

"Is that so?" and continued to read his newspaper.

In the course of the evening Mrs. Blossom nine times reminded her husband of some terrible crime against good breeding, which he was daily in the habit of committing.

The next day she hired a carriage and went out in a driving rain to return some first calls, which the book said should be positively returned within three or four days.

She said that a card for the lady of the house might be folded so as to include the rest of the family, and asked Mr. Blossom what that meant. Mr. Blossom said he did not know, and she left her cards turned down at four corners and bent in the middle, and said that if that didn't include the family she did not know what would.

She snatched a plate of toast away from Corny at the table, and told him that "when asparagus was served with toast, toast should not be eaten." Corny said he liked the toast, and didn't like asparagus, but she said that did not make any difference, it did not say what to do in such a case.

She read the book through slowly, a chapter a day, and had just gotten to the chapter on parties and balls when they were invited to a reception at the Neasmiths.

The Neasmiths had just returned from abroad, and Mrs. Blossom said she supposed everything would be done up in European style, but she didn't wish to appear green there, if she knew herself. She caught hold of Mr. Blossom as he rang the Neasmiths' door bell on that eventful night, and told him not to notice anyone till he got his things off; and on the way upstairs he snubbed the minister and his brother's wife. When they were going down stairs she commanded him to assume an air of formal pleasure, and he obeyed by putting on a stiffish grin.

Mrs. Blossom remembered to have read in the etiquette book that afternoon, that "At the most formal receptions, after addressing the host and hostess, pass at once to the refreshment room," and she said 'twas a mercy it said that, for she never would have thought of it in the world. So, after shaking hands formally with Mr. and Mrs. Neasmith, she walked with fixed determination toward the refreshment room.

"I say, Sue," whispered Mr. Blossom, "let's wait till we see someone else going."

But Mrs. Blossom said:

"The book says 'go immediately,' and I'm going to do it."

The door in the dining-room was closed, but Mrs. Blossom, with a hand nerved with the consciousness of right, turned the knob and walked boldly in. She took her stand at a small table near the centre of the room, and told Mr. Blossom:

"By no means to sit down, but to partake of refreshments standing."

Mr. Blossom said in an anxious tone:

"Sue, there is not another person in the room."

"And sure enough they were the sole occupants. Even Mrs. Blossom's faith wavered for a moment, but a bright idea suggested itself.

"Why, of course, they've all got through, we came late," and she sipped her coffee with a vain attempt at a festive air.

"I say, Sue, this is social," observed Mr. Blossom facetiously; "we might as well be lunching in our own dining-room at home, except that they beat us on variety."

But his wife helped herself to some more chicken salad, and said that was the way they did at receptions; she hoped he didn't think he was at a dinner party.

Somebody opened the door from the parlor, it was Mr. McCormick.

"Why, hello, Blossom," said he, "taking it out alone? You'd better wait for the rest of us."

Mr. Blossom grew red in the face, but Mrs. Blossom poised her coffee-cup gracefully in her hand, and said sweetly:

"Oh, no, thank you. Are you and Mrs. McCormick quite well?"

Mr. McCormick said:

"Yes, very well," and shut the door with a grin.

"Sue," again interposed Mr. Blossom, "there is some mistake about this."

But Mrs. Blossom said the McCormicks never had any society standing, and she guessed she knew the points of etiquette as well as they did.

After that, Mr. Ayers opened the door, stared and smiled.

Then, a young lady and gentleman peeped in and giggled.

Then, Mrs. Conkey glanced in; and so they kept it up until Mr. Blossom said he would swear that every person in those parlors had peeped through that door at them and gone away grinning.

They finished their ice-cream rather hastily and returned to the parlor. The hostess begged them not to hasten away.

"Stay until after refreshments anyway," she said.

Mr. Blossom began:

"We have had——," but his wife gave him an awful look.

"You are very kind, but we really must go," she said blandly, and dragged Mr. Blossom up-stairs.

Not a word did she say until they were in the carriage. But when Mr. Blossom began, "Well, I suppose this is style, but it beats me," she said, in a choking voice:

"Don't you see, Thomas Blossom, they have not had supper yet. Oh, I never can face that crowd again," and she relapsed into hysterical tears.

"Great Gideon! you do not think so?" gasped Mr. Blossom.

"I know they have not," she declared convulsively, "I asked the girl and she said so."

"Well, I thought it was queer," said Mr. Blossom; "it was against my better judgment all along."

"But, Thomas," faltered Mrs. Blossom, through her tears, "the etiquette book certainly said——"

"Confound that book," thundered Mr. Blossom, "Sue, we have made two of the most precious fools of ourselves! We will be the laughing stock of the town!"

"How could I know?" sobbed Mrs. Blossom.

Mr. Blossom answered not a word, but, when he entered the house, he walked straight to the table where the etiquette book reposed with a blue satin mark between its leaves, and he took it, satin mark and all, and cast it into the fire and watched it burn with savage satisfaction.—*Detroit Press and Tribune.*

LITTLE NAKED FEET.

BY A. THOMPSON.

The biting blasts of Winter
Swept through the sleeping town,
And from the black clouds centre
The snow came sifting down.
The midnight hour was pealing
Out on the Wintry air,
And many a wretch was stealing
From vice's midnight lair,
When out into the darkness
Of the long forsaken street,
There ran a tiny maiden
With little naked feet.

Down her long, shining lashes
The tears like rain-drops ran;
The snow upon the sashes
Was like her pale face wan.
Her thin lips move and quiver
With a grief beyond control,
And the rude winds make her shiver
As if they reach her soul;
"My father, oh, my father,"
Those quivering lips repeat
As through the falling snow she ran
With little naked feet.

Alas that brutal father
Is in the dens of rum,
And though his daughter calls him,
'Tis vain, he will not come.
Her mother lies a-dying
Upon a cheerless bed,
Her little brothers crying
From coldness and for bread,
And she to seek her father
Runs up the long lone street,
A tiny waif of woe and rags
With little naked feet.

The great sky arches o'er her,
But not a star is there,
The lone street lies before her
Where but the lamp lights flare,
No kindly door stands open,
No kindly word is said,
No kindly hand of blessing
Rests on her hapless head.
Her tearful eyes grow heavy,
And through the driving sleet
Her feeble will no more impels
The little naked feet.

The street spun round and round her,
The lamp-lights all went out,
And death's chill arms wound round her
Like serpent folds about.
A helpless thing they found her
And bore her from the street,
And white as were the snowflakes
Her little naked feet.

—The Witness.