

TALE OF A BALL GOWN.

Before I begin my story I want you to look closely at me. See my patterns—silver oak leaves and acorns on a white ground. Now examine my texture—ah! they don't make such broadcades nowadays. Be kind enough to bear in mind that I am not an heirloom.

I was woven in France and brought to Newport, where I was made up to wear to a colonial ball. I was trimmed with point lace ruffles then, and my mistress' hair was powdered and decked with ostrich feathers.

She wore a coach and four of court plaster on her forehead and other coquettish patches on her cheeks. Her daughter wore one when she danced a minuet with Lafayette and her granddaughter when she threaded the mazes with Aaron Burr.

After the Aaron Burr episode I was carefully pinned in lavender scented sheets and packed away in a cedar chest, where for many years I lay in undisturbed seclusion. I was comfortable. The combined perfume of cedar and lavender was grateful to my senses.

One day I received a rude shock. I heard a click above me, the linen coverings were torn away, and I was literally dragged out and violently flung upon a chair, while a silvery voice cried "Oh, look here, Sue! isn't this a stunner? Then two young women who were, I must confess, reprehensibly pretty, though their manners lacked the patrician repose of my former mistresses—examined me with great delight, pointing out my beauty and suggesting so many ways of utilizing me that my lace ruffles shivered with indignation.

From their conversation, which was extremely difficult to comprehend, I gathered that it was extraordinary words, I gathered that they were grand neices of my last mistress. The old New England home, where for many years I had peacefully rested, had come into their father's hands and they were ransacking it for heirlooms.

My existence in New York began with a quarrel. Fannie and Sue fell out over me. Both wanted me—the one for amateur theatricals, the other for a ball gown, to be veiled in tulle. A compromise was at last effected and I was handed over to Sue.

I must not dwell on the physical suffering I was forced to undergo when Sue's dressmaker snipped and clipped and ripped me—the story is too painful. I felt the cruel scissors and, most terrible of all, I was constantly put through an engine of torture, which ran with a ceaseless click.

At last I was again joined together—all but one breadth, which the dressmaker put away to make a sofa cushion for herself—and then they draped a lot of fluffy stuff over me, packed me in a box and sent me to Sue.

A maid took me and laid me tenderly on a lace covered bed, where for a few hours I lay in utter exhaustion.

Then I was lifted from the bed and slipped over my new mistress' head and hooked and fastened about her. When I was fairly adjusted and my last fold in place, she stepped back a bit, took a long look at herself, and said:

"I'm simply delicious."

I blushed for the audacious little baggage, as I did later, when, having sent the maid into the next room for her bouquet, she said as she drew on her long white gloves:

"If this gown doesn't fetch Jack I'm sure I shall give up in despair!"

I fetched Jack. That evening in the conservatory he put his arm about me and drew me close to him and told Miss Sue that he wished her to become his wife. And she? Why, she interrupted him. In my day maidens were more shy. But Sue needed no beseeching. She did not look down, blush and sigh, but only snuggled more closely to the bold young man and said, "Yes, Jack."

She wore me once or twice again. Then, pronouncing me a perfect rag, she hung me ignominiously away in a dark closet.

Some time later a hand clutched me and brought me forth. It proved to be that of Fannie, to whom Sue had given me. Fannie, I soon found was stage struck. I learned that her father left very little money, and she was preparing to elevate the dramatic profession by entering it.

Of course she made her debut in Juliet, and, equally, of course, I appeared with her. I was furnished with bands of snowy feathers and some long, drooping sleeves—I believe they called them angel sleeves—were fastened to my shoulders. Thus renovated I went in on the potion scene.

Fannie made a hit. So I gathered from her conversation with her leading man, whom I heartily disliked. He had a way of stepping on my train and of referring to me as an antediluvian piece of dry goods, which certainly was not respectful. His treatment of me hastened the change in my fortunes.

Fannie, I judge, was desperately in love with this young man, for one night she said tenderly to him, "I'm going to give this thing away—you dislike it so." To which he replied with great earnestness:

"Thank heaven the country is saved."

I couldn't for the life of me see how effected the condition of the country

but I was relieved to know I was to leave the stage.

The next day Fannie's maid bundled me up and took me to a second-hand clothing store, where she sold me for a ridiculously low price.

Months afterward I was taken off a shelf and spread out before a man whose wicked eyes stared greedily at me. He cursed me and the price asked for me, but took me away with him. He carried me to some handsome furnished rooms, and tossing me into the lap of a young woman said: "There's a frock for you. I want you to fix it up and wear it when the boys are here. Do you understand?"

She looked up timidly and said tremulously, "Yes, dear."

Day by day she worked on me, changing me here and there. She did not hurt me as the fashionable dressmaker had. She handled me tenderly, and sometimes glittering tears dropped from her soft blue eyes and rolled down upon my silver leaves and acorns. I saw that she was unhappy and lived in terror of the man who would sometimes caress her but oftener curse and threaten her.

Shall I ever forget the first night she wore me? She was tall slender and fair, and when she had put me on she went into her little drawing room and stood before the long mirror a minute, gazing steadily at the reflection. I thought she looked like an Easter lily, but she took no pleasure in the beautiful image.

"Good evening, Mrs. Ormonde," some one said.

She gave a little start and turned. A tall, fair man, with a frank, boyish face, stood there. His eyes beamed with kindness.

"Good evening, Mr. Howard," she said, and gave him her hand.

He pressed it gently and bent toward her, warm light playing in his beautiful eyes.

"How lovely you look," he said, "lovely and lovable."

She looked steadily at him with despair in her face. I could feel her heart beating violently against me. I recognized those symptoms only too well and knew instantly that my mistress loved this man.

"Be careful how you play tonight," was all Mrs. Ormonde said. She scarcely breathed these words, but even as she spoke Ormonde came from the next room, smiling and bowing graciously. He cast a look of rage at his wife. He had heard her warning.

Four or five other men came in soon and presently they all sat down around a great green baize covered table and began to play cards. Mrs. Ormonde sat by the fireplace. She was very quiet, but she constantly watched her husband and Mr. Howard. When the latter was playing she seemed to hold her breath, and when he won she drew a long sigh of relief.

Suddenly there was a crash. Every body started up. There was a struggle. They were all talking at once, but I heard the words:

"Cheat! Swindler! Blackguard!" Then Howard seized Ormonde's arm and shook it. Down from Ormonde's coat sleeve fluttered several cards.

The other men drew away from him as if he were a leper, and one after the other quickly left the room. At first Ormonde gazed upon the floor stupidly. Then he lifted his head and stared with bloodshot eyes at his beautiful wife.

"This is your doing," he said. "You warned Howard. I heard you." He snarled like a dog, and came toward her with a gleam of murder in his eyes.

She caught the talbe to keep from falling.

"You have ruined me," he cried "Take that."

She dropped at his feet and her blood poured over me. Her pretty hair fell down and covered her face. The fire-light gleamed brightly.

The man staggered back and pressed his hand across his eyes. For an instant he stood still. The awful silence was broken once or twice by a feeble moan—then all was still. I saw him steal stealthily from the room. I lay there with my dead mistress for three long frightful hours. I heard the shriek which Renee gave when she came in from her evening out. Then in quick succession came cries for help, the arrival of the policemen and the crowds who tried in vain to bring the poor lady back to life.

So that's why I am here today. I have run the gamut of the emotion, I really hope that Renee will cut me up into cushions, for I am old and tired of life.—New York Evening Sun.

Working For Their Soap.

Two famous philosophers—Menedemus and Aesclepiades—when pursuing their studies at Athens, were enabled to pay for their support and schooling by acting as millers after school hours, receiving the munificent sum of thirty six cents (two drachmas) per night. Happily their fellow students, upon hearing this, raised a subscription sufficient to defray the expenses of these deserving young men.—Detroit Free Press.

It eterna Killed by Electricity

The disease-producing bacteria may be killed by a current of electricity, as has been shown by experiments with bottles of water containing them. By passing the current from a battery through a loop of wire suspended in the water it was found that a small voltage was sufficient to deprive the most active bacteria of life. The consumption bacillus died under two and a quarter volts, while other more hardy species could not survive more than three volts and a half.

Unfortunately, this electrical method would be too expensive and troublesome for the householder to pursue. It is suggested, therefore, that cities or water companies shall perform the entire task, delivering the water to consumers in a condition guaranteed harmless. According to the plan proposed the killing of the microbe is to be accomplished at the reservoir. Nothing could be easier than to apply the energy of a battery by a current at one place in the supply pipes as to kill with absolute certainty every microbe that passed through in the flowing water.

A dynamo with a capacity of 1,000 volts would do the work perfectly for the biggest possible pipe, slaying all the bacteria going through and rendering innocuous all the millions of gallons daily that a metropolis consumes. All that is necessary is that a length of the pipe shall be made of insulated material, and through holes in its sides will be inserted wires representing the poles of the battery—positive on one side and negative on the other. Set the dynamo going, and the current springs through the water, filling it with powerful electric waves necessarily fatal to all living organisms floating in the stream.—New York Telegram.

An Electric Time and Date Stamp

In these days when the exigencies of business require an accurate record of the time and date at which transactions are effected, the invention of a piece of mechanism that will automatically and continuously record the time of day is evidently of great value. Among the numerous cases in which such a record is indispensable are the Stock Exchange transactions, the records of police and fire alarm signals, the recording of legal documents, and of many amusements, such as boxing and billiards, the cost of which is based on time. The instrument which has been successfully used for these purposes consists of a clock connected with wires to a stamp, the variable characters of which are mounted as type-wheels at the end of a swinging arm. These wheels are connected in a simple manner with an electro-magnet placed at the other end of the arm and worked by an electric current controlled by the clock. The wheels revolve with the clock and when it is desired to stamp the time it is only necessary to press a button at the front of the case.

Important Russian Invention.

A teacher by the name of Malykhin, of the city of Davioff, in the province of Voronej, has invented a fireproof paste which has been tested by the Moscow Imperial Society of Agriculture and proved a great success. A small shanty entirely of straw was built; it was covered with Malykhin's paste and subjected to the greatest possible heat. The straw turned from yellow to reddish brown without in the least cracking. It is prepared at a trifling cost, about forty kopekas for every seven feet square. This invention is looked upon as a great blessing for the Russian villages, where the houses are nearly all thatched with straw. It not infrequently happens that when a fire starts in one of these villages every house is consumed within half an hour. The Imperial Society has decided to introduce this great invention throughout the Russian Empire.

A London Smoke Annihilator

London is troubled by the immense smoke-cloud that hangs over the city like a pall. Recently a smoke annihilator was tested by some of the Sanitary Committee of the Commissioners of Sewers, and they expressed great confidence in its ability to abate so much of the nuisance as comes from the factories and large establishments generally. The contrivance exhibited consists of a small fan, which draws the smoke from the chimney and forces it into a tank of water at a point near the bottom. The water is agitated by revolving stirrers driven by an engine, and the smoke and water are thus churned together. All the solid particles present in the smoke, as well as the sulphurous vapors and noxious gases, are arrested by the water. By this device it is claimed that not only is smoke destroyed, but valuable products recovered.

A wealthy Londoner recently purchased some Ceylon tea at the rate of \$29.80 per pound. The tea was of a fine chop and had come overland from Russia, avoiding the supposed deleterious effects of a sea voyage.

"How shall I give a hint to a bad boy that his evil courses will lead him to ruin?" asks an enquiring father. A large, top-heavy club often has been found a very effective means.—New York Recorder.

A Memorable Christmas Dinner

The misery endured during those four months at Donner lake in our little dark cabins under the snow with all pages and make the coldest heart ache. Christmas was near, but to the starving its memory gave no comfort.

It came and passed without observation, but my mother had determined weeks before that her children should have a treat on this one day. She had laid away a few dried apples, some beans, a bit of tripe, and a small piece of bacon.

When this hoarded store was brought out the delight of the little ones knew no bounds. The cooking was watched carefully and when we sat down to our Christmas dinner mother said, "Children, eat slowly for this one day you can have all you wish." So bitter was the misery relieved by that one bright day, that I have never sat down to a Christmas dinner without my thought's going back to Donner lake.

The storms often would last ten days at a time, and we would have to cut chips from the logs inside which formed our cabin in order to start a fire. We could scarcely walk, and the men had hardly strength to procure wood. We would drag ourselves through the snow from one cabin to another, and some mornings snow would have to be shoveled out of the fireplace before a fire could be made. Our little children were crying with hunger, and mothers were crying because they had so little to give their children. We seldom thought of bread, we had been with it so long. Four months of such suffering would fill the bravest hearts with despair.—Cor. Century.

Woman's Rights in Sweden.

The evolution of the Swedish woman toward equality with the Swedish man furnishes instructive reading for the sex everywhere. It is a capital illustration of the rich fruits to be gathered when the gospel of moderation is faithfully preached and practiced. As wise as serpents, yet harmless as doves, those ladies of the fair north won without striking a blow, every concession which their sisters over here have fought gallantly to snatch from the grasping hands of mankind. They worked warily from the inductive system, judged the individual, and applied the knowledge thus gained to the whole body. Then appreciating the folly of attacking the citadel before storming the walls, they laid siege to small titles of merit, and common sense before assailing weightier matters of the law. With wit deserving of success, leaders of the woman movement ignored political privileges at the very outset, and devoted their energies to righting small grievances, knowing that the natural course of events would bring the ballot in good time. Their first effort, marked by dignity and an entire lack of cantableness, was directed toward opening the universities on equal terms to the sexes. This accomplished, their next request was for the privilege of practicing on equal terms the learned professions acquired side by side with male students. All commercial pursuits were then petitioned for as proper callings for women qualified to fill such positions, and thus, one after another, barriers were laid low by the strategy that no violence could have captured. Had there been the noisy campaign of the uncompromising suffragettes to drown their voices, it is extremely doubtful how fast or how far the progressionists would have been permitted to advance. But there were no battlefields, no heroines, no martyrs, and so, with cordial grace, the Swedish men granted whatever the prudent, overbearing Swedish woman wanted. It is a pleasing and grateful history to read of the gradual unfolding of womanly ambitions, fostered by manly sympathy.

The Wheel is Thousands of Years Old.

The earliest mention of wheels in the Bible is in Exodus xiv, 25, when the chariot wheels of the Egyptians were taken off by the Lord; but chariots are mentioned in Genesis xii, 43. But there were older nations than the Egyptians. The Chaldeans used chariots; the Greeks—Homer's poems date from about 900 B. C.—had chariots at the siege of Troy, 1500 B. C. Probably in reality the wheel is about as early a piece of machinery as any now existing. Of course it has been developed, but the bicycle wheel of today is a lineal descendant of the section of a log of wood used by the agricultural peoples thousands of years ago.—New York Sun.

All Curves to Be Made Straight.

Some day railroads will have in them no dangerous and deadly curves. Over half the disastrous collisions and a large percentage of run-offs are caused by curves. Of course, it will sometimes be found difficult to straighten out a curve and keep a legitimate grade; but if the laws required all railroads to go straight in all cuts and other dangerous places some plan would be devised by which this could be done.—Dallas (Tex.) News.

An automatic device to be used on streets cars for announcing the name of the street, is the latest electrical invention.

She Educated Herself.

Boston Journal: Among the graduates of the year one brave young woman has completed a course frankly taken in preparation for matrimony. Like many girls who make society amusements their chief existence, this young woman did not realize the deficiencies in her education until she had won the friendship and love of one who was her superior in intellectual requirements. With the realization of her ignorance came the determination to study for self-improvement.

Entering as a pupil a well-known school for girls, she took courses in literature, philosophy and other studies that would enable her to write and speak with accuracy and would teach her the methods of thought. She entered classes of political economy and studied the newspapers under competent direction.

Urging her teachers to correct all imperfections in her speech and manner, she made constant effort to attain the standard which might bring her nearer to an equality with her future husband. The struggle was not easy. There were trials of pride in studying with girls of a more youthful age; there were many moments of mortification from the exposure of her ignorance. Determination to succeed won its usual rewards.

The society girl, whose bright mind had been eclipsed by the routine of pleasure, became renowned in the school as one of the most earnest and satisfactory pupils. When she graduates this year into the refined home that has been in preparation for her she will meet her husband upon an equality and entertain his friends with a feeling of cheerful confidence. She says that the whole world seems more stable since she has been sure that her sentences are grammatical and her pronunciation according to the best authorities.

A Heroic Woman.

The latest heroine to come before the public is Sister Margaret France, of St. Victor's convent, near Montreal, which was burned at 4 o'clock in the morning. The convent contained a large number of deaf-mute children as pupils, but seems to have no fire escape, although the children were lodged on the sixth floor. At an hour in the morning when sleep is the soundest Sister Margaret, in charge of the sixth floor dormitory, awoke to find the room on fire and the children flocking around her.

The stairway was on fire, and the would-be rescuers who came from the neighborhood had no ladders. She gathered them in the corner of the building farthest from that part in which the flames were raging, and making a rope of bedclothing lowered her charges, one by one, to the ground. She kept at her work for half an hour and until the last child was safely landed; then slipped down the rope herself, with her hands and arms blistered with the heat and the hair singed from her head, and when she reached the ground—fainted.—Philadelphia Times.

Block Island fishermen are having poor luck with mackerel, and several boats have given up trying to catch the fish. Thus far the total catch is about half what it was at the same time last year.

Free Delivery of Newspapers.

"I believe in the extension of the free delivery system," said Mr. Wananaker. "Free delivery is like gas or water to a town. It increases its metropolitan character. It adds to its attractions as a business and a residence community. I believe that the introduction of free delivery extends the circulation of newspapers and increases letter writing. It is not convenient for a man to go to the postoffice for his newspaper.

"If he could get it delivered at his door it would be a welcome visitor. But take a young couple, for example, living in a small town. The husband is at work all day. The wife does not care to go to the postoffice, or perhaps she cannot go, especially if there is a baby in the house. That man would like to take a daily paper perhaps. But he is too tired to go to the postoffice for it every evening, and so he takes a weekly paper or no paper at all.

"I said, the extension of a free delivery system would increase letter writing too. It is astonishing to me how hard it is to convince the people that you can increase the business of the postoffice."—Washington Cor. Philadelphia Press.

Trappers' Trade Secret.

Captain Werner, who, during the last two years, has explored the coast region between the mouth of the Gabon river and the delta of the Congo reports that the primeval forests of the lowlands still swarm with apes, but that the larger varieties, the chimpanzees, for instance, are too shy to study their habits at anything like close range, and guard their young with a vigilance that makes it a perfect enigma how the native hunters can contrive to catch them alive. Captures of that kind are, nevertheless, pretty sure to follow an offer of twenty marks in cash (about \$1), but the successful trappers refuse to divulge the secret of their method

There were eighteen men and a small boy in the Indiana steamer yesterday afternoon.

As it tramped on Madison street, a dog spring dress, large and small, began to rise in one by one rose and gave up their seats. At Twelfth street there were six ladies, one large, and one small, and the small boy was of able bodied citizens, whose muscles by dangling from the straps.

The large, old gentleman, who was watching the small boy, the small boy was not watching the old gentleman. He sat with his feet in his pockets, fidgeting with an andron whistling in a pocket. He favored her with a penetrating which performance caused the old gentleman to scowl and to enter the car and reached the old gentleman's seat. The old gentleman's seat was with a courtesy bow surrounded to the first of the ladies. The old gentleman's seat was with a courtesy bow surrounded to the first of the ladies. The old gentleman's seat was with a courtesy bow surrounded to the first of the ladies.

The small boy listened and tried to wriggle out of that face down, over a large head had just time to gasp. "What of yours?" when there came a described as one of the most most symmetrical packings ministered in this or any other. During the performance he had three times, in the morning, then he was set upon the floor. The conductor, a man of 40, evidently, here thought it his interest.

"Here!" he said, "you should that boy if he's no relation to the boy."

"What? what?" said the old man, "does the young rascal own father?"

Then he put on his glasses and expression of astonishment was full to see.

"Why, bless me," he exclaimed, "I thought it was my young William. Dear me! I hope I inconvenience you, young Sir! excuse me, won't you?"

Here the car was running near Twenty-sixth street, and the something that sounded like the station," said the old gentleman, "Heaven forbid to be Well, we'll rectify that mistake."

And that large, kindly old gentleman took the small boy by the collar, him gently over the head, and dropped him.

The boy was so bewildered that he stood on the road until he was run over by a hansom, while the gentleman stepped back into where the men all touched the while six ladies rose and gave with each other for the price giving him a seat.—Inquirer.

PARTE AND SCISSORS

St. Louis has established a list of old bachelors. This is not available. Every bachelor should be peddled to make a home for his and for his wife.

Signor Cortie, the Italian ex-New Orleans, is wanted at Rome. He is a star in this country is over. He will never be missed on this water.—Kansas City Star.

General Rosecrans, the rep of the treasury, is remarkably vigorous. He breakfasts every day at 7 o'clock, reaches his desk at 8 o'clock and remains there hard till 4 o'clock. The bulk of his goes to old soldiers and other claimants on his charity.

You're a doctor. How eagerly sick ask for you. How gratefully turn their wondering eyes to placid countenance, therein hope and some signal for hope! How family press about you! How they beg you to "call again!" There is nothing too good for a doctor. Convalescence comes, the recoverers, visits are ended, how bills are disputed, what do whose honest bills are unpaid, New York Press.

A number of the Knights Templar state have hired the steamer of Chicago for a voyage across the land route in July, when some of them will make a European tour. are very much put out, however, news received from London that the Lincoln has failed to get permits for them to wear their regalia swords while in England. They tended to march through the streets in uniform, executing their usual maneuvers, but Home Secretary Matthews told Mr. Lincoln that the permit could not allow that permit. Similar requests have been sent to officials of the other countries they tend to visit, and they hope for favorable replies.—Baltimore Sun.

The law in Kansas against aliening real estate has been severely criticised, yet there is some good reason for it. Its purpose is to prevent the which have been suffered in the and which have threatened to be actively dangerous to the institutions of the country. We want no rich foreign landlords holding vast tracts of land in the United States for speculation or agricultural purposes. anti-foreign landlord sentiment is new in this country. A New York has a law prohibiting aliens from heriting real estate. The citizens that state regard work hardship as meaning is not to it as a good law, justice is not to it but simply to test the affairs of the country from too powerful foreign influence.—Commercial Gazette.