





Mr Horace G. Brinton.

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A HAIRDRESSER'S EXPERIENCE

IN

HIGH LIFE.

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CINCINNATI:

PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR.

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## THE AUTHOR'S APPEAL.

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It may perhaps be considered presumptive for one in my humble sphere of life to think of writing a book; but, influenced by the earnest persuasions of many ladies and gentlemen, I have at last concluded that I might just as well note down a few of my experiences for their amusement as not.

The unlettered of all ages have numbered in their ranks many with sufficient observation and intelligence to have written more entertaining books than many which have emanated from cultivated pens, had they only possessed the courage to tell what they knew in simple, plain language—could they only remember that the mouths of babes and sucklings have, in other days, perfected the praise of the mightiest. Those days may come again.

The physician writes his diary, and doubtless his means of discovering the hidden mysteries of life are great. The clergyman, whose calling inspires the deepest confidence, and into whose ear the tales of sorrow are unreservedly breathed, sends forth his diary to an eager world, and other innumerable chroniclers of fireside life have existed; but the hair-



dresser will yield rivalry to none in this regard. If domestic bitterness and joy, and all the heart-emotions that exist, cannot be discovered by her, she defies all the rest of the world to find them out.

My avocation calls me into the upper classes of society almost exclusively; and there reign as many elements of misery as the world can produce. No one need go into alleys to hunt up wretchedness; they can find it in perfection among the rich and fashionable of every land and nation. Oh! if tessellated hearths and satin tapestries could speak, what tales of agony they might tell! If the marble statues that adorn the riches of lordly mansions could open their mouths, how would they outrival all poetry and romance in the incidents they could proclaim! and could the nuptial couch, with its silken hangings, unfold its memories, could we bear to listen to its disclosures? But nowhere do hearts betray themselves more unguardedly than in the private boudoir, where the hair-dresser's mission makes her a daily attendant. Why, then, should not the hair-dresser write, as well as the physician and clergyman? She will tell her story in simpler language; but it will be none the less truthful, none the less strange.

## A HAIR-DRESSER'S EXPERIENCE

### IN HIGH LIFE.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### MY DEBUT.

I HAVE promised to give you a sketch of my experiences in those walks of life where fate has led me, up to the present time. You will find them somewhat rambling and desultory; but I beg you will overlook much that you will find a little *harum scarum*, considering the humble condition of your narrator.

I was brought up in New York, and went out, at an early age, to earn my living, in the service of people of *ton*. For some years, this occupation was agreeable to me; but at length I wearied of it, and being at liberty to choose my own course, I determined to travel, and to gratify my long-cherished desire to see the world—and especially the *Western world*: so I started as soon as possible toward the setting sun. At Buffalo, however, my journey was suddenly arrested by a sort of ceremony called *matrimony*, which I entered into very naturally, and became quieted down



with Mrs. So and-so, and to observe things generally, so all were satisfied.

I was amused to hear ladies say, "I am not going to-night, but am going to-morrow night, when there will be a crowd," as if they went to see the crowd and not to hear the music. Those who did not care for the music were the very ones who wanted some of the scenes cut off. One day I was combing some ladies and heard them rail at the dancing in one of the scenes of Robert Le Diable. These same ladies I have frequently dressed to go with their whole families to see the Ravels. I said, "Ladies, have you not gone yourselves and taken your whole families to see the Ravels?" They said, "Yes, but the Ravels were the Ravels, but we do not want dancing in the opera, that piece must come out, see if we don't have that part cut off." I laughed, and said to them, "I have never before heard of any one having an opera altered to suit themselves, but I will tell you one thing you can do, and ought to do, and that is, prevent little misses and masters from examining the different plots. I myself, the other day, saw some little ladies and gentlemen very busy in examining the plot of Don Juan, and I do think that is a little too far to go. I don't object to little people seeing the play and hearing the music, but I do think they should be prevented from examining such plots; that is, in my opinion, much worse than the dancing, and I do think in place of trying to raise a fuss, those who attend the opera should be perfectly satisfied with having such an elegant house as an ornament to our city and should give all praise to him through whose energy it was erected."

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ELIZA POTTER

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