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For BRIC-A-BRAC.

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.

By CLARA H. TARDY.

What is the matter? Such laughter!
"What's in the wind to-day?"
Asks grandfather, smiling, and looking
At Jamie and then at May.

He sits on the south verandah,
Where breezes and sunshine play,
(Though the calendar tells it is winter,
The weather seemeth like May.)

He has reached in his days—Life's winter;
Its frosts have silvered his hair:
And he waits in that Florida homestead
For the summons "over there."

The children are whispering round him,
Exchanging words and signs,—
And to his questionings, answer:
"Why, to-morrow's St. Valentine's."

"And, see, grandpa, we are sending
Flowers up North, you know;
Emblems of love for *some one*
Who lives midst the sleet and snow."

The old man hears,—then memory
Opens her golden store,
And in his thoughts he is living
The days that are now no more.

He is sending a little maiden,
One single, written line;
And "Yes," comes back in answer
To "Be my Valentine."

He sees a happy morning—
The white day of his life,
When his Valentine—dear Mary,
Becomes his darling wife.

And then, through years of brightness
His thoughts with swiftness run,
And reach that dark, sad hour
When Mary's life was done.

And his thoughts come to the present,
With its mellowed silver days,
Through which he is surely drifting,
To be with her always.

And he listens to the children,
While tears and smiles combine.
As he thinks how near the meeting
With his true Valentine.

HUNTSVILLE, ALA., December, 1884.

A MODERN CIRCUMSTANCE.

By HAROLD E. BATSFORD,

Author of "Doctor Dick," "To Gain Experience," etc.

CHAPTER III.

"Well, mamma," began Henrietta Nevins, one day after the summer had passed away, and the autumn had set in bright and pleasant, "has Miss Briarsford found rooms yet?"

"Oh, yes," replied Mrs. Smith, "she had no trouble in that matter; you know I referred her to Mrs. Newman; she wanted to let her top floor. Miss Briarsford went around there, and when she came back, she was quite enthusiastic about Mrs. Newman, said she had already fallen in love with her."

As Mrs. Smith uttered the last sentence, Henrietta gave a little scream; it had reminded her of the time they discovered Miss Briarsford's secret.

"Why, mamma, how could you!" she exclaimed.

"My dear!"

"Why ever did you refer Miss Briarsford to Mrs. Newman? Don't you know that she is Harry Newman's mother?"

"Yes, my dear, I presume she is."

"And don't you know that Miss Briarsford—"

Mrs. Smith fell back in the big arm-chair, while her face was overspread with a little of the anxious horror that was depicted on her daughter's.

"Oh dear!" she exclaimed, "I never thought."

"You have put her into the lion's den."

"Worse than that," groaned the mother, "much worse."

"Worse?"

"Yes, yes. I have put her into the lion's claws. Hark!"

There was the sound of footsteps on the front stoop, and then the door-bell rang.

"He is there," Mrs. Smith said, in a tragic whisper.

"He? Who?"

"Harry Newman."

"Good gracious, mamma! what for?"

"I hired him to take her furniture around."

Henrietta sank down on a convenient sofa, and stared at her mother in helpless horror.

"I could'nt help it," Mrs. Smith said, weakly, "he was out of employment, and I thought it would be a good opportunity to earn a couple of dollars. He asked me to speak for him, if I heard of any odd jobs around."

"And does *she* know?" asked Henrietta.

"No; and she is out now."

The bell sounded again.