

Taking a Photograph.

(J. Scott James, in 'Friendly Greetings.')

'Oh, uncle, uncle!' cried my little niece, running up to me; 'I am so glad you're come.'

'That's good hearing,' said I.

'Do you know,' she said, sinking her voice, 'I've got the most beautiful secret in the world. You cannot tell how nice it is.'

'No, I cannot,' I answered, looking very puzzled. 'What's it about?'

'Ah! then it wouldn't be a secret if I

I had told my secret.' You see, she was only six years old, and had not kept many secrets from me.

'What is it about?' I asked.

She laughed, reassured again. 'Oh, you won't catch me that way,' she said, 'so don't think it.'

'Then I'll go up to your mother,' I replied, and ran upstairs.

Evidently her secret was on her mind, for by various slips she made I learned all about it before I went, though she imagined she had kept it religiously.

sently he snapped his finger, but, uncle, I almost felt I wanted to laugh before. Is it good?' she added, meaning the photograph.

'Very good!' I answered, 'and there's just the little ghost of a smile upon it now that makes it very like you.'

'Do you like to have photographs of all your friends?' she asked.

'I do,' I replied.

'Have you got them?'

'No,' I answered. 'Some of the very dearest I haven't got, and never will have.'

'What a pity!'

'It is,' I said, 'because I cannot show them to others, but their faces are printed on my heart, and when I think of them, their beautiful character comes up before me, so that I love them.'

'Yes,' she answered, 'that's how I think of mamma. I could not forget her, you know.'

The little maiden was silent for a moment or two, and raising her thoughtful face, said, 'Is not that the way God remembers us? He has our character like a photograph on his heart, and loves us?'

'Quite true,' I replied, 'and how careful we should be to have it beautiful if it is to be printed on God's heart.'

'I am, dear uncle,' she answered, kissing me, 'for I love him very much.'

Dear Nellie! I was very glad to have your photograph, for it was not long we kept your sweet form in our midst! The Good Shepherd loved her too well to leave her long here.

But I have that photograph she gave me among my chiefest treasures, and her loving memory printed in my heart.

The O.P.S.C.E.

(By Isabelle Ecclestone Mackay, in 'Endeavor Herald.')

'I am myself of the opinion,' said Miss Mitchell decidedly, 'that we had better wait awhile.'

'Until we see,' suggested Miss Mattie.

'How it turns out,' finished Miss Jessie. 'It is always best not to be too precipitate, and yet it seems to be a good thing.'

'A good thing—push it along,' shouted a voice through the open window.

'That's Tom,' cried the three old ladies together, broad smiles of happy anticipation spreading over their pleasant faces. Indeed there could be but small doubt as to who it was, for at Vine Cottage one individual only was privileged to shout in windows, use slang, and bang doors, and that was Tom. Happy is the Tom who is at once the pet and the torment of three maiden aunts! He has a position unique in the boy kingdom, and his lines have fallen in pleasant places. Especially if the said aunts have a modest competence and a will to use it liberally for all good purposes—the happiness and welfare of Tom included.

The three Miss Mitchells had lived in the pretty vine-covered cottage on the outskirts of the little village of New Salem for thirty years. They had come to the town three fresh and comely girls (indeed, many thought Miss Jessie a beauty), and though thirty long years had slipped away they were the three Miss Mitchells still.

Why had they never married? Well, there were different theories to account for it. Mrs. Jones said it was a railway accident—all three intendeds killed; Miss Watkins said it was because they had never been asked (Miss Watkins had not had that pleasure herself), but for my part, I think, though I feel it to be but a poor reason and sufficient for no one but themselves, that it was simply because they did not want to.



'YOU MUSTN'T LAUGH TILL I SNAP MY FINGER.'

were to tell you,' she said with a laugh. 'But it's to-morrow. Oh, I wish it were here! Are photographers nice men?'

'Some of them are,' I answered.

'Because it would be dreadful to be taken by a disagreeable man, wouldn't it?'

'When I take you to a photographer I will bear that in mind,' I answered, not mentioning the revelation she had made of her secret.

She looked up in my face in some alarm, but was satisfied with its undiscerning expression.

'Do you know,' she said. 'I almost thought

Next time I went she came up to me. 'Now, uncle! now for the secret!'

'Oh!' I cried, looking greatly delighted.

'There it is,' she said, putting a photograph into my hand.

'Oh, that is first-rate!' I said. 'So that is the secret.'

'And, uncle, he was such a funny man. And when he was going to take us, there he stood with his hair parted in the middle, and his spectacles on, and he laughed so much, but he said, "You mustn't laugh till I snap my finger. So look at my finger, and when I snap it you must laugh." So pre-