

A MAD FLIGHT.

Day by day I had found myself growing more impatient for the dinner gong to sound. Had the braising air of Llandudno put such a ravenous edge on my appetite? It was hardly that, for breakfast and lunch had no corresponding attractions; they were simply scamped through as necessary formalities. Was it, then, that the entrees were so excellent, the wines so choice, the liquors so piquant, the conversation so sparkling?

I asked myself these questions as I stood looking down into the placid waters which softly lapped the tall black pillars of the pier. Then I turned on my heel, and for answer laughed a mocking negative to them all.

"I have seen her at table d'hote every night for a week," I soliloquised, and I believe I laughed again, and went all hot. Can you guess why? Somehow I fancy you can, and that you are laughing at me.

How lovely, how divine a creature she was, or at any rate, how lovely she seemed to me, I cannot tell you in cold print. I would only be foolish in the attempt. Let me ask you to take her beauty for granted—the rich black hair, the large, lustrous brown eyes, the rose-tint of her cheeks, the glorious—but here I am running into raptures. Let me simply set down once and for all that, as Christina's lover says in Browning.

"She should never have looked at me if she meant I should not love her."

For a week, as I have said, I gazed at her, where she sat—near the corner at the far end of the table. And meanwhile I sipped my wine, and now and then remembered that I might as well eat something.

The buzz of conversation was lost upon me! I took no heed of aught save her fair face. I was as one entranced. If some one asked me to pass the mustard I found myself replying, "No, thank you," or if the waiter murmured, "Claret or 'lock, sir," I absently rejoined: "A few potatoes, please."

It was a bad case—a very bad case—and toward the end of the week I began to realize where I was drifting. So for the first time I deigned to speak to my right-hand neighbor, a spry young fellow who had an air of knowing everybody and everything. I startled him out of his omniscience when I spoke, for I think he had wagered fifty to one that I couldn't utter a dozen words consecutively; but he recovered readily from the shock, and we prattled a while concerning various matters. I didn't want to broach the subject nearest my heart too quickly, and we had got as far as the sweets ere I said: "Who is the lady at the top corner, yonder?"

"The brown-eyes lass with the sheeny locks?" he rejoined.

I could have kicked him for his irreverence.

"Yes."

"Oh, that's Mrs. —, Mrs. Ah, yes, Mrs. Faulkner."

"Oh."

"And the dark, disagreeable looking gentleman who always accompanies her," I added in a tremor, "He is Mr. —."

"Exactly, Mr. Faulkner, her —. No, champagne, please. Yes, he's her —."

"Oh, thanks, thanks awfully!" I stammered precipitately, and I rose from the table and hurried from the room with a lump in my throat and a mist before my eyes.

I crushed a hat on my head and walked or stumbled somehow out into the street. Anon I was pacing the pier, and right at the end in the darkest, loneliest corner I could find, I sat me down. I smoked four cigars in half an hour, and all I said was —, But I kept repeating it.

It was very late when I returned to the hotel, and in the morning I rose betimes, and was off on my bicycle for a day aweek in the Conway Valley. I am afraid I scorched terribly at times. "I must get this fever out of me somehow," I muttered; and so I rode hard the day through, and toward evening was near Conway on my return, going as keenly as ever. Could it be that I was hurrying to be back in time for that dinner gong?

Suddenly I looked up and saw before me the figure, the face which had haunted me all day. She was standing by the roadside holding her machine. I leapt off mine, discerning her plight.

"Can you oblige me?" she said in a voice that tingled in my ears. "I am so sorry to bother you, but I left my pump behind, very foolishly."

"I am delighted to be of assistance," I replied, starting to repair and inflate the tire. Would only that the other had been punctured! The job was too soon accomplished.

"You are staying at the — Hotel, aren't you?" she queried as she got ready to remount. "I have seen you at dinner. Oh, shall we be in time for dinner do you think?"

I rather liked the "we." It seemed to imply that I need not raise my hat and clear off. So I mounted and rode beside her.

"We can just manage it, I fancy," quoth I, looking at the time, "that is, if you ride a little quicker."

"You pace me," said she, laughing gayly.

And I laughed gayly, too, as if it were a capital joke.

III.

She sat next me at dinner that night and I did not glance at the top far corner once during the whole meal. Mr. Faulkner somehow did not put in an appearance. We chatted merrily and unceasingly, and the dapper youth, still on my right hand, looked at me with more astonishment than ever.

She overflowed with mirth and brightness, and I did too. Only now and again my inner conscience would say: "You are making a fool of yourself, and you will suffer for it. You are losing your heart to one who cannot give you her hand."

But as I looked at her and her eyes fell shyly beneath my ardent gaze, I choked conscience back with a piece of chicken or submerged it in a glass of hock.

"Are you going to the Pavilion concert to-night?" I inquired, handing her a dish of strawberries, which matched her lips to a nicety.

"Yes, are you?" There was a nervous quaver in her voice, I thought.

"Yes, might I—that is—is Mr. Faulkner away?"

"Oh, yes; he has been called to town for a few days."

"Then perhaps I can help you to find the toll gate."

"As Mrs. Malaprop would say, that duty shall revolve upon you, if you will be so kind," was her reply.

It seemed to me this was the most sparkling wit I had ever encountered.

IV.

But, ah! let me draw a veil o'er it all. Why should I recall the bliss of those few days together—on the pier, together in the Happy Valley, together scaling the slopes of the Great Orme? Why, indeed, when the recollection is but pain, and pain how lacerating, how torturing!

I was in love, and madly in love, and happy to be in love—when I was with her. But when I was calmer and she was absent and the truth smote me, I could have fled to the uttermost end of the earth with very wrath, with very shame. I felt I was a villain, and all the deeper dyed because it seemed to me I was not altogether objectionable to her, and that I was becoming less and less so each time we met.

My passion, however, only boiled within me. I took care of that. I let it have no tongue.

Her husband was away longer than she had anticipated, but he returned one afternoon quite unexpectedly. He jumped out of a brougham which had brought him from the station just as she and I were entering the hotel. The heel of one of her shoes had come off, and I had been compelled—upon what delicious compulsion—to give her my arm. He scowled at me darkly as he espied us, and her smile was distinctly abashed. He greeted her with a single snappish word, and went off to his room, not vouchsafing to be introduced.

That look of his pursued me. I could not dismiss it from my mind's eye. It served only too well to call me to my right senses. I saw jealousy and the divorce court and scandal and misery ahead.

So that night I did not appear at dinner. I had summoned up courage to fly. I remembered Colonel Newcome's story of how sometimes the bravest thing to do is to run away, helter-skelter as fast as you can.

And at 9 o'clock I was at Colwyn Bay. Not far off, but far enough.

In the smoking-room of the hotel I encountered the dapper young gentleman of Llandudno.

"Hello!" he cried. "You here. You look glum; what's up?"

"I always regret to leave Llandudno, you know," I muttered.

"Why did you then?"

I changed the subject.

V.

Next day I took a train to London. I deemed it best to get out of the neighborhood. My eyesight was giving way even in one night.

Somewhat to my annoyance the dapper youth came with me. I wanted to be alone—miserable and alone, and to think. He evidently wanted to be lively and to talk. But I kept him tolerably quiet by pretending to fall asleep at frequent intervals.

Near London, however, I gave in to him, and we chatted a little.

"Did you know Mrs. Faulkner well?" I asked after a while. I felt so far away from her now that I thought I dare speak of her. He looked puzzled at my question, "Mrs. Faulkner, you know," I repeated, "who was stopping at Llandudno; the lady with the scowling husband; the dark-whiskered gentleman?"

"Oh! I know who you mean; no, I don't know them well, hardly at all. In fact, never saw them before in my life. But the scowling gentleman was not her husband, but her brother. She is a widow; married a man, curiously enough, of the same name as her own. I thought I told you. Why, what's the matter?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing. I only feared I'd lost my ticket."

In a few hours I eagerly opened a telegram which I had been awaiting in reply to one of my own. It came from the manager of the Llandudno Hotel, and read:

"Mr. Faulkner and sister left here this morning. No address."

PARADOXICAL.

By some freak of fortune,
I haven't got a cent;
And the rent in my trousers
Will not pay the rent.

LOVE IS QUEER.

Jones—I married my wife a month after she accepted me.
Brown—And I married mine three days after she refused me.

About the House.

TO A DAFFODIL.

Long to her bosom prest,
Smoking at Nature's breast,
Fed were your lips by her generous food;
Fresh from a dwelling dark,
Yet but a golden spark,
Here have you come as a lamp for the wood.

Daylight's inheritance
Won by that tender lance,
Now is your weapon a blossoming rod
Fast through the glebe you came,
Bearing at heart a flame,
Sent on your lovely adventure by God.

Now with the journey done,
Quaff a bright fill of sun,
Feasting with mosses and hyacinths tall;
While for your minstrelsy,
Bubbling from bush and tree,
Birds of the woodland melodiously call.

May my soul's errand be
Straight on to purity,
Swift as your passage to beauty hath been!
So shall I live my lease
Under the sky of peace,
Cool as a flower and heavenly clean.

ABOUT PRUNING ROSES.

A great many persons miss having fine roses in their gardens from not knowing how to prune them. It is often a sorrowful sight to pass a place in which are handsome shrubs and roses and see the ruin and disfigurement caused by lack of knowledge of what pruning is for. It is not always the proprietor who is at fault altogether. It is sometimes the case that one looking for work comes along and professing a knowledge of pruning is set to work to prune the roses and shrubs. It is strange that in nearly every case of this kind the pruner's idea of what is the proper way to prune is that all young shoots of the previous season's growth should be lopped off. This is sometimes done, leaving the shrub ball-shaped, at other times with a flat top. These notes are on the pruning of the rose, but it may be said here that most shrubs must not have the young shoots of last season's making cut away, or there will be no flowers the coming summer.

As to roses, the pruning must depend entirely on what class they belong to. What are known as daily roses, which are those that flower all through the season, and embrace Teas, Bourbons, Chinas and Noisettes, and some hybrids, need close pruning. The flowers come from young shoots of the same season. Cut down almost to the ground, strong shoots will succeed, which will bear flowers on their ends. Not that they need such close cutting down as that, if the branches are cut down to half their length it will be found to answer very well. Few other roses need cutting back as much as these, so that after determining whether a certain bush is an over-blooming one or not, the question of how to prune it can soon be settled. It may be added here that these roses are the least hardy of any.

The next important class consists of what are called Hybrid Perpetuals, or June roses. They are so named, because they flower freely in June, but hardly at all after that, excepting a stray bloom or two. The flowering is quite different from that of the other flowering shrubs, producing their blossoms from the shoots made the previous season; therefore these shoots must be well looked after. The character of this rose is to make a few strong shoots, of a length perhaps three to four feet. These shoots should be cut back to leave about two-thirds of what there were. Leave two feet of what was a three-foot shoot. From these pruned stems there should come an abundance of flowers. If cut down as low as the eye-bloomers should be called will be no flowers. What are called climbing roses should be pruned in the same way as June roses. A little cutting back of strong shoots, and a close cutting of weak ones, is the rule. Such old sorts as the Prairie rose and its seedlings, climbing Teas and Noisettes come into this class.

Of late years the Russian roses, known as Rugosa, have become well known. These are very hardy, and have given a desirable lot of seedlings of different colors. They do not need very much pruning, but should have a little. Very often a bush may be unshapely, and a pruning, to give it good shape, may be a great help to it. The old sweetbrier rose and the Austrian brier are valued in every garden. They need little pruning; neither does the beautiful hardy yellow one, called Persian Yellow. There are a few wild roses bearing single flowers, which are often found in gardens, both because of their flowers and their having numerous red berries on in the fall, which last all winter. These, too, need but little pruning.

As a rule, roses are pruned in spring. It is thought that as hard winters are apt to injure the shoots, it is better to wait until freezing weather is over to see what injury, if any, has been done, and then cut away the injured part. In the case of those mentioned as better for a good cutting back of the branches, some practice the pruning back early in the winter, and then cover up completely all that is left of the bush. On the other hand, a rose or any other bush pruned in the fall

pushes into growth earlier than a spring-pruned one, and this early growth is not desirable where late freezings sometimes occur.

FOR THE QUEEN'S NAVER.

How English Boys Are Trained for the Naval Reserve.

One of the strong features of England's naval service is the education of young men for the merchant marine. The government takes this work in charge, turning out a larger number of graduates each year who are placed as midshipmen on merchant vessels, and then work themselves up as officers. This insures to the merchant marine a constant supply of well-educated competent men, and also gives the royal navy a reserve force to draft officers from in time of war.

Two school ships, one of them the famous old Nile, now called the Conway, are employed for this purpose. These are under the immediate control of the Mercantile Marine Association of Liverpool, but the lords of the admiralty exercise close supervision.

The scheme of education carried out on board is general, besides being technical, English grammar, physics, geography, geometry, French, arithmetic and algebra finding a place besides natural astronomy, chart drawing, swimming, boxing, fencing and outclass drill. During nautical instructions, as well as at all times when not in school, the pupils are under the commander and nautical staff, and are exercised in all the duties of a first-class ship, in splicing, reefing, furling, heaving the lead, the management of boats and steam engines, and in

PRACTICAL SEAMANSHIP

generally. Lectures upon divers interesting subjects are given weekly, besides general instruction in some of the most useful and practical departments of surgery and medicine. That physical training is not neglected can be seen by a glance at the cadets, whose robust and healthy aspect proclaims their good condition. In addition to the vigorous exercise of rowing, two fields have been provided for the practice of cricket, football and other outdoor games, while instruction in swimming is given daily throughout the greater part of the year.

Every year a gold medal is given by the queen to the cadet who, in her opinion, possesses the qualities which will make the finest sailor, and the further interest taken by her in the ship is shown by the fact that she gives a yearly prize of binocular glasses and £35 to the boys who compete for the naval cadetship. Besides these there are many annual prizes. A number of midshipmen in the royal navy reserve are annually granted by the lords of admiralty, and appointments in the Bengal pilot service, in which the emoluments reach to £1,200 per annum in the higher grades are awarded by the secretary of state for India.

Within the last few years a great change has come over the merchant fleet; sailing ships, are rapidly becoming extinct, steamships replacing them everywhere. When one of the former is lost on broken up, she is replaced by a steamship. Of the new tonnage rebuilt during the past year, according to Lloyd's register, no less than 98 per cent. was of steamships, with the results that the number of apprentices carried has diminished from about 18,000 to 2,000. Formerly a boy destined to become an officer in the merchant service had to serve a lengthy term as apprentice on board a sailing ship, where

A ROUGH LIFE

of hardships had to be endured, combined with a great amount of personal risk, and the undesirable contact with "pitch." Now thanks to the enterprise and energy of the commander and the committee of the Conway, all this has been changed. Cadets can now pass direct from the schoolship on board many of the principal steamships as midshipmen to train for certified officers in steam without paying premiums. They receive special consideration and treatment on board, and are seldom absent from home more than a couple of months at a time, instead of years as formerly—an inestimable advantage only to be realized by those who have gone through the mill of apprenticeship. The parchment certificate of two years' service on the Conway is reckoned by the board of trade as one year passed at sea out of the four which are necessary to qualify for a second mate's certificate.

Over 200 ex-Conway boys are in the royal navy and the royal navy reserve, fifty others are in the P. and O. line, and no less than seventy have joined the Bengal pilot service, while a very large proportion of officers of the Indian marine owe their success to the schoolship. In all parts of the world old Conway boys have distinguished themselves by acts of bravery; the gallant conduct of Capt. DeBerry and Lieut. Dobbin and Goldsmith on the occasion of the loss of the Aden last summer, which brought them the recognition and thanks of the Indian government, is still fresh in the people's minds.

A MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

I want a big drum for my wife, a banjo for my daughter, an accordion for my little boy and a coronet for my self.

Gracious! Are you all going on the stage.

No; we are fixing up an orchestra to discourage that man next door who plays the piano 15 hours a day.

INTERCHANGEABLE.

Where in thunder are all my collars? Why, I'm wearing one and sister has another; Birdie took another and the rest are at the laundry.

But I'll swear there was a clean one in the drawer this noon.

Yes; Bridget borrowed that.

THE STOCKING BAG.

Below we give directions for making a handy bag to hold the stockings that may need mending. It also provides a place for all the articles necessary to use in the mending:

Get a large horseshoe and draw the outline on thick pasteboard; cut out four and cover with the material you are going to make a bag of; now cut three leaves for the needlebook of any desired material and shade, a half-inch smaller all around than the horseshoes and make a cover of the bag material for the outside of the needlebook, fasten these at the tops of the large horseshoe and put two together; take a piece of the material one yard long and half a yard wide; gather lengthwise on each edge and fasten onto the two horseshoes formed of the four pieces of pasteboard; now you should have a large bag shaped like a pocket.

On the opposite side from the needlebook fasten a little puffy pocket for the yarn. Both this pocket and the cover of the needlebook may have a monogram worked in colors. Now hem the edges of the material between the horseshoes, fasten on eight little rings and run braid through to hang up by. When complete the bag should measure about half a yard across.

SAVE THE PIECES.

Always save the pieces of good silk, no matter what color, or if new, or provided it is strong. Even a two-inch strip of silk is a boon at times, and larger pieces have many uses, so will never stand by long, in the hands of a thrifty workwoman. When ripping a silk garment, cut out the good pieces sponge out all spots, iron on the wrong side and store for use. The better pieces will sometimes come in for trimming a dress, lining sleeves, etc., and save buying new.

ROCKING-CHAIR HABIT.

English physicians are emphatic in their condemnation of what they term the American rocking-chair habit. To this, they affirm, are due many of the nervous diseases to which American women are victims. The amount of nervous energy expended in useless and injurious rocking, is they say, incredible.

A woman who usually imagines herself to be resting will exercise as much force of the lower muscles of the back and of the legs as would suffice to run a sewing machine for the same length of time. Not one woman in a dozen sits still in a rocking chair, and very few are content with the gentle swaying motion which is only mildly exhausting and which occasionally compensates for the exertion by sending an old lady comfortably to sleep.

Rockers are rare and unpopular in England, and this is cited as one reason why the health of middle class Englishwomen is so generally superior to that of our own.

FINGER-NAIL TRIMMING.

The average person trims off the thirty-second part of an inch from each finger nail a week, or about an inch and a half a year. The average human life all over the world is 40 years. There are 1,300,000,000 people in the world, who, therefore, waste, on an average, 28,400 miles of finger nails in a generation.