

STORIES
POETRY

The Inglenook

SKETCHES
TRAVEL

THE LUCK OF ANNE.

By Frances Margaret Fox.

"It does seem as if luck were against me at last," Anne dropped her work with a sigh as she glanced at the clock.

"What's wrong?" asked her cousin Ruth, gathering up an assortment of bundles as she spoke, and moving toward the door.

"O, I forgot all about Aunt Anne."

"What's the matter with her?"

"Nothing, except that she's expecting me this morning."

"What for?"

"To read to her. I promised to go over every Saturday afternoon."

"Telephone that you can't come."

"She'd be disappointed."

"What of it? Aren't the rest of us disappointed every day of our lives? How will you ever get your dress done for Monday night if you go?"

"That's more than I know, Ruth. I have had the worst luck trying to manage something to wear ever since we began planning the concert."

"Don't find fault with your luck, Anne; I still say you are the luckiest girl I ever knew, but what have you been doing all these days? Instead of tending to your own affairs you have helped half a dozen girls design their gowns, and you have actually helped make them. Cheating the dressmakers, Anne!"

"Well, Ruth, so many of the girls have no idea what an old-fashioned dress should be; and the real thing, from the attics of this village—O, don't mention such ugliness. Ora Perkins is going to wear the dingiest brown garment you ever saw, just because it belonged to her great-grandmother! Whatever—"

"I know more about that than you do," Ruth interrupted. "Ora's going to wear the homely thing to please her grandmother. That's what I call going a step too far. Why, Anne, I believe it's more than you'd do, with all your notions of making a rug of yourself for other folks to walk over."

"I think I'd rather wear this cheese-cloth creation," Anne replied, laughing as she folded her work.

"What!" exclaimed Ruth. "Surely you are not going to leave your sewing to go over to auntie's this afternoon. Don't be so silly."

"It isn't silly, Ruth; you don't know what a responsible position a namesake holds. Besides that, maybe you don't know Aunt Anne."

"Know Aunt Anne!" repeated Ruth. "I know her well enough to realize that she makes a slave of you. Know her! Why, last Thanksgiving Day, when I couldn't think of one thing to be thankful for, I suddenly remembered that I should always be glad I didn't happen to be that woman's namesake. Does she ever do anything nice and civilized, Anne?"

"O, yes, often, I really wouldn't disappoint her for anything. She sits there alone all day with only her servants to look after her, not even friendly neighbors to run in and chat; and you know she hasn't taken a step without help since autumn, and the doctors won't let her use her eyes more than five minutes at a time."

"Well, Anne, she has loads of money, even if you never do see a cent of it; and, if she wasn't such a cross-grained, cranky old lady, she would have plenty of friends. You know that as well as I do. I can't imagine what she would do without you."

"That's why I'm determined to keep my appointments, Ruth; and, if you'll wait a minute while I get my coat and hat, I'll walk along with you."

Aunt Anne never looked more pleased to see her niece. "I began to fear you

were not coming," said she; "it is fifteen minutes later than usual."

"I know it, auntie," was the reply. "Mother was out, and I was detained by a caller. Would you have been disappointed if I hadn't come?"

"Yes, indeed, Anne. If you had failed to appear this afternoon, I never should have forgotten it. Now sit down and let us read without delay. We will begin on 'Modern Painters' this afternoon."

Anne was pleased to obey promptly. She tried to read as slowly as usual, not wishing her aunt to dream of her impatience.

"That will do for to-day, thank you," interrupted Aunt Anne at the close of an hour. "Don't be in a hurry like; I would rather talk with you the rest of the afternoon, and then you must stay to dinner with me. No, I won't listen to a refusal; I will have you. You may telephone to your mother."

"But," faltered Anne, "you see I must go; I really can't stay. I—"

"No excuses, child."

"But—Aunt Anne, I should be glad to stay if my dress would finish itself. You know I take a leading part in the old folks' concert we are giving next Monday night for the benefit of the Old Ladies' Home, and my dress isn't half done."

"You don't think you can make a dress fit to wear, do you, Annet?"

"I've got to, auntie."

"That's where you're mistaken child. I wondered why you didn't come to me for help, knowing that my attic is full of quaint, old-fashioned things. I wish you to wear a correct gown, since you're my name sake, and you'll find it all laid out in the parlor bedroom. That's the reason I watched so eagerly for you this afternoon. Do you know, Anne, maybe I'm wrong; but, if you hadn't come this afternoon, that gown would have been packed away in the attic again before this time."

Anne wished it had been. "But, auntie," she objected, "perhaps the dress won't fit." How she hoped it wouldn't! "I am making the dearest fullest, short-waisted gown of cream cheese-cloth, with puffed sleeves."

"Cheese-cloth!" sniffed Aunt Anne.

"O, it's pretty," the girl hastened to say. "I am trimming it all around the bottom and on each side of the front gore with pink rosebuds cut from cretonne."

"No use to tell me another word, child; you will wear the dress I am giving you, or I'll know why. Now run along and put it on. I've always said you resembled the picture of Grandma Ashmore, when she was a girl, and this was one of her dresses."

"Whatever shall I do?" Anne inquired of herself as she walked slowly through the hall. "I'll look like a fright!"

Grandma Ashmore's dress lay on the bed beneath a sheet. On removing the sheet Anne saw not the faded, dingy garment of her imagination, but a soft gown of shimmering pink silk trimmed with exquisite lace. For one moment she gazed spellbound, then flew to her aunt's room, trying to express the delight and gratitude that she felt.

"There, there, child, run along. Let's see how the gown fits. After the concert it must be made over. You're getting old enough now to wear some of the lovely things I've been saving for my namesake all these years. Now run along and dress. If you stay to dinner with me, you must look pretty enough to do justice to the old family silver we'll see to-night. Why, child, you've been so kind to me this winter, I can't wait until you are through the high school to give you a glimpse of what is ahead of my namesake."

A lovely maiden of long ago was soon trailing down the hall, a vision of Grandma Ashmore's girlhood. On her head was a tiny, rosebud bonnet and in her hand she carried a wondrous fan with ivory sticks.

Aunt Anne gazed silently at the picture, for a moment before she said, "Suppose you step to the telephone, if you don't mind the mention of anything so modern, and ask Ruth over to dinner. If my namesake doesn't mind—and I know she isn't selfish—we'll give Ruth Grandma Ashmore's lilac brocade. We'll have two girls instead of one at our old-fashioned dinner party to-night. What do you say?"

"Say!" echoed Anne; "why, I can't talk."

When Ruth came, Anne met her at the door.

"O, you sweet thing!" cried Ruth. "O, Anne, you are the luckiest girl!"

"Well," laughed Anne, "you have fallen heir to a corner of the luck; so come in and dress for dinner. Yes, dress, I said!"—Ex.

The whole world once to a mother came
To buy her child away;
There were rich and poor, there were
great and small,
There were wise men old and gray.

Said one, "For your child I'll give you
gold";

But the mother smiled tenderly,
"There is gold enough in my baby's
hair,"

She quietly said, "for me."

"Jewels!" a childless couple cried,
But smiling again, she said:
"My baby's eyes are my diamonds
bright,
His lips are my rubies red."

"My kingdom," offered a gray-haired
king,
But strange was the look she gave;
"This is my king, who lies asleep,
And I his adoring slave."

"The world and its treasures, all, wilt
take?
Its gold, its castles and lands?"
"The world," she replied, "could pur-
chase not
The touch of my baby's hands."

So the world returned to its wealth and
pride,
To sail its ships on the deep;
But none were happy as she who sat
Singing her babe to sleep.

MISPLACED CONFIDENCE.

Lies fall in books as they fall in
life. I know a woman who intensely
desired to have a good photograph
taken of her little son.

"But in the studio the child bawled
as though he were going to be tortured.
It was impossible to calm him, impos-
sible to keep him in the chair. For
an hour he filled the place with howls
and yells. For an hour he tore up
and down the room like an imp.

"But, darling," said the mother,
"the gentleman isn't going to hurt you.
Just smile and keep still a moment,
and it will be all over before you know
it."

"Yes," roared the youngster. "Yes,
I know. That's what you told me at
the dentist's."

Because a young man is an expert
football player we have no reason to
conclude that there is nothing good at
the other end of him. There is always
room at the top.