

MAKE CHILDHOOD SWEET.

Wait not till the little hands are at rest
Ere you fill them full of flowers;
Wait not for the crowning tuberoses
To make sweet the last sad hours;
But while in the busy household haue
Your darlings still need your guiding hand;
O! fill their lives with sweetness.

Wait not till the little hearts are still
For the loving look and phrase,
But while you gently chide a fault,
The good deed kindly praise.
The word you would speak beside the bier,
Falls sweeter far on the living ear,
Oh! fill young lives with sweetness.

Ah! what are kisses on the clay-cold lips
To the rosy mouth we press,
When our wee one lies to her mother's arms
For love's tenderest caress!
Let never a worldly babble keep
Your heart from the joy each day should reap
Circling young lives with sweetness.

Give thanks each morn for the sturdy boys,
Give thanks for the fairy girls;
With a dower of wealth like this at home,
Would you rifle the earth for pearls?
Wait not for death to gem life's crown,
But daily shower life's blessings down,
And fill young hearts with sweetness.

Remember the home where the light has fled
Where the rose has faded away;
And the love that glows in youthful hearts,
O! cherish it while you may!
And make your home a garden of flowers,
Where joy shall bloom through childhood's
hours,
And fill young lives with sweetness.

Our Story.

A QUEER TEST.

"How happens it, Tom, that you never married?" asked Harry Stanhope of his friend, Tom Meredith, as the two sauntered along Broadway one fine spring morning.

"Because I never could find any woman who would have me, I suppose," answered Tom laughingly.

"No use to tell me that, old fellow," rejoined Harry. "Girls are not so foolish as to decline a good looking man like you, with plenty of money; yet here you are, nearly thirty years old, and no more prospect of settling than you had ten years ago. Now if it were me, why, the case is very different. A doctor just struggling into practice, is scarcely considered eligible by match-making mamma, to say nothing of their worldly wise daughters, but they are ready and eager to smile upon you, and you might as well make your choice."

"Thank you," answered Tom, still laughing, "when I find a young lady who can come up to my grandmother's standard of domestic virtues, I will invite her to become Mrs. Thomas Meredith."

"And what were your grandmother's peculiar doctrines on the subject?" asked Harry.

"I presume she had more than one," said Tom. "but this she particularly impressed upon my mind: 'Always look at a woman's dish-towels,' she would remark with much solemnity. 'No matter how well she plays the piano or sings, or how many languages she can speak, never marry her unless you see that she uses soft dry towels; and plenty of them, when she wipes her dishes. Be sure that the girl who uses soiled or wet dish towels does not know enough to be the wife of an honest man.'"

"Harry laughed at this definition of house-wifely knowledge, but presently he said in a serious tone:

"There is considerable truth in the old lady's ideas after all, but I don't quite understand how, in these days, you can apply the test. Most young

ladies that we know have, perhaps, never seen a dish towel. Now I think of it, I promised to introduce you to my cousins. There are three of them, all bright pretty girls, though I think it doubtful whether they would fulfil your grandmother's requirements as a wife. Still you may find them pleasant acquaintances, and if you like we will go there now."

"Agreed," responded Tom, and the two friends soon found themselves in the magnificent parlour of Mrs. Renshaw, Harry's aunt.

The young ladies were all at home, and, as Harry said, were bright, pretty girls. Ida, the eldest, was a tall, queenly brunette, whose magnificent black eyes and abundant raven tresses seemed to compel universal admiration, though she had a powerful rival in Adele, the second daughter, whose delicate blonde beauty shewed to fresh advantage beside her more brilliant sister. The two were acknowledged belles in their own circles, and few who knew them ever paused to give a second glance at their younger sister, little Violet. And shy and shrinking as her floral namesake, she avoided the gay assemblages in which her sisters loved to shine, and passed her time pleasantly and peacefully with her books, her music and flowers.—She was not present when Harry and his friend entered, but when her cousin, with whom she was a great favorite, asked expressly for her, Miss Adele desired the servant to call her. Tom, who was conversing with Ida, did not notice her entrance until aroused by Harry's voice saying:

"Mr. Meredith let me introduce you to my cousin, Miss Violet Renshaw."

And, turning quickly, he was surprised at the sight of the tiny creature, so unlike her elder sister. There was nothing magnificent, and little that could be termed strictly beautiful, in the almost childish figure, but there was something indescribably winning in the clear, gray eyes, and the rich, chestnut curls that clustered about the broad, low brow.

Tom had little time for observation, however, as Ida and Adele claimed his attention, while Harry monopolized Violet in a frank, brotherly way, quite unlike his more formal and ceremonious manner with the elder sisters.

"Well, what do you think of my two cousins?" was Harry's natural question when he and Tom were once more in the street.

"I can only express my admiration by saying that I wish it were possible to divide myself into three separate and distinct individuals, that I might offer each of the fair enslavers a hand and a heart," replied Tom with much solemnity.

"What, without waiting to discover whether their dish-towels are in proper order?" retorted his friend.

Tom laughed.

"I have a presentiment that I shall forget my revered grandmother's advice until too late, when the important event of meeting my fate shall arrive."

"And then remember it for the rest of your life, I suppose," observed Harry; "on the principle of 'marrying in haste and repenting at leisure.' Well, I hope my fair cousins will not be the cause of such a catastrophe; but I must leave you here, as I have a patient in the house." And he hastily ran up the steps.

Left to himself, Tom sauntered slowly on, thinking of the young ladies whom he had just seen. It must be confessed that little Violet occupied but a very small portion of his thoughts—which were filled with Ida and Adele.

"But I doubt if either of them ever saw a dish-towel," was his concluding reflection, as he reached his boarding house.

Weeks passed on. Tom was devoted

in his attentions to the Misses Renshaw. Rumor assigned him first to Ida, then to Adele, and waited with impatience for the time when the engagement should be publicly announced.

"Yes, certainly; why not?" asked Tom.

"Oh, I don't know—only I thought—you never did anything," stammered out Adele. Then endeavouring to seem at ease she said: "Yes, if you will help take the teakettle into the kitchen and set it on the stove."

Tom seized the kettle, and throwing open the door leading to the kitchen, was crossing the room towards the stove, when his progress was arrested by the sudden appearance of Ida from the store-room. If Adele looked slovenly and dishevelled, what shall we say of Ida? An old dress dirty and torn slippers, run down at the heels and burst out at the sides, no collar or ruffle, very little hair, instead of the magnificent tresses he had often admired, and what there was was hanging uncombed about her face, no wonder that Tom stared in blank astonishment.

A heavy frown took the place of the usual smile, as she curtly bade him good morning. Tom muttered apology for his intrusion, as he deposited his burden on the stove, and turned to retrace his steps just as Violet entered the dining room. She did not see him, but addressing Ida, said:

"Run away now Ida dear, and dress before callers come for you. I have already sent Adele upstairs, and will finish the dishes, now that I am about done with my sweeping."

"You have been long enough about it, I hope," muttered Ida ungraciously, nevertheless availing herself of her sister's offer with much celerity. "Here are the dish-towels, Violet," extending several greasy, blackened articles to the young girl.

Tom stood meditating an escape; not an easy affair, as the sisters stood directly in his path, but at the word dish-towels, he involuntarily stopped and glanced around.

"No wonder my grandmother cautioned me," was his first thought, as the soiled towel met his sight, and he hastily approved the look of disgust which crossed Violet's face as she laid them aside, and opening a drawer she took from it a splendid supply, soft and clean.

Ida and Adele had both disappeared, and Tom ventured to renew his offer of assistance to Violet, who startled a little as she for the first time noticed his presence. But she recovered her composure at once, and quietly answered as she deftly filled the dish-pan with clean hot suds:

"No, thank you, Mr. Meredith. I shall do very well without your assistance. My sisters have not left me much to do. You had better walk into the parlor, and they will soon join you."

"No, indeed," replied Tom. "I will take myself out of the way, with apologies for my untimely intrusion, unless you will really let me be of some service. And believe me," he added, earnestly, with an admiring glance at the neat little figure tripping so lightly about the kitchen, and mentally contrasting her with her two sisters, "you make me happy by allowing me to help you."

"O, very well," said Violet, smiling and blushing a little as she met his gaze, "if you are really in need of employment I'll try and find some for you to do. Suppose you set those dishes on the lower shelf of the closet as I wash them; then I can arrange them after all are done."

Tom obeyed and was rewarded by being allowed to bring a hod of coal from the cellar and doing various little errands, during which time he was noticing the neatness and despatch with which Violet worked, and was especially

observant of the clean, dry dish-towels and the skill with which, when done using them, she washed and scalded and hung them to dry.

He declined the invitation to dinner, given by Mrs. Renshaw when she came in and found him assisting Violet, and made his way directly to Harry's office.

"I have made my choice at last, Harry," he announced, "it is the one who would even snit my grandmother."

"Might I inquire who the fortunate damsel is?" asked Harry, laying down his book: "and how are you sure of your revered grandmother's approval?"

Tom told his morning's experience, concluding with:

"If she will only accept me, I shall be the happiest man alive, and all owing to my dear old grandmother's advice."

Meanwhile, almost every day brought some good and sufficient excuse for him to call at Mrs. Renshaw's pleasant house, a new poem, the latest song, an invitation for a drive, or a plan for an excursion. Of Violet he saw less than of the other sisters, although they were very friendly, and he treated her with the same brotherly frankness as did Harry.

One lovely June morning he presented himself at Mrs. Renshaw's at quite an early hour, intending to invite the three sisters to pass the beautiful day in a long country drive. He noticed that there was some delay in answering his ring, which was not unusually the case with Mrs. Renshaw's well-trained servants; but at length he heard a light footstep, and in another moment the door was opened by Violet. She had a broom in her hand and a dust-cap covered her bright curls; but she bade him good morning with as much cordiality as usual, and inviting him to enter, adding:

"Please walk into the dining room, for I am sweeping the parlors."

Secretly wondering, Tom obeyed. As he turned the handle of the dining room door, there was a sudden rush, a hasty bang at the door, and a hurried exclamation of "O Violet, how could you?" and he found himself in the presence of fair Adele, although for a moment he scarcely recognized her in the slovenly dressed girl, with dishevelled hair, who stood by the breakfast table dabbling the cups and saucers in some greasy water, and wiping them on a towel, which to say the least, was very far from being spotlessly clean. She coloured and with some confusion, said:

"Ah, good morning, Mr. Meredith. So you have come to find us all at work this morning. It happens that we have for our three servants a brother and sisters. They received this morning the news of their mother's dangerous illness, and mamma at once gave them all permission to go home. We supposed we could get a woman who sometimes does extra work for us, but she was engaged for this day, so we are obliged to do the best we can for ourselves. I assure you," she continued with a little laugh, which Tom had often thought pretty and engaging, but which now sounded false and affected, "that I am by no means accustomed to such work, nor have I any desire to become so."

"Cannot you allow me to assist you?" asked Tom, politely. "I was brought up on a farm, and often washed dishes and made myself generally useful in the kitchen."

"You!" exclaimed Adele, in such an astonishing tone that Tom couldn't forbear a laugh.

An exchange tells of a man who had \$65 stolen from him, and who soon after received \$25 with the following note: "I stole your money. Remorse naws at my conscience, and I send you some of it back. When remorse naws again I'll send you some more."