

The Mystery of a Photograph.

During the last of June, in the year 18—, I had occasion to make a business trip to Detroit. I left Chicago on the morning train, and found an old friend of mine aboard bound for the same destination, writes "B. B. B." in the *Maple Leaf*. We spent most of the time in the smoker, smoking and reading novels and chewing gum, which had been proffered for sale by the newsboy.

I had just finished the twentieth chapter of my book, had closed it, tossing it on the opposite seat, and raising my arms above my head indulged in a well-proportioned yawn, when the conductor called out "Twenty minutes for dinner!" Being a welcome call and a limited time, we made all possible haste to the dining room, and after a hasty lunch started for the train again.

My friend, Hal Hempstead, walked along the platform to our own car, but I jumped on the last car and walked through the train.

As I entered the second car from the end and was walking hurriedly through, for I was afraid Hal might miss me, as he did not see me get on, I came to a seat containing a dainty parasol, a lady's travelling bag, and on the opposite seat a book, half-open, and between its pages, as though to mark a place, a photo—a photo of myself!

Yes, I could not be mistaken; but to make sure, in spite of the consciousness that the eyes of all the occupants of the car were turned on me, I stepped into the seat and lifted the photo from the book. Yes, it was one of a dozen I had had taken but a month ago. Looking around for the occupant of the seat, I failed to see her, but encountered a dozen or so pairs of eyes fixed, half in wonderment, half in anger, upon me.

Placing the photo back in the book, I hurried on, for as the train was now moving I had my fears as to Hal. I found him, however, comfortably seated in the car, evidently not at all concerned about my absence, but eager to relate an account of a flirtation he had been indulging in. This gave me no chance to subject my mystery to his conjecture for at least half an hour, and when at last I managed to do so he suggested that now, as I knew he was safe, I had better take a trip back to the car and solve my own mystery.

Acting upon his suggestion, but still rather dubious as to my reception in that particular quarter, I made my way back again, but my bird had flown. Parasol, satchel, book, and photo had gone.

Hal treated the whole affair as a joke, but for many weeks I wondered who the person was who so mysteriously possessed my photo: mysteriously, because I had only given three away—one to my mother, one to my sister, and one to a cousin who lived in Florida. As I had left my mother and sister safe in Chicago that morning, surely it was neither of these; and so surely was it not my cousin, for had she been in the North, she would have visited my mother. So with this reasoning and no enquiry, I contented myself that it was none of these three.

Time went on, however, leaving the mystery unsolved. I received a promotion in my business, now placing me manager of a department in a large wholesale millinery house in Chicago. I had bought a large house on Lake Avenue and drove my own dogcart. My mother still kept house for me, and I deemed myself destined to bachelorhood, even though only twenty-eight. I had never yet found the woman with whom I could be perfectly satisfied; whom I felt sure would go through married life with no curl-papers, no rolling-pins, broom-handles, or pokers. People said I was hard to suit. Well, perhaps so, but I have not regretted it yet.

I had worked pretty steadily during the year of 18—, and had decided to take a five weeks' vacation, it being my first in three years. I had fully decided on visiting an old friend in New York; but just a week before I started word came that he was dangerously ill, so I started for Montana instead. This was my first trip West, and I thoroughly enjoyed the glorious scenery.

I had intended to stop at Helena; but about five miles from that city I glanced out of the window of the car as it stopped, and caught sight of a somewhat large though thoroughly countrified hotel on the summit of a slight elevation. The

scenery surrounding it was the prettiest I had seen, and an instant decided me. I would not go on to Helena; I would stop here. Snatching my grip and my hat, I made for the door of the car and jumped to the platform just as the train moved off. I would send next day for my trunk at Helena.

Luckily for me there was a room at the hotel, to which I was designated. After a pleasant evening on the broad piazza I retired to my room and prepared for a good night's sleep after my journey and an early rise the next morning.

My landlady was a motherly little woman, and seemed delighted, when I related to her my former intention to spend the summer at Helena, that I should have changed my mind upon seeing her house. "You will find," said she as I started down the stairs after my talk with her that morning, "that all the boarders are very pleasant, and we were quite in need of some young gentleman, as there are twice as many ladies." And I made my way through the front door, across the lawn, to where I could hear a running stream.

I had evidently arisen before my fellow-boarders, for no one was astir. I reached the stream, a babbling, dashing rush of water, bordered on each side by young alders and bedded with stones. A little way up I could see a rustic bridge; but having risen early, and being still breakfastless, I decided to stay where I was; so spying a convenient branch in an old apple tree, I climbed into it, deeming myself not too far away to hear the breakfast bell.

As I sat wondering whether it were Fate or Providence—or something else—that prompted my sudden departure the day before, I heard a faint, sweet whistle, which grew nearer and louder.

"Ah!" I said, half-aloud, wholly to myself, "some one else up early too. Wonder if they have had their breakfast?" But I did not trouble to watch for the comer till presently there appeared on the little bridge a glimmer of white, a circle of straw, two dainty pieces of leather, and a whistle. On it came, down this side of the stream, until I could witness the daintiest, most graceful, most thoroughly beautiful of women I had ever seen.

The whistle ceased, and she said, "I wonder why I never came here before. It is wonderfully picturesque." She drew from her dress a tiny watch, regarded it for a moment, replaced it, and taking a book from under her arm seated herself at the foot of my tree to read.

What was I to do? She was the intruder surely. But I had no time to use my reason, for it suddenly deserted me when, as she opened the book, I looked once more on my photo!

"Great Caesar's immortal bard!" I exclaimed rather confusedly and before I could prevent its utterance.

The young lady was on her feet in an instant, and stood staring at me with eyes full of surprise and almost fear. The book had fallen to the ground; the photo lay face upward on the grass. She stared but for a minute, then dropping her eyes to the picture, blushed so prettily that I made a hasty descent and an elaborate apology, and then could restrain myself no longer, but laughed aloud.

Before I had sufficiently relieved myself the breakfast bell rang, and I having restored the book and photo to the little woman, with a slight inclination of her dainty head in acknowledgment and a half reproachful, half-mischievous, almost angry flash of the brown eyes, she turned to the path and had gained the house before I could recover myself.

As I entered the breakfast room and found myself opposite her at the table, I could not repress a smile as I noticed how busily she was talking to an old gentleman, whom I had spent three-quarters of an hour over last night trying to make him understand one sentence, as he was frightfully deaf. But he sat and nodded and smiled at her, and said "Yes" where he should have said "No," and "No" where he should have said "Yes."

However, "where there's a will there's a way," and in less than a week I had procured an introduction. I had never mentioned the photo, until one day, after about three weeks, we were sitting under the same old apple tree, and I ventured to ask, "Miss Brown, how did you get that photo?"

"I have a good mind not to tell you, Mr.

Albert," she said, blushing and smiling, "but I will just to relieve you. I was visiting your cousin, Miss Armstrong, one summer, and was reading 'No Gentleman.' Kittie ran in just the day before I started away and wanted me to come to see the new pony her father had bought her, and for want of a better book mark I took a photo from the table. I did not read the book again, and that night put it in the satchel, photo and all, to read on the cars. I did not discover it until I was far on my journey, and when I reached Chicago I intended to send it back, but somehow I kept overlooking it. I went from Chicago to visit an aunt at a small town near Detroit, and from there home. I have always used it for a bookmark, though why I cannot tell."

I both astonished and amused her by telling her I had seen it used as a bookmark by her before, and then I related my experience on the cars on my way to Detroit.

"Oh, well!" she said with a sarcastic smile, "I didn't suppose your cousin counted it much of a loss, so I just kept it right along."

My five weeks extended to two months, and Bessie Brown paid another visit to her Chicago friends, upon whose card-stand might have been found many cards bearing the name, "Mr. Eugene Albert."

And the photo? When you come to Chicago you will find it on our parlor mantel—Bessie's and my parlor mantel—safe from my baby's meddling fingers.

Three Things to Remember.

Hood's Sarsaparilla has the most MERIT.

Hood's Sarsaparilla has won unequalled SUCCESS.

Hood's Sarsaparilla accomplishes the greatest CURES.

Is it not the medicine for you?

Constipation is caused by loss of the peristaltic action of the bowels. HOOD'S PILLS restore this action and invigorate the liver.

The Conquered Conqueror.

Few men drank more deeply the cup of success than Alexander of Macedon, and few have come to a more miserable or shameful end. It is certainly worthy to note that the three great conquerors, Alexander, Caesar, and Napoleon, all ended their lives unhappily. Caesar was murdered by a band of conspirators in the streets of Rome; Napoleon died of a horrible disease in lonely exile at St. Helena; and Alexander, who aspired to conquer the whole world, fell a victim to strong drink. There is something more than mere chance in all this; and we wonder sometimes that men do not see how plainly history teaches that a terrible retribution dogs the steps of those who climb to power over the dead bodies of their fellow men.

The young Prince of Macedonia, who was only fearful lest the successes of his father should leave nothing extraordinary for him to do, appears to have possessed at a very early age most of the qualities that distinguished the daring and successful soldier. Only twenty when he ascended the throne, he threw himself with fiery ardour into that horrible delight of kings, called war. The Greek States, after a short, fierce struggle, were glad to submit to him, and then he sallied forth into Asia to attack Darius, the great king of Persia. The resources of his foes were enormous, but at last, after several campaigns, the young conqueror remained undisputed master of the enormous empire of Persia. It was whilst he was engaged in consolidating his power in those regions, that he met the foe before whom—

"Sceptre and crown must topple down,
And in the dust be equal laid
Along with crooked scythe and spade."

Although Alexander was unrivalled in his skill as a soldier, and as a leader full of promptitude and vigour, there was one conquest he had never attempted, and he whose name carried terror wherever it was spoken, was himself the victim of his own evil passions. He conquered Asia, but he had never conquered himself. His success had been so remarkable that he half fancied himself superhuman, if not divine. He could not, however, shield his friends from the grisly king, and