

The Lover's Quarrel.

"I will not give you back your letters," said he.
"But you have no right to keep them," said I, "now that you are not engaged to me any longer, Mr. Howard."
"Oh, my dear," he answered, "you cannot have all the advantage. You have hit me, and you can say what you please, and I can prove the truth by our correspondence. I always kept the rough draft of mine, and there's no law in the land to make me give up my own letters."

"Gentlemen don't talk of law; they think of honor," said I.

"Ah, whatever you please, Miss Travis. I suppose the fact that my grandfather did not leave his property has a good deal to do with things being as they are. Good-by, Miss Travis."

Sally was a girl you could trust. She was a plain little thing, with something the matter with her spine, but just as good as gold. I told her every thing, and now I intended to tell her the facts of the case and get her to let me go into Ben's room while he was away and look for my letters.

I knew that Ben—I mean Mr. Howard—was out by eight o'clock, and at nine I tapped on the basement window, and Sally, who was making a cherry pie, looked up and saw me and opened the door herself.

And then and there I sat down and told her all about it and about the letters.

"And I want you to help me to get them," said I. "Let me get into Mr. Howard's room and take what belongs to me. And you will, won't you?"

"It's a splendid idea," said Sally.

You have to wait until lunch is over. Miss Jack and Jossie go out then. Mother'll be doing her end, and Buddy will be getting things ready for dinner and Sarah rubbing the forks and glasses. I'll get the passkey—or course we have one for every room. Now, do stay for lunch, darling."

And I did stay for lunch, and when Sally unlocked the door and we were really in the room—his room:

"I suppose he keeps his letters in his desk," said she. "I know he doesn't put them in his trunk, but this key unlocks all the drawers and desks in the house. We've got them down the lodgers when they lose their key rings. Now, I shall lock you in and sit on the stairs to keep watch, though nothing can happen. I'll come for you exactly at four."

I drew a chair to the desk, sat down.

There was nothing inside but some note-paper, and a little package of legal cap and pens, and inkstand, and a blotting pad.

"I shut the desk and looked into the drawers. There was no key box."

"Oh, dear, I thought, 'where can I look now?' And I was about to try my key on the drawers, when I heard the street door open and bang shut, and feet ascend the stairs.

I hid the key, ran into the locked room, and waited, at least for a moment.

There was a wardrobe cupboard with curtains before it. I ran toward it and stood bolt upright in the corner, holding my breath, and then followed by another man, I heard the door shut.

They shut the door and sat down.

They lighted their pipes.

"They're a couple of scoundrels," said Ben.

"They're not looking for me," said Ben.

"I'm feeling wretchedly," said Mr. Howard. "I wouldn't tell another fellow, but I believe my heart is broken there, don't you laugh. You see that photograph on the mantelpiece, and the other one of the woman, and then that's all. She's a mercenary little wretch, but I am a fool, Henry."

I love her still. I shall keep her photograph all my life—and her letters. To read and kiss. I would not give them up, even if I had to give up my Staff and Consuls!" said this Mr. Henry—heartsick!

"You'll find a better girl in no time."

"There is, but 'one' woman in the world for me," said Ben. "There, now, I'm done. You know my trouble. If I'm not good enough for you, you never speak of it to any one. I know."

"You'll not have any trouble in six months," said the horrible Mr. Henry.

"Now you'll come up and spend your holiday with me, won't you? I'll just stop and buy those things for my wife and you, and you'll need me and meet me at the station."

Then Henry walked away, and Ben—yes, Ben, my poor Ben—took a bundle of letters from his bosom and kissed them, and took down my photograph and hung it up, and then having pulled a bag out of the corner, he walked straight to the wardrobe and drew the curtain back.

The next moment he was staring at me and I at him.

"Is it her ghost?" I heard him say to me, and then I knew where I was.

It was not a situation to impress dignity.

"It is only me in the flesh, Ben," said I. "I wish I was a ghost so that I could vanish. And now you can boast of your life, if you like—and I will say nothing more, because I did not care about your grandfather's horrid mother."

Secondly, I—only meant to—if I a little—not to break off, only to frighten you. Thirdly, I—oh, I've found out that you really and truly love me!—and that's through a secret offer. I want to know, used to be very, very much—and I couldn't be going to marry old Mr. Javerrill, because he is engaged to my Aunt Opelia, and he never wanted me. I came to get my letters, but you may keep them—I've misinterpreted you, though we partly forgive for me, Ben."

And Sally was my bridemaid when I married, and is to-day my dearest friend and the only one who knows how Ben and I came to make up our quarrel.

THE RIVER THAMES.

If the plans now under way are carried out as anticipated, the great work of widening and deepening the River Thames will before long be an accomplished fact, and the commercial importance of that river thereby greatly increased. It is being clear to the authorities, an extended examination and consultation with engineering experts, that a twenty-six foot channel will be required for the deepest nine-tenths of the river. It was decided that the channel should be prosecuted to be done solely by dredging. According to this plan, there will be from Gravesend up the river as far as Grayfriars Ness, opposite Harfleet, a channel width of 1,000 feet and a minimum depth of twenty-four feet at low water. The channel from Grayfriars Ness to the Albert docks, the width is to be about 500 feet and the depth twenty-two, and from the latter to the Millwall Docks there will be a channel at least 300 feet wide and eighteen feet deep.

A three hundred and ten pounder sixteen turned up in this year's batch of French conscripts. He was active enough to be accepted.

THE TOMATO IN ITALY.

It is Popular With All Classes in King Member's Realm.

In every home and cottage in Italy the preserving of tomatoes is carried on. Terraces, balconies, and even the flat roofs of the houses are half covered with plates containing the deep red substance. After gathering the tomatoes intended for preserving are spread out for some hours in the sun until the skin has somewhat shrunk. They are then passed through a sieve so that they may be freed from both seeds and skins. As they contain a large proportion of water, the substance which has been passed through the sieve must be hung in bags, from which the water exudes, and soon a pool of dirty-looking water is formed beneath each bag. Strange to say, it is in no way tinged with red.

The mixture which remains in the bags has the consistency of a very thick paste. It is then salted, the proportion being a little less than one ounce of salt to a pound of preserve. The process now requires that it shall be spread on flat plates, exposed to the sun, and stirred from time to time with a wooden spoon, so that the upper part may not form a crust while the lower part is being reduced. It is a picturesque sight when the women are to be seen fitting about on the roofs and terraces, attending to the deep red preserves, their colored handkerchiefs flung over their heads to screen them from the rays of the sun, and the contents of the various plates are taken in and stirred up together, for it is customary by the night that the whole would be spoiled. After being exposed to the sun for seven or eight days, the same process is repeated each day, the preserve is finished and placed in jars for winter use.

Though it is used by all classes of persons, it is more necessary to the poor than to the rich, for the latter can make use of the fresh tomatoes preserved in tins. Tomatoes may be dried when the weather is bad, and usually passed through a sieve, the pulp being then placed in tins, which are immediately soldered down and then put in boiling water for five minutes. The cost of a small tin is half a franc, so it is as a rule beyond the means of the poor.

KINSHIP AND DIPLOMACY.

What the Relation is in Case of War and Rumours of War.

It is intimated in the despatches that the fact that the Dowager Empress of Russia is the sister of King George of Greece has had great influence in determining the course of Russia in the Cretan controversy. On the same theory the fact that the Duke of Edinburgh, son of Queen Victoria, married the Grand Duchess Marie of Russia, daughter of Alexander II., should have had influence in promoting concert of action between Great Britain and Russia, but it did not.

Mr. Faithful Begg, M. P., suggests the incorporation in the royal arms of England of a double-headed lion passing guard, the heads crowned one above the other, for the protection of Queen Victoria's long reign by "drawing the line" of the Corinthians which may soon be found.

MILLIONS TOO HIGH OR TOO LOW.

ADD that the estimate of Africa may be

50,000,000 out of the way, and that errors in proportion may exist in the figures given for Persia, Siam, Afghanistan, Turkey and other countries.

Both, however, concur that these figures are not absolutely reliable, and are largely calculations based on the more or less reliable reports of travel.

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