

## A Prize That was Missed.

(By Annie L. Noble, in 'Forward'.)

Marion Elsworth and Isabel Norton were not cousins, yet they rejoiced in the possession of a common uncle. Rejoiced is the word to use, for this uncle had been to them a real benefactor. He was not a rich man, but having no children of his own, he had given both nieces the very best education they were able to receive. Each girl came from a family of small means, so the good old gentleman reasoned that he could do no better for each than to fit her to be self-supporting. Isabel was rather handsome. Marion's sweet expression made her always attractive; and both—when their student life was ended—were equally qualified to teach to others what they had thoroughly learned.

Immediately after their graduation came

wrote many letters to educational bureaus and former teachers. When at last the day came for them to sail, each one had a reasonable hope of a future position. Marion looked confidently forward to a place in a crowded high school, where work would be hard and the salary by no means large; but it was a beginning. Isabel had far finer prospects. Certain influential friends were working to get her into a women's college of very high standing, where her work would be congenial, her salary double that of Marion's, and her home in the institution one of luxury compared to the humble boarding place which a public school teacher could afford.

Marion, however, was far too sweet-natured to let this difference in their prospects give her any discontent, much less any jealousy. In all their past intercourse, Isabel had taken the pre-eminence. It seem-

your tactics. Just deserving, working, and praying for the best is not going to bring even second best. One must push, push, and snatch every chance. Somebody must always go to the wall in a scrabble, but it never shall be her majesty, myself—never.

Before Marion could speak, Isabel hurried her across the platform, saying, "There is our train!" I mean to have a compartment to ourselves.

"We can't; there are too many going!"

Isabel caught the door of a cab, or 'waggon,' as the Germans say, hustled Marion inside, then turned to face a simply-dressed woman who was about to follow.

"This compartment is engaged," Isabel promptly explained.

"There are only two of your party."

"The compartment is certainly taken," and Isabel glanced toward several ladies bidding an officer good-bye.

The elderly lady retreated, taking the next car, which was unpleasantly crowded. By several skilful manoeuvres of a similar sort, Isabel managed to keep the compartment to themselves, much against Marion's consent, but Isabel protested: "Let in one and half a dozen will follow."

The train started, and soon the varying scenery engaged all their attention. Only once Belle, as her friend called her, exclaimed: "Last night I had a letter from the lady who is president of ——— college. She will see me in London next month. I am told that if she approves now I will get the position."

"I think she will approve," said Marion, thinking to herself that Isabel's personal appearance, voice and manner would impress her favorably.

Toward noon Belle said:—"We should have telegraphed for rooms. I heard last night that the village was full of people and the one hotel crowded."

"We may get into some peasant's house. If clean I should not object," said Marion.

An hour later they reached the pretty hamlet in a wide, sunlit valley, where queer red-roofed cottages clustered round one ancient church. On either side was a pine-covered mountain, and above and beyond a glorious circle of snowy peaks, sharp cut against blue sky. Blue and white Bavarian banners were waving everywhere, cannons were firing; the village streets and country roads were alive with people in gala dresses. Marion wanted to look about, but Belle hurried her to the hotel, only to be told that every place was full except one undesirable dingy room.

"Are your rooms all occupied now?" asked Belle.

"All but a few that are engaged by people just arrived or coming before night."

"Please show me the south corner room with a balcony."

"That has been engaged for three days by letter and telegraph," persisted the polite proprietor.

"Will you allow me to see it? I have a reason," asked Belle.

The man looked puzzled, but led the way, while Marion waited below.

After several minutes they came back, and a servant was ordered to 'take up the ladies' luggage.'

"What a beautiful room! How did you get it?" asked Marion.

"Oh, we found there was a mistake. A single room, not a double room, had been engaged," hastily answered Belle. "Now let us hurry out to see the fete."

Since this is a story of people—not of



ELIZABETH SHIPPEN GREEN.

'THIS COMPARTMENT IS ENGAGED,' ISABEL EXPLAINED.

a surprise which made them rejoice anew in 'Uncle Ben.' He wrote to each niece a note of congratulation, assured her of his continued affection, but told her plainly that what he now proposed to do for her was probably the last pecuniary assistance that he could give her. He said then that after months of hard study the girls must need rest; he proposed, therefore, to give them a sum sufficient to cover the expenses of a summer in Europe. He believed that the trip would be a delight, and a benefit intellectually.

Never were two young women happier! However, in the few weeks previous to sailing, each had the same thought: "We must find situations as teachers before the next school year begins." With this aim they

ed natural that she should start life in advance of her gentler companion. Isabel did, indeed, have some qualifications of a true leader, and in the first weeks of their foreign tour, Marion was glad to have her manage the business of the trip. Still, living constantly with Isabel, she perceived in her some traits not really admirable, yet strangely enough these were just those on whose possession Isabel most prided herself.

One morning the girls were in Munich, awaiting a train. They were going to a musical festival in a quaint old hamlet in the Bavarian highlands. While sitting in the station Isabel suddenly exclaimed:—"Marion, I can tell you where you will surely fail of success in life, if you do not change