

handkerchief in my breast pocket, with the corner just visible, as I went. This was to mop up Nettie's happy tears. I was soon ringing the front-door bell of Mr. Garnett's house and waiting for admittance.

Nettie seemed very glad to see me, and, I thought rather embarrassed, as she walked across the room, opened the window, and sat down beside it. She looked very sweet and demure with her hands folded in her lap and her brown eyes downcast, while her pretty curls played around her shoulders in the breeze and danced merry jigs on her white forehead. She was dressed in blue, and how I loved her! After tea I said: "Come back into the parlor, Nettie, I want to tell you something."

"Perhaps you would rather go into the garden, Mr. Rivers; the moon is shining and it is so cool and pleasant there."

I drew her hand through my arm and went down the walk together. I had planned out just how I should propose, and had written an elegant speech that would quite overpower and confuse her, while I, in perfect self-composure, would take the blushing, sobbing little thing in my arms and dry her tears with the aid of my waxed mustache and pink handkerchief.

I delivered my speech with all the eloquence I could command, and paused a second for it to take desired effect. But it didn't do it.

Nettie burst into a peal of laughter, which rang in my ears for many days, and, as soon as she could stop laughing, said:

"Why, Nat! You great strutting simpleton; do you suppose that I would marry you! When I marry I want a man whom I shall not be ashamed to call husband—a man that I shall be proud of; a man that has a more humble opinion of Number One than you have—a man too brave to boast of his talents and power."

I tried to appear indignant and walked away. As I walked home that night I was, for the first time in my life, heartily ashamed of myself. I was afraid she would tell it, and every one would be laughing at me.

"When I got home I procured an auger and slipped out a little distance from the house, where stood a large maple-tree many years old. I glanced cautiously around, and, seeing no one, I knelt down and raked the soil away with a stick and bored a hole in the

trunk close to the ground, and wrapping the ring that I had bought for Nettie up in a silken mop I stuffed it in the auger-hole and stopped the hole up with a plug of wood. I scratched the dirt back to hide the place, and shaking my fist at it, I turned away.

My love for Nettie began to decrease faster and with much less ceremony than it had taken form. You can scarcely imagine how mean I did feel, and the last straw was added a few weeks later in the shape of an invitation to Nettie's wedding with Phil Clayton. You bet I didn't go. They moved out west and I wandered around nearly all over the continent, wishing I could find another girl who could take Nettie's place in my heart.

"At last I found her, after a great deal of conceit had been knocked out of me, for Nettie's lesson proved a good one. She was a sweet, dainty little widow; and I loved her quite as much as I loved Nettie. By and by I whispered my secret to her and met with a favorable reception. And ten years from the time that Nettie refused me I was married to little Mrs. Arnold, though not until afterward did I know that I was Nettie Garnett's third husband. But she was all the dearer to me.

### BOSTON BOB.

No one was better known in the neighborhood of the Battery ten years ago than old "Boston Bob." Bob was a character. His surname was Stewart, but few of his most intimate acquaintances dared to call him anything but Bob to his face or to speak of him behind his back by any other name than Boston Bob. Although Bob was very close in money matters there was nothing mean about him. No one ever saw him spend any money except for the absolute necessities of life, yet no one ever spoke of him as a miser.

The unfortunate ones always had Bob's sympathies. His advice and any assistance that he could render which did not cost money was freely offered to whomsoever stood in need of it. He always seemed cheerful. He was always ready to listen to a good story, and never failed to repay his entertainer with an anecdote equally amusing. He was not usually averse to a moderate amount of liquor, but he never bought any himself. But he was never known to hang around a bar-