

### LIGHTING THE FIRE IN WINTER.

An' then the room gets good an' warm; the k'le starts to bile, An' m'ouner potters down the stairs an' stan' an' yawns awhile. And sez: "Now, pop, you go an' rouse them sleepy bows o' yours. For it's snowin' and they's lots to do beside the morning chores." An' then she brushes up the hearth with that old turkey wing, An' stoops and pulls her stockin's up an' tie 'em with a string, An' Towser yawns an' stretches out an' acts a little shyer, When I git up o' mornin's fer to light the kitchen fire.

An' when the boys come trompin' in, an' serce around an' spat An' kick the dose and poke the fire an' set down on the eat, The coffee-pot's biled over an' the biscuit's steaming hot, An' mother sez, "Fetch up the cheers," an' pours the coffee out— My cup runs over with a joy the rest don't know about; Fer the blessin's of the Lord to me's a daily drawin' nigher When I git up o' mornin's fer to light the kitchen fire.

—Edward S. Hopkins.

### ON APPROVAL.

WHAT on earth d'ye call that thing?" I asked, poking with my stick at a bunch of grapes poised airily upon a brass stand. "That thing," replied my cousin, proudly, "is the very latest Parisian fashion in bonnets."

I sank back into the little lounge that ran along the side of the room. "You couldn't insult anything so dainty with the name of 'shop'—and gazed upon its owner with an exclamation more profane than appropriate."

It must at once be confessed that she was a charming object to gaze at. There was an expression of wicked amusement in her large gray eyes, and the black gown she still wore in mourning for her husband—poor Jack Henderson, who was killed in the Soudan—set off the lines of her slender young figure, and threw her golden hair and fair skin prettily into relief.

"Pull yourself together, my dear boy," she continued, opening the door of an old carved oak cabinet, "and I will show you something that even your crude male intellect will appreciate. If you don't say its lovely I'll never let you inside the shop again. You may flatten your nose against the window, or stroll disconsolately up and down the street in vain! No more chats, no more teas in the back room!"

So saying, she lifted gingerly from the shelf a large hat, and planting it upon her pretty head, turned triumphantly toward me. It was lovely—quite lovely—a sort of arrangement in amethyst velvet and feathers to match. Being only a miserably and ignorant male, of course I can't describe it, but it was uncommonly becoming, and made Nina look like a Gainsborough picture. I told her so, and gushed over it sufficiently to satisfy her.

"It's my own idea, shape and all, and there isn't another like it in the world. I may possibly copy it, but I'm not sure. It depends upon who buys it. How I wish you were a woman, Ronald," she sighed, regretfully, "and I would make you buy it for Ascot to-morrow!"

"I wish I were, my dear. But why don't you go and wear it yourself?" "Gracious! and leave the shop for a whole day at this early stage of its existence? You gardeners have no more idea of business than a baby. No, I can't go; but I hope you'll have a lucky day and a good time; and, Ronald, dear, if you were nice you'd just look in one day soon and tell me what sort of a day you had. Oh, and be sure you don't forget to notice what hats and bonnets people wore."

I promised to do my best, and took my leave reluctantly as a large and portly matron, gorgeously arrayed, and whose features unmistakably betrayed her Semitic origin, sailed in and demanded a small "flower-bonnet."

"That woman in a flower-bonnet! I hope, poor soul, that Nina saved her from herself."

"What are you going to do this afternoon, Ronald?" asked my mother three days later. "I wish you to come and call with me on the Vanderdeckens."

"Can't, my dear mother. Promised to go and see Nina."

Visions of Miss Vanderdecken, rich as Croesus, but, oh, so deadly dull, hastened my movements, and I was half-way to Oxford street before my mother could call me back. I found Mme. Destrier, as my cousin calls herself, just parting with a customer. The hat was in her hand.

"I've sold it!" she cried, gleefully; "just sold it to that nice girl for 5 guineas."

"Awfully glad, I'm sure. But, my dear girl, I've a shock in store for you. I saw the very model and marrow of that hat at Ascot the day before yesterday."

"You couldn't, you couldn't! Who was wearing it?" she cried, sharply. "One of our reigning professional beauties—Lady Loddington."

"Lady Loddington!" gasped Nina, catching hold of the chair behind her. "Ronald, are you sure you aren't making any mistake?"

"I swear I'm not. She had on a

frock the color of the hat, and she looked simply ripping. I paid her all the compliments I could think of in the five minutes I was talking to her."

"The cheat, the swindle of it!" cried my cousin, white with anger. "My dear girl calm yourself! I'm sorry for you, but great minds, as you know, will jump, and some other clever woman has had the same idea as you."

Nina was past taking any notice of the insulting suggestion. She seemed thoroughly upset by the coincidence, and looked as if she were going to cry.

"Why did I ever go into business?" she cried, miserably. "It's simply awful to get behind the scenes like this and find out how mean women—well-bred women, who ought to know better—can be. We were all brought up with the old-fashioned ecclesie oblige ideas. Ron—you were too—and it seems to me now that there is hardly any one in society who has a notion of honor and dignity, as we used to understand the terms. Society! After all, I'm thankful I'm more or less out of it. It's just a herd of people, pushing, struggling, selling everything for notoriety and money."

"Hear, hear! Your sentiments, madame, are mine. But I don't think they should be wasted on the mere fact that some other woman has made a hat like yours."

"She hasn't," cried Nina, indignantly. "Lady Loddington was wearing this very hat! Listen; I'll tell you the whole story. The same afternoon you called, a woman came in, beautifully dressed, and asked to see some hats. I saw who she was, though I never met her. I don't want to meet her," savagely; "one sees quite enough of her in all the shop windows."

"One does," I remarked, sotto voce. "She wanted a hat the color of this one; so I brought it out and showed it to her, and told her the price, and explained why it was so expensive. 'Oh, I don't mind giving that for the hat,' she said; 'it is well worth it. I am quite in love with it, Mme. Destrier, but I don't buy it without letting my husband see it. He is so very particular about what I wear. Could I have it sent round to-night for him to look at? I would let you know some time to-morrow whether I would take it or not.' Of course, I said I should be glad to send it, and she gave me the address, and the hat went round there that evening. Last night she sent it back, and said she was very sorry, but Lord Loddington didn't think it suited her. I thought it looked a little tumbled, but one has to run those risks when one sends goods on approval. She had determined to have that hat just to wear for the one day, and she was too mean to get it honestly."

"Of course, you'll have it out with her—you'll expose her?" I said. "I was as angry and disgusted as Nina, who stood opposite me, with her pretty eyes and cheeks flaming with honest indignation. 'My dear boy, I would if I dared, but I can't afford to. It would drive half my customers away from me, and I must think of Hugo and Giles. They don't cost much while they are such tinies, but I want to give them every advantage, the darlings, and I was left so badly off, and the business is just beginning to pay so well. I don't run the risk of exposing Lady Loddington's meanness.'"

"I had forgotten your children. No, I see it won't do. Trust me to give her a mauvais quart d'heure, if I get a chance."

"Promise you'll be careful. Think of the boys." "I won't injure the dear little chaps, you best of mothers." "Well, in that case, I only hope fortune may favor you." Fortune did favor me at last, but she kept me waiting till the autumn, like the fickle lady she always is. My chance came in this wise. My uncle asked me up to his place in Scotland for shooting, and I went. The old gentleman is a very connoisseur of beauty and every pretty woman of note is bound to be asked to D. sooner or later. I got there in time to dress hurriedly, and appear in the drawing-room just as my uncle was telling every one whom they were to take in. I was introduced to some girl—I haven't a notion who she was—but I gave her my arm, and took her down to dinner, murmuring commonplaces on the way. The truth is I was half-famished with my journey, and my one idea was dinner. It was not till I was well on with the fish stage that I looked at my left-hand neighbor. It was Lady Loddington herself.

"I haven't seen you since we met at Ascot," she remarked pleasantly. She certainly is a most lovely woman, by the way. I started blankly, and she went on, with an air of well-acted reproach:

"I believe you have forgotten me ever met there."

"Here was my chance; I seized it. 'Forgotten! Why, I remember every word you said, the color of your gown, and even the hat you wore; the loveliest and most becoming hat I ever saw in my life.'"

"The compliment told."

"I don't believe you do," she pouted.

"Upon my word I do. It was a sort of big affair of amethyst velvet and feathers to match. I remember it with double force, because I made a cousin of mine quite angry with the mere description of it. I don't know if you have ever met her? She has gone into millinery, like everybody else. She calls herself 'Mme. Destrier.'"

I looked Lady Loddington full in

the face, and laid a peculiar emphasis on the name.

I never saw any one so thoroughly caught in my life. I knew in a moment that she knew I knew, as Punch would put it. She turned perfectly scarlet to the roots of her hair, and then quite white, and didn't speak for at least a moment. Then she pulled herself together as only a woman can, and adroitly changed the subject.

But she has been monstrously civil to me ever since, much to the surprise of my friends. I am plain and uninteresting; I am not a personage; I haven't a farthing—not even expectations—and they can't make it where the attraction lies. They had better ask Mme. Destrier of Oxford street to enlighten them.—London World.

### Winans' Secret Grief.

While Farmer Winans was in congress he was found one day by Tim Tarsney standing in front of a large painting in the national capital, shaking his head as if in deep despondency. There was nothing in the painting apparent to Tarsney to which Winans' evident despondency might be attributed. It was a large and noble landscape of glade and forest and lake, with a grassy foreground on which reposed a few like-like sheep. Tom laid his hand on Winans' shoulder, and said in a sympathetic voice: "Rouse up, old man; what can be the matter?"

"Ah, Tim," returned Farmer Winans, "I never look upon this picture without growing sad and despondent."

"I don't see how you draw despondency from this fine landscape," said Tim, as he glanced at its ample proportions. "What can be in it that makes you sad?"

"Oh," ejaculated Winans, with a sigh, "I never see those sheep without thinking of the d-d tariff. I don't see how I can get around wool in my district."

"I don't blame you," was the emphatic reply of Tim, as he wrung Winans' hand. "I never see a barrel of salt but what I have the same sad thoughts. But cheer up, tell the farmers to leave off growing sheep and grow hogs; that's the twist for the farmers, Winans. Put me in mind of my client, Mister O'Brien's beyant at Bay City. He came in one day and stated his case, the maddest man I ever saw. Says he: 'It's this way, Mister Tarsney. I have a lot there below that's lower than the street an' the wather poise bellar. An' let the wather inty me cellar. Off I goes to the clerk of the wather board t'ax him for damages. I want damages, sez I to the clerk. An' what's it for, Mister O'Brien? sez he. It's for wather in me lot, sez I. An' what harm is that, sez he. Harm enough, sez I, an' I want damages, sez I. I don't see what damages yiz would want for wather in yer lot, sez he. But it kem inty me cellar, sez I. We'll mend the poise an' throw the wather off, sez he. Draw in the wather off won't pay me damages, sez I. We have nothin' to do wid damages, sez he. Ye have, sez I. We haven't, sez he. I'll see that yiz hev, sez I. All we can do for yez, sez he. An' that's the foinal, is to repair the poise an' throw the wather off. An' what'll pay me for chickens, sez I. Ye lost some chickens? sez he. I have, sez I, as fine a lot as iver was in the Saginaw valley. They roosted in me cellar and the wather kem in an' throdren 'em. An', sez he, to me face; an' sez he, Mister O'Brien, why the divil didn't yiz raise ducks.'"

Returned After Many Years.

William Lanark, a wealthy old farmer of Lanark county, died fourteen years ago, leaving, \$84,000, the distribution of which was made the occasion of a law suit by some of the surviving members of his family. Among the male heirs was Stephen Holliday, a married son, who in 1864 left his wife and two children and went sailing on the lakes in the schooner Ada Drake, which was lost in a heavy storm off Cleveland, and Holliday's family supposed he went down with the vessel. His widow subsequently married a Toronto man named Derusha, and secured an order for the payment of Stephen's share of his father's money to her and her two sons. This was followed by an order that the money should remain in the court.

Four years ago Mrs. Derusha, Stephen's wife, died, and lately Stephen returned to Canada and told of his miraculous escape from the wreck after being washed about the lake for hours lashed to a spar, and of being picked up by a propeller, a tr which he went to Honduras and Central America. He has been identified by his only surviving son and a neighbor who knew him years ago, and Mr. Justice Armour has made an order for the payment of his share of his father's estate.—Toronto Globe.

A Lion Tamer's Magic Wand.

Science comes along to rob the lion tamer of much of the glory that comes from the danger of his work. There has late been invented a light wand with an insulating grip for the hand, connected by a flexible wire with a battery, of which the power can be varied at will. An experiment with this form of applied science is said to have been successfully made.—New York Journal.

### A WOMAN'S QUESTION.

Do you know you have asked for the celestial thing Ever made by the Hand above— A woman's heart and a woman's life And a woman's wonderful love? Do you know you have asked for this priceless thing As a child might have asked for a toy, Demanding what others have died to win, You have written my lessons of duty ask: Manlike you have questioned me: Now stand at the bar of my woman's soul Until I have questioned thee: You require your bread should be always good; Your socks and your shirts should be whole; I require your heart to be true as God's stars And pure as heaven your soul! You require a sock for your mitten and a bare— I require a far better thing: A seamstress you're wanting for stockings and shirt—

I want a man and a kind A king of the heart that I call home. And a man that the maker, God, Shall look upon as he did the first And say, it is very good! I am fair and young, but the rose will fade From my soft young cheek one day, Will you love me then 'mid the falling leaves As you did 'mid the bloom of May? Is your heart an ocean so strong and deep I may launch my all on its tide? A loving woman finds heaven in hell On the day she is made a bride. I require all things that are good and true, All things that a man should be: If you give this all I would stake my life To be all you demand of me. If you cannot do this, a laundress, a cook You can hire, with little to pay, But a woman's heart and a woman's life Are not to be won that way.

—Granham Journal.

### MR. DUMPTY'S IDEAL.

OR thirty years in the firm of Sheers, Dent & Co., bankers Lincoln's-inn-fields, London, Edward Dumpty had worked low down in the list of clerks. The firm had always doubted his capacity to hold a more responsible position, and he had done the work demanded of him so marvelously well that it was felt that any change in which Dumpty was concerned would be like challenging the wisdom of Providence. Dumpty had viewed with unalterable calm the various dynasties that had come and gone through the swing-doors and had ruled in the back room. What did it matter to him? There was his desk by the dim window; there were his pens; there was his pen-wiper; there was the ruler; there was the blotting-pad. Dumpty was always the first to arrive and the last to leave. Only once in his thirty years of service had he voluntarily accepted a holiday, and when asked how he had spent his holiday he answered that he had walked about in the morning looking at the shop windows, and in the afternoon he had gone down to the office to see how they were getting on. He said that he did not like holidays.

An obscure, clandestine, taciturn little man, whose conical head was leaned on one side, as if in token of his humility, occupying in life only the space necessary to lean over a desk.

It seemed that Dumpty had no other ambition than to be allowed to stagnate at a desk for the rest of his life. And his modest ambition would, no doubt, have been realized had it not been for a slight accident—the one accident that had found its way into Dumpty's well-ordered and closely guarded life. One day—

one summer's day—when the heat of the office was more than usually intense, when the odors from the deep areas penetrated between the window and window-sashes, Dumpty's somnolescent senses were moved by a soft and suave perfume. At first he was puzzled to say whence it came; then he grew aware that it proceeded from the bundle of checks which he held in his hand; and then, that the odoriferous paper was one pale pink paper check in the middle of the bundle. He had hardly seen a flower for thirty years and could not determine whether the odor was that of mignonette or honeysuckle or violet. But at that moment the checks were called for; he handed them to his superior, and with cool hand and clear brain continued to make entries in the ledger until the bank closed.

But that night, just as he was falling asleep, a remembrance of the insinuating perfume returned to him. He wondered whose check it was, and regretted not having looked at the signatures. And many times during the succeeding weeks he paused as he was making entries in the ledger to think whether the haunting perfume was rose or violet, or mignonette? Not rose—of that was he sure. And in these moments vague emotions were astir; hopes dead long ago or hopes that had not been born, shadows of dead dreams—dreams he had dreamt or might have dreamt. The world that swims below the waves of consciousness was in motion. Nor had its pulsations died wholly away, been driven back into the nether depths of unconsciousness by these mere ripples of his daily life, when the same delicious odor, which he now recognized as heliotrope, came and took him again with its entire sweetness. He sought for it amid the bundle of checks which

he held fluttering, and finding it, pressed the paper to his face, thrill to visions of unimagined beauty which he felt "as an odor within the sense." The check was written in a thin feminine hand-writing, and was signed "Henrietta Brown." The name and hand-writing were in Dumpty's disturbed mind pregnant with occult significances. His hand paused amid the entries and his brain filled with a revelation of some dim shadowy form, graceful and sweet-smelling as the spring, young leaves and grass about her. Was it shadow of wandering cloud; emanation of redolent earth, or woman herself? Dumpty could not say, though he pondered long, striving to pierce the depths of that universe which separated him from his idea. Dumpty's absent-mindedness that after-noon was noticed, and occasioned some comment at the bank.

For the first time in his life he was glad when the office hours were over. He wanted to be alone with his thoughts, and he felt the imperious need of complete abandonment to the new influence which had so suddenly and unexpectedly entered his life. Henrietta Brown! The name persisted in his mind like a half-forgotten, half-remembered tune; and in his efforts to realize her beauty he stopped before the photographic displays in the shop windows; but none of the famous or infamous celebrities there helped him in the least. He could only realize Henrietta Brown by turning his thoughts from without and seeking the intimate sense of her perfumed checks. For now the end of every month brought a fresh check from Henrietta Brown, and for the few moments it remained in his hands Dumpty was annihilated in endless beatitudes, profound as they were pitiful.

An idea had fixed itself irreparable in his mind—the one idea of his life. He knew not if Henrietta Brown was young or old, pretty or ugly, married or single; the perfume and the name were sufficient, and could no longer be dissociated from the idea which was now forcing its way through the fissures in the falling brain of this poor little bachelor clerk—that desire of light and love and grace so inherent in man, but which rigorous circumstances had compelled Dumpty to banish from his life. Triumphant nature was asserting her sway in this last hour.

It was whispered in the bank that Dumpty was rich. This was not true. Dumpty had had a mother to support for many years, and had found it impossible to economize. Since her death he had laid by about 1500 pounds. He had looked on this sum with reverence and awe, considering how much more he might have saved before he was forced to leave his employment; and to have touched a penny of it would have seemed a sin verging on sacrilege. Yet now he did not hesitate for a single moment to send Henrietta Brown, whose address he had been able to obtain through the bank-books, a diamond brooch had cost 20 pounds. He had deliberately omitted to say whence it had come, and for days lived in a warm dream of wonderment, satisfied in the thought that she was wearing something that he had seen and touched. And so exceedingly vivid had his ideal grown that he no longer neglected, even to the point of receiving censure, his duties at the bank. The change in his condition was so obvious that it had become the subject of gossip, and jokes were now beginning to verge into serious conjecturing. Dumpty took no notice, and amid jokes and theories he slowly matured his plans. The desire to write and reveal himself to his beloved had become imperative; and after some slight cogitation—for he was moved more by instinct than reason—he wrote a letter urging the fatality of the circumstances that separated them, and explaining rather than excusing this revelation of his identity. His letter was full of deference, but at the same time it left no doubt as to the nature of his attachment and hopes. The answer to this letter was a polite note begging him not to persist in this correspondence, and warning him that if he did it would become necessary to write to the manager of the bank. Nor did the return of this brooch dissuade Dumpty from the pursuit of his ideal; and as time went by it became more and more impossible for him to refrain from writing love-letters and sending occasional presents of jewelry. When the letters and jewelry were returned to him he put them carelessly away in his pockets, buying the first sparkle of diamonds that caught his fancy, and forwarding bracelet, ring or earring, with whatever words of rapturous adoration that came to his mind. One day he was called into the manager's room, severely reprimanded, and eventually pardoned in consideration of his long and faithful services. But the reprimand of his employers proved of no avail; he continued to write to Henrietta Brown, growing more and more careless of his secret. He dropped the brooches about the office, and he allowed his letter to lie about until at last the story was whispered from desk to desk. This was intolerable and Dumpty's dismissal was the only course opened to the firm. With much regret the partners told their old servant that his services was no longer required, and a new face was seen one morning at the desk where Dumpty had sat for thirty years.

Dumpty seemed quite unaffected by his dismissal; he appeared to experience a sense of relief. He left the bank smiling, thinking of Henrietta, bestowing no thought on his want of means. He did not even think of providing himself with funds by the sale of some of the jewelry he had

about him, nor of going to his lodging and packing up his clothes, nor of the train that would take him to Edinburg—it was there that he lived. He thought of her even to the exclusion of the simplest means of reaching her, and was content to walk about the streets in a state of happy dream; and about his dream of her face were interwoven dreams of glad, green fields, murmuring brooks, and melodious woodland; for he pictured her as some fair and vague embodiment of spring; some pale phantom clad in white draperies of morning—something, seen in the heaving haze—evanescent; on the borders of the mere. This dream floated even as the haze; and full of it, he wandered seeking the country instinctively. By nightfall he had wandered a long way through the many straggling villages that hang like children round the skirts of London. He was passing through one of these when, fatigue pressing upon him, he turned into the bar of an inn and asked for some bread and cheese.

"Come a long way, governor?" asked one of two rough fellows.

"I am going a long way," replied Dumpty. "I am going north—very far north."

"And what may yer begoing north for, if I may make bold to ask?" "I am going to the lady I love, and I am taking her beautiful presents of jewelry."

The two rough fellows exchanged glances, and it is easy to imagine how Dumpty was induced to let them have his diamonds, so that inquiries might be made of a friend round the corner regarding their real value. Having, waited a little while, Dumpty paid for his bread and cheese, and went in search of the thieves. But soon the imagined face of Henrietta Brown came between him and all earthly things, obliterating all remembrance of thieves and diamonds, and in its bright influence he wandered for a few days, living on very little, sustained by his dream and the crusts that his appearance drew from the pitiful; for now all his money had been spent or stolen, and he slept in the hay racks that chance afforded. And so he went until the first week of his quest drew to its close. But as bodily strength grew feebler the vision grew more beautiful and emphatic, until at last he even neglected to ask for a crust, and wandered foodless from sunrise to sundown. Yes, it was a soft summer's night when Dumpty lay down for the last time, and the heavens were filled with glorious stars. Dumpty had continued walking all that day; but now a great weariness had come upon him, and he had thrown himself upon some hay that was lying near the roadside. He lay there looking at the glorious stars, dreaming of her, feeling all sense of things slipping from him, and in their place, a divine oblivion enwrapping him, bringing her closer, revealing her more intimately to him; and as the ecstasy of death deepened and thickened about him, and when he opened his eyes for the last time, it seemed to this poor vagrant that one of the stars came out of heaven, and laid its silver face upon his shoulder.—St. James' Gazette.

### And They Moved.

Down in East Thirteenth street, the other day, two pedestrians suddenly halted and looked up at a fourth-story window. The lower sash was raised, and the head and shoulders of a child about two years old could be seen. In three minutes there was a group of a dozen men and women, and the child had got its breast on the lower sill and was reaching to get hold of a string hanging from the cornice—a reminder of some disaster to a kite.

"Heavens! he'll fall!" gasped one. "Certain to smash down on the pavement!" added a second.

"Stop! stop! Go back!" shouted a third.

Everybody had something to say, and while they were saying it the child wriggled further and further over the sill. At length a woman with a basket on her arm cried out: "What fools you men are! Why don't you run up and ring the bell and notify the mother?"

Three or four started, but they had not crossed the street when the child lost its balance and pitched out head first. There was a murmur of horror, but it was checked as the fall of the child was stopped two feet below the sill, and there he hung, squalling, with a leather strap buckled to his right ankle. His howls brought a woman to the window, and she pulled him up, depositing him inside, and then said to the gaping crowd below:

"Thought I didn't know my business, eh? Well, I just do, and you can move on!"—N. Y. Sun.

### The Youngsters Tittered.

The Arounder is authoritatively informed that the following was an actual occurrence at the gospel tent meeting on Niagara street, near Hudson. A member had just ceased speaking about a cure of asthma effected by prayer when a lank individual arose and asked for the privilege of the floor.

"If you have had experience you may speak, brother," said the presiding officer.

"I have had experience. My father was sick with the asthma for fifteen years, and he was finally brought to pray for his recovery. (Intense interest manifested among the hearers.) He prayed fifty years and (sympathetically) he died of the asthma."

Hysterical laughter among urchins on rear seats and consternation among the leaders.—Buffalo Courier.