

A RARA AVIS.
Life.

Once there was an Easter bonnet
With some wings and feathers on it,
And a tiny, shiny buckle in a bit of
ribbon shired.
Said the ladies, "Please inform us
Why this bill is so enormous."
And that foolish little Easter bonnet
thought it was a bird!

It slyly watched its chances,
And, escaping people's glances,
It flew straight out the window and it
lighted on a tree.
With fear its wings were quaking
And its little frame was shaking,
But it sat there smiling bravely though
'twas frightened as could be.

Said the birds, "You're of our feather,
Come and let us flock together."
But the bonnet answered proudly, "I'm
exclusive and select;
And although I could be pleasant
To an ostrich or a pheasant,
For me to herd with common birds you
really can't expect."

Said a hunter, "This is pretty,
I will take it home to Kitty,
Then he aimed his gun and shot it, and
it fell without a word.
Then it gave a final flutter,
And perily seemed to mutter,
"Well, after all, I'd rather be a Bonnet
than a Bird."

CAROLYN WELLS.

AT A FEARFUL COST.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"I declare it is too mortifying!" ex-
claimed a brilliant brunette, throwing
aside the morning paper with an impatient
gesture.

"What is, Jennie?" asked the gentle-
looking girl beside her.

"Why just to think every lady, with any
pretensions to respectability, has given a
party this season but us! I declare, I am
truly ashamed to accept any invitations,
as we have not returned the politeness,
nor have any prospect of doing so. I
don't know what papa is thinking about.
Whenever I've spoken about it, he has
given me not a bit of encouragement.
And I'm just going to take the matter
into my own hands. I will ask him just
once more, and if he does not agree, I will
have a party if—no matter what it costs!"

Jennie replied, with a determined look on
her handsome face.
"Jennie, don't talk so! Have you not
noticed that the lines of care on father's
face have deepened much lately? I know
all is not well with him. He is troubled,
I see plainly, and is striving not to cast
the shadow of it over his family. If he
could have given you a party, you know
he would have done so long ago. When
did he ever refuse us any pleasure he
could bestow? He has been too indulgent
I fear, and we too extravagant. I heard
Mr. Barnard say, last evening, that many
of the oldest firms in our city were totter-
ing, and the proprietors would have to be
very skilful to weather the financial
storm. I fear papa may be among those
anxious ones. Don't worry him, Jennie,
dear," pleaded the younger sister, her
fair, sweet face growing sadder, as Jennie
quickly answered:

"Oh, nonsense! It is nothing of the
kind. Papa is growing penurious, and
wants to economize. Saving money is
what he is up to."

"I think he is up to more than that,
Jennie. Saving his name and honor—"

"There, stop, Jennie! I don't want to
listen to a sermon on that subject. I've
known papa to get these spells before. I
am determined. Mamma will not object,
I know. So a party I'll have. But here
is mamma now."

Mrs. Halstead, entering, inquired con-
cerning the subject under discussion.
Jennie repeated what she had said to her
sister, concluding with:

"Now, mamma, don't you think we
might manage to give one? I've a par-
ticular reason for wishing it just now."

"I hardly think we can, Jennie. I've
noticed your father's depressed look. He
is worried about something, and I would
not like to ask him now."

"Mamma, might we not manage it with-
out asking him?" Jennie asked, with such
a sweet, pleading expression in her dark
eyes, as she leaned her head caressingly on
her mother's shoulder, and whispered:

"I should like so much to have Captain
Lovell see me do the honors. He was ad-
miring Ada Lawton's dignity and grace
the other evening, when she presided at
her party."

She blushed a little, and looked so
lovely, her mother felt disposed to help
her favorite child, yet scarcely knew how
it could be done.

Jennie saw she was yielding, and said:
"Mamma, I have fifty dollars. If you
had as much, we could pay Gilbert that
on the supper in advance, and he would glad-
ly wait for the balance three or six
months."

"I have a hundred, that your father
gave me this morning to pay several little
bills. Perhaps they might be put off—
that is, a part of them, those not so pres-
sing. But you forget the music."

"O dear, yes! Twenty-five more, that
must be paid at the time. Couldn't you
spare that, mamma?"

"I must pay twelve to Bridget, I owe
her for last month, and here this is nearly
gone. I must hold her, which I cannot
do if I do not pay her. Then your father
told me to be sure to give fifteen to
John."

"Oh, mamma, divide the twenty-five

between Bridget and John, and let us have
the party. Papa need not know anything
about it until it is on him, and he won't
worry over what he cannot help. You'll
never regret it, you darling mamma!
And we won't mind what it costs," Jen-
nie said, then in a happy mood, having
succeeded in winning her mother to her
will, she knew.

George Halstead sat in his counting
room, a weight of care plainly visible on
his sad face. He was evidently waiting
for the coming of some one. At length
the door opened, and he arose to meet the
visitor, saying:

"Thank you for coming, Walton.
Courtesy would demand my seeking you;
but you understand me. I thought you
would. Here you can say things to me
perhaps you would hesitate to in your
own house. Six months ago you lifted
the burden from my mind and heart. I
told you with your relief I could stem the
tide. To-day I am a ruined man. Diffi-
culties have increased on every side. I
can neither meet my liabilities to you or
others, although Heaven knows how hard
I have striven. In ten days at furthest
the crash must come."

"Halstead, I have seen it's coming. I
must be plain with you. And you would
have more sympathy when this is known,
had the extravagance of your family been
less manifest."

A half-suppressed groan escaped the
miserable man. His friend went on:

"It would be more cruel to withhold
this than say it to you. You are keep-
ing up an establishment of magnificence
scarcely justifiable in a man of millions.
Your wife and daughters are the most eleg-
antly and expensively dressed women in
town. Your boys—"

"Stop, stop! in mercy, stop! To one
you are unjust. Gertrude—"

"Yes, I should have excepted her. I
know she is a noble girl. Have you talk-
ed with her?"

"No, no; I could not bear to grieve her
loving heart any sooner than necessary.
Walton, I would willingly die to save
them from this trouble. In truth now,
at times, I fear I shall go mad. I have
not sent for you to ask for any delay; it
would not help me; only to make an as-
signment of all my effects to you, as a
preferred creditor. What may be left
you will do the best you can with."

"Stop a moment, Halstead. What
amount would save you?"

"Not less than twenty thousand dol-
lars."

Mr. Walton remained in deep thought
several moments. Then raising his eyes
to his friend's, he said:
"Halstead, that sum I will place at your
command this day week, if you will prom-
ise me to make a radical reform in your
household. Make your sons dependent
on their own exertions. See that they
obtain no credit. And make your wife
and daughters understand the trouble you
are in. Do this within the week, and you
are saved. Take my counsel, and in less
than five years you will be a free man."

"God bless you, Walton! my more than
friend! I will do it. You who will save
me shall counsel and guide."

"Very well; I shall be a stern master.
You will find me ready, when you are.
Cheer up now. Good-by. I've an en-
gagement at six."

Mrs. Halstead and Jennie had fully de-
cided upon the party at any rate, and
when her father returned home that even-
ing, his face wearing a more hopeful ex-
pression, Jennie whispered:

"I told you nothing was wrong with
papa. See how pleasant he looks!"

"Mother, wait awhile. Don't give up
Jennie's whims. You know, if father
was not in some trouble, he would not
have refused Jennie, when she asked him
to let her have the party," said Jennie.

But her pleading was useless. Prepar-
ations went on for a grand party. Jen-
nie triumphantly said, "Fortune has fav-
ored us," when her father told them he
should have to go to B— on business, to
be absent three or four days, possibly
longer.

"Let me find you all home when I re-
turn, at furthest, Thursday evening. I
want to have a council of peace, I hope,"
he said, smiling pleasantly, when he bade
them good-by.

"We will all be home," Mrs. Halstead
and Jennie replied, while Jennie stole out
after her father, and winding her arms
around his neck, said:

"You have been looking so worried
lately, father! Are you feeling better
now?"

"Yes, yes, little one. It was a passing
cloud. Things look brighter now. I will
tell you all when I return, and shall want
your help, my best child. Now run in."

Invitations were issued for Thursday
night. That night George Halstead had
fixed to disclose to his family his exact
circumstances. Two days after, Mr. Wal-
ton would fulfil his promise, and then all
would be well.

Never did Jennie Halstead look more
beautiful than when she stood, smiling,
and conscious of the admiring gaze from
eyes in whose sight she cared alone to tri-
umph.

The magnificent rooms were filled to
their utmost capacity. It was decidedly
the party of the season.

The band was playing one of Strauss'
beautiful waltzes when Jennie, supported
by the arm of Captain Lovell through the
dance, raised her eyes to the door. There
standing—the pallor of whose face fright-

ened her then, and haunted her ever after
—was her father.

Gertie, who, resisting the combined ef-
forts of all, refused to join the merry
throng, was watching for his coming.

She drew him with her far away into
an upper room, off from the company,
and there, through the night, strove to
calm the fevered state into which the
shock had thrown him.

The next morning, when Gertie, seeing
him somewhat relieved, threw herself
down for a few moments' rest, a servant
never dreaming of the mischief he was
doing, bore to Mr. Halstead the note
which Gertie found after, and which
somewhat explained the sad sequel of our
story. This it was:

"FRIEND HALSTEAD—Last evening's
event proves clearly you have not the
firmness, possibly not the disposition, to
do your duty. Why should I try to save
you? You need depend no further on
my assistance.
Yours,
"A. WALTON."

That night, evading the loving girl,
George Halstead stole from his home,
never to return.

Days passed, yet he came not. At last
the river cleared the terrible mystery.
On its bank were cast the remains of the
miserable man—the sad result of woman's
vanity, extravagance and carelessness.

The verdict, "Accidental death by
drowning, when in a fit of temporary in-
sanity," was given by the jury, and ac-
cepted by the people. But I think an-
other verdict might be found, which
would more clearly explain this case, and
many others: "Driven to death by wom-
an's folly." Men sometimes are more
considerate than wise.

It was a terrible blow to the gentle,
loving Gertie. Not a thought she spent
on the loss of all worldly possessions—all,
and only, for the dear father she grieved.
But her sorrow was freed from the bitter
pangs of conscience.

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A FINE HORSE.

A prominent English landlord was one
day riding across a common adjacent to
his preserves when he overtook one of his
tenants, who was also mounted. After
the usual salutations they rode on in
silence for some minutes, when the tenant
slightly spurred his horse, a balky animal,
whereupon it dropped to its knees.

"What is the matter with your horse?"
asked his lordship. The embarrassed ten-
ant remarked by way of explanation that
his steed always acted that way when
there was game to be found. A moment
later, to the tenant's satisfaction and sur-
prise, a frightened hare jumped out of
some bushes near by. This so impressed
the landlord that he at once drove a barg-
ain by which he secured the tenant's
bare-backed beast in exchange for his own
fine mount, perfectly saddled. With
much agility the tenant leaped on to his
new horse, and all went well until they
came to a small stream, whereat the land-
lord's new nag immediately balked. A
drive home with the spurs brought it
again to its knees.

"Hello! what's up now? There's no
game here," said his lordship.

"True, my lord," was the ready reply;
"but I forgot to tell you 'ee's as good for
fish as 'ee is for game."

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graving of the magnificent Electric Tower,
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ture of one of the torch bearers which
will adorn the wings of the Electric Tower
and beside it a picture of Niagara Falls.

The second page shows a picture of the
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station, where exhibitions will be given
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