THE RED-HAIRED GIRL.

Now, I am not a flirt, I wish that to be clearly understood at the outset but there was something wonderfully fascinating about the red hair and bewitching eyes of that girl.

But I must begin at the beginning It happened two years ago, just before I was a qualified doctor and A. M.

I spent a great part of that summer's vacation at Ballater, because Letty and her mother had gone there for a change, and, as Letty and I were engaged, naturally we liked spending most of our time together.

About the 24th of September, however, we all returned to Aberdeen, and I resolved to spend the remaining part of my holidays in the Buchan district where I had a few friends. So, after saying "good by" to Letty for what seemed an interminable period—though it was only for a fortnight—I took the train for Mintlaw. The Buchan trains are slow but sure and the scenery not specially interesting, so I was glad enough to arrive at Maud, where the energetic stationer shouted out at the top of his voice: "New Maud! Change for Fraserburgh! Change for Fraserburgh!" We waited till the Fraserburgh and Peterhead trains arrived and then we started again.

Soon afterward I arrived at Mintlaw, where I was met by my friend, who, for convenience sake, I shall call George White.

Old Deer, which lies barely two miles from Mintlaw station, is one of the prettiest villages in Buchan. It nestles snugly in a hollow surrounded and sheltered by many trees and beautified by the neighboring estates of Pitfour and Alden, and by that well known stream, the Ugie.

It was also an admirable center for a cyclist, and as the weather was good White and I took long spins together. It was toward the end of harvest, and, although "stooks" were still standing in a few fields, most farmers had already finished leading, and it was assuredly the time for "meal-and-ales."

Now I had never been at one of those functions, so, after spending a delightful week at Old Deer, I prolonged my visit by a day to go to Barnhill's harvest home. George promised there would be some fun. Barnhill was one of the largest farms in the district, and this year the "meal-and-ale" was to be a big affair.

The evening came. We drove over rather late, and when we got there the dancing had begun. A wooden floor had been laid in the immense barn, the walls were decorated with flags and flowers, and ripe corn, and at one end was a raised platform for the fiddlers. At the other end of the room a huge pole had been stuck up, on the top of which was the "clyack sheaf," all dressed with bright scarlet and blue ribbon.

White introduced me to his host, a short, jovial looking man, and to his two daughters, Miss Kate and Emmy Smith, and several others; but directly I entered the barn I became conscious of a girl with flaming red hair, dressed in pale blue muslin, who, although dancing at the time, kept looking at me with her great eyes till I felt a queer thrill go through me, and a feeling as if, somewhere before, I had seen that girl.

I was standing by Miss Smith. I tried to give her all my attention.

"You know, Mr. Keith, this is really the servants' night," she was saying, "but we always invite a few of our own friends, too. Then we dance her till 12 o'clock and after 12 father makes it a rule that the rest of us must go into the house, and leave the others to enjoy it better by themselves; they keep it up till 5 in the morning, and sometimes even till 6."

"Tell me," I said, more hurriedly than politely, "who is that lady, dressed in pale blue, dancing with the tall, dark gentleman?"

Miss Smith laughed slightly.

"The tall gentleman is my brother, and the girl my dearest school friend, Miss Nora Stuart. Shall I introduce you?"

Although fascinated in a certain way, I thought of Letty, and did not particularly wish an introduction, but now I could not well refuse, and soon I was dancing with the red haired girl.

There was an indescribable something that made her very attractive and kept me by her side, and again and again, as she talked, she made me think that I had met and known her somewhere before, but memory would not help me. And soon I did not think of that, but felt only happy to live in the present, and know her and talk to her now.

The hours flew swiftly by. I had danced with her nearly the whole evening, and scarcely left her side. Twelve o'clock came. Miss Stuart and I were in the garden. The harvest moon was shining brightly, and from the barn came the distant music of the fiddles and concertinas. We walked along the narrow path.

"The roses are almost over," she said.

"Oh, no! There is one yet. 'The last rose of summer.' It is a yellow one. Let me get it for you."

"Thank you."

She stuck it in her dress.

"You know," she said, laughingly, "I am so fond of roses, but I can never wear them."

Artlessly she touched her hair—and I understood. It was not even auburn, it was decidedly red, but just then I thought it the most beautiful I had ever seen.

"It is a great misfortune," she went on.

"On the contrary, it is a blessing," I hastened to reply. "That is just my

STORY—TWO

favorite color, and I think it very beautiful, and I also think a blue muslin gown the prettiest in all the world when a certain person wears it."

Letty was far away. I had completely forgotten her existence.

"You flatterer!" she said, smiling. Then she tapped her foot impatiently upon the ground and frowned. "But men are all alike—they have no constancy, no stability. They are tossed about by every wind that blows, taken by every fresh face they see. I have no patience with them—none! Come, let us go into the house!"

I caught her hand. Goodness knows what I was about to say, but just then we heard footsteps and some of the others approached us, and I thought of Letty, and felt thankful for their presence.

II.

Soon afterward White and I drove back to Old Deer together, and next day I went on to Peterhead to spend the remaining days of my holiday.

At first my thoughts were full of that red haired girl, and every time I went out I hoped to meet her. I cycled up to Old Deer three days running, and once even called at Barnhill, where I was entertained at tea by Miss Smith and her sister, who informed me that their friend, Miss Stuart, had gone home.

But the last few days of my holiday brought Letty nearer, and, dear girl, I began to long to see her again. And when at last I took the train to Aberdeen I saw that the other had only been a passing fancy, and that I had been led on by a bold, designing girl, and that, after all, I cared for Letty only.

I had written her only the day before, so I knew she would be expecting me, and, after getting some of the ourney's dust rubbed off, I set out for the little house at Queen's Cross.

I was getting impatient. I quickened my pace; I almost ran.

When I was shown into the pretty drawing room Letty was there alone. She wore a white dress that I had always admired; but she did not run to meet me, with a little, glad cry, as I expected. She only stood up and held out her hand coldly. I kissed her, but she did not return the caress.

"Letty, dear; aren't you glad to see me again? You have dressed for me alone. I know, though you do not wel——"

"I thought you admired pale blue, Joe: that was the reason I dressed in white."

That made me think of that horrid red haired girl. I really began to dislike her.

"Why do you say that, dear? You know I always like you in white. And why are you so cold—and—indifferent? Have I changed? I do not think so, and you are just the same, except for your coldness."

I glanced at her fair hair. The sun, shining in from a side window, put a touch of gold in it. I raised my hand and gently pushed back a stray curl that hid her eyes from me. She shrank from my touch.

"Don't!" she said, emphatically. "Red is your favorite color, you know. I wonder you can bear to look at my ugly fair tresses."

I felt almost giddy with astonishment. How I hated that red haired girl!

"I hate red," I cried, vehemently. "I detest it!"

"Men are all alike. They have no constancy whatever. Their fancy is taken by every fresh face they see. I have no belief in them—none!"

With which words, spoken quickly and angrily, Letty rushed out of the room and the door shut behind her with a little bang.

I was dazed and perplexed. I had heard almost the same words before, and now I felt as if I could have murdered that red haired girl.

I got up slowly and looked once again around the dear room. How familiar everything seemed and perhaps I might never see it again. Then I went to the door, and on opening it came face to face with—the red haired girl.

I staggered back. Was I mad? Was this all a horrible dream? I clutched the back of a chair for support. Coolly the girl held out her right hand. She wore the same half-evening dress of pale blue muslin and fastened by a gold pin. Near her throat was a yellow, withered rose.

"How do you do, Mr. Keith?"

I could stand this no longer. I took a quick step past her and reached the stair.

"Joe! Joe! Don't go! Don't you know me?"

"I looked round just as I reached the foot. The red haired girl had taken off her hair, and underneath were Letty's own fair tresses. She was was laughing and crying by turns, and of course, I rushed back and took the dear girl in my arms.

"Didn't I make up my checks and eyebrows beautifully, Joe?" she asked after a time. "And don't you think I act well? The Smith girls were school friends of mine and we made it up together!"

Then again she said:

"I do not know if I can trust you now, dear. A little more and you would have proposed to me as the red haired girl, and then you would have been engaged to two—no—yes, to two girls."

"I do not see how, if you and the red haired girl are one, you can't be two; and so I would have only been engaged to one girl—a thing every man has a right to be. And I think you can safely trust me, for not many girls throw themselves at gentlemen's heads in the shameless way that red haired——"

"If you dare to say another word I shall never forgive you!"

But afterward I often said to Letty, what I believe to be true, and what I said to the red haired girl—that her blue muslin gown is the prettiest in all the world when a certain person wears it.—Answers.

SMALLEST MAN ON EARTH.

Franz Ebert, the Liliputian Actor, Has Just Been Naturalized.

The tiniest native of Germany has just renounced his allegiance to the kaiser and taken out his naturalization papers as a citizen of the United States. He is the smallest American gentleman on earth, and his name is Franz Ebeling, comedian and man of the world, better known by his stage name, Franz Ebert, of the "Liliputians." This diminutive person stands just 3 feet 6 inches high and is 31 years old. Little Ebert had an amusing experience when he appeared before the clerk of the naturalization bureau of the supreme court in New York the other day. He was introduced to the clerk by a friend, who stood more than 6 feet high. The clerk at once said: "We don't naturalize children here. You had better bring the boy back when he is nine or ten years older." The clerk apologized for his mistake when Ebert's big friend explained who he was. The little comedian signed his name with a flourish. He was anxious to have his papers, he said, because his troupe was about to sail for Europe, and he desired to be able to call himself an American.

A Boy's Compact.

An account of the life of Judge James B. Bradwell of Chicago, by his daughter, tells a story of the deeply religious training of his childhood. He had the old-fashioned faith in the efficacy of prayer, before he was of sufficient age to understand the reasonable limits of such petitions.

Once, when James was only eight years old, the wagon was sent to Chicago for provisions. Five days elapsed; the wagon was detained, and the Bradwell family was without food, and without a man to provide it. Little James, as usual with even small boys of the time and place, was a good shot. His mother loaded the gun for him, and he started out to see what he could shoot to supply the table.

In due time he saw two prairie chickens not far away. He got his gun ready, and then took long enough to pray thus:

"O, Father, if you will just let me bring down those two chickens, I'll give your minister the choice of the pair."

The trigger was pulled and down came the two prairie chickens. James believed the shot to be a direct answer to his prayer. He took the two birds to Elder Snow, the minister, and told him of the circumstances.

The good elder took a long time to examine the two chickens, in order to be quite sure that he got the better of the two; because, he said, he thought it best that the boy's compact should be faithfully carried out.

Tag on Horseback.

Here's a way to have a little exciting sport if you are a good horseman. Take several fellows on horseback—girls are not necessarily barred, but it is not in any sense a girl's game—ride into some field and play tag on horseback. The smaller the field the better the opportunities for displaying good horsemanship, as it will necessitate more tricks and quicker turning. The way they play the game out in Wyoming the one who is "it" has to touch only the horse, but this is more dangerous than touching the rider, for the horse, thinking you mean to strike, will often plunge and kick viciously.

Of course, polo ponies are the best for this game, but any horse if properly ridden can be made to understand the game in a short time. It is a fact that the horses very often get as much interested as the riders and will sometimes get very much excited and kick at an approaching horse to keep the one who is "it" at a distance. Cross tag and "pussy wants a corner" can be played in the same way, although none but the most experienced riders should try the latter, as collisions are very liable to occur. In Wyoming they even play prisoner's base. This was a favorite sport in the Green River country, but they have plenty of rough games in Wyoming that should never be brought east of the Rocky mountains. Tag on horseback is really a very good game, but great care should be taken at all times to prevent accidents.

Mule Beats the Police

An angry mule at Atlanta, Macon county, Mo., put the entire police force of the town to flight the other day and killed one horse and severely injured another before it was finally despatched with a club. The mule belonged to an old darky. In the morning it lost its temper over something and proceeded to arouse the town sufficiently to call out the police force. During the first assault the officers used brickbats. Then the mule charged and one of the officers of the law saved himself by crawling under a house. The mule had things pretty much its own way for half an hour, but presently the arm of the law reached out and gathered it in.

Hand Blown Bubbles.

Have you ever tried blowing bubbles from your hands instead of a pipe? It can be done, and the bubbles will be considerably larger than those the ordinary clay pipe produces. The next time you are in the bath tub you can give the experiment a test Lather your hands well, with suds; then place them in the position of a cup, just as if you were scooping up water from a spring, leaving, however, a small hole in the bottom. Hold your hands about a foot from the mouth and blow a current of air into them. After one or two trials you will be able to send skimming about bubbles over a foot in diameter.

Roquefort cheese was made in the time of Pliny.

THE ART OF HOMEKEEPING.

The Kitchen is Really the Heart of the Home.

Housekeeping may be drudgery, as many another occupation is, but housekeeping is an art, and an art spelled with a capital.

We may call to our aid the services of decorator, paper-hanger, upholsterer; we may gather together treasures from every part of the world with which to adorn and beautify our homes, but these cannot give them the living, breathing spirit of our personalities.

A woman who was born and reared amid all the luxury that money can buy, once told the writer that the happiest moments of her life were when, after having married, as the world called it, "out of her sphere," in other words a poor man, and they had gone to housekeeping in a snug little flat of four rooms very plainly furnished, the first morning in this, their first home, they took breakfast in the little kitchen.

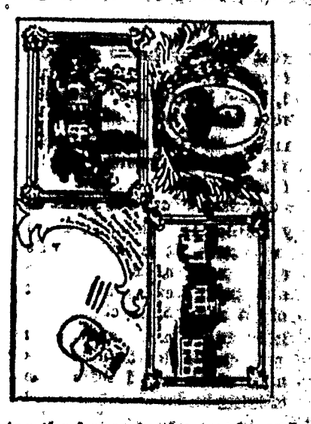
"You can never imagine," she said, with a sigh of regret for those days that were, "how great a peace seemed to hover over and settle down upon us then. Well do I remember that little kitchen as it looked then with the sunshine smiling in at the windows upon the common flowers in plain pots, the tiny range with the tea kettle singing cheerily, the aroma of coffee made by my husband's own hands, as he went about helping to prepare the morning meal, and the little table just large enough for us two, set daintily with the few dishes that were a part of our first housekeeping outfit. How good that coffee did taste, and how pleasant and peaceful was life then, and how happy I was, had I but known it!"

It ought to be the most frequented and most cheerful room in the house. It should be the room around which the memories of childhood will cluster; memories of the singing tea kettle, of savory dishes, of mother cutting generous slices of bread buttered for hungry children, of the big chintz-covered rocking chair, where lullabies were sung; of the broad, soft-cushioned and old-fashioned lounge whose comfortable proportions were equally divided between sleepy children having the afternoon nap, and the tortoise kitten that sought repose after the tantalizations of frolicsome youngsters with string and ball.

In considering the subject of housekeeping then, let it be regarded as a vocation, not as a drudgery, or simply as a duty. It is woman's nature to love and want the luxuries of life, but it is woman who can make of the bare necessities a place of habitation that shall be not only in the highest sense of the term "A Palace of Art," but where all things shall be "in order stored;" a home; truly "a haunt of ancient Peace."

The Peace Conference Postal Card.

This postal card, issued for the Peace Conference and sent out from The Hague, is a very pretty souvenir,



showing the house in the woods, and a portrait of the Czar with a frame of olive branches.

Care of the Eyesight.

The care of our school children's eyes, which is at present attracting attention, is a mater deserving the utmost consideration. Every precaution should be taken to protect children against myopia and other forms of eye trouble to which the conditions of the present day education make them so peculiarly liable.

There can be no doubt that ocular diseases have greatly increased during this century, and especially during the last generation. Previously popular education, except in Scotland and America, was utterly unknown, and people grew up without that strain upon the eyes which popular education entails.

The causes to which this prevalence of eye maladies is usually attributed are the defective lighting of the chools and the stooping position which children naturally assume while occupied with their lessons.

Both of these causes are under the control of the local authorities, who can remedy the defective lighting of any particular school, and by the provision of proper seats and desks, can greatly reduce—even if they cannot entirely remove—evils arising from an improper position of the body while working. But there is another cause which is not within the control of any board of trustees, and which yet works serious harm to the eyesight not only of children but of adults. This is the small type in which so many popular and even educational books are printed. This is a reading age, and publishers meet its demands by the issue of books in which the desired cheapness is secured by the use of poor paper and small print. Children in many cases devour the literature as eagerly as their elders, and the inevitable result follows in injury to the eyesight. The progress of sanitary science alone can remedy this evil.—Toronto News.

PRIVATE HOPKINS.

"Yes, Mary," said the old farmer, as he climbed into the wagon beside his wife to drive homeward, "I've got a letter, and it's from William. You take the lines and I'll read it."

As they drove out of the village and over the bridge and up the long hill, the husband and father slowly read aloud the words written by the soldier-son, now at the front. It was a gloomy letter. It told of hardships and sufferings and privations, and not a brave word was to be found from beginning to end.

"Poor boy!" sighed the mother, as the reading was finished and she relinquished the lines.

"Well, I don't like it!" replied the father. "He was bound to go, in spite of everything, and now he ought to put up with things and not be a baby. Them Spicer boys don't send home no such letters as this."

"I—I wish he hadn't gone!"

"But he did go, and now he's got to grin and bear it, same as the rest. Don't you let on to nobody that he's homesick and ready to cry. If the nayburs got hold of it they'd poke all manner of fun at him and be sneering at us."

"But we can sympathize with him," said the wife.

"A little, mebbe, but we ain't goin' to say very much. I'm goin' to write him that he wants to take things as they come and be a man. There's them Spicer boys, and Tom Johnson and Henry Doolittle and Ben Smith, and nobody ever hears a whine from them."

"It's 'cause William is homesick to see us."

"Well, he must get over it, then. I didn't want him to go, but bein' he's down there he mustn't play baby and make us ashamed. I'd feel like hanging myself if our William hunked out of a fight or deserted his colors. You've bin doin' the writin' and I guess you've writ to softly."

Down on the Rapidan in the old Sixteenth private William Hopkins wasn't making a good record for himself. For the first four weeks of army life he was cheerful and enthusiastic, but after that a change had come. Homesickness is worse than a fever or a wound for a soldier. Every man with a home had had a touch of it, but most of them had thrown it off. Perhaps he tried to, but if so he didn't succeed. The boys got onto him, and though they felt to pity him, they did not spare him their jibes and taunts. He was the bonby of Company G, and even his tent-mate had a feeling of contempt for him. One day the orderly sergeant dropped in on him to say:

"Look here, Bill Hopkins, this thing has gone about far enough! You are making a first-class fool of yourself, and if you don't brace up the boys will give you away at home. Get out and chase yourself and fling this homesickness off. A boy ten years old would be ashamed to mope around as you do!"

Private Hopkins was hurt by these remarks; instead of being braced up, and turning his face away from the sergeant he then and there resolved on a desperate deed. He would desert at the first opportunity. He wouldn't admit that homesickness had anything to do with it. He had been ill-used.

They had given him extra guard duty—extra work around camp—had bullied and jeered him in place of giving him a fair show. He could figure out that the captain and both lieutenants were down on him, and of the ninety men of the company he was the martyr. He had given no cause for this, and he wouldn't submit to such indignities. He was certain of sympathy from father and mother, and once more back home he would stay there, even if he had to hide in the garret. Every soldier who lets the feeling of homesickness get the better of him follows the same train of thought and arrives at the same conclusions.

An opportunity to carry out his plan came to private Hopkins much sooner than he had hoped for. Company G was ordered out on a night reconnoissance, and pale-faced and weak-kneed, the homesick boy took his place in the lines. No one expected any fighting, but it so happened that a small force of the enemy was in the neighborhood, and there was a skirmish and the company was driven back. At roll-call it was found that five men were missing. Two of these had been left dead in the road and two others were believed to have been wounded and crawled into the bushes. The fifth man was private Hopkins, and it was altogether likely that he had been taken prisoner. At any rate, he was thus recorded on the company roll until something more could be learned.

As a matter of fact, the homesick boy had a narrow escape from capture, but the danger had no sooner passed than he found the opportunity to desert. Throwing away his gun and accoutrements, he headed for the federal lines, and, having reached them, he set to work to dodge pickets and sentries. When morning came he was clear of those who would have halted him. With three months' pay in his pocket, he stood a good chance, and two weeks later, dressed as a citizen, and after a dozen close shaves, he found himself within a mile of home. Up to that moment, when a turn of the highway gave him a view of the old homestead, he had been consumed with impatience to reach the farmhouse. Of a sudden he felt dissatisfied and began to wonder and reflect. He had departed amid the wavings of flags and the cheers of hundreds. He was sneaking home as a deserter, almost dodging the cows and sheep in the fields. A loss of self-respect came to him, and he heartily wished himself back at the front. He would go back [illegible]

He was [illegible] he wanted [illegible] may of a week he [illegible] the army. When he had [illegible] and mother how he had been [illegible] they would not blame him [illegible] call it a case of desertion [illegible] sundown when the boy approached [illegible] barn across the fields. He caught [illegible] of his mother at the kitchen [illegible] he heard the father in the barn. From the hour he deserted up to this he had pictured himself how he would [illegible] to the house and take the old folks [illegible] surprise, but now he changed [illegible] program. He went skulkingly [illegible] the fence until he reached the [illegible] and there was shame in his face as he entered and stood before his father.

When the old man heard the step he looked up and stood leaning on the pitchfork in his hands. He saw his son William before him. The boy he had been heard of last at the front. He was here and in citizens' attire, and he had no shout of greeting. If it had been a case of furlough he would have been in uniform, and some word would have come in advance. Idlers passed through farmer Hopkins' brain like flashes of lightning, and after a long minute his face grew stern, his eyes had a cold look in them, and the watching son realized that the truth was known.

"Well?" hoarsely queried the father, with stern set face.

"They didn't use me right down there."

"And so ye ran away?"

"Yes. It wasn't exactly deserting, but——"

"But ye sneaked off like a cur, never mindin' the disgrace sure to follow!"

For half a minute they looked into each other's eyes. The boy's knees grew weak and his face went white, and the face in front of him was as hard and cold that he wondered if he had ever seen it before. By and by the father sternly said:

"Stranger, I take it from yer bein' here that ye'd like supper and lodgin', but I must tell ye that we can't accommodate."

"That is," continued the father, "unless ye was goin' right back to the army to do yer duty as a soldier and to stay until honorably discharged. I wouldn't let a deserter share the roof with my kogs!

"I've got a son down at the front," said the farmer in a voice which faltered a little. "His name's William Hopkins, and he's in Company G of the Sixteenth. If ye was goin' I'd send word to him. I'd send word that he wuz expected to be [illegible] among men, and to show home [illegible] a record as good as the rest. I'd [illegible] ye also say to him that if he deserted his colors he'd never call this place home again. I'd rather hear he was killed in battle. Did ye say ye was goin' right back to the front?"

The man nodded his head.

"Well, then, I shall have to do somethin' for ye. I'll go into the house and git ye a bite to eat. I've paid the taxes, and I'm short o' money. I'll hitch to out twenty dollars, and I guess that will bring it to you if ye don't get through, ye——"

"I shall get through!" [illegible] deserter.

Ten minutes later the farmer was back in the barn, having a bit in one hand and a [illegible] in the other.

"You are pretty sure to see William?" he queried, as he handed over the articles.

"Yes."

"Well, tell him just what I said, and tell him his mother won't [illegible] nuthin' about it.

One day as Company G had just finished drill, the missing private, William Hopkins, walked into camp in charge of the provost guard. He had been on a portion of the federal outline and he had approached the picket from the direction of the enemy.

"And so you were taken prisoner and escaped!" exclaimed the captain.

"Yes; I got away."

"Well, I'm glad to see you back. We feared you had been wounded and crawled away to die. Better write a letter home this afternoon, as the folks will be worrying about you. You seem to have had a rough time of it, but you'll soon pick up."

The prodigal soldier had [illegible] page of his letter, when the [illegible] sergeant stuck his head into the tent to say:

"Say, I'm mighty glad it happened. Those rebs have knocked some sense into you somehow. You don't look like the same man. How's the homesick business?"

"All gone."

"Good! All it wanted was a shock to drive it away, and you got one. If you hadn't gone out that night you'd have kept on moping over things until you'd [illegible] fool and deserted. All right—you'll make a soldier yet."

And two months later [illegible] kins returned from town one day with a letter in his hand, and as he handed it to his wife he said:

"Well, Mary, our William is [illegible] there."

"What do you mean, Joel?"

"Why, he is so well in the battle that they're making him a corporal, and he says he expects to get up three or four [illegible] before the war is over."

"You don't say? Well, I'm glad ye he'd do something to make us proud o' him, and I love to see ye right."

"I—s," replied the [illegible] the horse into the [illegible] kitchen.

"But ain't ye [illegible]

"Hardly [illegible] sleep [illegible] gun [illegible]