

Mr. Raven. "Let me see—how old are you?"

"Seventeen, sir," said Elsie in a low voice.

"And I am seven-and-thirty!" said Mr. Raven slowly. "Do I seem like a very old man in your eyes, Elsie?"

She shook her head, and then, emboldened by the fact that Uncle Joseph had disappeared, and Aunt Betsey was drawing water at the well, she added:

"When I write my novel, I shall make the hero just like you. I won't call him Raven, lest people should find out; but Ravenburn, or Belraven, or some such name. You won't mind, sir, will you?"

Mr. Raven smiled a strange, serious smile.

"Elsie," said he, "would you like to come and live at the Manor House?"

Elsie's dusk face brightened.

"Oh, so much!" she cried. "But Mrs. Perkins don't want me; she says I'm too flighty and too young."

"Elsie, you misunderstood me," said Mr. Raven, with another smile. "I don't mean as Mrs. Perkin's assistant—I mean as my wife."

A sudden crimson flooded Elsie's face, neck and throat. All of a sudden the scales seemed to fall from her eyes; the world stood before her in its true colors. She was a maiden out of the pages of romance. Robert Raven was her lover. He took her hand tenderly in his.

"Elsie," he said, "could you teach yourself to love me? For I love you with all my heart."

And she cried, "Oh, yes! Oh, yes!" and laid her flushed face across on his shoulder, and wept and smiled in turns.

She had entered the room a child; she went out a woman, leaning on her lover's arm. Even Uncle Joseph noticed the change, and Aunt Betsey vaguely wondered what had come to "our Elsie."

So Elsie's problem was solved. She went to be lady at the Manor House, to gladden the heart of this modern King Cophetua who had fallen in love with the nineteenth century Beggar Maid. And as her dark beauty bloomed out into perfect loveliness, people wondered that they had been so blind.

But Mr. Raven said quietly:

"I knew it all along. When first I saw her picking daisies in the park, I knew that she was the most beautiful creature in all the country. I fell in

love with her then, and I have been in love with her ever since."

But to Elsie the whole thing seems like a dream out of the Arabian Nights.

The triennial conclave of Knights Templar of the United States, will open its session in St. Louis on September 21.

"The principles inculcated in our system of instruction, when respected and adhered to in our intercourse with each other, must strengthen the bond of union, increase the ties of fellowship, command the respect due to our position, promote the harmony of the Order, and thereby render honor to the Fraternity."

ATTRACTIVE LEGEND.—"Apprentice Pillar" is the so-called and well-known pillar in the Chapel of Rosslyn Castle, with which an old Scottish Masonic legend has long been linked. The pillar has been described as a fluted shaft, with a floral garland wreathed around it. The legend is as follows:—"The Master Mason had to go away, some say to Rome, for some purpose connected with the plans of the building. During his absence, which was prolonged, a clever apprentice, a widow's son, either from the plans, or by his own genius, carved and completed the pillar out of the solid stone. When the master returned and found the pillar erected, he was so jealous of the success of his apprentice, that he killed him with one blow on the forehead by a heavy setting maul. To prove this legend to be a fact, visitors to the spot are still shown three carved heads in the eastern part of the chapel, the master's, the apprentice's, with a mark on his forehead, and the mother's. Some, however, believe that these three heads are mystical, and are meant to point to a well known legend of our Order, familiar to our Master Masons. If so, this is an undesigned evidence to the antiquity of Freemasonry and its traditions."