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FROM SHOP TO COURT.

A PRETTY PHILADELPHIA SHOP GIRL BECOMES A PEERESS.

The Story of Diana Blake's Good Fortune. A Romance of Fifty Years Ago—She Left the Stage for a Home in England. Her Second Marriage.

Forty years ago Eighth street, from Market to Arch, was bordered with two-story houses, most of them contemporary with 1800 and given over to small notion stores, the proprietors living in the second floors. The business done was very limited, old Mrs. Harbach selling more money in her little sandy store than any merchant on the street. Miss Rachel Lang kept a dry goods and trimming store in the neighborhood of Eighth and Filbert. She was a kindly old Scotch lady, who would as soon have had a man behind her counter as a German band before the door.

So all her assistants were girls. Gloves were the only men's wear sold in this shop, and Miss Lang noted with satisfaction that her sales in this line were rapidly increasing, but it never occurred to her that this was due to any other cause than the excellence of her goods, although in fact her gentleman customers cared very little for the price and quality of what they bought so long as they were waited on by Diana Blake, who was generally admitted to be the loveliest girl within the city limits.

Long nosed, saffron faced ladies, with undeniable social records and pockets full of money, often visited the store and wondered by what caprice of fortune a common Irish shop girl should have had such a dower of beauty which in the Diana of things ought to be the inheritance of women having Quaker ancestors and big bank accounts.

AT A SHOP GIRL.

One of them went so far as to suggest to Miss Lang that Miss Blake's good looks were too apparent for her station in life, but were away much offended when the little Scotch lady remarked "that if every one minded their own business we would all get along better."

Diana was born in Galway, Ireland, but had come to America when an infant. She was a type of that Irish beauty so scarce in these days, according to John Broughram, as bare teeth. Dark blue eyes, like wells of living water, shaded by long, dark lashes, blue black hair, and a complexion that was simply marvelous, were added to a sweet voice, graceful form and manners at once piquant and modest. Her father was a day laborer, and the family lived in Chester street, above Race.

Although Diana fully appreciated the enjoyment of her position, there was one temptation she could not forego, and that was dancing. When only 6 years old she had taken lessons from Signor Julius, who had a school at Tenth and Vine streets. The fact that he was an Irishman named McCaskey did not make him less efficient as a teacher, and when his pupil was 12 years old he secured her employment at the Walnut Street theatre in one of those elaborate ballets that so delighted our unsophisticated grandfathers. Her talent soon won recognition, and the dollar she received for such performances did much for the family income.

DANCING WITH A HUSBAND.

No whisper of this had reached her employer, and it was not until she was 18 that Manager Wood made her an offer of $18 a week and it became necessary for her to quit Miss Lang. That lady was a good Presbyterian, and looked on the stage as the broad road to destruction, but Diana justified herself through the family necessities, and she now went on the stage as chaperone premiere and took the name of Sophia Lee.

Her success was pronounced from the first, and the jessamine dame, represented in those days by gawky young gentlemen in gorgeous vests and cinches so tight that they looked as if skewered onto the wearer, paid the pretty dancer many squashy compliments, at which she laughed good naturedly, though she discreetly kept her admirers at a distance.

About 1840 one of the Barings, a nephew of Lord Ashburton, visited this country and was welcomed by the best society with affability. With him came a young King Richmond named Richard Hardy. He saw Miss Lee at the theatre, was struck with her grace and beauty and secured an introduction. He was a thoroughly good-natured, and addressed her not as a professional but as a lady.

Diana fell in love with a rapidity that startled herself. After a month's quiet attention Hardy spoke out. He loved her and wished to make her his wife. She became so kindly fully to tell the manager. He played the part of heavy father to perfection; painted out the ornamental character of success on the stage, the hardships and perils of professional life and advised her not to neglect an opportunity of securing a position at once permanent and honorable, as he had no doubt that her avenir as a wife would be a happy one.

A BEAUTIFUL WIFE.

Diana accepted Hardy, and they were married at St. Joseph's by Father Harbaugh. In society it was regarded as a distinct mesalliance, but the bride poor, an Irish girl and a stage dancer; but Hardy and his pretty wife cared nothing for the opinions of the breathless and Amindab Sleeks that prevailed then in Philadelphia, and left as soon for New York. Before the honeymoon was over the first trouble came. Hardy's father warned his son that such a marriage would cut all intercourse with his family, but Richard had money of his own and found no trouble in getting employment.

In less than a year old Hardy relented, and his son and wife left for England to find the father's wrath swept away by reverse in trade.

Sir James Hardy was Richard's uncle, and the head of the family. He was enormously wealthy, and had lost one son. He also resented the union his nephew had made, and dying about this time, left him out of his will. Between the inheritance to his vast Kentish property and Richard Hardy were the lives of eight people, old yet, by the caprice of fortune, all these vanished in two years and Richard became a barrister and his wife Lady Hardy.

She took her place in society with a grace and dignity that were natural gifts, and grew more beautiful as time went by. Her first sorrow was the death of her husband. She was then 36, with one son. Two years after she married Count Egmont, a Flemish nobleman of distinction connected with the Russian embassy at Paris, and when presented at the court of the emperor was regarded as one of the most beautiful women in Europe. She survived both her last husband and son, dying in 1869 in Brussels.—Philadelphia Times.

ABOUT COLD WAVES.

How Weight of Barometer Indicates Variations in Temperature.

During the winter time several cold waves are experienced in America, Europe and Asia. In North America they usually start east of the Rocky mountains and flow southeast over the United States. Similar cold waves spread from Siberia and Russia southeast over Europe, and from Thibet southeast over China and Japan, as also from the Andes eastward over the plains of South America. Such cold waves are the result of an adjustment of the temperature in the different strata of the air from the surface of the ground up to a great height. The cold is always dry air in the lowest stratum, cooled by radiation toward the cold ground below it and toward the clear sky above it until it accumulates in deep layers in the long winter nights of the Arctic regions and then flows toward any region from which warm air is ascending.

Cold waves are associated very closely with extensive areas of low barometer (regions of warm ascending air); they usually occur to the west and northwest of a low area and follow after it. The storm center moves in an easterly or southeasterly direction. Those, however, are not the severest kinds of cold waves, their effects lasting but a short time. The severer and prolonged cold waves are associated with extensive areas of very high barometric pressure, which make their first appearance in the regions north from Lake Winnipeg, in Manitoba. Toward the west and of enormous extent they spread southeast and east. The further east these high areas are the more important is the part they exercise in the transmission of cold waves. The advance of such a cold wave usually does not exceed 300 miles in the twenty-four hours.

When, however, the cold wave of a high barometer comes in close propinquity with an extensive area of low barometer, the progress of its cold wave is much more rapid, averaging 600 miles in twenty-four hours, and the territory over which there will be 20 degs. fall of temperature will be over half a million square miles. The great advantage of knowing from twelve to thirty-six hours in advance that the temperature will fall quickly and decidedly applies to multiplied business and agricultural interests, besides affecting the comfort and health of thousands of people. Such forecasts of cold waves are now made by the signal service bureau with increasing accuracy and highly satisfactory results, and are much valued by the general public.—Iowa Bulletin.

Dinner Customs at Home.

There is a growing feeling that in just so far as a meal in a private house can differ from restaurant and hotel affairs of a similar nature in that ratio is the proper fashionable effect obtained. Menu cards have received their death blow, temporarily, at least, although even the high class caterers are relinquishing them substantially. Their value to this class as a medium of decoration and effective display is too great to admit of a quick resignation. Crumb scrapers, even of silver and gold, are no longer in vogue, a folded napkin doing duty in their place, although this can hardly be put down as a non-restaurant practice.

In many fashionable establishments the waiter's tray is also on the shelf, literally and figuratively. In lieu of it a napkin folded square in the palm of the hand secures the untouched plate to each cover. There is an especial significance in this method. It takes the most skillfully trained and expert of assistants to accomplish successfully this hand serving. Carafes are absolutely unknown on well regulated tables.—Her Point of Viewin New York Times.

Poisonous Fish.

I have known two kinds of poisonous fish in the Cape waters, one of them small and the other large. The latter kind is known by the local name of "keeler," and is, as a rule, good to eat, although the oil is the most profitable use it can be put to. Only at certain times is it poisonous. Cape fishermen declare that they can discern at these times a poisonous streak of water from its color, which they say is a dark dirty brown. It is said to be accompanied by an unusual display of phosphorus. Occasionally the mussels are poisonous, and one year several pig faced baboons out of a troop which have long haunted the Cape peninsula were picked up dead after eating them. Shy and sagacious as the baboons are in selecting their food they are scarcely wary enough to guard against this periodical epidemic.

Within recent years several Malay fishermen have died from the effects of eating the "keeler." Fortunately it is not a common fish, and experience in time may remind the Malays that when there are so many good fish in their waters it is folly to experiment upon the doubtful ones. The other poisonous fish is a small toadlike object, with a small mouth, which often takes the red bait intended for others. It puffs itself out with venomous wrath, and it is well to avoid handling it. The local name for it is "Billy blaas-op," or Billy blow-up.—Blackwood's Magazine.

A Chinese Passport.

In China a traveler wishing for a passport is compelled to have the palm of his hand brushed over with fine oil paint. He then passes his hand on thin, damp paper, which retains an impression of the lines. This is used to prevent transference of the passport, as the lines of no two hands are alike. The cunning Chinese have also discovered that the impression of no two per sons' thumbs are alike, and also that the impression of no one person's two thumbs are alike.—London Tit-Bits.

Castor oil, it is said, if regularly applied each day to a wart, will remove it without leaving a scar. The time it takes may try the patience of the user—from two to six weeks being required—but if faithfully used it will remove the most obstinate wart.

An Insolent Calf.

An insolent calf would seem to be a new thing under the sun, yet that such a curious anomaly did once actually exist is seen from an anecdote of the late Capt. William Kilborn, of this town. The worthy captain—"Capt. Bill," as he was familiarly known, had a keen sense of the humorous, and likewise a dry way of presenting whatever struck him as ludicrous. Well, many years ago, in the good old times when neighbor dickered with neighbor in almost every variety of deal, and "you lend me and I'll lend you" was the most popular thing, especially in sparsely settled districts, it was the custom whenever a man killed a "beef critter" of any description, for some neighbor to borrow a quarter of meat until such time as his own was slaughtered.

A townsman of his, while calves were being slaughtered in the neighborhood, borrowed "just a quarter o' veal" in this way of one neighbor and another, until he had secured five quarters. He and by came the day of reckoning, when this man's calf was sacrificed. Of course, these were not quarters enough to go around to pay his loans. Capt. Bill heard of the slaughter of the innocent, and assuming that spiritual expression characteristic of him when secretly amused, and giving one of his peculiar shows, "just enough"