

THE LILAC TRAIN

By FRANCES MITCHELL

MISS 'LIZBETH had a story, but what it was, was a vexed question among the gossips, some of whom declared that she was once to have been married, and the guests were all in the house; she was dressed, and the preacher waiting to perform the ceremony, when a note was brought her, from her affianced, saying he had left, never to return, and asking her to forget him. Others told of a drunken husband, who had deserted her, and then she arose and went into the house. The next day, Miss 'Lizbeth went down town, looking her best in a pretty dark-blue suit, with a neat waiking hat to match, and returned in an hour, with a tiny envelope in her hand. Later in the evening, she started out with two large bunches of lilacs, and if the gossips had met her, they would have noticed a certain guilty look she wore, and would have declared that the drunken husband had been around lately.

An impatient crowd of people had been standing in the rain, since the early morning, expecting momentarily to hear the whistle of the engine that would bring the lilac car into the Butte depot. The noon whistles had sounded; still no evidence of the coming of the lilac car; still a pouring rain and still a waiting mass of people. Twelve-fifteen—thirty—forty-five—a whistle and the crowd began to surge forward. Into the depot the engine panted, and with a shout the anxious weary waiters welcomed the men who stood on the platform, with arms full of blossoms.

"Throw them this way, pardner." "Give us a few, over here." "Don't forget us. We can't get any closer." Such were the cries that came up from various quarters, as men, women and children, reached and scrambled for the flowers that came pouring upon them. Coming with quick step, down one of the streets, was a man roughly dressed in a miner's garb, and close behind him, another, clad in a neat brown business suit.

"Now, I do wonder if I am too late for the lilac train," soliloquized the man in the lead. "Well, be the first one I have missed since I came into Montana. Five years ago, she gave me a blossom that had fallen when they were loading the lilac train, and then she said, 'I'll wait for you, Reuben.' She read in my face what I did not have the manhood to tell her. She must have been sorry for me then, and so spoke, before she thought, but afterward, she grew sorry for herself, I suppose, when she realized what she had done, for she didn't answer that letter I wrote, as soon as I got here, telling her how glad I could work now, knowing that she was waiting for me. Well, she'd had to wait a long time, for luck was against me, right along, but I didn't care since she wasn't waiting for me, after all. She was in earnest when she said she'd wait. I am sure of that. And now, if only I could send her a message, saying, 'I am coming,—Reuben, it would be worth all these years of work and discouragement, I've seen people from there, many times since, but they didn't know that I knew her, and I never asked about her—I was afraid, somehow, of what they might tell me, till about a month ago, when the Sweet Lilac began to show rich streaks. Then—" and here he clenched his hands till the nails cut into the calloused flesh, "then I asked Jim Davis, if he knew her; he said he didn't, but he had heard her name in connection with some rumor about a drunken husband, and I turned and left him, and spent a night that was—well, a man don't have to die, to taste of the tortures of hell. Ah, I am not too late," for he had come in sight of the car, and in another moment, he and the man in brown, who had kept even pace with him, for a block or more, were grasping frantically at a large bouquet that came over the heads of the crowd, within easy reach for them.

"There, stranger," exclaimed the miner, "I beat you on that catch, but there are enough here for two, so I'll cut the string and 'divy' up, as we say in camp." "You are generous, sir," answered his late rival, "and I will gladly pay you any sum you may name, for my share of them. My little sick daughter—"

"Little sick daughter? Well, now, do you think I'd sell you a few flowers for her? And besides, money is nothing to me. Have you heard of the Sweet Lilac, that sold yesterday for fifty thousand—What's this? and lifting a tiny tintype that had been fastened in among the stems, he gazed into the face that spoke back to him, with a look of love, he only, could read. "I'm waiting for you, Reuben," were the words he saw faintly scratched beneath the face, and turning to his wondering companion, he said, as he held the entire bouquet to him: "Just give me one small spray of the flowers, stranger, and you can have all the rest for the little girl. I'm going in here to send a telegram that says, 'I am coming,—Reuben.'"

Odor of Flowers Not Always Most Pleasing Nearly everyone likes the smells of freshly cut flowers, of violets, roses and others that belong to the sweet-smelling varieties. But psychologists who have studied the matter scientifically find that flower odors are not really the ones most intensely and universally pleasing to the human nose. This distinction belongs to the spicy odors such as cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg and the others of similar character. Among hundreds of persons tested, always with odors that they could not identify by seeing the flower or in any way except by the sense of smell, not one person failed to describe a faint smell of cinnamon as being pleasant, while a number of persons were found to vote against each one of the flower odors.

Many Rare Treasures Found in Mesopotamia Chicago.—The Sumerian founders of ancient Kish, in Mesopotamia, were artisans possessing "skill and knowledge unprecedented among other ancients," in the opinion of members of the Field Museum-Oxford university expedition to that seat of the world's earliest civilization. D. C. Davies, director of the museum, announced he had received late reports from Prof. S. Langdon, heading the expedition, that "the value and variety of treasures and art works excavated have exceeded all expectations."

GOOD ROADS

PAVED ROADS PROVE BOON TO VILLAGES

With the completion of another thousand miles of concrete highways in Illinois, there is additional proof that the new hard roads, instead of being a curse to the villages and smaller towns along their route, are a blessing instead. The pessimists in the hamlets have argued ever since these improvements were first projected that they would sound the death knell of the rural settlements and that trade would centralize in the larger at the expense of the smaller. It is maintained that farmers who were formerly forced to trade at the village store, due to the embargo of mud, would patronize only the more pretentious stores of the city.

This gloomy condition has never been realized. The "Hill boulevard," which connects St. Louis and Chicago with a band of concrete 300 miles in length, will not allow a single town that has deteriorated since the new road was completed. Investigation has revealed that in every instance the population has held steady and, in most instances, increased, while there has been no loss, either in the number of inhabitants or in business. With thousands of tourists passing through daily in automobiles, each town has become more careful of its appearance. A more attractive front has been displayed. There has been a universal cleanup. Attractive filling stations line the new highway, surrounded by shrubs and flowers and with well-kept lawns and driveways. They required dilapidated buildings or other eyesores. Rubbish has been removed. Stores and residence premises, visible from the hard road, are well maintained. There is an air of neatness and orderliness, never before announced. It is an ever visible invitation to halt and patronize the "gas" stations or other places of business.

A count, maintained for several days during the tourist season, led to the estimate that during the year 1,900 cars from other states passed over the new boulevard every day on the average on route either to Chicago or St. Louis. This means more than 300,000 for the year. Probably the occupants of every car spent from \$5 to \$10 on the trip for supplies or food. The villages received their share of this sum, enormous in the aggregate, perhaps \$2,000,000. Roadside stands, where farm products, fruits, vegetables, eggs and butter are on sale, have been opened at many places between the villages and have been profitable.

Lad Wins Big Prize

John Liska, high school youth of Wisconsin Rapids, Wis., has been announced as winner of the H. S. Firestone four-year university scholarship for the best essay in the fifth annual good roads essay contest. More than 200,000 high school students throughout the United States and territorial possessions sought the honor which fell to this lad.

Double Tonnage Since War Freight hauled over British highways has increased from 150 per cent to 200 per cent since the war, according to a road survey near Sheffield, reported in Motor Transport (British). Seven thoroughfares studied were supporting over 10,000 tons of traffic daily and 16 between 5,000 and 10,000 tons.

Abolishing Death Trap Elimination of six dangerous grade crossings on the Montreal division of the Long Island railroad east of Jamaica, including the crossing at Merrick road, Springfield, generally regarded by experts as one of the most dangerous crossings on the Long Island lines, was ordered by the New York transit commission. One-quarter of the \$1,400,000 cost will be met by the state, one-quarter by the city and the remainder by the railroad company.

Origin of Word "Highway" The word "highway" comes from the old Roman roads in which the surface was elevated as much as four feet above the surface to permit good drainage. The Appian way was the first of these and the beginning of a system of 48,500 miles built under state supervision. It was made of blocks of lava resting on a masonry foundation and was begun 311 B. C.

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Persistency Won Throne. Jane Seymour, who, as the third wife of Henry VII, was queen of England, had been lady in waiting for the two preceding wives of Henry—Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn. She married Henry the day after Anne Boleyn was executed. She died in October, 1537.

Cooking in Aluminum. Aluminum conducts heat rapidly and stores it up in great quantities, so that after a pan is thoroughly heated any additional heat applied causes overheating. It is best, therefore, to turn down the gas flame one-half after the pan is thoroughly heated.

Test of Stage Skill. In 1707 a celebrated trial of skill was held between England's two greatest actresses, Anne Oldfield and Anne Bracegirdle, both playing the same part on alternate nights. Mrs. Bracegirdle lost, and in disgust left the stage.

Quaint Theory. Thomas Burnet, an Englishman, in 1681 wrote a book, "Sacred Theory of the Earth," to prove that the earth was originally like an egg, and that at the deluge the shell burst and the waters escaped.

Uncle Eben. "Nearly all de folks dat knows enough to give good advice," said Uncle Eben, "is lawyers or doctors or somebody dat charges real money for it."—Washington Star.

Fickleness. Fickleness has its rise in our experience of the fallaciousness of present pleasure and in our ignorance of the vanity of that which is absent.—Pascal.

Self-imposition. The greatest of fools is he who imposes on himself, and thinks certainly he knows that which he has least studied and of which he is most profoundly ignorant.—Shaftesbury.

Another Victim. A Lebanon man who early in July went out to scuff at "the cow pasture whinty" being played at the Country club, now talks about "slices" and "birdies" in his sleep.—Exchanges.

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Compensation. No man's feet can ever be made to look so neat as a fashionably shod girl's, but they are always happier.—Houston Post-Dispatch.

First Circus Press Agent. Circus press agents were first known in this country in 1797 in connection with exploitation of the first elephant shown here.

Especially Gifted. He only is happy as well as great who needs neither to obey nor command in order to be something.—Goethe.

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John Liska, high school youth of Wisconsin Rapids, Wis., has been announced as winner of the H. S. Firestone four-year university scholarship for the best essay in the fifth annual good roads essay contest.



Mrs. Sadie E. Holtzner

Seattle, Wash.—"In my girlhood, I suffered with severe backaches and pain and had a catarrhal condition. These disagreeable sensations were completely eradicated and I developed into a strong and healthy womanhood because my mother gave me Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. As my own daughters were developing I gave them Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription and in that way prevented their having any form of inward weakness. My daughters developed naturally into womanhood and I am sure it was because I had them take the 'Prescription' at that critical period."—Mrs. Sadie E. Holtzner, 2124 North 52d St. Go to your neighborhood drug store today and get this prescription in tablets or liquid, or write Dr. Pierce, President Invalids' Hotel, in Buffalo, N. Y., for medical advice, free and confidential.

Storms on Indian Ocean. The Indian ocean is noted for the violent hurricanes which sweep over it with surprising suddenness and great force. They do immense damage to shipping and to seaports all along the southern coast of Asia.

Curriculum for Brides. New York has a school for prospective brides. If the idea is to teach them to keep their husbands, it has, no doubt, a course in manuring.—Arkansas Thomas Cat.

Japanese Retire Early. Japanese as a rule retire much earlier than occidentals, even when a tea-house celebration is going full blast and the sake cups are circulating freely.

Proportionate Values. If gold were as plentiful as tin and tin were as rare as gold we'd be buying sardines in gold boxes and paying for them with tin, says the New York Telegraph.

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