

silver bell on the table beside him; simultaneously, good old Mrs. Potts' slippers clap up the basement stairs, and her head popping in at the door, betrays her face full of broad smiles as she utters her well learned words of announcement.

"Is't annything ye'd be wantin sur?"

"Yes Potts," Rayne answers, still lying back among his crimson cushions, "Go and ask Fitts if he called for the mail at my office to-day. he knows what his duty is when I am not well enough to be stirring."

"Och, doant fret Mither Rayne sur, shure he did bring the little bundles, ivery wan o' them, an' it's meself jest knows whare to lay the palm o' me hand on 'em this very minit 'idout troublin Mr. Fitts at all, at all," and away she darted again on a clatter down the inlaid passage to the letter box, and gathering up the contents, brought them back to her master's sitting-room. She was eyeing them closely as she laid them down beside him, exclaiming half audibly as she did so "Well now thin: that I may niver die iv it isn't jest the quarest thing in life!"

"What is that, Potts?" Henry Rayne asked good naturedly. "Well, yer honor, began his confiding old servant shyly, "I larned to do many's the nate job in me day, but if gettin' th' inside o' these in, 'ithout tearin' th' outsides don't bang all iver I larnt, my name's not Johanna Potts," and as she spoke she looked curiously at the bundle of letters before her. Potts' good sayings were never lost on her generous master, and this was no exception; he leaned back on his chair and fairly shook with laughter. "Why Potts:" he said at last, "You don't mean to say you never saw *envelopes* before they were sealed, do you?"

"Faith it's not the only thing I've lived to this 'ithout seein'" Potts answered resignedly.

"Well, I must show you Potts," her master said kindly, and there and then he took the trouble to explain to good ignorant Mrs. Potts how "th' insides were got in 'ithout tearin' th' outsides," and greatly satisfied with her new information, she clattered off down stairs, shaking her head all the while, and repeating absently to herself "Well now, there's nothin' can bate 'em, nothin' at all, at all."

As soon as Henry Rayne was alone again, he poked the now smouldering fire into a bright blaze, drew his chair