

Oscar thought p'raps I'd better come out and look for you, since she said she was expectin' to leave the city. Here's her card."

Kate takes the card and glances at it. "I will come in a minute," she says, in an odd kind of voice. Then, while Susan turns away, she looks at Tarleton with a new light shining in her eyes, a new color burning on her face. "You said a moment ago that you would like for me to be by while you charged Florida Vaughn with deception and treachery," she says. "Are you sure of that? Would you be willing to stake everything—every hope and trust for the future—on the result of such an interview? Stop and think! Don't answer unless you are certain."

"There is no reason why I should stop and think," he answers. "I am positively certain. I have nothing to fear."

"Then," she says, with a quick thrill in her tone, "look at this card. Florida Vaughn is at Miss Brooke's house waiting for me."

(To be continued.)

#### CURIOUS LENTEN CUSTOMS.

In addition to the many old customs still kept up here and there throughout the country in connection with the season of Lent, several interesting particulars have been bequeathed to us of the way it was observed in days gone by. Thus Mr. Fosbroke tells us that ladies wore friars' girdles during Lent, and quoting from "Camden's Remains," narrates how Sir Thomas More, finding his lady one day scolding the servant in Lent, endeavored to restrain her. "Tush, tush, my lord!" said she; "look, here is one step to heavenward!" showing him a friar's girdle. "I fear me," said he, "that one step will not bring you one step higher." It appears, also, that it was formerly customary for persons to wear black clothes, allusions to which practice are of frequent occurrence in old writers. Amongst some of the customs now fallen into disuse may be mentioned one known as the "Jack o' Lent"—a puppet supposed to represent Judas Iscariot—and thrown at during Lent, like the Shrove cocks on Shrove Tuesday. This figure, made up of straw and cast-off clothes, was drawn or carried through the streets amid much noise and merriment; after which it was often either burnt, shot at, or thrown down a chimney. In Ben Jonson's "Tale of a Tub" it is thus noticed:—

"On one Ash Wednesday,  
When thou didst stand six weeks the Jack o' Lent,  
For boys to hurl three throws a penny at thee."

In years gone by, during Lent, an officer denominated the "King's Cock Crower" crowded the hour every night within the precincts of the palace, instead of proclaiming it in the ordinary manner. On the first Ash Wednesday after the accession of the House of Hanover, as the Prince of Wales, afterwards George II., was sitting down to supper, this officer suddenly entered the apartment, before the chaplain said grace, and crowed "nast ten o'clock." The astonished Prince, not understanding English, and mistaking the tremulation of the crow for mockery, concluded that the ceremony was intended as an insult, and instantly rose to resent it; when, with some difficulty, he was made to understand the nature of the custom, and that it was intended as a compliment, and according to Court etiquette. From that period the custom was discontinued. This idea of crowing the hour of the night was no doubt intended, says a correspondent of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1785 (vol. lv. p. 341), to remind waking sinners of the effect which the third crowing of the cock had on the guilty Apostle St. Peter; and the limitation of the custom to the season of Lent was judiciously adopted; as, had the practice continued throughout the year, the impatient would have become as habituated and as indifferent to the crow of the mimic cock as they are to that of the real one. At the present day, the Sundays in Lent are, after different fashions, noteworthy days; for all, excepting the first, are named in the old rhyme:

"There's Tid, Mid, and Misery,  
Carling, Palm, and Paste Egg Day."

These names being no doubt corruptions of some part of the ancient Latin service or psalms used on each. There are various versions of this rhyme, and one, formerly current in Nottinghamshire, is as follows:—

"Care Sunday, Care away,  
Palm Sunday and Easter Day."

The Fourth Sunday in Lent, however, has had the most epithets applied to it; one of its well-known nicknames being Simnel Sunday, because large cakes, called "Simnels," are made on this day. This custom, which has been kept up from time immemorial in Lancashire, is said by some to be in commemoration of the banquet given by Joseph to his brethren, which is the subject of the first lesson of Mid-Lent Sunday, whilst the feeding of the five thousand forms the Gospel for the day. At Bury, in Lancashire, thousands of persons come from all parts to eat simnels on this Sunday. Formerly, nearly every shop was open, quite in defiance of the law respecting the "closing" during service; but, happily, of late years the disorderly scenes to which the custom gave occasion have been partially amended. Herrick mentions, in his lines to Dianeme, this custom, entitled "A Ceremony in Gloucester."

"I'll to thee a simnell bring,  
Gaiest thou go'st a mothering;  
So that, when she bleaseth thee,  
Half that blessing thou'll give me."

Another name for Mid-Lent Sunday is "Mothering Sunday," a term which took its rise from the verse, "Jerusalem, which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all," occurring in the epistle for the day. In many parts of England it was customary for servants, apprentices, and others to carry presents to their parents on this day. The practice was called "going a-mothering," and originated in the offerings made on this day at the mother Church:

"On Mothering Sunday, above all other,  
Every child should dine with its mother."

This Sunday has also been termed "Braggot Sunday," from a sort of spiced ale, called "braggot," which is used in many parts of Lancashire on these visits. In Ben Jonson's masque of the "Metamorphosed Gipsies" there is the following reference to this word:

"And we have serv'd there, armed all in ale,  
With the brown bowl and charged in braggot stale."

Once more, Mid-Lent Sunday was known in years by as Rose Sunday, because this was the day on which the Pope blessed a golden rose, which was first carried in procession, and then given to the principal person then in Rome, although it was occasionally sent to some foreign king. The Fifth Sunday in Lent is popularly called "Care Sunday," a term which has given the etymologists much difficulty to explain. In the northern counties it also goes by the name of Carl or Carling Sundays from the custom of eating carlings, which are grey peas, steeped all night in water, and fried the next day with butter.—*Queen.*

#### FLIRTING.

It is the fashion nowadays with many people to deplore the "forwardness" of girls of the present day, and to speak regretfully of the good old times when Chloe never ran after Strephon, and Thyrsis passionately entreated Saccarissa's favor on his knees. With all respect to those who ask dolefully why the old times were better than the new, we venture to doubt whether the golden age they regret, ever existed except in the imagination of poets.

The "antique time," when all men were anxious to fulfil their destiny of matrimony, and when all maidens were coy, is rather difficult to fix a date to. To judge from Boccaccio's *Giletta*, whom Shakespeare transformed into his Helena, young ladies were forward in those times, to an extent that even the present day would deprecate; and in Richardson's and Miss Burney's novels we find the women pursuing the men as energetically, and the men as bent on eluding their fair pursuers, as some moralists are pleased to tell us is the case in the present year of grace.

But while we believe that men—especially rich men—have always had a wise and prudent fear of losing their liberty; and that even now there are sweet and gracious girls, whose exquisite maidenhood needs hard wooing, even from a worthy lover, we own that the difficulty of ensnaring human flies of the masculine gender into matrimonial toils increases every day. It is to this that we attribute the greater variety of invention displayed by those who weave a golden mesh to catch the souls of men in the present time, Evelyn and Harriet Byron had but a very limited number of snares in which to enthrall men, compared with the various nets a young lady of the present day can spread for a refractory suitor. The maidens of the last century could indeed whisper soft nothings over a tea-table, could ogle their admirers at the playhouse and opera, and coquette with them while "taking a turn" at Ranelagh, or between the pauses of an auction. But what was a minuet, or even a country dance, when compared to the opportunities of flirtation afforded by a waltz? And where, then, were the multitudinous devices, which society has invented for the benefit of marriageable girls? Where was the croquet, the lawn-tennis, the bringing the lunch to the men out shooting, the afternoon teas, the stolen cigarette enjoyed secretly with his connivance, in his company beneath the moonlight, the private theatricals? Read *Mansfield Park*, young ladies, and see what your grandmothers thought of that last amusement. Where were the days "over the muir, among the heather?" Where the thousand and one cobwebs, now spun by siren spiders, for the attraction of flies with gilded wings?

Yet it is not these cobwebs, that flies of the present day find the most dangerous to their freedom. Men have been so often warned of women's plots to entrap them, that they have become rather too wise, and are apt to imagine nets, where there is not the suspicion of a thread. The most dangerous snares, both for wary and unwary flies, are those which a girl lays unconsciously to herself. An English girl coming down to breakfast with a natural bloom on her face, her eye bright as if they had been washed that morning in May dew, and her hair sleek to her head, is more attractive, though she does not know it, nay, because she does not know it, than she is in a ball-room, dressed in her war paint. When a man falls really in love, he becomes a poet, for love is poetry, and therefore, when he first cares for a girl, it will be because he sees, or fancies he sees, a certain charm and freshness or nobleness about her, which lifts her in spirit above the ordinary crowd. In this, we think, may be found part of the reason that, though we have carried the machinery of flirtation to great perfection, an increased number of marriages hardly seems to

reward our pains; even if flies become entangled in the meshes spun for their enthralling, the glittering threads of the cobwebs are not strong enough to hold them, and they break away, leaving poor Arachne ashamed and disconsolate, with but her torn web for her pains. Often she cannot mend it, or if she does, her victim has warned other flies, and they laugh her snares to scorn.

Swift's advice to girls, to make cages rather than nets for the capture of lovers, is not out of date even in the present day; a man may escape the elaborately-spun and cunningly-devised nets of many experienced spiders, and willingly enter, and make his home for life, in a pure, modest, faithful heart. Happy for him and for the woman he marries, if he can never, by word or thought, reproach his wife for having made him unwittingly yield up his freedom! If he can declare, that when a man has won the love of a good and noble woman—

"Angels alone that soar above  
Enjoy such liberty."

#### NOTHING.

A great many articles have been written on great subjects, but perhaps none has ever appeared on nothing. What is nothing? Has it ever been seen, heard, touched, smelt or tasted? No! It is not perceptible to one of our senses. And yet what power does it not exercise, what mischief has it not done, what misery has it not brought, and what mystery has it not involved? But what a useful and convenient word this "nothing" is! It is uttered daily by high and low, old and young, the innocent and the guilty, and often to shield the many and varied emotions caused by sudden and perplexing inquiries.

A schoolmaster, better known for his simplicity than his learning, on being asked by a pupil, "What is nothing?" angrily replied with his usual phrase when puzzled, "Don't ask so many foolish questions: Nothing is nothing; if I had nothing I could show you nothing!"

An Irishman used the word to define "chaos," which he described as "A great lump of nothing, and nowhere to put it."

"Surely, master," exclaimed a servant, "you are not going to sack me. I have done nothing!"—"Ah, you scoundrel!" returns the master, "that is the very reason why I am going to discharge you."

"What have you in that bag?" demanded the policeman of the sneaking burglar.

"Nothing," replied the thief.

"What have you been doing in that orchard?" inquires the farmer of the boy with overloaded pockets.

"Nothing," is the answer.

"You look so sad," says a mother to a daughter; "what is the matter?"

"Nothing," answers the disappointed young lady with a sigh.

"What are you thinking about?"

"Nothing."

"What are you laughing at?" asks the gentleman with a bit of paper pinned to his back.

"Nothing," returns the mischievous little urchin.

A German candidate for holy orders was once required, as a test of his ability, to preach an extemporaneous sermon, the text of which he was to see after he had mounted the pulpit. On taking his place before the congregation, he found, to his surprise, that the paper was a blank. Undismayed, he exhibited it on one side, and commenced,—

"Dearly beloved brethren, here is nothing;" then showing the reverse, "And there is nothing. Out of nothing the world was created!" and, with this for his text, he preached an able sermon.

Great things indeed have arisen out of nothing, and ended in nothing. What has become of all the gigantic plans that Napoleon formed to conquer the world, before he found himself a prisoner in St. Helena?

Nothing.

What is the cause of so many wretched wars, domestic disagreements and party quarrels?

Nothing.

What becomes, when we awake, of our delightful dreams and beautiful visions?

Nothing.

And now, dear reader, these lines, intended to amuse, if not instruct, what do they amount to, and of what value do they treat?

Nothing.

NOBODY.

#### ECHOES FROM PARIS.

Place aux Dames—*Madame la Diable* is the title of a new piece which will be shortly produced.

THE fashion in duelling seems to be changing from the sword to the pistol. They must take care, or they may get hurt now.

A MARRIAGE is arranged between the daughter of Baron Gustave de Rothschild and M. Lambert, the agent of M. Rothschild in Brussels.

SEVERAL of the Paris hospitals are so crowded that several female patients are poorly accommodated with mattresses on the ground instead of proper beds.

THE approaching marriage is announced of Mlle. de Castellane, the granddaughter of Marshal Castellane, to Count de Ponthieu, a distinguished member of sporting circles.

THE wax-work gallery for Paris, after the fashion of Mme. Tussaud's, is about to be opened. The catalogue of the new museum has been published with a preface by the talented M. Albert Wolff.

THE death is announced of the celebrated Bertall. He was wise as well as witty, for he managed, after making the world laugh for many a year (that is to say separate laughs), to buy an estate, retire thither, and laugh at the world in his turn.

THE Baroness de G— is about to cross swords (foils) with the famous Baron de San Maritato; he has been challenged, and in France a lady is never refused. So certain are the friends of the baroness of her success, that heavy bets are being made that she will foil San Maritato.

Mlle. LOUISE ABREMA will send to the Paris Salon this year four female figures representing the seasons. They are all portraits of celebrated actresses; Mlle. Barretta posed for spring, Mme. Samary for summer, Mlle. Sarah Bernhardt for autumn, and Mlle. Reichenberg for winter.

M. LOUIS FIGUIER, the scientific writer, has hired the theatre of the Folies-Dramatiques for the summer season. He purposes producing a scientific drama in nine tableaux, "Denis Papin," another of the same sort entitled "Gutenberg," and a one-act play, "Le Mariage de Franklin."

MRS. MACKAY has expressed her indignation at the report that her daughter is engaged to Prince Philippe de Bourbon. She is very angry with the Prince for having left to her the task of contradicting the report, which she asserts was maliciously promulgated by a lady on the *Figaro* staff because she asked to be invited to Mrs. Mackay's balls and was refused.

THE modesty of musicians falls in no respect below that of painters. The other evening as one of them finished playing an unpublished *morceau* of his own composition and was at once surrounded by a complimenting and congratulating crowd: "Do not congratulate me," he said, with simplicity; "thank heaven, instead, for it bestows genius."

A PARIS compliment was paid to the distinguished author of the piece called "Vase Brisé" by a lady of title, who inquired all about him, and among the items, his age. "Fifty-three," was the reply. "What! fifty-three?" exclaimed the lady; and then, recovering herself, continued, "fifty-three; so young, and yet almost immortal." People who heard her, acknowledged her presence of mind, and saw in it also a pleasant dash of irony.

WE have been told that Weber having been seized with the happy thought for the huntsman's chorus for "Der Freischütz" while taking a walk in the country, and having no paper and pencil, chalked the notes on the back of a box and brought them home with him. A French composer out shooting the other day, is said to have pencilled a beautiful *air de chasse* on his gun, being in a bankrupt paper condition even to 1,000 franc notes.

SHORT dresses necessitate very elegant hosiery and slippers, and the silk stockings now shown are marvels of embroidery, of lace-like open work, and of literal lace, the whole covering of the instep in some instances being in black or white thread lace, according to the toilette wherewith these dainty articles of foot-gear are to be worn. Fine embroidery in colored beads is also shown. It was an aesthetic sight to witness the other day on the Boulevard Montmartre a pair of peacock-green silk stockings with a peacock feather embroidered on the instep in colored beads relieved with gold ones. This was only one of a series of very beautiful and striking patterns to be met with *en route*.

#### MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC.

"GIBOUETTE" is the latest musical success in New York.

WAGNER's "Lohengrin" is nearing its hundredth performance at Leipzig.

MR. ABBEY has engaged Del Puente to support Nilsson in his promised opera company.

MR. BOOTH goes to Europe at the conclusion of his present engagement in New York, and will be gone about a year.

HERMANN VEZIN has been offered an engagement in New York, but wants too high a salary.

THE greatest excitement prevails in musical New York over the forthcoming May Festival.

On the 10th of May next, M. Oscar Martel and Madame Martel will give a concert at Norddeutscher Hall.

THE Montreal correspondent of "Music," the New York weekly, tells the story of the Queen's Hall organ from the beginning.