

and I'm sure your're much too good-natured to send me back to the smoke and dust of the city again. Positively, my dear madam, I feel better already. I have been very ill, madam; and all I want to set me up now is perfect rest and quiet."

"But, sir, I really have no accommodation," said my aunt, with an absolute blush.

"Pooh, nonsense, Miss Killeen! All I want is a large room with a chair and table; I carry my hammock about with me. In short, I'm here now, and I mean to stay, and you may as well make the best of me," the gentleman returned, with a merry laugh; "and, if you won't have me in the inhabited region, why, I'll make myself a nest with the owls in one of the ruined towers."

"But you are—sir," my aunt began, with an appealing glance at Mollie to come to the rescue, "I never—"

"So much the better, madam," the gentleman said, with his merry laugh; "and I'll be so quiet that you'll never know whether I'm in the house or not. Besides, I assure you the whole success of my new book depends on my having a quiet month here by the lake. Why, this old castle alone will be worth a whole fortune to me! I'll have it for the frontispiece, and go this moment and make a first sketch of it. You will find a large room for me, like a good soul," he went on, following Mollie into the hall, "and get me something for dinner—chop, steak, anything you like. I'll be back at three o'clock," and Mr. Philip Kent put a well-filled purse in Mollie's hand, and with a smile that seemed to send sunshine into every corner of the house, lifted his hat, and went out the way he had come.

"Well, I never!" exclaimed my aunt.

"No, nor me too, ma'am," said Mollie; "but let us make the best of it. He's a beautiful spoken gentleman any way. An' while I slip away to the village for a few things maybe you'll open the windows of the blue room: and Miss Una might take away the few things of her mamma's that's in it."

"It's the pleasantest room in the house," observed my aunt, with a sigh; "and I suppose he must have poor Dora's dressing-room for a sitting room. Give me the key, Mollie, and come with me, Una child."

Mollie took a huge basket on her arm and started off singing, or rather humming, "Nora Creina," and with a beating heart I followed my aunt up the great staircase. There were many of the rooms in our house locked up, and this was one of them. I had never been able to get even a glimpse of it, nor did I know that it had been my mother's chamber. I expected almost to see her sitting in it; and so it was with a strange, chilly awe that I followed my aunt, and kept close to her till she had thrown open the shutters and windows; and then, when I looked round, a little sigh of disappointment escaped me. It was a large room, with two bay-windows looking out upon the lake. The furniture was heavy and old-fashioned—in fact, it in no wise differed from the red room or the yellow room, except that the curtains and carpet were less faded and worn, and a pretty shade of blue. There were a few pictures on the walls, which I eyed contemptuously, for I felt I could paint better ones myself, a few vases on the mantelpiece, which I resolved would have some flowers, and, for the rest, the blue room was a somewhat desolate, cold chamber, and the dressing-room off it not much better.

When we had opened all the windows, and shaken out all the curtains, my aunt asked me if I thought I could light a fire. I replied in the affirmative; and, having done what she required to her entire satisfaction, she gave me permission to do anything else which I could to make the room cheerful. "But first take these two boxes to your own room," she said, "and, when you are finished, you shall have the keys of them—they belonged to your mother."

"Thank you, aunt," I replied carrying off the boxes; but I was not so curious about their contents as I should have been on the day before—I was too much occupied in thinking what I could do to beautify Mr. Philip Kent's rooms.

Two or three hours passed before my operations were finished, and then, when I paused to survey my work, I found my aunt and Mollie staring at the room in mute surprise.

"Bless the child," said my aunt, "she has done wonders!"

And so indeed I had. For from every room in the house I had carried off everything I thought beautiful or picturesque, and arranged them to the best of my poor ability, and the result was, as my aunt said, wonderful.

"Now, if we could only open the hall-door, the gentleman could come in and out as he liked," Mollie remarked, "and we'd never know he was in the house."

"It's a pity we can't," said my aunt.

"But," I suggested, "aunt Winifred, he might come in by the great window of the saloon."

"Why, of course!" cried Mollie. "I declare, ma'am, Miss Una is getting sense," she added approvingly.

It was on the first of July that my aunt's lodger arrived, and a month passed away almost too pleasantly. The change he made in our gloomy house was marvellous. My aunt bustled about of a morning with an agility that was wonderful; it was good to hear Mollie singing over her work; and Mr. Kent's merry laugh was like music, his presence like sunshine even in our dingy little parlour.

He was delighted with his rooms, and declared that whoever had arranged the furniture

was an artist. The fresh pure air of the hills had done him more good, he said, than all the medicine the whole Royal College of Surgeons could prescribe. The beautiful scenery and strange legends, of which my aunt and Mollie possessed a wonderful store, supplied constant food for his pencil and pen; and, in fact, Mr. Philip Kent seemed to be perfectly happy, and to have made himself quite at home with us.

For myself, I was living in a new world, and breathing a new atmosphere altogether. My aunt had given me permission to keep Mr. Kent's room tidy—and well it was that I had no other duties to perform, for I fear they would have been neglected, and I sadly scolded for my dilatoriness, as I spent most of the long summer mornings poring over the lodger's books, and I used to steal into his sitting-room directly he had gone out, and devour greedily the first book that came to my hand, until I had got through them all, and then I began again.

We were, as I said, very happy at Castle Killeen—so happy that I wonder how we ever lived before Mr. Kent came. We were no longer half-starved—no longer lacked the common comforts of civilized life—no longer felt it incumbent on us to go to bed by moonlight, or daylight when there was no moon, to save the expense of a candle, nor to rake out the fire after breakfast because we could not afford to keep it burning till dinner-time. We had sugar for our tea—a luxury we never dreamt of enjoying before—and butter instead of treacle—in fact, everything was changed for the better; and I do not think my aunt's conscience troubled her very much about the insult she was offering a score of dead and gone Killeens, and the disgrace she had brought to the venerable home of her ancestors by taking a lodger.

It is only by contrast, I think, that one can thoroughly realise any sensation.

To be intensely happy one must have been intensely miserable, and to feel what real misery is one must have been really happy. I thought I had been very wretched as a child, but it was not till Philip Kent had been with us three months, and then talked about going away, that I understood fully what wretchedness was. My childish troubles I had freely confided to my poor friend Rover, whom I had sadly neglected for three long months; but I felt that even he could give me no consolation when Mr. Kent was gone. It was not alone the sunshine of his smile and the music of his mirth that we should miss, but actually bread to eat, fire to warm us, occupation, energy, everything. We should have to return to the old life again, the dull monotonous misery, and I felt that I would much rather die.

It was with some such bitter thoughts that I went into our lodger's room the next morning, and, after mechanically arranging the furniture, I sat down at the table and began turning over the pages of a book that lay open before me. I cannot recall the name of the volume; but there was a sentence in it underlined with red pencil which I have never forgotten—"might she sleep in peace—might she sleep in peace; and we, too, when our struggles and pains are over. But the earth is the Lord's, as the heaven is; we are alike His creatures here and yonder. I took a little flower off the hillock and kissed it, and went my way, like the bird that had just lighted on the cross by me, back into the world again."

"May I sleep in peace," I cried, "and never, never awake!" And I laid my head down upon the open book and sobbed bitterly.

I do not know how long my fit of weeping lasted—it may have been an hour, perhaps two—but at length I became conscious that there was some one in the room. With a throbbing heart and crimson face I ventured to look up, and found Mr. Kent, with grave, kind, curious eyes, regarding me from the other side of the table.

"Now that you have got over your sorrow, tell me what's the matter—what has happened," he said gently, putting his hand on my chair and looking down into my face.

"Nothing," I answered, or tried to answer.

"Please, I want to go."

"Yes, when you have told me what troubles you," he said, his hand still on the chair. "Young ladies do not cry for a whole hour for nothing, Miss Killeen. I do not like to see your eyes all swollen and red; besides, perhaps I can help you."

"No, I don't want any help—and my name is not Killeen—and—please let me go."

"Certainly, if you really wish it," he said, gravely, drawing back; "but will you not tell me your name first?"

"Una—Una Fitzgerald. My father is dead, and my mother, and I have no friend in all the world except my aunt Winifred."

"Yes, you have, Una—or at least you can have if you will let me be your friend," she said, drawing close to me and putting his hand gently on my hair. "Was your father a soldier, Una?"

"I do not know—he died before I was born; but I have his picture and my mother's. That is all I know of either of them," I said, with a sob.

"Show me the pictures, my child," Mr. Kent said gravely. "And, Una, will you have me for a friend?"

I do not know how it happened, but in a moment more our lodger had both my hands in his, and was looking into my eyes with a strange, glad smile, while I tried to hold down my head in very shame, for my face was crimson.

"Look at me, Una," he whispered—"look up, my dear, just for a moment."

I raised my eyes shyly, for I was frightened at the new happiness which was beginning to

dawn on me, and which I think Mr. Kent must have seen in them, for he drew me closer to him, and then, despite all my efforts, I hid my face in my hands and sobbed out brokenly—

"You are going away?"

"No, little one—not if you bid me stay. I shall never leave you till you say 'Go'—never, never, never," he whispered; "so no more tears. Wipe them away this moment, my dear, and let me see a smile on this rosy face of yours."

I wiped away my tears, and smiled, laughed, and danced for joy the moment I got out of Mr. Kent's room, saying to myself, "He'll stay always—he'll stay always—for I'll never say 'Go.'"

In a few minutes I returned with the miniatures of my father and mother in a small leather case, which I handed to Mr. Kent. He looked at them for a long time, and then said—

"Una, my dear, I knew your father and your grandfather; and now I must go and have a long talk with your aunt. But first tell me, little one, am I to go or stay?"

"To stay, please," I whispered.

"Are you sure?"

"Quite sure."

"For how long, Una? How long, my dear? A month, or six months, or a year?" he asked earnestly. "Tell me, my dear."

"For ever and ever," I replied quickly—"that's how long."

"Then for ever and ever be it, my darling," he said gravely. "Now go to your room and bathe your face—I shall want you down-stairs presently."

It was a good many hours before I ventured down, and when I entered our parlour my aunt and Mr. Kent were chatting together most confidentially.

"Come here, Una," she said, "I have some good news for you."

"Yes, aunt," I returned calmly, with a glance at Mollie, who stood in the doorway, nodding and winking energetically.

"This gentleman knew your father, my dear, and your grandfather—in fact, he is related to your family—and when your grandpapa died he left you a fortune—in fact, two thousand pounds—so you are an heiress, my dear, or will be when you come of age. You will have about a hundred a year of your own, Una—think of that."

"Yes, aunt," I said again in a stupid sort of way; I'm very glad for you and Mollie—"

"And now, aunt Winifred," broke in Mr. Kent, seizing my aunt by both hands, "I want Una for my wife."

"Well, upon my word," exclaimed my aunt, "I never!"

"What do you say, Una?" Philip asked, opening his arms; and my reply was to walk straight into them; and from that moment until now, when there are more than a few streaks of silver on both our heads, I have never ceased to feel thankful to Heaven for sending my aunt the best lodger and me the best husband in the whole wide world!

BRELOQUES POUR DAMES.

A delicate but not uncommon parcel—A young lady wrapped up in herself.

"PERFECTLY mag," is the cultured Boston girl's synonym for "Quite too awful sweet." The Boston girl doesn't waste her words.

An English paper states that "women are too much inclined to tangle the hair," a sentiment that most married men will endorse.

Show us the man who never forgot to mail a letter for his sweetheart, and we will show you a man who always forgot to mail one for his wife.

A NEW YORK judge has decided that a baby-carriage is not a nuisance in its natural state, but it can be made one by any malicious-minded person.

A MAN is not really consistently fitted for married life until he can satisfactorily explain to a woman why it is that when off on business he can never get to the depot to return until the train has gone.

NEVER under any circumstances marry for money. Be very careful, though, to find out beforehand that the girl has plenty of it to have induced you to marry her for money if you had been that sort of a fellow.

It is popularly believed that the first time man ever blushed upon this sinful earth was when as a boy he first saw the condition of his hair after issuing from a cutting and indiscriminate summer scissoring at the hands of his mother.

A LADY writes that she plaits her hair after making it damp, in three strands round one strand of cord, drawing the cord tight, keeping it so over night, and in the morning finding that her hair is in waves.

"She paints beautifully," whispered a young lady to her escort, referring to a stunning belle who had just passed. "Do you think so?" he answered. "It struck me she had put on rather too much this evening." There was a lull.

ANOTHER advantage in moonlight nights for lovers is that the brilliant radiance enables the young men to perceive the sign of the dangerous ice-cream saloon from a remote distance, and consequently, by turning down some other street, save himself.

"What is your religion, Mr. Gibber?" asked the landlady of her new boarder. "Meat three times a day," was the reply that startled the

good woman, and put her in a reverie as to whether the man was a heathen or had misunderstood the question.

THE post-office department has ruled that a husband has no control over the correspondence of his wife. If she requests the postmaster not to place her letters in her husband's box, it is his duty to comply with her request.

TELL a woman that England had changed to a republic, the Sandwich Islands had sunk and Lake Erie had dried up, and she wouldn't exhibit half the interest that would possess her over the statement that something had at last been invented to remove freckles.

AN editor is pretty certain to lose a patron when his foreman inadvertently puts a married notice under the head of "Another Swindle Come to Light." The groom, instead of accepting the blunder as a new sample of American humour, gets awfully mad, and wants to murder somebody.

HE thought he had married a spirituelle young creature, with aesthetic tastes. The first Sunday morning she ate three platefuls of baked beans and two sections of brown bread. He says it was the most enthusiastic aesthetic taste he ever met with since he saw the lions in the circus fed.

"WHAT is a junction, nurse?" asked a seven-year-old fairy the other day of an elderly lady who stood at her side on a railway platform. "A junction, my dear," answered the nurse, with the air of a very superior person, indeed, "why, it's a place where two roads separate."

OF love and wits: In love affairs wit helps everything and decides nothing. In the presence of a woman he loves a witty man thinks too much of what he is going to say and not enough of what she is about to hear. Pretty thinkers should remember that love is a good deal like the opera, where the libretto without the music, the singers and the scenery, does not count for much.

"LOVEST thou me?" said a swain to his last year's girl. "Not much, I don't!" was her emphatic reply. "Then death is my best friend, and here's to his health!" spoke up the sighing lover as he drank off a bottle filled with a mixture which he supposed to be laudanum. But when the emetic, which a shrewd druggist had given instead of laudanum, began to work, his girl just held his hat to save the carpet, and then dragged him out on the door-steps by the hair of the head. He has no longer any faith in the vaunted tenderness of woman's sympathetic nature.

Too good to be lost. Just before the public schools in New Haven closed for vacation, a lady teacher in one of the departments gave out the word "fob" for her class to spell. After it was spelled, as was her custom, she asked the meaning of it. No one knew. The teacher then told the class that she had one, and was the only person in the room that did. After a little while a hand went hesitatingly up. Teacher—"Well, what is it?" "Please, ma'm, it's a beau." Her surprise can be readily imagined. She has since been married.

LITERARY.

BRYANT never read Swinburne, because he thought his works indecent.

DR. JOHN HILL BURTON's History of the British Empire during the reign of Queen Anne will extend to three volumes, and will be published by the Messrs. Blackwood.

GEORGE ELLIOTT's *College Breakfast-Party* will be translated into German by Miss E. Leo, the translator of Browning's *Inn Album*. Her little story, *The Lifted Veil*, is also to be translated into German.

MR. THEODORE MARTIN intends to collect the translations of Heine's *Lieder* into Lowland Scotch, which he has printed in *Blackwood's Magazine*, and to publish them, with some additions, in a separate volume, which Messrs. Blackwood will issue.

MR. RUSKIN's admirers are expecting soon to receive from him his last number of *Fora Clavigera*, containing his last homily and his fatherly farewell. It is no secret that he is no longer the man he once was. Writing is a great pain to him, and he can no longer undertake regular work.

THE next volume in Mr. Longfellow's series, "Poems of Places," will be devoted to Asia. The first of these includes Syria; the second, Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Turkestan, and Afghanistan; the third, Persia, India, China, and whatever other parts of Asia have been fortunate enough to be sung about.

A LIFE of Alexander H. Stephens, formerly Vice-President of the Confederate States of America, is in the press, and will be published at an early date by the Messrs. Lippincott. The work is by Prof. R. M. Johnston and Dr. William Hand Browne, who have the aid of Mr. Stephens's journals, correspondence, &c.

The work entitled *Diplomatic Sketches by an Outsider*, which Mr. Bentley advertises, is said to contain the opinions of one who is sufficiently behind the scenes to have a correct knowledge of the springs of political movement. The interest of the volume centres in Count Beust, of whose character it gives a political analysis.

THE volume of portraits of German Shakespeareans, presented by Professor F. A. Leo, of Berlin, to the Shakespeare Memorial Library, has been received. The album is a magnificent volume of oblong folio size, and is a superb specimen of the bookbinder's art. The clasps and bosses are silver, and around the sunk panel in the centre is a tasteful border of laurel leaves in fine repoussé work. In the recessed panel in the centre is a miniature model, in metal and silver, of the monument at Stratford, with bust, canopy, and inscription all in exquisite detail. The book is nearly filled with portraits of Germans who have illustrated Shakespeare either with pen or pencil, or on the orchestra or stage. Many of these photographs have the autographs of the originals.

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