

A SLIGHT MISTAKE.

'Marriage is the saving of a young man,' said my Aunt Tabitha, sententiously. I assented, for I find it pays to give a ready acquiescence to abstract propositions.

'You must marry,' continued my aunt. I hesitated, for to assent to the concrete is more dangerous.

'I am still very young,' I said, meekly. My aunt turned to my mother. 'Whom shall Alfred marry?'

My mother shook her head. 'Somebody nice,' she volunteered. 'What do you say to Letitia Brownlow?'

I asked my aunt.

'I would prefer to say nothing to Letitia Brownlow,' I interposed, hastily.

'Or Amelia Stafford?'

'Is she not rather—' my mother waved one hand; 'and Alfred is so slim.'

'I think she has a very fine figure,' responded my aunt. 'Or there is Gertrude Williams; she will have a fortune if she outlives her sisters.'

'There are only five of them,' I said, hopefully.

'Or Mabel Gordon?'

'She has taken a course of cooking lessons,' observed my mother.

'No, none of these!' I cried, decisively. My aunt looked offended.

'Very well, then, choose for yourself,' she said, tartly.

'Perhaps that would help,' I remarked, thoughtfully.

'You will choose somebody nice, won't you, Alfred?' said my mother.

'With money,' observed my aunt.

'Well connected,' emphasized my mother.

'Not too young,' added my aunt.

'And religious,' begged my mother.

'There is no objection to her being good-looking?' I asked, a trifle timidly.

'No, I think not,' said my aunt, provided she fully understands beauty is but skin-deep.

'I will tell her,' I murmured.

'Well,' said my aunt impatiently, after a short pause, 'whom do you suggest?'

I thought for a moment.

'What do you say to Winifred Fraser?'

'That minx!' cried my aunt.

'Oh, Alfred!' echoed my mother.

'Why not?' I asked.

'Such a dreadful family!' said my mother.

'So fast!' interjected my aunt.

'But have you ever noticed the sun on her hair?' I asked, innocently.

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My aunt drew herself up.

'We have not noticed the sun on her hair, nor do we wish to ice it,' said she with much asperity.

I was justly annoyed. 'I really think it must be Winifred Fraser,' I said. 'She is very fond of me and—'

'How can you be so cruel to me?' cried my mother. 'Have you noticed how gray my hair is getting? You will not have me long.' She drew out her handkerchief.

'You will come to a bad end,' said my aunt. 'I always thought you were depraved. If you marry that painted hussy, you must not expect my countenance.'

'Under the circumstances, I will not marry Winifred Fraser,' I said, with great magnanimity, for I did not particularly want my aunt's countenance.

My aunt sniffed. 'You had better not.'

'I am joking,' I said soothingly, remembering she had not made her will.

'Indeed!'

'The truth is—I dropped my voice—I am in love with some one else.'

'And you never told me!' said my mother, reproachfully.

'The girl I love is not free.'

'Married?' cried my aunt.

'Not married—but engaged.'

'Who is it?' asked my mother gently. I was silent for a moment, and then I sighed.

'It is Constance Burleigh.'

'It would have been a most suitable match,' murmured my mother.

'Very suitable,' repeated my aunt.

There was a momentary silence, broken by my aunt.

'I did not know Constance was engaged.'

'It is a secret; you must not repeat what I have told you.'

'I don't like these secret engagements,' said my aunt, bristling. 'Who told you?'

'She told me herself.'

'Who is the man?'

'I do not think I should repeat his name.'

I shook my head doubtfully.

'You know the man?'

'Is he quite—quite—'

Again I shook my head doubtfully.

'What have you heard?' my aunt asked eagerly.

'I don't think I ought to repeat these things.'

'You can surely trust your mother,' murmured my mother.

'And my discretion,' said my aunt.

'Well,' I said, 'I have been told he is cruel to his mother.'

'Really!' cried the two ladies in a breath. 'His mother told me so herself.'

'How sad!' said my mother.

'And what else?' asked my aunt.

'Another relation of his told me he was depraved.'

'Poor, poor Constance!' whispered my mother.

'And would probably end badly.'

'I expect he drinks,' said my aunt, grimly.

'Does Constance know this?' asked my mother.

'I don't think so.'

'You did not tell her?'

'Of course not.'

'I consider it is your duty to.'

'I really cannot.'

'Then I will,' said my aunt, resolutely.

'What I have said has been in confidence.'

'I do not care.'

'I beg you not to do so.'

'It is my duty. I am too fond of Constance to allow her to throw herself away on this worthless man.'

I shrugged my shoulders. 'Do as you please, but don't mention my name. By the way, Constance said she would probably call this afternoon.'

At that moment the bell rang.

'That may be her,' said my aunt, flying to the window. It is.'

I got up slowly and sauntered into the conservatory which adjoins the drawing-room. From behind a friendly palm I could see without being seen. I saw my aunt look towards my mother.

'If we open her eyes,' I heard her whisper, 'it may pave the way for Alfred.'

My mother said nothing, but I saw the same hope shine from her eyes.

The door opened and the servant announced Constance. She came forward with a little eager rush; then, stopped short, embarrassed by the want of reciprocity.

'We are glad to see you,' said my mother, and kissed her.

My aunt came forward. 'We were just speaking of you,' she said solemnly. 'Sit down.'

Constance looked a little crushed. 'I thought Alfred would have told you,' she murmured.

'We have heard—' began my aunt.

'Hush!' interposed my mother. 'Come nearer me, Constance. Won't you take off your hat?'

Constance came and sat by her side. 'I was anxious to come and tell you that—'

'If you are alluding to your engagement,' said my aunt somewhat severely, 'we have already heard of it.'

'You have heard—' cried Constance.

'With the deepest sorrow.'

Constance drew herself up.

'You do not approve?' she asked proudly.

'We love you too much,' said my mother gently.

Constance looked bewildered.

'You are too good for the wretch,' cried my aunt.

'What! Oh, what do you mean?' exclaimed Constance.

'If you marry this—this man,' continued my aunt vigorously, 'you will regret it.'

My mother took her hand. 'My sister should not tell you this so suddenly.'

'It is my duty to speak and I will,' cried my aunt. 'I will not let Constance unite herself to this man with her eyes closed.'

'What have you against him?' demanded Constance, a red spot beginning to burn in each cheek.

'He drinks,' answered my aunt triumphantly.

Constance sank back in the cushions.

'I don't believe it,' she said faintly.

'He ill-treats his mother—beats her, I believe,' continued my aunt.

'This cannot be true,' cried Constance.

'Mrs. Granville, tell me.'

My mother nodded sadly.

'Alas! I cannot deny it.'

Constance arose. 'This is awful!'

she said, holding on to the back of the sofa. 'I could never have believed it. It is like a bad dream.'

'My poor, dear Constance,' murmured my mother, rising and putting her arms around her.

My aunt brought up her artillery.

'He is thoroughly depraved, and will come to a bad end. His relations are at one on this point.'

Constance buried her face in my mother's bosom. 'Oh, dear, oh, dear, and I love him so,' she sobbed.

In the adjoining room I was becoming uncomfortable.

'We thought it right to tell you,' said my aunt, moved by the tears, 'though Alfred begged and implored us not to.'

'I could never, never have believed it,' sobbed Constance. 'Poor, poor Mrs. Granville!'

My mother soothed her.

'How difficult you must have felt it to tell me this,' exclaimed Constance drying her tears. 'It was so good of you. I will not give him another thought. To treat his mother so cruelly! Oh, Mrs. Granville I'm so sorry for you!'

'It is I who am sorry for you,' said my mother doubtfully.

'And no one would have dreamed it. We always thought you were so fond of him, and spoiled him so utterly. And all the time you were hiding your sorrow. How noble of you!'

My mother looked at aunt Tabitha, who returned her stare.

'Whoever it is?' said aunt Tabitha whispering. 'Find out.'

'Where did you meet him, dearest?' whispered my mother.

'Meet him? Why here, of course,' said Constance with opening eyes.

'Yes, yes, of course,' said my mother, mystified.

'I thought you would be so pleased, and I hurried across to tell you.'

'Can Alfred have made a mistake?' muttered my aunt hoarsely.

The two elder ladies stood still in the utmost embarrassment.

'I shall never be happy again,' said Constance mournfully.

'Don't say that,' implored my mother.

'Perhaps there is a mistake.'

'How can there be a mistake?' asked Constance, raising her head.

'There can be no mistake,' said my aunt hastily.

'How could he be cruel to you?' cried Constance, kissing my mother.

'Cruel to me?' cried my mother.

'You said he was cruel to you.'

'Of whom are you speaking?' cried both ladies.

'Of Alfred, of course.'

The two ladies sat down suddenly.

'You are not engaged to Alfred?' they gasped simultaneously.

'To whom else?' said Constance in amazement.

'There is some misunderstanding,' I observed smoothly, coming in at the moment.

The three fell upon me together.

It took at least an hour to explain. Yet I had said nothing which was not strictly true.

'You will not allow these practical jokes when you are married, will you, Conny?' said my mother fondly.

'I will not,' replied Constance, tightening her lips.

'Marriage is the saving of a young man,' repeated my aunt grimly.

The Kind That Cures.

The Great Spring Health Renewer.

Paine's Celery Compound for Men, Women and Children.

Read the following testimony that comes from Miss Blake of 303 Hughson street, Hamilton:

'For years I suffered greatly, and was under the care of doctors who finally told me I was going into consumption. I was becoming worse through the use of medicines, and I gave up my doctors. While in a very critical condition, not able to sleep or rest, always faint and weak, appetite and digestion bad, and my system run-down and little life left in me, I commenced to use Paine's Celery Compound. After taking one bottle I felt much relieved. I have used in all seven or eight bottles, and am now a new woman, can enjoy life, and am as well as I wish to be. Many thanks for your great medicine.'

FORCE OF HABIT.

Habits of Twenty-Five Years Cling to the Motorman.

A motorman on a Woburn street-car gave, not long ago, an amusing illustration of the force of habit. The Boston Herald describes the scene:

He had managed the front end of a horse-car for twenty-five years. When given charge of a trolley-car, he was filled with pride.

His conductor noticed that the veteran leaned toward the inside rail of a curve, and braced himself when the wheels were about to enter a turnout. He did these little things because he had found it necessary when his horses were jogging over the route.

One day he did something that caused a ripple of merriment in the square at Winchester. The big electric had crossed the railroad tracks and stopped for a passenger. The conductor yanked two bells, and the grizzled motorman at once ejaculated 'G'lang! One hand rested on the controller, while the other gripped the brake.

The imaginary horses didn't budge. Again the go head signal was sounded. The hand on the controller twitched as if holding 'webbin's' and the loud chirp sounded as shrill as a boatswain's whistle.

The car didn't start, despite persuasion. Then he stooped to the platform, where the whip used to have a place. In so doing he stubbed his foot against the striker of the gong.

The brass warning brought him to himself.

In an instant he let on the current with a jerk that set the passengers nodding. Then he glanced around to see if his little performance had provided an entertainment not mentioned on the time-cards.

It had.

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AN ARTIST'S DISCOVERY.

He Found why the Under Parts of Birds and Fishes are Light.

An exceedingly interesting natural law has been discovered by the distinguished artist, Mr. Abbott H. Thayer, who is an ardent observer of bird life. He, with his artist's eye for light and shade, discovered what the naturalists, notwithstanding their acquaintance with many varieties of imitative and protective coloration in animals, had as yet failed to elucidate, the reason why the under parts of fishes, reptiles, mammals, birds, and even insects are so generally white or light. It is a law which can be very simply stated thus: 'Animals are painted by nature darkest on those parts which tend to be most lighted by the sky's light, and vice versa.'

Of course, out-of-doors the light comes commonly from above, and thus the majority of wild creatures are darker on their backs and lighter below, where the shadow of their bodies upon the lighter color tends to equalize it with that of the upper parts. Thus, a dead bird with wool colored back, lighter shades on wing and sides and a white breast may look, when held in the hand, as if the conspicuous, silvery brilliance of the breast feathers would easily betray it to the eye of a searching enemy. Not at all. It would be much more easily discovered if it were dull brown all over. This Mr. Thayer proved at an open-air meeting of ornithologists in Cambridge last November by a series of cleverly devised experiments.

He placed three objects of about the size and shape of sweet potatoes—in fact they were sweet potatoes—horizontally on wires a few inches above the ground. They were covered with a sticky material, and then dry earth from the road where they stood was sprinkled over them to give them the very color of their background. Dr. C. Hart Merriam, in a report of this talk to Science, says:

'The two end ones were painted white on the under side, and the white color was shaded up and gradually mixed with the brown of the sides.'

'When viewed from a little distance, these two end ones, which were white below, disappeared from sight, while the middle one stood out in strong relief, and appeared much darker than it really was. Mr. Thayer explained that terrestrial birds and mammals, which are protectively colored, have the under parts white, or very light in color, and that the color of the under parts usually shaded gradually into that of the upper parts.'

'This is essential in order to counteract the effect of the shadow side, which otherwise, as shown by the middle potato, makes the object abnormally conspicuous, and causes it to appear much darker than it really is.'

'In the case of Mr. Thayer's experiment, some of the witnesses could hardly believe it at the striking difference in the visibility of the three potatoes was entirely due to the coloring of the under side, and Mr. Thayer was asked to color the middle one like the two others, in order that the effect might be observed. Mr. Thayer complied with the request, painting the under side of the middle potato white, and shading the white up into the sides, as in the case of the others.'

'The effect was almost magical. The middle potato at once disappeared from view.'

'A similar experiment was made on the lawn. Two potatoes were painted green, to resemble the green of the grass above which they were suspended. One was painted white on the under side, and at once became invisible when viewed from a little distance, while the other showed plainly and seemed very dark, the shadow superadded to the green of the under side, making it remarkably conspicuous. The experiments were an overwhelming success.'

Origin of the Word "snob."

'While turning over the leaves of the eighth volume of the Sporting Magazine, published in 1796,' says a writer in Notes and Queries, 'I have come upon what I think is a very early instance of the word "snob." The context does not indicate its meaning, but I apprehend there is no doubt that we must interpret it by Shce-maker. The writer is discoursing of races at Whitechurch. He says that there was a very respectable field; and although neither the Duke of Queensberry, Lord Egremont nor His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, were present, it being holiday time, a number of royal snobs were.'

Piles Cured in 3 to 6 Nights—Itching, Burning Skin Diseases Relieved in One Day.

Dr. Agnew's Ointment will cure all cases of itching piles in from three to six nights. One application brings comfort. For blind and bleeding piles it is peerless. Also cures tetter, salt rheum, eczema, barber's itch and all eruptions of the skin. Relieves in a day. 35 cents.

HELP TO BEAR BURDENS.

We talk a great deal about the burdens and loads we have to carry in life, and we are apt to think our own load heavier than anybody else's, just because it is our own. There's no getting rid of burdens altogether, and perhaps it wouldn't be good for us if we could. They act as an influence to keep us steady, like ballast in a ship. This is commonplace talk, I know; but the most important subjects that rise in our minds (subjects we have to deal with in a practical way) are the commonest. This article is written on that basis, and the purpose of it is to help in this universal business of carrying loads. Let a lady tell her experience in the matter.

She says: 'In February, 1889, I began to feel weak, tired, and languid. Everything was a burden to me. It seemed as though I had lost all my strength. My tongue was thickly coated, and I had a bad taste in my mouth. My appetite was poor, and after partaking of the least morsel of food a feeling of sickness came over me.'

'I had a sense of fullness at the chest and a gnawing pain at the pit of the stomach. I craved food as if I were hungry, and yet when it was placed before me I could not bring myself even to taste it.'

'In this low, miserable condition I continued year after year, sometimes feeling a trifle better, then worse again. In October, 1892, I had become so weak I was obliged to take to my bed, where I lay in a helpless, prostrate state for five months. I could now take liquid food only, but nothing really nourishing; and I gradually grew thin and wasted away. In time I became so far reduced that I thought I was at death's door; and all who saw me were of the opinion that I would never recover.'

'I had a doctor attending me during my long illness, but his medicines did not do me much good. In March, 1893, just a year ago, the doctor told me he could do nothing more for me.'

'At this time my sister called at Mr. Ball's (the grocer, Crumlin Road), and he told her how his wife had benefited from the use of Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup, and strongly recommended me to try it. I did so, and after having taken only half a bottle I found myself better. I felt like eating, and the food I took no longer distressed me; it agreed with me, and I felt the stronger for it. I continued with the Syrup, and slowly, but steadily gained in strength. Soon I was able to do the housework, and felt stronger than I had done for five years. Had I known of Mother Seigel's Syrup earlier I should have been saved much suffering and misery. Now, whenever I feel the need of medicine I take the Syrup at once, and it never fails to relieve me speedily.—Yours truly (signed) (Miss) Margaret Jane Douglas, 6 Arkwright Street, Crumlin Road, B. East, March 19th, 1894.'

There is no occasion for me to tell anyone who has ever had a long illness how true Miss Douglas's words are. Indeed, it is not possible to express in language what one goes through and endures in such a case. Everything is a burden, just as this lady says. And why? Because the strength is gone. We understand then what the writer meant who said, 'The grasshopper is become a burden.' What to a strong, healthy person is nothing, to a poor weak, emaciated one (as Miss Douglas was) is a load to crush you to the ground.

And in contrast, what a joy comes with relief such as came to her when Mother Seigel's Syrup began to cure the disease—indigestion and dyspepsia—from which she had suffered so long. And health (after years of pain, distress, and fear, with death threatening)—what a delight, beyond all words to describe!

No wonder (having been thus cured and restored to the reality of living) Miss Douglas says as she does, that she desires others to know of the remedy by means of the publication of her letter.

RIGHT FROM THE MINES.

Family Ties may be Broken in the Grand Rush for Gold, but What's Wealth Without Health—Dr. Agnew's Catarrhal Powder is a Wonderful Cure—It Never Fails to Relieve in Ten Minutes.

Fred Lawrie, of Trail Creek, B. C., writes: 'I have used two bottles of Dr. Agnew's Catarrhal Powder, and have been wonderfully helped. I can recommend it very highly to all sufferers from Catarrh.' And here is another.—Mr. B. L. Egan, Easton, Pa., says: 'When I read that Dr. Agnew's Catarrhal Powder would relieve Catarrh in 10 minutes, I must say I was far from being convinced of the fact. I decided to try it. I purchased a bottle. A single puff of the powder through the blower afforded instantaneous relief.'

A Bait Holder for Grasshoppers.

A neat little contrivance for holding live bait has been put on the market. When a trout fisherman passes through a field where there are a lot of grasshoppers he usually captures some for use in case of flies or other lures should fail. The usual method of carrying the insects is to put them into an ordinary bait case with the worms or an old tin can. The new device is a bit of wire netting shaped like a bowl. Around the rim is sewed some light cloth, which is closed by a puckering string at the top.



Stands for BLACKS, of this there's no doubt,—
The black on these faces will never wash out;
For wool, silk and cotton, Black Diamond Dyes
Are used without fear by the prudent and wise.

The above is taken from "Excelsior Rhyming A B C Book, Illustrated." Each letter of the Alphabet is 2 1/2 inches long; 10 two letters of the same color. Just the Book for the little ones. Sent for 3-cent stamp to any address.
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