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Esqueping, Jan. 3, 1877. 27-3m

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## THE SURPRISE PARTY.

"It's the silliest, most ridiculous thing that ever I heard of!" said Aunt Samantha. Married, indeed! I wonder you've the face to stand there and talk about it, Sarah Lynn!

"I'm not so much surprised at John Marchbank men have brass enough for anything!"

"Thank you, Miss Samantha," said Mr. Marchbank, ceremoniously, while pretty Sarah Lynn looked like a frightened young robin when the spring rain first comes patterning into its nest.

"I never did believe in matrimony—not but what I've had offers enough!" began the acidulated spinster.

"There can be no manner of doubt of that," interjected Marchbank, mischievously.

"And I never mean to encourage it in any nice of mine," went on Aunt Samantha. "There—now I hope you've got your answer."

"Well, if you can't be married, I suppose we may at least go to the surprise party across the river."

"You can do as you like, John Marchbank."

"No, I cannot, ma'am—at least not unless you will let Sarah go with me."

"I don't care," said Aunt Samantha, snappishly. "There it is again—surprise parties. Surprise parties!"

"Such things were never heard of when I was a girl. I don't approve of 'em, and I wouldn't let Sarah have one here."

"But what would you do if the young people all assembled without waiting for a formal invitation?"

"I'd turn 'em out of the house quicker than you can say Jack Robinson!" cried the irate lady. "Just let 'em try—that's all."

"Indeed! in that case I hardly think they will make the attempt, said Marchbank, demurely. "Come, Sarah, get your shawl—my gray pony will think we are a long time coming."

Sarah Lynn looked very pretty, with the blue worsted hood framing in her sunny golden hair and the clear pink bloom on her cheek, as she nestled down in the carriage at John Marchbank's side, and they drove away through the purple twilight, with Venus, the Star of Love, looking down upon them with her great loving eyes of gold, above the western hills.

"I wish Aunt Samanta didn't talk so terribly," sighed Sarah.

"My dear, she's a Turk—a positive heathen!" ejaculated Mr. Marchbank, with no little energy.

"At this rate she'll make you into just such an old maid as she is herself."

Sarah's blue eyes grew bluer and darker—sure sign of trouble in the peaceful waters of her breast.

"I could not oppose myself against Aunt Samantha's wishes," she said. "Perhaps some day she will change her mind."

"Perhaps the North Star will step round to the eastern horizon—not that Miss Samantha is particularly star-like," said John; "but I think there is about equal probability of either event occurring."

He drove on in silence for a little distance.

"Sarah," he said, "she needs a lesson—and she shall have it."

"What on earth do you mean, John?"

"Mean? Exactly what I say, and he burst into a general, rollicking fit of laughter that made the old pine-wood echo as if they were filled with lurking spirits that related the joke immensely.

And further than this Sarah could not make him divulge his inner thoughts, though she tried, with the prettiest wiles and coaxing in the world.

"Hold the reins one half second, my little princess of hearts," said Marchbank, gaily, as he checked the sober gray pony. "I want to run into the parson's just a minute."

Mr. Marchbank came into the parson's little parlor like a fresh gust of wind, so bright and cheery and inspiring was his presence. The parson looked up from his quarto volume—the parson's wife involuntarily laid down her knitting.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Mr. Pouncewell," said John, "but could you and your respected lady just step round to Miss Samantha Lynn's in the course of the evening—as soon as possible?"

"Ah, indeed! Miss Samantha expects company?"

"Well, no—I can't exactly say expects—it's rather a delicate and confidential subject." (The parson looked wise, and Mrs. Pouncewell ejaculated under her breath: "Well, who would have thought it!") But went on the prevaricating wretch, if you should happen in—and should be called upon to perform any interesting ceremonial—mind, I don't say you will be—

his spectacles-glasses. We shall be out hand Mr. John.

And Mr. Marchbank rushed out as jovially as he rushed in.

At the next farm house dwelt Deacon Job Potter and his sister Delia—a gossip of forty-tongue power.

Mr. John Marchbank surprised them at apple-paring in the back kitchen, by the light of a single tallow candle.

"She ain't going to have a party, is she?" demanded Miss Delia.

"Oh, no—it's to be a surprise—and she will be surprised," added Mr. John, mentally, "if you and the deacon happen to drop in about eight o'clock and meet the minister and any other friends."

"The minister—law sakes! then there's to be a wedding?"

"I didn't say there was to be a wedding, did I? Good evening!"

Presently the garden gate creaked dolefully and a knock sounded at the door. Deacon Potter and his sister Miss Delia made their abode.

"Come in, come in!" cried Miss Lynn, hospitably. "I'm drestful glad to see ye. Set up in the big chairs. I was just thinkin' what a lovely evening I had afore me."

Another knock—and this time it was the Reverend Mr. Pouncewell and his wife.

"Come in, Mr. Pouncewell," said Miss Samantha, "and how's your rheumatics, ma'am? It's dreadfully trying, weather, this spring!"

Mr. Pouncewell sat stiffly down. Mrs. Pouncewell wondered at the peculiar style of costume adopted by the fair bride-elect.

"But she always was odd," thought the parson's wife.

"Why here come Jerehiah Martin and his six do the trick! Aunt Samantha's beginning to look a little nervous," and Squire Mathewson's wife and sister, as I live!"

In a short time, Miss Samantha Lynn's "keeping-room" was filled with the middle-aged gentry of the neighborhood, all wearing a motley expectation look which puzzled that lady sorely. Person Pouncewell made divers well-measured efforts to keep the ball of conversation rolling, but somehow it would come that inscrutable air of waiting for something again.

"Perhaps it was refreshments," Miss Lynn sent John, the farm hand, to the cellar for doughnuts, red apples, and hard cider, and liberally distributed them around. To her astonishment, the company ate and drank and looked more astonished than ever when they were through.

The old clock struck nine—late hours for Beach Hollow. The parson looked appealingly at his wife, Mrs. Pouncewell grew embarrassed, but she spoke warmly up:

"Miss Samantha, my husband is quite ready, whenever you are."

"Ready? For what?"

"The parson pulled his pocket-handkerchief out, and wiped his forehead. "To marry you, Miss."

Miss Samantha looked bewildered. There was Mrs. Pouncewell smiling at her husband's side. Was the good man about to turn Mormon?

"I mean to perform the ceremony. I have not yet had the pleasure of an introduction to the bridegroom Mr. Marchbank."

"Whose bridegroom? What ceremony? What on earth are you talking about?" demanded Miss Samantha, with a shrill scream.

"We were told—that is, that I received the first impression—that is to say, notification, from Mr. John Marchbank."

"I thought so!" exclaimed the spinster smiting her hands together. The good for nothing meddling limb, it's just like him, I wish I could be even with him!"

"Do I understand," questioned Mr. Pouncewell, "that you really just step round to Miss Samantha Lynn's in the course of the evening—as soon as possible?"

"No more'n Mr. Fishley, there," said Miss Lynn, nodding towards the schoolmaster, who turned very red, and looked into the corner of his hat, as if for inspiration, murmuring "Exactly so."

"I am surprised at Mr. Marchbank," said the parson, solemnly. "I ain't, said Miss Samantha expects company?"

"Well, no—I can't exactly say expects—it's rather a delicate and confidential subject." (The parson looked wise, and Mrs. Pouncewell ejaculated under her breath: "Well, who would have thought it!") But went on the prevaricating wretch, if you should happen in—and should be called upon to perform any interesting ceremonial—mind, I don't say you will be—

"Certainly not," said the parson, infusing tremendous sadness into

"My dear Miss Samantha," he said, "I can suggest a way of being even with this evil-minded and ill-conditioned youth."

"What is it, Mr. Fishley?" said the lady, somewhat softened by the bland tones of her counselor.

"We have met here in the expectation of witnessing a wedding," went on the schoolmaster, dropping his voice to a persuasive whisper.

"It is a pity to disappoint these kind neighbors. Let the wedding go on."

"And who—" "Who will fill the very important post of bridegroom, do you ask? I myself! I have long admired you from a respectful distance, Miss Samantha, and it would be the crowning happiness of my life to—to make you Mrs. Fishley."

Miss Samantha hesitated.

"Well, I'm sure, I don't know. It would be a good joke on John, wouldn't it?"

"I would be a denouement for which he little looks."

"A what?" said Miss Samantha. "Well, since you're so pressing Mr. Fishley—" "Call me Caleb, dear one."

"Caleb; then—I kind of hate to say no."

"Mr. Fishley lifted her fair hand to his hip. Miss Samantha did not draw away."

"We are quite ready, Mr. Pouncewell, if you please," said the schoolmaster, exultingly.

The ceremony was scarcely over, when a rattling of wheels was heard in the road without, and Mr. Marchbank entered with Sarah Lynn upon his arm.

"You are just too late to witness the wedding, Sarah," cried Miss Delia Potter.

"The wedding?" Sarah looked round in surprise. Even Mr. Marchbank appeared a little incredulous.

"Your Aunt has just married Mr. Fishley!"

"Hullo!" roared John. "Yes, sir," said the schoolmaster, formally polite: "Miss Samantha—that is, Mrs. Fishley—concluded that as you had been so attentive as to invite her friends to her wedding, she could not disappoint them."

"But look here, ma'am—I thought you never did believe in matrimony!"

Aunt Samantha laughed. She really began to look quite pretty.

"Oh, Aunt, are you really married?" cried Sarah.

"I really am," said the lady spinster.

"Then, Aunt, you can't have any more objections to our being married!"

"Delays are dangerous," struck in Marchbank, seeing at one glance the weak spot in the fortification.

"Let us celebrate this auspicious occasion by a double wedding! Mr. Pouncewell, may we ask your kind assistance. Come, Sarah!"

"Can I, Aunt?"

Aunt Samantha was cornered. "I suppose so!"

And, seeing upon this ungracious assent, Mr. John Marchbank and pretty Sarah Lynn were immediately married!

Italians are the best organizers. If you want to control a hungry man, use him as you would use a horse—put a bit in his mouth.

"Nothing is certain" is a common aphorism, but if nothing is certain, how can it be certain that nothing is certain?

Misfortunes never come singly, and so—like the Death—Are always printed together.

Don't believe there's any use in vaccination, said a Yankee. Had a child vaccinated, and he fell out of a window next day and got killed!

## Chronology of Some Important Events.

Maps, globes and dials were first invented by Anaximander, in the 6th century before the Christian era. They were first brought into England by Bartholomew Columbus, in 1489.

Comedy and tragedy were first exhibited at Athens, 562 years B.C. Plays were first acted at Rome, 239 B.C.

The first public library was founded at Athens, 526 B.C. The first public library was founded at Rome, 167 B.C.

The first public library was founded at Alexandria, 284 B.C. Paper was invented in China, 170 B.C.

The calendar was reformed by Julius Caesar, 45 B.C. Saddles came into use in the fourth century.

Horse shoes made of iron were first made in A.D. 481. Stirrups were not made till a century later.

Manufacture of silk brought from India into Europe, 551 A.D. Stone buildings and glass introduced into England 574 A.D. Pens first made of quills, A.D. 635.

Pleadings in courts of judicature introduced A.D. 798. The figures of arithmetic brought into Europe by the Saracens, A.D. 991.

Paper of cotton rags invented towards the close of the 10th century. Paper made of linen, 1300.

The degree of Doctor first conferred in Europe at Bologna, in 1130; in England, 1208.

The first regular bank was established at Venice, in 1577. The bank of Geneva was established in 1407; that of Amsterdam in 1609; England, 1674.

Astronomy and geometry brought into England, 1230. Linen first made in England, 1253.

Spectacles invented, 1280. The art of weaving introduced into England 1330.

Musical notes, used, invented 1380. Gunpowder invented at the city of Cologne, by Schwarz, 1320-40.

Cannon first used at the siege of Algiers, 1342. Muskets in use, 1370.

Pistols in use, 1544. Printing invented at Mentz, Gutenberg, 1460.

Printing introduced into England, 1471. Post offices established in France 1464; in England, 1581; in Germany, 1641.

Turkey and chocolate introduced into England from America, in 1529. Tobacco introduced into France by Nicot, 1660.

First coach made in England, 1645. Clocks first made in England, 1608.

Potatoes first introduced into Ireland, in 1586. The circulation of the blood discovered by Harvey, 1619.

THE PRICE OF CABAGES—A certain physician recently vaccinated a farmer's family of twelve persons and charged twelve dollars. A few days thereafter he took a dozen cabages in part payment as he supposed; but upon final settlement learned to his astonishment that Mr. Farmer charged doctor's prices—one dollar a head!

SPICED—A Western clergyman admonished a youthful sabbath-schooler for habitually sleeping in church. "Can't help it," said he. "You should use cloves, or some other spice," said the dominie. "Better—put some spice in your sermons," was the spic reply.

CURIOS FACT—In a hundred years from now you will not find a person in Acton who has ever heard of you!

A Boston scheme, likely to be put into operation, is to provide practical schools in mechanics. Machine shops are to be established in which instruction may be supplemented with work.

An Iowa boy sued his father, and he got damages—with a skate strap.

It is not wise to pride ourselves upon the greater knowledge over those who lived a hundred years ago. A tanner's shop at Pompeii has recently been found to contain tools of the art very closely resembling those of the present day.

Some persons seem utterly incapable of appreciating a generous act. Merely because a young man calls on a young lady half a dozen evenings during the week, and occasionally drops in between meals, there are people mean enough to insinuate that it means something besides anxiety about the health of her sick mother.

## Return of the Jews to Palestine.

The year 1877 is likely to do more than the astrologers find promised in its two lucky figure seven. It will probably witness the birth of several nations. They may be born amid the pangs of war, though to day the signs may be auspicious; but they will be born. Not only will one, more probably two, constitutional and maternally protected nations be born within the limits of Ottoman suzerainty, but Egypt will be re-made by England.

The new scheme of widening the Suez canal really means the colonization of Egypt with many of the ablest Englishmen and the renovation of the Khedive's government. The keen instinct of the Jews have forefelt what is coming. I wrote you some time ago that a remarkable migration to Palestine was going on among that people, and that the signs of it were observable in many closed Jewish homes in London. A traveller who has just returned here writes in the Times that he found the whole region from Dan to Beersheba crowded with immigrants Jews from all parts of the world. Whatever may have caused the gathering of Jews to Palestine, the fact is certain. And the traveller who has remarked it no doubt represents the hope he found amongst them in his intimation that England might well assist in the restoration of Jerusalem and the foundation of a Jewish republic, or other liberal government. The proposition is likely to spread like wildfire.

The average orthodox Christian world will at once recognize the Divine hand stretched forth to fulfill prophecy, and any amount of money could be raised here for such a purpose. When Egypt and Syria are taken in hand it will become at once necessary to reduce Arabia to order. The world has been so absorbed in nearer Turkish affairs as hardly to have noticed that Arabia is at present in the arena of civil war.—English Paper.

A Novel Scheme. Scientific men in England are figuring out a plan to mitigate the severity of the climate of Lower Canada. They want to utilize the Gulf Stream, which J. G. Bennett had a notion to withdraw and send across the Isthmus of Panama; about the time he made up his mind that Canada ought to be varied in ice! The extreme cold of this part of Quebec lying along the Gulf of St. Lawrence is caused by huge blocks of ice which make their way through the Strait of Belleisle. For four months out of the twelve, the St. Lawrence is blocked with ice from Belleisle Bay and the Strait of Belleisle is un-navigable. By blocking up the Strait, it is held that the ice would be driven to the Atlantic east of Newfoundland, and the Gulf Stream would make Anticosti as verdant as Prince Edward Island.

The winter would then be reduced to a duration of about three months, and the St. Lawrence would be navigable all the year round. The temperature of the Gulf would be raised, and the beneficial efforts of the change would extend far inland to the north, and large tracts of land which are now almost useless would become valuable for cultivation or pasturage. The cost of this bit of engineering is estimated at £5,000,000 sterling. Immense rocks are found at the narrowest part of the Strait, the depth is only 15 fathoms, and there is no current sufficient to wash away the rocks after they have been thrown into the channel. The trip to England is shortened 180 miles by using the Strait of Belleisle. But the gain to the land is estimated to be of more value than the saving to navigation. Such an experiment would, however, be costly, and the engineers will require to demonstrate with certainty that closing the strait would actually produce the promised change.

QUEST.—Please explain the philosophy of the following fact, viz: That the bottom of a kettle taken from the stove while boiling is scorching warm, and as soon as the water ceases boiling it becomes hot. As this is a question our elms has failed to answer, you will confer a favor by explaining.

ANSWER.—There are two causes which produce this result. The bottom of the kettle is covered with soot, which is a bad conductor of heat, and the heat of the water is not conducted to the hand. Then, again, the circulation of the water is tended to the same cause. It is heated, rises to the surface, where it is partially cooled, and returns to the bottom again. The cooler portion of the water is therefore at the bottom of the kettle.

Time is a species of wealth which it is impossible for us to hoard, but which we may spend to good advantage.

## Something About the Sun.