

FOR EVERY BOY AND GIRL

The Coral Necklace

By Grace E. Craig.

"Oh, Daddy! Look! There's Vesuvius! And it is really smoking," cried Faire Atherton, dancing up to her father on the promenade deck of the *Astoria*.

The great liner was making her dignified way among the hazy islands of the bay toward the city of Naples, and all the passengers, having packed away their steamer caps and ulsters, were gathered on deck ready for the landing.

Fourteen-year-old Faire, with her merry face well tanned now by the sea-breezes, and all alight with interest, her gray eyes shining and her soft brown curls escaping from the huge bow which was endeavoring to hold them, made a pretty picture in her wide brown hat and brown corduroy traveling suit.

Her father looked down at her smilingly as she clung, chattering, to his arm.

"See, Daddy, all the little boats coming out to meet us! The people in that one have guitars! Oh! They are going to sing! and look, look! Those men are passing up bunches of violets on the end of a long stick! May I throw them some coppers? and oo—oo—oh! There are some little boys diving and coming up with pennies between their teeth!"

Mrs. Atherton laughed heartily and followed his little daughter's hasty flight down the deck to a point nearer the interesting urchins.

To Faire the voyage from Boston to Naples had been a delight. Her mother and Aunt Alice had been just the least little bit ill, but Faire had not suffered, and she and her father had never once missed a meal in the big dining-saloon. They had played shuffle board and bean-bag and tramped their four miles every day on deck.

The blue-and-gold days at sea were so glorious that Faire was almost sorry when the steamer at last reached the beautiful Azores and anchored in the harbor of the ancient city of Ponta del Garda, where Daddy said Columbus stopped for supplies on his first voyage to the new world.

She had enjoyed her afternoon in the old town, however. Everybody went ashore in tiny boats, rowed by dark, little Portuguese men, and hired queer carriages drawn by pairs of pretty little donkeys for drives about the island.

At Gibraltar, two or three days later, Faire had visited that great rock fortress of the English, crouching like a lion at the entrance of the Mediterranean, and in Genoa Daddy had taken her to see the tall, narrow house in the dark, narrow street where the great discoverer of her own dear land first opened his clear eyes.

And now at Naples, the "bella Napoli" of which the musicians in the boat were singing, the wonders were not to cease.

"Mother, mother!" Faire cried, as they drove up from the dock to their hotel on the hill. "Do see the corals! The shop windows are pink with them."

"Yes, dear," her mother answered, smiling. "Naples is the best place in Europe to purchase corals. While we are here I mean to buy my little daughter a really fine necklace to take the place of the baby chain she is outgrowing."

"Oh, Mommy! I should like it above all things," and Faire's eyes were brighter than ever. "I've always loved my tiny string of coral beads, because Uncle Charlie brought it to me when I was a baby, but I do have to hold my breath when I put on now."

Faire missed the soothing rocking of the good ship that first night on land after the two weeks' voyage and her sleep was disturbed by dreams of Mount Vesuvius spouting strings of coral beads which rolled down his mighty sides toward the city of Naples.

When she opened her gray eyes next morning, Aunt Alice was just ringing for the chambermaid. The room was answered by a very young girl in a neat, black dress and white cap and apron, an extremely pretty young girl, with the soft, lustrous eyes, dark hair, and fine skin so common in Italy. Faire, sitting up in bed with her brown curls falling around her, realized that the little maid gazed at her rather wistfully, and then with a pang she saw that the lovely dark eyes and the rounded cheeks were swollen with weeping.

"That girl can't be much older than I am, Auntie," she said as she climbed out of bed after her aunt had given her orders. "And she had been crying. Did you see?"

"Poor child! Probably she is tired and unhappy. These Italian girls are obliged to work very hard," and Aunt Alice looked troubled for a moment. Then she pushed aside the curtains and both aunt and niece promptly forgot little Teresita. Vesuvius was in plain sight and the beautiful Neapolitan bay, the fairest picture in the whole wide world, lay just beneath the window.

The happy days flew by on wings. Mr. and Mrs. Atherton, Aunt Alice and Faire went to Pompeii, and walked up and down the ancient streets and peered into the houses which had been buried under Vesuvius' ashes for so many centuries; to Sorrento, that village of orange groves, perched on its bluff above the purple sea; and finally drove across the mountains to Amalfi and stayed several days in the old convent which has been turned into a hotel, where Faire often saw the few monks who still remain there walking up and down under the orange trees, with bowed heads and serene faces.

Daddy read to her Longfellow's beautiful poem while they sat on the terrace overlooking the dreamy "Salernitan bay with its sicles of white sand" and "the dim discovered coast" where "Pastum with its ruins lies."

When they were back in Naples once more Mrs. Atherton decided that it was quite time for an expedition to the shops with the fascinating windows which had so charmed Faire on her arrival, and the little girl looked forward joyfully to becoming the proud owner of one of the dainty necklaces which were displayed everywhere in such profusion. She was to choose it herself and she could hardly wait. To be turned loose among the rosy corals would be bliss indeed.

Faire sat in her room on the eventful morning counting over the Italian coins which her mother had given her the night before.

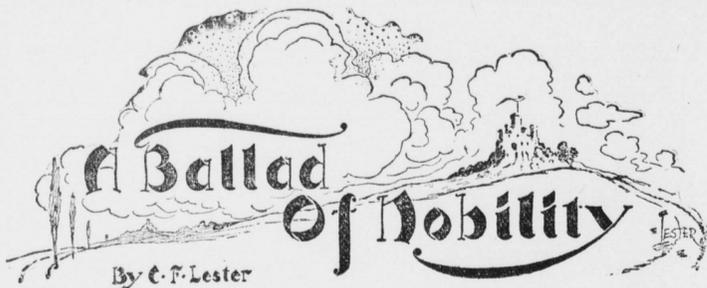
"For the necklace, dear," Mrs. Atherton had said, "and the keepsakes for the home people."

"One hundred and twenty-five francs! Twenty-five dollars!" the little girl chanted softly. "Dearie me! What gorgeous things I can buy!"

Just then the door which Faire had left unlocked opened and the small chambermaid appeared with broom and dusters to arrange the room for the day. She was about to withdraw hastily when the American girl called her. She had been weeping again, in fact she seemed to be always sorrowful, and kind little Faire felt that she must fathom these depths of woe.

"What is the matter, Teresita?" she asked, gently. "You have been crying. I know. Won't you tell me what troubles you?"

Teresita spoke very fair English, but for a moment she did not answer. Then she said with a little catch in her voice,



A Ballad of Nobility

By C. F. Lester

THE noble Duke of Nothing-Much, one sunny day in Spring,
He took a notion (and his hat) to go a-journeing.
He took a notion (and his hat) to go a-journeing,
Quoth he, "I don't know where I'm bound, but it doesn't worry me,
For, if I have no end in view, I can't go wrong, you see!"



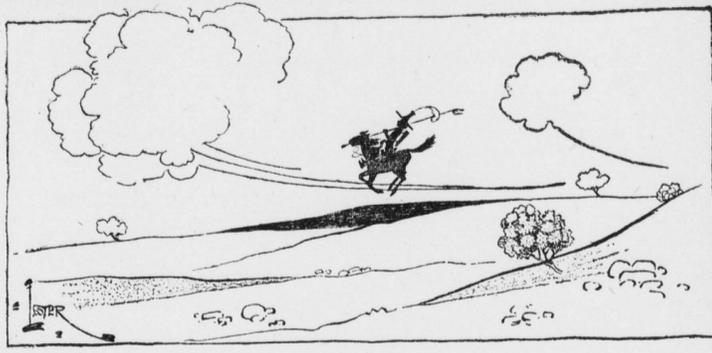
"QUOTH HE, 'I DON'T KNOW WHERE I'M BOUND.'"

We now must leave the noble Duke (he'll stay till we get back)
And trace the fortunes of young Count Fitzmaurice Crackerjack;
He lived three miles from some queer place (I don't remember which),
And if he'd had much money, he'd have probably been rich.



Lord Crackerjack loved candy; he kept it in a tower;
He used to buy it by the pound, and eat it by the hour;
So, as he sat and looked abroad, upon this day so bright,
His hands were filled with caramels, his soul with calm delight.

Full gladly would we linger with the joyful Crackerjack,
But a ballad is a ballad, and you just can't hold it back;
So let us tear ourselves away to quite another scene
And seek, amid the forest gloom, the Lady Geraldine.



"PRINCE HOOP-DE-DOO WAS RIDING TOWARD THAT SPOT."

"Help!" cried the Lady Geraldine. "Will no one rescue me?
Alas! Alack! and also Woe. I'm lost as I can be!"
Her lily hands she sadly wrung—(oh, I forgot to say
This happened in Hysteria, some hundred leagues away.)

The Lady Geraldine would not have thus bewailed her lot
If she had known Prince Hoop-de-doo was riding toward that spot.
Though it makes a deal of difference (as of course you know it would)
That the Prince was eighty-seven miles from where the lady stood.



"WILL NO ONE RESCUE ME?"

Now, the Prince was hunting starfish with his trusty bow and spear.
Said he, "To hunt for starfish in a forest may seem queer,
But then, just pray consider how renowned I'd surely be
If I ever really should bring down a starfish from a tree!"

Well, the noble Duke of Nothing-Much got home all safe and sound;
Lord Crackerjack continues to eat candy by the pound;
And the dainty Lady Geraldine in course of time was found;
And the Prince got fourteen starfish and is terribly renowned!



"THE PRINCE WAS HUNTING STARFISH WITH HIS TRUSTY BOW AND SPEAR."

So now you have the story, just as plain as anything,
Of everything that happened on that sunny day in Spring;
But should you ask me how these things all happened thus and so,
I really couldn't tell you,—for I really do not know!



"I am unhappy, very unhappy!"
"I am so sorry," and Faire clasped her hands before her in a way she had when she felt most deeply. "I noticed how sad you looked the first day we were here. What is the trouble? Can I help you?"
It is doubtful if Teresita understood all Faire's words, but she did understand the sympathy in the eloquent little face, and to Faire's distress she burst into tears.
Then the story all came out. Teresita was the eldest of several children and her widowed mother was very poor. The girl had been in school until about six weeks ago, and had stayed on until the end of the term would have received what she called a "certificates," and then might easily have obtained a good position in a shop. But the mother had been ill for several weeks in the winter and unable to do her regular laundry work for the hotel, and the household funds were consequently so low that when Teresita's gown and shoes became too badly worn to appear at school, new ones were out of the question.
"And so," the little maid finished, "I did geece it all all up, and came here. The hotel people furnishes the clothes but I shall never get here enough wage to help the mother, while if I might have had a position in a shop I should have earned as much as twenty francs a week. I was so disappointed."

Faire looked at pretty, sorrowful Teresita and then she looked at her little silver purse for a long moment. "Don't cry!" she said softly at last. "How much would a new gown and new shoes and the other things you need cost?"
"Fifty francs," Teresita said, sadly. "And I shall never earn here so much until I am too old for school!"
Faire rose and walked around the chair where the little Italian had dropped down, and suddenly something glittered on Teresita's white apron.
"Oh, but you must not!" the girl cried. "Fifty francs! Madame, the mother, will not like it."
"It is mine," Faire said. "Mother gave it to me for a coral necklace, but I would far rather have you use it, Teresita."
For a moment Faire's straight little American figure in its Peter Thompson suit stood opposite Teresita's little, rounded, already stooping form in its uniform of service, and then the two girls suddenly put their arms about each other and Faire felt a soft kiss on her cheek.
Mrs. Atherton and Aunt Alice could hardly refrain from openly regretting Faire's generosity, but Mr. Atherton restrained them.
"The money was Faire's," he said, "and I am glad to find that she is unselfish enough to give up something she really cares for, to help a less fortunate girl."

"But, Robert," Faire's mother mourned, "the child will not have another such opportunity to purchase corals, and girls do love them so. She was very brave, but I felt so sorry, when we were selecting gifts for all her little friends, that she was to have nothing. I believe I shall go down and get a string of beads and surprise her."
"Don't!" Mr. Atherton counseled. "Faire will not care for it now. I did not notice that she seemed unhappy when she returned from her shopping. I know my girl, and I think she can get on without a coral chain a while longer."
The very day the Athertons left Naples Teresita left the hotel to return to school.
A year later, when Faire was back in her Boston home, and had quite forgotten her longing for the pink glories of the Neapolitan windows, a box came for her one day. It was addressed in the clear, round hand which is taught in the Italian public schools, and bore many foreign stamps.
Faire opened it wonderingly, and there on a bed of white cotton lay a coral necklace.
Mrs. Atherton and Aunt Alice exclaimed in rapture.

It was a wonderfully fine chain, very long, and with beads perfectly matched, and as delicate in tint as the inside of a shell. A card attached bore the words, "From Teresita."
A little note written in the same careful hand told how Teresita had finished school, and at once obtained a good position in a dressmaking establishment. She had been able to keep her brothers in school also, and they could soon find positions now, and Teresita would be relieved from care, thanks to the young American Signorina. The writer knew that her kind friend had longed for a coral necklace, and as an uncle had returned from America with his savings and started a small jewelry shop in Naples, she had been able to obtain this one at a reasonable price. She was sending it with her "gratitude and reverent love."
"Hum!" Daddy said, when Faire exhibited her treasure to him. "It is extremely handsome, but I should value the letter even more highly than the necklace. There are things more precious, than coral beads. Don't you think so, daughter?"