Nov 1, 1888

The Three Little Chairs.

They sat alone by the bright wood fire,
The gray-haired dame and the aged sire,
Dreaming of days gone by.
The tear-drop fell on each wrinkled cheek;
They both had thoughts they could not speak,
And each heart uttered a sigh.

For their sad and fearful eyes descried
Three little chairs placed side by side
Against the sitting-room wall—
Old-fashioned enough as there they stood,
Their seats of flag and their frames of wood,
With their backs so high and tall.

Then the father shook his silvery head,
And with trembling voice he gently said:
"Mother, these empty chairs—
They bring us such sad thoughts to-night,
We'll put them forever out of sight
In the small dark room upstairs."

But she answered: "Father, not yet, not yet;
For I look at them and I forget
That the children are away.
The boys come back, and our Mary too,
With her apron on of checkered blue,
And sit here every day.

Johnny comes back from the billows deep;
Willie wakes from his battle-field sleep,
To say good-night to me.
Mary's a wife and mother no more,
But a tired child whose play is o'er,
And comes to rest at my knee.

So let them stand there, though empty now;
And every time when alone we bow
At the Father's throne to pray,
We'll ask to meet the children above,
In our Saviour's home of rest and love,
Where no child goeth away."

BELINDA: A BEAUTY

"Belinda, when we were both young—the day will come, I hope, child, when you will sympathize more with the trials and temptations of others—when we were both young, Roger Temple and I first met. And he cared for me."

Dead silence; the widow confused and stroking down the folds of her silk dress with her white fingers; Belinda's slip of a figure standing upright beside the window, her arms folded, her lips and eyes about as "sympathetic" as though they had been carved in granite.

"He cared for me—too much for his own peace—but duty stood between us, and we parted!" Of this the reader shall know more than by Rose's hazy utterances. "We parted. Fate was hard upon us both. And now—Belinda, must I say more?"

"Say everything, please, if you want me to understand you."

"Roger Temple has asked me to be his wife at last, and I——"

"And you—are going to be married again!" interrupts Belinda cruelly. "For the third time! Then all I can remark is, you are very fond of being married, Rose."

A heartless, unwomanly speech enough; but Belinda, like many other raw girls of her age, is absolutely heartless in matters of love; and at this moment passionate, unreasoning jealousy against the rival of her dead father is sending the blood to her brain too quickly for her to be very nice in the choice of words.

"I'm sure I don't know how you can be so unfeeling," says Rose, almost crying. "But you were always the same. Even when you were little you had no more sensibility than a stone. And Roger always expresses himself so beautifully about you, and the Temples are such a good family, and everything; and then to say that I—I, of all women living, am fond of being married! I do hope, Belinda, whatever your own opinions may be, you will not express yourself in this most heartless and indelicate manner before Captain Temple!"

"Captain Temple?" repeats Belinda, all innocence. "Why, when am I ever likely to see Captain Temple?"

"You will see him in St. Jean de Luz to-day."

"Captain Temple in St. Jean de Luz! You mean to tell me, Rose, that you and a young man are travelling about the world together?"

And Belinda, the first and last time in her life such hypocrisy can be recorded of her, puts on an air of outraged virtue edifying to behold.

"Roger met me in Paris and again in Bordeaux," says poor Rose, blushing through her rouge with vexation. "Roger was the old friend I told you of. And there was always Spencer—and we have taken care never to stop at the same hotel even He has gone now to look for a lodging in quite another part of the town. If you knew, Belinda, if you only knew what a soul of honor Roger Temple has, you would not talk so lightly!"

"Ah, but you must remember I know nothing at all about him," retorts the girl, "and my education does not dispose me to take any man's honor on trust. Never mind, Rosie," she goes on with an assumption of pitying complaisance: "I am shocked, I own, but I will keep what I know to myself. I will not say a word, even to Burke."

"And will you behave with feeling, with consideration to Roger Temple, for my sake?"

Before the girl can answer a man's step sounds in the corridor, a knock comes at the door.

"*Entrez*," cries out Belinda, in her clear young voice.

"My things!" sighs the widow all in a tremor, her heart reverting to the possessions which lie nearer to it even than her lover—her bandboxes.

And the door opens.

"Roger! You have found your way already, then?" Rose exclaims, with rather a forced little laugh, and retreating hastily from the light that falls unbecomingly full upon her through the open window. "Belinda, dearest, my very old acquaintance, Captain Temple. Now mind," with infantine candor, "I shall never forgive either of you if you don't fall in love with each other at once. I have been like that always—Miss Ingram used to say I was quite absurd. Whoever I am fond of must be fond of all my friends!"

But, long before Rose had ceased twittering her small falsities, Belinda's eyes and Roger Temple's have met—met and spoken the truth.

"In life as on railways," a master hand was written, "at certain points, whether you know it or not, there is but an inch, this way or that, into what train you are shunted."

Into what train has Belinda's passionate heart been shunted, all unknowing, at this moment!

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT MEN CALL LOVE.

Rose spoke of the romance of two young lives, of love sacrificed to duty, of a heart slowly breaking during a dozen years. This we may set down as the poetic form of the story about herself and Roger. Now let us have it in the prose.

The story, in the prose form, is simply this: Rose married in her girlhood to an elderly London lawyer and launched into a narrow circle of dull, professional respectability, was, at six-and-twenty, as really fresh and ingenuous a young person as ever breathed. Neither perruquier nor Bond street chemist needed then. Her flaxen hair, smoothly braided according to the fashion of the day, adorned her youthful face. Her complexion, innocent of cosmetic, was, in spite of some few freckles, like a just opened dog-rose. So Roger Temple met and loved her.

The Indian mutiny was just over at the time, and Roger, a fair-faced boy of nineteen, had come back, wounded, after his first dark taste of soldier's work, to England. He made Rose Shemadeane's acquaintance at an East London dinner party, and, not knowing, till dessert, at least, that she was the crown and blessing of another man's life already, conceived for her as wild a passion as ever foolish lad conceived for still more foolish woman since the world began.

The London season was at its height, even Rose's humdrum life enlivened by an unwonted share of parties, theatre-going, drives in the park, visits to the Zoological; country cousins who must be amused staying in the house. Roger saw her, dogged her, worshipped her everywhere. One of the country cousins being female and unmarried, it might be assumed that Mr. Temple's attentions were honorably matrimonial. Mr. Temple being well-born, young, handsome, of good expectations, was it not a manifest duty to offer him encouragement?

Thus Rose, with small platitudes, stifled her small conscience for a fortnight or so. Then the end came—the end of the prologue, not the play.

Watching the hippotamus together one July Sunday afternoon at the Zoological, the country cousins, the nonentity of a husband, all but within earshot, young Master Roger made a fool of himself. In stammering, passionate whispers, told Mrs. Shelmadeane a secret which Mrs. Shelmadeane had been calmly aware of for some time past, but which it was shocking, oh, unendurably shocking, even to think of, the moment the confession happened to find its way into words.

She walked away from him, her fair young matron face ablaze, and, with the air of a new Cornelia, laid her hand upon her husband's arm. Three evenings later—Rose twenty-six, remember, Roger nineteen—was waltzing with him at a ball to which duty bade her chaperone her country cousins at the Hanover Square rooms.

Mr. Temple had been wicked—so wicked that it really took one's breath away to think of it—in daring to regard her, an honored wife, save with feelings of iciest respect and esteem. But Rose, gentle soul, felt constrained to pity the poor misguided fellow, to lead him, if it might be, into better ways. And that Bloomsbury Square life and husband of hers, illumined by present experience, were so hideously monotonous, and the homage of a man, handsome, young, distinguished like Roger, was honey sweet to vanity.

A better woman, or a worse one, a woman inspired by imagination or guided by experience, might have been terrified at such a position. Good, passionless, unimaginative, self-saturated Rose, the first little cold shock of the plunge over, felt no terror at all. What she did feel strongest, I think (when one can disinter it sufficiently for analysis from the mass of small vanities, triumphs before partnerless country cousins, etc., in which it was embedded), was—gratified sense of power.

The infatuation lasted out the London season. Then old Shelmadeane carried his wife off to Margate—tardily suspicious, perhaps, as to the kind of sacrifice she was making to duty—and Roger's leave of absence came to an end. He was angry, bitter, sick at heart; his divinity during their last interview having sermonized and sympathized, and altogether tortured him beyond measure; determined to return to India, without seeing her again, determined to despise, to forget her.

Long letters passed between them, with or without Mr. Shelmadeane's knowledge—I refrain from speaking with certainty on this point—but letters certainly that Mr. Shelmadeane or any one else in the world might have read with safety. Rose, indeed, half thought at times that her victim repressed all allusion to his tortures too successfully. Every mail, every second mail at first; then once in three or four months; then twice a year. So the correspondence attending Roger's ill-starred passion was carried on. At last Mr. Shelmadeane died.

And Roger Temple, of course, flew to England to put in first claim for the possession of his beloved one's hand? No, Roger Temple did nothing of the kind. He was away up the country pig-sticking, when the letter containing the news of Rosie's widowhood reached him, after some delay. And he loved sport passionately. And the two or three men who formed the party happened to be his closest friends. And must not weeds be worn a decent time before they are replaced by wedding favors?

Roger neither rushed to England nor wrote any letter designed to compromise his Rosie's newly-gained liberty. It must be remembered that he had now been wasting in despair during a good many years; also that men get into the habit of everything, even of hopeless passion, and against their better reason may feel disturbed by having to abandon a settled mood of thought.

He wrote the widow as exquisitely delicate a letter of condolence as was ever penned; putting himself and his own selfish hopes and fears utterly away in the background; dwelling wholly on her and on her loss. He spoke tenderly, and with vagueness, of the long years of their separation; he spoke with greater vagueness still of the day of their possible reunion. Of marriage, of anything that could by possibility be constructed into a hint of marriage, he spoke not a word

An ordinary, intelligent woman, before she had read such a letter to the end, would have known that her lover's love for her was over. Rose, guided by the irrefragable logic of a fool, deduced from it only a new proof of her slave's devotion to her welfare.

"There is one far distant, who adores me, but who is too high-souled, too generous, to think of anything but my grief!" she would say to Major O'Shea, who got an introduction to the pretty widow, and indeed set steadily to work love-making, before her crape was six weeks old. "Ah, Major O'Shea, if you had only the conscientiousness, the noble, forbearing, unselfish nature of that poor fellow in India!"

And then Cornelius would respond to the effect of his heart being stronger than his reason, of his impetuous feelings hurrying him beyond the cold bond of conventional decorum. And the widow would sigh and blush, and wipe a tear or two, and call him a sad, sad man, as she yielded her hand to be kissed. And the upshot of it all was, that the next news Roger Temple got of Rose Shelmadeane was a flaming announcement in the *Times* of her infidelity to him; by special license, an archdeacon and three or four of the lesser clergy assisting, at St. George's, Hanover Square.

Singular perversity of men's nature! The news of this marriage cost him not only the most poignant jealousy, but a revival of his love in all its first fresh ardor. The existence of a husband, of any husband, seemed really some necessary, mysterious condition of Roger Temple's passion. You should have seen the letter of good wishes that he wrote the bride; bitterest veiled reproach discernible through every courteous phrase, every pleasant little congratulatory message to Major O'Shea! Rosy cried herself almost plain for the day after receiving it; hid it jealously from Cornelius, to whose philosophic mind the whole matter, you may be sure, would have been one of profoundest indifference; and wrote Roger a pleading, self-extenuating reply by return of mail, with three violets—ah, did Captain Temple remember the bunches of violets he used to bring her during the happy days of their friendship in Bloomsbury Square—enclosed.

And Captain Temple, Rose has had his own word for it since, kissed violets and letter both, and set up the writer on the old pedestal in his imagination—I was very nearly writing his heart—that she had ever held.

Some slight insight into Rose's domestic grievances as Mrs. O'Shea, the reader has had already; we need not farther enlarge upon them. Cornelius spent her money, neglected her, went to America, where his fate awaited him. And Rose, on her Uncle Robert's death, found herself once more free—free and with a handsome little income, villa at Brompton, plate, linen, and accessories, at her dispossl.

And then it was that she and her old lover looked again upon each other's faces. Roger had returned to England unexpected by his friends, his long leave having been given him some months earlier than he anticipated; and on a certain May night, Rose at that moment believing him to be thousands of miles away in India, knocked at the door of the Brompton villa and inquired, in a voice whose accents he vainly strove to command, if Mrs. O'Shea was at home.

At last a fluffy-haired, brilliantly complexioned—alas, that I must write it!—middle-aged lady came forward to him and bowed! a lady extremely overdressed or underdressed—as you like to term it. "I am not aware that I have the honor——" she began, looking at him strangely.

And then he knew her voice.

Poor Rose, if she could have seen into her quondam lover's heart just at that moment!

He watched her during the next hour or so with feelings about equally balanced of disappointment and blank surprise. Every woman's good looks must decline after the lapse of the twelve best years of her maturity, and Rose's had really, in the common acceptation of the phrase, "worn well." But it was not any fading due to age, it was not time's natural footprints on cheek or brow that shocked him thus; it was the absolute, startling transformation of her whole personality!

He had not really dined, Mrs. O'Shea discovered; had arrived in London late that afternoon, and, forgetful of bodily sustenance, had rushed away to call on her at once. So a little supper was organized, accompanied by a bottle of Uncle Robert's best champagne. And then this man and woman, who had played at love so long, began looking into each other's eyes, to talk of all that they had suffered (in imagination or reality) since they parted. And the cruel intervening years faded away. They were whispering beside the hippopotamus, they were murmuring farewells upon the Margate beach, again. And by and by Rose's hand, youthful and white still, found its way into Captain Temple's. It trembled; he pressed it to reassure her. Rose, with a sigh, made a feint of moving away. And then, for the first time in their lives, their lips met, and Roger's fate was sealed.

The wax lights had burnt low by now, and Rose kept her face well in shadow, nay, hid it bashfully out of sight, on her lover's breast. And when he kissed her beautiful golden hair it never occurred to him to think from what dead head it might have been sheared; and when at last she lifted up her face to falter out softest promises of life-long truth, he did not even see the rice powder it had left upon his waistcoat!

Who loves, cavils not; and Roger Temple, or Roger Temple's imagination, loved during this hour's intoxication at least.

What he thought and felt next morning, when he had to review his position, and Mrs. O'Shea's complexion by daylight, none but Roger Temple ever knew.

CHAPTER V.

COMPLIMENTS, NOT CARESSES.

Belinda's eyes have met Roger's and, in spite of all her foregone jealous resolves, the girl finds t hard to steal herself against Rose's future husband. Never in her whole vagabond, loveless life has such honest human sunshine shone on her as shines now in Roger Temple's smile.

"I don't know about falling in love, but I am sure Belinda and I mean to be friends, Rosie," he says, advancing. "Do we not, my dear?"

And before she can find time to put herself on guard, Captain Temple's bronzed moustache has touched her cheek. It is the kind of salutation that could scarce, by the very iciest prude, be stigmatized as a kiss, and yet it bears such a significantly marked family resemblance to one to be unpleasant in Rosie's sight.

"I—I, really, Roger—Belinda looks so ridiculously younger than she is!"

"Not a bit," cries Roger, and now he rests his hand kindly on the little girl's shoulder. "Belinda is fifteen years old—you told me, did you not, that she was fifteen? Well, and she looks it. Don't mind Rosie, Belinda. Rosy turns rusty at the thought of having a grown-up daughter."

"I shall be seventeen the week after next," says Belinda, holding up her chin.

"I don't know what people mean by taking me for a child. I have certainly seen enough of the world and its wickedness to make me feel old," she adds, with the accustomed hard, little ring in her voice.

"Belinda will look different—I trust Belinda will look totally different when she is properly dressed," says the widow, glancing down at her own elegantly flowing draperies. "I must really have a serious talk with Miss Burke about these short skirts."

"Ah, but Miss Burke is not here to be talked with, Rosie," cries Belinda. "My natural guide and protector has been away in Spain a week or more, collecting facts for her book, and I am knocking about alone, as you see—me and my dog Costa."

"Alone!" stammers Rose, shocked not so much, perhaps, at the fact itself, as at having the fact exposed before Roger. "You don't mean actually alone, my dear?"

"Well, no; I have my chums, of course, the fellows who were with me in the street when you arrived. Now, Rose," she goes on, pitilessly, "tell the truth! Were you or were you not ashamed when you first saw me?"

"I—I was surprised, Belinda" says Rose, in her sweetest little feminine treble. "It is not usual in England, you know, to see a girl of seventeen wearing her dress above her ankles. And then those fearful—What must I call them, Belinda?—what do they call those fearful door-mat things you have on your feet?"

"They call those fearful things *alpargetas* in Spanish, *espadrilles* in French," answers Belinda, cooly holding out a ragged, sandalled foot for inspection. "If you played paume on the hot sand for hours together as I do you would be glad to wear espadrilles, Rose; yes, or to go barefoot altogether, as I do, oftener than not."

A blush of burning shame rises over the widow's face.

"Our dear Belinda wants a year or two of sound English training," she remarks, in a tone that to Roger sounds dove-like, but that Belinda remembers and interprets only too well. "That is the worst of continental education. One has to sacrifice so many good solid English qualities for accomplishments. Still, in these days, a girl must be accomplished. A couple of years in a select English boarding-school will, I have no doubt, render Belinda all that our fondest wishes could desire."

Belinda, on the conclusion of this little tirade, looks hard into her step-mother's eyes for a moment or two; then, shouldering her schistera, she moves across to the door.

"I must be off," turning and bestowing a nod full of caustic meaning on the lovers. "And unless you want me to join some gang of wandering gipsy players, as I have often thought of doing, you had better not talk about boarding-schools any more. My accomplishments, Captain Temple," looking with an air of mock modesty—"Rose talks of my accomplishments, for which the good solid English qualities have been sacrificed! I will tell you what they are," checking off each accomplishment on her dark, slim fingers as she proceeds 'bolero dancing, slang paume'—of each a little. Knowledge, learnt practically, of how to keep myself and dog on twenty sous a day board-wages. And a taste for bull-fights so strong, oh! so strong," this with unaffected enthusiasm, "that I would sooner go without meat for a fortnight and church for a year than miss the chance of going to one. For further particulars apply to Mr. Augustus Jones."

And so exit Belinda, whistling—yes, Rose, whistling; keep from fainting if you can—as she goes.

"A quaint little original, our future daughter," says Roger, whose eyes have certainly opened wider during the conclusion of Belinda's tirade. "But a goodhearted child, I'll be bound. You must not be too hard on her, Rose."

"I hard!" sighs the widow, looking at him reproachfully. "When was I ever hard on any one? If you knew, Roger—but of course men never understand these things—the trial that poor girl has always been! I can assure you I look upon Belinda as a chastisement, sent to me for some wise purpose by Providence."

She seats herself on a sofa, discreetly away in the half light, and with an air of resignation takes out her pocket-handkerchief. "I have made sacrifices no real mother would have made for her—can I ever forget the devoted, blind attachment of her poor, dear papa for me? Sending her away, Heaven knows at what expense, to the continent, and always writing that she should have the best of masters, and everything; and now this is the result. How painfully plain she is."

"Plain? No, Rosie, anything but plain. Belinda is just at that awkward age when one does not know what to make of girls, and her dress is not quite like other people's, is it? But she has magnificent eyes, and a pretty hand."

"A pretty hand! Belinda's hands pretty! Why, they are enormous, six and three-quarters at least, two sizes bigger than mine, and as brown! But you think every one you see lovely, Roger," says Rose, pettishly. "I declare one might just as well be ugly one's self. I have never heard you speak of any woman yet that you could not find something to admire in her."

"And all because of you, my dearest!" cries Captain Temple, with warmth. "When a man admires one woman supremely, can you not imagine that every other woman, yes, even the plainest, must possess something fair in his sight for her sake?"

He comes across to her, stoops, and rests his hand on his betrothed's fair head. It is a favorite action of Roger's and one that Rose would be exceedingly well pleased to see him abandon. Who can tell what horrible trick *postiche* or plate may not play one in some unguarded moment or more than common tenderness?

"I shall be quite unhappy about my dresses if they do not arrive soon," Rose goes on presently. "Ten large cases, you remember." Does not Roger remember those awful ten cases well; in Paris, Bordeaux, everywhere? "And a bit of blue ribbon on each. There can be no mistake if the railway people are honest, but abroad one never knows. I'm sure nothing would have been easier than for Belinda to run back to the station; still, she did not offer, and in my delicate position as a step-mother, I have never required the slightest attention from the poor girl. Oh Roger," Rose's hand is in her lover's now, and he is beside her on the sofa. "If I dared, how much I should like to tell you a secret—something we are all concerned in!"

Roger's natural reply is, what should prevent her telling it? Ought there to be any secret, present or to come, between persons whose lives, like theirs, are to be spent in one long, delightful confidence? "Well, then—I'm a very naughty girl, I know," Rose avows, kittenishly, "and I dare say you will scold me sadly, but I've been match-making! It is not quite by accident that Mr. Augustus Jones is in St. Jean de Luz!"

"Accident or no accident, the fact is a deuced unpleasant one," remarks Captain Temple. "How or why Mr. Jones came here is Mr. Jones's own concern, but the bore of having to encounter him! I really did hope, Rose, that we had seen the last of that actrocious man when we left London."

"You are prejudiced against him, sir. I'm afraid you don't like poor Augustus because he was a little too attentive to me."

"Rose!"

"Oh, come, Roger, I know what your ruling passion is, and always has been. The green-eyed monster, sir——"

"Rosie, I swear——"

"Well, we cannot help these things, my dear; I am ridiculously without jealousy myself. Poor Major O'Shea often said he wished he could see me a little more jealous, but I can make every allowance for it in others. I ought to be able to bear all the jealous suspiciousness of men's natures after the experience that I have had!"

There is silence for a minute, and any one watching Roger Temple's face attentively might discern there a good deal the look of a man who is trying to repress his weariness under the perpetual, exacting babble of a child. "I don't think you judge of me correctly, Rose," he remarks after a time. "Who ever judges another correctly? Who can read but by his own light? We were talking of Mr. Jones, were we not? Ah, yes, and you think me jealous of Jones! So be it, my dear. Poor little Rosie," he bends forward and salutes the widow's cheek—very tenderly, I may almost say fearfully. Roger is better acquainted with feminine weakness, as regards rice powder especially, than he was on that first fatal night at Brompton. "And now what about this grand secret of yours? You have been match-making, have you? I hope you don't mean to marry our little daughter Belinda to Mr. Augustus Jones?"

"He would be an extremely nice husband for her, from a worldly point of view," says Rose, turning over and over the diamond, a gift of Roger's that rests on her plump third finger. "And as to education—old Mr. Jones was sensible of his own deficiencies, and had his son coached up by the most expensive tutors. Any one hearing Augustus talk would say that he was quite well educated enough—for a married man."

"And presentable enough, refined enough? The sort of husband a girl could not only love, but be proud of? Well, Rosie, manage it as you choose. If you like Mr. Jones, and if Belinda likes Mr. Jones, you may be sure that I shall not forbid the banns."

"Ah, there is the difficulty. Belinda does not like Mr. Jones. Belinda and I never liked the same thing or person yet." Poor Rosie, if the mantle of prophecy could but fall upon her shoulders at this moment!

"But you could help me so much, dear, if you would—and you will, I know?" upraising her eyes coaxingly to her lover's. "You will help me in my plans for Belinda's happiness? It was all through me, Roger—don't be cross with me if I confess the truth—it was all through me that Mr. Jones came to St. Jean de Luz."

"Through you that Mr. Jones came to St. Jean de Luz! And why should I be cross with you, you little goose?"

Rosie talks like a girl of sixteen: Roger treats her like a girl of sixteen—yet is sensible, mournfully sensible, ever, of the grotesqueness of so doing.

"You see, I knew that Augustus was anxious to marry. I suspected, feared," says Rose, with modest grace, "that his hopes in some directions might have been just a little blighted, and the thought struck me—as he was going abroad and had asked me to plan his tour for him—the thought struck me to bring him and Belinda together. What he wants is connection, what she wants is money——"

"But Belinda is a child still," interrupts Roger Temple. "You are building all these castles in the air, dear, kind little soul that you are, Rosie, for her good, but the thing is ridiculous. Belinda's home must be with us for the next three or four years. Ample time, then, to begin match-making. How could a child of her age possibly decide," goes on honest Roger—"how could an innocent-hearted child of Belinda's age possibly decide whether she ought or ought not to sell herself for the so many thousands a year of a snob like Jones?"

"Roger, my dear," answers Rose, in her sweetest, most angelic tones—whenever she is annoyed, Mrs. O'Shea's angelic proclivities become more marked—"excuse me if I tell you that all those romantic ideas about selling one's self for money are out of date. Belinda never was a child. Belinda has not one youthful sentiment belonging to her; and as to innocence, poor thing!—you heard what she said about bull-fights, without fainting! Those fine interesting-looking fellows in such danger, and the horrid bulls goring everybody. I'm sure to see a picture, to read a description of one, is sickening enough."

"A matter of custom and nerve, Rosie. I have known some English women capable of worse cruelty than being present at a bull-fight."

"And the very best thing for the girl's safety and our peace of mind will be to get her respectably settled as quick as possible. My own opinion of Belinda—I would say so to no one but you, Roger—is that she is without heart. And a woman without heart——"

But the generalization is opportunely cut short by the arrival of the boxes and blue ribbons. In her joy over her recovered finery, Rosie forgets all other human considerations; and her lover, with orders only to smoke one cigar, and to be back at the post of duty in an hour at latest, recovers a breathing space of liberty.

(To be Continued).

The Boys Are Improving.

An exchange tells of a schoolma'am who has introduced a novel system of spelling in her school. When one of the girls misses a word the boy who spells it correctly is permitted to kiss the girl. The boys are improving, but it is feared that the girls will soon forget how to spell their own names.—*Tionesta (Pa.) Democrat.*