THE LUCKIEST GIRL.

BY B. B.

"Engaged to be married!" slowly uttered Theresa Middleton. "And to think that little Blanche Follett should have been the first of the graduating class to wear an engagement ring!"

It was rather strange. The three girls sat side by side on the broad veranda of the Acapulco Hotel at Long Branch—Theresa Middleton, tall, handsome and stylish, with jetty hair, large, dark eyes and yellow roses in her hair; Sophie Dean, slight and graceful, a type of the most exquisite blond loveliness, and Blanche Follett, the fiancee of the group, an insignificant, chestnut-haired lassie, pretty enough when one came to examine her features, but nothing beyond the average.

"How soon are you to be married, Blanche?" asked Sophie.

"I don't know. As soon as Guy's father returns from Europe, I suppose."

"And are you to have your trousseau from Paris? Oh, dear, I wish it was I," said Theresa, enviously. "You scheming little thing! Who would have suspected you of captivating a rich husband?"

"I don't care whether he is rich or not," said Blanche, firing up. "I only know that I love him. That is enough."

"It wouldn't be enough for me," said Theresa. "I must have cash as well as caresses. But come, girls, it's time to dress for tea. Those handsome young Cubans will sit opposite us again, and even a handkerchief flirtation is better than nothing. Blanche won't join us, but we don't care for that."

"What a funny old man, all in snuff color, that was that sat next us this afternoon at dinner!" laughed Sophie. "And how he stared at us. I shouldn't wonder if he were some rich widower."

"Horrid old fogy!" said Theresa. "Do you know, girls, he has taken the room next to ours? I saw them carrying an antediluvian trunk in there a little while ago. Depend upon it he's the first cousin to Methuselah! I'm sure I don't know what such wretched old creatures want at a place like Long Branch. Why don't they stay at home and nurse their rheumatism in their own back garrets?"

"Hush, Theresa," whispered Miss Follett, glancing around. "He is sitting on the other bench, just beyond. He will hear you."

"Who cares if he does?" said Miss Middleton, insolent in the pride and flush of her young beauty.

The gray-haired old man, who had been sitting with both hands clasped over his gold-headed cane, and his eyes intently fixed on the changing glories of the sunset sea, looked up here.

"I suppose, young lady," said he, "you think that the old have no business to exist. Perhaps when half a century or so more has rolled over your own head you may think differently on the subject."

Theresa colored and tossed her head, Sophie Dean tittered as she rose and shook out her flounced muslin robes preparatory to going up stairs, but Blanche Follett lingered behind after the other two had swept away, and glanced pleadingly up in the old man's face.

"I hope they have not hurt your feelings, sir," said she, wistfully. "They mean no harm only they are young and foolish."

"No, my dear, no," said the old man kindly. "You, at all events, have a gentler nature and more womanly temperament."

The August moon was at the full that night, and long after midnight Sophie and Theresa were practicing on the guitar and singing sentimental songs, when a waiter tapped at their door with a message.

"Please, miss, No. 49's compliments, and 'e has a bad 'eadache and can't sleep, and wouldn't the young ladies oblige him by leavin'hoff a-singing."

"What nonsense!" cried Theresa, sharply. "Every one is free to do as he or she likes in a hotel, I believe."

"Theresa," pleaded kind-hearted little Blanche, "if the old gentleman has a headache——"

"Pshaw! A regular fussy old bachelor," said Sophie, petulantly, "to spoil our practicing in this way."

For Blanche was resolute in insisting that the guitar should be put away, and so the two pretty girls went grumbling to bed.

"What do you think?" exclaimed Sophie, coming in the next morning, dripping and radiant from her bath. "Old 49 is sick! The doctor was there half an hour ago, and I just saw the waiters carrying ice for his head!"

"Some horrid fever!" cried Theresa, turning pale. "I mean to change to some other hotel at once. Blanche—where is Blanche? Why, she's gone, I declare! How provoking, when we are in a hurry to decide upon the matter!"

It was more than an hour before Blanche Follett returned, and when at length she entered the room Theresa and Sophie were half through the task of packing the trunks.

"Blanche!" cried the former, petulantly, "where have you been?"

"In the next room, with the sick old gentleman, doing my best to nurse him."

"Blanche!" shrieked Theresa.

"Well!" was the calm response.

"Are you mad?" cried both the girls in chorus.

"No—only human. If it was my father," added Blanche, courageously, "do you think I should went him to lie alone and unattended in a hotel like this?"

"Let him send for his friends," said Theresa, sullenly.

"Who can tell who or where they are?"

"Search his trunk—that's the way. You all not like so many fools!" said Sophie, sharply.

"I suppose they will do so if he does not get better soon. In the meantime he needs a daughter's care—and he memory of my own dear, dead father prompts me to the mission."

"Blanche, you are crazy!" cried out Miss Dean. "What do you suppose Mr. Archfield would say to your risking your life thus?"

"I do not think there is any risk," said Blanche, calmly. "Moreover, I believe Guy would bid me do my duty at any and all hazards."

"I'm glad my sense of duty isn't quite so supertine," said Theresa scornfully. "You can do as you please, but Sophie and I intend removing at once to the 'Mermaid House.'"

"And if you are sensible you will do the same," added Miss Dean.

But Blanche shook her head.

"No," she said, quietly; "I have made up my mind."

"Well, then," said Sophie, "I wish old Snuff Color would die and be done with it. For it won't be half so pleasant without you, Blanche."

"Old Snuff Color," however, as Sophie irreverently termed him, did not die. On the contrary, after that one day of peril the scales of chance seemed to turn in his favor, and permanent recovery set in.

"My dear," said he to Blanche Follett, "I have much to thank you for. Before yesterday, I never knew the soft touch of a daughter's hand upon my brow, the music of a daughter's footsteps around my bedside. Nor shall I consent to part with them now, I mean to keep you always my child."

Blanche colored and started at these incomprehensible words.

"Does he mean to adopt me?" she asked herself. "Or—no, surely, that cannot be possible—he is going to propose to me?"

But the old gentleman's next sentence completely solved the riddle.

"For I do not think you have once suspected," he added, with a quiet smile, "that all your secret charitable offices have been rendered to—Guy Archfield's father!"

Blanche was more frightened than ever. Surely the old man was insane.

"Mr. Archfield, senior, is in Europe," she said, hesitatingly.

"He was, my dear," the old man answered, dryly; "but he returned on the Ariadne and he is here by your side. I telegraphed to Guy this morning; he will be here in half an hour to confirm my words. Little Blanche, will you give me a daughter's kiss now."

"My own Blanche, you have won his heart," said Guy Archfield. "The only doubt I ever entertained about our marriage—his consent—is solved at last. He honors you as you deserve."

And the prettiest of all Blanche Follett's wedding gifts was the parure of diamonds, given by her wealthy and eccentric old father-in-law.

And Theresa Middleton and Sophie Dean cried out in chorus, as they had cried before many a time:

"Blanche is the luckiest girl!"

—Joseph R[illegible] man, Percy, writes: I was induced to try Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil for a lameness [illegible] which troubled me for three or four years, and found it the best article I ever tried. It has been a great blessing to me.

HORRIBLE WORK

Was That Memorable Battle in the Soudan.

Written for the Boston Commercial Bulletin.

At it we went; the square was closed. I must acknowledge that our men were now mad. We all felt that we must fight for our lives. Retreat was not to be thought of; if we did, where could we retreat to, cut off as we were from all support? If we did not win the day we must leave our bones in the desert. The temper of our fellows mounted to the boiling pitch. Each man felt as if he must put forth the power of a giant, and as a consequence the butchery was terrible—none dared to flinch. Thus every man in the square had to do his duty, for while the inside resembled a volcano in active eruption, the outside or kneeling ranks had enough to do to keep the other Arabs at a respectful distance. The fighting was literally back to back, bayonet v. scimitar.

Stabbing and gashing their horses, which were jammed in a mass, we quickly brought them to the ground, riders and all when the latter were despatched by dozens of bayonets at once. The Arabs being packed so tightly together, could neither use their lances nor wield their scimitars without slashing each other, while we did not cease our lunging as long as one breathed. At last they were wiped out, and we again faced outwards and reopened fire, our weapons meanwhile dripping. Five times the enemy charged us with frantic cries and waving banners, and as many times we poured in the murderous volleys—no shots wasted.

It was during one of these charges that Colonel Burnaby, impatient at the restraint imposed on him, pushed his horse through the ranks of the rear face, and singling out an emir who was making himself disagreeably prominent, made a thrust at him, but was rather short; the emir thrust in return with his lance, but Burnaby, with a sneer on his face, parried it easily. Two or three other Arabs took a hand, but he disposed of them similarly. It was evident that he now intended to astonish them by his magnificent swordsmanship, as he gathered up his reins and tightened his grip on his sabre. But at this juncture another rush was made, the Arabs surged around him, and before he could turn an Arab thrust at him from behind, piercing his jugular vein. He reeled in the saddle and fell, but springing to his feet, dying though he was, he delivered one tremendous cut at some dismounted Arabs nearest him, with such terrible effect as to sever the head from the shoulders of two of them! As he dropped the Arabs closed in to mutilate him, but a dozen men sprang from the square and tore his body from them. Meanwhile the battle raged, the enemy came on like waves, not to be driven back, but to be beaten to the earth. Horses and men, they were piled in mounds; in fact the great numbers of their dead and wounded interfered with their movements, while the slightest delay on their part insured certain death, and it was now noticed from their hesitation that they had lost heart. As they came on for the last time, the front of their advance consisting entirely of white-robed emirs and sheiks, shouting, waving their banners and pointing at us, all our machine guns opened a searching fire, supplemented by hand-clap volleys from the Martini-Henrys, and when the smoke lifted not a live Arab was to be seen within 5000 yards—they were all stretched.

—Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup stands at the head of the list for all diseases of the throat and lungs. It acts like magic in breaking up a cold. A cough is soon subdued, tightness of the chest is relieved, even the worst case of consumption is relieved, while in recent cases it may be said never to fail. It is a medicine prepared from the active principles or virtues of several medicinal herbs, and can be depended upon for all pulmonary complaints.

She Was a Rascally Lady.

From the Arkansaw Traveler.

A woman who had hired a negro to saw fifty cents' worth of wood, looked at the wood when the old man had finished the job, and said:

"Uncle Bob, I told you to saw fifty cents' worth."

"Yassum."

"Well, you haven't hurt yourself."

"No, lady, I hain't hu't merse'f, an' I didn't come heah wid dat 'tention, an' whut yerse'f wants me ter hu't merse'f fur is suthin' I doan' un'erstan'. It's de fool dat hu'ts hisse'f. I ain't no fool. Oh," with sudden recollection, "you hain't gin me mer fifty cents yit. Gwine down heah an' git some med'cine fur mer sick son, an' den I'se comin' back an' saw yer ser whole lot er de nices' wood yer ever seed. Thanked ma'am, he said when he had received the money; and then, as he stood fumbling with the gate latch, he mumbled: "Dat white 'oman 'spects me ter come back heah an' work all day fur dis heah little bit o' er fifty cents. Didn't out her mo'n ha'f er nuff wood—kivered up her bar'l ter make it look er big pile." He passed out into the street and mused: "Reckon she's found out by dis time. Whut's dis? Good Lawd! Dat rascal lady didn' gin me but er quarter!"

—Pleasant as syrup; nothing equals it as a worm medicine; the name is Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator. The greatest worm destroyer of the age.

Bad for Evangelism.

From the Baltimore Herald.

Sam Small, the evangelist, is just now the subject of a very unedifying and unevangelistic correspondence in the Western newspapers.

It seems to be admitted that Mr. Small has been recently making extensive purchases of diamonds and jewelry for his wife and himself, and a jeweler of Cincinnati is now suing the evangelist for payment of a note given to cover the balance due.

It will strike many good and true friends of Messrs. Jones and Small that this exposure is more damaging to their cause than the harshest censure of orthodox clergymen or the most caustic satires of infidels. The injunction to the primitive evangelists to take with them neither purse nor scrip, and generally to forsake utterly the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, does not harmonize well with the report of a revival preacher of national fame being pressed for payment of notes given to cover the purchase of diamonds and expensive jewelry for personal use.

It is one of those incidents that makes the devil laugh in his sleeve.

—There is danger in neglecting a cold. Many who have died of consumption dated their troubles from exposure, followed by a cold which settled on their lungs, and in a short time they were beyond the skill of the best physician. Had they used Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup before it was too late, their lives would have been spared. This medicine has no equal for curing coughs, colds and all affections of the throat and lungs.

The Steward Estate.

From the Philadelphia Times.

Mrs. Stewart's will, which was made public yesterday, dispels the notion that any of the immense Stewart fortune is to go to public uses, except the Garden City Cathedral and the schools attached thereto, which had already been endowed and attached to the Protestant Episcopal Church of the diocese of Long Island. The remainder of the estate, which must be very large, is divided among various relatives and friends, and it probably will be distributed and largely squandered in a good deal less time than it took its original owner to accumulate it.

—A dilapidated physique may be built up and fortified against disease by that incomparable promoter of digestion and fertilizer of the blood, Northrop & Lyman's Vegetable Discovery and Dyspeptic Cure. It counteracts biliousness and kidney complaints, overcomes bodily ailments special with the feebler sex, causes the bowels to act like clockwork, and is a safeguard against malaria and rheumatism.

An Expressman's Trick.

A young woman journeying alone from Seattle to Nanaimo recently, landed at Victoria, B.C., and her trunk was landed at the wharf where the boat for Nanaimo would start. She didn't know this, and hired an expressman to take it to the Nanaimo wharf. He did. He loaded it, made the girl pay in advance, and then drove around the block and back to the starting place.

—Give Holloway's Corn Cure a trial. It removed ten corns from one pair of feet without any pain. What it has done once it will do again.

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