
A PRETTY COMPANION
 By Louisa Bedford.

CHAPTER I.

The gas was turned up to its full height and flared noisily in the front parlor of a lodging house in the suburbs of London. Just underneath it, so that the bright light illumined the varying shade of her auburn hair, sat a girl, with the advertisement sheet of the Daily Mail laid upon the table before her. One finger passed rapidly down the columns.

"I wish I were a cook, Neville. Here are cooks required of every size and shape, no limit to either age or sex, apparently. I could get a dozen situations tomorrow if I could roast a joint properly, and I could earn a fortune if I could do made dishes."

The brother that Janetta Howard addressed was a good-looking lad about 19 years old, with dark appealing eyes, and closely-cropped curly hair. The face was spotted by the purposeless, weak mouth and the characterless chin. He reclined in an easy chair, and was smoking a pipe, with his hands thrust deep into his trouser pockets.

"What nonsense, Jennie! As if I should ever consent to your going out as a common servant! Besides, I don't believe you could do a red herring properly."

"Given a good fire and a toning fork, I would evolve the way to do the herring," retorted Janetta merrily. "But that I dare not draw out our last penny of capital I would go in for a series of cooking lessons, come out at the top of the tree, and take a place as cook in a high family, I tell you. I would not adopt the title of 'lady help.' I'd be cook, and rule my kitchen with a rod of iron." And she clenched her hand, as if she really gripped the rod of which she spoke.

"And, falling this, what do you propose to do?" asked Neville lazily.

"Anything that offers," replied Janetta quickly, resuming her search through the paper. "It is quite clear that, if you are to accept this chance of a stool in an accountant's office, I must supplement your salary in some way; you can't live on it."

"I need not accept it; I can wait for something better."

"Wait until we come to our last penny, in fact!" cried Janetta impatiently. "No, Neville; you must take this clerkship, and I must get something and help you all I can. You know I'm ready enough to do it; but—with a little break in her voice—"you'll keep steady, dear, when I'm gone?"

Her tone implied that the boy's past had not been altogether blameless, and he started to his feet, as if stung by her words.

"I know I've been a beast, Jennie. I've wasted a lot of money; but if I hadn't had such bad luck I should have won it back on the last Derby."

"That's just it—you'd no right to risk it," replied Janetta despairingly; "but you'll leave it alone now—you must promise me to try and keep straight. I think it would break my heart if you turned into a drinking, betting man like father!"

The last words were brought out sadly and reluctantly, briefly telling the tale of the present low ebb in their fortunes.

"He's dead; you need not bring up his sins against him," said Neville, rather sulkily.

"And I would not, except that I love you so dearly that I must give you one word of warning. You've nobody else, you see," said Janetta, with a smile that was almost a caress.

"Let me see, where was I? Bent upon finding that wonderful situation that is to make both your fortune and mine," she continued, with an effort to regain her usual light-heartedness. "What do you say to this?"

"Wanted immediately, a young lady as companion, good-looking and good-tempered. Photo must accompany every application. References required."

"Humbug!" ejaculated Neville, from the depths of his easy chair.

"Come and look for yourself, if you don't believe me," said Janetta, with laughter in her eyes.

He rose and peeped over his sister's shoulder. "Why, yes! it's there safe enough. It's a hoax, of course. You won't be green enough to answer it."

"This very night," said Janetta brightly—"at least, if you honestly can assure me that I fulfill the requirements, I'm not old at two-and-twenty, am I?"

"I'm averagely good-tempered, and could attain perfect self-control if an occasional outburst meant a loss of situation. And"—as she spoke she glanced at the common little mirror above the mantel shelf—"don't mind my feelings, tell me truly; am I good looking enough?"

"Oh, as to that, you'll do," replied Neville, with the bluntness of a brother.

The face that the mirror reflected was framed in a cloudy mass of hair, set like an aureole round the daintily-poised head. Hazel eyes, half veiled by the long lashes, looked wistfully from under level, clearly-defined eyebrows; a creamy complexion; and a smiling mouth, whose half-opened red lips disclosed the whiteness of the small, even teeth, completed the picture.

Beauty was the one possession left to Janetta, and tonight she prized it more than she had ever done before as a possible means to an end. What if the simple fact that she was pretty

should win for her the situation she so longed to obtain?

"I shall send her my prettiest photo, Neville," she said, after her brief self survey.

"You don't even know the sex of the advertiser. It may be a widower advertising darkly for number two," suggested her brother.

Janetta laid down her pen in some alarm.

"I don't care," she said; "I shall write and send my photo and references. The answer will tell us all about it. I think it's a very rich old maid, with a poodle and a parrot. I shall probably have to wash the poodle, and play pretty Polly with endless lumps of sugar, and get my fingers well packed in the process. There! my letter is at any rate short and to the point. Will it do?" she said, tossing it over to Neville.

"A man could not have put the thing better. Old maid or widower, I would close with you at once if I were the advertiser. You write a short note and a pretty hand."

"Very well, we'll go out and post it," said Janetta, stretching out her hand for her hat. "May good luck attend it!"

She received an answer by return of post. The pointed handwriting in which the letter was written was of the style prevalent about 40 years ago.

"An old maid! Look at the writing!" cried Janetta triumphantly, as she opened the envelope.

"There is a modern brevity about it," said Neville, peeping over her shoulder. "Read it out, there's a dear."

"Dear Madam: I think you seem likely to suit me. The salary I offer is £60 pounds a year; but I shall be willing to raise it at the end of the first quarter if we find we get on together. Will you come for a month and see how you like it, beginning on Monday?"

"Can you leave by the train which starts from Paddington at 2 o'clock? I shall be sending to Northelf Station meet a friend, and you could come by the same carriage. Wire reply."

"Believe me, faithfully yours, (Miss) Clarice Seymour."

Janetta and her brother burst into simultaneous laugh when she finished the letter.

"Either the woman is a lunatic or it's a hoax," said Neville.

"I'll go and see for myself. It's too good an opening to miss. Sixty pounds a year for doing nothing, apparently. No mention even of the poodle or the parrot. Anyhow, it's a genuine place; I've looked it out in the 'Gazetteer.'"

Thus it came to pass that, on the Monday following, Janetta and Neville paced up and down Paddington station together, both their hearts too full of the approaching separation to trust themselves to speak of it.

Instead, they talked of trivialities, watched the other passengers as they hurried down the platform to the train, commenting idly upon them.

"Look, Neville! what a handsome man that is getting into the first-class carriage not far from my humble third. If he were a girl, and applied for my situation, I should not have a chance, should I? He's so very good looking!"

The man in question turned, as if he had heard the remark, glancing at the brother and sister, who had come to a halt before the carriage in which Janetta had placed her rugs.

The glance was but momentary. He signed to the porter, who followed him, to hand in his belongings, jumped into the carriage, and closed the door.

"I believe he heard you, Jennie," said Neville quickly.

"If he did it can't matter. We shall never meet again, and it can't be the first time that he's heard he's good looking," said Janetta, with a little laugh.

"Oh, Neville, I must get in! I don't know how to say good-by. I will write tonight. Good-by, dear; good-by. Jump in a minute, I must kiss you; and you'll keep steady, for my sake?"

The last words were said in a whisper.

"All right, don't bother!" said Neville, horribly ashamed of the fact that there were tears in his eyes.

CHAPTER II.

In a few minutes more the train was puffing slowly from the station, and Janetta, who had craned her neck from the carriage to obtain a farewell smile from Neville, sank back into her corner, with plenty of time before her in which to consider her prospects and her fellow travelers.

The latter were singularly uninteresting, with the exception of a little girl not more than two years old, who sat just opposite Janetta, regarding her with thoughtful eyes.

"Pretty," she said presently, stretching out her arms to come to her. And Janetta, with a reassuring nod to the mother, stood the child by the window and talked to her for the first hour, only handing her back to her natural guardian when the little thing was tired out, and showed signs of dropping off to sleep.

A glance at her watch told her that she could not be many miles from her destination, and she looked out of the window to notice the sort of country through which they were traveling, fancying that in the fast-fading light of the February afternoon she could catch the shimmer of the sea in the distance.

The thought had scarcely framed itself before she was conscious of a curious yawning and fro in the carriage, then a shivering vibration ran along the train as if the brake had been applied with unwonted force; and, before she could do more than read the awful alarm that was written upon the faces of her fellow travelers, there came a crash and a total cessation of movement.

The earth itself seemed tottering under her, and she was thrown from her seat to the floor. She was too stunned for a few minutes to realize in the least what had happened; but when at last able to collect her senses, she knew that there must have been an accident, the nature and character of which she was incapable of gauging.

The air was alive with sounds more or less distressing—the hissing of the engine, the shouts of the engine driver, the piercing shrieks of women, and close to her, making itself heard above the din, the pitiful, frightened wail of a little child.

"Poor little dear! it must be the little child I was talking to," said Janetta, trying to raise herself on to her knees so as to see better what had happened to her fellow travelers, and much relieved to find that her own limbs were whole and sound.

The carriage was jerked off the rails and was pitched half over on its side, and the struggles of others to free themselves were beginning to be unpleasantly felt when, from her kneeling posture, Janetta caught a glimpse of the man whom she had seen getting into the first-class carriage a little beyond her own at Paddington.

"Hallo!" he said, with a pleasant smile. "You seem to want help here. Don't be frightened; I don't think there is much harm done, barring the smashing up of a carriage or so. No, no! don't struggle behind there! Ladies first, please. I must help you out through the window, as the door is jammed, and beware of broken glass."

"The child first," said Janetta, with quivering lips, who had laid hold of the little frightened heap that had been propelled right under the seat opposite to her own.

"Hand her out, please!" cried the man, depositing the child high up on the bank near by. "She's scared out of her wits, as well she may be. Now give me your hands, and place your feet on the handle of the door; I'll keep you steady as you climb through and lift you out."

Janetta obeyed every direction swiftly and deftly.

With her arm about the child, Janetta sat and watched the strange scene with dazed, bewildered eyes. The huge engine, which had run off the line, stood half embedded in the bank at the side, snorting and puffing as if indignant at finding himself in such an ignominious position.

Men with scared faces hurried hither and thither; women stood in groups along the line, sobbing in helpless terror.

The mother of her little charge lay stretched at full length on the grass close by, borne thither by the strong arms of her rescuer, who seemed almost the only man who kept full possession of his senses, except a fair-faced, fair-haired young doctor, who hastened forward towards the prostrate figure, kneeling by her and feeling her pulse with professional calm.

"Fainted, that's all," he said, looking up at the man by his side. Then a quick glance of recognition passed over his features. "Why, Merivale, you here?" he exclaimed. "On your way to the George, I suppose?"

From a certain hardening of the voice Janetta gathered that, for some reason unknown, the fair-haired doctor did not like the handsome stranger, whose fine physique and pleasant bearing seemed so attractive to herself.

(To be continued.)

"TELEPHONE EAR."

Operators Say Answering Calls Does Not Affect the Hearing.

Chicago girls who listen to the click in the telephone receiver for eight hours every day in the week laugh at the idea that their New York sister operators are getting a "telephone ear," or a deafness, from the constant snapping of the call signals, says the Chicago News. "A 'telephone ear,'" remarked one girl who has operated a board in the central office for three years, "is the most acute one in the world, and the more noise there is in the phone the more trained our ears become to detect what is being said."

"There are a great number of girls in this office," said the chief operator. "I sat at a board myself for several years, and I never heard a girl complain that the sound of the phone affected her hearing in the least. I know it never did mine." In speaking of the effect of the click on an operator's hearing, A. S. Hibbard, the general manager of company said:

"I do not care to say that the New York people are wrong in their contentions that they have had cases of deafness due to the sound made in connecting and disconnecting the telephones, but it sounds improbable to me. We have had the signal system in Chicago for about five years. Almost every phone in Chicago now calls the main board without twisting a crank, and yet I have never heard of a complaint."

Cat That Never Tasted Meat.

A kitten has been brought up on an exclusively vegetable diet by a family of vegetarians. The result is that it will not touch animal food and it pays no attention to rats or mice.

Almost any evil can be remedied if you face it fearlessly and honestly try to remove it.

A HIGH MARK.

The New York Almanac for 1901, issued by Charles H. Fletcher of New York City, has set a high mark for similar publications during the new century, and shows remarkable enterprise on the part of the publisher when we consider that it is intended solely for free distribution. The numerous publications of this character are usually gotten up with the single idea of cheapness, while the thought of expense has certainly been set aside in the case of the New York Almanac.

The artistic colorings of the cover, the accuracy of its calendars and its fund of information all go to make it well worthy of perusal and preservation. It has innumerable hints for mothers as to the care of children. A unique page is the "Baby's Record" page, which is in blank, to be filled in with baby's name, date of birth, cut first tooth, etc.

The whole is a very creditable piece of work and may be procured at any drug store or direct on request, free.

Britain makes 300,000,000 yards of linen a year.

How's This?

We offer One Hundred Dollars reward for any case of Catarrh that cannot be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure.

F. J. CHENEY & CO., Props., Toledo, O.

We, the undersigned, have known F. J. Cheney for the last 15 years and believe him perfectly honorable in all business transactions and financially able to carry out any obligations made by their firm.

West & Traux, Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, O.; Welling, Kinosh & Marvin, Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, Ohio.

Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. Testimonials sent free. Price 75c per bottle. Sold by all druggists.

Hall's Family Pills are the best.

A pound of phosphorus heads 1,000,000 matches.

You Can Get Allen's Foot-Ease Free.

Write to-day to Allen S. Olmsted, Le Roy, N. Y., for a FREE sample of Allen's Foot-Ease, a powder. It cures sweating, damp, swollen, aching feet. Makes new or tight shoes easy. A certain cure for Chilblains and Frost-bites. At all druggists and shoe stores; 25c.

The fear of unbelief is unbelief in yourself.

Garfield Tea has permanently cured countless cases of chronic constipation, and many diseases arising from a clogged system; it cleanses the system and purifies the blood.

No one is ever too busy to tell his troubles.

THE CHANGE OF LIFE

Is the most important period in a woman's existence. Owing to modern methods of living, not one woman in a thousand approaches this perfectly natural change without experiencing a train of very annoying and sometimes painful symptoms.

Those dreadful hot flashes, sending the blood surging to the heart until it seems ready to burst, and the faint feeling that follows, sometimes with chills, as if the heart were going to stop for good, are symptoms of a dangerous, nervous trouble. Those hot flashes are just so many calls from nature for help. The nerves are cry-



SKINTORTURES
 And every Distressing Irritation
 of the Skin and Scalp Instantly
 Relieved by a Bath with
Cuticura SOAP

And a single anointing with CUTICURA, the great skin cure and purest of emollients. This treatment, when followed in severe cases by mild doses of CUTICURA RESOLVENT, to cool and cleanse the blood, is the most speedy, permanent, and economical cure for torturing, disfiguring, itching, burning, scaly, crusted, and pimply skin and scalp humors with loss of hair ever compounded.

Millions of Women

USE CUTICURA SOAP, assisted by Cuticura Ointment, for preserving, purifying, and beautifying the skin, for cleansing the scalp of crusts, scales, and dandruff, and the stopping of falling hair, for softening, whitening, and soothing red, rough, and sore hands, for baby rashes, itchings, and chafings, in the form of baths for annoying irritations and inflammations, or too free or offensive perspiration, in the form of washes for ulcerative weaknesses, and many sanative antiseptic purposes which readily suggest themselves to women and mothers, and for all the purposes of the toilet, bath, and nursery. No amount of persuasion can induce those who have once used these great skin purifiers and beautifiers to use any others. CUTICURA SOAP combines delicate emollient properties derived from CUTICURA, the great skin cure, with the purest of cleansing ingredients and the most refreshing of flower odors. No other medicated soap ever compounded is to be compared with it for preserving, purifying, and beautifying the skin, scalp, hair, and hands. No other foreign or domestic toilet soap, however expensive, is to be compared with it for all the purposes of the toilet, bath, and nursery. Thus it combines in ONE SOAP at ONE PRICE, viz., TWENTY-FIVE CENTS, the BEST skin and complexion soap, the BEST toilet and BEST baby soap in the world.

Complete External and Internal Treatment for Every Humor.

Consisting of CUTICURA SOAP (25c.), to cleanse the skin of crusts and scales and soften the thickened cuticle. CUTICURA OINTMENT (50c.), to instantly alkyl itching, inflammation, and irritation, and soothe and heal. CUTICURA RESOLVENT (50c.), to cool and cleanse the blood, and remove itching, burning, and scaly skin, scalp, and blood humors, with loss of hair, when all else fails. Sold throughout the world.

Cuticura
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MRS. JENNIE NOBLE.

ing out for assistance. The cry should be heeded in time. Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound was prepared to meet the needs of woman's system at this trying period of her life.

It builds up the weakened nervous system, and enables a woman to pass that grand change triumphantly.

"I was a very sick woman, caused by Change of Life. I suffered with hot flashes, and fainting spells. I was afraid to go on the street, my head and back troubled me so. I was entirely cured by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound."—MRS. JENNIE NOBLE, 5010 Keyser St., Germantown, Pa.

For 50 Years mothers have been giving their children for croup, coughs and colds

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Mothers—have you SHILOH in the house at all times? Do you know just where you can find it if you need it quickly—if your little one is gasping and choking with croup? If you haven't it get a bottle. It will save your child's life.

"Shiloh always cured my baby of croup, coughs and colds. I would not be without it."—MRS. J. B. MARTIN, Huntsville, Ala.

Shiloh's Consumption Cure is sold by all druggists at 25c, 50c, \$1.00 a bottle. A printed guarantee goes with every bottle. If you are not satisfied go to your druggist and get your money back.

Write for illustrated book on consumption. Sent without cost to you. S. C. Wells & Co., LeRoy, N. Y.

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