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Caprice at Home.

No, I will not say good-by— Not good-by, nor anything. He is gone, — I wonder why. Lilies are not sweet this spring. How that tiresome bird will sing!

I might follow him and say Just that he forgot to kiss Baby, when he went away. Everything I want I miss. Oh, a precious world is this!

... What if night came and not he? Something might mislead his feet. Does the moon rise late? Ah me! There are things that he might meet. Now the rain begins to beat.

So it will be dark. The bell?— Some one some one loves is dead. Were it he?— I cannot tell. Half the fretful words I said. Half the fretful tears I shed.

... And but to think of death?— Men might bring him through the gate. Lips that have not any breath. Eyes that stare— And I must wait! Is it time, or is it late?

I was wrong, and wrong, and wrong! I will tell him, oh, he sure! If the heavens are builded strong. Love shall therein be secure. Love like mine shall there endure.

... Listen, listen—that is he! I'll not speak to him, I say. If he choose to say to me, I will tell him, oh, he sure! I was all to blame to-day. Sweet, forgive me, why—I may!

AUNT RUTH'S VALENTINE.

"Dinah," said Aunt Ruth, "there may light the gas in the hall and see who is at the door; I hear the bell again."

"Dead, Missus, it's only another of them mizzable boys with their valentines, I spect. My legs is about broke now, and I've got a dreadful misery in my back a-runnin' to the door with nothin' there but them no 'count picters and chalk marks on the steps!"

Muttering thus she sallied from the room with the air of an offended princess; opened the door cautiously a few inches and peered out into the snow storm that was raging; but seeing no one, proceeded to shut it with muttered imprecations against all "mizzable white trash," when a small boy, ten or twelve years of age, black as ebony, and scantily clothed in a cotton shirt and ragged pants a world too large for him, which were drawn nearly to his shoulders and held in place by suspenders of twine, and turned up at the ankles, showing a pair of bare feet, rose from a corner beside the door. Surveying her for a moment quite as coolly as she surveyed him, he at last deliberately stepped into the lighted hall, dragging by the hand a shivering little girl almost hidden in the folds of a ragged coat which he dexterously jerked from her shoulders, saying:

"Here's a valentine for the lady wot lives here!"

"Then turning, he ran rapidly down the steps and disappeared around the first corner in the snowy darkness, while the bewildered Dinah stood staring stupidly after him.

The little smutty-faced, blue-eyed "valentine," so unceremoniously delivered, stood motionless under the gas-light, awaiting further developments.—Dinah speedily recovered speech and action, and closed the door with a bang.

"Missus, Missus! for the Lord's sake look-a-here!"

As the lady obeyed the imperative summons and stepped into the hall the little bundle of tatters and rags moved to her side and peered up into the placid face surrounded by two prim folds of a Quaker cap. Seemingly to recognize a friendly heart shining in the serious eyes, she thrust into her hand a scrap of crumpled paper, saying:

"Dink writ it!"

"Aunt Ruth took the document, and, with a puzzled look at the bearer, proceeded to decipher the queer hieroglyphics.

It had evidently been a laborious task for the grimy fingers that had traced them; but she at last picked out the message embodied in letters of all sizes and shapes. The writer had evidently made it his sole aim to give the facts in the case, proudly regardless of the minor considerations of orthography and punctuation:

"This littl' girl Hain't get no folks nor no wares to sta only a woman t at betes her orful and me and a Box with straw into it to sleep in nights. I've brung her to bee yare valentine.—Shee's hungree. Dink."

While the lady was laboring over the old massive little waif stood looking soberly up into her face, and when she raised her eyes, full of pity and compassion, the child said:

"He told me he writ into it that I wasn't nobody's girl only his'n, and that I'd be your valentine! I don't look like 'em, but I'll be it. I'd like to. It's jolly warm here, only my feet's cold," and she looked down at the heavy boots she had on, ragged and run over at the heel. "They's Dink's. He made me wear 'em when I cried."

"There may take the child to the kitchen, Dinah, and give her something to eat. I will come presently, and perhaps I can find out where she belongs."

Dinah led her down the hall, the wet boots shuffling heavily over the carpet, and the bright blue eyes, shining out

of the smutty face like stars from a mud-hole, lifted apprehensively to the dark face.

"I do declare for it," muttered the old woman, "white trash and black trash is mostly alike in their no 'count tranks, that's a fact! Bless if this ain't the queerest piece of business I've ever seen at this house yet! A valentine! Here, you poor little white beggar!"

Dinah's crusty manner softened a little as she watched the greediness with which the child devoured the big slice of bread and butter; but she melt'd outright when, as she finished her feast, the "little white beggar" slid from her chair and caught and kissed the big black hand, saying:

"I likes you, 'cause you look like Dick. I likes good black folks."

When Aunt Ruth came down she found her "valentine" seated in Dinah's own rocking chair before the fire, while Dinah herself, down on the floor, held the almost four feet in her lap, warming them, and giving vent to some very unorthodox expressions of opinion as to the ordering of Providence.

"Sakes alive! don't know's it's so, but the Lord seems to pay a mighty sight of 'ention to some folks and fergit all about the rest. 'Pears like ch'il run ought to be looked after anyhow. They ain't though, half on 'em! Things is queer in this world if 'tis the Lord's world!"

"Well, child," said Aunt Ruth, "now that there is warmed and fed, will thee tell thy name and where thee belongs?" She shook her head.

"Don't belong nowhere. Father always call me 'Dink-you-Bab!'"

Aunt Ruth sighed over this dolorous compound cognomen.

"Has thee no mother?"

"Ooee. She called me 'Here-you-Bab!'—Father struck her once with a bottle, and in the morning she went dead. And one day the perlice took father away, and old Bob told me to go 'long too, and I went 'long fer as I could. I couldn't noverless to stop, and I crawled into Dick's bed and he put things over me and fixed me a jolly nice place, and ev'ry day he took care of me. He made this"—and here the child stooped and drew from one of the spacious boots, which she put on again, upon getting down from the rocking chair, a doll, whittled from ash and artistically finished with coal, as to hair, eyes and mouth. She looked at it admiringly for a moment, rearranged its drapery of old print, which was somewhat disturbed by its journey in the boot, and restored it to its resting place.

Aunt Ruth sighed again.

"Give her a warm bath, Dinah, and then thee may make her a bed on the lounge in my room. I will give thee something that will serve her as a night-dress."

The poor little wandering child was soon wrapped in a warm shawl and curled down on the lounge in Aunt Ruth's pleasant room, too much excited by the novelty of her position to sleep—too comfortable to do anything but tug her wooden treasure and stare, first at the pretty surroundings, then at the kind face at the fireside. Suddenly she raised herself on her elbow.

"Dick said he heard there was niggers that lived some'wars an' took care of folks. B' you one?"

"No, no, child," said Aunt Ruth, gently; "I am only Aunt Ruth. Go to sleep."

"Yes, 'm. But I do wish Dick was a valentine. 'Tis wery odd into his box."

Aunt Ruth and Dinah sat late into the night hastily fashioning warm garments for the little one, and considered them selves well repaid by the delight with which they were dandied in the morning.

While happy little "Dink-you-Bab" was taking her breakfast by the side of the kitchen stove a shadow darkened the window, and the little girl, looking up, exclaimed, joyfully:

"O, there's my Dick!"

Dinah opened the door and bade him "come 'long in," giving him a jerk to facilitate his movements. He stambled bashfully in, and in a moment the child's arms were around his neck, and her face, pretty in its unwonted cleanliness, nestled against his black cheek, while she poured out a torrent of eager exclamations of satisfaction at being a "valentine."

When she at last released him Dinah took him by his shoulders and seated him firmly in a chair.

"Now," said she, "you'st a goin' to ret there till you explain this whole 'rangement to me and Missus. An' you'st lay out to tell the truth, the whole truth, an' nothin' but the truth all the way through—that is, if ye kin. Niggas is mostly mighty unsertin'!"

When Aunt Ruth came down she found her "valentine" bringer sitting by the fire with little Bab at his side, her two little hands tightly held in one of his own, and supreme satisfaction at the success of his old scheme shining in every feature of his honest face. Her eyes filled as she stood in the door a moment unnoticed by the children, but she was not given to demonstrations and made no comment.

And then Dick rose in his place still holding both the little hands.

"I hain't got much to tell, ma'ma. I'm only Dick the bootblack, an' this yer

little girl I found one night last week. Me and Joe Huffynty laid in to a place where they had some picters an' things the man called a pandorammer, an' when we came out 'twas late and we was cold an' we ran all the way to the box. The box is a big box down by Higby's warehouse, an' we sleep into it. An' we found this little Bab curled up into it asleep. Joe he was a-goin' to bounce her, but when he seen how little she was he didn't. He just yanked his coat off an' put it over her an' some old carpet, too, an' we did cover her up elegant, an' she sleep 'till mornin'. In the mornin' she told us she hain't no place to stay, an' we reckoned to take care of her our own selves after that. Joe an' me got her crackers and milk an' things when we could, an' we made believe she was our housekeeper. Joe sleep the crossin', an' one day a team knocked him down an' killed him all of a sudden. Then here Bab she cried so, an' was so lone some after Joe that I allowed it was better to try an' find her a home if I could. I seen folks a sendin' valentines for presents, an' I thought some one order like a little girl better than a picter. I seen you on the street, ma'ma, the day you gave the lame man some money, an' I followed along to see where you lived, an' when you went up the steps you seen me, an' you smiled out of your eyes so good that I 'most knowed you'd be kind to a little girl what hain't nobody put me. She's real cute, ma'ma. I seen you ones, too," added he to Dinah, who stood with dilated eye in hand, gravely weighing his words. "I was a blackin' a feller's boots on the market the day you bored that chap's ears for dragging the dog over the stones in the gutter. Didn't he run, though, when you let him go?"

"I 'dare fort," said Dinah; "she's tellin' the truth! 'Pears like I felt he might be 'blame the minnet I set eyes on him."

Dick made no comment on Dinah's change of base, but looked earnestly into Aunt Ruth's face. As she said nothing he repeated timidly, with a little quaver in his voice:

"She hain't got no mother nor no body in the world, only me, ma'ma; an' she's real cute!"

"He's Dick," said Aunt Ruth, quietly, "I should think thee would rather find a home for thyself than to take so much trouble for a strange little girl."

"Ma'ma," said Dick, gravely, "I heard a preacher man on the street one day tellin' about a good feller that wanted the little children took care of, an' that he said into some book or other (he hain't it) read out of it. 'When you do it to them you do it to me, an' I'll remember and be good to you some time fer it!' The wot found Bab a-curlin' up in the box lookin' so little an' so helpless, I thought it meant for us to take care of her, an' poor Joe, he reckoned so, too."

"I think I'll keep my valentine, Dick," Aunt Ruth said, with a smile. "I never heard of sendin' back a valentine, I believe, and I think I will send one myself, too. Thee may carry it for me to Friend Bradley's office, on Harlem street, Dick."

The note was written in a fair, upright hand, in a few concise lines:

"FRIEND BRADLEY: I read thee a valentine. Thee will find the lines belonging to the picture in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, fortieth verse.

REUB HARMON."

It is a year since Aunt Ruth received and sent a valentine, and the 14th of February, 1880, when it comes, will find no happier child than little "Dink-you-Bab," no prouder boy than "Valentine Dick," who occupies the post of errand boy in Friend Bradley's office; no more peaceful heart than Aunt Ruth; and certainly he would fall to sport with his strongest beams, a more dignified, undismayed, constitutional grunter than poor old Dinah, who pines or scolds the two children as inclination and opportunity dictate, and who sums up the whole matter in these words:

"Sometimes children is a comfort, but mostly they is an aggravation. Them two—the two valentines—is a wearin' the life out of my bones, the poor orphanless things! But Missus Ruth is so set in her ways that I've got to have 'em under foot to the end of time, if the Lord spares us!"

A Wooden Watch.

A North Carolina paper, the Abingdon Standard has the following: Some time ago Mr. E. A. Johnson, of Johnson Brothers, jewelers, of this place, made a plain, open-face wooden watch that attracted a great deal of attention, but was subsequently eclipsed by Mr. Doriot, of Bristol, in a watch somewhat more elaborate in design. Not to be outdone, Mr. Johnson put to work on another watch, and has turned out a handsome double case stem-winder and stem setter, every piece of which, save the main and hair springs and crystal, are of wood and made entirely by his own hands. Even the springs to be used as a time keeper. It is of ordinary size, and when ornamented, as he expects to do, will be a handsome tribute to his skill and ingenuity.

FOR THE FAIR SEX.

Fashion Notes. White pinks are used for bride bouquets.

Buttons will be as fanciful as ever this summer.

There are twenty-two new shades in open-work silk stockings.

Lutes ring ribbons with feather edges are coming in fashion again.

Bracelets should be worn on the wrist when paced outside long gloves.

Imitation Alençon point is much used to trim kerchiefs and neckties.

Isabelle yellow is the proper name for the coffee color so prominent in lace and nets.

Bolts and rivets in metal are to fasten on the trimmings of some of the summer hats.

Outside jackets are made with very large pearl buttons, but are otherwise quite plain.

Pain grenade and brocade grenade will be combined in summer gowns this year as they were last summer.

Pain limes and cottons, and very simple stripes, are to be the favorite wear of our English sisters this summer.

Louisiana silks are replaced this summer by what are called canvas silks. They have alternately stripes of plain color and of brocade on white ground.

Checkered women Cheviots in pinkish shades of two colors or of two shades of one color, will be worn for traveling suits this summer. They are wide and not very expensive.

Sea-green, which is to be fashionable this summer in thin goods, seems to be adapted up with pink ribbons or pipings to become bonds and bracelets cannot wear it at all.

Long jackets, made tight at the waist and reaching nearly to the hem of the skirt, have been introduced in England. They are almost exactly like the old-fashioned basquine.

Camel's hair goods appear still another style this year. It is made with thick round threads, loosely woven, and is either striped, clouded or strewn with tiny dashes.

One of the new ways of dressing the hair is to part it in front, crimping it slightly, and to fasten it into one large braid at the back, placing a lock in the center of the braid and a rose low on the side.

The Difference. It is frequently remarked, says Jonathan June in the Washington Star, that one of the great advantages which the dress of ladies is the permanent cut and style of their hair, or what is known as "evening dress." With a plain shirt, a dress coat and white tie all men look like gentlemen, and what is more, few like one. This is not always the case with the evening dress of women, notwithstanding the vast amount of trouble and anxiety it costs them, because it is so often different from anything they ever wore before in their lives, and they are not sure of it themselves. Fine dress ought to have something distinctive about it, and it should not change very often, or in essential ideas. The skirt should always be more or less trained, the bodice cut square or open, and the sleeves to or below the elbow so as to allow of the delicate finishing of lace, the display of jewels it need be, and the wearing of long gloves. A dark short street suit is as much out of place in a drawing-room as a "dress" occasion as the business suit of a man, and for a gentleman to make his appearance in such a costume at a formal gathering would be to exclude him from the lists of guests in the future, unless his poverty or his genius formed a sufficient excuse. The smart dresses worn at dancing parties by young girls are of course most fitting and proper. They are usually of light delicate materials, and as charming as the wearers. They have a reason—a being—while the working suit has not—in such company.

A Physician's Mistake. Dr. Clemenceau, the eminent Parisian physician, is also a member of the French legislature. He is a brisk and busy man, keenly cognizant of the fact that "time is money," and, the other day, while he was in attendance at his Montmartre consulting room, two men simultaneously solicited an interview with him for the purpose of taking his advice. One of them, admitted to his presence, and asked, "What was the matter with him," complained of a pain in his chest; whereupon he was ordered to take off his shirt, and Dr. Clemenceau subjected him to a careful examination. Before the doctor, however, sat down to write his prescription, he rang the bell and ordered his servant to show the other patient into the consulting room. As the latter entered the door, way Dr. Clemenceau, without looking up from the desk at which he was writing, said to him: "Just undress yourself, too. If you will be so good, we shall save time by your doing so." Without a moment's hesitation the second visitor proceeded to take off his clothes, and by the time the doctor had finished writing his recipe, taken his fee, and dismissed the preceding patient, he was stripped to the waist ready for inspection. Turning toward him, the doctor observed: "You are also suffering from pain in the chest, are you not?" "Well, no, doctor," the man replied; "I have called upon you to beg that you will recommend me to the government for a place in the postoffice."

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST. Trying to get a beautiful young lady at a party to give you a song, is, in one respect, a pleasing matter.—Olema Republican.

A divorce was recently granted by one of the courts of Indiana, where the only allegation against the defendant was that he had cold feet!

An exclamation: "What is nearest to the heart of the American citizen?" We should say his undershirt, or his best protector, if he wears one.—New York Express.

A city ordinance in Terre Haute compels every man keeping a canine to put upon his gate a sign: "Beware of the dog," and it is a lovely sight to see a two pound bobcat-and-lion lounging around one of these notices.

The Dennis family at Heavensop, Ill., found bits of glass in the sausage at breakfast, and that day the children's teeth crunched powdered glass in their merriment at school. The mother confessed that wishing her relatives to die in the most horrible manner possible, she had planned to kill them with the glass.

The ubiquitous grasshopper has appeared in Russia and has alarmed the government, which has already sent a scientific commission to investigate the habits and possible operations of the unwelcome visitor, and with most unwelcome results. But it is thought that certain flies infesting the Caucasus country prey upon the locusts, and would be only too happy to make their acquaintance, and an effort will be made to introduce them to each other.

It is estimated that the total cost of the bridge connecting Brooklyn with New York will exceed \$13,000,000. This will make the Brooklyn bridge by far the most expensive bridge in the world. But its unique-ness, the boldest undertaking in the history of bridge structure ever attempted, the twenty-span across the East river, from tower to tower, is 1,265 feet long. It is nearly 600 feet above the now highest span—that of the bridge at Cincinnati across the Ohio.

The most recently published figures show that suicide is on the increase in France. Before the Franco-German war the average number of suicides only slightly exceeded 5,000 a year, and now they exceed 6,000. In Paris there are three times as many suicides committed as in the country. Most of the men who destroy their lives are bachelors. The spring is the time of year when suicide is the most frequent, and death by hanging is most frequently resorted to than any other mode of self-destruction, being considered more expeditious.

Silver, next to iron and gold, is the most extensively diffused metal upon the globe. It is frequently found in a native state, though never chemically pure, being invariably mixed with gold, copper, antimony and other metals. The richest silver mine in the world is Potosi. It is situated on an elevation 10,000 feet above sea level, in a region of perpetual snow. It has always been worked in a very rude manner, yet it has already produced \$250,000,000, and shows no sign of exhaustion.

An instrument called the stathmograph, for recording the speed of railway trains, has been invented by a German mechanic at Cassel, and works so well that the Prussian government is about to test it on some of the State lines. A dia in view of the engineer enables him to ascertain the velocity of his locomotive at any moment, and the changes of speed are graphically represented upon a roll of paper, which can be studied at the end of the journey.

A curiously pathetic little story comes from Ohio. Dr. Frank Bledson and wife of Brownstown separated four or five years ago, and the wife parted for a divorce, retaining their two little girls. The doctor soon married again, and his second wife, after being nine five sons, died. Then a correspondence sprang up between the doctor and his former wife, which resulted in a renewal of the old love, and a promise of remarriage. They met and the pledged faith was renewed, the doctor promising to be kind and loving to Mrs. Bledson and her children, but to hold her that she must herself be a mother to his five boys. She indignantly said, "Never!" The doctor took the train to join his five boys, while Mrs. Bledson took her two girls and returned to her home in Brownstown.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters; thou shalt find it after many days." The historical editor of the Philadelphia Ledger has unearthed a striking re-creation of the old text. In the year 1676 the conflict of New England was one of fearful desolation. One in eleven of the New England towns had been destroyed by the Indians, and the same proportion of men capable of bearing arms had fallen by massacre, or in open encounter with the Indians. The fields had to be abandoned and bread was at famine scarcity. During a period of the most acute distress in 1676 the Rev. Nathaniel Mather, resident in Dublin, probably upon advice received from the Rev. Increase Mather, residing in Boston, suggested the relief of the colonists. Citizens of Dublin freighted the "good ship Catherine" with provisions, which were duly received, thankfully acknowledged and equitably distributed. The governor and the local magistrates superintended the distribution. In Boston 402 persons were relieved, and in other towns the recipients made up the total to 2,351. That Dublin food cast upon the waters in 1676 is once more returning after many years. One vast drift of it went back in 1847 and another goes now in 1880.