

To a Maid Demure.

When the night is come,
With its quiet group at home,
While they broder, knit, or sew,
Keen, or chat in voices low,

MY STRANGE VISITOR.

BY FRANK CLAIRINGTON.

Some distance from the town of L—
and on one of the roads running
through it, stands an old vacant house.

Soon after graduating from the medical
college at X—, I decided to
settle down in L—. Of course, it would
be years before I became popular—

However, I only noticed this at
night, and soon drove it off by reading.
Frequently I would get interested in a
newspaper or book, and find it long
past midnight when I would lie it
down.

One cold December night, while I
sat thus occupied on a volume of travel,
I heard the large front door slam and
the sound of footsteps in the hall.

I arose to my feet and glanced out.
It was a fearful night, the wind moaned
dismally around the house, rattling the
shrunken doors and sashes, and sent
the snow drifting across the window

I laughed and answered in the affir-
mative.
"Well, that's the way he tackles all
strangers. Odd, too, for he never had
any love trouble, they say. So now, sir,
we will bid you good-bye."

My dear friend? Why, my dear
friend, I never met you before." (I
laughed as I spoke, for I thought that
one of L—'s practical jokes was trying
to spring a new trick on me.)

As he spoke he dashed to the door,
locked it, then giving the key a jerk
sent it spinning through the window.
Then the terrible truth flashed across
my mind—he was a madman.

Well, tell me who she is," I said,
trying to make the matter a joke.
"Ah, you wish to throw me off the
scout," he answered, "Minnie, the girl
I speak of, is Minnie Warbrane.

"Well, sir, I want you to understand
that you made a mistake. I am now
worth \$18,000, and could give your
daughter every luxury."

By way of answer, Theodora Oxgate
threw her arms around the tall girl's
neck and pressed her soft, red lips close
to the other's cold mouth. And as she
did so, something plashed on her cheek
—a hot tear.

"A new style of Jersey has a round
yoke extending to the shoulders, to
which the back is attached in three
box-plaits, which extend to the bottom
of the short basque, and are laid in so
that they touch at the waist, making a
jaunty postilion below the belt.

"This is the way I settle old scores.
A new way of paying old debts—you
pay your debt with your life. I will
give you two minutes and then blow
your brains out."

I looked around the department in
despair. Yes, there was no escape, I

must die by his bullet. I glanced at
the closed door, the walls, the bottles
of medicine on the shelves, and just
then my eye fell upon something that
would render assistance—my galvanic
battery. The handle of it resembled
cups, and thus gave me an idea.

"Say, old fellow," I said, quite
friendly, and in a careless way, "don't
you think that death by poison would
be better than that?"
"Who do you mean?"

"Not so bad," he exclaimed, lowering
the weapon and shoving it back in
his pocket.

"I thought you would agree," I re-
plied, stepping over to the battery.

"Now, you stand here, hold these two
cups, one in each hand, and you pass
them quickly to me, and I will drink
their contents."

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Theodora Oxgate.
Dreary and chilly, a dying year, and
yet the windows of Mrs. Oxgate's old
brown farm-house hung out their cheery
signals behind the fringed cotton curtains,

"My goodness alive! What's that?"
For, as the words thrilled from her
tongue, a tall, dark figure had arisen
from the low wooden bench under the
apple-tree whose boughs overhung the
well.

"Don't be alarmed," said a deep,
sweet contralto, with a scornful intona-
tion in its sound. "It's only me,
Dora."

"Joanna Elfield?"
"Yes, Joanna Elfield. What then?
Have I fallen so low that I am no longer
worthy to sit beneath the old apple
tree? If so, tell me so at once, and I'll
quit."

"You know I didn't mean that, Jo-
anna."

"It's hard to tell what people mean
or don't mean nowadays," said Joanna,
pecking at the fringe of her frayed rag
of a shawl. "I was tired. I wanted a
drink of water; so I came to the old
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gates hung creaking; grassy pasture
lands were neglected; sunny meadows
had lapped over with their own weight
of harvest.

"This is the Oxgate Place, is it not?"
the lady asked, in a deep, sweet voice,
that betrayed her at once. Dora an-
swered promptly:

"Not Joanna Elfield now, but Joanna
Avenel," she rejoined, smiling. "Here
is my husband, George, this is the
friend I told you of, whose hand ten
years ago lifted me out of the darkness
and set me in the right place."

"Dora," she ad- "that night was
the turning point in my life. See! I
have your little gold chain with the
heart, yet. I knew then that one hu-
man creature had faith in me still, and
renewed the fountain of life within me.
Dora, you were my guardian angel!
God bless you for it!"

"People wondered much why the Ave-
nel had Dora Oxgate so much with
them, to say nothing of that tiresome,
prosing old bore, her mother. But
Mrs. Avenel was a great lady, and could
of course, be excused for having her
whim—one of which was always to
wear a thread-like chain of gold around
her neck, with a heart-shaped locket
hanging from it.

And Dora Oxgate, although she had
settled into a solitary, hard-working old
maid, knew that her life had not been
in vain.

I was sitting on a train about to
leave Richmond, Va., for Petersburg,
when a bridal party came on, and one
of the bridesmaids occupied the vacant
seat by my side.

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—Patsy Clinker, pacing record of
2:20, has taken to trotting.

—James Pettit will train Charles
McFadden's horse the coming season.

—The trotting stock of the late Al-
den Goldsmith will be sold on March
1 and 2.

—W. P. Balch, of Boston, claims to
have sold \$33,000 worth of horseflesh
since October 8, 1886.

—A syndicate has purchased the
Riverside Driving Park at Buffalo, for
\$27,500, being \$550 an acre.

—W. J. Leys has purchased the 3-
year-old gray filly Venetia, by Bis-
marck, dam Estella Gray.

—The get of imp. Mortemer won
\$41,100 in 1886. Winfred heading the
list with \$720. There were 87 starters,
participating in 449 races and winning
71.

—The broodmare Bertha, by Harold,
dam Jean Wood (dam of Clermont
2:30), by Melbourne Jr., died recently
at Belleaire Stock Farm, Woodlake,
Ky.

—On Thursday and Friday, March
3 and 4, at London, Eng., the Messrs.
Tattersall will sell the entire stud of
the late John Grout, of Woodbridge,
Suffolk.

—Ten Broeck's get, thirty-nine of
which were on the turf in 1886, won 52
races out of 315 starts and captured
\$46,563, of which Jim Gray contribu-
ted \$17,090.

—C. H. Nelson, of Waterville, Me.,
has sold to Dr. O. G. Ciley, of Boston,
the brown 3-year-old stallion Wedg-
wood, Jr., by Wedgwood, dam by
Howe's Bismarck.

—J. D. Willis, of Brooklyn, proprie-
tor of the Middletown Stock Farm, has
sold to R. R. Ross, of Canada, the bay
stallion Volunteer Clay, by Harry
Clay, dam Voluntary (dam of Black-
wood Prince, 2:23 1/2), by Volunteer, for
\$5000.

—John S. Campbell has established a
night school and employed a teacher
for the benefit of his jockeys and the
other boys of his stable at New Or-
leans. Boys from other stables will
have the privilege of joining the class
by paying a small weekly fee.

—W. H. Wilson, Abdullah Park,
Cynthiana, Ky., states that his sales
for the year 1886 amounted to \$38,000,
closing with the sale of one-fourth in-
terest in Sultan at \$5000 to J. P. Case.
E. B. Echer, of Kansas City, has en-
gaged to train for Mr. Wilson.

—The subject of the sale of Conema-
auga came up again during the week.
Dwyer Bros., ever on the alert for a
good thing, offered Mr. O'Reilly \$14,
000 for the filly. That was before her
late attack of lung fever, which, of
course, set at rest all stories concern-
ing her sale. But now that she has re-
covered the subject is revived. It may
be merely idle gossip, but one of the
most prominent jockeys is the Messrs.
Dwyer and O'Reilly have come to an
understanding and that the Dwyers
will take her, subject to trial, and if,
when she is galloped, she shows no ef-
fects of her late illness in the shape of
roaring or whistling, etc., they will
pay Mr. O'Reilly his price.

—R. P. Mepper has sold to P. L.
Silvers, Tecumseh, Mich., Bulletin,
bay colt, foaled 1882, by Onward, dam
Missess, by Hamlin's Almont Jr., to
Mr. Bidwell, Tecumseh, Mich., Aragon,
bay colt, foaled 1884, by Madrid,
dam Missess, by Hamlin's Almont
Jr., to J. G. Ladd, Beatrice, Neb. Plu-
tar, bay colt, foaled 1883, by Onward,
dam Flushing Girl, by Scott's Thomas,
2:21; also a bay colt, foaled 1886, by
Madrid, dam Dream, by Administrator,
to J. B. Ross, Madison, Ind., Ad-
venturer, bay filly, foaled 1885, by Pre-
tender, dam Zest, by Woodford Abdul-
lah (sire of Kenilworth, 2:19 1/2); also a
bay filly, foaled 1886, by Margin (son of
Almont), dam Ingenua, by Egbert; to
A. Rightmeyer, Sangeries, N. Y., Bar-
celona, bay colt, foaled 1884, by Mad-
rid, dam Extract, by Woodford Abdul-
lah.

—The Montgomery, Berks and Ches-
ter Counties Agricultural and Horti-
cultural Society, located at Potstown,
Pa., recently held its annual meeting
and re-elected the entire old Board of
officers. The society is in a flourishing
condition, having earned 30 per cent.
on its capital stock last year. A 10
per cent. dividend was declared, the
balance being spent in improvements on
the property. Since this society was or-
ganized two years ago over \$16,000 has
been spent in permanent improve-
ments. The buildings have been erected
in the most substantial manner and
compare favorably with any of the kind
in the country. The mile track is one
of the best. Pipes have been laid and
water conveyed throughout the entire
grounds. One hundred and sixty box-
stalls have been built for trotting and
exhibition horses. Two trotting meet-
ings are given yearly, in the spring and
fall. The managers hope to make their
exhibitions rival those of the Great
Mount Holly Fair, and with her super-
ior grounds and railroad facilities the
Jerseyman will have to look to their
laurels.

Waterproofs have now become
quite elegant and ornamental mantles.
They are of silk, lined with India-rub-
ber, the silk, is either self-colored, in
soft tints of gray, beige or brown, or
else it is striped or plaided in various
shades or color. The newest models are
made in the shape of redingotes, with
visite sleeves.

—The Marie-Antoinette coiffure is
also much in vogue. For this coiffure
the hair is arranged in a rouleau; it is
not brushed straight down from the face
and fastened straight down, but merely
rolled off and attached with pins, but
so as to remain loose. This style does
not suit all faces, but is very becoming
to ladies who have a low, broad fore
head and straight eyebrows.

—By way of redingote, the follow-
ing is a very new model: The material
is thick-ribbed woolen serge, of the
navy blue. The fronts are fastened
straight down from the neck; then the
right side one is rounded off and
crossed over the left hip, where it is
finished in three full plaits under an
ornament of dull passementerie, also
navy blue. In consequence the right
side lapel of the redingote remains a
little shorter than the left-side one; a
strip of passementerie braid, simulat-
ing a thick plaid, follows the edge of
both fronts from the neck to the foot
Joanna sleeve, widely open in the lower
part, lined with navy blue silk and
trimmed with a plaited braid.

—Tortoise-shell combs and pins for
the coiffure are also extremely fash-
ionable. Coiffures are still worn very
high, the hair being brushed up from
the roots and arranged in loops on the
top of the head; these loops are
fastened with the tortoise-shell pins.
While the small comb is placed a little
on one side! In front the hair is parted
in the middle and arranged in very
small bandeaux or small clusters of
curls over the temples.

—Another style of redingote, very
elegant and unique, is of iron gray
fancy armure cloth. The front is made
like a cuirass bodice, clinging to the
neck, and fitted to the waist like a
jersey; it is open on each side from the
shoulder to the edge of the skirt, to
show a panel of gray velvet. This
panel is gored and very narrow from
the shoulder to the waist, but gradu-
ally enlarged from the waist to the
foot. A fringe of small silk passemen-
terie accorns edges both sides of the
mantle, touching the velvet. A hand-
some border of dull passementerie
passes across the waist and is rounded
off at the foot of the mantle on each
side. Turned-up collar and coat
sleeve.

A cloth dress should be what is
called "tailor-made." It should fit
perfectly and should be made just as
plain as possible. The latest achieve-
ments in this style of dress are calcu-
lated to keep up the character for
simplicity. No silk, satin or velvet
enters into their composition, but the
materials are good, soft and rich. At
present the chief demand for this
description of dress, says a leading
London journal, is in fine vicuña cloth.
The material is soft and light that it
answers both for foundation, skirt and
drapery, and when made from the un-
dyed wool runs no risk either from sun
or sea, besides being of great durability.
If, however, any special shade or color
be desired this can only be obtained
by means of dye, when, of course
the cloth becomes subject to the un-
certainty of all artificial tints. For
the ornamentation of these dresses
balding answers better than anything
else, and the designs can be bright-
ened by having a thread of gold or
silver woven into the braid.

A leading dressmaker in London
has successfully introduced an
innovation in the ordinary wed-
ding gowns, and it is so unique
and pretty that we give not only a
description of it but of the entire
trousseau. The wedding dress was of
the softest, finest French cashmere of
a creamy hue over white silk. It was
bordered with marabout, and plaitings
of mervelieux were carried up on one
side, bunches of orange flowers form-
ing a panel; the marabout was used for
the upright collar to the dress, and was
carried around the long sleeves of the
high bodice, looking warm and com-
fortable even in the cold weather we
are now having. The cashmere blended
well with the fine old lace veil. There
were many beautiful gowns in the
trousseau, such as sapphire blue velvet
for dinner wear, made with a long
train en princess, the bodice square,
draped with lace. Its perfection was
the simplicity of its arrangement.
There was a cream-colored satin which
could be worn on these full-dress occa-
sions when a wedding-gown is expected
to be donned; it was cut three-quarter
length and had a round bodice and an
epaulette of old lace on the shoulder—
a style which cannot find too many ad-
herents. The upper portion of the arm,
which is now much too freely shown,
is rarely "a thing of beauty," but
these epaulettes just veil it sufficiently,
and a stomacher of the same lace cov-
ered the front of the bodice, folds of
tulle resting on the neck. A stylish
afternoon visiting dress was combina-
tion of dark electric-blue silk and
Havana-brown cashmere, draped with
a bordering of sable, matching the
out-door jacket. The silk appeared as
the foundation of the vest and side
panels, the rest was a study of skilful
drapery. A tea-gown was made of
prune velvet, with a long falling front
of mervelieux to match, and plenty of
valenciennes lace intermixed. A terra
cotta brocaded silk was intermixed
with mousses cashmere, and worn with
a bonnet of the mousses tone, trimmed
with gold chrysanthemum. A great
deal of cashmere is being used for
evening gowns, the bodices being
draped with soft silk, showing no
tucker, the silk forming a sash drapery
across the front of the bodice. Two
fancy dresses were most successful;
Spring, in white tulle, the skirt trim-
med with ribbon bows and snowdrops,
an epaulette of the same on one
shoulder; the other a Tudor Queen,
made in a rich peacock brocade, with
pink roses, interwoven; the front of
both bodice and skirt was a mass of
magnificent embroidery.