

LUCY ELLEN'S DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

"Sometimes I kind of feel as though the hand of Providence was in it," said Lucy Ellen, reflectively. "I've thought of buying a 'front' for nearly 7 years, but every time I get pretty near what I thought likely it would cost something happened. The first time I had to have new wall-paper on Sister S'liny's room. The rain came in, and the green all run together. It didn't show much under the window, but S'liny said it looked so much like mussed seaweed that it made her seasick. Then when I made a new covering for her lounge, she said she couldn't stand the change, nohow. So I had to get Mr. Simkins to send clear to Boston to match the old pattern. It cost an awful sight," added Lucy Ellen, but with an undercurrent of pride in the words. "They do say as how Queen Victoria can't stand any change in her furniture, sister S'liny has notions too, you know."

Mrs. Tuttle did know. The entire village felt a personal interest and gratification in S'liny's whose name, as inscribed in the family Bible, was "S'liny". In later days, or in more modern nomenclature, her illness would have been called nervous prostration. In Banbury, however, there was a general feeling that it would have been impossible to diagnose the exact cause of the chronic ailment of the youngest of the "S'liny girls." Nor were the various phases of her illness to be defined in medical phraseology. She was "took," was "conspicuously ailing," was "peaked" or "slim." She had "turns" and "notions" and "spells."

"I thought I'd just run in to show you the Camberwell Gazette that my daughter Julia's just sent me," resumed Mrs. Tuttle. "It has an advertisement of the loveliest false 'front'! I don't believe anybody could tell it from real hair. This hair-dresser's come from the city, and Julia says she's all the fashion in Camberwell. She's going to have a new switch herself."

"I haven't my glasses, suppose it costs a awful sight," murmured Lucy Ellen, feasting her eyes on the accompanying illustration, representing a luxurious "front" that would come well down over the forehead, and cover any enlarging area of baldness at the back of the crown; on either side were six waves, arranged with a symmetry perfect as though carved, that one felt instinctively would never come "out" or become disarranged under whatever exigency of weather or stress of exercise.

"The best is the cheapest," returned Mrs. Tuttle, judiciously. "I understand that this is a special offer." "You see, I don't get much chance to lay up money, resumed Lucy Ellen. "Folks buy their boys' clothes over in Camberwell now. Time was when everybody in Banbury thought they couldn't get along without me every spring, regular as sulphur and molasses, to make the children's jackets and trousers. These days, all I get to do is bring in the pieces a quilt now and then. But then, I'm not paid for sitting still and doing nothing," added Lucy Ellen, briskly. "Going? Much obliged for the paper. I'd like to look it over again."

Time had been when Lucy Ellen's notions and notions were always brisk. If there were now sometimes dullness in the one and heaviness in the other, perhaps it was not the years only that were accountable. The moments in which Lucy Ellen did nothing were few indeed, for besides the never-failing round of household duties was the care of her invalid sister; and S'liny's demands, having their origin chiefly in "notions" though they did, were many and incoherent. Had there ever come in instant's breathing pace uninterrupted by the call from above to ascertain if the pork barrel had not sprung a leak or the bulkhead been left open? Or when had Lucy Ellen sunk into wearied slumber unbroken by the tones from the adjoining room penetrating as those of a mosquito?—"Lucy Ellen, come quick! I'm a-falling!"

The rescue always proved her safe in her feather bed, and not Heaven's own assurance could have eradicated the notion of that wild dream through nothingness from S'liny's mind. Lucy Ellen could not even say her prayers in peace. Usually Saturday morning was her time for self-examination and self-mortification, at only because of the close approach of the Sabbath, but because outward and visible signs of purification by broom and soap assisted the inward process. It was a season also of special trial, in that S'liny, when she came down to dinner, was sunning that over a piece of furniture was placed the fraction of an inch out of its former position. Though Lucy Ellen, from long experience, succeeding in avoiding any marked appearance of change, to S'liny's finer perceptions "nothing felt the same," and the result of the Saturday housecleaning was generally that the invalid slept the afternoon on the bed, with smelling-salts at her nose.

There had been other moments in her life when what Lucy Ellen afterwards tearfully called "the old Adam" in her hair, arisen against the household tyranny, but never to the point of open rebellion. Perhaps it was that the slow gathering impalpable mist of years had condensed and snaped the "old Adam" in it may have been that that advertisement of the lovely "front" focussed all the pent-up longings of years. Instead, as usual, of following S'liny to her room after dinner, to ascertain that the shades were drawn to the right degree and the pillows disposed at the proper angle, Lucy Ellen washed the dinner dishes with an ever-growing feeling of resentment against everybody and everything, but which seemed to concentrate itself especially against S'liny. As she stood at the kitchen door, wringing out the last towel, the forces of nature without—it was a lovely day in early spring—the forces of her own nature within overcame the voice of the inflamed New England conscience that whispered of the "old Adam" in her hair. "front" she was traveling that her sister would sleep so far from her and her nightly faith. From her upper bureau drawer Lucy Ellen took a queer pasteboard box, smelling of camphor. Its contents were a slender gold ring, a big silver watch, a few worn silver spoons, and a huge cameo brooch. Nothing there but was of slight intrinsic value. But they had been treasured by Lucy Ellen for many years as a sort of fetish, to be looked over Sunday afternoons, when

she was dressed in her best merino gown and clean white apron. She looked at her treasures now with eyes that greedily calculated their value at the second-hand shop in Camberwell.

Long ago Lucy Ellen had sat in the village choir, and kept company with Hiram Millikin. Which Camberwell built its town-hall, Hiram—he was a carpenter by trade—received a good offer to assist in the work. Lucy Ellen would have consented in the immediate marriage he urged, but for her sister's objections. But the mere mention of set moments a change as leaving her native village gave S'liny a "turn." She was never vociferously assertive. On this occasion she dropped her chin, rolled her eyes, said, "It fits me to think of it," and sank into a colossal silence, and was deaf to argument or entreaty. Hiram, in quick anger at Lucy's decision, said it must be "now or never," so his sweetheart gave back the slender gold ring that had scarce had time to become warmed by the fingers of Lucy Ellen. Face to face with life-long friend, it was not so easy to maintain an undaunted front.

"I don't think I can ever get used to it," said S'liny, faintly. "It's real pretty and becoming," used Lucy Ellen, tremulously. "If you could only get used to it, I could wear it for best, Sundays and Thanksgivings, at first, you know. I'd like real well to wear it, S'liny," she added, with a hysterical shriek. "But the feeling was already clutching her heartstrings that she had bartered the precious memories of her youth for a mess of pottage; that the Lord was dealing judgment, if severely, with her for her sin of vanity."

"It makes me—tired—to look at you!" murmured S'liny, and closed her eyes. "A 'spell' or a 'turn' was plainly imminent—all the more appalling that their cause or nature was absolutely unknown. For a full minute Lucy Ellen stood on the threshold. Then, slowly and sadly, she turned back into her own room. The cloud-burst stayed its consequence; the Declaration of Independence was recalled. She took off her "front," and with calm, grim determination looked at herself in the glass. The mirror whispered back the truth. In the broad light of day Lucy Ellen saw the face of middle age, that had bartered its past, and had no future save that summed up in the round of Monday's washing and Tuesday's ironing—inevitable as the roll of the planets. Lucy Ellen knew now that Hiram would never come back; and would he look upon her in the other world, when she must tell him that she had "swapped" the little gold ring, his father's watch, and his mother's brooch for a "front" of false hair that made S'liny tired?

When the "S'liny girls" came up the aisle of the meeting-house that Sabbath, S'liny, as though from friendly teams, more than one person whispered: "How old Lucy Ellen is looking! Poor S'liny!"—Harper's Bazar.

What Shall We Have for Dessert? This question arises in the family every day. Let us answer it to-day. Try Jell-O, a delicious and healthful dessert. Prepared in two minutes. No boiling! No baking! Add boiling water and a dash of sugar. Lemon, Orange, Raspberry and Strawberry. At your grocers. 10 c. per box.

Grain-O! Grain-O! Remember that name when you want a delicious, appetizing, nourishing food drink to take the place of coffee. Sold by grocers and liked by all who have used it. Grain-O is made of pure grain. It aids digestion and strengthens the nerves. It is not a stimulant but a health builder and the children as well as the adults can drink it with great benefit. Costs about 1/4 as much as coffee. 10 c. per package. Ask your grocer for Grain-O.

Tourists. Winter Excursion to Summer Lands. The Iron Mountain route announces the sale of winter excursion tickets to various points in Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, Old and New Mexico, Arizona and California. For rates, descriptive pamphlets, etc., address J. R. James, acting central passenger agent, 965 Park Building, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Medical. For the first time since S'liny was "took," Lucy Ellen did not weakly succumb to this mute eloquence. For the first time, too, as she helped S'liny make ready for bed, a voice—she called it afterwards the voice of the Tempter—whispered to her: "Tell her her sickness is all fuss and fiddle-sticks! That if she had to spend a day at the wash-tub or ironing-table it would be the best cure for her 'notions.' She ain't no more sick than I am! She's only just oddled herself into the idea, and I've been a fool to give in to her. It would have been a good sight better for her, too, if I hadn't."

There had been other moments in her life when what Lucy Ellen afterwards tearfully called "the old Adam" in her hair, arisen against the household tyranny, but never to the point of open rebellion. Perhaps it was that the slow gathering impalpable mist of years had condensed and snaped the "old Adam" in it may have been that that advertisement of the lovely "front" focussed all the pent-up longings of years. Instead, as usual, of following S'liny to her room after dinner, to ascertain that the shades were drawn to the right degree and the pillows disposed at the proper angle, Lucy Ellen washed the dinner dishes with an ever-growing feeling of resentment against everybody and everything, but which seemed to concentrate itself especially against S'liny. As she stood at the kitchen door, wringing out the last towel, the forces of nature without—it was a lovely day in early spring—the forces of her own nature within overcame the voice of the inflamed New England conscience that whispered of the "old Adam" in her hair. "front" she was traveling that her sister would sleep so far from her and her nightly faith. From her upper bureau drawer Lucy Ellen took a queer pasteboard box, smelling of camphor. Its contents were a slender gold ring, a big silver watch, a few worn silver spoons, and a huge cameo brooch. Nothing there but was of slight intrinsic value. But they had been treasured by Lucy Ellen for many years as a sort of fetish, to be looked over Sunday afternoons, when

she held the candle high above her head, that its light might fall at various angles on her new head-covering, regarding herself the while with coquettish little ducks and frowns and a simpering smile. She lit another candle in a snarled mood, a reckless extravagance, and placing one on either side of the little eight-by-twelve looking-glass, whispered the old question of the heart of youth.

Mirror, mirror, on the wall, Who is the fairest of us all? and the glass answered the heart, and not the withered face under its crown of false, discordant locks.

Thou art the fairest of them all. When at last Lucy Ellen laid aside the

"front," it was to fall asleep with the pleased consciousness—running through her slumbers—that this mirror held something very sweet and new, as a child dreams of its Christmas stocking. The next morning she set the breakfast tray on the light-stand by her sister's head in silence. S'liny seemed still to be whetting her appetite for merriment. With a last look at herself in the glass—it was wonderful how young the "front" beneath the nodding cabbage-roses made her look—Lucy Ellen stood on the threshold of her sister's room.

S'liny gave a hysterical shriek. "Why—why—why—what has happened?" she gasped.

"It's my new 'front,'" answered Lucy Ellen, beamingly; for, fresh from the flattering mirror, pleasure in her acquisition took away apprehension of S'liny's possible opposition or strictures.

"It's such a change!" murmured the invalid, turning her head upon the pillow. "My hair was real kind of thin," said Lucy Ellen, with a little break in her voice. Face to face with life-long friend, it was not so easy to maintain an undaunted front.

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Dr. Stites.

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Game in season, and any kinds of good meats you want. TAY MY SHOES. P. L. BEEZER, 43-1-ly High Street, Belleville.

SAVIN YOUR MEAT BILLS. There is no reason why you should use poor meat, or pay exorbitant prices for tender, juicy steaks. Good meat is abundant hereabouts, because good cattle, sheep and calves are to be had.

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Table with columns: READ DOWN, STATIONS, READ UP. Includes stations like Altoona, Tyrone, and Philadelphia.

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PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD AND BRANCHES. Schedule in effect Nov. 20th, 1899.

Table with columns: VIA TYRONE—WESTWARD, VIA TYRONE—EASTWARD, VIA LOCK HAVEN—WESTWARD, VIA LOCK HAVEN—EASTWARD.

TYRONE AND CLEARFIELD, R. R. Schedule in effect Nov. 20th, 1899.

Table with columns: NORTHWARD, SOUTHWARD, stations like Tyrone, Altoona, and Philadelphia.

BALD EAGLE VALLEY BRANCH. Schedule in effect Nov. 20th, 1899.

Table with columns: WESTWARD, EASTWARD, stations like Tyrone, Altoona, and Philadelphia.

LEWISBURG & TYRONE RAILROAD. Schedule in effect Nov. 20th, 1899.

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BELLEVILLE & SNOW SHOE BRANCH. Time Table in effect on and after July 10, 1899.

General Manager, R. WOOD, General Passenger Agent.

BELLEVILLE CENTRAL RAILROAD. Schedule to take effect Monday, Apr. 3rd, 1899.

Table with columns: WESTWARD, EASTWARD, stations like Tyrone, Altoona, and Philadelphia.

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