



YOU will find as you look back upon your life, that the moments that stand out, the moments when you have really lived, are the moments when you have done things in a spirit of love.

—Henry Drummond.

An Unconventional Visit

By Julia Hemstead Bull

WHEN I got Mrs. Hedding's letter inviting us to spend a week at her new home in Prattburg, I was very much pleased and so was Early. We are both extremely fond of Clara Hedding. Three years ago when she was Clara James, we spent the winter that we were eighteen together at Miss Neaf's School for young Ladies. And Clara's invitation came so opportunely, for Early's vacation had just commenced, and I myself was so tired of the routine of struggling with stupid pupils that I was almost ready to go to an asylum and ask to be locked up! So I wrote to Clara when to expect us. The morning before we were to start the postman came and I ran down to get the mail. There was a letter for me, and when I opened it I nearly fainted. This is what it said:

MY DEAREST EDITH:
I am overwhelmed with desolation at the thought that I shall not see you quite as soon as I expected. Eugene's father fell this morning and broke his leg, and they telegraphed for us to come immediately. Of course we feel that we must go. Now will you forgive me if I make a somewhat unconventional proposition? Won't you and Early please come anyway? You will have no trouble in finding the place, 314 Mellison, and the key will be under the north-east corner of the door-mat. Go right in and take possession. There are lots of things in the pantry and refrigerator, for you see I am leaving unexpended. And you can run out to market for any other little things you may need. I suggest this early because I think possibly you may enjoy the very novelty of the situation, and partly because I don't want to miss unnecessarily one minute of your visit. I want you there when I come, and I don't know just when that will be, but I hope that I can leave in two or three days. I've got to start for the train in fifteen minutes, and I am writing in such a hurry that I am afraid that my letter is incoherent.
Yours lovingly,
CLARA.

I hurried upstairs and into the bedroom where Early was combing her hair.

"Read that," I cried, "and then tell me that Fate hasn't got it in for the Clares girls!"

Early dropped the comb and her lovely hair tumbled in a cloud all over her pretty, white shoulders. For fully a minute after she had read it, she did not say a word, and I watched her in suspense.

"Early," I cried, "what shall we do?"

"Well, I suppose we could give up our visit," she said.

Actually, I hadn't realized until that minute how fantastically I was looking forward to that visit. When she said that I turned cold all over.

"Why, Early, Clare!" I exclaimed. "How can you suggest such a thing?"

Early burst into a little high laugh, and stooped to pick up the comb. Her hair fell down the wrong way, and she parted a place for her eyes to shine through, as she said buoyantly: "I think we'll start to-morrow for Prattburg, as we had intended; and we'll take possession of 314 Mellison, and go to housekeeping."

I grabbed Early around the neck and hugged her; I couldn't help it. "I feel," said I, "that I am going to enjoy this more than anything that ever happened."

I think I never saw it rain harder than it did the next day, and as it was still pouring down wickedly when we reached Prattburg, we decided that it would be a matter of simple economy to take a cab. We picked out a cabman who looked good-natured and as we climbed in we told him to take us to 314 Mellison. He acted rather stupid, I thought, for he leaned down and kept repeating, "Mellison Street? 314 Mellison Street?"

"Can't you understand?" I said. "Of course it's a street. 314 Mellison."

Then he nodded and started his horse.

It seemed as though we rode for miles, up and down, over a bridge, and around corners until I grew quite dizzy. At last we stopped in front of a very well-looking establishment, and we got out and paid him.

It wasn't storming quite so hard, fortunately, but there was enough rain to hurry us up the walk and on to the porch without a very close examination of our surroundings. There was the door-mat, all right.

"I haven't the faintest idea which is northeast," I said. "But if we look in all the corners, we'll surely find the key."

We looked but we did not find it.

"Probably it has got pushed under the middle of the Early," said I.

"Of course that's it," said I.

We picked up the rug and turned it over, but there was no key. Then we stood up and looked at each other; and if my expression was anything like hers I must have been a sight.

"The trouble is," I said, "that Clara left in such a flutter that she forgot to put the key where she said she was going to. It's around here somewhere; we'll see if we can't find it."

"I feel like a porch climber already," said my sister. "And I'm sure I saw someone looking at us with suspicion from that up-stairs window next door."

But it was looking for the key, and my hair was beginning to feel creepy

at the roots, when my eye fell upon a little jut on the door-casing, about six feet up. I climbed on the porch chair, and reached my hand up to it, and there was the key!

"I cannot describe what an immense relief I felt," said I.

"What a charming house!" cried Early delightedly. And indeed it was. The furnishings were exquisite, so quaint and tasteful and expensive too; any one could see that. I was surprised, because I knew that Eugene Hedding worked on a moderate salary.

"Where's the refrigerator?" said I. "I want to see what we are going to have for supper."

Everything looked clean and trim, and put away the pantry shelves were full of kitchen dishes and tinware, but we did not see anything to eat.

Early gave me a queer look, but she didn't say anything. There wasn't thing in the pantry in the line of eatables, except a half-loaf of dry bread and a bottle of olives.

"Where's the refrigerator?" said I. "Let's look there."

Well there was a dish of butter in it and nothing else.

"I couldn't keep still any longer."

"What ever possessed Clara Hedding to tell us that she had the house full of things to eat?" I said indignantly. "A half-loaf of dry bread doesn't constitute my idea of lavish plenty in the culinary line, by any means."



"What a Charming House!"

"Well," said Early, "now that we have found that we are to have no supper, let us go up-stairs and see where we are to sleep."

The up-stairs bore out the promise of the lower floor; it was charmingly dainty and luxurious. The room at the head of the stairs was evidently a guest chamber, done exquisitely in blue and gold.

"Do you suppose Clara meant this room for us?" I asked wistfully.

"I don't know," she said; "let's investigate a little before we take possession anyway."

She gingerly pushed open another door. I stood on tiptoe, my chin upon her shoulder, and peered in with interest. Oh what a dream of a bathroom!

We both gave a gurgle of delight as we beheld it. I always did want a big bathroom, with a separate foot-bath in it, and here it was!

"My hair needs shampooing," said Early virtuously, "and I am going to attend to it this very night."

We found a little room at the end of the hall that we decided to take, pending the arrival of our hostess. It was pretty, but not elaborate, and evidently empty. We carried our suit cases in and unpacked them; then we decided that we would go out and hunt for something to eat. We found

a clean little market two blocks down the street, and we laid in a supply of eggs, bread and celery and some bacon. Then we scurried back and struggled for a while with the garage. It worked all right after two or three tries, and I pushed up quite a respectable supper.

"I wish," said Early, as we put away the dishes, "that we did not feel so poorly and so culpable. I feel as if I ought to be arrested, and I don't quite know what for. Still, if I were to hazard a guess, I should say for housebreaking."

"Silly!" I replied.

Nevertheless, I was conscious of something of the same feeling myself. We went in to the library, which looked very jolly and inviting, all lit up, tried the piano, which was a lovely Steinway, and hunted out some good books. But very soon Early went upstairs to shampoo her hair. I went up with her to help her rub in the eggs; then I left her to finish the ceremony at her leisure, and went down to the library to read.

"Did I leave the lights all turned on like that, when I went upstairs?" I thought, as I walked quietly through the hall. "How careless of me and how extravagant!"

Then I stopped, and my heart came up and bobbed against my palate, for standing by the library table was a man!

"A burglar!" was my first thought; "but would he leave all the lights turned on like that?" I didn't know. But I had no time to formulate a plan of defence, or to effect my escape, for he saw me. He was standing by the table, a magazine in his hand, but he laid it down quickly and stepped forward.

"Good evening," he said; and it was suddenly borne in upon me that he was the man I had pressed, and remarkably good-looking.

"Good evening," I replied. I was so frightened that I was quite self-possessed, and it seems strange to me, come to think about it.

He smiled at me deferentially, but he looked unmistakably surprised. He took another step forward, and said, hesitatingly, "Were you expecting to see my sister?"

If I was frightened before, then I was simply paralyzed. His sister! Clara Hedding had just one brother, and he was insane—had been in an asylum for years! I saw it all in a flash. He had escaped, and coming here in her absence, had let himself in. Heaven only knows how, but a lunatic cunning enough to break out of one building, when carefully guarded, would certainly have no difficulty in breaking into another, and an empty one. It was a hideous situation, but it had to be faced.

"I had hoped to see her," I said, and he bowed, and then he said, "and I presume she will soon be here."

(Continued next week.)

The Covered Broom

By Ruth Fel.

One of the most useful articles the housewife can have as an assistance to quick work in cleaning in time of need, is one of the woven broom covers intended for use in dusting walls and ceilings.

The woven knitted cover was first bought for this purpose, but one morning, when time was flying, and the broom was still covered with the woven wool bag, the housewife used it for sweeping up the linoleum in the kitchen. Not only did it take up the dirt and dust, but it made an after-mopping unnecessary, but it did this without raising a bit of dust, and from that day a bare broom or brush has never been used on this particular floor covering; think of sweeping a kitchen floor without raising a particle of dust! This is the ideal of kitchen sweepers. Moreover, the linoleum is never scratched,