

"To that we should make no serious objection. To-morrow morning I shall be prepared to give you an answer."

Agnes retired with a heart full of hope, yet trembling lest something should prevent the engagement she was so eager to make. She said nothing to her aunt, who, bent on taking boarders, went out on the following morning to look for a house suited for that purpose. As soon as she was gone, Agnes went with a trembling heart to hear the decision that was to be made concerning her application. It was favourable.

On going home, she found that her aunt had not yet returned, nor did she come back for two hours; then she was so worn down with fatigue, that she had to go to bed. A cup of tea revived her; but her head ached so badly, that she did not get up until late in the afternoon, when she was better.

"I have found a house, Aggie, that will just suit," said she, as soon as she felt able to allude to the subject. "The owner is to give me an answer about it to-morrow."

"If looking for a house has made you sick enough to go to bed, aunt," returned Agnes, "how can you expect to bear the fatigue of keeping boarders in the house after you shall have taken it? You must not think of it. In two good rooms, at a light rent, we can live very comfortably, and at an expense much lighter than we have at present to bear."

"Yes, Agnes, comfortably enough, if we had the ability to meet that expense; but we have not. You know that there is no income."

"There has been none, but—"

"But what, dear?" Mrs. Wellford saw that there was something more than usual in the mind of Agnes.

"Forgive me, dear aunt," said the affectionate girl, throwing her arms around the neck of her relative; but I cannot see you, at your time of life, and in ill health, compelled to toil as you propose. I have, therefore, applied for and secured a situation in a private family, as a teacher of music and languages to the young ladies, for which I am to receive a salary of eighty pounds a year."

While Mrs. Wellford was looking for a house, and after she had found one, the fatigue and pain she suffered led her more fully to realize than she had done before, the great labour, with a doubtful result, that she was about taking upon herself. She was, therefore, just in the state of mind to receive the unexpected communication made by Agnes.

"You are a good girl," she merely replied, kissing her as she spoke.

"And you do not object?" eagerly asked the niece.

"How can I?" responded Mrs. Wellford, leaving her head down upon the shoulder of Agnes. In a few moments she said, as she looked up, with tears glistening on her eyelashes—"May Heaven reward you!" And turning away, she left Agnes to her own happy thoughts.

Six months from this time, as Mrs. Lionel sat alone in her room, gloomy and sad, the woman with whom she was living, and upon whom she still remained a heavy burden, came in where she was, and said—"Did you know that your niece, Agnes Wellford, was married yesterday to a son of one of the richest men in town?"

"No; it can't be!" quickly replied Mrs. Lionel. "Mr. Wellford died not worth a shilling, and his widow has been as poor as poverty ever since."

"No, not quite that," said the woman. "Agnes has supported her comfortably by teaching music. I heard the whole story this morning. Mrs. Wellford wanted to keep boarders, but Agnes wouldn't hear of it, and, against her aunt's wishes, went out and applied for a situation as teacher to three young ladies in a wealthy family, for which she was to receive a salary of eighty pounds a year. She had not taught long before the brother of the young ladies fell in love with her, to which no very strong objection was made by his friends; and now they are married."

"And what of Mrs. Wellford?" was eagerly inquired.

"They go to house-keeping forthwith, and Mrs. Wellford is to live with them."

Mrs. Lionel clasped her hands together, and sinking back in her chair, murmured—"Oh, what an error I committed!"

"How?" inquired the woman. But Mrs. Lionel did not answer the question.

She had her reward, and Mrs. Wellford had hers.

Ralph the Peacemaker.

The evening meal is finished, and my husband and I sit down before the fire to spend the most enjoyable part of the day. He, after the manner of his kind, unfolds the newspaper and buries his face behind it. My fingers are soon busy with bright-colored fancy work. Edward affects to despise this occupation, though he never fails to remind me when a new pair of slippers are wanted. For half an hour nothing is heard but the click of the needle and rustle of the newspaper. Ralph, a venerable retriever, stretched upon the hearth-rug, becoming weary of the monotony, rises and places his large intelligent head upon my lap, looking up with kind, expressive brown eyes. He has come for a little petting, and gets it to his heart's content. Good old Ralph! though your curly black coat is sprinkled with gray, you are still a prime favorite in the household, and have easy times under an indulgent mistress. Reader, you will scarcely wonder that we regard him with such affection, when you learn what a valuable service he once rendered us.

It was some years ago, in the days of my maidenhood. My father's home was a pretty sheltered villa, outside the little town of G—. From the windows, we could see across a few meadows the clear water of the river; and beyond, through the distant trees, the delicate spire of a church. It formed a beautiful rural picture, the fresh green of the foliage undimmed by the smoke of factories. At the other end of the town lived Edward Drayton—the same individual who sits there silently reading his newspaper—who worked busily from morning to night in a dusty office. We seldom met during the week; but with unflinching regularity he called for me, every Sunday afternoon. In summer, when the bright sunshine invited every living creature to delight in the warm rays, we would stroll arm-in-arm through the meadows and wander by the side of the river. Ralph always accompanied us.

How the hours fled past as we sat and watched the martins skimming over the surface, or read what were to us the most interesting of love stories in one another's eyes! This courtship had lasted several months, when a foolish quarrel threatened to break our engagement off altogether. The cause was trivial in itself, and I now wonder how we can ever have let such a thing trouble us; but unfortunately lovers are much given to misunderstanding one another. Each of us had a considerable share of pride, too much at all events to make the first overtures of peace. Gloomily we nursed our resentment during the week. Twice had we met in the street, and passed without a word. Did his heart throb like mine, I wonder, and a plea for forgiveness rise to his lips? If it did, he allowed the opportunity to pass unimproved. Sunday came round again. Only one week had elapsed since the quarrel, but oh! how the days had dragged by; what a weary, weary time it had been! The afternoon was bright and sunny. A delicious south wind tempered the summer heat. No ring at the bell announced the welcome notice, "Mr. Drayton to see you, Miss." Lonely and sick at heart, I strolled out into the meadows. I noticed not that the ground was carpeted with buttercups, and the air full of the hum of insects; the bitter reflections within excluded all else. The stile was reached, the smooth comfortable old stile near the river, where some one had always before been so ready to assist; but he was not here to-day, and the mere thought caused the pent-up tears to burst forth. Sitting down beneath a gnarled oak hard by, I laid my face in my hands and sobbed piteously. Presently, Ralph's joyous bark aroused me from the painful reverie. Looking up, I saw bending over me the dear object of my regrets, who said, as he gave a reconciling kiss. "Ralph has brought me to you, and taught us both a wholesome lesson."

True enough, the sagacious dog had played the part of peacemaker. I remembered seeing him follow me from the house, but had been too absorbed to notice his disap-

pearance. Some reflection like this must have passed through his canine imagination: "My mistress goes out alone, sad and unhappy; formerly, she had some one with her, and the result was different; let me run and fetch the third person, and doubtless we shall all three be glad together."

Whether such were his thoughts or not, he trotted off to the other end of the town, and called at the Drayton's house. He found Edward sitting disconsolately in the garden, pretending to read. Ralph placed his forepaws on Edward's knees and gave a short inquiring kind of bark; then started off towards the gate, returned, and almost as plainly as words could have done, requested to be followed. Nothing loathe to lay aside the book, and wondering what the dog could want, Edward rose, and started along the path. Ralph's joy knew no bounds; with barks of delight, he ran ahead, turning every now and then to wait for his companion. Thus had he brought the repentant lover to the field where his mistress sat sobbing beneath the oak tree. And there Ralph now stood, holding forth eloquently with his tail, and something almost like a quiet smile lurking about the corners of his mouth.

In honor of the occasion, a little wren hopped out of her moss roofed cottage on the bough above, and burst forth into a flood of high-pitched music. Her throat swelled, and her tiny lungs worked bravely, as the song grew into a passion of shrill melody. That song was the precursor of a peal of bells!

As some return for the gratitude we owe to Ralph, it is our delight to treat him as a worthy aged retainer. All his wants are supplied with affectionate care, the troubles of advanced years being smoothed away as far as possible.

Sydney Smith on Happiness.

I have a contempt for persons who destroy themselves. Live on, and look evil in the face; walk up to it and you will find it less than you imagined, and often you will not find it at all, for it will recede as you advance. When you are in a melancholy fit, first suspect the body, appeal to rhubarb and calomel, and send for the apothecary; a little bit of gristle sticking in the wrong place, an untimely consumption of custard, excessive gooseberries, often cover the mind with clouds and bring on the most distressing views of human life. I start up at two o'clock in the morning, after my first sleep, in an agony of terror, and feel all the weight of life upon my soul. It is impossible that I can bring up such a family of children, my sons and daughters will be beggars; I shall see those whom I love exposed to the scorn and contumely of the world! So I argued, and lived dejected and with little hope; but the difficulty vanished as life went on. My daughters married well; I had two or three appointments, and before life was half over became a prosperous man. And so will you. Friends start up out of the earth: time brings a thousand chances in your favor. Nothing so absurd as to sit down and wring your hands because all the good which may happen to you in twenty years has not taken place at this precise moment.

Men to Reason With.

If you find a man with sense enough to ignore his own pride, to reason without getting into a passion, to contend for truth and principle, and not victory and party; who has patience enough to hear your side of the question as well as his own; and who has the charity to suppose that you are as sincere as himself, and have as much right to your opinions as he has to his, I say when you find a man of this stamp, there may be some benefit in your exchanging ideas. But to expect an impartial hearing and decision from a person wedded to a party and his own pride, is to labor under a gigantic delusion! You will find that some men do not know the difference between ridicule and reason; between persons and principles. Always avoid disputing with such. You run too much risk. They cannot honor you and may disgrace you. These are little things that it may be well to heed.

Carlyle and Hawthorne as Husbands.

"My dear, whatever you do, never marry a man of genius," was a vein of advice in which poor nerve-wrecked Mrs. Thomas Carlyle was very much addicted to indulging with her young lady friends; not, probably, because she thought the alarming surplus of genius thrown on the matrimonial market was in danger of settling on a general stampede in that direction, but because the bare possibility of one case of such misery in a million seemed to her enough to justify a warning cry. Rightly or wrongly, women get the credit of drawing, sweeping, universal conclusions from single instances, and where the instances are of a peculiarly exasperating kind, the thing is hardly to be wondered at. That at the very time when she herself was dutifully staying at home, the house a pandemonium of hammering carpenters and splashing plasterers, and nothing but a dark closet left her to sleep in, her husband abroad in Germany, should entertain her in his letters with little but a catalogue of the oats that had sown him the previous night, and of the roosters whose crowing had waked him up at dawn, and of the dead dogs he had seen floating on the green waters of the Rhine, all this might perhaps have been enough to justify her at moments in sympathizing with the Roman Emperor's amiable wish that the whole tribe of men of genius had but one neck, and there were a convenient ax ready to hand. And yet, on the other side, how many of the young women who, after reading the recent biography of Nathaniel Hawthorne and his wife, will lay the book down with the sigh: "Ah, that heaven would only send me such a husband! Never marry a man of genius! Why, I will take a vow of perpetual virginity unless I can find one somewhere." And the young lady is not so far wrong. Stupid and commonplace men have too many advantages already in a world so well fitted to them to be allowed a longer monopoly of the claim that they furnish the only material out of which ideal husbands can be made. If a woman must have a man to worship, why should she never be indulged in one toward whom the adoration involves a less exhausting strain?—[Boston Herald.]

It's No Use.

The real, solemn fact is that nobody, man or woman, statesman or tramp, can strike an icy spot in public and go cavorting around to bring up with a crash on the flagstones without feeling more or less poisoned against the whole world. At such a time any words of consolation you may offer are like cranberry sauce offered to a man with the lock-jaw.

Yesterday as a woman of 50 years and 150 pounds was passing the City Hall she struck the spot which had been looking for her ever since the first freeze-up. An exclamation of astonishment was followed by a yell of alarm and while she was wondering what made the sidewalk bob around so she sat down in four Paris styles. Close behind her was a philanthropist, and as he rushed to her assistance he said:

"Never mind, madam! The day is coming when everybody will be provided with air-cushions, and a fall will make our porous plasters stick the tighter. Allow me to send a messenger for a derrick to hoist you on your pins again."

She refused his offer, and after a struggle reached her feet. Then she seized the fence with one hand, and waving the other in the air she screamed out:

"Air-cushions! Dericks! Pins! Porous plasters! You old bow-legged, bald-headed bean pole, if my husband doesn't hunt you down and make you eat your ears I won't live with him another day! Go on with you!"

And the broken-hearted man went on.

Patti, it seems, refuses to re-enter society. O, why will you shut yourself up and be an oyster-Patti.

We cannot be too grateful to the Naugatuck man who has invented a rubber shoe that can be carried in the pocket. This will obviate leaving it in the hall for some one to draw his umbrella in.

The *Detroit Free Press* talks about "a hen which will lay around on top of a nest full of eggs for the best part of a month." If the *Free Press* man thinks it's merely fun to sit on a dozen of eggs, let him try it once,