

course, which we're all liable to, rich and poor alike. But I haven't worried neither, knowing there's no call to fear but what my wages will be all right with an honorable gentleman like yourself."

He makes no effort to restrain her cackle, but passes through the door she has thrown open in silence, and enters the deserted sitting-room. He does not know if he is awake or asleep; he feels as if he were moving in a dream.

Gone! Left him! without the intention of returning! It is impossible; she must mean to come back again: she is playing a foolish trick, in hopes of frightening him into compliance with that which she has so often asked, and he refused. But neither in bed or sitting-room can Eric Keir discover the least indication that Myra's absence is to be a temporary one; nor a written line of threatening or farewell. On the contrary, she has taken all the simplest articles of her attire with her, and left behind, strewn on the floor in proud neglect, the richer things with which he has provided her. Weary, and utterly at a loss to account for this freak on the part of one who has appeared so entirely devoted to himself, Eric returns to the lower room, and summons old Margaret to his side.

"I can find nothing to account for Mrs. Hamilton's departure. What do you mean by having your suspicions?" he inquires in a determined voice.

"Well, sir—deary me! don't take offence at what I say; but truth is truth, and your lady didn't leave this house alone, as my own eyes is witness to."

His eye flashes, and as he puts the next question he shades it with his hand.

"Who did she leave it with, then? Speak out, woman, and don't keep me waiting here for ever!"

"O lor, sir! don't take on so, there's a dear gentleman. I can't rightly tell you, sir, never having seen the young man before; but he was hanging about here the evening you left, and talking with your lady in the field, and he fetched away her box with his own hands, yesterday morning, as I watched 'im from the kitchen window. A country-looking young man he was, but not ill-favored; and as they walked off together I see him kiss the mistress's cheek, that I did, if my tongue was to be cut out, for saying so, the very next minute."

"There—there! that will do; go to your work, and hold your tongue, if such a thing is possible to you. You will remain on here, and when I have decided what is to be done with these things, I will let you know."

And so saying, Eric Keir strides from the house again, mounts his horse, and retakes his way to Oxford.

"A young man, country-looking but not ill-favored; some one of the friends from whom he has alienated her, perhaps. Certainly a person of her own class, and to whom she returns in preference to himself."

"How could he have ever been such a fool as to suppose that a woman taken from her station in life, accustomed to, and probably flattered by, the attentions of clothoppers and tradesmen, could appreciate the niceties of such a sacred thing as honor, or the affection of an elevated and intellectual mind?"

So he says, in his first frenzy of wrath and jealousy and shame, but so does he not entirely believe. The old woman's gossip has left a miserable doubt to rankle in his heart; but has not accomplished the death of his trust in the girl who has left him, and whom, though he has ceased to love, he feels bound to search after and succor and protect. He makes all the investigations that are possible without betraying his secret to the world; but private enquiries and carefully-worded newspaper advertisements prove alike futile, and from the day on which she fled from Fretterley the fate of Myra to Eric Keir is wrapt in dark uncertainty.

(To be continued.)

RALPH'S MISTAKE.

"There is my cousin Edwina" said my friend, Ralph Hay. "Edwina! Edwina!"

She turned her face as he called to her, and looked at us.

I had never seen anyone like her before, nor had I ever heard her name.

Both were unique; both, I thought, beautiful.

Whether anyone is really so, it is often hard to determine.

That every eye makes its own beauty is a truth as well as a proverb.

She suited me, that small, dark, crimson-lipped creature, as graceful as a gazelle, and almost as shy.

I saw, in the glance she gave us, that she hesitated between advancing and running away when she heard herself called.

The conventionalities got the better of her bashfulness, and she turned and came towards us.

"Miss Earle," said Ralph Hay, "Mr. Smith. John, this is Cousin Edwina."

She bowed; so did I; and so my love came into my life.

It was the supreme moment of my existence, though I was not conscious of it then.

I knew that I had met a girl I liked; that the day was very bright, and the pleasant country place pleasanter than it had ever seemed before.

I can see it now—the long, green lane; the cottage roof beyond; the white spire in the distance; over all a sweet, pink-tinted, sunset sky, and near by the tiny tinkle of the running

stream; the girl, in her white dress, with a cluster of scarlet flowers in her small hand walking between us.

I had to come to S—— on a visit. Such holiday as my business permitted me I should spend there, and it was on my way to my friend's house that I met Edwina.

She was his cousin, as he had said, and she helped to care for the children, of whom there were a half-dozen.

She could churn, and milk, and bake. She was bright and quick when not under the cloud of shyness.

She was not a brilliant woman; she was not a society belle.

Most men would have rated her only "a nice little thing," I presume.

Whatever she was, she crept into my heart somehow, and stayed there.

One day I knew that I loved her, and that if she did not love me, I should be very unhappy. We had gone out upon the river for water lilies.

There was a little quiet nook, quite over-arched by tree branches, where they grew in profusion.

I rowed the boat. She drew the great, white floating beauties towards her by their long stems, and, breaking them off, laid them in the basket she had brought.

There was no other boat on the river; there was no one on the shore.

A little way farther on lay the shadow of a covered bridge, and farther still the ruins of a mill; but no one crossed the bridge, and the mill was deserted.

We never had been so entirely alone before. The long lily-stems had entangled my oars. I drew them out and laid them in the boat.

We only drifted slowly now. Everything was very still.

A sense of peace such as I had never felt before settled down upon me.

Her hand, so white, and small, and fine rested on the boat's edge.

To save my life I could not have resisted the impulse I had to touch it.

One moment I laid my palm upon it—the next I held it fast and close.

She did not take it away.

Her shy eyes saw the water, but the hand remained in mine.

And so we sat quite silent until the sun set. Then I kissed her.

We rowed back to our starting point in the twilight.

The children were watching for us, and I had no chance to speak to her alone that night, but I felt that she was mine.

I went up to my room a happy man.

I lost myself in slumber, only to dream of Edwina.

And I remember that in my fancy we were walking hand in hand in some pleasant place where flowers grew, and birds sang, and waters rippled, when a rough hand shook me by the shoulder, and a voice at my ear cried—

"John! I say, old fellow, wake up. Here's a telegram. Steady, now. I'm afraid it's bad news."

At these words I arose from my bed with a sudden chill of terror upon me, snatched the paper from my friend's hand and read the brief contents.

They brought bad news indeed.

My beloved father lay at death's door, and I was bidden to hasten if I would see him alive.

I looked at my friend with eyes from which I could not banish the sudden flood of tears.

"Don't take it too hard, John," he said.

"While there's life there's hope. I'll harness the horse, and we'll get to the station in time for the one o'clock train."

I could not forget as I drove away that a light shone in the window of Edwina's room.

I think the messenger had awakened her, and that, unseen by me, she watched my departure.

My father died before I reached home, and our house was a house of mourning for many days.

At last, however, I became calm enough to write to Edwina.

Our understood engagement was not enough. I offered myself to her in plain and earnest terms.

I had no doubt as to the answer.

Her kiss had given me assurance of her love.

I dispatched the letter, and anxiously waited for a reply.

It came soon, but not in the regular way.

One morning, my friend, Ralph Hay, tossed me a little note.

"From a lady," he said, and nodded and went away.

I put the note upon the desk before me, and looked at it tenderly.

"John Smith, Esq.," was prettily flourished.

"It looks like a love letter," I said, and cut it daintily open, and drew out the folded paper.

It began thus—

"MR. SMITH,—Dear sir, I have but just received your proposal. Doubtless, I ought to be flattered at being chosen where so many have, of course, offered themselves; but, really, the position you proffer has no charms for me. I am useful here, and happy in my duties, and I hasten to decline, with many thanks. I trust we shall be just as friendly, notwithstanding, and that next time you come to——, you will bring your wife to see me.

"Very truly,

"EDWINA EARLE"

I read that letter three times before I could believe in it.

It was the strangest answer that man ever received to a passionate declaration of love.

I had told her that she was the only woman I had ever loved or ever should love.

She had bidden me "bring my wife to see her" next time I came to——.

I was at once grieved and angry, astonished and dismayed.

My manner was altered.

I did not feel like myself.

It was as though some other soul were in my body.

After a while, that longing for change of scene which some temperaments always experience after great trouble, possessed me, and an opportunity soon offered itself.

The firm with which I was connected needed a business man in Paris.

I applied for the position, and obtained it.

Hopeless love is a thing no one respects, or even pities.

Why, then, should I tell of the long weary years through which I lived, with that heavy burden at my heart?

I could not forget her.

I knew that all my life I must crush this silent sorrow in my breast, and hide it as I might, that in old age I must sit solitary beside my hearth, because no other woman could fill the place I had destined for Edwina.

How many years were they?

Enough to cure most men of any passion.

I knew it, and I wondered at my own constancy.

One day—I knew it was my birthday, and that I was thirty years old, I said to myself—

"Man, you are a fool; forget the fleeting joy of your youth; take your life in your hands. Marry. Have a home, a wife, children, like other men. Of boyhood's folly are born such raptures as those you feel for Edwina; they go, and revisit the heart no more.

"The toys of childhood please you no more; its sweets cloy upon your taste. No more can you be a boy than a child. Cast off this old delusion, tramp! it under foot. It has worked you evil enough already."

I arose and looked at myself in the glass, and saw a big fellow with a long light brown beard.

That was no pensive youth to die of love and longing.

"I will go to Monsieur Durand's and propose for the hand of Mademoiselle Rosalie, his daughter," I said.

"She is a good young woman, and a pretty one. There will be no love-making required, and I shall do my duty as a husband. A bachelor old age is hideous."

I went forth.

It was a fine day, and the streets were full of people.

I had not felt so happy for years.

"Mongshure," said some one at my side—

"Mongshure, silverplate—no, hang it! seal voo play—oh, dear! Roo the what's his name—polly voo English?"

It is an Englishman trying to ask his way in French.

As I faced him, I knew Ralph Hay, whom I had not seen or heard of for at least eight years.

He was stout, but I had no doubt of his identity.

"Ralph!" I cried, "don't you know me?"

"No; it ain't!" he cried. "Well, but it is, though—John Smith!"

We shook hands.

"I thought you were a foreigner, and I was trying to talk your lingo," said Ralph.

"You are a pretty fellow, aren't you?"

Voices alter very little.

As he spoke, the past came back to me, and I heard him call "Edwina," and saw her turn and come towards us.

"Married?" asked Ralph.

"No. How is Mrs. Hay?"

"Splendid," said Ralph, "blooming, young as her daughter, and Gussie is seventeen now. I say, look here, I suppose we can talk anywhere about here without being understood?"

"In English, yes," I said.

He thrust his arm into mine.

"John Smith," said he, "I've something on my mind. I always was a bungling fellow, and—well, I don't know how to get at it. I've made money, you know, and I can afford to treat wifey and Gussie to a trip—if it is a treat—matter of taste, that; but I came to Paris partly to hunt you up.

"I—I felt I ought to. I say, you know the day you went away from our house—no, I mean the day I came to your place and brought you a letter from Edwina."

"I do," I said.

"Was there anything wrong about that letter?" he asked.

"A little," I said.

"Tell me what?" he whispered.

"She refused me," I said. "I had offered myself to Edwina Earle."

"Look here," said Ralph, "you know your name is John Smith?"

"Aye," said I.

"So's his," said Ralph.

"Who's?"

"The school trustee's," said Ralph. "You see he'd written to her to offer her the position of governess in a school, and that morning she gave me two letters, one to post, 't'other to take,

"I think, maybe, I posted the wrong one and took 't'other. I haven't told them at home about it.

"You see, the trustee's wife tore his up. But you didn't come back, you know, and Edwina told all to wife, and she hasn't married; and, you see, I don't think Edwina did refuse you."

I made him no answer.

"Come to the hotel with me. She's there, with wife and Gussie."

• • • • •

"Edwina, come closer to me. Have we forgotten good old Ralph? Aye, long ago. Many years lay between us, but our love lived through them all, and we shall never part again until death sunders us, my own Edwina."

HOUSEHOLD RECEIPTS.

TO MAKE ANCHOVY SAUCE.—This is made by adding a spoonful of Harvey sauce and two of essence of anchovy, with a little cayenne, to half a pint of melted butter; shrimps, or blanched oysters, may be served in it.

KITCHENER'S RELISH.—Ground black pepper and salt, of each, two ounces; ground allspice, scraped horseradish, and minced eschalots, of each, one ounce; walnut pickle, or mushrooms catsup, one quart; infuse for fourteen days, and strain.

EGG BALLS.—Boil five fresh eggs quite hard, and lay them in cold water to get cold. Take the yolks out, and pound them smoothly with the beaten yolk of one fresh egg; put a little cayenne and salt, roll the mixture into very small balls, and boil them for two minutes. Half a teaspoonful of flour can be worked up with the eggs.

SAUR KRAUT.—Procure some clean white cabbages, cut them into small pieces, and stratify them in a cask long with salt and a few juniper berries and caraway seeds, observing to pack them down as hard as possible with a wooden rammer, and to cover them with a lid pressed down by a heavy weight. The cask must be placed in a cold situation as soon as a sour smell is perceived.

A GOOD GRAVY.—Chop fine some lean meat, an onion, some slices of carrot and turnip, and a little thyme and parsley; put these, with half an ounce of butter, into a saucepan, and keep them stirred until they are slightly browned; browned; add a little spice, and water in the proportion of a pint to one pound of meat. Clear the gravy from scum, let it boil half an hour, then strain it for use.

SAUCE PIQUANTE.—Put a bit of butter, with two sliced onions, into a stew-pan, with a carrot, a parsnip, a little thyme, laurel, basil, two cloves, two shallots, a clove of garlic, and some parsley; turn the whole over the fire until it be well colored; then shake in some flour, and moisten it with some broth, and a spoonful of vinegar. Let it boil over a slow fire; skim, and strain it through a sieve. Season it with salt and serve it with any dish required to be heightened.

MUFFINS.—Flour, one quart; warm milk and water, one pint and a half; yeast, a quarter of a pint; salt, two ounces; mix for fifteen minutes; then further add, flour, a quarter of a peck, make a dough, let it rise one hour, roll it up, pull it into pieces, make them into balls, put them into a warm place, and when the whole dough is made into balls, shape them into muffins, and bake them on tins; turn them when half done, dip them into warm milk, and bake into a pale brown.

COMPOTE OF REUBARB.—Take and cut a pound of the stalks, after they are pared, into short lengths, have ready a quarter of a pint of water boiled for ten minutes with six ounces of sugar; put your fruit in, and let it simmer for ten to fifteen minutes. This served with boiled rice is much more wholesome for children than puddings. If for sick people to be eaten alone, the compote should be made with the very best lump sugar; and the same if for dessert. But common sugar for children's use will do.

SPICED BACON.—This may be prepared, of excellent quality, by pursuing the following method. Select a side or middle of delicate pork, and take out all the bones. Put it into a pan of water for ten or twelve hours to extract the blood, changing the water as often as it becomes much colored. Then put the meat into a pickle made as follows:—Water, one gallon; common salt, one pound; sal prunelle, quarter of a pound; coarse sugar, one pound. Let the meat remain in this pickle for at least a fortnight; then take it out, wipe it well, and shred sage and bay leaves (the stalks having been carefully taken out) very small. When the latter are well mixed, add white pepper, and strew these well over the inside part of the meat. Roll it very tightly up, and tie a string round it three inches apart, knotting the string at every round, so that when fillets are cut off for cooking, the remainder of the collar may remain confined. Smoke it well for twelve or fourteen days.

TO MAKE WALNUT CATSUP.—To one peck of walnut huds, from ripe walnuts in September, add as much salt and water, made strong enough to bear an egg, as will cover them. Let them lay in ten days, strain them, let them lay thin on baskets three or four days in the sun, when they will turn black, which will take much of the bitter from them, and put them in a pan. Boil two gallons of spring water, and one pound and a quarter bay salt; pour it on them hot, let them stand ten days, then strain off the liquor, add a quarter of a pound long-pepper, quarter of a pound black pepper, quarter ounce of mace, half a pound brown mustard seed, quarter of a pound of shallots cut small. Bruise the spices and mustard seed, and add as much burnt onions as will make it a good dark color, a quarter of pound of good anchovies, half a pint of vinegar, and one pint of Indian soy. Boil them an hour, turn them altogether into a jar, let them lay a month with the bung out, and you may then strain and use it—but the longer it lays on the spices the better.