

THE CHILDREN OF THE HOUSEHOLD.

There's a clatter on the stair;
There's a clatter in the air;
Where our little ones are romping right merrily;

THEY MET BY CHANCE!

"You are sure you have forgotten nothing, Kitty?"
"Nothing not, Jane," making a thorough examination of the contents of her hand-bag.

It is the afternoon of a damp, doleful September day. The place is, romantically enough, the Chicago depot. The speakers Jane Spencer and her sister, Miss Kitty Warner, who has been visiting western friends, and is about to take the next eastern train for home.

But Miss Kitty has already sought refuge in John's gift, and is absorbedly following the fortunes of Howells's hero through the opening chapter. So the puzzled gentleman wisely produces a paper from his pocket, and lets himself become absorbed in its contents, also.

This is a matter of considerable delay, since some one in advance inaugurates a mild, but lengthy dispute with that official regarding the claim to a section that has been telephoned for, or something of that sort.

"I am so sorry that our train starts before you are due," she exclaims fretfully, with tears in her eyes. "If it were not for Aunt Eunice's telegram, John and I might have stayed over until to-morrow, so as to have seen you fairly off."

And the nervous little woman shakes out a fresh handkerchief and brushes a rising tear from her left eye, just as her husband comes up with the depressing intelligence that the plan of the sleeper on the Pennsylvania railroad will not be visible for twenty-eight minutes yet--just a quarter of an hour after their train is to leave.

This last calamitous piece of news has a paralyzing effect upon Mrs. Spencer, and she locks on in distressed silence while her husband gives Kitty a few parting instructions, as together they pore over a railway guide.

"I have a novel somewhere for you to read on your journey, Kit," John says, presently, and reaching over to his light overcoat, which is thrown carelessly across the back of the nearest settee, he produces a dun-colored volume from one of its spacious pockets.

"Well, Jonathan Spencer, I actually don't believe you could remember the day that you were born!"
"No matter, Jenny. At any rate I never shall forget the day that I was married," retorts an amiable spouse, with a facetiousness that under the circumstances is odious, for a skillful cross-examination discloses the fact that the wretch has carried these letters in his pockets for at least three days.

But before the long suffering Jane has time properly to rebuke him, passengers for the southern train are warned that time is up. So Miss Kitty, hastily thrusting into her bag the letter which a glance tells her is from her brother Edgar, descends the steps with her relatives, and chats with them upon the platform as cheerfully as Jane's misgivings will permit, until the last gong strikes, and they enter the train just as Jane is in the midst of recounting a tale that she has read in some newspaper about a lady whose pockets were picked by a gentlemanly appearing man, who politely helped her off the car.

"I beg your pardon, sir," she says, coldly, "but will you be so kind as to return my book?"
The gentleman turns in astonishment and courteously raises his hat.

"I should be delighted to do so, if your book were in my possession," he answers gravely. "May I inquire to what book you refer?"

legal hat, and an execrable Colorado can make it. But Kitty is thoroughly familiar with her brother's scrawls, and by skipping a word here, and guessing one there, her mind eventually grasps the drift of the welcome, entertaining home news and airy gossip with which your letter abounds. The concluding paragraph read like this:

I received a letter from my friend Haselden, last evening, in which he tells me that he is to be in Chicago this week and part of next. If you write me what day you intend coming up town, I will wire him your address and have him call on you. He is looking after some legal interests of my father's, who, perhaps you know already, is a manufacturing jeweler in Paterson. Haselden is a fine fellow and as rich as a jeweler in his own right.

With a little pout and a smile at the villainous puns which her brother had thoughtfully underlined, As though she were disappointed to find that Kitty returns the message to its broad, soap-colored envelope, and raises her eyes just in time to meet a surprised and steady look from a gentleman who has just come up the stairs from the street. In reality it is not an impertinent stare; only such a look as a man might give who fancies he recognizes an acquaintance, yet doubts the testimony of his own eyes as he meets nothing of a repelling blankness in the other's answering regard.

"Jane's drummer! He is appearing rather early upon the scene!" are the thoughts that flashed through Kitty's mind, as she looks frigid, unutterable things through and beyond the new comer, who passes on to the next seat, and disposes of his portmanteau and overcoat, pausing in his proceedings to glance occasionally with a puzzled look at the pretty girl opposite.

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By and by Kitty becomes aware that the ticket office is open, and with a weariness born of Jane's warnings, she arranges her traps in a compact pile, and, clinging valiantly to the hand-bag gets into line, and patiently awaits her turn at interviewing the busy ticket-seller.

She cannot see the title, but it is the same dun-colored volume with the regulation gilt fringes and publishers' monogram. She could identify it if she saw it in Africa, she is sure. "Impudence!" she ejaculates, mentally, as she drops angrily into her seat and waits for him to return her book. But this he evidently does not intend to do; and, resolved on her part not to ask it, the annoyed young lady feigns to be unaware of the dark eyes that so frequently desert the pages of the borrowed novel, to bestow a long steady and puzzled look upon the face of their neighbor.

She watches with well-simulated interest the different characters in the busy scene that is constantly changing with the crowds that enter the department as the trains come and go. She reflects upon the majesty of the law as typified by the burly policeman who thumps his cane up and down the treaded floor, and who ferts condescendingly with the matron, who ferts her duster in return as coquettishly as though she were a maid in a comedy, and had learned her role. But all the time Kitty's mind is running on the audacity of her neighbor; and her faith in Jane's penetration goes up thirty degrees as she recalls that lady's warnings as regards the deceitfulness of appearances.

At Pittsburg she has sent a telegram to Edgar, and at Rochester the reply is brought to her. As she reads her brother's message her blue eyes light up with an expression of love and pleasure that her neighbor's mirror faithfully reflects. "From her husband?" he thinks with a great wave of bitterness at the good luck that some fellows always enjoy. And then for awhile he reads on violently and tries to forget.

"I beg your pardon, sir," she says, coldly, "but will you be so kind as to return my book?"
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seat where Kitty has dropped it, he triumphantly brings forth from one of its pockets the twin volume.

With a hasty and humble apology, the blushing Kitty once more collects her possessions, and in a very unenviable frame of mind follows the crowd into the Pullman car. She is almost crying at her own stupidity as she glances hastily at the coupon which she carries, and notices that it bears the number six. She hardly glances at her opposite neighbor--a small boy and his big brother--as she arranges her luggage and tries not to see her new acquaintance, who is coming down the aisle. To her annoyance, he pauses just at her section, and scans his coupon with a nonplussed air. But Kitty obstinately looks out of the window, although she is keenly conscious, that, after an instant's hesitation, he takes the seat beside her. And while she is still feeling hot and angry, and uncomfortable, the train rushes out of the station, and into the wet, foggy streets beyond.

Presently enters the white capped conductor and on by one the passengers' tickets are examined satisfactorily, until he comes to the turn of the people in section 6. Her three neighbors passed muster successfully, and unhappy Kitty timidly thrusts forth her checks, only to be crushed with shame and consternation as the conductor turns the coupon upside down, and, piercing her with his cold, shiny, eye, gruffly roars:

"Number 9, madam! number 9, please! You have mistaken your section!"

Kitty's companion politely removes her bags to number 9, and leaves her to her by no means pleasant meditations. She can see him in the mirror of the opera at the railroad restaurant in Alliance. For the same reason she elects to dine in Pittsburg; yet her order is scarcely filled when her "chance acquaintance" walks leisurely in, and is allotted a place at the same table. That he is gentlemanly and unobtrusive she is forced to admit before the meal ends. Even Jane herself could hardly cavil at his demeanor; he is polite; simply that and nothing more. Nevertheless she does not linger over the meal; and at its close she hastily makes her way to the gate to be confronted by an official whose brass is not limited to the buttons on his uniform, and who authoritatively demands to be shown her ticket.

"Poor, heedless Kate! Of course she has left it in her bag in the car. She attempts an explanation to the guard, who on the whole, rather enjoys bullying a pretty girl in her confusion, when a quiet voice at her side requests that the lady be permitted to pass, and offers to be responsible for her ticket if need be. The officer steps back obsequiously, and Kitty passes on, timidly murmuring her thanks. In her embarrassment at this, her newest obligation to the dreaded drummer, she steps aboard the wrong car, and once again he quietly sets her right, with a few deferential words waving all title to her gratitude.

Jane is too great a pessimist anyway, she reflects throughout that gloomy afternoon as the train is flying along through smoky Pennsylvania towns, and she makes a pretense of reading while covertly watching the traveler, who is stationed opposite just a seat two ahead. He has met the porter and the enemy is his. Evidently he has traveled before and knows his man. Miss Kitty thinks, for after he has donned a becoming cap, a word to the attentive functionary and a pillow for his head is produced, against which he leans in a lazy, comfortable fashion and reads leisurely--to all appearance, at least. But in his secret heart he is blithely indulging in a game of cards, and particularly the beneficent rules that relate to the reflection from plain mirrors; for from his easy position he commands an unobscured view of the little girl who sits just back of him; and whose dark traveling dress and natty hat of ultra-marine furnish such an admirable setting for her bright, clear complexion, and heavy brown braids.

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this station, she can have a lower berth since she persists in giving up her own number to the lady with the sick baby. This is gratifying to our little lady, who secretly dreaded another night up aloft. But conductors propose and fate disposes.

An Erie train leaves the station just as their train enters; and through some confusion of signals; a number of Erie passengers let their train pass unnoticd and are forced to seek refuge on board the sleeper which carries our two friends. There are six or eight persons in the group, and their annoying mishap excites much commiseration among the passengers. Numerous telegrams are sent on to Philadelphia to quiet the anxiety of friends on the train ahead. Berths are kindly offered them; and by the time the train is fairly under way they are completely at home and as comfortable as their impatience will admit.

On, on they rush through the darkness of the stormy night. The porter goes his rounds, the berths are quietly arranged, and one by one the sleepy passengers disappear behind the friendly curtains. Kitty who is not a bit sleepy, and is in deep converse with a Boston artist who has numerous novel and artistic views to unfold, retires with her companion to a rear seat, and talks art with the pretty enthusiasm of an amateur who paints plaques and works South Kensington. It is ten o'clock before the conference ends and unsuspecting Katherine makes her way down the aisle between the fluttering green curtains to section four, the number that the conductor has promised her early in the evening. Warned by past mistakes, she carefully searches for the proper number; and having found it, she parts the curtains carefully and deliberately to see--what a pair of laughing blue eyes; a hand thrust forth to seize the parted curtains; the flash of a familiar diamond ring! and in confusion and terror Kitty Warner retreats hastily to confer with the porter and bribe that worthy into making a full explanation of the cause of her blunder to the disturbed dreamer of section four.

An upper berth is found for her presently, and heavenward she mounts, her blue eyes suffused with tears, and her cheeks burning with shame at the thought of her last and most disgraceful encounter with this man, who has been the bugbear of her whole journey.

"I hate him! I do!" she exclaims passionately. "If I had to ride on this horrid train another day I should die!" And poor Kitty cries softly as she suddenly remembers that her hand bag hangs on the book of section 4, and that Edgar's letters and all her possessions are in it.

"I don't suppose he will be ungentlemanly enough to open it, though," she thinks with a flash of honesty, as she remembers that he has not yet justified Jane's suspicions in every respect. Still it is a very anxious head that lays itself upon Kitty's pillow that night.

However, she finally falls into a troubled sleep that lasts until the porter makes his morning rounds and warns the passengers of their rapid approach to Jersey City.

"Why, Kitty, darling! Welcome home!" exclaims a familiar voice as the train runs into the station at last, and the little girl in blue-leaves the train in which she has spent some of the most unhappy hours of her life, to receive her brother's cordial and somewhat bearish greeting.

"Here, let me take your traps--why, Haselden, my dear boy! You, too, Brutus!" and Edgar turns in surprise to greet Kitty's bug-bear, the "D. H." who has unwittingly been the means of spoiling her pleasure ever since she said good-bye to Jane and John in Chicago.

A few words of explanation, a hurried introduction, and the friends seek different ferries; but not until blind, boisterous, good-natured Edgar has made his friend promise to dine with them at the Windsor that evening.

"Perhaps I was rude," Dwight Haselden confesses ingenuously, as he and Kitty stand by the window of a private parlor of the Windsor, in the dusk of thanksgiving evening, and indulge in an amused yet tender retrospection. "But you reminded me so forcibly of Edger that I could not resist starting mildly; even if there was not another valid reason to justify me," he adds fondly. "I had never seen as much as a photo of you and, of course, knew nothing of your western trip."

"Do you know," she acknowledges penitentially, "I took you for one of those conceited commercial travelers. And can you guess what quite confirmed me in my opinion? Your foppishness in wearing this!" and she holds up to his inspection the familiar cluster diamond which sparkles upon the third finger of her left hand. "Can you ever forgive me?"

His pardon is not in words, but it suffices.

A Venerable Structure.

From this day the huge shaft which rears its majestic head high above the waters of the historic Potomac must stand back, for it is a base impostor. Its claim to the name of the Washington monument is an assumption of a title which properly belongs to a more modest, yet not inconsiderable pile, which towers, if not five hundred feet above its base, yet higher above the ocean's level than its more pretentious fellow.

The artist has discovered the first and original Washington monument, whose claim as such cannot be questioned, and to which justice is now for the first time done. Not that this paper would detract one iota from either the noble shaft which to-day looms above us the most chaste and beautiful architectural structure of the kind in the world, or from the glory of Colonel Casey, from whose brain has evolved a piece of engineering unsurpassed by man.

But our monument must gracefully yield to the fact that it is but the child of another and not the Adam of its race.

Our artist, in search of "something new under the sun" to present to a public surfeited with politics and hot weather, found himself groping among the clouds that obscured the summit of South Mountain, Maryland. This is the mountain rendered historic on the 13th of September, 1862, when the brave Reno gave up his life and the gallant Hayes fell bleeding from his horse. From South Mountain's bluffs echoed the hoarse belch of cannon and sharp rattle of musketry, and the blood of hundreds of men, as brave as men ever get, enriched its soil on that memorable day.

And here, standing like the ghost of a sentinel of by-gone days, overlooking the field of battle, our artist found something which if not new to all, must be new to many of our readers. In the cleared spot of an acre rises a solid pile of masonry, circular in form, about twenty-five feet in diameter at the base and tapering to sixteen or seventeen feet at the top. It stands on a square foundation of rock thirty-five feet square and about four feet high, and over its head is a hexagonal roof supported by 3-inch rods at the corners. These rods are well braced by smaller ones running from the foot of one to the top of the next of the supporting rods. A ladder leads through a hole above, so that the more adventurous observer may take to the roof for a more extended view.

The whole structure is about fifty feet high, and entrance is made, first by three stones steps up the foundation, through a narrow door way, and then up a winding stairway of some thirty or more stone steps to the top. Near the top of the stairs is embedded in the masonry a tablet bearing the following inscription:

Built in Memory of
GEORGE WASHINGTON,
July 4, 1827.
BY THE CITIZENS OF BOONSBORO'
AND VICINITY.
Rebuilt July 4, 1882, by the members of South Mountain Encampment No. 25, I. O. O. F., of Boonsboro', Maryland.

WILLIAM F. SMITH, JACOB R. BLECKER, ELIAS COST:
Committee.

The rebuilding in 1882 consisted in erecting the roof over the monument and repairing the stone work, where it had either been struck by cannon balls during the battle or had succumbed to the wear and tear of time.

So here rests the proof that the patriotic citizens of Washington county Md., honored the memory of the lad whose proficiency with the hatchet determined the fate of the celebrated cherry-tree, twenty-one years before the cornerstone of our monument was quarried. The top of this ancient structure once gazed there breaks upon the vision a shaft that would make Col. Casey's shaft flush with envious shame were it made of anything more sensitive than white marble. Stretching out for miles at one's feet lie hundreds of beautiful farms teeming with life, industry corn and cabbage. To the west and north lies the Washington county valley, from which rises the spires of Boonsboro', Keedysville, Hagerstown and numberless smaller towns. In the east Mid-dletown valley reposes peaceful, prosperous and happy with its myriads of farms and villages. In the south the mist-capped summit of Mount Reno towers high into the clouds; while pale blue mountain walls in the distance surround the whole panorama as though afraid that something that's in might get out, or something that's out might get in.

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On experiment three of his lions immediately showed signs of the greatest terror. They were seized with trembling and growled fitfully. The tiger was more quickly subdued, became stupefied and crouched in a corner of the cage. Bruin was more refractory to the electricity, which seemed scarcely to affect him. He would growl and show his teeth, but was subdued after repeated discharges.

The most astonishing effects, however, were perceptible in the box constrictor. On receiving the discharge the specimen from Cayenne, nearly twenty feet in length, became at once paralyzed and remained motionless for six hours afterward. When he recovered he showed signs of helplessness for three whole days. Finally the elephant on being electrified by a touch of the stick upon the tip of his trunk, set up a series of wild cries, and became so frantic that the tamer feared he would break his heavy iron chain.

We sow many seeds to get a few flowers.

Diamonds.

A London expert says that of old the world received each year new diamonds of about \$250,000 in value on the average. Suddenly, from South Africa, comes a new supply exceeding \$20,000,000 each year for ten years. In consequence the price of diamonds has steadily fallen from \$15 to 3.75 a carat.

Of course, it is known that when they go over a comparatively insignificant number of carats diamonds take a leap into the thousands. Brazilian diamonds are very fine stones, but no stones found there or in the South African diamond fields, are as lustrous and beautiful as the gems in the gala decorations of East Indian princes, and those which have been obtained in India during the past century by conquest and purchase. These came mainly from the mines of Golconda.

The ex-Khedive of Egypt, Ismail Pasha, is said to have the finest collection of diamonds, rubies and emeralds in the world--aggregating several hundred thousand dollars in value. Large rubies of a lurid, lustrous red, without a blemish, are scarcer than big diamonds, and are consequently more valuable.

Ex-Queen Isabella of Spain is said to have the finest pearls in the world; and the unaccountable loss of many of the most valuable gems in the Spanish crown jewels set the tongues of Spanish courtiers going. King Alfonso, Isabella's affectionate son, probably thinks his mamma's continued absence a pearl beyond price.

Drowned by an Octopus.

In the harbor of San Diego, California, lie a number of Chinese junks preparing for a fishing trip to the coast of Lower California. The Chinese who sail from this port fishing are quite different from the Mongols who run landries. Sunburnt they are, and look almost as bronzed as Modoc Indians.

A representative had a talk with one of them recently, named Hoy Kee, who seemed to be intelligent and spoke English rather fairly, and elicited the news that on their last trip they lost one man. It occurred down at Ballenas Bay, below Abrejos Point, on the coast of Lower California, about four hundred miles south of San Diego. They were engaged in gathering the abalone, the beautiful shell which adorns many homes in the United States. One of the men, whose first trip this was, strayed away from the rest, it being the lowest point of the tide, which was commencing to run with big breakers. It seems that this Chinaman, standing barelegged with the water up to his knees, was surprised at being caught by one of his legs by an immense octopus, or, as our informant called it, a devil fish, and in a second he was stripped over, drawn out into deep water, and drowned before the rest of the Chinaman realized what was the matter with their shell gatherer. The boats of the Chinamen were high up on the beach, and when they were got into the water no trace could be seen of the missing man. Several days afterward his remains floated ashore in a horrible state of mutilation. The octopus from the description of it, must have been a monster, each arm measuring about ten feet.

Art in Smoking.

"I can tell directly I can see him light his cigar whether a man is going to enjoy his smoke, or, indeed, whether he knows how to do so. I often smile when I see a man looking wisely through a bundle of cigars, and picking out one, under the fond impression that he is making me think he is a judge. There is an old story of a man who went into a store and asked for the best cigar the dealer had. He was handed a ten-cent cigar. That didn't satisfy him he wanted a more expensive one. He was shown several, ranging fifteen, twenty-five and fifty cents apiece, but he always pretended they were not good enough, although any of them was an excellent article, the most expensive being so only on account of its perfume or some little matter of that kind. At last the store-keeper became annoyed and wearied, so he determined to settle the matter. 'I have a cigar here which I seldom sell, because I have only one box left; they are a dollar a cigar and are very choice.' 'Why didn't you bring 'em out before?' said the customer. Accordingly the dealer handed him one of his five-cent cigars, pocketed the dollar and the man went away perfectly satisfied. I don't think that it is an exaggerated case. In nine cases out of ten where people ask for a very expensive cigar it is only because they happen to be flush of money and want to brag of the big price they have paid for their smoke."

Drunkard's Paradise in Africa.

On the third day out the explorers came upon the Amakwaka tribe, of whom Mr. Richards says: "They have no gardens at all. They are so frequently robbed by Umidia's imps (soldiers) that they have become quite discouraged. Another reason is that the native fruit is capable of sustaining life, and is abundant; and again, the palm wine flows freely all over the country. This palm tree is usually four or five feet high, seldom ten feet. It manifests little life, save at the top, where a few leaves appear, looking like a flower pot in a stump. These leaves are all cut off, and from the cut each tree yields daily about a pint of delicious juice, but highly intoxicating when allowed to stand for a few hours. There seems to be no limit to these trees, and we were surrounded on every hand by drunken men and women. Even little children were staggering about as if they had been kicked by the devil. It was difficult to avoid trouble with these people, yet our guns were respected, and a ball fired carelessly at a near tree would produce quiet for half an hour. They were coarse, rough drunken fellows, often plundering, often plundered, and accustomed to quarrels and fights not altogether bloodless. One could scarce expect to find pleasure in passing among them."