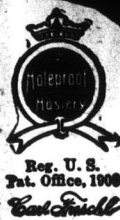


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Reg. U. S. Pat. Office, 1908

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Holeproof Hosiery Co. of Canada, Ltd.
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Gentlemen: I enclose \$....., for which send me one box of Holeproof Hosiery for..... (state whether for men, women or children). Weight..... (medium or light). Size..... Color (check the color on list below). Any six colors in a box, but only one weight and size.

Name.....
Street.....
City..... Province.....

LIST OF COLORS
For Men and Women—Black, Light Tan, Dark Tan,
Pearl, Lavender, Navy Blue, Light Blue.
For Children—Black and Tan only—med. weight only.

On the Denver Sleeper

A Tale of Christmas Eve. Written By J. de Q. Donehoo

THERE were just a round dozen of us on the Denver sleeper that Christmas Eve. All we men, numbering eight, had already fraternized with that good-fellowship which is invariably begotten of common dangers or tribulations encountered. The four ladies had not, however, up to this time "spoken to strange men on the train," as was eminently proper. But now with the entire stoppage of the wheels, with the certainty that we should have to pass the night here, snow-bound, and that it might be a day or two before we got off again, the icy manners of the better half of creation melted, if the snow did not.

"I am Mrs. Jones, of Washington, on my way to San Francisco to meet my husband, Captain Jones, who arrives from the Philippines on the 31st; and this is my daughter, who accompanies me," said the handsomely gowned and attractive looking middle-aged lady who had berth No. 7, suddenly unbending and addressing the group of us men who were gathered near the middle of the car. "And isn't this dreadful, gentlemen, perfectly dreadful!"

All of us hastened to reassure Mrs. Jones and her charming daughter, as we most gratefully acknowledged the compliment of the introduction.

"And I am Mrs. DeWitt, of Chicago, on my way to Denver," affably remarked the stunning blonde who occupied the seat opposite that of the Jones'.

"I am Miss—Miss Parsons, of New York," diffidently volunteered in a moment or two a modest-looking but not unseemly appearing brunette who sat at the other end of the car, "and I am on my way to Salt Lake."

Scarcely had we all acknowledged these introductions, and begun to commiserate each other, as well as enter on interminable speculations as to our ultimate fate, when the train conductor, a big, burly, good-natured man who seemed to exude optimism, bustled in to reassure us.

"It's all right, ladies and gentlemen," he protested. "Sorry that you're thus unaccommodated; but there's plenty of fuel on board to keep us all warm, and plenty in the diner for everybody to eat, for supper and breakfast, anyway. Let's turn in and make the best of it and spend the jolliest Christmas Eve of our lives, even if we are snow-bound out here on the Kansas prairies. They'll get us out by noon to-morrow, anyhow, I think."

"Bravo!" cried we all, even the ladies. "Let's make the best of it. A Merry Christmas Eve it shall be."

With an infectious laugh and a few more cheery words the jolly conductor passed on, to infuse new life and hope into the passengers on the other sleepers in the rear, even as he had already done, doubtless, whilst passing through the coaches in front of us. Remarkable it is, the influence exerted by one through-going optimist possessing the personal magnetism that railroad man had. We were all now as cheerful, hopeful, and I may even say, contented, as a few moments before we had been wretched, dejected, discouraged and even fearful.

How it had snowed that afternoon on the prairies! Ever since we left Topeka at noon, soft flakes had been falling; but as the day wore on, what at first had been merely a storm became a blizzard. The air was full of icy spicules that served no longer to make the skies white, but actually darkened them, so thickly they fell, and were tossed about by the furious blasts from the northwest.

With the darkness came an end to our progress. Not even by backing every few minutes, then dashing forward under all steam, could the engineer longer make an impression upon the inert walls of icy debris that ever rose higher and more unyielding before him. The weary wheels lagged and with a few last despairing snorts from the locomotive, ceased to turn. We were snow-bound, snow-bound on the prairies, in a snow-bound town, in the midst of the most terrible

storm that anyone on the train could remember. And though from the last station, ten miles back, a message had been sent to Topeka for relief—snow plows—it might never reach there, the lines very likely being down. But somehow we now felt that it would all come out right, and even if we didn't get off for a day or two, we were determined, like Mark Tapley, to be jolly notwithstanding.

"I'll tell you what I propose that we do," soon suggested Mrs. Jones, who at once began to come out strong, revealing the possession of eminent social qualities, and very gracefully, as the elder of the ladies present, assuming the unquestioned position of chaperone and mistress of ceremonies on our sleeper. "It's Christmas Eve. We can't have a party, at least we can't dance, or anything of that kind. I suppose, too, that a Christmas tree would be out of the question; and I don't imagine that we could hang up our stoe ings and reasonably expect a visit from Santa Claus, there being no fireplace in evidence, and the travelling out this way being so bad that even Dancer and Prancer and the rest of his reindeers would probably balk at trying to reach us. I suggest, then, that after supper we spend the evening in telling stories. True ones are the best, and each of us will therefore relate the tale of his or her life. We may use fictitious names for persons and places, if we so desire; but each of us is to pledge his solemn word that his narrative is strictly true. What do you say?"

"Capital! the very thing!" shouted all of us men in unison. "We agree, and thank you ever so much, Mrs. Jones, for the suggestion. It will certainly make a jolly evening for us."

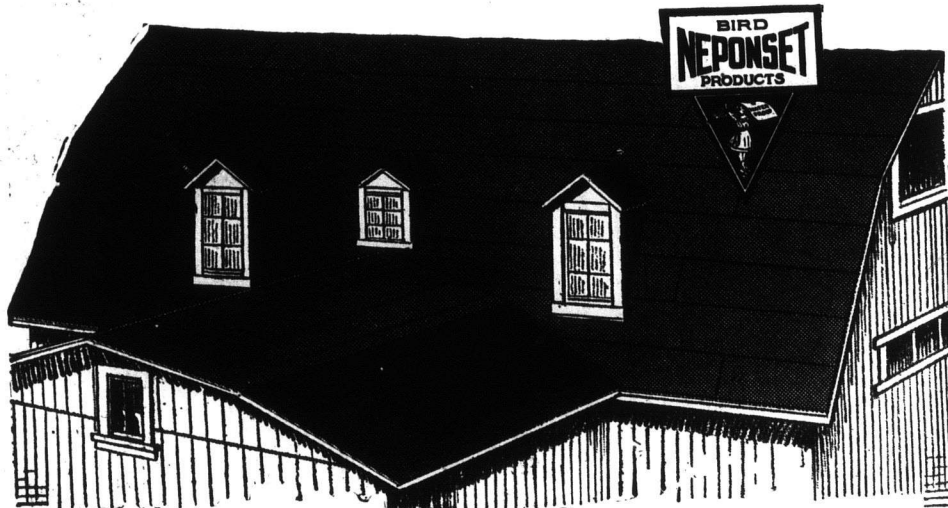
The three other ladies did not, however, acquiesce quite so cordially. The modest brunette, in particular, seemed to be decidedly opposed to the proposition, as was also the blonde from Chicago. But these were soon whipped into line by the coaxings of the rest of us, and so it was settled.

After supper, and a very good one, had been served in the diner, which we all took together, having made arrangements to that effect with the head waiter, our little coterie, by this time christened "The Twelve," resumed its old position in our own pullman. Mrs. Jones was by acclamation called to the chair and the story-telling began, we being gathered together in a little circle at one end of the car.

Our chaperone and president very considerably agreed to open the evening's entertainment, which she did, telling very pleasantly the story of her life—not a specially eventful one, but full of enough human interest, as related by its very charming raconteur, to hold our closest attention. Next followed the briefer and not all exciting biography of her daughter, but one most fascinating as it fell from the lips of its pretty subject. Third was the turn of the dashing blonde lady from Chicago. I am almost tempted to set down here the salient features of her life's romance, for the readers' benefit—it was very entertaining—but I will refrain and pass at once to the history of the fourth lady, Miss Parsons.

"The name I gave you," she reluctantly began, as urged by Mrs. Jones, "is not my real one. I am not Miss Parsons; I am not Miss anybody; I am a widow. Greatly do I dislike to tell the story I now relate, but you all have persuaded me, against my will, to promise to do this; and I will not deny that I have been greatly interested by the tales that have already been told. I will not, therefore, refuse to contribute my own quota to the evening's entertainment, much as it pains me to do so."

"I was born some—well, we will say twenty-six years ago, in a little village in the hills of West Virginia, not far from the Ohio river. My parents were of Scotch-Irish descent, as nearly all the people in that region are—pious, God-fearing, religious enthusiasts, and with the strictest ideas about morality, as



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