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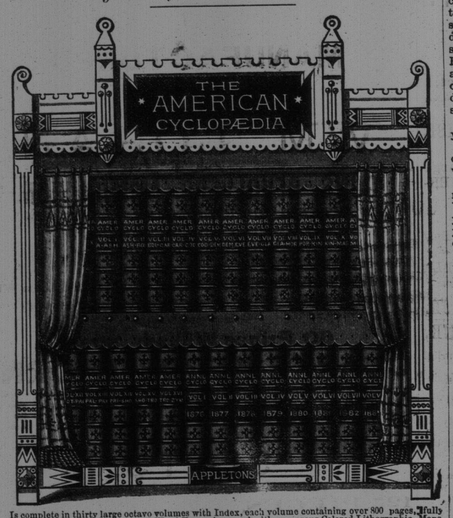

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A BLUE SERGE SUIT

By ROBERT SHINDLER.

I.

I GOT this suit because I was going to the seaside. My wife said I was to go; that I was looking tired and worn, and that I wanted a change. Now I don't at all care about going into the country. London is the pleasantest place in the world, and it seems folly to leave it for a place that is certain to be less pleasant. And I had not been away for years—not since I was married, in fact; but this year my wife said I was to go, and she stroked back my hair from my forehead, and said my temples were throbbing, and that showed I ought to be at the seaside. And she kissed me on the top of the head on the place where the hair is very thin, and said persuasively, "We'd better spend the money that way than in doctor's bills, Walter, and you can easily take three weeks' holiday."

"I can," I said, "and I will; but I don't know why I should go away simply because everybody else does. The air of Highgate is healthy enough for anybody, and we can make some excursions from here. We can hire a carriage and drive out through Hendon, anywhere in that direction. And I'll take you to the Crystal Palace. And I haven't seen Epping Forest for ever so long."

There's no use arguing with my wife—she never gives in. I'm told most women are like her in that. She persuaded me finally that I was to go down to Eastcliff, and after I had been there a day or two I was to look out for lodgings, and she would come down with the two children. They didn't want the change, she said; it was for my sake we were going. But she couldn't think of leaving me alone. When we had settled on Eastcliff my wife left me in peace for a few days. Then one morning at breakfast she said suddenly:

"Have you ordered your new clothes yet, Walter?"

"New clothes, my dear?" I said. "I don't get my next suit for another six weeks."

"Well, but, Walter," she said, "you must have a light suit for the seaside. You can't go about all the time in black; you must have a jacket suit, for when you are sitting on the pebbles or rowing or wading."

It was no use saying anything; my wife would have ordered the suit herself if I hadn't gone round to the tailor's.

He was very pleased to see me, and rubbed his hands deferentially as I sat down.

"A little sooner than usual this time, sir," he said. "The same thing, I suppose, sir. Black diagonal coat and vest."

"Mr. Tape," said I, "I regret that it is not the same thing. My wife insists on my having a summer suit—a light suit, you know, for the seaside."

He showed me no end of patterns of light materials, but I couldn't satisfy myself. I am shy, let me say here—particularly about wearing new clothes. My wife says I am afraid that people will pinch me as my schoolfellows did when I was a boy. Even when I get into a new black coat just the same as the one I am leaving off, I don't like it. And to wear those stripes and things! At last the tailor suggested a blue serge. That wasn't so very different, he said, and was quite the correct thing for the seaside—quite nautical, in fact.

I fixed on a suit of navy blue, and was pleased when I got home to find my wife was satisfied.

"It's a pity we're not going into Wales or Scotland," she said, "or you could have worn knickerbockers."

"My dear," I said, "I'm sure I wouldn't. You may tempt me to a blue serge suit, but we must draw the line somewhere. I draw it a long way this side of knickerbockers."

Well, the day came at last that was to take me to Eastcliff. My wife had fixed on Eastcliff because she has an old maiden aunt who lives there. This aunt has promised to do something for the children by and by, and we have hopes that their parents won't be forgotten. The next day was her birthday, and my wife had bought her a small pair of ear rings, and I was to be sure not to forget to call and deliver them, with all sorts of messages and inquiries. I had another small piece of business, too: a copy of an agreement had to be sent down from our firm to the leading solicitors at Eastcliff, and as their head clerk was one of my greatest friends—we had been in the same office in London—I readily undertook the commission. I got down too late that night to do more than look at the sea before I went to bed, but the next morning I was out walking on the beach very early. The sea looked very cold, and I determined to put off my bathe till after breakfast. Afterwards I decided to go and call upon my wife's aunt; just as I started, however, I found out that I hadn't the earrings. They were in a small box like a pill box, and I had taken my compound colocynth pills instead. I was horrified to think of the scene there would have been had I presented the wrong box; I didn't think I was going to make a still worse mistake. When I went back to my room I saw the agreement which I was to leave with Messrs. Croyland, Harkness & Fillip. So I put it in my pocket, and as I found their office was on my way to the old lady's house, I determined to leave it as I was going there. Accordingly I went to the beach.

Just as I was getting into the water a man about my size and build got out of the next machine. He walked out gayly into deep water and then swam out to sea. If I could swim like that, I thought, there would be some sense in sea bathing; but I had to stand about on the beach, which was pebbly and hurt my feet a good deal. Then a wave broke over me and filled my mouth with water, and I was glad to get back again and dress myself. I was very quick over my dressing, as I began to be afraid of being late at my aunt's. My boots seemed to be unusually painful; I supposed it was owing to the pebbles on the beach when I had bathed. I gave up the idea of calling on the lawyers, but fortunately I met my old friend Hopkins, the head clerk of Messrs. Croyland & Co., and I gave him the packet I had.

"Are you down here for business or pleasure?" he said. I knew he wanted to chaff—Hopkins was always great at chaff.

"For pleasure, chiefly," I answered.

Hopkins is a bachelor, or I would have said; "For my wife's pleasure."

"Ah, I should think so," he said. "How much for the get up?"

Hopkins, like many other people, is often vulgar when he tries to be jocular.

"It fits you like ze pa-a-per on ze wa-all," he went on. "Jacobs & Co., I suppose." Then he examined the coat more closely

"It's very queer," he said, "the cloth is the best serge made, but the fit—why, my dear fellow, your arms are sticking out of it dreadfully."

It was quite true, though I had never noticed before that the sleeves were so short. I am not quick at observation, but it struck me as rather strange that my wife had not remarked it.

However, I arranged to see Hopkins in the evening for a chat over old times, and went on to my aunt's (I know my wife's aunt is not really my aunt, but then what relation is she? I call her my aunt). She wasn't in a very good humor when I called. I don't think elderly ladies are very keen about celebrating their birthdays. They only keep them once in four years, I fancy, and perhaps this wasn't the right year. First my aunt scolded me for being late, then for walking fast and making myself hot. Then she became amiable again, and said she was glad we were coming down here; she should be so glad to see her niece.

"And your niece's husband, too, aunt, I hope," I said, with an attempt at being pleasant.

"Don't be ridiculous, sir," she replied. "I mean your little girl, of course."

This cool way of skipping a generation was rather too much for me, but I said nothing.

My aunt looked at me for a moment. "Mr. Biffin, I don't like your extravagance. A married man ought not to wear expensive flowers in his coat; those must have cost you half a crown at the least."

"Expensive flowers, aunt?" I gasped. "I've bought no flowers."

"Expensive flowers, aunt?" I gasped.

"Then where did you get those, Mr. Biffin?" inquired my aunt sternly.

I looked, and sure enough there was a buttonhole of very choice flowers in my coat. I didn't in the least know how they got there.

"Aunt," I said, "I didn't buy those flowers."

"Don't tell me," she replied. "Who would give you flowers, I wonder?"

I might have found some telling reply to this very uncomplimentary question, but I was so astonished by the presence of the flowers that I could think of nothing to say. At last, to make a diversion, I took out my wife's present and handed it to my aunt.

"A little trifle, aunt," I said. "Bertha hopes you will like it. I took out my handkerchief as I said this to wipe away the perspiration which my excitement had caused; a piece of brown paper fell to the ground and fluttered over to where my aunt was sitting. I didn't like to go over and get it, but sat still mopping my face.

"I hope you like Bertha's choice," I said after a time; "it is so hard to find anything exactly appropriate."

I looked at my aunt; her face had a very queer expression.

"And is this your idea of what is exactly appropriate?" she repeated in tones of deep irony.

For a moment it flashed upon me that I had brought the compound colocynth pills after all.

"Is this your idea of appropriate?" she repeated, as she held up a wedding ring.

"Mr. Biffin," she said solemnly after a little time, "you are not such a fool as to want to give me a wedding ring. There is some secret here, and you have betrayed yourself."

And my aunt slowly stooped down and picked up the paper at her feet.

"I saw you eying it," she said. It was a telegram. She took it out of the envelope and read it, then looked at me and said: "You villain!"

More astonished than ever, I took it from her hand and read: "Will come by 5 p. m. train; meet me at station. Mille baisers. Clara."

"I know French," said my aunt. "That means 'a thousand kisses,' you villain. And addressed to 'C. Lambert, Poste Restante,' of course. You villain! —and a wedding ring, too! You are going to run away from your dear wife. But I will defend my little niece and her mother too."

I gasped out that I was innocent, that I knew nothing of the telegram or the ring. My aunt darted at me and seized a small locket hanging on my watch chain.

"That's not the locket I gave you on your wedding day," she screamed. "Open it."

I did so, and inside there was a little braid of hair and the portrait of a lady. My aunt was furious.

"I suppose you will tell me that that's your wife's portrait, and that her hair is dark," she said.

All of a sudden the truth flashed upon me. I understood it all—why the boots hurt me, the short sleeves, the flowers, everything. I had gone into the wrong bathing machine, and dressed in some one else's clothes. It was a blue serge suit, but not mine. I was a long time before I could persuade my aunt of the truth of this, but at last she gave in that I was right.

"Mr. Biffin," she said, "I called you a villain—I was wrong. You are a fool. A man who doesn't know his own clothes isn't fit to be a married man."

II.

I went straight back to the bathing place, in the hope of finding out something about the man whose clothes I was wearing. I was sure that the man I had seen swimming out to sea was the man I wanted. I found him in a low public house. He was surrounded by a lot of rowdy looking fellows, and was telling them about the very affair of the change of clothes. "Yes," I heard him say as I entered, "it was one of the downiest tricks I ever heard of, and I've come across a good deal in my time."

"So you 'ave, Bill; 'ear, 'ear," they chorused approvingly.

"He was got up just like 'im, yer know; just the same kind of togs, watch chain, and everythink."

"I suppose the watch he left behind wasn't worth much," observed one of the listeners.

"Wot do you think?" replied the Cockney contemptuously. "In course it wasn't, no fear of that. But, Lord, you should have heard the other a-cussin' and a-swearin'; seems as how he'd somethink valuable in his pockets. If he comes across that downy card he'll make it 'ot for 'im. But, Lord bless you, he's safe again in Whitechapel."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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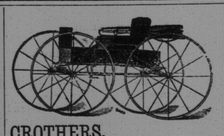

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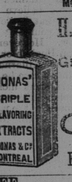

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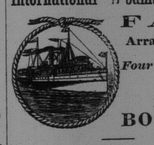

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373. Furness Line warehouse, Water street.

372. Schofield & Co., Ltd. ship brokers, Prince Wm. street.

208. Shephard, W. A. & Co, Employment exchange, 134 Prince Wm. street.

A. W. McMACKIN, Local Manager.

RAILROADS.

INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY.

1889 SUMMER ARRANGEMENT. 1889.

ON and after **MONDAY, 10th June, 1889,** the trains of this Railway will run daily (Sunday excepted) as follows:—

TRAINS WILL LEAVE ST. JOHN

Day Express for H'f'x and Campbellton	7.00
Accommodation for Point du Chene	11.10
Fast Express for Halifax	14.30
Express for Sussex	16.35
Fa Express for Quebec and Montreal	16.35

A Parlor Car runs each way daily on Express trains leaving Halifax at 8.30 o'clock and St. John at 7.00 o'clock. Passengers from St. John for Quebec and Montreal leave St. John 16.35 and take Sleeping Car at Moncton.

TRAINS WILL ARRIVE AT ST. JOHN.

Express from Sussex	8.30
Fast Express from Montreal and Quebec	10.50
Fast Express from Halifax	14.50
Day Express from H'f'x and Campbellton	20.10
Day Express from Hfx. Pictou & Mulgrave	23.30

The trains of the Intercolonial Railway to and from Montreal are lighted by electricity and heated by steam from the locomotive.

All trains are run by Eastern Standard Time.

D. POTTINGER,

Chief Superintendent.

RAILWAY OFFICE, Moncton, N. B., June 8th, 1889.

New Brunswick Railway Co'y.

ALL RAIL LINE TO BOSTON &C.

"The Short Line" to Montreal &c.

A ARRANGEMENT OF TRAINS; in effect Sept. 16th, 1889. Leaves St. John Intercolonial Station—Eastern Standard Time.

6.40 a. m.—Fast Express for Bangor, Portland, Boston, &c.; Fredericton, St. Stephen, St. Andrews, Houlton, Woodstock and points north. Pullman Buffet Parlor Car for Boston.

8.45 a. m.—Accommodation for Bangor, Portland, Boston, &c.; Fredericton, St. Stephen, Houlton Woodstock.

3.00 p. m.—Fast Express, "via Short Line," for Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and the west; St. Stephen, Houlton and Woodstock. Canadian Pacific Sleeping Car for Montreal.

4.45 p.m.—For Fredericton and intermediate points.

8.30 p. m.—(Except Saturday night)—Express for Bangor, Portland, Boston, and points west; St. Stephen, Houlton, Woodstock. Presque Isle &c. Pullman Sleeping Car for Bangor.

RETURNING TO ST. JOHN.

FROM BANGOR, 6.00 a. m.; 3.35 p. m., Parlor Car attached; 7.50 p. m., Sleeping Car attached.

MONTREAL, "via Short Line," 8.30 p. m. daily, except Saturday. Canadian Pacific Sleeping Car attached.

VANCEBORO ¶ 1.15, 10.55 a. m. 7.10 p. m.;

WOODSTOCK 7.50, 10.30 a. m., 8.20 p. m.;

HOULTON 7.40, 10.30 a. m., 8.30 p. m.;

ST. STEPHEN 9.00, 11.40 a. m, 3.15 10.20 p. m;

ST. ANDREWS 6.45 a. m.

FREDERICTON 6.00, 11.20 a. m., 3.20 p. m.;

ARRIVE AT ST. JOHN ¶ 5.45, 8.20 a. m., 2.10, 7.10, 10.30, p. m.

LEAVE CARLETON.

7.55 a.m.—For Fairville, and points west.

4.40 p.m.—For Fairville, Fredericton. and intermediate points.

ARRIVE AT CARLETON.

8.45 a. m—From Fairville, Fredericton &c.

5.10 p.m.—From Fairville and points west.

A. J. HEATH, Gen. Pass. and Ticket Agent. F. W. CRAM, Gen. Manager.

Shore Line Railway.

ST. STEPHEN & ST. JOHN

Eastern Standard Time.

ON and after MONDAY, June 24, Trains will run (Sunday excepted, as follows:

LEAVE St. John at 7.00 a. m., and Carleton at 7.30 a. m., for St. George, St. Stephen and intermediate points, arrive in St. George at 9.50 a. m., St. Stephen 11.05 a. m.

LEAVE St. Stephen at 8.00 a.m., St. George 10.00 a. m.; arriving in Carleton at 12.20 p. m.; St. John at 12.40 p. m.

Freight up to 500 or 600 lbs—not large in bulk—will be received by JAS. MOULSON, 40 Water street, up to 5 p. m.; all larger weights and bulky freight must be delivered at the warehouse, Carleton, above 2 p. m.

Baggage will be received and delivered at MOULSON'S, Water street, where a truckman will be in attendance.

W. A. LAMB, MANAGER.

St. John, N. B., June 17, 1888.

sun, tel.

Buctouche and Moncton Ry.

ON and after MONDAY, June 10th, trains will run as follows:

No. 1.			No. 2.		
Lv.	Buctouche	7 30	Lv.	Moncton	16 45
	Little River	7 48		Lewisville	16 49
	St. Anthony	8 06		Humphreys	16 53
	Coesagne	8 20		Irishtown	17 15
	Norte Dame	8 22		Cape Breton	17 25
	McDougall's	8 38		Scotch Sett.	17 33
	Scotch Sett.	8 50		McDougall's	17 45
	Cape Breton	8 56		Notre Dame	18 01
	Irishtown	9 08		Coesagne	18 03
	Humphreys	9 36		St. Anthony	18 19
	Lewisville	9 34		Little River	18 35
Ar.	Moncton	9 38	Ar.	Buctouche	18 53

Trains will connect at Moncton with I. C. R trains Nos. 9 and 2 to St. John and Halifax. Returning will leave Moncton after arrival of Nos. 4 and 1 from St. John and Halifax.

C. F. HANINGTON, Manager.

Moncton, June 9, 1889.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

EXHIBITION

—AT—

TORONTO,

Sept. 9th to 21st.

Return tickets will be issued Sept. 9th to 13th good to return until Sept. 23th at

$20.50,

—AND—

On Sept. 14th and 16th, good to return until Sept. 24th at

$16.50.

For tickets and all information apply to

H. CHUBB & CO.,

City Agents,

Chubb's Corner, St. John, N. B.

CONFUSION

of thought, a defective memory, a disinclination to labor, and a distaste for the ties, are the symptomatic indications of **Nervous Debility,** and these symptoms are usually accompanied by **Seminal Weakness** and **Impotency.** The necessary consequences are **Consumption** and **Death.** "Lamon's Specific **Remedy,**" an invaluable preparation, is a permanent cure of all nervous diseases. Sent at one **Dollar per Package,** or sent on receipt of price to any address, free of charge.

THE LANE MEDICINE CO.,

MONTREAL, QUE.

☞ Young Men should read Dr. Lane's Essay, "Nervous Diseases," mailed free to any address.

N. W. BRENAN,

UNDERTAKER.

Warerooms in brick building No. 555, foot of Main Street, Portland.

BRANCH.

88 Charlotte Street.

St. John, N. B.

Telephones 222 Portland, 222c City.