

STORIES
POETRY

The Inglenook

SKETCHES
TRAVEL

PRICILLA'S DILEMMA.

By Marie Deacon Hanson.

"Prisca, hurry and dress, and come for a drive."

"You come indoors for a few minutes, Nathalie," Priscilla answered, smiling from the open window at her cousin, seated in her dog cart. As the visitor joined her, Priscilla added: "Huddah is visiting Susie Price in Watertown, and mamma says I may give a luncheon for the girls next week."

"How delightful!" Nathalie exclaimed, following her cousin into the library.

"Apartment dining-rooms are not built to accommodate large parties, and I can only entertain about eight of the girls," Priscilla went on a trifle regretfully.

"Eight is a comfortable number," Nathalie suggested. "Hurry and dress, dear. I want to take you to see the violets out Arlington way; we can talk as we drive."

"I might have been dressed and have had the invitations written, if I hadn't lazed the morning away," Priscilla confessed. "Do you wonder that mamma sometimes calls me Procrastinator Popham? It is 'the sin that doth so easily beset' me." Priscilla opened a desk and added: "You write so beautifully, Thalie; do write the invitations for me while I go dress?"

Nathalie good-naturedly consented. Priscilla handed her a sheet of paper on which she had scribbled the names and addresses of the girls to be invited, together with a rough sketch of the invitation, and disappeared.

Priscilla was a small creature, spite of her sixteen and one-half years, and when she presently appeared, she seemed a veritable fairy in the fluffiest of soft, white dresses. Her big blue eyes looked out smilingly from beneath the broad-brimmed hat of white embroidery and delicate pink roses that crowned her head of gold. Nathalie sealed the last invitation and arose.

"Hail, Queen of the Spring!" she cried, making a deep curtsy. "With your majesty's permission, we will mail the invitations at the corner, and then for a drive in your majesty's own domain!"

The week of the luncheon was a holiday for the young ladies in Miss Carleton's private school. Priscilla, having planned to spend Monday morning putting her room in order, Priscilla-like was easily tempted, instead, to go in quest of violets, nor did she return in time to decorate the place-cards for her guests, as she had intended. However, she comforted herself thinking she would have plenty of time on Tuesday and Wednesday, the luncheon being on Thursday.

Nine o'clock Tuesday morning found Priscilla still in bed, sleepyhead that she was! Not even the bird singing joyously on her window-sill had power to lure her from her soft nest, and there she lay, half awake, half asleep, when her mother entered, holding an open letter in her hand.

"It's from your Aunt Kate," Mrs. Popham said, raising the blinds. "She is coming in on the nine o'clock train, and asks me to meet her at Parker's to select a coat for wrandma. Hannah is ironing, though she is suffering dreadfully with toothache, and I was just urging her to go to the dentist when the letter came."

"Why did you let me sleep so long, mumsie?" Priscilla cried, springing out of bed. "You hurry right off, dear. I'll wash the dishes and tend to things while Hannah goes to the dentist."

"I wish you would, Prisca," Mrs. Popham replied, with evident relief. "I'll lunch with Aunt Katie down town, so don't wait for me."

Priscilla ran out in her little, bare feet, and bade Hannah go at once to the doctor. Then she took her bath, made a leisurely semi-toilet, and sat down to her breakfast and the newspaper. It was after eleven o'clock when Priscilla finally arose and be-

gan to gather the dishes together. And, at this moment, the front door bell rang.

"It can't be a caller so early," Priscilla said, looking in dismay at the long, tatted blue kimono she had donned as good enough in which to wash dishes and dust. "It must be a peddler." A second peal sounded as she deliberated. The next moment, Priscilla opened the door, then stepped back, gasping. Three radiant visions in white confronted her.

"We came unfashionably early, Prisca, because Huddah was so anxious to see you," Nathalie said smilingly. "Susie and she called for me on their way from the train."

"You dear!" Huddah cried, taking the shrinking Priscilla into her arms and smothering her with kisses. "Never mind if you aren't ready. We can talk while you are dressing."

"But the luncheon isn't to-day; it's Thursday," Priscilla said miserably.

"I'm sure the invitation read Tuesday," Susie replied.

Priscilla ushered her guests into the library, fortunately tidy, and broke into a cold perspiration at thought of the other guests soon to arrive, and the condition of the other rooms.

"I must see for myself," she murmured, slipping down on her knees beside the waste basket and searching feverishly for a coveted slip of paper. If only it were Nathalie's fault. But no! Here was the slip, and in her own handwriting the day—Tuesday. She had dashed off the copy hurriedly at the last minute, and had written Tuesday unthinkingly.

"Never mind if a mistake has been made, Prisca. It isn't the luncheon we care about, it's the visit with you," Huddah said lovingly.

"Effie Carruthers always has things so elegant at her house, and this was going to be the nicest luncheon I've ever given," Priscilla groaned. "Oh, dear!" A sob threatened to develop into tears, till Priscilla suddenly remembered that something was due the guests already assembled. The next moment she straightened and went on bravely, spite of the tremble in her voice: "Girls, I invited you to a luncheon, with hand-painted place-cards and—and things. But you've come to a plain lunch, and to that you are very welcome. I'm going to make it ready now, and get dressed."

"We'll help you," Nathalie cried.

"It will be much more fun than finding everything ready," supplemented Susie. Priscilla despatched Nathalie to the delicatessen store, a few blocks away, to buy whatever she could find that was nice. By the time the four other guests arrived, the rooms were in order, the meal on the table, and Priscilla dressed, though looking a little tired around her eyes.

The girls apparently enjoyed to the full their plain lunch, and were as merry as bees in clover. Not so Priscilla. Hours later, she pillowed her aching head on her mother's bosom and whispered in her ear the story of the day's event. And she added fervently:

"It was just dreadful, trying to smile and make believe things were as they should have been. Oh, mumsie, dear, Procrastinator Popham left your home forever to-day."—The Girl's Companion.

The interesting person is the one who gives a little over. You say of a certain person that he is just, implying you don't quite like him. You say of another person that he is generous, implying that you do like him. It is because of that which he does beyond what he is obliged to do. If there is any life where this applies with utmost force it is to the religious life. Your piety must make the cup overflow. If you do only what you are obliged to do, or do exactly your duty and nothing else, your life is no comfort to you and little help to any one else.—Alexander McKenzie.

SAVING SPACE IN CITY FLAT.

By Margaret E. Sangster.

Apartment flats are now so common in Ottawa, Montreal and other Canadian cities that the following hints may prove useful to some of our readers:

Living in a flat in a big city is being packed like sardines in a box with others packed equally as close and equally requiring to save space.

The greatest benefit that could possibly happen to a great many flat-dwellers would be to have a big bonfire nearby in a vacant lot while some despoiler seized upon their goods and chattels and threw them in. Everybody who has kept house over five years owns more furniture and accumulates more articles than are actually essential to comfort and luxury. Nobody can bear to part with a single thing. This was a wedding present; that was bought the day when the baby had her first birthday; the other was brought by a visiting cousin from Australia. Somebody has said—was it Emerson?—"Things are in the saddle, and ride mankind." They certainly are in the saddle and ride mankind with a vengeance when the home is in a flat.

The first suggestion as to saving space is the practical one of eliminating sternly whatever can be spared. The storage warehouse should accommodate very superfluous stick of furniture until a time comes when wider quarters and ampler environment may be secured.

A city flat is a thing of makeshifts. Possibly, in one or two rooms a bedstead with springs, mattresses and pillows, a bedstead that announces itself for what it is and stands in full view all day long will be tolerated. Ordinarily, people who live in flats take to folding beds. These masquerade by day as bureaus, bookcases, sideboards, and other contrivances. The folding bed that successfully deceives the elect has not yet been invented. It looks like a bookcase on casual inspection, but the cloven feet peep out and a closer glance reveals the reality. Divans and lounges are less objectionable and more popular because a room with a divan looks like a living room, a library or a drawing room and does not shout at you the fact that at night this is a bedroom. Added to this, divans are often long chester and hollow in which all sorts of things are kept.

I remember a small flat reached by several flights of stairs and made aluring by a little stairway leading up to a great airy roof. This was the home one winter of what I may call a colony of girls. They were art students, journalists and newspaper women. Every inch of space in their flat was made available, and the bewilderment of the pretty Southern matron mother of one sweet maiden, a woman who had come from an ample home in Kentucky to hover over this brood, with her motherly wings, was both amusing and pathetic. She had been used to a large house with wide verandas, high ceilings and a vast attic. Imagine her dismay when fitted into a spot that covered its tenants as a very tight glove covers a plump hand. But she made the best of the situation and helped the girls to get fun out of it.

In order to save space in a city flat one must be clever, original and quick-witted. One must do without some conveniences. One must be contented to take a good deal of trouble. In the downtown tenements it is said that bath-