A KISS IN THE WOODS.

Clayford was an isolated little village, almost destitute of the intellectual activities that characterize most inland villages of its size.

Despite this mental and spiritual dearth, it was a fact that Clayford was the home of some very pretty and attractive young ladies, whatever else might be said of the young men. Certainly dainty Mattie Crondit, queenly Helen Murray and her sister Kate were maidens upon whom a connoisseur of female charms might have deigned to bestow more than a passing glance.

Now, if there was anything Clayford as a community excelled in it was gossip. Its proficiency in this was not to be wondered at, perhaps, considering the fact that every family worth considering at all was related by natural ties or by marriage to every other family; and it was perfectly natural that anything affecting one individual was a matter of interest to all the others; and so when Charley Brouse entered the church on probation it was a subject for widely different comment from every member of this heterogeneous family.

The fraternity at the store loudly declared that Charley Brouse never had known how to be civil, and now he never would know; while, on the other hand, the church members set their seal upon it that Charley Brouse was destined for a great and shining career; and in this circle of popular opinion he became the "bright particular star." Long before his six months' probation was at an end he was by acclamation elected superintendent of the Sabbath school, and more than ever, if possible, mammas doted upon him, and stern fathers held him up to luckless sons as a pattern of excellence.

Just previous to this event the shrewdest of Clayford's female gossips had promulgated her firm belief that "Charley Brouse had a kind of hankering after Kate Murray, and as for Kate, la! she'd snap at the chance any minit." But her story had not gained much credence, for Kate had numerous beaux, such as they were, and no one else had observed that he had paid more attention to her than to any of the other pretty girls.

However, as time wore on, these "signs" became more apparent, and the anxiety to learn just how matters stood between the two became almost an epidemic. Every inhabitant of mature years had his or her private reason for wishing to know. Parents with eligible children considered possible future alliances with the Brouse or Murray family; young ladies alternately hoped and sighed, and their brothers mentally vowed to "make things warm" for Charley Brouse.

At this juncture in affairs, which threatened to become serious, a Sabbath-school picnic, the only public amusement the church society ever indulged in, and to which even the store sent its quota of delegates, was held in the forest skirting the bank of the little lake. It was the event of the season, instituted each year solely for the children's benefit, and to the credit of the elders be it confessed this holiday contributed not a little to their enjoyment. The lake offered its placid surface to those who cared to risk their lives in a few weather-beaten boats drawn high upon the beach, and the "forest primeval" held many a sylvan retreat for rustic lovers and places of concealment for the boys and girls who scampered among its shadows in the game of "hide-and-seek," and it was amid this scene and while deep in the mysteries of this game, that little Ada Billings, by a lucky chance was able to throw more light on the subject engrossing the public mind than the ablest of Clayford's gossip mongers had done.

Some spiteful women, who were not warmly attached to Ada's mother, said afterward that Ada had followed Charley and Kate in their rambles to spy upon them, and that her mother had "set her up to it," but others declared it was pure accident, for their children were playing with her all the time. For a few days this contested point absorbed the public mind and tongue almost to the exclusion of the discovery made and the war of words ran high.

On good authority it is safe to say the child was innocent of intentional spying, and only in the zest of animal spirits had run away from her comrades, thinking they would hunt for her, and so stumbled upon a scene that caused her little heart to beat fast with a new sensation and her eyes to open wide like two big blue fringed gentians. In this state of open-mouthed wonderment she stood an instant and then turned and ran as swiftly as her little feet could carry her straight to her mother, who was sitting in a circle of Clayford's best people. Flushed, tearful and dripping with perspiration she flung herself, face downward, into her mother's lap.

"Why! Ada, what ails the child?" exclaimed Mrs. Billings, giving her a a vigorous shake. But Ada only buried her face deeper and did not answer.

"Ada, sit right up and tell me what's the matter, this instant," demanded Mrs. Billings, half impatiently, yet with some concern in her voice.

Thus adjured Ada slowly raised herself, and still keeping her face hidden by her hands, said between her sobs:

"I—saw—the—superintendent — kissing — Kate—Murray—boo—hoo!"

The circle looked aghast.

"Where? When?" gasped Mrs. Billings excitedly.

"Over there in the woods. I didn't mean to see it," faltered the child.

It was a thrilling moment for Mrs. Billings. The knowledge all Clayford was almost dying of curiosity to learn lay right here in her hands. She determined to make the most of her opportunity.

"Ada," she solemnly commanded, "jest you go right on and tell us all about this—don't you skip a word," holding up one finger threateningly.

With drooping head and scarlet cheeks the abashed child continued: "I was runnin' along on the sand, and was jest stoppin' to turn round an' go back, when I heard somethin', an' I looked up the bank an' I saw the superintendent and Kate Murray gettin' up from a seat; and his arm was 'round her, an'—an' he kiss't her—an'—an' hugged her; an' he kept his arm 'round her, an' they came this way, an' I run back—that's all."

"You're sure that's all?" urged Mrs. Billings, anxiously.

At this instant the couple under discussion sauntered into view, calm, unruffled and sedate, and only those who had just learned their secret knew the meaning of the glad light in their eyes and the brilliant bloom on Kittie's face.

"I do declare, they make a purty couple," whispered Mrs. Blackman to her companions.

And so said all Clayford when it had become accustomed to the fact that it was really to be a match; but little Ada could never again quite reconcile the solemn, dignified superintendent and the proper young lady who sung like an angel in Sabbath school with the sentimental pair she had overtaken in the woods.

—Henry Clement, Almonte, writes: "For a long time I was troubled with chronic rheumatism, at times wholly disabled; I tried anything and everything recommended, but failed to get any benefit, until a gentleman who was cured of rheumatism by Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil, told me about it. I began using it both internally and externally, and before two bottles were used I was radically cured. We find it a household medicine, and for croup, burns, cuts and bruises it has no equal."

—For liver complaint, dyspepsia, and sick headache use West's Liver Pills. All druggists. ed

Cremation of the Calmuck Lama.

From the London Times.

On the 26th of last month (January), in the neighborhood of a small town of Vetlianka, on the right bank of the Volga, the cremation of the lately deceased Lama of the Calmuck people was celebrated. For seven days the body of the Lama, seated in an iron armchair, was exposed in the Khouroul to the gaze of his followers. It was then placed on a sort of esplanade, and what may be called a brick oven was constructed around the deceased. This was then filled with combustibles, which were ignited to the strains of Calmuck music, and the cremation was completed in the presence of a large audience, many of whom were Russians. The late Lama was exceedingly popular, and he is the last of his rank, as the Russian Government has decided to suppress this priestly office.

—For coughs, colds, and all throat and lung diseases use West's Cough Syrup. All druggists. ed

—Use the safe, pleasant and effectual worm killer, Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator; nothing equals it. Procure a bottle and take it home.

GAMBLING AT MONTE CARLO.

Selfish Greed for Money in which Death is the Profit.

From the Boston Commercial Bulletin.

There was, as an attache later informed me, an unexceptionable assemblage of players at our table [Monte Carlo] that evening. Opposite to where I sat was a cadaverous-looking old woman whose selfish greed caused her to eagerly clutch at the stakes whenever she was fortunate enough to win. The revolting expression of her face, if at that moment caught and faithfully transferred to canvas by a painter, would rendor the latter immortal. One individual present appeared to attract more than ordinary attention. Tall, well proportioned, and with a frank, open countenance, he seemed to have entered the game for the sole purpose of winning the entire capital held by the croupier. The latter regarded him with evident uneasiness as he coolly proceeded to double all bets and invariably win. At length he staked 2000 francs on the turn, and with a cynical smile arose, having performed what is regarded as the extraordinary feat of breaking the bank, after which all play was suspended at that particular table.

Gamblers are, perhaps, the most superstitious of any class of people alive, none being more so than the roulette dealers at Monte Carlo. Hence it invariably follows that whenever the bank is broken the play of the unlucky dealer ceases until the following day under the belief that the fortune of both parties will meanwhile change.

Seeking the open air, I remained for hours seated beneath the divinely beautiful Italian sky philosophically observing everything and everybody in my immediate neighborhood. During the day I had accidentally overheard a conversation between an English clergyman and his good wife regarding the sinfulness of gaming and deploring the fact that neither the French nor the Italian Government could be induced to make war upon the Prince of Monaco and shut up the Casino and similar resorts.

Having been reared in Christian Boston and educated in the public schools of that staid old town, I had ever been taught to revere the honest convictions of any individual regardless of creed. It is barely possible that in roughing it about the world some portion of these teachings may have been permitted to escape my memory if not wholly ignored on my part. Nevertheless upon this occasion I was inclined to respect the sentiments expressed by the worthy divine in question, more especially after noting the fact that he was accompanied by a son and daughter, both of whom appeared to be in the heyday of youth and withal prudent in speech and manner. While comfortably seated in a cosy arbor, I could not fail in hearing the following colloquy between two individuals who were as yet unseen, but who were evidently approaching in close proximity to my retreat:

"Clara," exclaimed a voice, which I instantly recognized as that of the clergyman's son, "there can be but little harm in entering the Casino, as we do not intend to play."

"But," remonstrated his sister, "the temptation may prove to be too strong to resist; and oh! Frank, what would dear papa say were he to learn of our disobedience?"

"My dear Clara," pleaded the youth, "we are not to remain near any of the players. What I desire more than aught else is to personally witness a game of chance and to note the appearance of the latter."

Thus persuaded, the young girl yielded to the solicitation of her brother and both entered the building.

Prompted by curiosity, I quietly entered the gaming hall, and, in an amused sort of manner, followed the pair in their meanderings. Their artless ways and innocent prattle seemed painfully out of place in such a gathering, as hand in hand they sauntered through the spacious apartments of that gambling hell. The entire length of the room had been already traversed, when, upon nearing a table surrounded by players engaged in a game of Trente et Quarante, the young lady with a sudden start shrieked out the one word "Papa!" and fell fainting to the floor. In a moment all play had ceased, while the gamblers themselves crowded around the prostrate girl, anxiously inquiring the cause of her sudden agitation.

With an anxious countenance the father of the young girl, quickly forsaking the gaming table at which he had been playing, rushed to her side and frantically endeavored to restore her to consciousness, meanwhile bitterly upbraiding his son for his folly in introducing his pure-minded sister to such a scene. The boy appeared to be dazed at sight of his father in such a place, and by narrowly observing his countenance I saw that a feeling of contempt mingled with surprise at the duplicity of his parent actuated the breast of the young man. With the free use of restoratives the lady was soon brought to her senses and, supported by her father and brother, speedily left the establishment to seek her apartment at the hotel.

Two years afterward I had occasion to visit Monte Carlo, and in the person of the boldest and most reckless of the players assembled about a roulette table discovered the clergyman's son, who, even before my departure, having lost his all, cunningly contrived to elude the vigilance of the gendarmes and blew his brains out in the garden adjacent to a concert saloon near the Casino.

—For rheumatism, neuralgia, cuts, wounds or burns use West's World's Wonder. All druggists. ed

—Have you tried Holloway's Corn Cure? It has no equal for removing these troublesome excrescences, as many have testified who have tried it.

The Land of the Goose Liver.

Buda-Pesth Letter to San Francisco Chronicle.

The goose is a bird that, after it is dead, constantly thrusts itself on the stranger's attention in Austria. Its apparition is frequent on the tables and hotels at Vienna, and it reappears more frequently as you descend the Danube. It is the most chosen viand at Buda-Pesth. Here it achieves its apotheosis. But it is not so much to the bird itself as to that important organ, its liver, that I desire to direct attention. The local commerce in this delicacy is considerable. On certain streets the attention of the pedestrian is attracted by the counterfeit presentment of a goose, dead and cooked, beside which is a painted object so nearly like that he is aware it is the liver of the deceased bird. This sign indicates a shop whose sole business is to sell roasted goose cut in pieces, goose livers and a sort of biscuit made of chopped goose and flour. Here is a temptation to those who are fond of pate de foie gras. On entering the dealer is discovered standing behind a huge tray filled with livers arranged in rows, armed with a fork resembling Neptune's trident. He passes the trident mystically over the livers and names the prices—20 kreutzers, 25 kreutzers, 30, 40, 50 kreutzers, the latter being from giant birds and weighing nearly a pound. You take one of the smallest as a starter, and a biscuit, and, adjourning to a neighboring wine shop, properly adjust your digestive apparatus to the unctious viand with a "fourth" of white Hungarian wine. No bad results follows, as with the artificially fattened livers that cost their weight in gold in America. Your digestion continues excellent. What is the effect? The next day you come back and buy a liver twice the size, take two rations of biscuit and wash the repast down with a "half" of the same wine, and so on. As this ratio of increase cannot go on forever, you find yourself obliged to leave the town a day or two sooner than you intended, to subdue a growing appetite, taking with you in your valise a few pounds of goose livers to satisfy the pangs of hunger and solace the regret of parting, for you know when you have left the Danube you can see this luxury no more.

—There are cases of consumption so far advanced that Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup will not cure, but none so bad that it will not give relief. For coughs, colds and all affections of the throat, lungs and chest, it is a specific which has never been known to fail. It promotes a free and easy expectoration, thereby removing the phlegm, and gives the diseased parts a chance to heal.

Prohibition and Politics.

The anti-liquor question is a strong plank in the political platform, and one safe to lay hold of. All intoxicating beverages are safest when let alone, even in medicine. Burdock Blood Bitters is not a bar beverage, but a strictly pure medicine, reliable for diseases of the stomach, liver, bowels, kidneys and blood, and will not aid in making drunkards. 246

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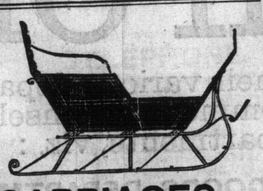

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