THIS ORIGINAL DOCUMENT IS IN VERY POOR CONDITION

The Professional Shopper.

I come from every part of town,
I'm stopping night or day;
I turn the stores all inside down
And don't get home till seven.

I look at stocks of every class,
From silk to piano;
But all I ever buy, alas!
Is bonbons and bananas.

I price and sample every where,
But make a purchase never,
For clerks may frown and clerks may swear,
But I'll shop on forever.

I'm after every bargain sale;
I watch each "flood" and "fire";
I go when "mark down" rates prevail,
And likewise when they're higher.

On opening days I'm sure to be
In very highest feather;
I'm always bound to go and see,
No matter what the weather.

I price and sample day by day,
But make a purchase never;
For clerks may come and clerks may fade away,
But I'll shop on forever.

It is the keenest joy for me,
Wh-re crowds are congregating,
To dally with the clerk and see
The other people waiting.

And when I can no longer stay
The clerk's poor soul to harrow,
I tell him, "I'll not buy to-day,
But I'll come back to-morrow."

Though years may come and years may flee,
And earthly ties may sever,
"I'll still be joy enough for me
To just shop on forever.

THE VICAR'S DAUGHTER.

As long as Brandon was at home, his wife was happy and radiant as ever, so that he had no idea of her sufferings in his absence, until one morning she astonished him, and herself, too, by bursting into a flood of tears as he was bidding her good-bye, flinging her arms round his neck, and imploring him not to leave her. He had an important appointment, and was compelled to keep it, but all day long he was violently perturbed in his mind. After all, she was not happy; after his beautiful dream, the awakening he had foreseen was coming; she had been pleased at first, like a child with a new toy, but already she was *desillusionnee* and disappointed. He was as happy as ever himself, or had been up to this disastrous moment; but then his mind was occupied all day, and he had his beautiful darling to return to with fresh zest after his work.

CHAPTER XI.

In his bachelor days Brandon had a considerable circle of acquaintance. But unless a man has a settled position in society, or marries a woman who has, it is extraordinary how this circle narrows if he marries. There were plenty of women in society who had been pleased to know him and to be civil to him—he was a gentleman born and bred, and had good manners. They did not want to marry him—he was not rich enough to give a *cachet* to his business—but they met him in society; he was never intrusive—that was enough. But to know and visit his wife was a very different affair—he must drop out of their sphere into his own place now, unless she happened to be taken up in the proper quarter. Then, wine-merchant, horse dealer or pedicure, what mattered his business or profession!

There was one visitor always *fêted* in Bryanston Square, and though he came often and stayed long, he never overstayed his welcome. He was known to his intimates as Charlie Dallas. His full names and titles were Colonel the Honorable Charles Dallas, formerly of the First Regiment of Guards, from which he retired soon after the Crimean war, with a wound and two medals. He was agreeable, the reverse of rich, and he was fond of pretty women in a pleasant, fatherly sort of manner.

He had known and liked Brandon from a boy; but it was only when he became the husband of a loved wife that Colonel Dallas discovered what an immense regard he had for him. Vanessa charmed and delighted him—she perfectly fulfilled his idea of beauty and breeding in a woman—she was vivacious, graceful, gracious; all her instincts were delicate and refined—perhaps her chief charm lay in the fact that she was so delighted with him and took such pleasure in his society.

The winter passed, and by the time the London season began the Colonel had taken the place of the superior maid in public, and was Vanessa's escort. Many an older man than Charlie Dallas might have compromised a woman by being her constant companion, but everybody knew that Charlie was a man of honor and "as safe as the bank"; besides, that was "not his line."

The steps of the pair were most frequently turned to the Park, for Vanessa was never tired of this brilliant kaleidoscope, and as the Colonel knew every one and who every one was, it made it extremely entertaining. It was from no selfish motives that he refrained from introducing to her the many golden youths who came up to him in the hope of making Vanessa's acquaintance, but from honest scruples about her husband's peace of mind. He was so genuinely devoted to or that he would have done anything to give her pleasure.

One day as they sat in the Row and two pretty women passed talking with great vivacity to two gallant cavaliers, Vanessa sighed, and said:

"How happy all these women seem! How delightful it must be to know every one—every one nice, at least!"

That evening the colonel took up his parable as he and Brandon were sipping their after-dinner claret. Vanessa had just left them.

"You are a fortunate man, Brandon," Dallas began, though the remark was made more with a view to opening the ball of conversation than because he really thought his host what he professed to think him. To be the husband of a very beautiful woman was, to his experienced mind, rather a doubtful piece of good fortune.

But Brandon answered in the heartiest manner, evidently devoid of all misgiving.

"You are right, colonel, I am."

"May I bring my niece, Hermione Fane, to call on her?" he asked, after a moment's pause.

"I should think it very kind of you," answered Brandon, warmly.

So there was nothing left for Charles Dallas but to arrange the matter with his neice. It is very dangerous and imprudent to promise anything for a lady, especially that she will be kind and civil to an unknown member of her sex, but the colonel was tolerably confident about his niece, who was a very kind-hearted and pleasant little lady, and exceedingly fond of aim into the bargain.

The next afternoon he was ushered into her boudoir at six o'clock.

"Is it possible," he said, after kissing her, "that I am so fortunate as to find you alone! Where are all the *soupirants?*"

Mrs. Fane is small, pretty, extremely [illegible] and beautifully dressed. She [illegible] billiest little mortal in existence [illegible] seems strewn with roses, and, [illegible] all the world knows there is one [illegible] thorn among them, she steps on [illegible] such an unflinching smile that no [illegible] she suffers any inconvenience [illegible]

"[illegible] dear Uncle Charlie" [illegible] "I am [illegible] at home" to-[illegible] rise man and [illegible] be let in. I [illegible] and we'll have [illegible] tea, and [illegible] mysterious [illegible]

is so much pleasanter to be on one's own account. I don't care for reflected lustre myself.

"My dear girl," cries the Colonel, warmly, "I don't want you to do anything to put yourself to inconvenience. All I want is to get you to come and call on her with me, and ask her to luncheon. When once you have seen her, I know you will like her."

CHAPTER XII.

Contrary to all precedent, Mrs. Fane took a violent fancy to Vanessa the moment she set eyes on her; declared her to be perfectly lovely and 2 charming, and insisted at once on fixing a day for the luncheon party. Vanessa, on her part, had a difficulty in finding words to express how pretty, how sweet, how altogether delightful she found Mrs. Fane. The colonel was enchanted.

"Now, who shall I have to meet her?" said Hermione, thoughtfully, as they drove away from the door. "I must get two or three nice women, who may be useful to her and won't be jealous, and"—laughing—"I must not have any seductive young men on your account, to say nothing of the poor husband's."

"She is too fond of her husband to care about seductive young men," replied the colonel.

"Perhaps she has never seen any," remarked Hermione, skeptically. "I shall ask Mildred, and then, of course, if she comes, Gerard will. If he were not so infatuated about her, he would be sure to fall in love with the new beauty, but I think he is quite safe. What lovely eyes! they seem to float in some heavenly liquid! And what a wonderful color they are! You really are a very good judge, my dear uncle. And she is not the least conscious or affected. I hope she won't get spoilt."

As Vanessa is a little bit nervous about her debut, it is arranged that the colonel shall call for her and accompany her to Mrs. Fane's house, in Grosvenor Place. When he arrives in Bryanston Square, the victoria is already at the door, and Vanessa is walking up and down the drawing-room in a highly nervous state, waiting for him. Excitement has given a beautiful little flush to her creamy skin—the colonel is delighted to find her looking handsomer than ever. She wears a very fresh, white toilet; excellent and critical as is his taste, he finds nothing to be improved or to alter in it.

He does not seem at all in a hurry to start, but takes a chair and begins to chat.

"Shall we not be late?" asks Vanessa at last, having cast several meaning glances at the clock.

"Lots of time," he replies. "People generally stop out in the park until after two."

He has an object in being a little late today, though he is habitually the most punctual of men. But he knows that a pretty woman creates a greater impression by entering a room than by being found seated there. After all, though it is ten minutes past two when they arrive, there are only three persons assembled; the hostess, another lady and a very handsome young man.

"This is the head of the house," says the colonel, smilingly taking his nephew by the arm after Vanessa has been presented by Mrs. Fane to Lady Mildred Belair. "Mrs. Brandon, let me introduce Lord Ravenhold to you. Gerard, Mrs. Brandon.

"May I come and talk to you?" says the latter, dropping gently into the seat beside her as if he had known her all his life. "I've heard so much about you. And I hope you know a little about me."

Vanessa looks at him with interest. This is Edith's "Algy" about whom she has received so many heartrending confidences.

"Oh, yes," she answers. "I have often heard of you."

"And you sympathize with me, don't you?" he says, confidentially, bringing his good-looking young face close to her. "I know you do—you believe in love. You married for love—you wouldn't have old Sir Bertram. Quite right, I admire you for it! What a thundering old brute he is!"

For a moment Vanessa is a little bit taken aback at finding these state secrets spoken of so lightly and familiarly by a stranger; but soon the ease of her interlocutor's manner communicates itself to her, and she finds herself talking as naturally to him as though they had been children together.

Algy finds so interested a listener in Vanessa that he continues to pour out his confessions—it is charming to confide in a beautiful and sympathetic woman. Seeing the pair so engrossed with each other, the colonel feels a little bit uneasy. He is not in the secret of Mr. Howard's love-affair, and the lad appears so impassioned and Vanessa so eagerly attentive, that the outside world might well imagine them to be carrying on a little flirtation on their own account.

The party is beginning to disperse—now there is only the Colonel left, talking to Mrs. Fane, and Lord Ravenhold and Lady Mildred whispering in the corner.

"I suppose I must be going," says Mrs. Brandon, who has just caught the Colonel's eye for the second time.

"After all, I have not had a chat with you," exclaims Mrs. Fane at parting, "and I really must. If I look in upon you to-morrow at 6, will you give me some tea, and then we can have a nice little talk all to ourselves?"

"I shall be delighted," answers Vanessa.

"You are not to come and interrupt our tete-a-tete, Uncle Charlie," and Mrs. Fane turns to the colonel.

"Certainly not, my dear. Have you ever known me indiscreet?"

"Never—never in my life! To-morrow, then," shaking Vanessa's hand in a very friendly manner.

Lord Ravenhold and Lady Mildred have also risen to speed the parting guest.

"May I come and see you," says her ladyship, who has been asked by Ravenhold's sister to be civil to the new beauty, and Vanessa expresses her pleasure at the proposal very prettily.

Lady Mildred smiles and feels benevolently disposed towards Mrs. Brandon and the rest of the world. Meanwhile the Colonel is putting Vanessa into her carriage.

"I will say good-bye," he says. "You have seen enough of me for to-day."

CHAPTER XIII.

Viscount Ravenhold was a very handsome young man indeed, and particularly attractive in the eyes of the fair, to whom he was quite devoted. He was a keen sportsman, and something of an athlete; but there is no doubt that his favorite distraction was *faire le parfait amour*. He was one of the few men who would have stayed away willingly from a hunt or a shoot at the request of a woman with whom he was in love. He was devoured by chronic heart-hunger—the object of his passion might change (did, in fact, not unfrequently), but the desire to love always remained. He denied strenuously that he was fickle or unfaithful, and swore that he should be the most faithful lover created if [illegible]

Mrs. Fane took such an immense fancy to Vanessa that, in spite of the whirl of gayety in which she lived, she found time to see a good deal of her. And Vanessa, who was not, like Hermione, rich in friends, became still more attached to the gay, pretty, butterfly-like little lady—even the colonel had to sink into a second place.

Although Vanessa was frequently at Mrs. Fane's house, she rarely encountered Lord Ravenhold there. In fact, his friends saw very little of him unless they happened to be in company with Lady Mildred Belair. Mrs. Fane spoke of him sometimes, and lightly expressed a hope that he would not [illegible] trouble, and Vanessa, not knowing what to say, feeling that it was very terrible and shocking for a man to be in love with a married woman, yet not wishing to express disapprobation of a brother to his sister, generally took refuge in silence.

Hermione Fane, although she presented such a smiling face to the world, had a very unpleasant skeleton in her cupboard. She had him fast locked up, and though she did tried to look through the keyhole and pose cracks, and listen attentively to hear his bones rattle, it never succeeded in having ocular or oral demonstration of him. So it delivered the verdict that she was a thoroughly mercenary young woman without a grain of heart. The skeleton, as a matter of fact, was clothed in the fleshy garb of a somewhat stout and coarse-featured young man, Giles Fane by name, who was the husband of Hermione. Society saw but little of him, a circumstance which it did not regret, as he was neither agreeable nor amusing, nor, having a wife, eligible.

CHAPTER XIV.

Hermione had no other feeling for Giles now than contempt. When a woman thoroughly despises her husband, he can no longer wound or annoy her, unless he tries to fetter her actions or refuses to give her money. Giles Fane in these particulars [illegible] husband. He never asked a [illegible] nor grumbled at a bill, and Hermione [illegible] spent money very freely. [illegible] Giles, goaded on by the [illegible] mistress, might have been [illegible] wife, had she not been [illegible] up by his mother, but he felt he was no match for the two. All he wanted was peace and quietness, which, however, he was far from enjoying, as the second Mrs. Fane had a fierce, turbulent spirit. Still he remained devotedly attached to her, in spite of the scenes to which she not unfrequently treated him. He went up to town for a fortnight in the season for the Derby and Ascot, but though he was by way of staying at the house in Grosvenor Place, it saw very little of him. The racecourse, the horse-show in the daytime, music-halls in the evening, were his amusements. The world said he was a vulgar, uninteresting young man, and would have pitied Hermione had she offered herself as a candidate for its sympathy. But Hermione knew better. Never, how great soe'er your sorrows, ask the world's pity! Pity means contempt. It may at first offer you a languid sympathy, and will then hasten to turn its back upon you. Present a smiling face, seem to be fortunate and happy, though you may be racked with misery, and it will seek you and smile upon you.

Hermione smiled, and society envied and fawned upon her. Her smiles were natural enough now; she turned everything into jest and was only cynical upon one subject—happy marriage. She did not tell Vanessa to her face that neither her happiness nor her love would last, but she told the colonel so, and laughed at him when he doubted her.

Vanessa was puzzled about Mrs. Fane's relations with her husband. She did not quite know the real story, because Colonel Dallas was not able to tell it to her, and her husband did not know it. Vanessa had not been brought up in the fashionable world, and her ears were very sensitive indeed, and would have burned with shame had many things that were common talk been poured into them, and the colonel was the last man in the world to offend modesty. Many of her new acquaintances were amused and surprised at her innocence, but they respected it as gentlemen invariably do. Men always take their cue from the women they are talking to—it is very rare to find one who wantonly and brutally offends a modest woman.

Late one afternoon towards the end of the season, Vanessa and Mrs. Fane were drinking tea in the boudoir of the latter—they had been driving together, and Vanessa's victoria was presently to fetch her. They were conversing with eager interest about a fancy dress ball to be given by a fashionable lady, which was to be a *bal masque* until supper time, when every one would have to doff mask and domino. Both ladies had received invitations, and were discussing their costumes with exceeding animation.

At this moment the door opens and admite Lord Ravenhold.

"Am I horribly *de trop?*" he asks, having greeted Vanessa and brushed his sister's curly head with his mustache. "Were you playing your thousands or inventing a new fashion? I know it is worse to interrupt two bosom friends than two lovers."

"We will forgive you, as you don't offend very often," laughs Hermione. "You are a perfect stranger; dear boy. Ring for a brandy-and-soda."

"No," shaking his head. "I only want refreshment for the mind." And he sinks into a chair beside Vanessa.

"Tell us some news," says Hermione, settling herself to listen.

"News! There never is any in hot weather. Besides, I have hardly seen a member of your sex for two days."

"What has that to do with it" asks Hermione. "Have you not been to your clubs?"

"I should not be likely to pick up any there," answers her brother. "The only place where I ever hear news or scandal is in a lady's drawing-room."

"What a monstrous story!" laughs Mrs. Fane. "Well, we need not interrupt our conversation for you. We were talking of clothes, of course. *Apropos* what are you going as? Edgar Ravenswood or Faust? or one of the parts suited to a handsome young man?"

"On the contrary," returns Lord Ravenhold, "I am undecided between Quasimodo and *L'Homme qui rit*. The latter, I think, would be a novelty."

"Don't be a goose, Gerard. But really, seriously?"

"I don't think I shall go at all. Fancy a domino and mask in July! I should die of the heat."

"What character has Mildred chosen?" inquires Mrs. Fane.

"I don't know, I am sure," he replies, mendaciously, having just come from quarreling with her upon the very subject.

"If you please, ma'am, the dressmaker is here," announces the butler at this juncture.

"Oh, I must see her!" cries Hermoine, jumping up. "Will it be indiscreet to leave you two together? Do not make love to her, Gerard. You will only waste your time."

Her parting shaft cause no embarrassment to either; they smile each-has, or think he has, a permanent guest in his heart.

"My sister has a very light opinion of me," remarks Ravenhold, as the door closes upon her. "She thinks I am bound to make love to every woman I meet. But" —looking at Vanessa with a certain tender of earnestness—"I am the most faithful, the most constant fellow in the world, and though I am not such a barbarian as to be insensible to the charms of a beautiful woman, they are powerless to shake my allegiance."

"One can only love one person at a time," returns Vanessa, with a frank smile. "And that makes one perfectly indifferent to every one else, as you say, except just in a friendly way."

"Yes," he purues, sighing. "I know. You are an exception. Well, it is very nice for you and awfully nice for him. By the way, I have never seen your husband.

Twain halves of a perfect heart made one. I should very much like to see what the other half is like."

"Come and see us," says Vanessa, cordially; "my husband will be delighted to know you."

"Is Mr. Brandon jealous?" asked Ravenhold, unable to grasp the idea of a woman in these days thinking it *inconsonable* to entertain a man alone in her drawing-room.

"Jealous!" echoes Vanessa, laughing. "No, indeed."

"Ah, then you think I should bore you?"

"No, no," cries Vanessa, quite distressed.

"Then," observes Lord Ravenhold, gently but firmly, "I shall come and see you by myself when I think Mr. Brandon is out. You know you can always say 'not at home,' if you don't want to see me."

He is piqued. As a rule when he proposes to call upon a woman, she seems pleased and flattered—not one has ever made the smallest reference to Mrs. Grundy.

Here Mrs. Fane comes tripping in.

CHAPTER XV.

Lord Ravenhold has put Vanessa into her carriage and has returned to his sister's boudoir.

"Gerard," says Hermione, half laughing, "I will not have this. Youare to leave Mrs. Brandon quite alone."

"You flatter me!" replies Ravenhold. "Am I dangerous even to the peace of mind of a lady who is quite wrapped up in her husband?"

"Did she snub you?" asks Hermione, with an interested air.

"Most emphatically. She gave me distinctly to understand that she did not want me to call unless a third person was present."

"Tell me, Hermy," says her brother, "what sort of fe low is this Brandon, who has succeeded in awakening such an immense devotion in his wife's lovely bosom?"

"He is a very nice, quiet, gentlemanlike, middle-aged man," replies Mrs. Fane.

After a moment's silence, Ravenhold speaks with much more energy than he has done hitherto

"You know it can't last."

"Why not?"

"It's on the face of it. If he's a quiet, middle aged man, and she is, as she is, a gloriously beautiful woman, with every man who comes near making up with her, why, of course he'll go to the wall."

"Good-bye," says her brother, rising abruptly.

"Don't be cross, dear boy," utters Hermione, in a caressing tone.

"I am not in the least cross," he replies.

"All right," kissing him. "And, to please me, *leave Mrs. Brandon quite alone.*"

Lord Ravenhold frowns distinctly.

"I think you are really silly," he says, going.

"I dare say I am," she answers good-humoredly.

Two nights later Mrs. Brandon and Lord Ravenhold meet at a ball. Lady Mildred is also there. The two latter are not yet quite reconciled; there [illegible] serious breach [illegible] has [illegible] this time [illegible] tions of [illegible] of this, and [illegible] more resolutely in consequence. Her ladyship is of a fiercely jealous disposition. When she twice sees Ravenhold waiting with Mrs. Fane, and employing a coaxing manner to her which it is his wont to use toward all pretty women when his thoughts are not completely centred on one, a sudden rage and hatred against Vanessa possess her soul. She is violent, headstrong, passionate, unjust. When once her jealousy is roused, neither prudence nor common sense have any control over her. And she loves Lord Ravenhold in a reckless, furious sort of way, and will not tolerate any thoughts of a rival.

After dancing with Mrs. Brandon once, Lord Ravenhold had gone to Lady Mildred's side; she received him with her head in the air, made one or two cutting and insolent remarks, and turned her back upon him. He, not to be behindhand in spirit, returned at once to Vanessa, and, under the very eyes of Lady Mildred petitioned for another waltz. He knew and felt that he was doing exactly what his sister had warned him against, making Lady Mildred Vanessa's enemy, and he felt rather guilty and perturbed; but how was he to blame? Besides, after all, he said to himself, Mrs. Brandon did not care two straws about him or any one else except her husband, so what harm could it do?

Vanessa was pleased to dance with him; he waltzed perfectly; he was very good-looking; and, greatest recommendation of all, he was nephew to Colonel Dallas and brother to Mrs. Fane.

Mr. Brandon was at the ball, and Ravenhold asked to be introduced to him. They had entered into some conversation, the younger man having a considerable curiosity to arrive at the cause of Mrs. Brandon's devotion to her husband. After some chat he was still unable to grasp the reason. Brandon was exactly what Hermione had described him—a nice, quiet, gentlemanlike, middle-aged man; but were those qualities sufficient to inspire such a very ardent affection in the breast of a lovely young woman?

Lord Ravenhold proposed to Mr. Brandon that he and his wife should dine with them at Hurlingham on the Sunday following. He would drive them down on his coach. Brandon replied that it would give them both great pleasure. Ravenhold was a little surprised when, in dancing with Mrs. Brandon for the third time that evening, he informed her of the pleasure he was anticipating that she turned rosy red, betrayed considerable confusion, and, without giving any definite reason, said she was afraid they would not be able to accept his very kind invitation. He could not press her for the reason, as she gave none—she pleaded no previous engagement, and Ravenhold felt decidedly piqued. After all, he thought, with a sudden revulsion of feeling, it was commonly worth while (paraphrasing a *Vaudevaux* with Milly for a woman who did not seem to care either for his company or his attentions. So he went back to Lady Milfred, bent on propitiating her. But by this time she was beyond his power of recall. She did not, however, turn her back upon him as she had done before—she was so furious that only one idea possessed her, which was to have it out with him.

"Will you dance this with me?" he whispered, in his softest voice, and, without answering him, she put her hand on his arm. Her anger was such that she could scarcely bear to touch him. The fingers that rested on his arm writhed with a feeling of antagonism. Light as her touch was, she led him by her determination of purpose to the door, which was just where he did not want to go. He had no desire for a tete-a-tete at this moment; at all events until a waltz had exercised a beneficial effect upon her ladyship's nerves and temper.

"Let us stay and have one turn," he whispered, persuasively; but without answering him, she pressed her lips tighter together, and continued her march toward the door.

Every considerate hostess provides her guests with opportunities for *solitudes a deux*; to-night there were severe charming recesses and bowers arranged for the purpose. To one of these the lady, reversing the order of things, hurried her lover, but little thought or intention of love-making was there on the part of either.

"I congratulate you upon your latest conquest," she says.

"Such a conquest, too!" pursues Lady Mildred, after a moment's pause. "A creature picked up no one knows where, with her painted eyes and vulgar beauty airs. Upon my word, I rather wonder at your sister foisting your uncle's mistress upon society."

Perhaps the reader ought to have it explained to him that Lady Mildred is speaking of Mrs. Brandon, whom he may not recognize by her ladyship's description. At all events, she succeeds in her purpose, for she gets what, in the language of the day, is termed a "rise" out of Lord Ravenhold.

"May I ask of whom you are speaking?" he asks in tones of ice, although dangerous scintillations are gathering in his eyes.

Lady Mildred is pleased at having scored a point.

"I mean Mrs. Brandon," retorts Lady Mildred, too angry to f nce; "if you don't know it, everyone else does."

Lord Ravenhold retains his coolness, although he lost his temper some little time ago.

"Whoever invented that story is a liar," he observes, quite calmly. Lady Mildred can scarcely restrain herself from tearing him to pieces physically.

"How dare you!" she pants. "You coward!"

"It was you, then!"

"You are in love with her too," gasps Lady Mildred. "Do you think I have not seen it coming on from the very day she first went to Grosvenor Place? Do you think I have not seen how Hermione has been throwing her at you and playing into your hands? You had better think twice. Do you fancy that I am a woman to be thrown over like you did Ella Scott? I don't advise you to dare me. I am quite capable of going to Frank this very night."

She is quite beside herself, and Ravenhold appreciates that in her present mood it will not be safe to dare her, as his anger tempts him very much to do.

"May I have one word with you, Lord Ravenhold?" says a voice. Then, as its owner becomes aware of Lady Mildred, it adds:

"I beg your pardon."

The voice is John Brandon's.

To be Continued.

The Scotch in Blaine.

Great and silent, and silent now for all time. Great in experience, great in ambition, great in his knowledge of men and their works, great in that he had figured in great events; great, too, by contrast with his contemporaries of other nations, great in that he was an American of the purest mould, great in his absolutely stoic endurance, Blaine is dead!

He kept brave silence under trials and in hours of great agony, when lesser men would have cried out. Through years when ambition still burned in him and when enemies and ill fortune lashed him as few men are lashed, when his party failed in justice to him, he kept silence. To the American people he was a question mark. To the rest of the world an exclamation. He was stubborn beyond the conception of most men; stubborn along great lines. And why should he not have been so? In the first place, there was Scotch blood in him. When you see a man whose great grandfather fought with Prince Charlie at Culloden and then took a hand in the American Revolution, you can take chances he will bear a good brunt in court and camp and field. Mr. Blaine's forebears on his father's side were of that sort. Old Ephraim Blaine, when he had done fighting in Scotland, came out to America and served as Commissary General of the Middle Department all through the Revolutionary War.—*New York Herald.*

Dr. Schwand, of Breslau, the woman physician arrested some time ago together with 28 married and unmarried women for complicity in numerous child murders, was sentenced yesterday to 10 years' imprisonment. The other 28 prisoners were released with reproofs. All the women were of the better class, and were saved from prison only by the strongest efforts of their relatives. At the trial it was shown that Dr. Schwand was instrumental in taking the lives of some 50 infants.

Mrs. Geo. Welsh, while walking along a street in Windsor, Ont., on Friday afternoon, picked up a bundle which was thrown to her from a buggy occupied by a man and woman, who drove rapidly away. Mrs. Welsh opened the bundle, and found therein an infant female child, which she still has in her possession.

The largest telegraph office in the world is at the General Post-office, London. In it there are over 3,000 operators, constantly employed, about one-third of whom are women.

There are said to be 50,000 muscles in an elephant's trunk. It must have been packed by a woman

FASHIONS AND FANCIES.

London Belles Well to the Fore in Both Novelty and Style.

New Twist in Hair Ornaments—Society's Stockings All Inserted with Neat Lace—Latest High-Tone Dinner-Table Decorations—Old-Time Dance Measures Once More in Vogue—New Skirts, Berthas and Pelerines—Fans for Empire and Empire-Gown.

LONDON, January 1.—It is said that some women always look as if they had just stepped out of a bandbox, to use the accepted and time-honored phrase. Those who possess this article are usually of limited height, for those who do not possess it wonderfully managed. The invariable tastefulness and composure of habitualty neatness to be almost miraculous. Even a robin is occasionally somewhat dishevelled of aspect, but these human robins never.

An alarm of fire was given in a country house and everyone turned out in fear of what might be going to happen. An observer, whom little escapes even in such moments as these, wrote to a friend that he had always entertained a vague belief that nightcaps were a portion of feminine nightgear until that occasion, but that he had then discovered that crimping pins were the only means adopted by English women of keeping their heads warm on winter nights. He also remarked on the picturesque appearance of a handsome girl in a scarlet tea-gown with a cataract of curling raven hair flowing down the back of it and added: "Little Miss Prudent turned out as neat as ever in snow-white dimity, with capes and frills, looking as if they had that moment been ironed out, and not a hair of her head disordered. She must be thinking of tidiness when she's asleep." Few could stand such a test as this, and indeed such utter neatness would be a trifle monotonous if it were universal. The Puritans essayed it, and see how much they made of rebelliously curly locks that escaped from the thraldom of the small, close cap. Has poet ever yet sung a Puritan maiden without giving her at least one such mutinous ring of soft hair?

THE RUFFLE-HEADED JEZEBEL.

But, on the other hand there are girls who purposely ruffle their heads all over having arranged their hair, because they think it suits them to look slightly dishevelled. Those girls, do not as a rule belong to the cultured classes, though now and then their example is followed by some who should know better. There is a pleasant medium between a too mathematical precision and a *sans facon* style, and this is generally achieved by the well-dressed. As a man of considerable social experience remarked not long ago, "I can 'place' a woman with a glimpse at the back of her head. Her coiffure is so significant." It is very true and reminds one indirectly of Dr. Wendell Holmes' shrewd remark that to hear a person pronounce the simple word "how" told him more about that individual than he could have gathered on the subject in an hour's information from a third person.

THE NEW SKIRT SUITS DAINTY FIGURES.

The fact that the new skirts fit as closely as ever on the hips renders them very becoming to the owners of pretty figures, some are gathered in with a little fullness all round, a style that will be more fully patronized when sombre fabrics are in hand, while others are sheathlike in their smoothness and plainness. One of the new bodices is remarkably becoming, the cloth or serge overdress being cut away to show a beautifully braided or embroidered yoke, which is continued in a diminishing point to the waist. The overdress being lined with a narrow edging of fur wherever it borders upon the embroidery, the effect is very good. The sleeves are fulled into long tight cuffs, also covered with embroidery and very often the skirt of the dress is edged with embroidery and fur to bring it into affinity with the bodice.

Another very becoming bodice was the yoke square, with folds of the dress fabrics coming from the shoulders and meeting about an inch below the waist, the intervening space below the yoke being filled in with dark velvet. A very charming dress made in this style is in pinkish heliotrope cloth, the embroidery in gold and silver and shades of amethyst and the velvet in peasy purple. A band of the latter borders the skirt, and the long cuffs are in embroidery, while the full upper sleeves are composed of velvet.

BERTHAS, PELERINES AND STIFFENINGS.

Each succeeding week the fashion plates bear a closer resemblance to those belonging to the era of our great grandmothers prim, bell-shaped little figures that we have hitherto been wont to regard with a smile of amusement not altogether unmingled with derision. Now, however, we are rushing on to our fate, and berthes, pelerines and stiffened skirts are the first words with milliners; and we, the long-suffering slaves of fashion, are preparing to accept them without a murmur, with one exception—that of the crinoline, against which even lords of creation have deigned to raise their voices in protestation. It is a relief to turn to the Empire period. For teagowns more especially this style is irreproachable. Imagine a waistless robe of flowered brocho shot with the palest pink and green, watteau pleated at the yoke, and sleeves of rose-pink velvet, softened by draperies of filmy ecru lace. Sky-blue and black is a popular combination for evening wear. We lately came across a pretty teagown with the tight-fitting under-dress of light-blue silk. This glimmered faintly through black accordeon-pleated grenadine. The huge puffed sleeves were of blue silk partly veiled with lace, and the deep square yoke, also of silk, was deeply fringed with jet.

The new fans to accompany the Empire and Pompadour gowns are chiefly of the Louis XV. and Louis XVI period. Some charming examples are copied from the antique. They are about half the size of a modern gauze fan, and generally of white silk, beautifully painted with figures and flowers and elaborately mounted on carved and gilded mother-of-pearl.

NOVELTIES IN HAIR ORNAMENTS AND STOCKINGS.

Some very novel hair ornaments are now in evidence. They are in the shape of the feather that adorns the wicked red cap of Mephistopheles, and which are fastened by a hinge to a comb of tortoise-shell, so that they can be worn in several different positions. They are very ingenious and becoming. Among brooches some are formed to imitate bows and rosettes, of various shapes and sizes. They are made in brilliants and are extremely graceful. They are copies of those worn by the grand dames of the French *noblesse* at the latter end of the last century.

The latest fad in stockings is the insertion of a bit of real lace, on the foot and ankle. In white silk stockings white lace is introduced, while black lace is let into colored silks, such as blue, pink or red. Shoes and gown must of course be en suite. The newest silk stockings are all made in two colors, and dainty and very fanciful some of them are.

EMERALDS, RUBIES, TURQUOISES AND DIAMONDS.

Turquoises and diamonds are the favorite jewels of the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh's eldest daughter, who is now the Princess of Roumania. The combination is one that has been growing in favor with the smartest people since the marriage of Princess Louise of Wales. In the Princess Ferdinand of Romania's case there is a mother and a personal reason, also an intensely womanly one for this preference, namely, her charming personal appearance. Her pretty pink and white complexion, her bright, wavy fair hair, and her blue eyes are particularly adapted to the becomingness of turquoises to her. The tiara, necklet and earrings given to her by her father are most exquisite, and there is one of her evening gowns with which they will look quite perfect. The emeralds in Queen Victoria's present, a very beautifully designed pendant, are of wonderful beauty, but sapphires and turquoises are the jewels most suited to a fair girl. Emeralds and rubies look superb on a brunette, and all must be set with diamonds to secure effect.

DINNER TABLE FREAKS OF FANCY.

Some of the new dinner-table decorations have been wonderfully pretty and effective. At a local table the only flowers were Christmas roses and poinsettias. They were arranged with asparagus tops and fern fronds in crystal glasses, inlaid with gold, and the effect was particularly refined and lovely. Poinsettias were used only sparingly. They are so big and so imposing that a little of them goes a long way. Another table had on it nothing but frosted holly and mistletoe. The frosting was done in some way by which the leaves were white and glistening, a tiny portion of the scarlet berries showing on the holly, while the rest of the berries were apparently frost-flecked. In the centre of the table there was a crystal dish in each of which was filled with frosted fruit and bedded in moss out of the orange rose was pure white pancratium lily with a white silk banner springing up out of the heart of it, bearing the wish "A Happy New Year," in frosted silver letters. The lights were all bright red.

REFORMATION OF THE DANCE MEASURE.

The favorite dance item on every programme is now the Barn dance, a sort of cousin of the Pas de Quatre, but about as much like that stately measure as Sir Roger de Coverly is to a minuet de la cour. The Barn dance is more like the old polka-masurka than anything else. It is distinctly lively and therein is the secret of its popularity. We are evidently at the beginning of a great reaction from the ball-room languor which has obtained for so long. It is quite usual to see several couples skip light-heartedly and light-souledly through even the exquisite waltzes from "Faust," whereas such a proceeding even last winter, would have been regarded as most unorthodox. The smart thing nowadays is to be smart, and the noble art of dawdling has died of being overdone.

THE COSTLY FUR WHIM.

There is a lady well-known in London society for her affection of a Russian liberality of fur in her turn-out. Her servants are almost obscured by their capes and cuffs. She wears fur garments, reclines on a fur carriage rug, and has another over her knees. There have been times when one had sniffed at this Tobyncrasy, but during the recent cold weather one almost wept from envy of the comfort of it. It was impossible to keep warm on some of the days, and the run on cherry brandy at the confectioners' was serious. It is a lucky thing that British spells of Arctic weather are neither frequent nor lengthy.

A Genuine Scottish Poet.

Perhaps because simplicity of style is favored by simplicity of national customs and manners, and because simplicity is the highest art in literature when a writer really has anything to say, the Land o Cakes is prolific of poets. Every country produces verse-makers, but Burns' lays are the fountain of more genuine expression of human feeling, which is, after all, the main thing in music and verse, than any other spot on the globe. The bards of Scotland have made love-ditties and folk-poems for the world. He is a rare Scot indeed who has not at some time told the feelings of his soul in verse. Now and then, all over the world, such a Scot sings so pure a strain that all within hearing listen enchanted, and his song uplifts and sweetens many lives.

Such a singer was a Buffalonian, who died a few days ago at Derby, N. Y., where he retired to be a farmer several years ago, leaving the bustle and business and cares of the city behind him. Samuel Davidson is well known, through his rarely melodious verse, to thousands of *News* readers. It is not our purpose to quote at length from the writings now. They are familiar to most readers. A few of his lines come to mind at once in the time of his passing away. He was a thorough Scot—patriotic, domestic, gallant. Many of his verses will live. He had a peculiar faculty of receiving inspiration not less rare than his power of expressing what was in him.—*Buffalo News.*

What She Said.

Mrs. R. Peck, E 15th street, New York City, visited Canada last year, and had the good fortune to pick up something which not only suited her, but her neighbors also. Writing the manufacturer of Nerviline she says: "I bought three bottles of Nerviline while in Canada and treated my neighbors to some of it, and all think it is the best remedy for internal or external pain they have ever used." Nerviline deserves such a commendation, for it is a most powerful penetrating, and certain remedy for pain of all kinds. Take no substitute.

She Consented.

"You want me to marry you? Why have you singled me out from among so many girls of your acquaintance?"

"Because I made a vow that only the loveliest and most amiable girl in town should ever receive a proposal from me."

McCollum's Rheumatic Repellant

Is the most reliable internal remedy known for the thorough cure of rheumatism or neuralgia. In use over 18 years, thousands testify to it. The most eminent physicians in the world agree that internal treatment is required to eradicate the disease from the system. Sold by wholesale and retail druggists.

Two Good Reasons for Refusing.

First Scot—Mornin', John. Come awa' an' tak' a dram.

Second Scot—No, thank ye. I never drink sae early in the day—besides I've had ane a'ready.

GIBBONS' TOOTHACHE GUM acts as a temporary filling and stops toothache instantly. Sold by druggists.

A Clear Explanation.

Merchant to his son, whom he is sending on a mission to an influential friend—This gentleman will treat you very kindly. You may tell him that I am your father and, if you find it necessary, you may add that you are my son.—*La Lanterne de Cocorico.*

A cablegram from London, received by Lord and Lady Stanley at Ottawa on Saturday afternoon, announced the sudden illness and critical condition of Hon. George Stanley, the second son of their Excellencies. He had been seized with brain fever. Lady Stanley, it is stated, will leave for England to-day.

Perseverance, dear my lord, keeps honor bright. To have none is to hang quite out of fashion, like a rusty nail in monumental mockery.—*