

## A HAPPY CHANCE

A hot sun poured pitilessly down upon the gaily-decorated streets, on the long red line of soldiers on guard, on the densely-packed mass of people standing within the military lines on either side, a good-humored if impatient Dublin crowd. Long festoons of roses, hung from lamp-post to lamp-post, gaily caparisoned Venetian masts stood at intervals along the streets, flags of all colors and sizes drooped from the windows of the houses. All was life and color, bustle and excitement, for it was the occasion and of the state entry into Dublin of King Edward and his Queen.

On the topmost doorstep of a handsome city mansion stood a young girl, waiting with the rest to see the pageant go by. In a quiet corner beside her resting in a folding chair, sat a little boy of eight or nine, watching the whole busy scene with interested eyes, whose unnatural brightness was increased twofold by the hectic spots of color beneath them.

"The girl herself was young and slender, more than common tall, with something about the willowy figure and her slightly hollowed cheeks which gave one the impression that she, too, had outgrown her strength. She looked at the boy now with an anxious air as though doubting her own wisdom in having brought him so far and into such a crowd."

"I'm all right, Mab," he said, with a bright smile, in answer to her looks of tender inquiry. "I'm jolly comfortable here. But, I say, it's your turn now to have a rest, making an attempt to rise."

"Don't get up, Brendan," his sister said with gentle decision. "Don't you know I'd be quite doubled up if I attempted to sit in that seat? Can you see anything?"

"Oh, yes," cheerfully. "I suppose they'll soon be here."

"I hope so. You'll hear the cheers beginning afar off as soon as they come in sight."

A slight commotion in the crowd below her now distracted the girl's attention. Amidst a great deal of jostling and shoving, and some half-suppressed exclamations of annoyance, a little old lady pushed her way, or rather found herself pushed through the crowd. She clutched at the railings of the steps beside her as a drowning man will catch at a straw, and finding a sure footing on the lowest of Mabel's flight of steps, seemed determined not to budge an inch further from this safe harbor of refuge into which she had drifted.

Mabel from her own high vantage point looked down at the new comer with a certain feeling of compassion. She was a little woman, white-haired, very feeble, very old, utterly out of place in this thoughtless crowd without some one to protect and fight a way for her.

As Mabel watched her still clinging feebly to the railings, she saw how the old woman's breath came and went in quick gasps. Her bonnet was all askew, the pretty little bows of white curls which hung beneath it at each side of her face were tossed and disheveled. All at once the bright color which illumined the withered old cheeks faded into paleness. Her eyes closed; for a moment it seemed as though the old lady were about to faint. With a little cry of alarm, Mabel pushed her way down and put her arms supportively about the old woman.

"Thank you, my dear," the latter said, opening her eyes after a moment. "It is nothing. I'll be all right presently."

"There's a seat up here," Mabel told her. "If you could come up to it you would be better."

"Two or three pairs of willing hands were outstretched to help, and the old lady found herself half led, half lifted into the quiet corner which by silent consent on the part of the bystanders had been reserved for the delicate-looking boy."

"Thank you again, my dear," the old woman reiterated as Brendan quickly vacated his seat in her favor. "You are very good."

She sank gratefully into the folding chair.

"Don't talk too much yet," Mabel said gently. "Would you like some grapes? I had brought some for my brother, who is not very strong."

"Ah, yes, poor boy!" shaking her head. "He looks too thin. What do you give him? Milk, meat, eggs, cod liver oil? He needs all these things, and plenty of fresh air. You should take him to the country, my dear."

"Unfortunately," Mabel said, with a pitiful smile, "that is just what I am unable to do. My business keeps me in town."

"And is there no one else?"

"There is no one else. Both our parents are dead."

"Poor children!" the old lady said, tenderly. "Ah, well, God is good. I once had a delicate boy of my own. But he grew up so sturdy and independent of me that sometimes I am almost wicked enough to wish he had remained delicate. For nothing will do him but to travel the world over and leave his poor old mother desolate and alone. Isn't it cruel? Well, what a foolish old woman I was to get myself lost in this crowd! I wanted to get to my friend, Lady McDonnell—I live in the certain distance into the city my carriage would not be allowed any further. So, as I was determined to see their Majesties come in, I tried to make my way through the crowd on foot, and of course, it nearly killed me. But what is this, child? Lift the boy up! Can he see?"

"The King and Queen were coming. A great wave of human voices swept up along the crowded lines."

"The girl lifted her brother high in her arms that he might have a better view. The old lady had leapt to her feet, and stood straining her neck to catch sight of the royalties."

"Well, well, what a marvelous woman!" she was saying. "Not a day older, I do declare, than when we saw her at Punchestown, and my dear Edward, how long ago! Ah, my dear time has not dealt so tenderly with all of us."

Mabel saw that the old woman's eyes were filled with something suspiciously like tears as she waved with enthusiasm a tiny lace handkerchief in the air. In

another few minutes the last of the carriages had passed, the pageant was over for to-day.

"It was a great deal too short," the boy said, in tones of disappointment, as his sister, with a sigh of relief, set him again on the ground.

"Ah, wasn't it worth seeing, after all, Master Dissatisfied?" the old lady said sharply. "But now, my dears, I must be going on. My friend's house is not many doors away. What is your name, child? And do you live in this square?"

"Oh, no," Mabel answered. "We live at 23 C—street," mentioning the name of a well-known thoroughfare in a decaying part of the city, once a favorite place of residence with the old aristocracy, but now given over to the undisputed possession of tenement dwellers and cheap lodging house keepers. "My name is Mabel Plunkett, Brendan is my brother's name."

"Plunkett," the old lady repeated softly, a shade of tenderness sweeping over her face. "I once had some very dear friends of that name, but they are gone long since to the land of shadows. Perhaps I may come to see you some day, my dear."

Mabel murmured her thanks, somewhat shyly and awkwardly, it is true, being indeed embarrassed by the high honor threatened to be conferred on her. What would this finely-dressed old lady, who talked with such ease of her carriage and her titled friends, think of their own poor abode on the dingy top floor of a second-rate lodging-house? Kindly and gracious as was the old lady's manner, the girl hoped devoutly that she would forget her intention. But she need not have been afraid. Week after week went by and still there was no sign of the strange old lady coming to see them.

Mabel and her brother were wretchedly poor. The orphan children of a physician whose practice had lain in a poor part of London, and who himself, owing to long ill health, had died in poverty, they found themselves, at his death practically thrown on their own resources. That was to say, Mabel's resources, for Brendan could not be anything save a drain on her purse.

With part of the considerable sum realized by the sale of their furniture she and her brother had migrated to Dublin, where, as it was the city of her father's birth, the lonely girl felt she might be more at home. But it did not seem to make much difference: her father's friends seemed to have forgotten his existence and that of his family—at least no one sought to find them out. Luckily, the girl had musical talents, which, though there was little chance now of her being able to develop them gave hope at least of enabling her to make a living by teaching the piano. An advertisement inserted in the papers had brought her two or three pupils, who in turn recommended her to others of their friends.

During the months of winter and spring she had been fairly successful in making ends meet, but now that summer had come, most of her pupils had gone to the country or the seaside; the one or two that remained hardly sufficed to keep them in bread and butter alone. And then there were so many things to be thought of—the rent of their two little rooms, now long overdue; clothes for Brendan and herself, medicine and lectures for the boy, whose little strength seemed to fall him more than ever in those attic rooms, the roof since the hot days of summer arrived.

Only yesterday the landlady had told her in no uncertain tones that if she did not pay the rent by the end of the week they would have to leave. Mabel had a wild idea of disguising herself somehow and setting out to sing for pence in the streets. The idea did not appeal to her though there was little that she would not have done to bring back the roses to Brendan's pale cheeks, to see his worn, shrunken little limbs covered with firm, healthy flesh once more.

If there was even anything that she could sell. But there was nothing; no jewels, no plate, nothing worth selling except that little gold locket belonging to her mother set with diamonds and pearls, which the miniature of her dear father inside—her father not as she knew him, bent, gray-headed and broken but young and handsome, with smiling eyes and a brave and confident air. Ah, no; she could not part with that—and yet if Brennie were to die!

The boy was inexpressibly dear to her. What kind of a world would it be without Brennie? A vision flashed across her mind of a little wooden coffin being slowly carried down the long, dark stairs and out into the sunshine and down the noisy street, to be laid in a lonely pauper's grave. With a half-stifled sob of anguish she threw herself down beside the boy enfolding him in a passionate motherly embrace.

"What's the matter, Cis?" he asked in surprise, laying aside the illustrated boy's paper in the reading of which he had been thus rudely disturbed.

"Nothing, darling." She had always been careful to hide her troubles from him. "I was only thinking of something that might happen."

"Just like a girl! Fancy anybody crying over something that might happen! You were crying, Cis—your eyelashes are wet. Hello! What's up with her now?"

"Her" had reference not to his sister, but to Mrs. Mulrooney, their landlady whose surly and disrespectful behavior lately had not been entirely lost on the boy, and whose well-known rap was now heard at the door of the room.

"Come in," Mabel said in loud tones, jumping up hastily and brushing away a tear.

The door opened, and to her astonishment, Mabel caught sight of her landlady's countenance, smiling obsequious and refreshingly guileless of a frown as she entered to hide her dress on the lady into the apartment, announcing the visitor's name in mincing tones as "Mrs. Browne Cooper." To Mabel's surprise she saw it was none other than the same old lady whom they had met on the day of the royal entry.

"Why, my dear children, what a dreadful height you are! I'm quite out of breath," gladly sinking into the chair which Brennie brought forward. "No, not a bit good of me, child," as Mabel ventured to thank her for coming. "I ought to have found you out long ago; but I was busy, and other things put you out of my mind."

Her keen eyes traveled round the apartment, refreshingly neat and tidy, for all its bareness and poverty, then rested inquiringly on Mabel's face. Perhaps, she, too, saw that the girl's eyelashes were wet, for she turned towards Brennie as though to find in him an answer to a question suddenly arisen.

"Well, what's the matter with you, young sir? What about getting off to the country for a month or two eh?"

Mabel looked at her doubtfully. Could it be possible that this kind old lady herself meant to help them?

"What have you been doing to yourselves? Tell me what you had for your breakfast this morning?"

"Tea and bread and marmalade," Mabel answered, forgetting to be offended by the old lady's brusqueness.

"And what will you have for your dinner?"

"The girl hesitated.

"Tea and bread and marmalade again I suppose; and tea and bread and marmalade, or bread without the marmalade, for your supper later. Is that it? Don't deceive me, child; I know."

Mabel nodded silently, feeling all at once that she wanted to throw herself at the feet of this kind if inquisitive old body, and by telling her all her troubles lift half the weight of them off her own young heart.

"I thought so. Well, well, we must change all that. Have you any money in the house? What is that you've got in your hand, child? Ah, a locket I see, and a pretty one, my dear. That old-fashioned bit of enamel is beautiful. Whom have you in it? Your sweetheart? May I look?" She glanced at the girl with bright, questioning eyes.

"It is my father," Mabel said.

The old lady snapped open the locket, then gave a cry of surprise that was almost painful.

"Your father, child? Was Roderick James Plunkett your father?"

"That was papa's name," Mabel answered, wondering much how her visitor should know it.

The old lady was silent, looking from the face in the locket back to Mabel and the boy with eyes that were dimmed with tears.

"My child," she said then, "your father and I were very dear friends a long time ago. We did hope, both of us, to be something more than friends one day, but it was willed otherwise. Roderick Plunkett was a poor country doctor, and I was an heiress, the only child of my parents, who wished a wealthier match for me. We drifted apart—he to earn a living in London, and I, weakly, into a marriage which, though it gave me riches, a good husband and a dear son, yet never brought me the heart happiness I had dreamt of. Poor Roddy! What a happy chance it was that brought me here! I never heard that your father was married, child. He must have married late in life."

"I believe he did," Mabel assented. "He was not very successful at his profession, but he had had health—heart trouble it was—for nearly as long as I remember."

"My dear, he would have been successful if I had married him," she replied with an air of conviction. "I broke his heart. I broke his heart. Poor Roddy, poor Roddy," she went on in a dreamy, sorrowful way, till at last she seemed to remember where she was.

"Now, children," she said, "you must come with me at once, my carriage is at the door."

"But—" Mabel began.

"There are no buts, I am going out straight to my country home, and a little fresh air will do neither of you any harm. What do you owe this woman downstairs?"

Mrs. Browne Cooper was a close student of human nature, and had shrewdly gathered from the landlady's first manner that her lodgers on the topmost floor were not just now in her best graces. It was useless for Mabel to protest or prevaricate. She would pay the landlady's bill, and they should go with her.

"My dear, I am 'she' who must be obeyed," this self-willed old lady said with a smile. "Long ago in my youth I got the best happiness of my life by being weak-willed and too easily led but I have atoned for it ever since. Now I make up my mind to have what I want, and I generally get it, too."

Mabel, not ill pleased to have to obey this beneficent tyrant, now packed up their few personal belongings, and, having paid, by her visitor's orders, the landlady's bill out of her visitor's money a few minutes later she and Brennie were seated comfortably in Mrs. Browne Cooper's laundau and driving rapidly away from the scene of so many unhappy hours.

It was quite a long drive to Killardycce, Mrs. Browne Cooper's country residence, which, as Brennie remarked, to that lady's evident pleasure, might better have been called "Paradise" instead. Such woods, and fields, and lakes, with gardens and orchards, terraces and greenhouses, flowers and sunshine and running rivers—everything that was sweetest and loveliest in the whole glad world!

"Why, my dears, it is just dinner time," the old lady said, as the carriage swept round the corner of a big, old-fashioned mansion and stopped before the imposing front entrance. "And this is my son, child," she went on, as a tall, sunburnt young man came forward and helped his mother to alight. "I did not tell you, did I, that my wanderer had returned? This is Miss Mabel Plunkett, Gerald, and my brother Brendan, the children of an old and very dear friend. I have persuaded them to come—much against their will, indeed—to stay a few weeks with us here."

The young man lifted a pair of very pleasant, kindly brown eyes to Mabel's blue ones.

"You are welcome to Killardycce," he said simply. And looking into those honest eyes of his, Mabel felt at once that they two would be friends.

The month had lengthened into two or three, and still there is little sign of Mabel Plunkett returning to her weary routine of musical tuitions. The girl has wound herself quietly around the heart of her benefactress, who treats her as a dear daughter for whose love she had always been lonely. Mrs. Browne Cooper's every day grows stronger; the color has come back to his wan cheeks. The household at

Killardycce is a singularly happy one, and since "the wanderer" seems at last to have found a pleasant and safe anchorage in Mabel's tender heart, there is now little likelihood that his mother will again be bereft of him.—Nora Tynan O'Mahony.—New World.

## BARKER &amp; CO.'S TRIP FOR TWO

By Virginia Dupuy Holton, in the Blue Book Magazine.

"Haven't you got my shirt ironed yet, Ma?"

"The irritability in the tone was unmistakable; Mrs. Wicks heard, and bent lower over the board."

"I'm on the last sleeve now, Henry," she called back, quickening her stroke as she spoke.

By this time her son, a student at the big university only a few blocks away, had reached the kitchen door.

"I told you yesterday morning that I wanted my green-striped shirt to wear to the 'frat' lunch to-day, he complained."

"I know you did, dear," answered his mother patiently, "but I haven't had a minute till this morning. Yesterday I had six extra cakes to bake for the Exchange," she explained, "and the icing had to cool before I could take them down. As soon as I got back, I had to mend and press that tear in your pa's every-day suit, so he wouldn't have to wear his best one again to-day—and the side room had to be got ready to show. I wonder if I'll get any answers to my advertisement," she added with sum-moned cheerfulness.

"Well, I suppose I'll have to be late," grumbled the boy, manifesting no interest in his mother's latest sacrifice of moving back to the room off the kitchen in order to rent the one in the middle of the flat.

A few minutes later Mrs. Wicks drew the coveted shirt from the board; her steps dragged wearily as she carried it the length of the flat to her son's room, off of the parlor.

"I'll put your buttons in," she offered, unconsciously fostering his dependence upon her, which now amounted to almost complete helplessness.

"Did Pa leave the money for my dues?" he asked when ready to start.

"Yes, I'll get it," and again Mrs. Wicks plodded the distance of the hall to the room where she had hidden the money in the leaves of her Bible.

"Is this all he left?" the boy asked, counting it over.

"Isn't that enough, dear?" inquired his mother anxiously.

"No, I've got to have \$5 more; I told them I'd take one of the 'frat' pictures and I have to buy my tickets for the 'prom' to-day, besides."

Bewildered, but questioning, she trudged back once more to the hiding place and brought a \$5 bill she had been saving toward renting a piano; Henry's friends liked to have one to play on when they came to see him.

The boy took the money and without word, thoughtlessly slammed the door upon a misty-eyed little woman who stood waiting and hoping for a parting caress.

She crossed the room to the front window. With a buoyant step he swung along, whistling a tune as gay as the tri-colored hat band, now a part of the insignia worn by a student.

Mrs. Wicks brushed away a tear with her apron as she turned from the window to the soul-wearingly repetition of her daily duties.

They had lately moved near the university, that it might be more convenient for Henry to attend. True it was that the rent was higher, but Mrs. Wicks had taken her second wind, and by securing the privilege of doing some baking for the Woman's Exchange, was able to add enough to her husband's meagre salary to make up that deficit.

The location they now lived in necessitated Mr. Wick's starting a half hour earlier in the morning, and a longer walk for him at each end of the line, but both of the parents, although in the fifties, were ready for any sacrifice in order that Henry might get an education. Of just what the education so dearly bought, would be after it was acquired, was not clear to any one, least of all to Henry himself.

The ringing of the bell brought Mrs. Wicks once more down the long hall. She grabbed her white apron from its hook, slipping it over her dark gingham as she went. Her step this time held more of hopeful elasticity.

She opened the door and found a dark-eyed, slender girl before her.

"I came in answer to your advertisement for a roomer," he called explained, in a voice whose youthful freshness at once had a vivifying effect upon Mrs. Wicks' ebbing spirits.

"Step in, won't you?" said the older woman, "and I will show you the room."

But even in the reflection of this radiating cheer, Mrs. Wicks was not able to wholly vanish her disappointment that the applicant was a young lady, instead of a young man, who would be away all day.

Mrs. Wicks' next door neighbor, had a young lady roomer who was either entertaining her friends in the parlor, or pressing her clothes in the kitchen. These dismal forebodings were interrupted by the same mellifluous voice, saying: "This would be splendid!" as she entered the small but fresh-looking room, with its spotless curtains and counterpane. "How much would it be?"

"Ten dollars a month," replied Mrs. Wicks, mentally placing each dollar of the amount.

"Couldn't you give me my breakfast and dinner?" the girl pleaded. "I am a student at the university and I wait on the table up there at noon, so I wouldn't be here for lunch. I could pay \$5 a week for room with board," she added, sweetly persistent.

Mrs. Wicks brooded gloomily. Could she cook and wash dishes, sheets and towels for another? Each day became more pitilessly exacting, each day demanded more, yet took relentlessly its toll from her sparse store of strength. If it only lasted until Henry got his education!

Her answer was one of characteristic selfishness:

"I'll try it, Miss!"

"Oh, thank you!" and the girl caught her hardened hand in an impulsive little squeeze, which brought an unbidden catch to Mrs. Wicks' dry throat.

"And may I come this afternoon?" her new boarder asked as they reached the front door.

"Any time—the room's there and ready now," replied Mrs. Wicks, who felt much as if she had already received a payment in advance.

"Good-by! I'm sure we're going to like each other!" the girl said with friendly spontaneity and was gone.

After closing the door upon this animated sunbeam, Mrs. Wicks mused for a moment upon the capricious dispensation of Providence in the matter of dispositions.

That night she put another leaf in the table, set her artificial fernery in the center of it and cooked an extra vegetable for dinner.

The new boarder, Mabel Martin by name, soon overcame the restraint at the table, dreaded by the retiring Mr. Wicks, while Henry's displeasure over his mother's move gradually gave way to a curiosity over the new-comer.

"I taught last year in order to get enough to come to the university for a year," she was saying. "It will help me in getting a better place to teach next year. Then by waiting on the table noons, and helping Miss Beggs in the Extension Department after hours, I get along very well," she ended, with frank simplicity.

Henry listened in silence.

"Don't you get all tired out?" inquired the astonished Mrs. Wicks. "Henry seems to have all he can do with his university work, don't you, son?"

"I'm afraid I'm not so energetic as Miss Martin," Henry answered, abashedly.

His university work included a major portion devoted to his fraternity, and a minor portion given to his studies. But he displayed a brilliant mind at the rare intervals when he chose to apply himself.

He quickly caught the unwitting reflection in the naive assertion of this slender, frail looking girl, that she was largely working her way through the university. And again he resented her presence; that, after her own day's work, she should now be insisting upon helping his mother with the dishes only disturbed and perplexed him the more.

When Mrs. Wicks went to put her new boarder's room in order the following morning she found the bed had been made and everything done. The shades had been drawn to keep out the glare and heat of midday.

"That ain't right when she's payin' me to do the work," Mrs. Wicks commented out loud to herself.

And as she turned away, the daily deepening wrinkles in her face—a face chastened by a long epoch of character building—mellowed with a new tenderness.

"I wish Providence had given me a daughter, too!" she sighed, tremulously, and went back to look at her cakes.

Upon protesting to the little dark-eyed girl that evening the answer was: "Why, that little exercise before breakfast is good for one!" Then she added: "I've got up at five!" so my bed has plenty of time to air," suddenly fearing that Mrs. Wicks's objection might have arisen from sanitary reasons.

Henry stared blankly at this information and found himself fervently hoping his mother would refrain from betraying his rising hour.

When he took Miss Martin into the parlor to show her the new picture of his fraternity he was suddenly met with the question:

"What science are you preparing to follow, Mr. Wicks?"

"Me—oh—I don't know—yet!" he stammered, confusedly.

"Do you mean you are going through the university with no specific end in view?" with frank surprise.

For a sympathetic intuition, beyond her eighteen years, enabled Mabel Martin to read the self-denial and hard work graven with ineradicable lines upon Mrs. Wicks' sallow face and in the eyes of Mr. Wicks, where the fire of hope no longer shone.

Henry's handsome boyish face flushed painfully as he quickly sensed the rebuke so artlessly administered him.

"Don't you believe in higher education for its own sake?" he argued, half-heartedly.

"That depends upon one's circumstances in life," she answered earnestly. "If one can afford it, I know of no greater privilege, but to others, I believe, it should be only a means to an end."

These naive utterances, which at first merely piqued Henry's interest, had gradually assumed the form of a challenge to his own more frivolous views.

A sudden quickening of perception came to him, when, by mistake, he opened a letter which had come to his father. It proved to be a notice of suspension for non-payment of lodge dues.

The boy went quietly to his room with the letter. He sat staring at the words with clear, steady eyes. His thoughts traveled back to the days when he had been more intimate in the knowledge of home life, and he recalled his father's custom of attending his lodge regularly. He remembered his mother's laughing protest that she believed he thought more of it than he did of her.

Something alive now glowed within him! The money he had planned to spend on the "prom," would go far toward the amount of the delinquent dues named in this letter!

He at once sought his mother at the kitchen, her voice rang out in laughter. It was so long since she had laughed aloud that the sound actually startled him. On the back porch she and Mabel Martin sat hulling berries for a short-cake.

He could not prom tell her of his decision to sell the "prom" tickets he had so thoughtlessly bought. After all, Miss Martin's society on that evening would not be a bad substitute, he thought as he stood in the back door, until he was reminded by the object of his thoughts that he was letting in the flies by keeping the screen open.

"Make yourself useful, sir!" she commanded, sweetly.

"May I eat one once in a while as a sort of partial payment?" he laughed as he drew up an empty soap box, sat down

beside them, and commenced hulling from the bowl. His mother's hands dropped motionless in her lap. Nor could she understand the reason for his uncommonly high spirits as he worked. Such is the heaven of sacrifice!

The following Sunday Mabel sat reading the paper in the parlor while Henry strummed dreamily upon his mandolin, watching her slender white hands in the manipulation of the big sheets which hid her face in such an aggravating manner.

Suddenly she dropped the sheet to her lap and said: "Do you know what I'd do if I only knew enough?"

"I wouldn't presume to guess, but whatever it is, I don't see why you should hesitate on account of insufficient mental equipment," Henry answered, gallantly.

"It's my colossal 'mental equipment' that tells me my limitations," she laughed. "Here's a most tempting offer—listen!"

"A trip for two—Four days on the water and ten days at the finest hotel in Mackinac for the best phrase sent to us before June 1st, advertising Barker & Co's Toilet Soap. Must be short and pithy in the exposition of the soap's merits."

"If I got it, I would present the trip to your father and mother!"

The mandolin was suddenly silenced.

"They do need it, don't they?" he answered.

The gay bantering tone of a moment earlier was now subdued and thoughtful.

When Mabel dropped the paper to go and set the table—one of the many responsibilities she insisted upon assuming—Henry quickly folded it and put it in his pocket. Most of the afternoon he spent in his room, and when he emerged he carried an envelope which he immediately carried to the post-box on the corner.

One by one he had treasured the fragmentary bits of philosophy, dropped as pearls from the mouth of the frail looking girl with the darkling eyes, and had woven them together into a beautiful fabric. In his day-dreams it encircled her and set her apart, and while he coveted, being yet unworthy, dared not approach.

Even the breakfast table was now made gayer by her presence. He no longer reserved his jokes and laughter for the ears of the fraternity walls, but occasionally succeeded in bringing a hearty laugh to the grimly-lined face of his father. This invariably enabled Mrs. Wicks to relish her own cooking.

An envelope, bearing the name of Barker & Co., in one corner, found its way to Henry's chiffonier. He tore it hastily open and rushed to Mabel's room, knocking vigorously.

Fearful, yet expectant, she quickly opened the door.

"Oh! I thought perhaps your knock was a fire alarm," she laughed.

"I'm wishing quite as thrilling!" he assured her while with boyish enthusiasm, he took her by the hand and led her to the light of the parlor window.

"Read that!" he commanded with mock severity.

"How splendid of you!" she cried, as she handed him back the announcement that he had won "Barker & Co's Trip for Two."

"You go and tell her!" he said. "It was you who thought of it, you know!"

"Nonsense! You did it!" she declared. "You go and I'll wait here."

"No," he protested, "we'll both go then."

And again taking her by the hand, they fairly ran down the hall together. Mrs. Wicks was just closing the oven door when they burst in upon her. Each wanted to give the other the pleasure of telling her.

"You tell her; she's your mother."

"There was no disputing this right, so Henry first told the facts, giving Mabel all of the credit. Then he described the trip in a most dazzling manner.