THE WHITE LACE FAN.

I.

"What is the price of it?" Nina Carrol asked eagerly.

"Twenty-five shillings, ma'am," the assistant answered, referring to the small ticket which hung to the elegant fan upon the counter.

"Twenty-five shilling! Oh, dear! Then of course I can't afford it."

And Nina laid down the pretty trinket and walked slowly out of the shop.

She was a sparkling, black-browed brunette, with great, languid eyes, a mouth like wave-wet coral, and a shy, bewitching way which gentlemen called charming and ladies couldn't appreciate at all. Miss Philpotts was just about to be married, and she had asked Nina to be her second bridesmaid; the other bridesmaids had given such elegant wedding-gifts—and Nina, girl-like had no wish to be behindhand.

"That white lace fan, with the lavender silk lining and the pearl sticks, would have been the very thing," said Nina to herself. "Oh, dear, what a wretched thing it is to be poor! And what will Mr. Fortescue think if I give Nellie nothing on earth but a two-and-sixpenny handkerchief!"

Mr. Fortescue was the name of the gentleman who was to be "best man" at the wedding—a handsome young graduate with an auburn mustache, a head of curly Saxon hair and laughing eyes, and whom the girls all liked and Nina—well, she liked him, too—just a little. At all events, she was anxious to stand well in his eyes, and from this, quite as much as from her affection for the bride-expectant, sprang her desire for the white lace fan with the lavender silk lining and the carved mother-of-pearl sticks. For Allie Mortimer had given a gold watch and chain, and Esther Ames a silver smelling bottle with a diamond-studded stopper.

"I must give something decent!" said Nina, compressing her cherry lips together; and she went to her grim old granduncle.

"Uncle Leopold," she said, "can you spare me a sovereign?"

Uncle Leopold turned upon her a sharp and withering glance.

"You know, child, I cannot," said he, "Money isn't so plentiful with the Carrols that sovereigns flutter through the day like sparrows. I gave you half a sovereign the day before yesterday. It is all that you can have at present."

"But, uncle, here is a sovereign lying on the desk."

"Humph!" and Uncle Leopold shrugged his shoulders. "You're welcome to that if you want it. It's a counterfeit—a dead loss, so far as I am concerned. I don't know where I could possibly have taken it."

"But it looks good, Uncle Leopold."

"Of course it does, else I shouldn't have been sold as I was. Take it away child,—take it away! It's not pleasant to be reminded of one's folly by the perpetual witness lying there before one's eyes."

And so with a sigh Nina put the coin in her purse and went away.

"I don't believe it's bad," said she to herself, a sudden idea springing into her mind. "I dare say it is good, only some old fogy or other has refused to take it from Uncle Leopold. At all events, I mean to try the experiment. It certainly can't do any harm, and I do want the fan so much!"

II.

"Miss Carrol!"

"Oh, Mr. Fortescue! is it you?"

Nina colored scarlet. She was a little vexed that Mr. Fortescue should have overtaken her just on the threshold of Newton & Taxley's emporium; and yet why should she be annoyed?

"Am I in the way? May I accompany you?" he asked in an off-hand sort of manner.

"Oh, certainly, I shall be delighted! I—I was only going to buy a wedding present for Nellie Philpotts."

"Ah! Then I shall be interested, too. May I venture to inquire what it is?"

Nina's heart pulsated a degree or two more rapidly as she advanced to the counter and addressed a shy, pretty girl who stood there.

"I was looking at a white-laced fan here yesterday. Will you show it to me again?"

A bright look of intelligence came over the girl's face. She remembered the young lady's interest of the day before.

"Oh, yes, ma'am!" said she. "White, with pearl sticks and a lavender lining. Here it is."

"Twenty-five shillings I think you said the price was?"

"Yes, ma'am; twenty-five shillings."

"I will take it. Please pack it very carefully in the box."

"Shall I send it, ma'am?"

"No, I am in a hurry—I will take it myself."

And, half-conscious that she was doing wrong, yet unwilling to deny herself the luxury, and resolutely persuading herself that no harm was done. Nina Carrol handed over the counterfeit sovereign with five shillings in payment for the glittering trinket.

The girl took it without a word, and presently a little papered packet arrived.

"I am ready now," said Nina, turning to Mr. Fortescue, who had stood leaning against the counter, with exemplary patience, during the whole of the transaction.

Side by side they left the shop.

"Do you think Nellie will like it," Miss Carrol asked, as soon as they were safe out on the pavement.

"I am sure she will!" Mr. Fortescue answered with enthusiasm. "It is a gift alike worthy of the giver and of the recipient."

Nina smiled and flushed up. Praise from such a source as this was very sweet.

She looked at the fan with delight when she reached home.

"What a beauty it is!" soliloquised she. "What a ridiculous idea it was of Uncle Leopold's that the coin wasn't good!"

But she kept the story of her purchase to herself.

III.

"Which of the girls was it who took this sovereign?"

Mr. Taxley's little black eyes glittered like glass beads behind the moony glasses of his double-convex spectacles. The doubtful coin quivered in his indignant fingers like an aspen leaf upon its stem.

The bookkeeper, a fat, middle-aged woman, looked round, and said:

"It was Miss Charnock, I know, because she remarked on its brightness when she paid it over."

"Call Miss Charnock at once," muttered the proprietor. "The coin is bad!"

And Amy Charnock came.

"Counterfeit? O, Mr. Taxley, that cannot possibly be! I took it from an elegant young lady."

"Can you describe her?"

Amy hesitated.

"She was very pretty, with black eyes and hair. She bought one of these white lace fans."

"Humph," said Mr. Taxley grimly. "No doubt all this is very satisfactory, but our rules are invariable and stringent—most stringent where the receiving of bad coins is in question. Your services will be required no longer, Miss Charnock, and the sovereign will be deducted from your month's salary. Sorry, of course"—as a look of blank dismay came over Amy's face—"but it's our rule. Otherwise we should be losing all the time. Pass on please, Miss Charnock, Miss Fettridge is waiting to speak to me."

So Amy was discharged.

She hurried home through the waning twilight, her heart feeling heavy as lead in her bosom, her cheeks pale as ashes; because with Amy Charnock it was a question of sheer starvation whether she retained her situation at Newton & Taxley's or not. And then there was the rheumatic old mother, and the little brother, who must be kept at school, and— Oh! what was to become of them?

As she hastened along, too deeply absorbed in these sorrowful reflections to take any note of the outer world, she stumbled against some one.

It was a gentleman, and the light of the street lamp shone plainly on his face as he lifted his hat and spoke the customary phrase:

"I beg your pardon!"

But Amy Charnock stopped him.

"I—I surely am not mistaken," she said falteringly. "You are the gentleman who was with the lady who bought the lace fan? Don't you remember me, sir? I am the girl who sold the fan—at Newton & Taxley's."

"I do remember now," said Mr. Fortescue, supremely puzzled. "But may I ask—"

"I don't wonder you are puzzled at my strange address," Amy interrupted, with a little hysterical laugh. "But the sovereign she paid was a counterfeit, and it has cost me my situation."

And she told the simple story of her tribulations.

Mr. Fortescue listened with the deepest interest. He was one of nature's gentlemen, be it said to his honor. He would have helped an old fishwoman across the Strand, or stopped to pick up the tattered shawl of an organ-grinder's wife as readily as the embroidered handkerchief of a Flora McFlimsey, but it is only natural to be interested in the tears that obscure china-blue eyes and the words that flow from lips that are like a cleft cherry.

"It seems scarcely possible," said he, "that Miss Carrol would give you a counterfeit coin. It must be a mistake."

"It may be," said Amy simply. "But I know that I have been turned out of my place; and if she knew—"

"Will you go with me to her house?"

"If you think it will do any good."

So they went together.

Uncle Leopold was in his study, and Nina was copying out some paper or other for him when the two visitors were shown in. Nina rose to her feet, coloring hot carmine. She knew the sweet face of the shopgirl at once—and something told her that her secret was revealed.

"Nina," said her grand-uncle, turning sharply around, with a heavy frown darkening his brow, as Amy Charnock told her simple story, "is it possible that you could be so devoid of principle as to use that coin after I had plainly told you it was a counterfeit?"

"I—I did not know, I thought perhaps—" stammered poor Nina.

"You see the mischief you have done," interrupted Mr. Carrol. "Let it be a lesson to you. I must see this Taxley fellow at once. This poor girl must be reinstated in her place without delay!"

"And must I send back the fan?" cried Nina, bursting into tears of mortified pride.

"Pardon me," said Mr. Fortescue, interposing here. "Let me have the pleasure of settling this little account for Miss Carrol."

"No!" said Uncle Leopold brusquely. "We are poor; but we are no beggars. My niece can afford neither to send 25-shilling fans nor to allow others to send them for her."

And so Nina had to fall back upon the linen cambric pocket handkerchief after all on which she had embroidered her friend's monogram.

"How I wish I had let the coin alone," she cried in the bitterness of her soul the week after the wedding, when she heard that Mr. Fortescue had actually engaged himself to Newton & Taxley's pretty assistant.

So one wedding made another. And Amy Charnock thanked God for the great goodness that had bestowed upon her such a gift as Henry Fortescue's love.

About the House.

I hold the aim of life is less
The search for my own happiness,
Than giving joy to others.

TIDBITS MADE OF VEAL.

To Stuff a Shoulder of Veal.—Have the bone removed and fill the space with a stuffing made thus: Take two cups of bread crumbs, mix with them a slice of pork chopped fine, one tablespoonful of butter, a pinch of thyme, some chopped parsley, the juice of part of a lemon, salt and pepper, and one beaten egg. If the stuffing seems dry add a little stock, or the crumbs may be moistened in hot water before mixing them with the other ingredients. Rub the inside of the meat with salt and pepper and fill it with the stuffing. Roll the meat under in good shape and tie or skewer it in place. Put it into a baking pan; sprinkle the top with salt and pepper, and dredge with flour; lay three slices of pork on the top and keep them in place with wooden toothpicks; pour some water into the pan, or stock is better if you have it; add one slice of onion, a few pieces of celery, one teaspoonful of tomato, half a dozen pepper corns, and a blade of mace. Have the oven quite hot when the meat is first put in; then reduce the heat. Baste frequently, and allow full twenty minutes to a pound; give it more time rather than less. In the last half hour remove the pieces of pork and dredge the meat with flour. Place it in the upper part of the oven to insure its being a nice brown. If the gravy in the pan is too thin thicken it with a little browned flour and strain it upon the dish.

A filet of veal is also greatly improved if cooked in this way: Have the bone removed and fill the space with stuffing, and with a sharp, narrow-blade knife make half a dozen incisions parallel with the fibre of the meat and draw into them strips of fat pork. Then treat the meat in the same way as the shoulder is roasted.

A very nice sauce for serving with roasted veal is made by mixing one tablespoonful of butter with one teaspoonful of salt, a saltspoonful of pepper, half a teaspoonful of celery salt and one teaspoonful of dry mustard. Stir them well together, and then add the yolks of two eggs and beat hard before stirring in one cup of hot cream. Stand the bowl containing this mixture over the fire in a pan of boiling water and stir until it begins to thicken like custard; then immediately take it from the fire and add two tablespoonfuls of lemon juice or vinegar and serve with the meat in a separate dish.

For braised fricandeau of veal: This part of the meat is thought to make the most delicious of dishes. It is from the cushion or upper round of the leg and should be cut four or five inches in thickness. Lay the meat on a table and with a wooden mallet gently pound it flat and into good shape. Have the edges thinner than the middle. Closely lard the top with small strips of fat pork. Place four slices of pork in a dripping pan and scatter over them a chopped carrot, turnip and onion, a bay leaf, and some sprigs of parsley. Lay the prepared meat upon these vegetables and dust it well with salt and pepper and dredge with flour. Pour a cupful of stock into the pan and cover it closely. Place the pan in a very moderate oven as it must cook slowly. The liquids in the pan should be allowed just to simmer. Baste frequently, and if the liquid cooks away add more stock or water. In the last half hour let the meat cook without the cover. Remove the meat when it is done to a heated platter. If the gravy seems at all greasy turn off the top, and if necessary add a little more stock. Place the pan over the fire, dredge lightly with flour, stirring all the while; add the juice of part of a lemon, and rub through a sieve over the meat.

For scalloped veal, chop the cooked meat very fine. Butter an earthen dish and put at the bottom a layer of the meat. Put a layer of sliced hard-boiled eggs over the meat and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Then have a layer of bread crumbs and scatter bits of butter over the top. Repeat these layers until the dish is nearly filled, having crumbs for the last layer. Pour a cup of stock or milk over the whole, and bake half an hour. A very small piece of ham chopped with the veal gives an additional flavor, and parsley may be scattered over the meat.

To Make a Veal Loaf.—Mince 3 1-2 pounds of veal and one thick slice of salt pork very fine. Add half a dozen butter crackers rolled fine, a heaping tablespoonful of chopped parsley, two well-beaten eggs, a piece of butter the size of an egg, a level tablespoonful of salt, half a teaspoonful of pepper, and the same quantity of mixed cloves and allspice. Knead these ingredients well together and mould the mixture into the form of a square loaf of bread. Stick a tiny cucumber or walnut pickle in here and there, pressing them into the loaf. Sprinkle bread crumbs over the top and put bits of butter on them. Lay the loaf in a baking pan, add a little water to prevent the meat's cooking too dry, and bake in a moderate oven two hours, basting the loaf with melted butter and hot water.

A nice way of cooking veal to serve cold is thus: Butter thickly an earthen bowl and line it with slices of hard-boiled eggs. Have some lean veal and ham cut into thin slices. Put into the bowl a layer of veal and sprinkle with salt and pepper; then a layer of the ham and another of the veal and seasoning, alternating ham and veal until the bowl is filled; then pour a cup of rich veal stock over this. Make a paste of flour and water as stiff as it can be rolled out. Cover the contents of the bowl with the paste and over this tie a clean cotton cloth. Put the bowl into a sauce pan or some other vessel with boiling water that will just reach to the rim of the bowl and boil three hours. Then take from the fire, remove the cloth and paste, and let it stand until the next day, when it may be turned out and served in thin slices.

To make a brown fricassee of veal, cut four ounces of pork into strips and fry them brown and crisp. Meanwhile cut two pounds of lean veal into finger strips, and when the pork is cooked take it out and put the prepared veal in its place and brown this meat. Remove the meat and stir into the fat three tablespoonfuls of browned flour, and then three cups of stock or part water and stock. Season with salt and paprika and a gill of sherry. Add the meat and cover the pan; put it where the meat will simmer twenty minutes. Turn it over strips of buttered toast and sprinkle chopped parsley over the whole.

EVERY-DAY FLOWERS.

The common soil found in the rear yard of a town house, by the addition of salt, ashes, lime, etc., makes the best possible soil for growing the greater number of flowers and vines. Favorable situations are usually accessible in the country but in cramped city lots there is often no possible choice.

To the genuine flower enthusiast there is no satisfaction in half-developed flowers, vines, and shrubs. Variety is often esteemed more highly than quality. Study the harmony of color. White blossoms are always beautiful and combine well with all colors. Shun planting blues with reds and reds that war with each other. Very pretty effects are sometimes produced by sowing two plants of similar habits and harmonious colors, as a pink and white geranium or fuchsia in one large pot.

Flower lovers in town houses, the poor and the well-to-do alike resort to some very ingenious devices for making room to grow their favorites. One would have puzzled long to know that a unique shaped mass of the most luxuriant vines and flowers imaginable, a charming bit of color from a rear dining-room window in a fashionable block of houses, had a discarded zinc sitz bath tub for a foundation.

Four wooden shoe cases formed the basis of one quite extensive "garden." They were arranged as described below by the ingenious mistress of a second story apartment. The dining and one sleeping room were at the rear, and below the double and single window opening out of them was the roof of a first floor piazza. The boxes were filled deep enough with broken bricks and potsherds to allow the pots placed on them to reach just to the top of the boxes, and the outside of the latter was painted dull brown. When placed in position they reached six inches above the window sills and after being filled as full as possible with pots containing flowers, trailing and high growing vines, the spaces between the pots and boxes and pots were packed full of damp moss. The latter was the sort used by florists and had first been picked apart and thoroughly dampened. Earth would have been used instead of moss, but it was feared that the weight would be too much for the supports of the roof. The moss proved in every way as suitable, being easily kept moist.

No variety of flowers is more desirable for table decoration than nasturtiums, with their handsome foliage, artistic shaped, brilliantly colored blossoms, and spicy, refreshing fragrance. And did you know that the dwarf varieties, Tom Thumb, and Tropaeolum Lobbianum require comparatively little root room and will flourish beautifully in large pots, boxes or almost any receptacle.

HASTY WORDS

We are told that we ought to think twice before we speak. Sometimes, we are advised, if we are feeling unkindly to count ten before we open our mouth. Yet hasty words oftimes fly from our lips, in the moment of excited feeling, and before we have time to think twice or count half of ten, the harm is done, the keen word has flashed like a dart into some gentle heart. These hasty words are spoken, too, most frequently between those who love each other. We control our speech fairly well when it is with strangers or ordinary acquaintances we are speaking; but with those we love the best we are less careful. We let our worry or our weariness make us irritable, and then we utter hasty words which, five minutes afterward we would give all we have to recall. But such words never can be recalled. They may be forgiven, for love forgives till seventy times seven times; but the wounds, the scars, remain.

EVEN-HANDED JUSTICE.

Justice—You are charged with committing an assault on this man and blacking his eye. What have you to say, sir?

Gentleman—Your honor, my wife lost a pet dog, and I caught this fellow bringing it back.

Justice—You are discharged; but as for you, you miserable, scalawag, with a black eye, the next time you steal a lady's dog and don't keep it, I'll send you up for six months.

Separate Institutions.—Clerical Friend—I hear you are having trouble in your church. The Rev. Dr. Fourthly—Not a word of truth in it. The trouble is in the choir.

SPAIN ALWAYS DEFEATED.

THE UNITED STATES SHOULD BE VICTORIOUS IN THIS WAR.

Over Three Hundred Years Ago Since Spain Won A Naval Battle—She Lost Thousands of Men in Trying to Retake Gibraltar—Easily Beaten at Trafalgar.

American naval officers are absolutely confident of success in the war with Spain, not only because they have the best navy, but because Spain has had a long, unbroken record of naval defeats for three centuries and a quarter, and a victory this time would be an exception.

The last naval battle won by Spain was that of Lepanto, fought in 1571, when the Turkish fleet was defeated. This was one of the greatest battles in history, but the Spanish had not only their ablest warrior at their head, but were given effective assistance by the Genoese and Venetian fleets.

Since that battle Spain has not won a victory on the seas. At one time or another the Castilians have been engaged with England, Holland, France, the petty Italian states, combinations of German states and various other countries. The revolutions in Central and South America caused her to make use of her naval skill. But always with the same result. She has won no battle which has had the slightest effect toward bettering her fortunes.

It was only seventeen years after the battle of the armanda at Lepanto that Spain sent her supposedly invincible armanda—the greatest fleet in appearance that the world had ever seen—against Great Britain. But they were defeated overwhelmingly by a British force that was insignificant compared with the great Spanish fleet of warships.

UNABLE TO KEEP GIBRALTAR.

Spain was unable to retain Gibraltar, the greatest of the world's fortresses. England won it in 1704 after an attack by Sir George Rooke, the prince of Hesse-Darmstadt, Sir John Leake and Admiral Byng. Spain repeatedly tried to get it back but has never been successful, and it yet remains in England's possession. The Spanish and French lost 10,000 men in the first attempt, three months after its capture, while the British loss was about 400. Another attack by the Spaniards in 1720 was repulsed with great loss. In 1727 their attack cost them 5,000 men, while but 300 of the small British garrison of British defenders perished. In 1779 the French and Spaniards made a concerted attack, and although they employed the greatest armament that had up to that time been brought against a fortress they were overthrown. Another army of 40,000 men with a naval force failed in a similar effort in 1781.

The most determined effort made by the French and Spanish to regain the fortress was in 1782, when 12,000 of the best troops of France were engaged. One thousand pieces of artillery were brought against the fortress besides forty-seven sail of the line, all three deckers, ten great floating batteries, supposed to be invincible, carrying 212 guns, and innumerable smaller boats, such as xebecs, frigates, bomb catches, gun and mortar boats. For weeks 6,000 shells were daily thrown, but the garrison of only 7,000 British held the fort.

At a meeting on the high seas Spain had a more severe lesson in the prowess of the Anglo-Saxon tars. A Spanish fleet of twenty-nine sail was totally defeated by Sir George Byng in the Faro of Messina, July 31, 1780. Near Cape Vincent Rodney whipped another fleet in 1780; and France and Spain together fought desperately but vainly against England in the bay of Gibraltar. Spain always had allies. England was fighting half the rest of the world.

BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR.

The last of the more important naval battles engaged in by Spain was that of Trafalgar, in which the French and Spanish together attempted to give battle to the English fleet after having dodged it for months. They relied on a numerical superiority, but were easily beaten by Nelson.

Since then Spain has not attempted to fight on the seas except with the young republics of South and Central America. The Peruvians and Chileans easily beat the Spanish in the wars of 1864 and 1866. Pereja, the Spanish admiral, committed suicide in 1864 because of his defeat by the South Americans. His successor was the blundering and cowardly Nunez who bombarded Valparaiso and destroyed the property of Europeans, thus arousing the indignation of all Europe.

Nunez attempted to repeat this same trick at Callao, but some vessels that happened to be in the harbor fired a few shots and he fled.

It is this record that makes the naval officers believe they have an easy task before them in the war with Spain, and they would be surprised if this war should prove for the first time that Spain could defeat Anglo-Saxons, or any other nation for that matter.

ALL ON WIND.

Tom Harmon, whatever became of him?

Oh, he's here yet. Buildin' up quite a reputation on wind.

How's that?

He's invented three different bicycle pumps, and now he's working on a flyin' machine.

A SINCERE YOUTH.

Marie—Don't you think he wants to marry you for your money?

Penelope—Oh, no; he does not care for money. Why, I hear that he throws it away as fast as he gets it.