

A Disappointment

By MARGARET BARR

My Dear Helen—I have something to tell you which I am sure will interest you; besides, I wish your sympathy. I have met with a disappointment and a loss at the same time. Oh dear, what a world this is!

But I must not begin at the wrong end or there will be no story. We are expecting to be abroad next autumn, to be absent at least a year, and I know no language except my own native tongue and French. Hence we are to spend the winter in Italy, concluded to study the Italian language. In order to be able to speak it well enough to enter society, especially in Rome, where we have advantages in the way of introduction, I concluded to take lessons. I secured a teacher who was born and educated in Florence and a member of a good family there, so I could be sure that I would get the language pure.

Having only a few months for study in order to progress rapidly I determined to engage an Italian maid. I advertised for one and received a number of replies. I called for several of them to come to see me, and after inspecting them all I chose one calling herself Vittoria. She told me her other name was the same, but I was not interested in that.

I chose Vittoria because she seemed to be of so much higher grade than the others and because my Italian teacher, after talking with her, told me that she spoke the language with tolerable correctness. Since this was all I wanted her for I decided to give her the position at once. Clarisse, you know, is my personal maid, who attends to me when I am making my toilet. Does my hair and all that.

Well, I found Vittoria quite valuable to converse with. While I got nothing from her of the construction of the language, the practice of talking with her advanced me more rapidly than my regular lessons. She spoke French as well as Italian, and she and Clarisse became very good friends. You know how nice it is to have servants who get on well together. If they are at sword's points one has no comfort. Besides they divided the work very well between them. Vittoria would have nothing to do with my toilet, and Clarisse had no reason to fear that the Italian would become necessary to me. The arrangement suited me exactly.

The friendship between Clarisse and Vittoria seemed to be continually growing. It appeared that there must be some bond between them. I questioned Clarisse about it, but got no satisfaction. Then Clarisse began to look worried. Again I tried to get out of her if there was anything on her mind, but she would not tell me. One day I cried Vittoria, asking her what was the matter with Clarisse. She told me that Clarisse had a lover. She had told her (Vittoria) about him and had introduced him to her. Vittoria took a great dislike to him and advised Clarisse to have nothing to do with him. Vittoria also asked me to say nothing to Clarisse about the information she had given me, for Clarisse would certainly regard it as a betrayal of confidence.

This seemed to me a very satisfactory explanation. Vittoria after having informed me of Clarisse's infatuation and that she was trying to induce her to give up an unworthy lover, made no effort to conceal their interest in one another and once or twice they asked to have the same afternoon off. This I granted, of course, wishing to give Vittoria every opportunity to argue with Clarisse against yielding to a love that would likely turn out unfortunately. I suppose it was very selfish in me, but I have been so dependent on Clarisse for so long that to lose her through a marriage or from any other cause would break my heart.

So matters drifted on. One afternoon I returned from a bridge party and went to my room. It was Clarisse's afternoon out. A bureau drawer containing my jewels in use, which I kept always locked, stood open and the jewels gone. Suspecting that burglars had been in the house, I rushed to a closet where I kept an iron box containing my most valuable gems. It, too, had been rifled. I called for Vittoria. She did not reply. Great heat came. What did it mean? My jewels, worth many thousands of dollars, had been taken, and my Italian maid, who was expected to be close at hand when my French maid was absent, did not answer when called.

In the midst of my confusion Clarisse came in. When I showed her my empty jewel boxes I thought she would faint. I was obliged to support her. She tried to say something to me, but her voice failed her.

"Never mind, Clarisse," I said soothingly. "I know what you would say. Vittoria has turned out to be a thief. She has deceived us both. She told me that you had a lover who was unworthy of you and she was trying to dissuade you from him."

"She," repeated Clarisse, covering her face with her hands. "Vittoria is a man."

"Great heavens!"

"He confided his secret to me; told me that for love of me he had dressed as a woman that he might be near me. I knew I was wrong to listen to him, but I did. My faith! What shall I do?"

How women may be hoodwinked by men. I don't care so much for the jewels, since I can buy those of later style, but I am so disappointed at losing my practice in speaking Italian.

EARTHQUAKES.

Causes That Conspire to Rend the Earth's Crust Asunder.

Until recently all earthquake shocks were attributed to volcanic manifestations. But often the earth is agitated in regions where there are no volcanoes. Hence the belief has arisen that earthquakes may arise independent of all volcanic action. The explanation, when volcanoes are in operation, there are no earthquakes.

Subterranean caverns are often the cause of earthquakes. They are the consequences of the action of subterranean water. When water runs through fissures in the earth, it is often forced out of its bed, and thus produces shocks. When it is forced out of its bed, it is often forced out of its bed, and thus produces shocks. When it is forced out of its bed, it is often forced out of its bed, and thus produces shocks.

The layers forming the solid envelope of the earth are neither homogeneous nor regularly distributed. Limestone hits granite, and relatively recent rocks overlie ancient masses. Limestone and schist lie together like folded cloth. Layers of the same age are separated by abrupt gaps and breaks by the debris cast out on either side.

The crust of the earth has been compared to masonry composed of many parts which must have been joined together and joined again many times. Its component parts are unstable; their movements are still in progress; they shift, and possibly their sudden shifting causes the upper crust to tremble.

The best evidence in favor of this explanation is that the great earthquakes have devastated countries where the geological layers show traces of cave-ins and slips. In Japan an earthquake raised the ground about twenty-one feet, and the rise ran for a distance of 112 kilometers. An earthquake in Alaska occurring in 1899 raised the coast for a long distance. Earthquakes are limited to two zones. One embraces the Himalaya, Asia Minor, the coasts of the Adriatic, Italy, the Alps, the Pyrenees, Algeria, Andalusia and southern Portugal; the other zone comprises the two coasts of the Pacific ocean. The majority of earthquakes have been produced in the first zone.—Harper's Weekly.

Barthold's Egotism.

An old friend of Mme. Steinheil's husband was Barthold, the sculptor of the colossal "Liberty Enlightening the World." Although a man of keen intellect and much originality of thought, Barthold's egotism was as colossal as his statue. Once Mme. Steinheil met him at the "Institut." He wore the green uniform and sword of a member, and his breast glittered with orders. "You see this little thing here?" he said. "There are but three Europeans who have the right to wear it: one emperor, one king and myself. I don't attach the slightest importance to it." Of the statue in New York harbor he said, "The Americans believe that it is Liberty that illuminates the world, but in reality it is my genius."—Bookman.

Seared and Knew It.

A soldier under his first fire was charging with the rest of his regiment on the heights of Vicksburg, but so scared he looked like a ghost. A comrade next to him was unafraid and even smiled at the torrents of grape shot that swept the ranks. The comrade, noticing his friend's plight, turned to him and said with a sneer: "Coward!"

"Coward yourself," retorted the frightened soldier. "Old man, if you were one-tenth as scared as I am you'd have broken ranks and run long ago."—Kansas City Journal.

The One He Caught.

One day many years ago the telephone in the office of the chief of police rang. Chief Speers answered. The call was from a new policeman on the Union avenue beat. He said, "A man has been robbed down here, and I've got one of them."

"Which one have you?" asked the chief.

The reply came back, "The man that was robbed!"—Argonaut.

Said I'd Try.

"Yes," confessed Mr. Dorkins, "it serves me right. I engaged the man to move out goods, and I forgot to ask him how much he was going to charge me for the job. If ever I do such a thing again, Maria, you can have my head for a football!"

"It would be a good deal more profitable, John," said Mrs. Dorkins, "to cut it up into billiard balls."—Chicago Tribune.

Preached into Generosity.

A preacher pawned his watch and the following Sunday preached four hours because he had no timepiece. At the conclusion of the sermon there was a special collection raised and sent to the pawnbroker.—New Orleans Picayune.

Corrected.

Gentleman (engaging groom)—Are you married? Groom—No, sir. I was thrown again a barbed wire fence and got my face scratched.—London Tatler.

Three Priests.

Teacher—Willie, give three proofs that the world actually is round. Willie—The book says so, you say so, and Ma says so.—Puck.

One day Judgeth another, and the last judgeth all.—Stow.

THE RUNAWAY

By SAMUEL E. BRANT

A handsome dressed woman carrying a suit case emerged from a large country place, and just as she reached the gate a man came hurrying along the road. The suit case was heavy, and she evidently had trouble to get along with it.

"May I carry your baggage?" asked the gentleman.

"No, no, to trouble you, but if I don't permit you I fear I shall miss my train."

"I see, am going to the station."

With a suit case in each hand, he walked along with the lady. "I should suppose," he said, "that your baggage would be doing this work."

"The lady did not reply for some moments; then she said: "I am going to give you my confidence. My father is trying to force me into a marriage I detest. I am running away to get rid of it."

"Do you not fear that he will stop you on the way by telegraph?"

"Will he? Oh, heavens! What shall I do?"

The gentleman stood still. He was thinking. "I have it," he said at last. "Come up to my house and disengage yourself."

She suffered herself to be persuaded, and when they arrived at the house he suggested that she put on man's clothing. She demurred at first, but finally consented. He gave her a man's suit, which she put on, and when she reappeared he was dressed as a woman.

"Why have you done that?" she asked, surprised.

"Because we passed several persons on the road just now who saw us, and you may be tracked and arrested before we can get away. We will speak of us as a blood lady with a brunette man. We are now the reverse."

"You are very clever," she said. "I don't see any one about. Is the house unoccupied?"

"Live in the city at this season. My family are there."

"They were obliged to wait in a taxi for another train, and by the time they started for it dusk had come on, and they had no fear of being recognized. The gentleman, as before, carried the baggage. They waited near the station till they heard the pinging of the engine and did not go on to the platform until the train was ready to proceed. Fortunately, they got into a car where there were few other persons."

"Now, if your father telegraphs, said the man, "to the different terminals to have you stopped there will be detectives at this one. When you leave the cars do not look conscious. I assure you that you make a very good man, though you might affect to have a weak throat and cover the lower part of your face with your handkerchief. I will give you my glasses."

"How kind you are!" replied the lady gratefully.

They chatted gayly during the ride that they might not appear ill at ease and that they might be prepared to carry out their parts well when they reached the station. Furthermore, each was practicing the part of the opposite sex.

When they left the train at the terminal the man told her that he would put his arm through hers and when he saw any one who might be looking for her he would whisper if they each carried a suit case. They passed through the gate without being stopped, and the lady gave a sigh of relief.

"Did you notice two men standing on the left who eyed us suspiciously?" he asked.

"Yes. Who were they?"

"Detectives."

"But you did not give me the signal."

"Yes, I told you I would do so that you might not appear conscious until I gave it. I had no intention of giving it. If I had you would have given up away."

"You certainly act as if you had been through something like this before."

"I have."

"What do you mean?"

"I will tell you later."

He asked her to call a cab and hand him into it. She did so and gave the address of a hotel to which they were driven. The lady went to the office and, with her hat down over her eyes and her face partly covered with her handkerchief, registered as brother and sister. Before parting to go to their respective rooms the man said:

"You are Mrs. N's lady's maid. I have seen you in her grounds quite often. You have her jewels in this suit case."

"Are you going to give me away?" she asked, palling.

"Certainly not. And I will tell you why. I am Mr. R's valet. The family left certain valuables at their country place last fall, and I, knowing where they were, have been there, captured them and have them with me. I was as anxious not to be recognized as you were. The telegraph would be used to stop you. No one yet knows of my theft."

"I have said all along that you were very clever."

"No more than you."

"You are a pair of dinkies," said a man, who stepped out from behind a curtain.

"How did you get on to us?" asked the crestfallen valet.

"Suspected and followed you from the station."

The end of this romance is passed walls.

A TRICKY TONGUE.

It Was Dear Spooner's Reputation That He Far Exaggerated His.

QUEER BLINDERS OF SPEECH.

Some of the queer blunders of the Old English language are mentioned in the First Edition of Spooner's "Miscellaneous Observations."

"Spoonership" is a recognized and accepted word used in the best circles of English society, even though it has not yet found its way into the dictionaries. Derived from the last name of the Rev. William A. Spooner, rector of New College, Oxford, it characterizes a curious sort of blunder that is habitual with that man, the peculiar nature of which is the result of an interchanging of words with that are often directly humorous results.

The most famous of all the stories about him tells how he once threatened out from the pulpit, "I believe you are on the side of the liberating cause," meaning, of course, "conquering time."

At another time he corrected his audience by boldly stating that he had consulted a half-witted man that had formed with in his bottom.

At a university dinner given at the time of Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee he proposed, "That among for the queen's old days," and then went on with a will, "I believe you are on the side of the liberating cause," but he forgot to remember that the queen was dead and that the liberating cause was a thing of the past.

Exasperated by a would-be humorous remark, he proposed to "invent" a new word, "to be a woman," but he forgot to remember that the queen was dead and that the liberating cause was a thing of the past.

"To another who had been mainly occupied in writing two terms at college he complained, "You have been thoroughly lax and, to top it all, you have wasted two worms."

In quoting the familiar text, "How not thy knee to an idol," he made it, "How not thine eye to a noodle."

One day he discovered a stranger sitting in his family pew. "Madam," he whispered, "do you intend to accompany this pie?"

Also he could blunder as blithely in action as in speech. One windy day, as he was walking down High street in Oxford, his hat blew off. He stopped to pick it up, but at that very moment a man hurried by. He set off in full pursuit and never stopped until he had caught hold of the luckless hat on Magdalen bridge. Then and there he solemnly tried to put the hat on his head.

Such are a few of the blunders in word and deed that have been attributed to the "dear old dean." Most we accept them all as genuine? Not if we are to believe a contributor to M. A. F., who informed that paper that at a church congress a well-known theologian said to him:

"Have you ever noticed how spoonerships have died out since Canon Liddon is no more?—with all your best, it is Liddon and I used to make them up. One of our best, which is always attributed to Spooner, is 'From Liddon's Greasy Mountains.'"

Spoonerships at all events existed before Spooner himself was born. Some meretricious ones may be found in Moore's Diary. There is the story, for example, of an old actor named Paris, who used always to say the "colossal pop" instead of the "colossal top." One night when he spoke it right the audience said "No, no!" and called for the other reading. Another actor mentioned in Moore made a great hit with the misquotation:

How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is To have a toothless child.

John Kemble was one night performing a favorite part in a country theater when he was interrupted from time to time by the squalling of a child in the gallery. At length, angered by this rival performance, Kemble walked with solemn step to the front of the stage and, addressing the audience in his most tragic tones, said, "Ladies and gentlemen, unless the play is stopped the child cannot possibly go on."

America itself is not without its Spooners and its consequent spoonerships. There must have been at least three Spooners in the western court where the following scene is said to have taken place:

"How far is it between these two towns?" asked the lawyer.

"About four miles is the slow train," replied the witness.

"You mean as the ox says."

"No," put in the judge, "he means as the fly crows."

And then they all looked at one another, feeling that something was wrong.

A sort of conscious spoonership was that brilliant jest credited to Dean Briggs of Harvard. During the year when the slogan "To hell with Yale!" first became popular among Cambridge undergraduates the dean, in company with Dr. Edward Everett Hale, was hurrying on his way to a great football game between Yale and Harvard.

"Where are you going?" asked another member of the faculty.

"To yell with Hale," answered Dr. Briggs.—Boston Post.

L.H.

Life is the finest of the fine arts. It has to be learned with lifelong patience, and the years of our pilgrimage are all too short to master it triumphantly.—Drummond.

Opportunity is that a pitched ball. The time to hit it is before it passes the plate.—Youth's Companion.

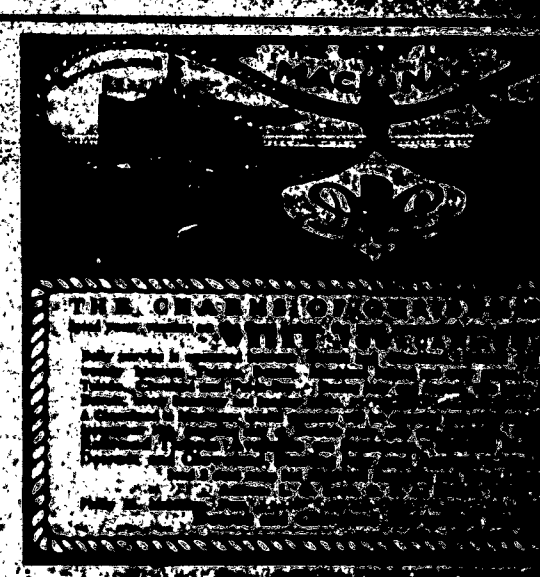
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