly novel under her pillow. She read herself to sleep every night with such things."

"Most demoralizing!" said Miss Drake. "I never touch a work of fiction. Solid books alone satisfy."

"Very true," said the old lady. "I like your sentiments on that subject. Now another—very delicate—a mere form in your case—but I had a German companion, well recommended who drank bottled beer before retiring, and made no secret of taking claret with her dinner. When I explained that I could not permit that, she said: 'But what objections can madame have, since I provided it at my own expense?' She was utterly without a sense of shame on the subject. We parted in a week, although she demanded the month's salary in lieu of warning."

"And you must have felt that you were cheaply rid of her, Mrs. Bolus," said Miss Drake. "As for me, I never drink anything but weak tea."

"Really, I know we shall get on," said the old lady. "And you would not mind curling the poodle and taking him to walk, or sewing with the dressmaker, or dusting the bric-a-brac? Miss St. Aubyn considered that menial."

"Oh! I do not," said Miss Drake. "Bric-a-brac cannot be left to the servants."

The old lady touched the bell. A servant appeared.

"Sara, show Miss Drake the blue room," she said. "Oh! my dear, don't carry your parcel up-stairs; it is so wearying to the wrists carrying something so long. Sara, put Miss Drake's parcel and parasol on the table. Nothing breakable, is it?"

Poor Miss Drake! Positively she was not in the habit of telling fibs, but one occurred to her just then.

"Only a good book or two for some poor working girls whom I am endeavoring to wean from pernicious novel-reading," she said.

The old lady beamed upon her, and she followed the servant up-stairs to see her room.

What a lovely room it was! What a charming house! Miss Drake was not very imaginative, but for once she gave fancy the rein, and before she got down to the parlor again she had become the confidential companion of the wealthy widow of the late Dr. Bolus, and the latter had made a will in her favor.

"You like your quarters?" asked Mrs. Bolus, amiably, as Miss Drake minced into the room.

"They are perfection!" said Miss Drake.

She was ready to say that she preferred walking on her hands to any other means of locomotion, if Mrs. Bolus suggested the idea.

"And I don't think I ever felt so well pleased," said Mrs. Bolus. "You are exactly the person I have always needed. Now, when may I expect you, Miss Drake?"

"Any day you prefer," replied that lady.

"Tomorrow, then," said Mrs. Bolus.

"Good-by. Sara, Miss Drake's parcel and parasol."

Sara hurried to lift these articles from the table on which they reposed. She handed Miss Drake the parasol, and she tendered the parcel, holding it by the blue cord which bound it. The lady's fingers had just touched it, when Sara released her hold—alas! too soon. Before Miss Drake could grasp it it fell to the carpet with a crash and a tinkle of broken glass.

Sara stooped to pick it up, but the cord had slipped away; the paper was unrolled; there was no longer any parcel, but its contents lay scattered on the floor, and the old lady stood staring down upon two books with red covers, across the back of which "Zola" was printed in characters of gold.

A large package of cigarettes and a flat bottle, from which a tell-tale odor escaped, and on which, moreover, was pasted a printed paper bearing the word "Whisky" in letters that all who ran might read.

For a moment there was silence in the room. Then the old lady spoke:

"Hereafter I shall believe that my guardian angel is always with me. I was about to take into my home a companion who drinks whisky, smokes cigarettes and reads 'Zola.'"

"If I may explain, madame," began Miss Drake.

"I decline to listen," said Mrs. Bolus. "These, then, are the good books you were about to take to your poor girls? A gratuitous falsehood that must have been inspired by a sense of guilt. What a shocking smell of liquor! Sara, give Miss Drake her books and cigarettes."

"They are not mine; I must explain," said Miss Drake.

"Sara will show you the door," said Mrs. Bolus. "I can remain no longer in this polluted atmosphere." Then she left the room, and shortly after Miss Drake passed out into the street.

Mr. Gladstone is the owner of the largest lead pencil in the world. It is the gift of a pencil-maker at Keswick and is thirty-nine inches in length. In place of the customary rubber cap it has a gold cap. Its distinguished owner uses it for a walking stick.

An Unlucky Cigarette.

Chicago Journal: The question of "getting a place" always brings up a long list of incidents by which the lucky have got on in the world and the luckless ones have been left. In discussing the overcrowded condition of the city it called out one story that I must tell for the benefit of the big broad-shouldered men who have condescended to the effort of getting comfort from a cigarette so small that it makes the smoker cross-eyed to look at it. A gentleman of 30 years, good presence, pleasant family, etc., was thrown out of his regular employment through a fire. He advertised, setting forth his qualifications. The head of a large factory saw the "ad" and thought to save time by taking a cab right to the number designated and secure the gentleman's services. He found the wife at home expecting her husband's return from down town. He waited a few minutes, when the anxious wife saw her husband coming up the street. The would-be employer saw him also. The young man walked leisurely until he reached his own steps, when he turned his back to the house and proceeded to pull the very last whiff from the wee stub of a cigarette. Two minutes, three minutes passed. The wife was nervous. Another minute and a few more whiffs, and the gentleman inside rose hastily and said kindly: "Pardon me, but I do not think I wish a man who has not left off boyish habits. In my business time is money. Good day." He bowed himself out just as the husband, disturbed by the opening of the door, spat the little stub from between his teeth and passed up the steps. He found his wife in tears and would hardly believe his senses when she told him how he lost good employment by dally with the weed in small packages.

Failures in 125 Years.

There have been eighteen great financial crises during the last century and a quarter, viz: In 1763, at Amsterdam, originating with the house of De Neufville and involving seventy-seven failures. The failures in Holland in 1773 exceeded \$10,000,000. In 1799 in Hamburg there were eighty-two failures, involving \$2,000,000. There was a panic in Liverpool in the same year, which was, however, somewhat mitigated by parliament lending \$500,000 in exchequer bills on goods. In 1814 240 banks suspended payment in England. In 1825 at Manchester failures occurred to the amount of \$2,000,000.

The Calcutta failure of 1831 involved \$15,000,000. The "wildcat" prices in the states in 1837 caused all their banks to close. In 1839 the Bank of England was saved by the Bank of France. A panic in France during the same year caused ninety-three companies to fail for the sum of \$8,000,000. In 1844 a crisis in England brought about the reformation of the Bank of England.

The English failures of 1847 involved \$20,000,000. During the great panic of 1857 in the states 7,300 houses failed for \$112,000,000. The Overend Gurney & Co. failure, nearly a quarter of a century ago, involved failures costing upward of \$100,000,000. "Black Friday," in Wall street, was on Sept. 24, 1860. The shoe and leather trade crisis in Boston, U. S. A., in 1883, caused losses amounting to over \$2,000,000. The Grant & Ward failure, in New York city in 1884, involved many financial and business houses and a loss of over \$5,000,000.—London Financial News.

Whose Face Was It?

A few years ago while a workman at Pueblo, Colo., was dressing a block of stone his chisel uncovered a hard concretion near the surface of the block. Presently this concretion, which was rounded on the back dropped from the cavity in which it rested, disclosing a perfect mold of a human face on its surface, every outline perfect, unhurt and unmarked by the tool which had dislodged it. The imprint in the block was as perfect as the model on the concretion, and many plaster casts were taken from it by archaeologists and local curiosity seekers. Some of these casts found their way to the museums of the learned societies of Europe, where the subject of many debates. Many scientists were inclined to take it as a perfect human fossil, but the majority insists upon it being merely an idol of prehistoric times. The stone in which it was found was from a eighty feet below the surface.—St. Louis Republic.

Barnum's Philosophy of Childhood.

If you would be as happy as a child, please one.

Childish wonder is the first step in human wisdom.

To best please a child is the highest triumph of philosophy.

To stimulate wholesome curiosity in the mind of the child is to plant golden seed.

I would rather be called the children's friend than the world's king.

Amusement to children is like rain so flowers.

He that makes knowledge most attractive to the young is the king of sages.

Childish laughter is the echo of heavenly music.

The noblest art is that of making others happy.

Wholesome recreation conquers evil thoughts.

Innocent amusement transforms tears into rainbows.

Jealous Chat with Mrs. Lippincott.

I was greatly interested in listening to some of Mrs. Lippincott's reminiscences the other afternoon. We were talking in her pleasant apartment on West Thirty-fourth street, New York. She was showing me a scrap book which her mother made of newspaper clippings about Grace Greenwood. The personalities of those days are very amusing to read now. With their stately language, their rhetoric, they are entirely different from the flippant and familiar paragraphs of today.

"In those days," said Mrs. Lippincott, "it was an unusual thing for a woman to write. We were blue stockings then. Few often did people say to me, 'Well, my dear, this writing may be amusing to you; you may enjoy it, but you know it will injure your chances of getting a husband.' That was the main object of woman's existence then. I was the first woman newspaper correspondent. No, I was not the first woman journalist—Margaret Fuller and Lydia Maria Child were before me—but my Washington correspondence inaugurated a new departure."

Mrs. Lippincott intends to make Washington her home for the future, and when once settled there to begin to make her recollections, which certainly will be instructive and of great interest. The lady's hair is quite gray. She is stout and motherly looking. Her quaint, old-fashioned portrait of herself when a young woman shows a lovely face lighted by great hazel eyes, and many of the curious personalities and poems written to and about her speak of her beautiful hands and arms. Mrs. Lippincott's time is almost entirely given over to charitable work, hunting out the poor and needy and ministering to their wants. Her daughter, who studied for the stage and who forced to retire from it temporarily on account of ill health, lives with her. She is a fair girl with a serious and delicate face.—Edith Sessions Tupper in Chicago Herald.

Texas Again to Fore.

The Uvalde Reflector says that a party out hunting in that country had along a liver colored setter dog, which found a snake of the rattler species, and that the snake swallowed the dog. The hunters killed the snake with a Gatling gun, cut him open with a butcher's cleaver, and that the dog jumped out all right, except losing his bark; that the snake was two feet thick and thirty-six feet long, and had ninety-two rattles and a button, and the editor says it sounds a little improbable, and it may be. But out on the San Antonio river, in 1853, Col. Rip Ford, Bill Pitts and others killed a rattler with an acre of burnt woods and four live Indians in it, and no one of them thought it improbable.—New Birmingham (Tex.) Times.

Strange Lapse of Memory.

Cases of forgetfulness on matters of interest are on record. While Dr. Priestley was preparing his work entitled "Harmony of the Gospels," he had taken great pains to inform himself on a subject which had been under discussion relative to the Jewish Passover. He wrote out the result of his researches and laid the paper away. His attention and time being taken with something else, some little time elapsed before the subject occurred to his mind again. Then the same time and pains were given to the subject that had been given to it before, and the results were again put on paper and laid aside. So completely had he forgotten that he had copied the same paragraphs and reflections before, that it was only when he had found the papers on which he had transcribed them that it was recalled to his recollection. This same author had frequently read his own published writings and did not recognize them.—Boston Herald.

The Yosemite Valley.

For every hundred persons living west of the Mississippi river who have seen St. Peter's at Rome hardly ten, I think it may be safely said, have visited the Yosemite. Two small hotels in the valley are ample for all who may at any time seek accommodations, and on an average two coaches a day during the season will carry all who seek conveyance to that place of grandeur. One thing is certain, the foreigner "doing" the United States seldom omits the Yosemite; yet many an American tourist traveling in California leaves the coast in ignorance of the wonders and beauties of the famous region. On a beautiful Sunday in May, out of sixty-five guests at the Stoneman house over forty-five were foreigners, most of them on a trip around the world; and that proportion is not unusual during the season. To the foreign tourist the Yosemite ranks with Niagara, and from those who have seen the wonders of nature on every continent the verdict seems to be that the Yosemite pre-eminently—the greatest of all.—New England Magazine.

His Colonial Jacket.

John—I went to a Chinese laundry to have some washing done and a crazy Chinaman drove me out with a poker. James—Indeed what for? John—A new way to iron a collar, I suppose.—Pittsburg Bulletin.

How Stanley Won His Bride.

Speaking of Stanley's courtship, Mrs. Tennant, Mr. Stanley's mother-in-law, said: "Henry won a long time before he won. I did not give my consent at once. When he came to me and pleaded for Dolly's hand I said: 'No, Henry; Dolly is all that I have left and I cannot, shall not, part with her. The mother-in-law in England plays a lonely part. She is not welcomed to her daughter's household, her visits must be few and brief. They have taken my other daughter away—I cannot part with Dolly.'"

"Henry pleaded long and eloquently: at times he would almost weep. The tears would fill his eyes and he would choke with emotion."

"One day he said: 'I am all alone in the world; I have neither father nor mother, brother nor sister; I am perishing of loneliness, I know nothing of, and care less, for the customs of the country. I want your daughter to be my wife. Give her to me, and do you at the same time become my mother, father, brother, sister and all!'"

"Henry, says I, 'do you mean it?'"

"I do," he answered firmly, and I saw determination flashing from the same eyes before which the ferocious barbarians of Ujiji had quailed, and under which the hostile hordes of insupportable Njehda had melted away like mists of the morning."

"She is yours," I cried, and then I added, 'and so am I.' Now that," continued the proud mother-in-law, "is, in brief, the story of his wooing. I am his as inseparably and indissolubly as Dolly is. I shall never leave him. I regard him as one of the noblest and most lovable men on earth, and have no other ambition than to aid him with the benefit of my counsel and experience. Knowing this, he is ever the paragon of affection and gentleness, and I am certain that no woman—at least, no English woman—ever had a more tractable or obedient son."—Chicago News.

Life After Forty.

The best half of life is in front of the man of 40, if he be anything of a man. The work he will do will be done with the hand of a master, and not of raw apprentices. The trained intellect does not see "men as trees walking," but sees everything clearer and in just measure. The trained temper does not rush at work like a blind bull at a haystack, but advances with the calm and ordered pace of conscious power and deliberate determination. To no man is the world so new and the future so fresh as to him who has spent the early years of his manhood in striving to understand the deeper problems of science and life, and who has made some headway toward comprehending them. To him the commonest things are rare and wonderful, both in themselves and as parts of a beautiful and intelligent whole. Such a thing as stuteness in life and its duties he cannot understand. Knowledge is always opening out before him in wider expanses and more commanding heights. The pleasure of growing knowledge and increasing power makes every year of his life happier and more hopeful than the last.—Hospital.

A Norman Lady.

We behold her, then, a well proportioned, slender figure of graceful bearing the features aquiline, complexion clear, eyes hazel, and hair of chestnut hue worn in smooth plaits that fall over the shoulders to the waist. On her bridal day those shining locks, bound only by a chaplet of jewels, flowed freely about her form, lying lightly against a robe "of good and delicate scarlet"—for white was with the Normans an emblem of mourning—but the matron confines the tresses which the bride suffered to fall loose. Yet the dress is still gay in color—a hooded robe of green of Ghent, the sleeves knotted up last they should trail upon the ground. Even as it is the ample curls hang from waist to heel.

The embroidered kerchief, too, is gathered in a loose knot to protect from soil its silver fringes, yet should sooth be spoken the dame's overzealous chambers have ventured to hint that the kerchief might be discarded as a garment favoring more of fashions past than present, but their mistress makes steadfast answer that she was taught in early youth to dress rather for warmth than appearance, nor be the first to shift apparel with the shifting humor of the day.—Chataqua.

Seeing the Empress of Japan

"When her Majesty shall pass along no one must look at her from the frame built on houses for the drying of clothes, or through cracks in doors, or from any position in the upper portion of their houses. If anybody wishes to see her Majesty he or she must sit down at the side of the road by which her Majesty will pass. No one must look at her Majesty without taking off his hat, neckcloth or turban, or whatever else he may be wearing on or about his head. Moreover, no one must be smoking while he or she is looking at her Majesty, nor, must any carry a stick or cane. Only women wearing foreign clothes will be permitted to retain their head covering. Although it may rain, no person will be allowed to put up an umbrella while her Majesty may be passing. As her Majesty passed no one must raise his voice, nor must any sound be heard."—Japan Letter.

Whose Might Have

Texas Settlers: Had the been introduced when the young, how differently things might have been ordered. The world would have been found in a much milder head than the young ladies of ancient Egypt have found more agreeable than carrying water pots on their heads, and Syrian men not have been compelled to lug the cedars of Lebanon up the mountains. Instead of before Saul to earn her bread, a masochist girl might have done the old king an ill will. I wonder if the writer at \$20 a week and five cents a line would not have been found in a much milder head than the young ladies of ancient Egypt have found more agreeable than carrying water pots on their heads, and Syrian men not have been compelled to lug the cedars of Lebanon up the mountains. Instead of before Saul to earn her bread, a masochist girl might have done the old king an ill will. 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