# THE HEADLIGHT

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THE BROOK'S SONG.

Through all the drifted snows
That fill the woodland nook,
In lisping music flows
The dark, unlilied brook.

While winding swift along
Upon its icy way,
Its song is but the song
It sang in rosy May.

Ah, happy brook, to sing,
While winter days depart,
The melody of spring
That ripples in its heart!

*R. K. Munkittrick, in Harper's Weekly.*

## THE LOST DIME.

BY JENNIE P. ARNOLD.

I was sitting in the parlor of a New York friend, indulging in an after-dinner chat, when the subject of horse car strikes was mentioned and my friend remarked: "I believe I understood both sides of the story pretty well, for I was conductor on the — avenue line for nearly a year."

"You a conductor!" I said in surprise, "I never knew that before, but then," I added, "as our acquaintance extends only over a little more than two years you might have been a highwayman before that for all I know to the contrary."

"I hardly think a car conductor can be classed with that fraternity, though perhaps some of the bosses think they are little better, when they abuse them of having so much of the company's money stick to their fingers; but I never speculated in Wall street or bought a brown stone front with my accumulations in that line. I came to New York about four years ago with the promise of a situation in the office of the — Avenue Horse Railroad Company, but there was no vacancy at that time, and, as nothing better offered, I accepted a place as conductor while waiting; but nearly a year passed before they were ready for me in the office, and in the meantime I had an opportunity of learning considerable of the ins and outs of the business. I added something to my knowledge of human nature if not to my bank account."

His oldest child, a bright-eyed, mischievous little sprite of eight years, came up at that moment and laid her cheek against his shoulder, while her hands tightly clasped his arm.

"Ah, Puss!" he said, catching her up and giving her a toss in the air, then setting her on his knee as he resumed: "You'd be surprised at all the ingenious devices to beat a conductor out of a fare, from the well-dressed gentlemen who have left their pocket books in the other trousers' pockets, to the half-drunken bummer who never has another pair of trousers to leave a nickel in, but who rides as far as he can and when put off for non-payment of fare, hails the next car and so keeps on until he reaches his destination. But the toughest of all is when a woman claims to have lost her purse, or something of the kind, and her helplessness appeals to a fellow's gallantry. I used to ring in a fare out of my own pocket at such times until I caught some of the schemers laughing at my softness, then I decided I wasn't so green as to get sold that way again. The company was very strict, it was all a fellow's place was worth to let any one ride without paying fare, no matter what the circumstances; our orders were to compel women, as well as men, to leave the car unless they paid. If we felt in the least lenient in enforcing this order we could never tell which passenger might be a "spotter," or how soon we might get called into the office and discharged. I'll never forget one case of the kind. It was a cold day in December, and the President of the road was in the car; what he was there for I never knew, but he occasionally rode up and down, for inspection, I suppose. At Grand street two nicely-dressed ladies got on, who paid their fare out of well-filled purses; not a very common occurrence where ladies are returning from shopping at the Grand street bargain stores, eh Fanny?" with a laughing glance at his wife, who was rocking in an easy chair with the baby, a fine plump little fellow a year old, in her lap.

"You ought to know best," was the response, "seeing you had a year to study up the subject."

"I shouldn't have noticed these so particularly only for what followed. At the next crossing a woman was waiting. I saw that she was young, was dressed in black, and had a very sad expression. She had a large bundle and feeble-looking baby in her arms, while holding to her dress was a three-year-old toddler with round rosy cheeks and bright blue eyes. I stepped off to help the woman on and took the little girl in my arms. I always had a soft spot in my heart for children of the genuine sort, not little old men and women. My friends used to chaff me on liking pretty little girls better than I did the big ones, and I think they were about right. This one was so bright and pretty I wanted to give her a hug and kiss, but I had learned that it isn't always wise to try it with the little girls any more than with the older ones."

"'I yikes to wide!" the little puss said, looking up into my face all smiles and dimples, and showing her pretty white teeth between her rosy lips, 'It makes my tootsies told to walk,' holding up her plump little foot poorly protected from the cold pavement by a well-worn shoe."

"'Well, you shall get them all nice and warm,' I said, making room for her beside the stove. The mother dropped into a seat with a sigh of weariness, and placing her bundle on the floor shifted the baby to her lap to relieve her tired arms. I was called away to attend to other passengers, and returning held out my hand for the mother's fare. The little girl was holding out her poor worn little shoes to the fire.

"'It's dood and warm here,' she said, with a face all smiles and dimples, as I stopped beside her.

"'That's right, get all warmed through,' I said, patting her on the head, then turned to the mother again. She had shifted the baby to her left knee and was carefully searching her pockets, a troubled, anxious expression came over her face, then one of alarm followed.

"'I had a ten cent piece in my pocket-book,' she said, looking up, 'but I can't find it; I'm sure I put it here; I'm afraid,' and her lips trembled and her eyes began to fill with tears, 'I'm afraid I've lost it.'

"Her distress was so evidently genuine I could not believe she was playing off as so many had done before, and I said pleasantly: 'Look again, madam, you will probably find it somewhere,' and I turned, catching the eyes of the President watching me sharply.

"The woman turned her pocket inside out, got up and shook her dress, then looked carefully over the floor, as did several who sat near her. I stopped the car to help on and off several passengers, then came back to the woman. She looked greatly troubled, and I could see only restrained tears by great effort.

"'I cannot find it,' she said looking up at me with trembling lips, 'I saved it out on purpose for this ride, and put it in my pocket-book just as I started, but it's gone, and I must have lost it.'"

"What was I to do? The woman seemed honest enough, yet I had seen others equally so who proved to be imposters; then there were the sharp eyes of the President upon me, and if I faltered in my duty off would go my head, with no chance of the promotion I was hoping for.

"'The rules are to put off all who do not pay,' I managed to say with assumed firmness, while all the time I felt as if I would like to pitch the President off neck and heels instead of the woman. 'I'm sorry, madam, but the rules must be obeyed.' 'I know it, I know it,' she said piteously, 'but if you would let me ride up I could pay you when I come back; I shall have the money then,' pointing to her bundle of work to prove her statement; 'It's such a long way, and I'm so tired,' she pleaded, and there was the chubby, dimpled face of the little girl smiling up at me all the time.

"I felt as if I would like to kick myself as I turned away; if I only dared appeal to the President, but no! none of the men were supposed to know him, and I felt as if his cold eyes were piercing me through and through as if he delighted in the test I was passing through.

"'Hang the old rascal,' I said to myself, 'I'll have to put the woman off, but I'll slip a quarter into Puss's hand so they can pay their fare on the next car.'

"'I'm sorry, madam,' I tried to say firmly, but the sad, pleading look almost broke me down, 'the rules must be obeyed,' and I reached up to pull the bell rope; but in an instant the younger of the two women, of whom I have before spoken, caught my arm.

"'No, no!' she cried with flushed cheeks and indignant eyes, and before I knew what she intended she emptied her purse into the woman's lap and passed quickly out of the car. A perfect shower of coin—several dollars, at least, fell rattling down, a part falling on the floor. I stooped to pick it up, when the elder lady dropped several more pieces into the woman's lap and followed her companion. The poor woman looked up, dumb with amazement, then covering the money with one hand, dropped her face on the baby's head and sobbed so she shook from head to foot. The little girl, seeing her mother's distress, crept up close beside her, and with her little arms about her neck and her cheek nestled against hers tried to comfort her.

"'Don't kwy, mamma,' she pleaded, 'I'll be so dood, don't kwy.'

"I don't believe there was a dry eye in the car; the women didn't hesitate to carry their handkerchiefs to their eyes, but the men looked out of the windows, drew their hats down over their eyes, and some blew their noses vigorously, the President giving the strongest blast of all. As for myself, I just rung in a fare out of my own pocket, and went out on the platform, thankful that it was a cold day I could use my handkerchief freely.

"At the next street the President got out, and as he passed the little girl he stopped and patted her rosy cheeks, with some pleasant word, and slipped something into her hand. A moment later, when I had occasion to pass through the car again, the little puss held out her chubby hand: 'See!' she cried, with her pretty face radiant with delight: 'O see my bright, new penny!' I looked, it was a five dollar gold piece.

"The mother noticed it for the first time.

"'Where did you get it?' she asked, in astonishment.

"'E big man div it to me,' the little one answered.

"'Oh, sir, do you know who it was?' the mother said, appealing to me. 'It must be a mistake.'

"'Not a bit of it,' I answered, almost as delighted as the child, herself, 'it was the President of this road; he could give her a thousand such pieces and never feel it.'"

My friend's little Elsie had been sitting very quietly in his lap listening attentively to his story, and now as he paused eagerly.

"'And the little girl—did you ever see her again, papa?'

"'Yes, Pussie, I think I've seen her several times since then,' he said, with a merry twinkle in his eyes and a peculiar smile under his heavy moustache. 'I think I see her now,' catching up Elsie and giving her a hug and a kiss, 'you're the little girl, yourself, Puss!'

"'Me, papa!' she cried, bounding to her feet and catching her father by the shoulders, 'and was the lady my mamma?'

"'Just your mamma and no one else,' was the reply, with a smile at the child's amazement. 'She used to ride frequently on my car after that, and I always carried a pocket full of bonbons for you, Pussie: we soon got to be the best of friends and of course mamma had to get acquainted a little with me on your account. Then I learned she had been a widow for a year and was trying to support herself and two children by doing plain sewing, which hardly gave her enough to keep soul and body together. At last the baby died and mamma had a long illness from the grief and over-work: just then I received my appointment to the office with twice my old salary, and I finally persuaded mamma to let me take care of both of you; though mamma says I courted you instead of her, and married her so as to get you."

I caught the quick interchange of glances, the look of pride and affection which took in wife and baby, and the the happy content in the face of the wife, and felt sure there was room in my friend's heart for all his treasures.

"Well, now that's a nice little story," Elsie cried delightedly, putting her plump hands on either cheek and drawing her father's face down until she could kiss it, "and you're the darlingest old papa in the whole world!"—*New York Post.*

### The Word "Blatherskite."

The word "blatherskite" in its origin is Scotch, being composed of the Scotch blather, blether, equivalent to the German bladdern, to talk nonsense, and skate, corrupted into skite, a term of contempt. The original meaning was "one who talks nonsense in a blustering manner." From this comes the meaning, a good-for-nothing, a man who talks too much. The word is good English.

## LADIES' COLUMN.

FEATHERS ALWAYS THE PROPER THING.

It always delights the female heart when feathers are in vogue. This season they are used on all garments, from the tea gown to the outside wrap and hat. This fondness for feathers is not to be wondered at, for they are always becoming. A pretty girl in a large hat, with black ostrich feathers is twice as fascinating as with any other style of hat, and a trimming of feathers about the neck of an older woman softens all the lines of the face. Mrs. Stanley affects large hats and ostrich feathers.

A SUCCESSFUL WOMAN FARMER.

Mary B. Clay, of Whitehall, Ky., is one of the most successful farmers in that portion of the State. In a recent article, contributed to the *Woman's Journal*, on farming for women, Miss Clay says:

"The advantages of farming as a business for women may be summed up under the following heads: Women who have no training or learning in other ways so as to take a profession can, with ordinary application and judgment, make a comfortable living on a farm. It is available for women with large or small means. For women thrown upon their own resources, with children to raise, it is an economical and safe business investment. If the means to be invested are small a judicious choice of land as to location or access to market, the quality of the soil for the purpose wanted, etc., should be considered, with a view to small fruits, such as strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, dwarf fruits and grapes, and the most salable vegetables, one or two cows, chickens and ducks. Milk and cream bring more to sell than to make into butter. Eggs are more profitable to sell than to raise chickens. Money invested in two or three acres, can, with industry and care, be made to produce more than any notes or bonds with interest will bring, and the family can live on the fat of the land with very little money outlay.

A LIFE-SAVING SKIRT.

"While my wife and I were on our last trip to Europe," said a gentleman to a Detroit *News* man the other day, "we met a middle-aged lady who was going over for her health, and my wife and she became great friends. One day, while sitting in the ladies' private cabin, the lady said: 'Let me show you my life-preserver,' and, removing her outer skirt, my wife beheld a skirt that was a curiosity if nothing more. Running up and down the skirt at a distance of two or three inches were soft, flexible rubber bands about two inches wide. They were sewed on at the side of each band, and ran all the way around the skirt, and at the top they were all joined to a broad rubber band six inches wide. At the top of this band was a rubber tube about two feet long, and which ran up the waist in front and was left resting on the top of the corset.

"Said the lady, 'You behold one of my own inventions for saving my life. In case of any accident all I have to do is to take the end of the rubber tube in my mouth and in two minutes I can fill all of the rubber bands, which are hollow and air-tight, with air. Then, tying the tube in a hard knot, I am ready for the waves. This skirt, when I strike the water, will spread out in the shape of a pond lily leaf, and I will rest on it in any upright position, as easy as though reclining upon a coach, and I can float around till picked up.'

"As our voyage was a pleasant one we did not have an opportunity to see how it would work, but I have no doubt it would work well."

FASHION NOTES.

In floral brooches the enameled orchid has many adherents.

Monkey skin card cases have tiny silver monkeys leaping upon them.

Jewelers are exhibiting vinaigrettes with enameled pansies as stoppers.

A match-box representing a block of cord wood, in oxidized silver, is odd.

Umbrella shades for the piano lamp have reached the perfection of "artistic elegance."

Hussar jackets are quite chic, although this is not the effect when worn by stout women.

A novelty in trimming consists of yoke and sleeves to match of black velvet, studded with tiny steel bars.

In very many of the fashionable houses the afternoon tea-table is set with pure white china, fancy having wearied of the much decorated ware.

In waste baskets the evolution the last few years has been wonderful, and now they are things of beauty and valuable pieces of furniture.

Huge boas of soft-cut bear fur, reaching nearly to the foot of the dress, and half concealing the face of the wearer in their soft depths, are worn by ladies who affect English styles in dress.

### Mohammedans Are Not Savages.

"The Mohammedans, or, as we call them, 'Moohummedans,' are as distinct in appearance from the Hindoos as they are in religion," says a returned missionary. "Physically they are a much larger and according to western ideals a handsomer race. In the north, toward the hills, many of them are six feet tall, straight and dignified in bearing. They are not nearly so chaste a people as the Hindoos, their religion holding up to them different ideals. Many both of the Mohammedans and Hindoos are refined, cultured and educated. All are civilized and not the savages or barbarians I find so many people here think them.

"You hear much of the poverty of India. It is true. Sixty per cent. of the population never has quite enough to eat. Yet I have never seen in India the pinching, degrading poverty I have seen in London and New York. The people of India are poor because the population is so dense, the methods of production so inadequate, partly due to the existence of caste and because the taxes are so enormous. But with all this poverty the mass of the people find it relatively about as easy to make a living as people in Europe or America. Of course, on the average, they do not live as well. But quite as dark a picture of life in America or England can be written—indeed, has been written—as any that can be written of India. The difference is that our own experience and observation relieves the melancholy of the picture."—*Chicago News.*

### The Most Popular Russian.

One of the most popular men in Russia, fast outstripping Count Tolstoi for the premier place, writes our St. Petersburg correspondent, and on the high road to canonization, is Father Ivan, of Cronstadt. During the last three weeks at least three different booklets have been published giving an account of his life and doings, and these find a ready sale, for his deeds have been told, by rumor, throughout the empire and exaggerated till they have reached marvelous proportions. It is popularly believed that his prayer can cure the sick. He never touches those for whom he prays and makes not the slightest claim himself to the possession of occult powers. He was born in 1829 in the Government of Archangel, in the far north, and was settled in Cronstadt thirty-five years ago. His reputation has therefore been a thing of slow growth, for it is only during the last few years that those outside his own parish have heard of his good deeds; but now every one in Russia talks of him as much as the world now talks of Dr. Koch.—*London News.*

**February was the last month of the year until 452 B. C.**


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