

BRIC-À-BRAC.



EQUAL TO THE EMERGENCY.

Hebe: "Unc' Isrul, mammy say, huccome de milk so watery on top in de mornin'?"

Patriarch: "Tell you' mammy dat's de bes' sort o' milk; dat's de dew on it — de cows been layin' in de dew."

Hebe: "An' she tell me to ax you what meck it so blue."

Patriarch: "You ax your mammy what meck she so black!"

The Coupon Letter of Introduction.

THE interchange of letters of introduction between old friends, by which valuable acquaintances are added to the list, is a great blessing, and in good hands these letters have, no doubt, been the beginning of many a warm friendship; but, like all other blessings, it has been greatly abused. I have been the recipient of letters, presented by tourists, which, it was easy to see, had been wrung from some sand-bagged friend of mine—letters with sobs between the lines, letters punctuated with invisible signals, calling upon me to

remember that the bearer had looked over the writer's shoulder as each sentence grew into a polite prevarication.

To those who are in the habit of giving hearty letters of introduction and indorsement to casual acquaintances, I desire to say that I am perfecting a system by which the drugged and kidnapped writer of a style of assumed sincerity and bogus hilarity will be thoroughly protected. Let me explain briefly and then illustrate my method.

A casual acquaintance, who has met you, say four or five times, and who feels thoroughly intimate with

you, calling you by the name that no one uses but your wife, approaches you with an air of confidence that betrays his utter ignorance of himself, and asks for a letter of introduction (in the same serious vein in which one asks for a match). You are already provided with my numbered Introductory Letter Pad. You write the letter of introduction on a sheet numbered to correspond with a letter of advice mailed simultaneously to the person who is to submit to the letter of introduction.

For instance, a young man, inclined to be "fresh," enters your office or library, and states that he is going abroad. He has learned that you are intimate with Dom Pedro of Brazil. Perhaps you have conveyed that idea unintentionally while in the young man's presence at some time. So now he asks the trifling favor of a letter of introduction to the Emperor. He is going to see the President and Cabinet and the members of the Supreme Court before he leaves this country, and when he goes to South America he naturally wants to meet Dom Pedro. So you fill out the right-hand end or coupon of the sheet as follows:

[*International Introductory Letter System, Form Z 23.*]

No. B 135,986.

NEW YORK, Dec. 25, 1886.

SIR: You will please honor this letter of introduction in accordance with the terms of a certain letter of advice numbered as above, and bearing even date herewith, mailed to you this day, and oblige,

Yours, etc.,

A. B.

The young man goes abroad with this letter inclosed in a maroon alligator-skin pocket-book, and when he arrives in Brazil he finds that the way has been paved for him by the following letter of advice:

[*International Introductory Letter System, Form Z 23.*]

No. B 135,986.

NEW YORK, Dec. 25, 1886.

YOUR MAJESTY: Mr. W—, a young man with great assurance and a maroon-colored alligator-skin pocket-book, bearing a letter of introduction to you numbered as above, is now at large. He will visit Europe for a few weeks, after which he will tour about South America. He will make a specialty of volcanoes and monarchs.

He will offer to exchange photographs with you, but you must use your own judgment about complying with this request. Do not allow this letter to influence you in the matter.

You will readily recognize him by the wonderful confidence which he has in himself, and which is not shared by those who know him here.

He is a fluent conversationalist, and can talk for hours without fatigue to himself.

You will find it very difficult to wound his feelings, but there would be no harm in trying.

Should you get this letter in time, you might do as you thought best in the matter of quarantine. Some foreign powers are doing that way.

Mr. W— has met a great many prominent people in this country. What this country needs is more free trade on the high seas and better protection for its prominent people.

I have tried to be conservative in what I have said here, and if I have given you a better opinion of the young man than his conduct on fuller acquaintance will warrant, I assure you that I have not done so intentionally.

You will notice at once that he is a self-made man, so your admiration for the works of nature need not be in any way diminished. With due respect, your most obedient servant,

A. B.

To his Imperial Majesty DOM PEDRO,
Emperor of BRAZIL, ETC.

No. Z 30,865.

SIR: This letter of advice will probably precede a tall youth named Brindley. Mr. Brindley is a young man who, by a strange combination of circumstances, is the eldest son of a perfect gentleman, who now has, and will ever continue to have, my highest esteem and my promissory note for \$250.

Will you kindly bear this in mind while you peruse my pleading letter of introduction, which will accompany Mr. Brindley, Jr.?

All through his stormy and tempestuous career in the capacity of son to his father, he has never done anything that the grand jury could get hold of. Treat him as well as you can consistently, and if you can get him a position in a bank, I am sure his father would appreciate it. A place in a bank, where he would not have anything to do but look pretty and declare dividends in a shrill falsetto voice, would please him very much. He is a very good declaimer. He is not accustomed to manual toil, but he has always yearned to do literary work. If he could do the editorial work connected with the sight-draft department, or write humorous indorsements on the backs of checks, over a *nom de plume*, it would tickle the boy almost to death. Anything you could do toward getting him a position in a large bank that is nailed down securely, would be thoroughly appreciated by me, and I should be glad to retaliate at any time.

Yours candidly,

WYMAN DAYTON.

To K. O. PECK, ESQ., LONDON.

A beautiful feature of this invaluable system is the understanding to which everybody is committed, that the original letter is entirely worthless on its presentation unless the letter of advice has already been received.

Bill Nye.

To Critics.

WHEN I was seventeen I heard
From each censorious tongue,
"I'd not do that if I were you,
You see you're rather young."

Now that I number forty years,
I'm quite as often told
Of this or that I shouldn't do
Because I'm quite too old.

O carping world! If there's an age
Where youth and manhood keep
An equal poise, alas! I must
Have passed it in my sleep.

Walter Learned.

Mourned.

LOVED — lost — "is he dead" do you say?
Murray Hill has his name on a door;
There's a slow, measured step on the floor —
Ghost! why are you hid from the day?

His height was the stature of man;
His mind was the leader to mine;
I saw in him something divine;
I've lost him, console me who can.

See! this is the man was my friend;
So dull, so exact, so urbane,
So formal, so cold — to complain,
To reproach him were idle — what end?

With the red blood of youth in our veins
How high ran our hopes, our desires!
All good is for him who aspires —
He sank to a surfeit of gains.

Bowed down by a burden of gold,
Withdrawn from the labor of day,
He shrinks from life's conflict away;
I mourn for my comrade of old.

D. H. R. Goodale.