

PROGRESS, SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1895.

LETTERS FROM NANNARY.

No. 2.

Old and almost too familiar scenes flash their beauties or their dislikes upon us on either hand as the flying train glides swiftly on and every turn upon the road has many a time and oft before sheltered us in our wanderings, and the information given to us by the ten-dollar-a-week brakeman, in that muffled sound which all, or at least nearly all, brakemen try to cultivate, is not appreciated perhaps as it should be. He is conscientiously earning his salary, but when the gathering shades of night hide all and gentle sleep is trying "to knit up the ravell'd sleeve of care," it is neither pleasant or enjoyable to be told, in a very loud and discordant voice, many things that perhaps you already know. And when the captain of the train, as they call the conductors down south, approaches you with a lordly air, the traces of good living and a nice soft time of it mantle upon his cheek, sparkle in his eye and give a nice curve to his rotundity, from which flash the glittering watch chain and the diamonds of Alaska or some other chilly atmosphere. He punches one first in the midst of a pleasant dream and then punches another hole in your hitherto well punched passport to a land that is fairer than this, and then wanders on, with a look of triumph in his eye, to the next victim, who is snoring soundly, unconscious of the holes afflicting has bored in his socks; and so we go away into the darkness and the gloom, with the rushing waters of the Susquehanna mingling its roaring music with the snores of the sleeping travellers, who are not now so chipper-looking as when they embarked, only a few short hours before, a few hundred miles away.

The Erie road is slightly picturesque and winds through a section of New York state that is not as fruitful or as rich as other portions of Governor Flower's domain. There is considerable scenery, however, and some bright looking towns that one may digest as he moves along, with a good deal of enjoyment. There is Binghamton, where they make a great many cigars and cigarettes and good records for themselves, and one of the largest insane asylums in the Empire state. Then Oswego, where they told me once there were thirteen or fourteen millionaires among a population of ten thousand; but that was some years ago, ere times got hard and so called "industrial armies" had not swarmed over the land. Then Elmira, where Senator David B. Hill was wont to speak in youthful glee on the banks of the raging Chemung, where Mark Twain got his wife, while Hill is still bald-headed and without one. There is also a big reformatory there when Brockway used "the paddle" on some of the refractory boys, and hastened, in cases it is said, their exit out of this world of care and sorrow. Then we came to Corning, where the old clock in Erastus Corning's gift to the town strikes one from the unsightly and flinty looking monument he bequeathed to the town. He wandered away from where he was young and made his mark in the commercial and political world of New York.

We cruised rapidly along during the darkness through the northern part of the Empire state, leaping through a small strip of Pennsylvania and then through Ohio, where the cornstalks were lying low and neglected-looking and big pumpkins that we saw lying around loose a few months before had all rolled away from there. The country was becoming so flat, stale and unprofitable looking, as we forged along over territory that we had often been compelled to look on before, that it really became tiresome and dreadfully monotonous. The darkness came on swiftly and the gloaming turned to night as we crawled carefully along towards Chicago. Presently were seen the many colored lights of red and green and blue and yellow that were gleaming brightly above and around the myriad-ribbed avenue of steel that lead into the wonderful city of Chicago. There was the roaring and rushing of flying railway trains, going and coming in every direction, the puffing smoke and hissing steam of the iron horse echoing back their noisy carnival from towering walls of busy commercial life and stately homes that fringed our line of march, while the gentle murmur of Lake Michigan was making its aquatic music felt amid the din and clatter that went down to the very shores of that great unvalleyed sea and seemingly hushed their wailing discord on the bosom of its mighty waters.

Peering into the darkness we thought we might catch a glimpse of what was left of the greatest show the world has ever seen, but even that is denied us as we stole quietly in through the far stretching suburbs that are lending their aid and population to swell the head of this little giant of the west to such immense proportions. After a ride of about twenty-seven hours we are in Chicago with two hours to spare ere we resume our westward journey. One of

Frank Parmalee's numerous "buses" transfer us through a portion of the town across the muddy beauties and unpleasant scents of the Chicago river to the Union depot, where the long trains are drawn up with their flaring headlights flashing their bright gleams to any point of the compass. They are going north and south, to the east and west, with a serious or careless throng, the restless and busy actors on the stage of life, "who fret and strut their last hours upon the stage" until life's impenetrable curtain is run down upon them and their brazen lights go out in darkness on the fearful brink of an everlasting and eternal shore.

At 10.30 p. m. of our second day out we leave Chicago behind as we stretched our weary form upon the luxurious colored embrace of a nicely upholstered chair built upon the lines of our barbers in many lands, and which the C. B. & Q. gives you for nothing, or a nice white downy pillow for which the smiling avaricious colored porter lessens your pile of glittering coin only twenty five cents less than when you placed yourself under his protecting wing. It was dark, of course, and we only knew we were clattering along in our dreams through Illinois and then into the rolling prairies and fruitful looking plains of Iowa.

In the early morn when the sun is climbing the hills and "the morn in russet mantle clad" is stealing over the eastern hills, we creep stealthily down to the banks of the giant Mississippi and across the rushing stream over an iron and wooden span and halt beneath the bluffs in the pretty town of Burlington, where "the Hawk-eye man" lived and moved and had his being, when he was not away from home telling lots of other good people in other places how it all happened. We buy his paper and we glide away once more through a pastoral looking country just beginning to bud into vernal bloom and blossom, past little towns and hamlets that have some of the frontier simplicity clinging to them yet; where general merchandise and general apathy are still "in it" with their false fronts trying to make a couple of stones out of what is really one-and-a-half; here there is a good deal of "bluff" otherwise, and the big bearded men let their whiskers grow long enough to disguise their shi t fronts and are aiming a deadly blow at the fair city girl who is engaged making scarfs and neckties which they discard altogether as the wind blows through their palpable deception and whiskers at the same time.

It was just forty-eight hours from the time we pulled out of Jersey City until we reached the banks of the muddy Missouri and rattled over the bridge into Jefferson City, nestling on the western bank of the muddy stream in the great State of Nebraska. We halted at Omaha for a few minutes, sitting in queenly beauty overlooking the rushing waters that were bounding along with Montana and Dakota, or just a little bit of either, in its clutch, to pay tribute, as it were, to the giant stream it was rushing to catch and pollute hundreds of miles below where it joined it and the Ohio in their wild rush to the sunlit waters of the Gulf of Mexico over a thousand miles away. We halt at Lincoln, the capital of the state, and dash away from there as the rosy sun was making a golden set in the west beckoning us on, as it were, over their tireless, windswept plains, where the adventurous and hardy pioneer of only a quarter of a century before, chalked upon his canvas-covered wagon the traditional motto of "Pike's Peak or bust."

In the early Sabbath morn, that was quietly usurping the gloom of the preceding night, we saw a lonely habitation here and there on the cheerless looking prairie, where the lonely sheepherder was tending his flocks and the wild horses were tugging away at the short brown withery looking buffalo grass which was springing up in little clumps from the dry sandy plain; and there, in hazy distance, the grand Rockies, rough and jagged and snow-covered, were soaring up among the clouds. Nearer and clearer and more beautiful these towering and everlasting hills seemed to grow as we rolled into beautiful Denver, lying peacefully almost at the base and in the shadow of the lofty and wild grandeur of those dizzy heights. The great big Union depot at this Queen city of the Plains had been a short time before gutted by fire and water, and was now roofless and cheerless looking, around which the hackmen and other pests of a traveller's life were trying to keep warm and comfortable beneath the charred and blackened walls. Just one hour was spent in Denver, where we bade good bye to our colored porter and our white conductor, the former getting his pillow hack again, and the latter giving our ticket his last punch as we left the comforts of the C. B. & Q., and made the acquaintance of the controlling spirits on the Denver and Rio Grande, the scenic route par excellence of the world.

"THE UGLY DUCKLING."

SHE MAY SOME DAY BE A GRACEFUL SWAN.

A Young Lady who Thinks She is Ugly Writes to "Astra," who Comforts Her with Comparisons, etc.—Plain Girls who Are Extremely Popular.

"I am such an ugly girl, Astra," writes a correspondent, "that I feel certain no man will ever love me, or want to marry me, and when I see other girls who are pretty and attractive, receiving so much attention, and having so many lovers, I cannot help feeling envious of them and utterly dissatisfied with my own fate. I am sure you will tell me I ought to be ashamed of myself for being so weak, and that beauty does not matter in the least; I have heard all that so often, that I am tired of it, and I do not believe it either!"

Neither do I, my dear, so you need not be afraid of hearing it once more. Beauty does matter very much, almost more, to us women, than anything else, and the lack of it is a serious deprivation, in fact it sometimes makes all the difference between happiness and misery to its possessor. But still I think I can give you some better comfort than those foolish and untruthful old sayings "Handsome is that handsome does," or "Beauty is only skin deep." The last is a most flagrant fallacy, since no woman could possibly be beautiful who had a huge nose high cheek bones, and a long chin, no matter how perfect her skin was. Beauty means feature, contour, coloring, and expression, and all these are much more than skin deep. Beauty is a gift of the gods, and something to be most grateful for, but still it is not everything, and those of us who are not as well favored as our most fortunate sisters should derive solid comfort from the fact that while the world is full of lovely roses slowly fading on the stem—scores and scores of plain girls marry early, every year, just look around amongst your own circle of acquaintances, my dear "Ugly Girl" and tell me how many men you know have beautiful, or even very pretty wives; and then, when you have counted them, begin again and count those who have ordinary, plain and even ugly wives. I really believe the result will be most encouraging to you, especially when you observe that the plain ones are quite as dearly loved, and as much admired by their husbands as the beauties are by theirs.

Unfortunately for us all beauty is so largely a matter of taste that it seems almost impossible to establish any fixed rule on the subject, and there have been diversities of opinion even on Mrs. Langtry's claims to beauty, some of her admirers declaring that if Helen of Troy could come back to earth and be contrasted with the Jersey Lily the cause of the Trojan war would find her charms so to speak, nowhere—while others who were quite as well qualified to give an opinion have confessed that they were bitterly disappointed, on seeing the English beauty for the first time.

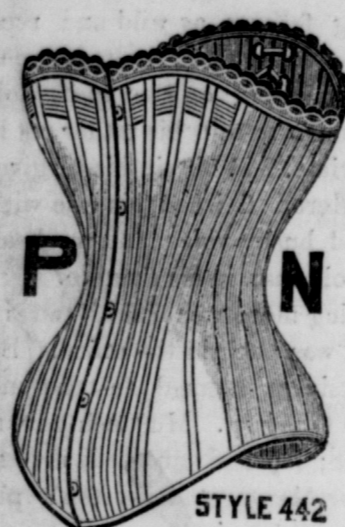
Now if there is room for doubt in Mrs. Langtry's case, why not in others, and why may not some men consider one girl pretty in whom others fail to discover any charm whatever?

I think it a well established fact that the plain girl who is jolly and lively, has a pleasant manner and plenty to say, generally receives far more attention than the spoiled and conceited beauty who is too conscious of her own attractions, and too determined to rely upon her personal charms, to take the trouble of being agreeable to anyone. Men are conceded beings, my dear, and too fond of admiration themselves, not to get tired of continual incense before another shrine; and turn their attention to some other source, where they will come in for some little meed of admiration too.

Some time ago, a young lady from a distant western city came to visit in St. John, and though for a long time I did not meet her, I formed the opinion that she must be a remarkably pretty girl, from the amount of attention she received; wherever I went I heard of her, and always through some young man, he was going to walk, or drive with her, he was hurrying to a party in order to be early on the scene and secure a dance or two before her programme was filled, or he had just found that his bosom friend intended calling upon her that evening, and was rushing wildly to the scene of action in order to be first on the ground. All young men, I knew, seemed to vie with each other as to which should pay her the most attention, and obtain the most of her society. "Lucky girl!" I thought, "What a beauty she must be!"

One evening we were both at a reception at the same house, and after looking in vain for some one who answered to my idea of what the lovely Miss Smith ought to be like, I asked to have her pointed out to me. She was one of the most hopelessly plain girls I ever saw. And strange to say she was destitute even of that nameless charm called style, which stands some

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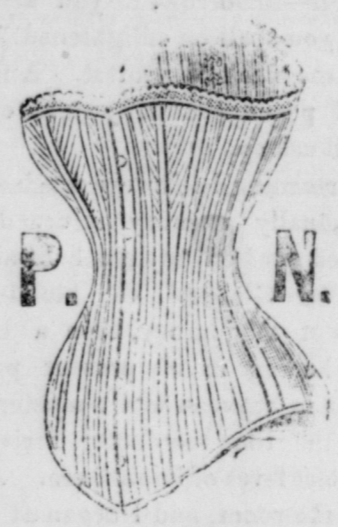
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P. N. Drab, 18 to 26 inches, \$1.25.
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Manchester Robertson & Allison, St. John

plain maidens in such good stead; stranger still she had not a good figure. When I recovered my breath I asked in what her attraction consisted. "Pretty, did I say she was pretty? I hardly think so, because when you come to look at her I don't believe she is, but then, she is so nice; I really think she is the loveliest girl I ever met."

And they all said the same thing, and were ready to walk over each other's necks, in order to win a few words from her; she wasn't pretty, they knew, but she was just "nice" and they were satisfied.

"I am so glad I am an ugly girl," said a clever damsel to me once. "Because if any man ever does fall in love with me he will stick to me till the end. I have known more men get tired of their pretty sweethearts, and more pretty girls who have been simply jilted than you would believe, while an ugly girl can feel pretty certain that when she makes a conquest it is going to last. It takes her longer, I know, and she may only make one in her life, but she has such a comfortable feeling of security, such an easy confidence in her power of holding her own, that it is really worth while being plain, just for the chance of experiencing it!" And I believe she was right. Another advantage which the plain girl has over the beauty is the curious fact that time deals much more gently with her. Take two girls of eighteen, one pretty, and the other plain, and note the contrast between them, one seems to be the favorite of nature, and the other her step-child, but if you could see those two again when they were 40, the positions seem to be reversed. The beauty, in losing the freshness of youth, and the delicate tinting of her complexion has lost fully one-half of her charms, and on the same principle that a faded rose is a more melancholy sight than a brilliant autumn leaf, she looks much older than her contemporary, who had so little beauty to spare that time seemed to hesitate about robbing her of it, and so passed her tenderly by.

A beautiful woman dreads losing her attractions and often frets so, over the first wrinkle, or the first gray hair, that she hastens the catastrophe herself; while her plain sister, never having been accustomed to get much thought to her looks, keeps free from worry, and preserves her youth twice as long in consequence. In fact she often grows better looking with maturity, and the plain angular girl who long ago resigned herself to the fate of the ugly duckling, wakes up to the pleasant consciousness of being a swan, or rather a very fine looking matron when she is past forty.

Now my dear "Ugly girl," if I have not said enough to comfort you, this time, just let me know, and I will give you enough instances of ugly girls winning and keeping love, both from history, romance, and real life, to make you absolutely rejoice that you have been spared the doubtful and dangerous gift of being "fair to look upon."

When Aberdeen Met His Wife.

The Earl of Aberdeen first met his wife on Gnischan, her father's estate, when he was a lad, and, having lost himself on the hills, had to beg for shelter for himself and his pony.

HALIFAX PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

They Cost the Taxpayers a Good Deal of Money.

HALIFAX, Jan. 17.—The public schools of Halifax cost the tax-payers of the city about \$100,000 annually. Doubtless the citizens get pretty good value for their money, but that does not prevent them from feeling the burden of taxation. More than one retrenchment committee has been appointed during the past few years, but with little or no result. Commissioners have come on the board determined to cut down expense in every direction, but so far they have accomplished nothing, except perhaps, the negative good of presenting further increases in expenditure.

The latest retrenchment committee was appointed at the last meeting of the board. It was moved for by Alderman Hubley, who never looks at any service whatever without wondering what it would cost. An illustration of Alderman Hubley's sometimes cheese-paring policy was seen at the same meeting. The alderman advocated the discontinuance by the board of its subscription to the two Halifax morning papers, on the ground that they were unnecessary, and that the \$12 per year might be saved if the papers were stopped. The board discussed the subject ten minutes ere the alderman was voted down. So Mr. Hubley's credit it should be said that after the vote was taken he looked ashamed of his attempted work. The papers are to be continued and not only that, they are to be filed and bound for future use.

The retrenchment committee consists of Commissioners Stewart, Goudge, Hubley, Hills and Doyle. The committee may accomplish good results. Commissioner Stewart, who will be chairman, is an able man, and Commissioners Goudge and Hills are both level-headed and practical. Commissioner Hubley will be very active in keeping his fellow co-mittee-men up to the mark, and Captain Doyle will assist in the good work.

It is worthy of note that the very first thing this retrenchment committee did, before it organized, and almost before one of them had agreed to serve, was to make sure that they would be paid for their work. Commissioners Doyle and Hubley asked the board if attendance at the meetings of the committee should not count for a share of \$1,000 annually divided by themselves among the commissioners. When they were informed that the dollars would be forthcoming these two retrenchment men looked relieved and more than ever ready for their patriotic work. Whether they succeed in cutting down expenditure or not is a question for the future, but that they will draw their allowance for time spent in the attempt is already assured the members of the committee, thanks to Captain Doyle—and his ally from Ward IV., the retrenchment men.

The Reward of Merit.

"Why, Jimmy, my darling boy, you've got the medal for good behavior this week?" said the fond mother, noting the little silver medal on her son's vest.

"Yessum," said Jimmy. "Tommy Roberts won it, but I told him I'd knock the head off him if he didn't give it to me."

Advice:

Don't buy clothes from force of habit—unthinkingly, without a reason. True, you may need new clothes; but that's no reason. Your old suit or overcoat may look worn and faded, but take our advice and consider that UNGAR MAKES THE OLD NEW. Have your old clothes made new by him. ONE TRIAL CONVINCES.

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