

Monday mornings I generally go round and take her a little tea and sugar and such like, and stay and have a chat with her to while away the time.

The two fairly laughed aloud, and even baby cooed at this amazing joke. Towards the end of the week it was no unusual thing for them to go without sugar and sometimes tea themselves so that the postal order might be as large as possible; and here was their innocent old granny actually handing some of it to yet another in distress! "She thinks we are well off," they exclaimed when they had done laughing, "and yet we need the tea and sugar ourselves." But the very last thing that entered the gay hearts of these two optimists was to cut the postal order down, or let the cat of poverty out of the bag of concealment. "We do it to give the old dear pleasure," said the wife, "and if it gives her more pleasure to give it away than use it herself—why, then, our purpose is answered, isn't it, dear?" And she lifted a cup of sugarless tea to her lips.

Londoners take no notice of each other as they hurry to the city in the morning, and never waste a moment in speculating why this man looks blum or his neighbor on the bus smiling. Had they sought the reason of the comical smile which played round the lips of the young man that morning, and continued to play there throughout the day, they would have been surprised at the cause they would have discovered. He was smiling at the idea of his mother imagining

there was any one in greater need of sugar in his tea than himself.

"Bless her dear old blind heart!" he murmured.

And now July came, and with it a suffocating heat which drove all who could afford it, and many who couldn't, down to the sea.

"You can take your week's holiday after the fourteenth," the manager had said to him as he put on his coat to go home.

"Thank you," and he left the shop wondering what he ought to do. Two pictures rose before him as he crossed the bridge that unites the two halves of the great city. One was of a rather pale but happy face pressed close to a much smaller but likewise pale and happy face much like it—the faces of his wife and child. The other picture was of the post office round in the next street, where two or three pounds of his own lay in waiting for the hour of need. Yes, he would apply for a withdrawal form on the thirteenth, and they should all three go and smell the sea.

"A letter from granny," cried his wife as he entered his home. "I've opened it, and she says there is an excursion for a week to Margate, and she wonders whether you could spare her the money to go—only two pounds—as all the village is going, and she wants to see the sea once before she dies, she says. Have we got it, dear? I should so like her to go; we may not have her much longer."

For once—just for once—the smile did

not come at the call. In fact a shade—just a tiny shade—of disappointment passed over the young man's face.

"We've got it," he said slowly; "but

"That settles it!" said his wife promptly. "Granny shall go to Margate with the others, poor old dear."

And so granny did.

When the fifteenth came round and his holiday began, there was much exercise of ingenuity in planning and much economy in carrying out little inexpensive, or rather non-expensive, walks in Hyde Park, bus rides to Putney, and tramps to Wimbledon Common. But though an enormous amount of gusto was put into these home-made holidays, as the week drew towards its end and the heat increased, the parade of enjoying them had to be abandoned, and each Spartan confessed to the other that the smell of the sea would be simply heavenly. The young man stopped, and by lovely coincidence opposite to them faced the gaudy boardings bright with alluring illustrations of Brighton Promenade, Blackpool Pavilion and Margate Sands, and beneath them announcements of day excursions for heart-kindlingly small fares. As I say, the young man stopped, and an idea flashed into his mind.

"Sophie!" he exclaimed, "do you know what we'll do? Granny is at Margate; her week is not up till Monday. Let us go down by that half-crown excursion for the day on Saturday

and take her by surprise. We can scrape it out of the next two weeks, can't we?"

"Easily!" responded Sophie, conscious that no one could do that sort of thing better than herself. "Now, let us go home; I'm too excited to go any farther."

Saturday came, and brought as glorious a day as any day excursionist could desire. And with merry hearts the three hurried to Victoria Station and started for Margate. On arriving there their plan was this: Sophie should go to granny's lodgings, while her husband took the baby to the sands, where they would await them. Granny's surprise and delight were unbounded—a delight, albeit, that would have suffered instant extinction had she possessed the least notion that her own holiday was being enjoyed at the price of her son and daughter's. But a surprise and delight rarer in kind and of even greater intensity had by this time invaded the heart of the young man playing with his baby on the sands. He had not been sitting there long—so he told his wife later—and had just taken off baby's shoes and socks, than he noticed a little old lady in shabby widow's dress standing near to him, gazing at the sea with a face of serene joy. Baby having now toddled seaward, he ventured to address her. "Beautiful morning," he said, smiling.

The little old lady turned round. "It is," she answered. Then, desiring evidently a sympathetic soul, she went on: "I've never seen the sea before this week, and shouldn't have ever seen it at all before I die, I expect, but for the kindness of a friend of mine."

"I'm very glad to hear it," smiled the young man. "You are fortunate to have such a friend."

"I am, indeed," continued the little old lady. "She lives near me, and often brings me things I couldn't afford to get myself, for I am very poor, you know. She has a son in London who is very well off, and he sent her a lot of money the other day to go for a holiday with, and she came and said that if I would go with her—I haven't been well all winter—she would go for just three days, and so the money for a week for one of us would pay for half a week for us both. Wasn't it good of her? But here she is," and she broke off abruptly. "Granny!"

Most householders have some family story or other that never loses its flavor and salt, no matter how many years glide by. And the young man of my story tells to this day, and every time with fresh pleasure and humor—though Granny has gone to heaven these many years—the story of the holiday to Margate which he and his wife handed on to his old mother, and which she in her turn passed on, at least half of it, to her yet needier friend. The young man is able to take a whole fortnight now with his wife and son, and he does so. But he often wonders whether he will ever get as much pleasure out of a holiday again as he got out of the one which he did not have.—British Monthly.

The Difference.

I planted a maple where rippled a brook,
Where chilling winds never came near it;

'Twas sheltered by hedges; the green sunny nook
Seemed a haven where safe I could rear it.

It grew in the sun and it grew in the shower,
No tree ever branched in more beauty;
I passed in its shadow full many an hour
In dreams of this life and its duty.

I planted a maple tree high on a hill,
Where stormy winds tossed it for ever;

No shelter was near it, no murmuring rill
Ran by in its ceaseless endeavour.

And when in the days of the harvesters' home
I looked at my trees in the morning,

The one was a temple with high arching dome
The other a beauty adorning.



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