

off, but she blushed as red as a pinoy. Says I, "I think you have done pretty well to catch a husband so soon after coming here, and as likely a man as Charles Marsh, too." She looked at me sort of surprised-like for a minute, and then I s'pose she thought 'twant no use shamming, so she said just as cool, "Oh, Mr. Marsh and I have been engaged more than a year."

"I declare I never heard the beat. If that gal aint the most brazen-faced piece I ever saw."

So poor Miss Arnold was discussed, and some plainly declared they were glad school had closed, for they would not send their children to such a person.

It was the last night of Helen's stay in Tattletown; and the widow Simpkins, having flattened her nose against the window for a distressing period of time, was at last rewarded by seeing Mr. Marsh enter the door of her boarding place and seat himself on the sofa with Helen Arnold. Then he rose and shut the blind toward the street, entirely cutting off the good widow's view of any interesting scene that might be about to transpire. The widow was in agony. All at once she recollected a pressing errand that called her to her neighbor's—Miss Sally's—and in her sympathizing ear she told what she had just seen.

"Sakes alive," exclaimed Miss Sally, "well my parlor window is close to theirs, and we can sit there without any light and hear every word they say."

No sooner said than done, and the two honorable worthies were installed by the window, but greatly to their disappointment, they could only hear disconnected sentences. What they did hear, ran about as follows:

"I do not feel as if I was worthy of such a wife, Nellie."

"I don't think you are either, and I have a great mind to enter protest now."

Then a merry laugh, during which Miss Sally whispered to the widow, "she thinks enough of herself any how."

"I met that old Widow Simpkins in at the dressmaker's the other day, and she said you were a very likely man, and congratulated me on my conquest. I can't imagine how that has got around town."

"The deceitful jade," whispered the widow, wrathfully, "I should like to box her ears."

A good deal more was said on both sides, but nothing very satisfactory to the listeners until Mr. Marsh rose to depart.

"Oh, I forgot," said he, pausing exactly before the window, and taking a small package from his pocket, he opened it, held up an elegant bracelet, which he clasped upon Miss Arnold's arm, saying, "wear that at the wedding, will you, Nellie, for my sake?"

Helen looked at the bracelet a moment, admiring it with all a child's delight, and then said, "I think I will repent and give you the kiss you teased for, after all."—So Charles Marsh bent his handsome head, and left a kiss on as rosy a mouth as ever was kissed before or since.

"Good night, little one, I shall see you again next Thursday. Give my love to your father and mother, and you know who has all the rest."

He was gone at last, down the street, and Helen shut the door, and they had a glimpse of her little feet flying up the stairs to her room.

The widow looked at Miss Sally, and Miss Sally looked at the widow. "Well, I do declare!" said the widow, setting her cap border, "I never see the beat in all my born days," said Miss Sally, smoothing her apron nervously.

With hearts too full for utterance the two worthies separated.

No sooner was Miss Arnold out of town, than Mr. Marsh went to a pleasant family, living in the edge of the village, and engaged rooms for himself and wife—and to the laughing remark of Mrs. Edwards, that she supposed, of course, the wife was to be Miss Arnold, he gave an unhesitating assent.

The furnishing of the rooms occupied the whole of his attention for several days, and many were the plans devised by the Widow Simpkins for getting a peep at them, but she failed in all of them, and Mr. Marsh finally left Tattletown with the keys in his pocket, and not so much as a crack in the blinds to gratify the woman's curiosity.

It seemed as if that summer vacation never would come to an end, but it did close at last, and it was told all over Tattletown one Saturday evening, that Mr. Marsh and his wife were at Mrs. Edwards' house.

Our good minister must have wondered at the unusual crowd that fairly filled the church the next morning, but he must have readily guessed the cause, from the universal rustle and turning of heads when Charles Marsh came slowly up the aisle, escorting a very beautiful lady, in the purest white, and followed

by a little figure in travelling costume, with a face that some of us thought was fairly running over with mischief—oven our teacher, Miss Helen Arnold.

Everybody was puzzled; Miss Sally could not think "what on airth it meant. The bride was the *very picture* of Helen Arnold, only she had longer curls and redder cheeks." The mystery was solved, however, after service, when Helen, with her eyes all in a twinkle, introduced to Widow Simpkins, "my sister, Mrs. Marsh."

School-girls are proverbially quick-witted, and it was soon universally understood in the Academy how Helen had "check-mated the gossips," and how Mr. Marsh had been engaged to her sister Alice, for a long time, and only waiting to establish himself in the Academy before he married—that Helen was her sister's bride-maid, and wore the white crape at the wedding, and a great deal more that May Edward's told us.

"Helen," said Miss Edwards to her one day, did you really tell the Widow Simpkins that you had been engaged to Mr. Marsh a year?"

"No, indeed, she congratulated me on catching a husband so soon, and the fun of the thing happened to strike me just then, so I told her, Mr. Marsh and I had been engaged more than a year. It was true, you see, for Charles and Alice have been engaged ever so long, and I have been engaged a year to—to—well no matter. Don't laugh at me, that's a dear, good Aunty—I didn't mean to tell, only don't you think Widow Simpkins is a meddling old gossip?"

Helen Arnold is our teacher still, but we are to have a new one next term, and I know something that Helen told me one night, about a locket with somebody's picture in it—but I said I wouldn't tell, and I am not a going to.

FRESH AIR.—Give your children plenty of fresh air. Let them snuff it until it sends the rosy current of life dancing joyfully to their temples. Air is so cheap, and so good, and so necessary withal, that every child should have free access to it. Horace Mann, beautifully says:—"To put children on a short allowance of fresh air, is as foolish as it would have been for Noah, during the deluge, to have put his family on a short allowance of water. Since God has poured out an atmosphere of fifty miles deep, it is enough to make a miser weep to see our children stinted in breath."