

Overcoming Her Despondency

By Elizabeth Robbins

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The shadow of the leaves of an apple tree branch quivered on the white muslin curtains of Miss Phoebe Percival's chamber window as they were stirred by the light morning breeze.

The sun just rising filled the room with a yellow glow. Ordinarily this was the signal for the rising of Phoebe, but this morning she lay and watched the shadows. She had awakened with a heavy feeling of despondency.

"I declare for it!" she exclaimed to herself, "I've a good mind not to get up at all. I ain't of any use in the world—an old maid, living here alone. Seems as if everybody else had somebody to do for—parents or husband or children or relations of some kind—at any rate, somebody they're necessary to and who'd miss 'em if they should die. But me!—I don't suppose any living being would shed a tear if I should die this minute. I shouldn't be missed any more'n one of the rocks over in the pasture!"

Phoebe stopped short in her monologue to listen. A faint "meow" came from somewhere below.

"Coming, little," called Phoebe, and was out of bed before the words were out of her mouth.

It took her but a few minutes to dress, and then she tripped downstairs, for Phoebe was quick-motioned if she was 40.

She let the cat in, stooping to take him in her arms for a moment and pet and talk to him. "You've had to wait so long, Peterkin, I think I will give you an extra good breakfast," she said. The cat rubbed against her and showed his affection in all the ways possible to a cat, and when the saucer of food was set before him, purred loudly as he ate.

Phoebe had hardly cleared away her breakfast and made her three small



Tripped Downstairs.

rooms tidy, when there was the sound of children's voices and a knock on the front door.

"Oh, Miss Percival, will you please give us some flowers for the teacher?" spoke up one of the children eagerly when she appeared.

"Bless your hearts, yes!" was the hearty response. There was a snipping of Phoebe's scissors, and when the troop passed out of the yard with happy faces, each child had a fragrant little bouquet, and there was a chorus of "Thank you, Miss Percival."

"Precious few left," laughed Phoebe to herself. "But they'll blossom all the more for being picked, and what would be the use of having flowers if nobody wanted 'em?"

She was now ready for the day's work, which was to make a jacket and two pairs of knickerbockers for little Freddie Westall, from two old pairs of his papa's trousers, which his mamma had ripped and pressed.

"I think I'll make the seats and elbows double, seeing there's cloth enough," soliloquized Phoebe. "Freddie is so hard on his clothes and poor Mrs. Westall has so much to do, and then when they do come to holes the patches'll be right there all ready to hem down to."

The groceryman came as Phoebe finished cutting the jacket. He was a fresh, attractive-looking young man, and generally inclined to be sociable; but this morning he was very glum and said never a word as he wrote down Phoebe's order.

"Why, what have you done to your wrist?" she exclaimed suddenly.

"Cut it on Badger's old kerosene can, I guess. The dickens! I didn't know it was bleeding like that—on your clean floor, too!"

"Wait a minute and let me do it up for you. Never mind the floor."

"Oh, it's no matter. I can put my handkerchief about it."

But Phoebe insisted, and after washing the wounded wrist, wound it with soft white cloth. The young man looked down at her in silence till she began to fasten the end of the bandage, when he spoke abruptly:

"Say, Miss Percival! Suppose you'd been going with a girl steady for most two years, and all at once she left you in the lurch some Sunday night and went home from evening meeting with another fellow! Shouldn't you think yourself justified in never having anything more to say to her?"

"Why, I don't know," said Phoebe. "She may have done it just to tease."

not meaning anything. No; I don't think I'd break an engagement for a little thing like that."

"Oh, but there wasn't any engagement—at least, nothing had ever been said—"

"Well," said Phoebe, as she took several unnecessary stitches, "if I had been going with a girl two years and never mentioned anything about being engaged. I should expect her to think my attentions didn't mean anything and she was free to go home with anybody she liked. Shouldn't you?"

The young man blushed. "I guess I've been something of a fool, Miss Percival," he said, with an embarrassed laugh. "I've been expecting folks to be mind-readers. Thank you for doing up my wrist."

Phoebe watched him as he went down the path. "I knew Nellie was feeling bad about something the last time she was here," she mused; "but I had other company and so she didn't say anything. It's queer what trifles will come between two people who really think the world of each other," and Phoebe sighed as she recalled the one romance of her own life.

BERLIN WOOL WORK AGAIN.

Fashion's Wheel Has Brought Old-Timer Into Favor.

So many of our "new things" turn out to be old things slightly disguised and brought into fashion by a turn of the wheel. Here's "Berlin work" as the latest arrival. This is work in wool on canvas in either "cross" or "tent" stitch. The cross-stitch is the easier and, on the whole, the better adapted to elaborate patterns. It was in cross-stitch that the dames of olden days embroidered the elaborate tapestries that adorned the walls of hall and castle, some of which are highly esteemed as art treasures.

If a girl is very enterprising and wishes to give a very handsome present to some friend, she could not do better than work a chairback and seat cover. The back of the chair might be worked in the coat of arms of the recipient. Cross-stitch lends itself particularly well to such conventional designs. The seat of the chair might be the crest only. Care must be taken to do the work in the very best grade of wools, as the others are liable to fade. Sofa pillows worked in cross-stitch are always acceptable, and many charming patterns (most of them old ones revived) are shown this season. Hand fire screens are very pretty, but they should be worked in silk on very fine canvas. A very little silk will enable any girl to pick out even the most complicated pattern with ease, but for the lazy, patterns are bought already stamped on the material.—Detroit Free Press.

PRETTY AND CHEAP SCREEN.

Beautiful Ornament for Any Room in the House.

Something beautiful in a window screen will cost you only the price of some very thin blue lawn, providing you already have a frame, and many homes have screen frames which have once done duty and only await something new in a covering. It takes a double thickness of lawn for the screen, because the designs are pasted lightly between the covers and when the light shines through the screen there is a beautiful shadow effect. One neat design is a stork standing amid cat-tails and pond lilies, another is bunches of grapes and leaves, and the odd little figures of dancing Dutch children or pretty geisha girls make good shadowgraphs. A handsome covering can be made with white lawn, the pictures being in colors which reflect through the material. It is best to cut the patterns from paper and paste very lightly to one piece of the material after it has been tacked in place. Always iron the pieces to the material to prevent wrinkles. Or the patterns can be cut from dress goods and attached in the same manner. A large screen will be attractive if covered with cheap unbleached muslin and the figures cut from heavy paper, which show in bold relief on the white background. Shades for lamps can be made in the same manner, either with floral effect or any of the conventional patterns commonly used.

"I'll go right back with you," Phoebe said promptly, and the two left the house together.

Phoebe was possessed of "gumption," and the stove lining was put in as quickly and as well as John could have done it.

"Now, Laura," she commanded, "you just run and change your dress and get ready for your company—'tis most 11 o'clock—and leave the dinner to me. I'll have it all on the table by 12, and run over afterward and wash up the dishes."

"Oh, it is too much—"

"No, it isn't!" Phoebe interrupted her. "What are neighbors for if not to be neighborly?"

So with a deep breath of relief Mrs. Gaines obeyed, and Phoebe set to work on the dinner.

Everything went off well, and at half-past one the dishes were washed and put away, and Phoebe was back at her machine.

Just before supper, Mrs. Gaines ran over for a minute to tell Phoebe how grateful she was. "My company had to go away at three o'clock," she said, "and if it hadn't been for you I should have had to stay in the kitchen most of the time and hardly seen my sister at all."

Phoebe hurried her sewing after supper, so that by half-past eight she was on her way down the road with Freddie Westall's completed garments over her arm.

Mrs. Westall gave a relieved sigh at sight of her. "I'm so glad they're finished," she exclaimed. "Some of the other children dared Freddie to go through a thicker of horse-briers and blackberry vines this afternoon down in the pasture, and his only pair of knickerbockers was torn to tatters. You couldn't stay and spend the evening, could you?" she asked wistfully as Phoebe rose to go. "I can't blame folks for not coming to see me, when I never get to see them; but I do get so lonesome—and my husband is away this evening, too."

"Why, I'll be glad to," asserted Phoebe, and the two sat and rocked and chatted till Mr. Westall came home at ten o'clock.

After Phoebe was home again and had locked up for the night, there came a quick knock at the door.

"Somebody must have been taken suddenly sick and sent for me," she thought as she drew the bolt and opened the door.

"Good evening, Miss Percival," said a voice which she instantly recognized as that of the groceryman.

"I was going by home," the young man said, "and saw your light was burning, so I thought I'd stop and tell you that I acted on the hint you gave me this morning, and 'everything is all right. Nellie has said she'll marry me. We thought we'd like you to know about it first."

"Well, I am glad!" thought Phoebe, as she fastened the door again and went upstairs. "He's a likely fellow and she's a good girl. They'll never be sorry, either of 'em."

When Phoebe had put out her light she lay for awhile watching the leafy shadows on her curtains, cast this time by the newly-risen moon.

The despondency of the morning had given place to a quiet happiness that was soon merged in pleasant dreams.

Relief for Choking.

A raw egg swallowed immediately will generally carry a fish bone or other substance down which cannot be removed from the throat by the utmost exertion.



TO PROTECT WALL

HERE IS SOMETHING DAINTIER THAN JAPANESE MATTING.

Directions for Making Splash-Back in Floral Muslin or Cretonne—Pretty Frill with Which to Finish Drapery.

The splash backs in Japanese matting which are so often used to protect a well-papered behind a washstand are never very decorative in effect, and seem always as though their proper place would be rather the floor up with tassels.

A pretty frill of the flowered muslin, or other material, finishes the drapery along the top, while lower down the muslin festoons are caught

the wall, without any assistance from a professional carpenter.

It might be carried out in any kind of floral muslin or cretonne, or even silk, draped in the manner shown in the sketch, and arranged so that it will hang from a long, narrow piece of wood, which must also be covered with the same material. A blind-lath would answer the purpose admirably. Into the back of this piece of wood two picture-frame rings might be screwed, which could afterward hang from two nails in the wall; or hooks might be fastened into the wall, on which the wooden lath might rest.

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PARIS STYLES AND COLORS.

Blue Stockings and Big Hats Worn in Gay Capital.

The favorite color for stockings over in Paris this season is blue. But another word comes from the other side that Parisian style makers are concealing their original designs because Americans steal them. Well, now, did you ever? Mushroom hats are not dead; only the brims are wider and turn up at the edges; as to smaller sizes being worn, that depends on the buyer. It will interest those who have humanitarian scruples to know that the gayest plumage nowadays comes from the humble barnyard, the poulter's shop and the sportsmen's guns. The feathered product from these sources is dyed in magnificent colors conjured into vast heights that decorate the newest shapes and are softed to the needs of the picture hat. When women are tired of seeing themselves overtopped by these constructions, there will be changes, not till then. The last word is by no means said on the unique hat of the season.

MADE IN PRINCESS STYLE.

Handsome Reception Gown of Cheviot with Fine Trimmings.

A very handsome reception gown was developed in a princess model from cerise French cheviot. This material being rather heavy, the elaborate touches were shown in fine trimmings. A deep yoke of white lace was broad over the shoulders and the front piece extended several inches below the waist line, where it was finished with a broad tab effect. The narrow belt closed at each side of the lace piece. An odd feature of the trimming was shown in innumerable little pendants of cerise enamel which studded the lace, not heavily, but noticeably. The skirt was made decided fully around the lower portion by the introduction of set-in folds which were simply outlined with a narrow finishing braid of the same color. The sleeves were alternate rows of cerise satin and the belt was of satin.

Spice Fingers.

Cream thoroughly three tablespoonsfuls of butter with a scant cupful of brown sugar, adding a teaspoonful of powdered cinnamon, a half teaspoonful each of nutmeg and allspice, a quarter of a teaspoonful of ginger and salt. Stir one teaspoonful of sifted baking soda into one cupful of rich sour cream, and as it foams add it to the spice mixture alternately with enough graham and white flour (half and half) to make a soft dough. Turn on a floured board and knead into it three tablespoonsfuls of seeded raisins, three of currants, and one each of chopped citron and candied orange peel. Roll out very thin, cut in strips with a jagging iron, then sprinkle with powdered sugar and bake in a moderate oven until brown and crisp.—The Circle.

Buttermilk Biscuit.

Two cups flour, one-half level teaspoon salt, one-half level teaspoon baking powder, two level teaspoons cream of tartar, three level tablespoons shortening, buttermilk.

Sift together the flour, salt, soda and cream of tartar. Work in the shortening with the fingers, then add buttermilk to make a soft dough. Turn on a floured board and knead into it three tablespoonsfuls of seeded raisins, three of currants, and one each of chopped citron and candied orange peel. Roll out very thin, cut in strips with a jagging iron, then sprinkle with powdered sugar and bake in a moderate oven until brown and crisp.—The Circle.

Coque's Plumes.

In millinery the alpha and omega is undoubtedly feathers and every description of birds' wings and breast plumage—no matter how humble its origin—is pressed into service. From economical reasons, women in general have to congratulate themselves that the coque's plum may fairly be said to be at the zenith of its popularity, and even in the dark, iridescent tones which one has scarcely seen for some years it will be amazingly popular, while panaches of flecked brown and white, gray and white, or blue and white coque's plumage take all manner of different forms in the hands of the milliner.

IN RIBBON OR SILK.

Belt of flowered ribbon or silk with tiny tabs in the back which hook on the waist.

CULTIVATE HAPPINESS.

Every girl can do one thing well if she will only take the trouble to find what that thing is.

There are great talents in reach, if one will only look, and these talents may be a comfort in dark hours that will make life better and happier, both for ourselves and those about us.

It is the girl who does things that is attractive.

This does not mean painting great pictures or singing in grand opera or writing the popular book, but it does mean cultivating the faculty of saying bright things, playing light, catchy airs, acquiring the art of being sympathetic.

The girl who puts her own griefs as much as possible aside—who takes a wholesome interest in life, who cultivates looking for the best in people with whom she comes in contact—is happier herself and makes those about her happy.

Good for the Complexion.

Parsley water is said to be useful for clearing the complexion. Take one-half pint of rain water and soak a large bunch of parsley in it all night; in the morning wipe the face with a clean, soft cloth, then sponge with the parsley water; let the face dry without wiping. This should be done three times a day for a fortnight, when great improvement will be seen in the complexion.

The General Demand

of the Well-Informed of the World has always been for a simple, pleasant and efficient liquid laxative remedy of known value; a laxative which physicians could sanction for family use because its component parts are known to them to be wholesome and truly beneficial in effect, acceptable to the system and gentle, yet prompt, in action.

In supplying that demand with its excellent combination of Syrup of Figs and Elixir of Senna, the California Fig Syrup Co. proceeds along ethical lines and relies on the merits of the laxative for its remarkable success.

That is one of many reasons why Syrup of Figs and Elixir of Senna is given the preference by the Well-Informed. To get its beneficial effects always buy the genuine—manufactured by the California Fig Syrup Co., only, and for sale by all leading druggists. Price fifty cents per bottle.

BLAMED ON THE RAILROAD.

First Thought in Irishman's Mind After the Accident.

Railroad claim-agents have little faith in their fellow creatures. One said recently: "Every time I settle a claim with one of these hard-headed rural residents who wants the railroad to pay twice what he would charge the butcher if he gets a sheep killed, I think of this story, illustrative of the way some people want to hold the railhead responsible for every accident, of whatever kind, that happens. Two Irishmen were driving home from town one night when their buggy ran into a ditch, overturned, and they were both stunned. When a rescuer came along and revived them, the first thing one of them said was: 'Where's the train?' 'Why, there's no train around,' he was told. 'Then where's the railroad?' 'The nearest railroad is three miles away,' he learned. 'Well, well,' he commented. 'I knew it hit us pretty hard, but I didn't suppose it knocked us three miles from the track.'"

THE LIMITATIONS OF THE CLOTH



His Reverence (whose caddie has sneezed at the moment of putting) You—you—you naughty caddie!

A Busy Locality.

Jack is the eight-year-old son of a Philadelphia suburban merchant, and not long ago made his first visit to New York with his father. The strenuous of the big town got on the boy