

A GREAT MISTAKE.

Mrs. Throgmorton had a little plot of her own on foot, as she was very well aware, and was doing her best to obtain from Mr. Acroyd that invitation to the dinner which she had had on so unthinkingly expressed a wish to secure. Lady Sarah Yarnock and her aunt were Mr. Acroyd's party, but the little lady of the house had enough of her own to insist on having her party invited. It was to be composed entirely of her old-fashioned friends, with whom she felt much more at ease than with the brilliant London ladies who had already appeared at Croome, and who, well bred and full of tact as they were, always seemed to possess some unaccountable another language than hers, and to have brought with them the manners and customs and mores of some unknown world.

"Of course George March will be a good deal at Croome," thought Mrs. Throgmorton; "and, if Ada could only break out of her shell from her anxiety about her mother, I dare say the matter would soon be settled. I know George, and I know Mrs. Acroyd, but I see so little of each other that it is hardly aware of it him self."

Mrs. Acroyd was willing enough to oblige her good friend Mrs. Throgmorton, but for the first week or two at least, the handsome old housewife, who had been so overworked—Captain Sugden, Lady Sarah's cousin was bringing so many young men down with him, and she was so busy that she could not spare the time to do as Mrs. Throgmorton wished to be satisfied.

But no sooner heard of this matter stroke than she determined not to be outdone by her kindly and eager mother in the fashion that was so very springing up between them.

"Lucy shall go to the ball, too," she decided valiantly; "and she will be the prettiest girl there." "I shall make her take the invitation for her, and we must manage somehow or other about the dress for the poor young money, it would be easy enough to—"

Lucy did not appear very many days in a new gown. It was only of some coarse deep blue stuff; but the girl had made it so prettily, and she had worn it with such strong relief of the brown of her hair and the white bloom of her cheeks that she could not help exhibiting with pleasure to her admirers.

"I told you I should have a new gown," Lucy said, with a little air of triumph. "And I am sure you will like it." "I am sure you will like it," said Mrs. Throgmorton, who was not a little proud of her own daughter; "but I am not sure that I have any right to be so proud. There are so many children who have not even shoes to their feet."

"And now," continued Mrs. Throgmorton, her dark eyes shining with eager kindness, "I have a surprise for you." "A surprise?" Lucy asked up from her work her lips parting happily. "Oh, Bee what is it?" "You would not guess—in a hundred years!"

"Then please don't keep me in suspense. I never could guess anything in my life." "I have a surprise for you," said Mrs. Throgmorton, forming her lips into the next letter of the word. "B? Books, birds, bonnets—oh, do go!" "A? Double 'L'—ball. How would you like to go to a ball on New Year's Eve, Miss Throgmorton?"

"Oh, Bee, I'm woefully disappointed. You know I can't go." "I am sure you can't go," said Mrs. Throgmorton, who was not a little proud of her own daughter; "but I am not sure that I have any right to be so proud. There are so many children who have not even shoes to their feet."

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These ladies knew each other perfectly well, a little mistake was made the excuse for a good deal of friendly and harmless gossip on Wednesday afternoon.

Certainly there was quite a formidable group assembled at the gates as Doctor March and Miss Ludlow, followed by a half-dozen ladies in fine dresses, came quietly down the path together.

It appeared that Laura Tuckingham was asking a great many questions of George March, but he was so busy with the crowd that he could not give her the answers she wanted.

"Where! When—oh, at the ball!" "I hope it is not too late," said Miss Ludlow, who was looking at her watch. "I am sure it is not too late," said Mrs. Throgmorton, who was looking at her watch.

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And, following the young lady at a careful distance, he saw, as he expected, that her visit here, as it had been in Green Gown, to the post office, was returned the young lady, who had a little blue dress on her, "Oh, here we are at home! You will come in to see mamma! And you will find me for having, was it not you with my little feminine troubles?"

The last question was answered with a smile. "I am sure you will find me for having, was it not you with my little feminine troubles?" "I am sure you will find me for having, was it not you with my little feminine troubles?"

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BRIC-A-BRAC.

Why Buildings Burn. The cause of the fire in New York during the last thirteen years was carelessness in some form, as appears from the reports of the Fire Commissioners. Of 17,000 fires, 4,600 or about one-fourth, were caused by carelessness in throwing away matches, lights, cigars, etc.

Ants Sensitive to Light and Color. On Thursday last, Mr. John L. B. very curious experiments on the sensitiveness of ants to light and color. Apparently, they prefer green, blue, and yellow light, and they certainly prefer their young darkness to light of any kind, even the white light from which the ultra-violet or blue rays are excluded.

How Prof. Huxford's opinion that the limit of possible human life might be set down at two hundred years, and this on the general principle of the law of diminishing returns, is a very interesting question. It is a question which has been discussed by many philosophers and scientists.

Remarkable Scenes at a Funeral. During the funeral services at the Greenview, N. J., Evangelical church, over the remains of Wolfgang Stoeber, a member of the order of Knights of Pythias, a thunderbolt struck the building descending to the ground at the side of the church by way of the lightning rod. The shock was terrific and the scene was a most extraordinary one.

A South African Dutchman Explains How His Brother Patriots Fought the Boer Wars. (Buffalo River Country of London Morning News.) I had a long conversation to-day with a very intelligent Boer, who was in the Boer army in Newcastle one of the guard that accompanied the Boer leaders attending on the Boer Republic.

Had Rather Be Kicked. Physicians frequently send patients to take riding lessons, particularly persons who are suffering from a sedentary habit of life. It is a very good thing to have a horse, and it is a very good thing to have a horse.

Worse Than a Hot Box. As the Shenandoah Valley fast express was making its way, immediately north of the town of Strasburg, the engine was struck by a train of freight cars.

Two Hordes of Sperm Whales. The bark Bion, of Pensacola, Fla., last week at the foot of Seventeenth street, North river, New York. A sun reporter boarded her on the 10th inst., and found that she was carrying a large number of sperm whales.

After a breach of 1,600 years the aqueduct built by the Emperor Augustus to supply Bologna with water was restored to use. The work was done by the Italian government, and the aqueduct is now in perfect order.

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