

The Poor Young Man on the Top Floor.

EARLY days of my life were uneventful. I was but one of the spotless number who traveled about on the back of a goose. True, we saw much of the world, my companions and I—but as this is going to be an autobiography, I will only relate those incidents in which I played a star part. In the barn-yard, where my early life was spent, I saw Arabella, a young lady from New York, with an old gold-colored bang, and eyes as blue as wood-violets. She dressed as soberly as a Dominick hen, and all occupants of the barn were fond of her. Even the goose, who had a notoriously bad temper, forgot to hiss when she patted its back.

Arabella was standing in the doorway one morning, with her new archery set around her, when the tragedy occurred. The goose was so intent in looking at her fair young figure on the porch that she did not notice any impending danger. Tooling along the road on a bicycle came a young man attired in a neat-fitting corduroy suit. A sunburnt, honest-looking young chap, he seemed to me, who took a sensible view of life, and who knew a pretty girl when he saw her.

He saw Arabella, and saw that she was fair; he did not see the goose, however. There was a collision, and in a moment the air seemed filled with gentlemen's furnishing goods and mild profanity. The goose, greatly disgusted, with ruffled feathers and a general appearance as if she had been boxing with a buzz-saw or delving into the intricacies of a sausage-machine, retired to recuperate under the hedge, and hissed the other actors in the play.

Arabella stopped long enough to take up a stitch she had dropped in her knitting, and then went to the young man's assistance, like a brave little woman that she was.

She deftly dug the rich Jersey clay out of his eyes with her rosy fingers, and bathed his brow with eau-de-Cologne. He did not seem to object to

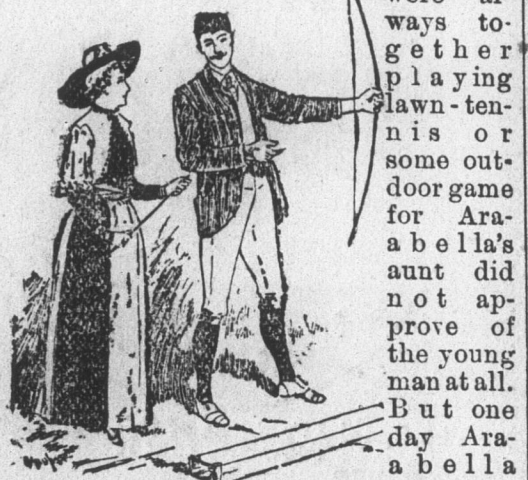


this performance a bit, and I am inclined to think he rather exaggerated the result of his injuries. I know they sat by the shady road long enough to have had a dozen arms set, and he hadn't broken anything but his bicycle.

Well, I thought they never would say good-by; but at last, after taking about an hour to the operation, the young man disappeared over the hill trundling his bicycle, and Arabella went back to the house with a dreamy look in her eyes, and a new installment of freckles accumulated during the interview.

From that day the young man was often to be seen going by the house, and finally he began to stop at the gate; and it wasn't very long before they were practicing archery on the lawn.

The summer passed and the fall set in, but even in the bleak days of October they were always together playing lawn-tennis or some outdoor game for Arabella's aunt did not approve of the young man at all. But one day Arabella



suddenly packed up all her dainty dresses and started for home. We all mourned her loss in the barn-yard, and sympathized with the bicycle rider.

I noticed about ten days after Arabella went away that the goose to whom we clung with such affection was growing fat. The fact alarmed me, for I knew by the signs that our venerable friend was destined to fall into the hands of the executioner. She, poor thing, suspected nothing of the impending danger, but ate her double rations with a thankful heart, and waddled about the barn-yard proud with satisfaction.

But the gluttonous grass-widow did not long enjoy her luxurious life; for one night we were bundled unceremoniously into a box, and found ourselves in a few hours on the rolling cars.

When I finally saw daylight again, it was to find myself in a great market with a glass-covered roof, and filled with hurrying people.



I was being whirled through the building at a 2:40 speed, on the wings of the cold north wind, for I was free at last to go where I would; my old friend the goose, bare as a new-born babe, lay on a stall below me as I whirled by.

I was so busy looking around me that I ran smack into the face of a hungry-looking young man, who was haggling with a marketwoman for a pound of liver. Heavens! I recognized the young bicycle rider. I was very glad Arabella was not present to see him as I did that day; without an overcoat or gloves, his face blue with the cold, and a hungry, half-sad look in his eyes. He looked as if he had very little to give thanks for, poor fellow!

I would have liked to follow him, but a particularly spiteful gust of wind just at that moment carried me off and whirled me down the street. A little shivering newsboy, who was trying to warm himself over a grating in Printing House Square, caught sight of me drifting airily by, and after a chase finally captured me, to his great delight. It was nine o'clock before my little friend had disposed of all his papers and started for home. Our way led through the east end of the city, where the houses looked like wrecks stranded on the shores of the commercial sea; tottering tenements that looked blind alleys, with sightless-looking windows filled with old hats and dingy newspapers. The house we entered was squalid enough; its halls reeking with filth, where grimy-faced children were enjoying some boisterous games. The family of my captor occupied a single room near the roof. There were seven in all; his father and mother, who had never known what rest meant in all their worn and weary lives, three other boys, and the tiniest baby I ever laid my eyes on. I was soon in the baby's dimpled fingers, and though a good deal crushed by the operation, I felt I was giving the poor little thing pleasure.

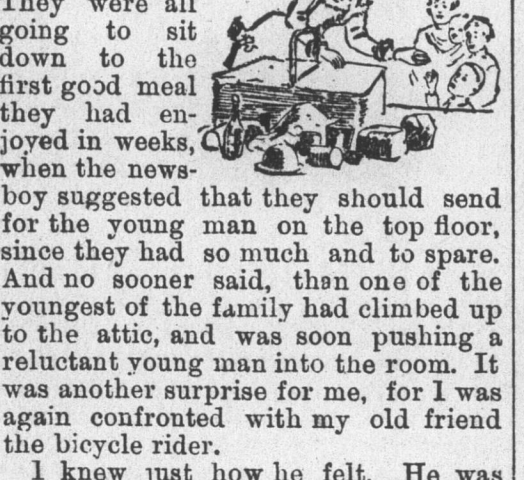
I was just making a survey of the room and its happy occupants—for they did seem to be happy in spite of their surroundings—when the door opened, and who should enter but Arabella! Yes, Arabella; and behind her strode a footman in livery, carrying a basketful of poultry and groceries—enough to last the family for a month. And how the newsboy yelled, and his mother laughed, and the baby crowded, when they found that all the good things were for them. I declare, I wished I could be a man to buy Arabella just then and there for what she had done.

It would take me a long time to describe the pleasure that poor family experienced through her bounty, and how the table groaned with good things. They were all going to sit down to the first good meal they had enjoyed in weeks, when the newsboy suggested that they should send for the young man on the top floor, since they had so much to spare. And no sooner said, than one of the youngest of the family had climbed up to the attic, and was soon pushing a reluctant young man into the room. It was another surprise for me, for I was again confronted with my old friend the bicycle rider.

I knew just how he felt. He was proud and he did not like to accept anything from these poor, honest people; but they made him so welcome, and the appetizing smell of the dinner was so savory, that before he exactly knew what to think, he was seated at the table and eating as he had not eaten since he left the country.

I found out, through the conversation at the table during the meal, that he was a poor author, and that the paper on which he had worked had suddenly failed, so that he was reduced to extreme want. He talked remarkably well for so young a man, and I grew very much interested in him.

Among other things, he said he had grown so discouraged of late that he had not written a line, but an idea for a poem had come to him as he walked about the streets that day, and he intended to begin it at once. After dinner was over he caught sight of me in the baby's hands. "Just the thing I want to write my poem with, if the baby don't mind," he said with a laugh. "If you will lend it to me, perhaps it will bring me luck, and I shall soften the heart of some publisher." So he got me finally, and, after saying good-night to the honest people, went up to his attic, where he fashioned me into



as fine a quill-pen as ever an author gained immortality by using.

For hours and hours that night I traveled diligently over the paper—though the young man was considerate enough to give me frequent rests while he ran his fingers through his hair to collect his thoughts. It was nearly morning before we stopped our work, and I was laid down alongside of the poem, which was beautifully written on a spotless piece of paper, all ready for the next operation.

In the morning my proprietor put me in his pocket, together with the completed manuscript, and then we did a great deal of walking until we came to a square filled with trees and benches. At the north end of this stood a high brick building, which I recognized by the sign as belonging to a very wealthy publishing house.

My proprietor, with a confident step, entered an elegant office in this building, and deposited his manuscript with a supercilious-looking clerk, who eyed him disdainfully as he pitched the package into a half-filled basket that lay on the desk. But my proprietor was too confident of success to mind this, and hummed a merry tune all the way home.

An old goose-quill I once met on the farm, and my only literary friend, once told me that the average magazine editor generally took one year to read a manuscript, one year to pay for it, and about five years to publish it. I was therefore surprised to find, a few days afterward, that my captor had received a letter from the editor, inclosing a check accompanied by a request that he would call with a view to future contributions.

Our second visit was more pleasant than the first, and we soon found ourselves in the presence of the editor. I noticed my proprietor started when the great man of the magazine introduced himself; but, however, that might be, I know we accepted the invitation to dine that evening at the editor's house with great alacrity. To make a long story short, we went to the dinner, and there the bicycle was introduced by the editor to his daughter, who turned out to be none other than Arabella!

So I was the means of bringing together two loving hearts, and saving that truly good young man from being a suicide. They were married yesterday, and I, mounted in gold, occupied the most conspicuous place among the many costly presents. I did that young man a good turn once, and I shall do it again. He shall be immortal, if my nibs hold out!

No Spending-Money.

Among the poor, particularly the thrifty and industrious poor, says a writer in *Harper's*, the woman of the household, be she wife or daughter, has much more control in dispensing the daily or weekly wage than women on a higher social plane; men of brawn, when sensible and kindly, practice a more generous rule of conjugal partnership than is usual among men of brain, though these latter's earnings are on such a scale of plenty that unless we look below the surface regulations and equipments of the house we fail to discover the false financial relations that exist between husband and wife. For wives, as a class, have no spending money, and are rarely cognizant of their husband's true business condition. Is this just to the being a man has promised to honor as well as to love? Women are accused of being "mean," and any one who has ever served on a collecting committee knows how, in forming a list of possible subscribers, name after name is omitted with the remark, "No use going to her; she never gives," or, "She has no money," and yet the husband of "she" is invariably a man of means or ample professional income, who pays extravagant household and personal bills for his family, usually with willing good-nature. It is only when money is asked for that a tightening of the purse-strings instinctively takes place and the unblushing query is made: "Why, little woman, what did you do with the \$5 I gave you last week?" We have heard such a question put to a beloved wife by a man whose yearly expenses were at least \$20,000, and who the next week gave the same wife valuable diamond earrings, and always encouraged her to dress extravagantly and live luxuriously.

What Kind of a Speech.

"I'm going to speak my mind at that meeting to-night, and don't you forget it," said an irate metropolitan clubber to his wife.

"Going to speak it plainly, are you, dear?" she asked quietly.

"Yes, I am; I'm going to speak my mind, my whole mind, and nothing but my mind."

"What a short speech it will be," she said, half to herself, and went on sewing.—*Washington Capital*.



A Column or Two of Chat About the Fair Daughters of Eve.

Together with a Few Notes on the Latest Styles in Feminine Attire.

Fall Fashion Flyers.

The truly fashionable belle is doing a double duty to the goddess of dress. She is finishing her summer season handsomely, and at the same time is getting her wardrobe ready for winter. The proper outlines for evening toilets, as fixed by the latest canons of style, are accurately shown in the first of these pictures. The materials may be anything within the considerable range of approved fabrics, but the shapes for grand occasions of finery cannot greatly depart from this illustration, unless the wearer be a bud, or debutante, as young girls are called during their first winter out. In that case two styles are illustrated in the second plate. Formerly, such maidens wore distinctly juvenile costumes, like that of the girl on the left; but now bare arms and low corsages are allowable, though the gown usually has, nevertheless, a girl-



NEW BALL COSTUMES.

ish air, as here shown. The drawings in both plates are from actual garments just made for September use for balls or receptions.

Fashion writers sometimes do not hesitate to grind out information of the fall styles as early as August. But never until October will the public know all about the winter's glories of dress. Things are projected upon the public as fashionable that will never become so. Styles are described that will never be heard of on the backs of the modish. Some merchants in New York fix up the show-windows as early as August 25 with loud devices in wool, but the custom is as foolish as eating oysters on a certain day for the first time, because there's an "r" in the month. Many people spell "Orgue" that fashion for the sake of getting in oysters on the uneducated. So with the big stores of Gotham. They catch the unwary with unsalable goods by their early displays. When the real styles get in their flaming inducements, the Macgregor plaids and the telegraph-pole stripes are relegated to the store-room, not to be seen till the next summer. I am acquainted with a piece of silk on whose orange ground rest



IN THEIR FIRST SEASON.

peonies in their natural colors and life size, that has decorated the show-window of a Broadway dry-goods house ten consecutive Septembers. Some credulous women have bought breadths for panels, and in 1879 a lady from Ann Arbor purchased a dress pattern off it. In other respects the original package is unimpaired. The Ann Arbor lady is said to have been consigned for treatment to a lunatic asylum in the spring, and it is an open question in Michigan to this day whether the purchase broke up a fine Western intellect or the purchase indicated an intellect

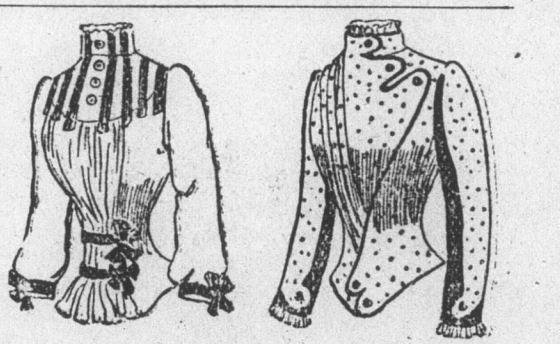
already on the wane. But there are genuinely new styles in some of the stores of this city. The general tendency of taste and style can be outlined at this early day. The dress-makers are coming home with their discoveries.

Dresses for autumn out-door wear show no more d d stent on of bustle than was tolerated last summer, and it is to be hoped that a decrease of that deformity will soon ensue. Two contrasting styles are depicted. The draperies which characterize the skirt of one are absent in the other. The bodices illustrate the ingenuity of decoration nowadays achieved in mock-jackets and plastrons. Big hats are still seen, especially on late sojourners at the resorts and mountain tourists. Striking suits of Scotch plaids, of loudly figured stuffs, and of violently trimmed goods, are worn by fair travelers. But it is safe to say that big hats will not be worn this fall for the best of reasons. All the skewers this side of the kitchen can not keep a Gainsborough on the head during No-



FALL OUTDOOR DRESSES.

vember and the windy part of October. Two things may be depended on: Jet will be as fashionable as ever—nothing takes its place—and birds' plumage will hold its own on hats, especially the stiff wings and cocks' feathers, for the humidity lately so largely introduced into our atmosphere ruins an ostrich plume on sight. The importers are booming an immense stock of velvet flowers, leaves and such small fruits as grapes, plums and cherries made of plush. They are handsome, rich-looking things, but have a prim, set air of their own that imparts a flavor of middle age to the female face. That settles it. I have said a middle-aged woman under 75. One would suppose 150 years was the average length of life, if we took a lady's word as to the dividing line. It is doubtful if the gorgeous, soft splendor of plush fruit or velvet flowers will ever amount to more than the decoration of the wholesale dealers' counters. But lengths of tulle, of gauze and various diaphanous materials will be worn around hats and twisted about necks both fair and grizzly. It keeps the hair in place, frills up neuralgic chinks, and is becoming to all faces. The mode will be to wind a scarf about a hat, leaving at the back a streamer of at least a yard and a half. That will go once or twice



TWO NEAT BODICES.

about the neck. Some necks are so much bigger than others that they must regulate the purchase. A yard and a half will be plenty for Mrs. Frances Cleveland, but if Grover concludes to conduct his fall campaign with one, three yards won't be an inch too much.

A glance at the two bodices pictured will not only show some neat ideas in quiet decoration, but will give outlines after which any ingenious woman can herself fashion a dress waist by modifying the pattern which she ordinarily uses. The devices are not difficult, although among the prettiest and most effective in the market. Sleeves range from the tight one long in vogue to all sorts of loose ones. It may be believed that the era of skin-tight sleeves is over, and that a fashionable woman will soon, for the first time in years, be able to lift her hands freely to the top of her head without bursting a seam.—*Chicago Ledger*.

Heart Almost Broken.

"Madame, your husband was killed, I believe," said a man, addressing a woman who lives on the border of the Indian Territory.

"Yes," she replied, with a sigh, "and I could have borne the misfortune much better had not the circumstances of his death been so distressing."

"What were the circumstances?"

"Well, you see, he was killed by a man who had had no experience whatever in that line. It is sad, of course, to be killed by a professional, but to be shot down by a mere amateur is awful beyond description. My husband was a man of much experience, and to think that he was taken off by a scrub from St. Louis almost breaks my heart."—*Arkansas Traveler*.

NEVER yet was a good act lost, no matter if it was not appreciated.