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AN OLD WOMAN'S ROMANCE.

BY T. D. F.

"PLEASE, cousin Lizzie, go and see Aunt Richie to-day," said a curly-pated little fellow, looking beseechingly up in my face, as I, seated at my Louis Quatorze table, was driving on my gold-nibbed pen with rail-road speed.

The words fell almost unheeded, striking merely the outer portals of the ear, but not entering into the sanctum of the mind, so busy were my thoughts with the loved and the distant. Again the soft voice said, "Cousin Lizzie! Cousin Lizzie!" and a little dimpled hand, brown and sunburnt, with not the cleanest nails in the world, but yet, fat and innocent like, was laid upon my arm, and the soft hazel eyes looked so completely under my own half-closed lids, that I was obliged to raise them, and, looking into the earnest orbs, I saw they were asking a favor.

"Well dear, what do you say?" I asked, passing my fingers through the rings of sunny-hued hair, which lay damp, and clinging round the youthful brow.

"I want to go to Aunt Richie's; will you go with me, Cousin Lizzie? Oh, do! do go!"

"Go to Aunt Richie's, what for, dear?" said I, as the image of poor old Aunt Richie rose before me in striking contrast to the lovely child.

"I love to see Aunt Richie, she talks so funny, and she makes you laugh too, Cousin Lizzie, and we are always happier for going to Aunt Richie's, and she looks so pleased too. Will you go?"

"Yes! perhaps this afternoon," replied I.

"Oh, no! go now, now Cousin Lizzie; I will get

your shawl and bonnet," and the earnest, persevering child, ran to the closet and took out the well worn shawl and simple bonnet. I had resumed my writing, but in a moment he had mounted the little ottoman, his own peculiar seat, and climbing up before I was aware of what he was doing, the bonnet was tossed away upon my wondering pate, the shawl thrown over my shoulders, and the point of the pin with which the rogue was attempting to fasten it, entered the clavicle, forcing me to throw aside my pen, and give myself up to his wishes. He then caught up his own little straw hat, threw it carelessly on his head, and taking up his miniature cane, he seized me by the hand and led me out.

It was a winding way to Aunt Richie's, through narrow close streets, past bakers' shops and breweries, through rows of Irish houses, whose inmates, at least the juvenile portions, were all paraded out in front, playing with mud puddings or getting up mimic battles. They paused and looked up as we passed along; some of the little ones not yet quite corrupted, seemed to be pleased to see "the pretty boy," but the larger ones gave a fierce look of defiance, and assumed such a pugnacious air, that little Frank almost involuntarily grasped both my hand and his cane tighter. They were angry at seeing something they were forced to acknowledge at least cleaner and better than themselves.

It was not long ere we stood before a neat straw coloured house, with bright green blinds,