

The Green Coat.

“WELL, it doesn't seem so bad to be back after all, and after the time I've had for the last three weeks, I guess I'll be willing to grind from now till Easter.” “Haw-haw.” “Hear him.” “Dream on old man,” simultaneously came from the three youths who composed his audience, and were lounging about the room. The speaker was a short, broad shouldered youth, with red hair, and was busily engaged in scattering around shoes, collars, ties, etc. that he was taking from a suit-case lying in the middle of the floor.

“Cut the comedy, Bud, and give us a match,” said the tallest of the three, who was known to his college chums as Doc. “Did you hear from Tad during the holidays?” “Only a card that I got a couple of days ago, saying that he was having a good time, and would be back on the twelfth, so that means that he will be in today.”

Bud and Tad, known to the college authorities as Arthur O. Berner, and Richard B. Fosdick, respectively, had been room-mates ever since they entered college over three years before. The former was red haired, short and stout; the latter large, and powerfully built, a member of the foot-ball team, and captain of the base-ball nine.

“Well, I hope he gets here soon,” chimed in little Ned Braley, “for fruit-cake would—” The door suddenly opened, and the object of their conversation could be seen through the veil of cigarette smoke that filled the room. “Hello, Tad,” “Happy New Year,” “Oh! you Richard.” “Welcome to our city,” chorused the quartet, while there was a general rush for the grip he held in his hand. He pushed them off, saying,

"nothing doing fellows I had to pack in a hurry, and forgot the cake this trip." "Well you needn't look so gloomy about it," said Bud, "you might think you had just lost your last friend." Well it's a funny world anyway," answered Fosdick. "Ah-ha," said Doc, "I guess it was pretty hard to leave her. Come on now, be a sport and tell us what she looks like, and describe the parting scene."

"I'll tell you the story if you all give me your promise of secrecy."

"Mum's the word boys" said Doc, "Commence."

"Well, it began the day before Christmas and ended about an hour ago. She was a blonde, with blue eyes, not very tall, and, I should judge about twenty years of age. She wore a long green coat, with a fur boa thrown over her shoulders.

"I was in the city the day before Xmas, and was walking down the street, when the girl in green came out of a store just ahead of me, and I noticed her drop her purse. I picked it up, and returned it to her, and she thanked me with a smile. She turned the next corner, and I watched her till she reached the end of the block and then turned again.

"I took a late afternoon train for my own little town, and all the way out I tried to read a newspaper, but continually saw green coats. I told myself that I would never see her again, but still I thought I would like to know her. I was pretty busy enjoying myself for the next two weeks and had almost forgotten about the girl in the green coat, until today.

"When I boarded the train this morning I went into the 'smoker' but finding it crowded I went into the coach ahead. There were just two seats unoccupied in this car. One was beside a large stout lady, and the other was next a young woman, wearing—a green

coat. On being informed that the latter seat was not engaged, I sat down beside its other occupant.

"She had a magazine in her hand, but was not reading it, for she seemed annoyed by the cool breeze coming through the window, which was opened a little at the bottom. She requested me to close it, and then we started a conversation.

She remembered me as the person who had returned her purse, but was surprised when she saw me getting on the train at the little suburban station. I explained that my home was in that town, and gave her my card. She was sorry she could not return the compliment, but said her name was Brown, and she lived in L-s-t-r.

"Two gentlemen occupying the seat in front of us had been busily engaged in conversation. The younger of the two now looked back, as if surprised at hearing the young lady behind him talking. She bowed, and he resumed his talk with his companion.

"I told her I often visited L-s-t-r, and named some friends I had there. She knew them, and invited me to call on her the next time I was down that way. We were soon talking as if we had known each other for years, and when she said she was getting off at the next station, I thought I had enjoyed the best fifty minutes of my life, and had promised myself to accept her invitation to call, on my first visit to L-s-t-r. I had moreover, decided that this first visit was not far distant.

"The train stopped, and I went to the door with her. On the platform of the car she touched a man on the shoulder, he turned, and I saw he was the younger of the two men who had been sitting in front of us. She said "John, permit me to make you acquainted with my friend, Mr. Fosdick. Mr. Fosdick, this is my husband."