

JUST A SHORT STORY.



EVERYTHING happened exactly as it does in those charming novels which of all literature, are my favorites. I was very late for the train; it was on the move; the porter bundled me in, flung my bag after me, slammed the door, and whistled. And the lady sat in the opposite corner of the carriage gathering her feet under the seat to avoid my hurrying bag. She was extremely pretty.

"Depend upon it," said I to myself at once, "she's going to stay with the Blairs." For it had to be so—it always is so. I was going to the Blairs, you see.

Unhappily, she did not seem inclined for conversation. She was accommodating but not discursive as to the window; it was summer, and there was no foot-warmer to bridge the gap between us. The annoying girl had a paper, and buried herself behind it. This was, of course, all wrong. Something would happen soon, however.

Something did. The lady put down the paper and gazed in a puzzled manner at her left glove. I peered cautiously around the edge of the Huntsman. Her eyes expressed doubt and difficulty. I saw what was the matter, a button of the glove was undone. I ached never intrusive or precipitate. I bided my time. Why, we were hardly at page ten of the novel yet!

She tried to button the glove. The glove was not too large; she could not button it. Her brow wrinkled into a perplexed little frown.

I love a dainty woman, and a woman whose life is spoiled by an obstinate glove-button is just the wife for me. She was bound to ask me to button it in another moment.

But she did not. A sudden smile—a smile of illumination—spread over her face. She had got it! Of course she couldn't button the tiresome thing with her glove on! Who could! With another smile for her own folly, she quietly unbuttoned all the buttons of her right glove and drew it off. Then she turned with quiet confidence to the left-hand button.

Had it not been for the look of the thing I'd have kissed her on the spot. As it was—and notwithstanding my interest in racing—I allowed the Huntsman to drop and fastened my eye on her. Her hand was the most lovely little hand I have ever seen—small, plump, tapering white, pink-nailed. I dote on a good hand.

She buttoned the button of her left glove with immediate and complete success, and smiled rapturously; indeed, she held up her hand and surveyed the job with immense complacency. I was smiling broadly myself now, because I saw what was going to happen. Thank heaven, however, I made no sound! I wouldn't have spoilt it for the world.

Her white teeth gleamed radiantly between her parted lips as she gently drew on the right glove. She treated the glove lovingly, working and pulling and patting, stopping to look now and again, conducting the thumb with infinite adroitness into its compartment. Then she gave a final persuasive tug to the upper part, and prepared to button the glove.

She tried the first button. She stopped to think. A curious expression stole over her face. She looked up.

She shook her head. She looked at the right glove. She shook her head again. Her right hand moved toward her left. Was she going to unbutton the left glove again? As I hope to be saved she undid two buttons!

Then it struck her, and in an instant her face was all a-lauding, and I burst into a loud peal.

She looked up—in momentary indignation, in swiftly succeeding fun, in irresistible sympathy. Then she laughed a low, long, luxurious ripple. "I ought to have told you," I gasped. "But you see, I hoped you'd undo them all again."

"But what am I to do?" she asked. "What am I for?" I returned. "Well, if you don't mind," said she. I crossed over and sat down by her. "There is," I observed, starting on the fons et origo, the top button of the left-hand glove, "no man so good that he cannot find a woman too good for him."

"It was very curious," she remarked, "that I shouldn't have seen that as often as I unbuttoned one glove in order to button the other I should have—"

"It is just what I liked about you," I interrupted. "I must have been thinking of something else."

"Of course you were," said I, proudly. "You were thinking of me. But it would have been the same anyhow. You are a perfect woman."

"Have you known me long enough?" "Yes, for anything," said I. "Even to take five minutes to button a glove for me?"

"It is nearly done," said I, undoing the second button again, "but I can't manage this one. Now if I had a hairpin I should be the happiest—I mean I should be able to manage it."

"I'm afraid my hair will come down!" "I am in favor of risking that," I observed.

She gave me a hairpin. I buttoned the glove with it and put it in my pocket. "My hairpin, please," said she, holding out her hand.

"But am I to get nothing out of it?" I cried indignantly. "The reward of a good conscience," she suggested.

"It is not enough." "Oh! but you must give it to me." "Well," said I, "I'll give it to you when we get there."

"Get where?" "Why, to the Blairs, of course. How amused they'll be to find that we've made acquaintance!"

"But I'm not going to—where is it?" "My face fell a little, but I recovered in a moment." "Oh, well," said I, nodding my head, "you live quite near and we shall often meet. I'm going to stay a month. I'm not sure now it won't be two months."

"I'm sure I hope you'll enjoy yourself," she said, "and find plenty of gloves to button; but why—the train's stopping!"

"All right, all right," said I. "We've another hundred—a whole splendid hundred—miles to go. And it's a slow train at that."

"I'm afraid I don't know what you mean." "I'm afraid," I returned, "that I am being a little hasty, but—"

"Unless I am hasty," she interrupted, with a laugh and a blush, "I shall be carried past my station." And she folded up her paper and took hold of her parasol.

"You're never going to get out here!" I cried, aghast. "You're not going even to the same station?"

"I'm very sorry, but the next is my station."

ALL WANT NOBLES.

LONDON MUSIC HALL BELLES AND MARRIAGE.

Few of Them Who Do Not Expect to Land a Lord or a Duke Before They Retire from the Footlights for Good.



THE WOMEN OF THE LONDON MUSIC HALL stage have always had a peculiar interest for American theater goers. A somewhat soiled but still gaudy halo of romance surrounds them, giving them an interest which the home-made and just as made and just as made glove commodity has never been able to obtain.

Perhaps this is due to women of the Belle-Bilton stamp, the dashing lady with a past, who married the young Lord Dunlo and is now the Countess of Clancarty. There are countless other evidences in Burke's peerage of the linking of the concert hall and the nobility via the matrimonial altar, and it is perhaps this fact which makes the London variety performer a person of unique interest to the American mind.

Every concert hall celebrity taken across the ocean is adroitly advertised as having just narrowly escaped being a countess, baroness or duchess, a method which is sure to establish her in high favor with the chaffle class.

London and Paris differ greatly on the question of nobility and the variety stage. There are very few members of the aristocratic class on the London boards, but in Paris there are dozens of counts, barons, marquises and even a princess or two singing nightly in the cafe-chantants of the Paris boulevards.

Until recently the Princess Pignatelli, a magnificent looking brunette, and daughter of the king of Naples' minister to St. Petersburg, sang ques-

favorites in England to-day. At present she is singing and displaying her fine figure at the Theater Royal at Birmingham.

Miss Marie Kendall is a recent star, and has not been to America as yet. She has made a great hit in the character of the English sporting girl, modeled somewhat after Miss Lewis' famous tough girl.

Miss Kendall is at present at the Britannia theater, where she sings and dances in a pantomime called "The Giant of the Mountains." Miss Kendall is a really pretty girl, with a good deal of talent of the imitation order and of a higher order of refinement than the average young woman given to sourette parts.

A little lady who made a great hit when she was in New York some time ago is Miss Vesta Tilley, who, it is claimed, can wear a dress suit more gracefully than any other woman living.

At the moment Miss Tilley is not showing off her graces in the conventional garb of masculine evening clothes. She is now at the Prince of Wales', Birmingham, doing character work with a vast amount of cleverness.

For a long time Miss Tilley has been a kind of goddess to the gilded youth of

CHICAGO'S THEATERS.

AMUSEMENT ATTRACTIONS FOR COMING WEEK.

What the Managers of the Various City Play-Houses Offer Their Patrons—Drama, Vaudeville and Opera Engagements.

SCHILLER. The engagement of Wilson Barrett, at the Schiller, which begins next Sunday evening, will be a notable one, from the fact that it signals the production for the first time in Chicago of "The Manxman," his own dramatization of Hall Caine's great novel.

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The Russian had with great care copied, character for character, the legend on the gate post, supposing that it was the number of the house and the name of the street.

At the Pavilion theater is an American girl who has made a great hit in London. She is a Miss Billie Barlow, or, as she is better known among her friends since the advent of "Trilby," as "Little Billie." She is not very little, however, but a plump young lady, who sings charmingly, dances nimbly and has succeeded in popularizing a number of songs within the last year.

When Miss Marie LaFarge was in New York some time ago she captured the chaffle world with ease. She is a dancer of grace, and by reason of many admirers could write an interesting essay on the "Life of a Concert Hall Singer." She has jewels galore, the gifts of lords, and is said to have stored away a snug fortune, the result of a good business management and her stage success.

The Preston sisters are almost as well known on one side as the other, although it has been some time since they faced an American audience. They are the best character singers of eastern songs on the stage to-day, Miss Jessel being particularly bright. She has grown quite plump recently, but her voice has improved, and as Robinson Crusoe in an extravaganza of that name has made quite a hit at the Grand. Georgina is the Polly Perkins of the play, a rollicking part giving wide scope for her comicallities.

Photography is to be employed as a means of testing the bearing power of bridges. A negative is to be taken when the bridge is unoccupied, then heavy trains are to be run on and another negative is to be taken from precisely the same point. Prints from both plates are to be made, or one negative can be placed over the other and the straight lines can be compared. Any undue weight will show by the sagging of the bridge or the bending of the supports. Photographs of various parts of the bridge, both under strain and unladen, will, when enlarged, clearly show any weak points and will furnish excellent directions for supplying more strength and changing the points where there is uneven bearing.

Minerva Eversoll, a young Italian girl, is the mail-carrier of Borrough Valley, which lies fifty miles northeast of Fresno, Cal. The valley is somewhat shut off from the outer world, and the only means of communication is by wagon or horseback over a narrow road, and there is no post-office near at hand.

Gov. Upham's Misfortune. Gov. Upham of Wisconsin is said to have been robbed of a diamond at his first official reception.

THE MIKADO'S DAILY LIFE.

Rises Early and Works Hard, Is Fond of Sweets and Hunting.

The emperor of Japan, according to the people most closely connected with him at Tokio, has by no means an easy office to fill. Japan now contains more than 40,000,000 people and there are a baker's dozen of political factions, many of which are anxious to create trouble. The changing condition of the people makes plenty of work. You can never tell who is going to fly off on a tangent, and the newspapers have to be carefully watched. The emperor keeps his eyes on everything. At least, I am told so. He rises early and breakfasts about 7 o'clock. He uses a knife and fork whenever he takes foreign food, but he prefers the chopsticks at his Japanese dinners. He eats both kinds of food and is very fond of rice, taking it with every meal. He likes meats and is by no means averse to sweets. He usually eats his breakfast alone and also his lunch. His dinner is served in table d'hotel style and with all the European accompaniments. Contrary to the regular practice in Japanese families, his wife often sits down at the table with him, and also the crown prince.

His work begins as soon as his breakfast is over. From 9 o'clock until 12 he receives his ministers and discusses matters of state. After this he takes his lunch, and then spends a little time in reading newspapers. He watches closely the Japanese press, keeps track of public opinion, and, I venture, changes his actions somewhat to suit it. All the papers are looked over for him and the passages which he should see are marked. Ordinary misstatements or criticisms he passes over, but if a newspaper becomes at all dangerous he gives an order to his censors and the newspaper is stopped, while its editors are liable to be thrown into prison. He also has the leading foreign papers, and the articles of these which treat on Japan are translated for him, and he keeps track of public opinion all over the world. He takes our illustrated papers and the articles relating to the pictures in them are sometimes translated. He does a great deal of work in the afternoon, but toward evening goes out for exercise. He is a good horse-back rider and is fond of horses. He has about 200 in his stables, and these are of all kinds, including a number of fine hunters. The emperor is fond of hunting, and he has large game preserves where there are deer and wild pig. There are plenty of pheasants and his majesty is said to be a very good shot.

Finally the poor foreigner gave it up Miscellaneous—2. and with a great deal of difficulty recalling the landmarks which he had observed the day before, found his way to his friend's house. Once there and in company with one who could understand him, he delivered himself of a hot condemnation of the cabmen and police of London for their impertinence and discourtesy. His friend asked for a look at the mirth-provoking address, and the mystery was solved. This was the entry:

846 RING THE BELL.

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PRINCESS PIGNATELLI.

tionable songs in various cheap places of amusement in the French capital. After she had exhausted her popularity in Paris she went to Vienna, where she became the chief attraction in a beer garden. Then she married the proprietor and upon his death went to Austria with three small children, where she will live on the modest income left by the beer garden owner.

This is merely one example. There are scores of others, including the Mar-



BARONESS VON RAHDEN.

quis Sarnpelt, at the Elorado; the Baroness von Rahden, at the Folies Bergere; Court d'Obizany de Ferriere of the Gymnase, Marquis de Breuille and Count Lesot de Penneret.

Coming back to the English music hall singers, every one of whom treasures the hope that some day she may marry into the nobility, nearly all of the most famous ones have been to America to gather up the coin of the realm.

There is Miss Harriet Vernon, the six foot, 200 pound, superbly proportioned beauty, who it was expected would capture New York at one swoop when she appeared at an up town music hall a little more than a year ago. She was paid \$500 a week for about thirty minutes' singing and displaying of gorgeous costumes. The costumes were better than the singing, but as the novelty soon wore off the former, it was determined she was not a hit. Yet Miss Vernon is one of the greatest music hall

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