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TO SECURE THE BEST RESULTS

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ever saw. There is something mysterious about this stranger. What a whiff of smoke was that! Dim and faded, did you call him? Why, as he turns about the star on his breast is all ablaze."

"It is, indeed," said his companion; "and it will go near to dazzle pretty Polly Gookin, whom I see peeping at it out of the chamber window."

The door being now opened, Feather-top turned to the crowd, made a stately bend of his body like a great man acknowledging the reverence of the meaner sort, and vanished into the house. There was a mysterious kind of a smile, if it might not be called a grin or grimace, upon his visage, but of all the throng that beheld him, not an individual appears to have possessed insight enough to detect the illusive character of the stranger, except a little child and a cur dog.

Our legend here loses somewhat of its continuity, and, passing over the preliminary explanation between Feather-top and the merchant, goes in quest of the pretty Polly Gookin. She was a damsel of soft, round figure, with light hair and blue eyes, and a fair, rosy face, which seemed neither very shrewd nor very simple. This young lady had caught a glimpse of the glistening stranger while standing at the threshold, and had forthwith put on a lace cap, a string of beads, her finest kerchief, and her stiffest damask petticoat, in preparation for the interview. Hurrying from her chamber to the parlor, she had ever since been viewing herself in the large looking-glass and practicing pretty airs—now a smile, now a ceremonious dignity of aspect, and now a softer smile than the former, kissing her hand likewise, tossing her head, and managing her fan, while within the mirror an unsubstantial little maid repeated every gesture and did all the foolish things that Polly did, but without making her ashamed of them. In short, it was the fault of Pretty Polly's ability rather than her will if she failed to be as complete an artifice as the illustrious Feather-top himself; and, when she thus tampered with her own simplicity, the witch's phantom might well hope to win her.

No sooner did Polly hear he father's gouty footsteps approaching the parlor door, accompanied with the stiff clatter of Feather-top's high-heeled shoes, than she seated herself bolt upright, and innocently began warbling a song.

"Polly! daughter Polly!" cried the old merchant. "Come hither, child."

Master Gookin's aspect, as he opened the door, was doubtful and troubled.

"This gentleman," continued he, presenting the stranger, "is the Chevalier Feather-top—nay, I beg his pardon, my Lord Feather-top—who hath brought me a token of remembrance from an ancient friend of mine. Pay your duty to his lordship, child, and honor him as his quality deserves."

After these few words of introduction the worshipful magistrate im-

mediately quitted the room. But even in that brief moment, had the fair Polly glanced aside at her father, instead of devoting herself wholly to the brilliant guest, she might have taken warning of some mischief nigh at hand. The old man was nervous, fidgety, and very pale. Purposing a smile of courtesy, he had deformed his face with a sort of galvanic grin, which, when Feather-top's back was turned, he exchanged for a scowl, at the same time shaking his fist and stamping his gouty foot—an incivility which brought its retribution along with it. The truth appears to have been that Mother Rigby's word of introduction, whatever it might be, had operated far more on the rich merchant's fears than on his good will. Moreover, being a man of wonderfully acute observation, he had noticed that the painted figures on the bowl of Feather-top's pipe were in motion. Looking more closely, he became convinced that these figures were a party of little demons, each duly provided with horns and a tail, and dancing hand in hand, with gestures of diabolical merriment, round the circumference of the pipe bowl. As if to confirm his suspicions, while Master Gookin ushered his guest along a dusky passage from his private room to the parlor, the star on Feather-top's breast had scintillated actual flames, and threw a flickering gleam upon the wall, the ceiling, and the floor.

With such sinister prognostics manifesting themselves on all hands, it is not to be marvelled at that the merchant should have felt that he was committing his daughter to a very questionable acquaintance. He cursed in his secret soul the insinuating elegance of Feather-top's manners, as this brilliant personage bowed, smiled, put his hand on his heart, inhaled a long whiff from his pipe, and enriched the atmosphere with the smoky vapor of a fragrant and visible sigh. Gladly would poor Master Gookin have thrust his dangerous guest into the street, but there was a constraint and terror within him. This respectable old gentleman, we fear, at an earlier period of life, had given some pledge or other to the evil principle, and perhaps was now to redeem it by the sacrifice of his daughter.

It so happened that the parlor door was partly of glass, shaded by a silken curtain, the folds of which hung a little awry. So strong was the merchant's interest in witnessing what was to ensue between the fair Polly and the gallant Feather-top, that, after quitting the room, he could by no means refrain from peeping through the crevice of the curtain.

But there was nothing very miraculous to be seen, nothing—except the trifles previously noticed—to confirm the idea of a supernatural peril environing the pretty Polly. The stranger, it is true, was evidently a thorough and practiced man of the world, systematic and self-possessed, and therefore the sort of a person to

(Continued on page 1335.)

About the House.

Still More About Our Farm Homes.

There has been a great deal written lately in "The Farmer's Advocate" about the planning of our farm homes, dealing mainly with the artistic and attractive side of the subject. This is all very important as far as it goes, but it does not go quite far enough. We want something on the practical side as well, and there are two or three little suggestions which might be made, which have not, I believe, been touched upon as yet, either in the written articles on the subject, or in any of the plans I have seen published in our own "old reliable."

The first of the suggestions is to advocate, very strongly, the addition of an upstairs balcony or piazza. When plan-

ning for a new house, the additional cost of carrying the porch or veranda up to the second story—and roofing it—would be comparatively slight, and the comfort would far outweigh the initial expense. Think of the wear and tear upon nerves and temper, not to speak of carpets and furniture, which would be saved if there were some convenient place where heavy beds, mattresses, etc., could be brought for airing and dusting, without the necessity of dragging them up and down stairs. Who does not know the inconvenience of having to go "all the way downstairs" whenever a garment needed brushing or shaking? Of course, in a city where one rubs elbows with one's neighbors on each side, and where one's out-door life is lived, more or less (generally more), in public, it is preferable to have this "general-purpose" veranda at the back of the house, but in the country, where one is not so much exposed to the "vulgar gaze of the public," it could very well