THE FIRST TEAR.

On my darling's rosy cheek
A tear, delaying, seemed to say—
And would have said, if tear could speak,
"How can I ever get away?"
For on that bright and velvet ground,
As yet untouched by time or care,
No track, no furrow could be found,
And so perforce it lingered there.

As dew-drop in the shining light
Of joyous summer's golden ray
Will fade and die on rose-leaf bright,
And sink in gladness quite away,
So gently died my darling's tear—
By smiles and dimples chased away.
With no more thought of grief or fear
Than dew-drop has of winter's day.

COMING TO WOO.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

When Aunt Philinda went away, the last thing she said to me was:

"I'm going to send somebody down to see you afore long, an' I hope you'll act like a sensible girl, an' not stand in your own light. He's smart as the averidge, an' he's got the best farm I know on anywhere in our section o' country. You couldn't do better."

I hadn't the faintest idea that she would do as she said; but I began to believe she meant business when I received the following letter:

"DEAR NIECE MARIAR. I've told Mr. Green about you, an' he's goin' to come down to your place next week. I do hope you'll like him, for a better husban' never lived than he'd make you. Afore Mehetabel—that was his first wife—died, he was one of the best perviders I ever see, an' the land knows he's had to be sence, for that sister of his'n that keeps house for him is awful wasteful. He's considerable took up with you from my descripshun, an' I know he'll like you. Anybody that's smart an' capable can do well to marry him. The children are purty behaved, an' take after their father. Now, don't think he won't suit you 'cause he ain't fixt up like a young man. He's worth a dozen young men, fur's property's concerned, an' Mehetabel used to say he was awful lovin'. Do be a sentsible girl, Mariar, an'—an' not stan' in your own light.

From your affectionate aunt,

PHILINDA.

"For goodness sake!" I exclaimed, when I had read the letter through to sister Jane. "What shall I do? Here it's Monday, and the letter ought to have been here last week. He's likely to happen along any time. Such an old fool as Aunt Philinda is! The idea of my marrying an old widower with half a dozen children."

"But they're 'purty behaved, and take after their father,'" said Jane, wiping the tears from her eyes, and hardly able to talk from laughing, "an' he's awful lovin'!"

"I don't want any of his loving ways round me," says I, indignantly. "I won't speak to him. She might have known better. It think it is a regular insult."

"I'll tell you what," cried Jane, her eyes luminous with a brilliant idea. "Let me pretend that I'm you. I'll be Maria for the time being, and you be Jane."

"What good'll that do!" I asked.

"Ever so much," answered she. "Father and mother won't be back for four or five days and I can tire him out before that time. I'll be deaf! Won't that be splendid? I won't be able to hear anything lower than a shout."

"I'm agreeable to the plan," I said. And Jane began to make preparations for her wooer. She combed down her hair smoothly on each side of her face, and put on mother's old mohair cap. Then she added spectacles, and arranged herself in an antiquated old dress. When she had finished her toilet she looked old-maidish, I assure you. I laughed till I cried.

About three o'clock there came a rap at the door.

"It's him, I'll bet!" cried Jane. "If it is, remember I'm Maria, and can't hear you unless you talk very loud."

I went to the door and opened it. There stood Mr. Green, I was sure. He had on his Sunday best, evidently, and very comical he looked in it, and very uncomfortable he felt, judging from his actions. He was wiping his face with a huge red and yellow handkerchief.

"I'm Mr. Green," he said, making a bow and introducing himself at the same time. "I came to see Miss Mariar Lawton. Be you her?"

"She's expecting you; she's in the parlor. Come in," I said, choking with laughter. "You'll have to talk a little louder than usual, for she is a trifle deaf."

"Deaf!" exclaimed Mr. Green. "Your aunt didn't mention that."

By that time we were at the parlor door. Jane was all expectation, and did look so comical that I thought I should laugh or die. But I managed to keep my face tolerably straight while I introduced them.

"Maria, this is Mr. Green!" shouted I, in a shrill key, putting my mouth close to her ear.

"A little louder," said she, and I shouted "Mr. Green" an octave higher.

The poor man looked terribly disappointed. His fancy had not painted her in true colors, evidently.

"Ah, yes, Mr. Green," said Jane, fairly beaming with delight. "How do you do?" and she shook the poor gentleman's hand energetically. "Jane, get Mr. Green a chair. Put it here by the side of mine, so that he can talk to me. I'm happy to see you, sir. Aunt Philinda spoke of you in very complimentary terms, indeed."

"I'm glad of that," said Mr. Green, sinking into the chair.

"Eh? What did you say?" said Jane, turning her ear toward him. "A trifle louder, if you please."

Mr. Green repeated his remark, while I retired to the window to laugh.

"A very fine day?" he added.

"Good crop of hay? I'm glad of it," responded Jane. "I'm greatly interested in farm matters, Mr. Green.

"I said the weather was fine," corrected Mr. Green.

"When'll I be yours? Why, you're so sudden, Mr. Green!" exclaimed Jane, pretending to blush. "I don't really feel as if I knew you yet. And yet, my heart tells me that you are an affinity," and then the wicked girl smiled most bewitchingly upon the uneasy man, who looked at me appealingly.

"I didn't say that," he shouted. "I spoke about the weather."

"Yes; I hope we'll be happy together," said Jane, pensively. "Oh, Mr. Green, if you knew how I have longed for the companionship of some heart like yours these many years," and then she proceeded to shed unseen tears in her handkerchief.

Mr. Green was touched.

"She's awful affeckshunate, ain't she?" he said to me. "I wish she wasn't so awful deaf. Can't anything be done for her?"

"Oh, you won't mind that after a little," said I cheerfully. "We don't."

"I dun'no 'bout that," said Mr. Green, doubtfully. "We couldn't never have no secrets, 'cause the neighbors'd heer 'em 'fore she did, if I went to tellin' her any. Don't seem to me's if I ever see anybody quite so deef as she is."

"Talk to me," said Jane, who had dried her eyes. "Tell me all about your children. I know I shall take so much comfort with them. Bless their souls."

Thereupon Mr. Green began his family history away up in the higher octaves, and I got so nearly deafened at his shouting that I had to leave the room.

I sat down on the back steps and laughed for half an hour. When I stopped I could hear him shouting still, but I fancied he was getting hoarse.

Jane kept him talking all the afternoon. I never saw anyone quite so relieved as he was when I announced that supper was in readiness.

Jane fastened herself upon him, and accompanied him to the supper table.

"It's such an awful pity about her," said the poor man to me, regretfully. "She's got a wonderful affeckshunate way, an' she's awful anxious to be Mrs. Green; but," and there Mr. Green stopped, dubiously, "I know'd an old woman who was so deef that when it thundered once, she thought some one was knockin', and hollered 'come in;' an' she didn't begin to be as deef as she is, no, not begin. I don't s'pose you'd be willin' to settle down on a farm, now, would you?" hopefully.

"Oh, I couldn't think of such a thing," I answered. "Maria's the wife for a farmer. She takes such an interest in such matters."

"That's a fact," said Mr. Green. "I dun'no when I've seen a woman more interested than she is. I swan, I'd give twenty-five dollars if 'twould cure her, an' up our way we can get a good cow for that price."

Mr. Green had got so used to talking to Jane that he had forgotten that I was not deaf, and shouted the last sentence at me.

"You say you're fond of rice! Oh, so am I," said Jane, delightedly. "Jane," to me. "you put some on to cook after supper; we'll have some for breakfast."

"Don't put yourself out for me," shouted Mr. Green.

"Wish you had some for tea, did you say? I wish so, too." Jane smiled another tender smile at her suitor, and sipped her tea slowly, smiling at him every time he looked at her.

"Where's your folks?" he asked suddenly, as if he had just thought of them.

"Yes, it is a good plan," answered Jane, nodding her head appreciatively. "Geese always ought to wear pokes. If they don't they'll get into the garden and eat everything up."

"I asked after your father an' mother," shouted Mr. Green, with awful emphasis, and turning red in the face with the exertion.

"Let me see," said Jane, thoughtfully. "Henry Bascom's brother? No, Mr. Green, I don't think I ever knew him."

"Oh, dear," groaned Mr. Green. "She gets deefer and deefer. I can't marry her. What if I wanted to say anything to her in the dead o' night? I'd have to wake the hull house up to make her hear. It's an awful pity, I swan."

Jane kept him shouting at her all the evening, under the beaming effulgence of her smile. I never laughed so much in my life before.

He came into the kitchen the next morning, where I was busy getting breakfast.

"I'm so hoarse I can hardly talk loud," he said, mournfully. "I like her. She's smart, naturally, an' seems willin', an' she wants to get married as bad as any woman I ever see; but she's too deef! I guess I won't stop for breakfast, 'cause it'll only make her more set on havin' me, an' I can't make such a sacrifice for the sake o' anybody. If you'd only think favorable 'bout it, I'd stay. Couldn't you, now, s'pose?" with a very tender smile.

"Not for a minute," said I.

And seeing that there was no hope, Mr. Green took his departure.

Aunt Philinda evidently saw through the state of affairs, as reported to her by Mr. Green, for she hasn't been visiting since. I wonder if he's still single?

Beauty and Happiness.

Ruskin says: Do you think you can make a girl lovely if you do not make her happy? There is not one restraint you put on a good girl's nature—there is not one shock you give to her instincts of affection or effort—which will not be indelibly written on her features with a hardness which is all the more painful, because it takes away the brightness from the eyes of innocence, and the charm from the brow of virtue. The perfect loveliness of a woman's countenance can only consist in the majestic peace which is founded in the memory of happy and useful years—full of sweet records, and from the joining of this with the yet majestic childishness which is still full of change and promise, opening always modest at once and bright with hope of better things to be won and to be bestowed. There is an old adage where there is still that promise—it is in eternal youth.

OPENING AN ACCOUNT.

A Woman in a Bank for the First Time Has Peculiar Ways.

"A woman opening a bank account for the first time is a peculiar creature," said one of the clerks in a national bank. "One came in a few days ago and glanced around suspiciously. Then she ambled up to the window and said:

"'If you please, I want to deposit some money.'

"'Yes'm; just to the next window.'

"She stepped over in a careful way, as if she was breaking some rule or other, and, almost in a whisper, said:

"'Is this where they deposit money?'

"'Yes, ma'am. Do you wish to open an account?'

"'Oh, no,' she said, 'I don't want to have anything charged. I just want to deposit my money. Is this bank really safe?'

"She was assured that it was.

"'This bank is as firm as Gibraltar, madam. You have come to the right place. We will have to have your autograph. Just write your name right there.'

"'Oh, I can't write without a stub pen. Haven't you got a stub pen and some nice violet ink?'

"She was fitted out, and in the most careful way imaginable she wrote out her full name. Then she was provided with a deposit book, which she looked at in an inquiring way. She produced her money, hung on to it for a minute and then handed it in, all rolled up and tied with a thread. The receiving teller counted it in a rapid way and threw it in with the other receipts.

"'Now,' she said, 'this ain't a good bank. You've just gone and thrown my money in with all the rest, and you can never pick it out again. Take your old book and give me my money. And scratch my name off that big autograph album. Mother said you couldn't tell anything about a bank.'

"She was given her little roll, the autograph was scratched off and the deposit ticket destroyed. She flounced out in a decisive way, as much as to say, 'they can't cheat me if I am a woman.'"

The Winter Window.

Artistic arrangement of potted plants are in order, and even small windows can be tastefully adorned by the arrangement of potted vines and plants. A bay widow is especially serviceable in this way. Trailing vines up or down the sides, with a row of bright colored

plants arranged along a shelf of the base, and perhaps a tall fern set upon a small stand or table, as shown in the accompanying cut, makes a desirable effect as viewed either from within or without the room.

Preparation for Sleep.

Sleep is a state requiring careful preparation, without which its best results cannot be obtained. Most women labor under the delusion that sleep is a natural function and that slumber is a state that requires no preparation. Given a bed and a certain hour of the simple creed. As a matter of fact, they find that they do not always sleep when they think they should. In the first place the bedroom must be as quiet as the neighborhood will permit. It must be well ventilated. The air in it should not be vitiated by the burning of gas throughout the evening. If possible gas should not be burned at all, but candles should furnish whatever light is required. The bed should be turned so that the morning sun will not shine directly in the eyes of the sleeper. A screen placed between the foot of the bed and the window helps to prolong the morning nap after sunrise.

The bed should not be downy. Feathers may be luxurious, but they are unhygienic. A hair mattress, with no pillow at all, or at most a very small one, not only conduces to the greatest amount of repose, but helps to give an erect carriage and other things which sleepers like to possess in their waking hours. The coverlids should be as light as is consistent with proper warmth.

When her room and her bed are properly arranged the wise woman considers herself. She goes to sleep as clean as warm water and soap will make her, knowing that a warm bath is the most restful, sleep-provoking thing in the world. Her hair is brushed out of the "kinks "and snarls of the day and braided loosely. She wears a very loose night dress. She cultivates an easy conscience, as a foe to insomnia, and she banishes thought as undesirable. If her brain persists in working after she has gone to bed she does not attempt to stop its labors by one mighty act of her will, but she tries to think in desultory, disconnected fashion until she ceases to think at all. So does sleep cease to be a merely instinctive process and becomes one of fine arts.

Candles for the Bedroom.

No one who has not used candles for the bedroom can appreciate their value. The light is soft, and there is no unpleasant, unhealthy ordor, as there may be from gas or kerosene; nor the staring whiteness of the electric light. Lamps are pretty for the bedroom, but it is almost impossible to turn them out without leaving some odor in the room. But candles are for retiring only, when they furnish sufficient light. No room can be too light where a woman is dressing. She should be able to see every detail of her dress, from every point of view from which it will be seen by many eyes in a drawing-room or ballroom. If there were more mirrors in the world, and they were better distributed, there would be more well-dressed women. For other purposes the candle is infinitely restful to the eye.

Toilet vinegar, cologne water, alcohol and red wine are good for oily and moist hands.

FOOD WASTED IN COOKING.

Life-Sustaining Value of Meat and Vegetables Lost Through Ignorance.

A series of investigations just completed by experts connected with the United States Department of Agriculture go to show that there is an immense amount of popular ignorance in the matter of cooking; that, while the greater part of the food of man is prepared for use by cooking, yet the changes which various foods undergo during the process and the losses which are brought about have been but little studied. Few persons know, for instance, that in 100 pounds of uncooked cabbage there are but seven and one-half pounds of dry matter, and of this dry matter from two and one-quarter to three pounds are lost in the cooking pot. Experiments with potatoes showed that in order to obtain the highest food value potatoes should not be peeled before cooking; that when potatoes are peeled before cooking the least loss is sustained by putting them directly into hot water and boiling as rapidly as possible. Even then the loss is very considerable.

"If potatoes are peeled and soaked in cold water before boiling, the loss of nutrients is very great, being one-fourth of all the albumenoid matter. In a bushel of potatoes the loss would be equivalent to a pound of sirloin steak. Carrots contain less nitrogen, but relatively more albumenoid nitrogen than potatoes, and, therefore, furnish more matter available for building muscular tissues. In order to preserve the greatest amount of nutrients in the coking of carrots, the pieces should be large rather than small; the boiling should be rapid, so that the food value of the vegetable shall not be impaired; as little water as possible should be used, and if the matter extracted is made available as food along with the carrots, a loss of twenty to thirty per cent. or even more, of the total food value may be prevented. In the cooking of cabbage the kin of water used has more effect on the loss of nutrients than the temperature of the water at which the cooking is started. In any case the loss is large. The losses which occur in the cooking of potatoes, carrots and cabbages vary with the different methods of boiling followed.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

A Brocaded Screen.

A most exquisite Marie Antoinette screen was recently placed in the bay window of a Fifth avenue, New York, boudoir. The screen was the handiwork of the fair ocupant, and so deftly did she combine beauty and use that you would have supposed from first glance that it was imported from the Tuileries.

She was indiscreet enough, however, to tell the secret of its manufacture, and here it is, as it comes from her own lips:

"Take three stiff pieces of pasteboard and cut them out in fancy designs, the two sides lower than the sack. Now place upon the table a piece of brocaded satin and firmly glue the pasteboard upon it. Cover the other side with a piece of old gold satin. When all is dry, take a sharp scissors and cut through the brocaded silk and its lining, making as clean a cut as possible. It will be easy, with the scissors, to follow the design of the pasteboard lining. To prevent the edges from fraying, touch them with the fingers wet with glue. Do the same around the entire outside edges and finish at the top with a small ornament. In the centre, if so pleases you, you can hang a little bracket upon which is a tiny oriental lamp.

"You will have a piece of fancy work that well justifies the time and trouble you have put upon it."

Poppies in Nature and in Art.

Very ancient is the history of the poppy; it was wreathed with the lotus in Egypt and twined with thyme and parsley in Greece. It waas also one of the flowers dedicated to Venus; and the witches who wrought their spells and muttered their incantations on the mountain tops cast into their brew the horned leaves.

It was early recognized that the poppy in its simplest form is one of the most decorative of flowers. Its simplest form is, of course, the wild flower of four petals. It is treated decoratively in a number of ways—either as a flat design of the lifted cup, or as a conventional representation of the four petals encircling the receptacle, or as the stem upholding the dome-like and sometimes strongly ridged seed pod. But, after all the most marvelous artistic suggestions are found in the sharply outlined leaves which rise to slender, gothic points. These serve as models of leaf design, and were carven boldly and delicately in the stone of ancient cathedrals.

There is always something artificial in the appearence of the cultivated poppies. They lack the stability of reality, and ever suggest the gypsy masquerading as the princess.

Poppies, with very few exceptions, are not the least difficult to grow. Seed sown in the fall or spring will produce plants that flower all summer. They do not demand an enriched soil and profuse watering, but grow in an independent, careless fashion that is a relief after an experience of the exaction of some plants.—Godey's Magazine.

Food for Repairing Health.

"To keep in proper health, and do without medicine," says a doctor, "food should be taken in proper proportion. If a man's health has been wrecked through his profession, or by any other cause, it is not so much medicine as proper food that is required.

"A man should keep himself in good health without a holiday of any kind if he studies his diet. He should take about two parts of repair food, such as meat, eggs, milk, cheese—or, in the vegetable kingdom, the old peas, beans and lentils— to three parts of carbonaceous food, such as white bread, potatoes, rice, butter, cream and fats of all kinds.

"Then he must take a certain amount of bulky or water vegetables, such as lettuce, spinach, cabbage, onions, and also the fruits. In making out a daily ration, some light dish should first be taken slowly, to prepare the stomach for the food that is to follow; then a meat or its equivalent."

Artificial poppies, American beauty roses, violets and peonies are popular for evening gown garnitures.

TAKE HEART.

All day the stormy wind has blown
From off the dark and rainy sea;
No bird has past the window flown,
The only song has been the moan
The wind made in the willow tree.

This is the summer's burial time;
She died when drooped the earliest leaves,
And cold upon her rosy prime
Fell down the autumn's frosty rime—
Yet I am not as one that grieves.

For well I know o'er sunny seas
The bluebird waits for April skies;
And at the roots of forest trees
The mayflowers sleep in fragrant ease
And violets hide their azure eyes.

O thou, by winds of grief o'erblown
Beside some golden summer's bier—
Take heart! Thy birds are only flown,
Thy blossoms sleeping, tearful sown,
To greet thee in the immortal year!

—Edna Dean Proctor.

THE THREE CANDIDATES.

A patter of slippered feet echoed from the oaken stairs through the wide hall of Mrs. Gregory's mansion. A moment more and the parlor door opened, admitting a pretty young lady. She was greeted by a laughing command:

"Go straight back and change your dress, Nancy Kerswell!"

"Don't I look nice enough?" retorted Miss Kerswell, glancing at a mirror opposite with a satisfied air. She had reason to be satisfied;—the truthful crystal copied a lovely picture. Youth, health and hope incarnate,—or, to speak more intelligibly, a young lady of nineteen, fair-haired, with a lovely, changing color that was nearly as expressive as the clear eyes or the delicate mouth. Her shapely figure was dressed in black, relieved by a vivid scarlet knot that fastened the dainty collar. The bright young eyes glanced from the mirror to Mrs. Gregory. "Will you tell me what is the matter, aunt?"

"My dear, you look nice enough for any one that has not an artistic eye, but I wish you to be unexceptional this afternoon. Look here!"

Mrs. Gregory advanced towards the mirror where the young girl was still standing. She then dexterously unknotted the scarlet ribbon, and laid it against the soft crimson cheek.

"Do you see, Nannie? Rose-pink and fire-red—dreadful combination!"

"Well," said Nannie, good-naturedly, "it's easy enough knotting blue in instead."

"That would do, my child; but you can look better still. Just oblige me by changing this dress for that plain blue silk of yours, and clasp your lace with that lovely pearl brooch. When you come back I'll tell you why. You will thank me."

Miss Kerswell will be gone long enough for me to tell you all of her previous life, doubtless. Dispensing, however, with a biographical account of her paternal and maternal grandparents, I will merely say that she is the only daughter of the Hon. James Kerswell She was duly "finished" at Madam Bourne's school for young ladies, and at the date of this narrative she is spending a winter in Boston, where her accomplishments are suitably admired.

Nannie Kerswell is by no means a well educated machine. Beneath all outward forms, she is a true woman, gentle, earnest;—facile in the hands of those she loves, wilful without reason. In fact like many sunny-eyed blonde girls that you know.

The pattering steps echo again, interrupting this sketch of my heroine. As she enters the parlor the second time I wish I had delayed introducing her, so much fairer and softer she seems in the delicate silk, its graceful folds pliant to her motion—its lovely, translucent color rendering still fairer the dainty complexion, and setting off her shining gold hair, as a blue summer sky sets off the glancing sunlight.

Mrs. Gregory smiled her approval.

"Nannie," said she, "follow my advice in every respect as faithfully as you have in dress, and you will be a success."

"Oh, auntie, spare your lecture!" exclaimed Nannie, impulsively. "Tell me why I must look my best this afternoon."

"You must answer one or two questions first," replied Mrs. Gregory, provokingly assuming that air of mystery which all women delight in.

"Nancy," she continued, seriously "of course at your age you have your preferences, but I trust your affections are not engaged?"

The "rose-pink" of the girl's cheeks burned to scarlet at this unexpected subject.

Mrs. Gregory awaited her reply anxiously. She was greatly relieved by the gay little laugh that receded a very frank confession.

"I'll tell you, dear auntie. I have heard there's such a thing as 'love at first sight,' but it hasn't been my experience. I have my 'preferences,' of course—three of them."

"Three!" Mrs. Gregory looked amazed.

"Certainly. I prefer Mr. Bates, Dr. Pettigrew, and Ralph Lyons. I like Mr. Bates for his goodness and good looks, Dr. Pettigrew because he's witty without ever being sarcastic, and Ralph Lyons because he is fascinating—"

"Pernicious, I say. Suppose you say 'him,'" interrupted Mrs. Gregory, sternly. "But seriously, Nannie, do you regard these gentlemen with equal interest?"

Mrs. Gregory read her answer in the clear eyes before her.

"How would it be, Nannie, if one of them should offer himself to you? Would he not gain a superior preference?"

Nannie's radiant blushes revealed what she would have scorned to profess in words.

"All that is wanting, then," continued Mrs. Gregory, "is the declaration. What a pity Dr. Pettigrew and Mr. Lyons did not know it! But I am rejoiced that the worthiest suitor is in advance. I need hardly tell you why I wish you to look your best this afternoon—Mr. Bates is coming to learn his fate."

The door-bell emphasized her words. Nannie awaited her visitor in a state of emotion. She was young, and to

[illegible] to be sure. [illegible] wicked. It was not, afterward, many-eyed moonlight [illegible] parlor is an odorous [illegible] that drove sentiment [illegible] There were various [illegible] —noisy school-children [illegible] in the court adjoining, the [illegible] moan of a piano under little Wally Gregory's afternoon practice. Or, [illegible] hour of moonlight, or the [illegible] ing, or the charm of country [illegible] This was the last place on all [illegible] accept a lover. She would accept [illegible] of course. However Bates [illegible] ently a young man of good [illegible] He was young, wealthy, highly [illegible] ed, and—by no means the least [illegible] —remarkably fine-looking. Hair, eyes, expression, figure—all sufficient for the hero of a novel, or for any young lady's day-dreams. Such were the reflections, though far less clearly defined, that glanced through Miss Nannie's mind. All that was wanting was the assurance of her suitor's affection, and a more romantic place to respond to it. She hoped that his presence would somehow make her oblivious of the matter-of-fact surroundings—that it would soften the sunlight, and deaden all sounds but "the soft whisper of love."

But she was greatly mistaken. Mr. Bates's "presence" would have frozen the languishing air of the tropics.

He entered the parlor stiffly, bowed with the profoundest respect to the blushing Nannie, and then having established himself in the remotest corner of the room, proceeded to deliver a cut-and dried declaration of affection.

"Miss Kerswell," he commenced, with a little elocutionary gesture, such as he might have used before a jury, "I desire to enter into an engagement with you, but first allow me to state the premises. I have met you occasionally in society this season, and whether there, or in the more retired sphere of your aunt's home, I have been deeply interested in you. Your character impresses me as all that is desirable; that character is fitly accompanied by personal attractions. Miss Kerswell, if you could honor me with your hand, it would be my life-long aim to render you happy. Miss Kerswell, I await your reply."

Poor Nannie! Frozen into silence by his cold proposal, she could not speak for a moment, and then she dared not say other than these words, almost as measured as his own:

"Mr. Bates, I am honored by your proposal. I—I have always felt great respect for you."

Mr. Bates rose.

Miss Kerswell, spare me the rest—I see I have presumed too much. It is evident I have gained only your respect. If ever my friendship can be of service to you, rely on me."

He bowed courteously, and withdrew.

Had Nannie Kerswell guessed half the love that throbbed beneath his frigid exterior, she would have recalled her rejected suitor. She sat in silence, applying to him the words he had just spoken to her: "It is evident I have gained only your respect."

Mrs. Gregory lamented the failure of her favorite scheme, and blamed Nannie for not encouraging her too-respectful suitor.

"What could I have done? Would you have had me cross those leagues of carpet, and throw myself into an iceberg's arms? Why, Aunt Gregory, he didn't even say he loved me. I don't believe he does!"

"I will bring matters around yet," exclaimed Mrs. Gregory.

But the good lady was unable to do so. That very evening Ralph Lyons called to beg Miss Kerswell's company for a sleigh-ride. Poorer in mind and morals, principles and personal appearance, than Mr. Bates, Ralph Lyons possessed the advantage of tact. He saw at once that to win Nannie Kerswell he must treat her as a lovable human being, rather than a marble divinity.

Mrs. Gregory looked doubtful at the proposed sleigh-ride. She would have been more doubtful if she had seen the tender care that wrapped the furs about Miss Nannie as the young couple rode away through the intervening moonlight.

A week later "Mrs. Grundy" was exultant over the latest bit of scandal—the engagement of Hon. Mr. Kerswell's daughter to that worthless scapegrace, Ralph Lyons.

"How can it be possible?" exclaimed gentle Miss Bates when told.

Mr. Bates looked up sharply, with a sardonic smile, which had become habitual with him of late.

"How possible, Sarah?" he repeated. "It's the universal rule. He being a villain, and she being a woman. Your best girls always prefer rascals."

Nannie Lyons is now a broken-hearted wife, and Howard Bates a surly old bachelor.

Young ladies and gentlemen, I hope you will profit by their experience.

Did It in the Dark.

A young wag of an officer, making a morning call upon his superior in the latter's tent, found him seated upon, perhaps a little the worse for a night's carrying over the flowing bowl.

The officer was tall, and the tent was short, so that his feet [illegible] out of the foot of the bed.

Instead of waking him the visitor took the spurs from a pair of boots standing by the bedside, and [illegible] to the sleeper's ankles and [illegible]

The officer had pretty well [illegible] himself about the shins and ankles before he woke up and hastily [illegible] his orderly.

"What do you mean by this?" he screamed to the latter, pointing to his feet, which were scarred and [illegible]

The orderly looked at them [illegible] consternation.

"I'll forgive you this time, sir, [illegible] did it in the dark," said the [illegible] "but the next time you [illegible] and some of my spurs on I'll give you [illegible] guardhouse, do you hear?"—New York World.

The present is threatened [illegible] railroad which will [illegible] from the [illegible] Pacific coast [illegible] the [illegible]