BACHELOR BARTON.

When we were first married we bought a little cottage in the midst of a pretty garden-s cottage that had just four rooms and a garret in all, but we vanted no more.

"Once the property of the late Miss ancy Free," the real estate dealer said in his circular.

We did not think much about Miss Free, however, only that her old-fashioned furniture—just what every one was going wild over-went with the house, and that we could make it the prettiest little nest in the world. We were beginning the world. Why should we think of those who had done with it?

Why should Jack and Lottie Deane. just married, ask what had been the hopes and griefs of Nancy Free, spinster, some time dead? We live for ourselves

Jack bought the house we moved in. The place had been very carefully kept clean by the agent, and I began to arrange and rearrange, to tie ribbon bows on chairs, to loop fresh muslin curtains at the window panes, to fill the old chins vases with flowers, thinking of Jack the while, as a bride would be apt to do, when looking out of the window I saw a quaint old figure coming up the roadthat of a man very old in years, and who had not changed his garb with the fashions of the times.

His hat had a bell crown and rolling rim, his collar and coat and neckerchief were of the sort we see in our grand-father's portraits. I had had him pointed out to me as "Bachelor Barton," and been told that he was rich and of good old family, and had once been disappointed in love.

I hid myself behind the curtain and watched him curiously as he came on, wondering if he were once a handsome young fellow like my Jack, and if he had loved some one as Jack loved me, and how it was that youth could change to age and golden locks to gray, and why it need to be, when to my surprise he paused at the gate of my garden and en-

Perhaps his old-fashioned politeness led him to call upon the "strangers," after the good old custom so rapidly dy ing out.

A moment more my little maid brought me his card, and with a glance at the mirror, I hurried down to greet him.

Close at hand Bachelor Barton was older than he had seemed from my up-per window, and frailer, but his face had a sweet expression still.

Pardon my intrusion, madam," he said. "I saw the house open for the first time for years and could not restrain myself from approaching the door. I knew it well in bygone days, when Miss Nancy Free and her mother lived here. I came here often then. I was a very intimate friend. I wanted to see the dear old rooms once again. Miss Free was eighty when she died; I am eighty-five. But we were very young people when we first met-twenty-one and twenty-six. You think me an eccentric old creature no doubt, but I want to see the house once before I die, for old times' sake."

"Come in, sir," I said. "I shall be happy to show you every corner of it. I think I understand-"

"As young people understand such things," he said. "Happily they can not quite know how the old feel—not

He held his quaint old hat in his hand as he spoke, and gave me a sad smile that drew his face into a hundred tiny crow's feet, and as I motioned the way he followed me into our little parlor and

"Nothing altered," he said. "This is old Mrs. Free's furniture, that had been her grandmother's in Revolutionary days. They say it is the fad of the time to buy it up or have imitations of it. The brass andirons, the shovels and tongs, the carved chairs, the escritoire-I remember them all. This is a Turkish carpetthere are hardly any of them to be found now. Yes, Mrs. Free sat here, and Nancy played the guitar, and I sangyou would not think that I sang-or, I remember, she worked at her tambour frame while I read aloud from the

He moved his head slowly about, noting every detail—the peacock feather fans, the cut-glass decanters and glasses, the painted china in the corner cupboard, the footstool like a melon, the lamp mat like a rose. Nothing had worm out or grown shabby in the spinster's little home.

"Once," he said, "Miss Nancy sat for a miniature to a painter then well known. It was a speaking likeness. Does it by chance remain in the house?"

"I think it does," I said. "The heir, a nephew, a rich man, who lives in New Orleans, wrote orders that the house should be sold with all its belongings, and I think the miniature you mean is

I went to the escritoire and drew from one of the drawers the likeness of a lady painted on ivory and set in a narrow gold frame. I doubt if it really resembled any living being.

It was a beautiful doll, all pink and white, with blue eyes, little brown curls pencited on the forehead and a white frill about the neck, but as I put it into the hands of Bachelor Barton he gazed upon it with rapture.

"Miss Nancy's very self," he said, "as she appeared at twenty-two. There are no such women now." He paused, and with a low bow, added, "With the exception of the fair lady in whose presence I now stand.

I courtesied. I hope I did it properly. It seemed the only thing to do under the circumstances.

After this I begged the old gentleman to visit any portion of the house and grounds be pleased, and when he went away presented him with Miss Nancy's miniature, for which he kissed my hand, standing at a long distance and touching my fingers as though they were sacred

We talked him over at tea time, Jack and I, and made up our minds that he had once been a suitor of Miss Nancy's. It was not a very difficult matter to guess that, and from that day he called

frequently. He made me his confidante

He had adored Miss Nancy, he told me, and she had returned his affection, and they had become engaged to each other with the consent of the mother, and all went morry as a marriage bell, until, in some manuer, he offended the object of

I judge he made her jesious, having been in his day a beau of the first water and much admired by the ladies, but he was too modest to say so outright. But at all events she would not forgive him. She refused him the miniature which had been painted for him, she took back her lock of hair and sent him back his letters, and in all sorts of ways wrecked vengeance upon him for his evil doing. Yet I believe she intended to relent and forgive, and he also thought so, I am sure. He made every possible apology and overture, but she yielded not one

At last her mother died. That great serrow, it seemed to him, must bow her pride, and she must more than ever need

comforter, a consoler, a protector. Allowing time for the first burst of grief, he wrote to her, asking her to reply, whatever her flat might be, begging her to forgive him and once more promise to be his wife.

"She never answered me," he said. She never gave me one word in reply.

It was on my tongue to say she had been very vindictive, but I saw that that would not do. Miss Nancy was sainted in his memory and could be suspected of no wrong whatever.

"I erred beyond forgiveness, sweet angel," he said-"I erred beyond forgiveness;" and Bachelor Barton could not have been moved from this opinion by the whisper of an angel.

"Auntie," cried my little nephew, there's something in the crow's nest." I was sitting in the garden and the voice sounded above my head. I looked up with a start. In the road outside arose a tall pole, and from time immemorial a great cro . 's nest had crowned it. How little Billy had managed to reach its apex I cannot say, but there he was, and spechiess with horror I could only

implore him, in dumb show, to descend. He answered me with a laugh, flung comething to the ground and came slid-

ing down after it. "You naughty boy!" I cried, as I caught him in my arms.

"It's not a bit like a nest, suntie," he said. "It's all ugly and muddy. There were some feathers in it, black, and there was a dead bird, and there was that cap-a queer cap. I never saw such a funny thing."

He picked from the grass the object he had cast down. It looked like a crushed leather box, and had been melted by the sun and soaked by the rain until it was shapeless; but it certainly proved to be a queer, old-fashioned cap with a peak and lined with oiled silk, and as Billy tossed it about and turned it inside out, a square white package dropped from some secret spot beneath this lining, which had kept it from destruction adown the years.

Long years they must have been, for the letter had been written before the days when envelopes were used, was curiously folded and sealed with a large seal on which was the letter "F." was addressed in a delicate, running hand, to "Alwyn Barton, Esq., The Oaks," etc. In fact, it had evidently been intended for the old gentleman we called Bachelor Barton, and to him I at once despatched it with a note of ex-

planation. His answer was a request that I and my husband would do him the honor of calling, as Mr. Barton was sick and there was much to explain. And of

course we went. Bachelor Barton, bolstered up with pillows, lay upon a lounge, pale as yellow wax, his eyes shining under his gray

"Dear friends, you have told me that the letter you sent me was in the lining of an old leather cap in the crow's nest,' he said. "I remember seeing the cap thrown away. Miss Free's little negro servant Cato wore it. A carpenter, who was mending the barn, had enatched it and flung it in the air. Apparently it never came down again. It was searched for, and I watched the search from the window, but never dreamed that it was in the nest. The cap was old. Cato had new one, and that was the end of it. But now I remember that in that oiled silk lining the boy put any letters with which he was sent to the postoffice, in order to keep them clean. I think it was made with a sort of pocket on purpose. and in this lining this letter had started on its way to me when a rude jest ended my hopes of happiness for life. Cato forgot or never told the fact of its being undelivered.

"The letter, dear friends, was an answer to my prayer for Miss Naucy Free's pardon-a beautiful, forgiving, angelic reply. Had I received it I should have thown to her. She should have been my brids. These lonely years would have been gladsome. I might not have been the last leaf on a withered branch.

"It was fated not to be. I trust she did not suffer also. I-I fear that is posaride. How discourteous she must have deemed me. I never dreamed she had w.i.ten. I"

Hap paused. Tears filled his eyes. "I am sorry," I began.

"Don't say you are sorry you found it!" Bachelor Barton cried. "If I was toolish enough to faint when the truth learst upon me, I still rejoice. Up there mink she waits for me-there, where the truth is manifest without words; and

hack you-oh, so much!" We staid with him a little longer, and he tailed to us of Nancy and old times. Vinen I left him he kissed my hand.

He died that night, and the letter and Miss Nancy's miniature repose upon his Losum -Mary Kyle, in Saturday Night.

Calte Apropos.

"So you have met Miss Smithers?" I was introduced at a social." "She is a woman of great erudition, I understand."

"Yes, a regular nobody."

GOING TO SEA.

I used to say, "When I'm a man,
A jolly sailor I will be;
I'll have my own boat, if I can,
At least I know I'll go to sea."

And often to papa I cried,
Playing at ship with plank or pail,
"If this were but the ocean wide,
Ob, how I'd sail and sail and sail."

But now no more of boats for mel I've had another better plan Since papa let me go to sea With Ben, the big, brown sailor man

You should have heard me laugh and shout; But when we tipped so, once or twice, I felt all turning inside out.

I'd rather be our nursemaid Ann. Who has to hear the baby bawl, Than be a wretched sailor man,
And have no inside left at all.
—Clinton Scollard.

Wanted to Know. There is a new house being finished on Sibley street, says the Detroit Free Press, and the owner was so much appoyed by people asking him if it was for rent that he had a sign painted and hung in the window. It bore this unusual announce-

: THIS HOUSE

IS NOT

Then people stopped and read the card, but did not annoy the workmen or the owner by perambulating the house, asking questions and suggesting improve-

That night when the owner of the new house had gone home to supper, two women called on him.

"We are house-hunting."
"I haven't any house," said the man "We saw your new house and"

"Di i you read the notice in the win-"Yes, that's what we came about"-

"Goodness, woman, doesn't that card distinctly say 'that the house is not for But why isn't it for rent? We came

on purpose to ask you that very ques-"Recause," thundered the owner, "I am going to live in it myself."

Then he showed them out and barricaded himself in.

Not the Right Expression.

Gus Smith had his photograph taken not long since, and meeting Snobberly showed him the picture, asking him if it wasn't a spiendid likeness. Gus thought was the only picture that he had ever and taken that caught his expression pre-

"1.'s perfect," replied Snobberly, critically. "The only thing about it that is not like you at all is the face."—Texas

A Soft Speech. "We can not see ourselves as others

see us," said Henrietta, when George was trying to convince her of his good points.

"No," said he. "If we could you wouldn't do anything but look at your-

Then she was convinced of his good points.-Harper's Bazar.

Nosh's Joke.

"Provisions are running pretty low, pop," said Shem on the thirtieth day "What are we going to do about

"I don't know," said Noah, with a wink at Japhet, "unless we eat Ham." Harlem Life.

Mixed Dates.

Posy (reaching for his side pocket)-Let me read you my new poem on

Prosy-Don't you remember you read it to me last week?

Posy (turning off with a sigh)-I only wrote it last night.-Life.

She Was Not the Janitor's Wife. Mrs. Wishit-Won't you buy me that diamond necklace, Charlie?

Mr. Wishit—Be reasonable, darling. to emulate the janitor's extravagance.-Jewellers' Weekly.

The Modern Method. "Bagley, I understood, went to one of those institutions where they cure intemperance."

Yes, and he came out cured." "What is he doing now?"

"Oh, his relatives put him in the lune tic asylum."—Judge.

Full Directions.

"What's the best way to go to Canter bury, sir?" asked a traveller on horseback of a pedestrian.

"If I were you, sir, I should go to Canterbury on a trot."—Judge.

Some Difference. Druggist-There you are, sir. wenty-five.

Customer-Excuse me, but I'm in the trade. Druggist-Oh, I beg pardon. Ten cents. Smith, Gray & Co.'s Monthly.

tie Invited the Retort. Attorney Wantling-What did your father say when he saw my picture in your watch?

Miss Worth-That it was the only case you had ever appeared in. - Jewellers' Weekly.

Not So Bad. Patient-I've lost my appetite, doctor. Doctor-That's bad, "Bad! You wouldn't think so if you

boarded where I do. "-Harlem Life. In Small Doses. Snodgrass-How that man stutters while talking to his friend. Snively—He's merely giving informa-tion on the instalment plan.—Judge.

Old Friend-And so you've married a count? What is his name? Bride-I can spell it for you, dear, but I can't pronounce it yet.-Judge.



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Notice is hereby given that letters testament-ary on the estate of Ezekiel Cole, deceased, have been granted to H. H. Grotz, to whom all persons indelited to said exatte are requested to make payment, and those having claims or de-mands will make known the same without de-lay.

H. H. GROTZ,

Executor.

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