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LITERATURE.

BALE GINGERBREAD.

(From Harper's Weekly.)

L. MR. STAPLETON, U. S. A.

The sun had just set, and Bale on

Saturday evening in mid-summer,

when a gentleman stepped out on a

balcony of his room, drew a chair

near the railing, and asked himself

to enjoy the scene, with the aid of a

good cigar.

The hotel was that quaint and al-

together uncomfortable one, the Les

Trois Rois, where a raveler delights

to linger in contemplation of polished

mirrors, rich carvings on the walls,

chandeliers, and even though his

chamber should be no evidence of

familiarity with the house-maid's

broom. Dignified and venerable

Trois Rois, on the bank of River Rbir

unacquainted with the house-maid's

broom, dusty and mouldy, add ye a-

dowed with that great charm of sto-

rical association and comment by

the veracious tourist, Maximilian

Mission, in year 1869, with far more

than we can praise in success. 1876:

However indifferent the guide now

served, in this old mansion met those

three sovereigns, the Emperor Conrad

II, his son Henry III, and Rodolph,

last King of Burgundy, to discuss

little matters of royal interest, and

their effigies still seem to nod above

the door. Verily, not a hotel here

not boast so glorious an ancient re-

cord, however glorious may be their

upholstery.

The gentleman on the balcony

sighed half wearily, and removed

the cigar from his lips. He was a

handsome man with a brown mous-

tache, and above all of the type

aristocratic. Mr. Stapleton's family

pride was shown in his straight and

firm nose, with the flexible nostrils

which belonged to his race, and bore

them back as it were, to the top of

the country, inclining relationship

the English nobility. Mr. Staple-

ton had even desired to trace, as a

family name when he landed in Eng-

land, but his brother refused the idea,

with a sudden acquiescence, saying

he finally laughed of the lords Bor-

romeo is a distinctive feature. Why

might not the Stapletons also boast

a far more ornamental appendage in

another quarter of the world?

The Rhine flowed below the balcony,

with tinges of rose reflections from

the sky, the bridge spanned the river

just beyond, where the people came

and went, and opposite stretched

the lower portion of the town, while

away from the town on the river a

primitive ferry-boat plied between the

shores by means of a rope. A peaceful

place in the twilight, stirred in every

pulse by healthy industry, famous for

its ribbons and gingerbread.

Neither aspect of the spot, past or

present, interested Mr. Stapleton, U.

S. A. He had not wished to visit

Bale; he was weary of contention and

a little afraid of making a fool of

himself, so Janet had taken the lead

as usual. Was he really in love?

The fact that his sister managed

most things, which was apparent to

a disinterested public, became dimly

Miss Stapleton said to herself that

our Rosy, W. A. thank Heaven (she

is far enough away by this time),

all her superb airs and graces, I

only hope we may not get on her

again to-day.

DAUGHTER GENTLEMAN with un-

derstandable (tossing), "Yes, but I

am a lady of excellent qualities, my

dear; and you know her brother has

always been your ideal of a young

virtuous man, I trust."

INVISIBLE LADY (with proper spirit):

"I have no patience with men! No

man is good enough to be trusted

completely, as she does her brother,

and her tyranny is a by-word through-

out the country at home. Everybody

is sure that she does not intend to

fall ever marry, and she picks any

man she likes to place on her path."

INVISIBLE GENTLEMAN (mildly): "I

think that is none of our affair, the

Rosy is not in love with him, I hope."

INVISIBLE LADY (laughing): "Oh,

nothing at all to us, of course; only

one dislikes to see a really fine man

so managed by a nagging old maid

sister, until he is afraid to say his

soul is his own. Why, he would not

dare to present me with a box of Bale

gingerbread, if he were here, without

asking leave. Ha! ha!"

Fancy the emotions of Mr. Staple-

ton, U. S. A. The flush of anger and

annoyance which overspread his

face betrayed indecision, and yet it

was succeeded by a sweet smile of

satisfaction. He rose from his chair

mechanically, feeling as if all the

occupants of the hotel in rooms above

were gazing down at him, and all the

loungeurs on the long balcony below

were equally interested in gazing up

were equally interested in gazing up

at him. Why, he was playing

the part of a eavesdropper, because

of the fascination of receiving these

capricious threats on his armor from

the invisible lady. Yes, he, Roger Sta-

pleton, was availing himself of a

privilege not usually accorded to

members of good society, in order to

learn what Rosy's mother thought of

himself. What absurd prejudices

he had! He supposed to be

managed by Janet, whose opinion had

no more weight with him than the

summer breeze? She was rather

severe in her criticism of girls, and

fancied that his wife must embody

all graces, even as Thorwaldsen's Venus

could only be perfected from the fu-

sion of thirty beautiful models into

one lovely shape. He was in no haste

to marry.

The river flowed swiftly yet tran-

quilly, and stars began to appear in

the clear sky, as shadows gathered

about the bridge. A girl stepped out

from the next window, humming a

snatch of song, and started percepti-

bly at sight of her neighbor. The

July evening gained color, warmth,

in her advent, even a waft of perfume

came from the flowers in her golden

hair. The brightness of her presence

dazzled the quiet gentleman; he held

out his hand, the flush of pleasure

again overspread his face.

"Rosy!"

"Mr. Stapleton!" she said merrily

and gave him both of her little hands.

"Oh, I am so glad to see you again,"

she added frankly. "I thought we

were deserted for Chamonix. Such

a glorious journey as we had, with the

Bernese Alps left behind, though!"

"Are you glad to find me here?"

he inquired politely.

"Rosy sighed, and tapped the floor

with her foot a moment, then the

dimpling smiles curled the saucy lips

once more.

"Let me throw down flowers on

the bald head of the fat German who

sits there smoking so placidly," she

said gleefully. "What fun it would

be if one only dared!"

II.—AN AMERICAN HERE.

Sunday morning dawned at Bale,

fresh and clear at least in the eyes

of that American Hebe, Rose

Brownley, to whom all things were

the holiday aspect of novelty. Every

thing was so delightful and every

body so pleasant in the estimation of

Rosy, a spoiled child, indeed, but

with that sweetness of temperament

which ever receives more than its im-

parts. Rosy's portion was flowers

and bloom, and material for specula-

tive interest in her fellow-creatures,

as afforded by the citizens of Bale.

In Sunday attire, crossing the bridge

Miss Stapleton's portion, if the truth

must be told, in an adjacent chamber,

the thorn-pricks of alarm, suspicion,

and anxiety to avert the possible

consequences of this unfortunate ren-

contre with people she had plotted to

avoid. Of course Mrs. Brownley

was a designing mother, and had

brought Rosy to Bale to encounter

her father again. All this was as

clear as Alpine crystal to a casual

observer, and was quite

capable of discerning deep motives

more or less, liable to undermine

society in the way Mr. Brownley

portended the recreation was a suf-

ficiently harmless one, and he pos-

sessed no more power of management

in travel than a mouse, as his wife

frequently informed him.

Rosy, who sat on the balcony

again; her neighbor was not there

to bid her good-morning. In all her

little world did any one approach the

standard of Mr. Roger Stapleton?

She shook her golden head, glancing

half jealously at the sparkling

eyes. She could not remember the time

when she had not been deemed a

model of elegance and refinement in

the village at home, as heir of the

Stapleton homestead. Why, even

grandfather had taken her on his

knee in the porch of the old farm-

house, when Master Stapleton from

school had galloped his pony past,

and told her wonderful tales of the

Revolution. Eighteen is the age for

forming pictures colored from the glow-

ing lines of imagination. Standing

on the balcony at Bale, above the

Rhine, Rosy saw still more vividly

the old farm-house, the great water-

fall falling in the grass, the loudest

in the air with the faint

sweetness of their blossoms, herself

in clean frock and ribbons, baby

feet in Lilliputian slippers,

perched on grandfather's knee, and

a trifle frightened when bidden never

to forget what General Stapleton

had done for his country in fighting

the Redcoats. Then the fairy peep

on his pony dashed past. How

delighted to spend a Sunday at Bale

with him, if only to admire and try

to imitate his beautiful manners!

Miss Stapleton was unusually cross,

but Rosy did not mind that.

The Brownleys had risen in the

social scale since the watch-dog

pinked in the grass on the hot, win-

ternoon, and the locust-

trees shed their cloying sweetness of

their blossoms. Rosy was now a city

millionaire's only daughter, yet there

erect lessons lingered. She poised

herself lightly on the balcony, swing-

ing softly to herself, but her neigh-

bor did not appear. Mr. Staple-

ton was taking coffee with his sister.

Silence reigned in their small salon,

broken only by the click of spoons

and rattle of crockery; a quiet, sug-

gestive of some topic having been

settled only to be resumed later.

Mr. Stapleton would have been

amused had he not also been ir-

ritated. Janet had been absent

enough to lose her temper on learn-

ing that the B. wneters were also

stopping over Sunday at Les Trois

Rois, and had declared, with amazing

vehemence, that they fully intended

to join her party in travel. The

brother's reply had been usually

sharp; perhaps the charm of Rosy

on the balcony in the twilight still

lingered in his mind. Why could

not women be pleasant with each

other? Silence had ensued of this

ominous sort, Miss Stapleton eating

her roll gloomily, while her brother

took refuge in sipping his coffee.

Miss Stapleton's head ached after

a sleepless night; her manner of

biting the roll would have warned

most men of her humor; and, indeed,

Rosy disliked to see her disturbed.

Presently she opened her battered

bag.

