

POLISHING THE WINDOWS.

BY MRS. C. W. ELANDERS.

MRS. WHIPPLE'S daughters were the most stylish girls in the town. There were four of them, all handsome, and queenly and cultivated, with a little fortune of their own, which was left them two years before, and which they were to come into full possession of when they were twenty-one, but not a moment before.

Of course the young gentlemen of the village kept their eyes turned toward the Whipple family. If there was a ride, or a walk, or a party, or sociable, nothing could be done unless these four pretty maidens were concerned in it; much to the disgust of the rest of us, who had no especial expectations, whatever might be our individual pretensions to good looks and culture.

There was another member of the Whipple family. This young lady was a niece of Mr. Whipple, the child of a favorite sister, who had been unfortunate, and who died not long after her marriage. The child was such a pale, puny creature, with such awkward, shy ways, that she grew Cinderella-like, in such domestic obscurity that none of us knew much of her until the event happened which I am about to relate.

Cousin Ned was always an eccentric genius. He had been traveling all over Europe, and was the author of "Letters from Paris," published in our paper, that were thought very brilliant, because they described the European fashions in a vivacious way, and cut us Americans up for trying to ape Eugenia, when we ought to have enough sense to know that styles of one country were illy adapted to another.

Cousin Ned was regarded as a great catch. All the Whipple girls were delighted when they heard of his intended return, and made me promise to bring him over as soon as he was at leisure. Indeed, they had been very attentive to me on his account, as I very well knew, and I was just foolish enough to be patronized by them, although I knew they barely recognized me at Saratoga, when we met there one summer.

Among my letters that morning, I found one from Ned. He had arrived in New York, and was only waiting he said, "to purchase me the handsome silk, at Stewart's," before coming to us.

As I knew there was to be a birthday party at the Whipples, I ran over to show the letter, and beg then to allow me to telegraph to Ned to hasten, that he might be in season for the festivities.

We were all sitting in the back parlor, talking over our new dresses and trimmings, when Mr. Whipple came in hastily.

"Now, girls," this won't do; some of you must polish the windows in front.—Bridget is all out of sorts this morning. She says she will wash them, but she will not have time to rub them, and that unless some of you will help her, she will quit, and it will be just like her to do it. So if you know what is for your interest, do fly around and get her good natured again?"

"Where's Said?" asked all the girls in a breath. Said, was the orphan niece, and was expected to do everything that Bridget didn't.

"She's sick, with one of her terrible headaches," Mrs. Whipple said, with an indignant toss of the head.

"Well, she's always sick, it seems to me," Cecelia cried out harshly.

"I've been expecting she would give out ever since my birthday party has been announced," said Rose, spitefully.

"I should think you would be ashamed of yourself," Mrs. Whipple returned, as if there was a slight sense of justice left in her. "Said has worked like a dog ever since this party was talked of.—Look at the piles of cakes she has made, and the creams and whips to say nothing of the dresses and furbelows. I should think you might have some mercy on the child."

"Well, I guess she can manage to polish these windows," Rose said, laughingly. "You don't think I'm going to stand up there for everybody to look at who goes by?"

"If you never do anything worse than polish windows you never will have occasion to blush for yourself," the mother said.

"Well, I should blush to be seen doing Bridget's work, and if she can not do it, then Said must."

"Said! Said!" Rose screamed, at the foot of the stairs.

"Well," answered a sweet, pleasant voice from above.

"Bridget wants somebody to polish the windows."

There was a little pause, as if gathering strength to take up the cross—then the sweet voice answered.

"I'll come right down."

"Well, hurry up, they are all cross—Bridget and mother."

"Yes, dear."

Rose came back to where we were sitting, but somehow, the beauty of her face had all disappeared.

Presently Said came in with a white handkerchief resting on her curls, like a dainty morning cap, and with a chamois skin in her hand.

I do not suppose I had looked at Said for two whole years as observantly as I looked at her then. Was it possible this was the sallow, peaked-faced girl that had been called "Said?" Her form had rounded into the finest proportions. The blue eyes looked from under the long, sicken lashes, with a depth of tenderness in them, such as one sees in the pictures of nuns grieving for the lost love of this world, and yearning for the sanctification of that to come. The pensive rounding of the smooth cheeks, and graceful curving of the red lips were perfect, and every motion was graceful and winning.

Said passed near me with timid recognition, blushing as if she expected no return to her salute.

I don't know what impulse made me rise, and put my arm around her neck, and kiss her, but the girls all burst out laughing when I did so, in such a sarcastic manner that Said slipped hastily away, but not until I had seen the tears in her beautiful eyes.

"What made you kiss Said?" Rose asked, tartly, when I was seated again.

"I could not help it," I said; "she is the prettiest creature I ever saw."

Rose pouted.

Said took the steps and mounted boldly. As she stood there with the lace drapery falling around her, with her perfectly moulded arms moving over the glass, I thought what a pity it was that Cousin Ned could not see her, for it would be exactly the kind of picture to take his fancy.

Just then some one entered the front gate, and came along the gravel walk.

"Bless me!" Rose cried, springing to her feet; "there is a stranger," and away she ran to arrange her toilette.

Cecelia simply tucked her pretty foot on the cushion, and opened a book in the most graceful way imaginable.

"Do get down, Said," gasped Mat; but Said went on polishing, as if she had not heard.

Mat went to the piano and struck a plaintive chord, just as I recognized the voice of Cousin Ned.

Such a time as we had, then! Rose was recalled, and came down in a silk dress, and was so surprised, and so delighted, and it was so fortunate he had come in season for the party. There was no end to the rapturous exclamations.

Mrs. Whipple had somehow taken off the working gown she had been wearing all the morning, and come sailing forward in a handsome wrapper. She kissed him on both cheeks, in such a motherly way, and then, after a time, made him try her raspberry shrub, and walked him all over the premises to see the improvements that had been made since he went to Europe.

Ned was in his manners a gentleman, and listened as if she were telling him what he was most eager to know, but every once in a while his eyes glanced toward the front window, where Said was polishing, without a word of apology, or an attempt to leave her work. When the glasses were cleaned, and she had gone from the room, Ned asked:

"Allow me to inquire how it happens, Mrs. Whipple, that you are fortunate in having beautiful servants as well as elegant daughters? Must everything be beautiful that comes within your pleasant circle?"

Mrs. Whipple laughed, and the girls laughed, but no one said, the young lady is our relative, and so Ned still supposed that Said was a house-servant.

When we were passing down the walk to go home, and while Mrs. Whipple and her daughters were still at the hall door, we came near Said, who was standing among the rose bushes, culling buds for vases.

"Said," I asked, "may I introduce you to my Cousin Ned? You have not forgotten each other, I trust?"

Said blushed the color of the roses she held in her hand, but with perfectly lady-like grace, saluted him.

Ned was embarrassed—any one could see that—but he did find words to say he

certainly had not recognized her as he came in. He stopped to select a bud from the fragrant mass, when Rose cried out, from the hall steps:

"If you are ready Said, we will arrange the flowers."

A little tremor passed over the beautiful lips, but she bade us a pleasant good-morning, and went in.

"In what capacity does that young lady serve in her aunt's family?" Ned asked, after he had swept off innumerable dandelion blossoms with his cane.

"It would be difficult to say. She seems to be as much a maid-of-all-work as anything."

Ned was absent-minded from that day forth. I wore the gorgeous silk he had brought me from Stewart's, but no one knew better than I, how dowdy I looked beside Said, in her cool, white muslin, looped up with moss rose buds.

As none seemed to notice her, all being absorbed in their admiration of the Misses Whipple, Cousin Ned took her upon his arm, and, I am afraid, would not have left her the whole evening, had not Mrs. Whipple summoned her to take round the ices. I wish you could have seen Ned's face then, it flashed all over.

The long and short of the story is, Said became my cousin, and we are as fond of each other as if we were sisters.

At first the Whipples were very indignant, but when Ned discovered that Mr. Whipple had made Said an heir equally with his daughters, and refused to allow his wife to receive a penny of the money, they became very patronizing and kind.

As Ned was amply able to buy the Whipples all out, and then have money to lend them, he cared very little for their likes or dislikes. Said is as happy as the days are long, and blesses the hour when she was called upon to polish the windows.

We do not suppose that every young person who polishes windows will see her lover come up the gravel walk—but no sensible girl should be ashamed to be seen doing anything that is useful and domestic, since no one whose opinion is desirable will think less of her for being thus employed.

Questions Answered by Science.

WHY is rain water soft? Because it is not impregnated with earth and minerals.

Why is it more easy to wash with soft water than hard? Because soft water unites freely with soap, and dissolves it instead of decomposing it, as hard water does.

Why do wood ashes make hard water soft? 1st. Because the carbonic acid of wood ashes combines with the sulphate of lime in the hard water and converts it into chalk. 2d. Wood ashes converts some of the soluble salts of water into insoluble, and throws them down as a sediment, by which the water remains more pure.

Why has rain water such an unpleasant smell when it is collected in a rain tub or tank? Because it is impregnated with decomposed organic matters, in which it is collected.

Why does water melt salt? Because the very minute particles of water insinuate themselves into the pores of the salt by capillary attraction, and force the crystals apart from each other.

How does blowing hot foods make them cool? It causes the air which has been heated by the food to change rapidly, and give place to fresh, cool air.

Why do ladies fan themselves in hot weather? That the fresh particles of air may be brought in contact with their face by the action of the fan; and as every fresh particle of air absorbs some heat from the skin, this constant change makes them cool.

Does a fan cool the air? No; it makes the air hotter by imparting to it the heat of our face, but cools our faces by transferring its heat to the air.

As a fine-looking young man was coming out of the depot in Hartford, Conn., he was met by a beautiful girl who threw her arms around his neck, and kissed him several times, exclaiming: "Oh, Charles, you have come at last. How happy I am." The young man who was not particularly bashful, relished the kisses, and even went so far as to return them, but the young lady soon discovered her mistake, and was ready to scream with shame and mortification. It seems that she had expected her brother by the train, who had been absent several years in Europe, and was strikingly like the young stranger. The mistake was natural, and was readily forgiven.

A Wonderful Microscopic Discovery.

SCIENCE is yet ceaselessly working on to results still more surprising. The last advance, which has just been made in this city, is a very large one. Until now the best microscope magnified an object not more than two hundred million times its size, and very few microscopists ever saw such power. The President of the Royal Society of England last Summer showed a shell magnified one hundred and forty-four million times, and this excited the astonishment of microscopists throughout the world. But the new opticle combination just completed in this city exhibits the same objects under the enlargement of nine thousand million times its natural magnitude. If an ordinary domestic fly could be seen entire under such magnification it would seem to cover a space as large as the whole city of New York below Wall street. A man would appear more than a hundred miles high, and a lady's hair would reach half-way from New York to New Haven.

This wonderful instrument is so sensitive that a loud word spoken near it destroys all distinctness of vision, from the tremor imparted to it by the motion of the air, and a footstep on the floor shakes it out of adjustment. The field of view—that is, the area which can be seen at once—is a circle only the one twelve-thousandth part of an inch in diameter. A microscopic shell called an *angulatum*, of which about one hundred and forty placed end to end will reach an inch, and which is simply marked with lines of the most exquisite delicacy when examined under ordinary powerful microscopes, exhibits under the new instrument half globes of white silex, whose diameter appears to be an inch and three-quarters, and of which only fifteen can be seen at once. In reality, the point of a cambric needle is larger than the circle upon which those fifteen half globes exist, and yet that circle appears like a dessert plate covered with lady apples. These wonders we have seen, but how they are produced only men of science can fully explain and understand.—N. Y. Sun.

Too Late for Explanation.

LORD MARK KERR, who distinguished himself at the battle of Fontenoy, was a good but eccentric officer, and a terrible duelist. His debut was remarkable. He was a lad of slight, effeminate appearance, apparently void of spirit. His father, the Marquis of Lothian, when he brought him to London to join his regiment—the Coldstream Guards—requested the Colonel, who was his particular friend, to watch over him, and see that he submitted to no improper liberties, and to instruct him in the way he should go, in case he had the misfortune to be insulted.

Those were the days of hard-drinking, "prodigious swearing" and brutal manners. This pacific young scion of nobility soon became a butt at mess, a stop-peg to hang practical jokes on, until at last a Captain of a year's standing threw a glass of wine in his face. He still said nothing, but wiped his face with his handkerchief, and took no further notice of the insult he had received.

The Colonel thought it was high time to interfere, and invited him to breakfast, *teba-tele*, on the following morning at 9 o'clock. Lord Mark arrived punctually, ate his breakfast with perfect composure, and spoke but little. At length the commanding officer broke ground.

"Lord Mark," said he, "I must speak to you on rather a delicate subject, but, as your father's friend, I am compelled to waive ceremony. Captain L—, yesterday morning, publicly passed an affront on you, which both your honor and the credit of the regiment require you to notice."

"What do you think, sir, I ought to do?" inquired Lord Mark.

"Call on him for an explanation," rejoined the Colonel.

"It is, I fear, too late for that," replied the young Ensign, "I shot him at eight this morning, and if you take the trouble to look out of the front window, you will see him on a shutter!"

No more Complaints.

A married gentleman, every time he met the father of his wife, complained to him of the ugly temper and disposition of his daughter. At last, upon one occasion, becoming weary of the grumbings of his son-in-law, the old gentleman exclaimed: "You are right; she is an impertinent jade, and if I hear any more complaints of her I will disinheritor her." The husband made no more complaints.

In the Dark.

A MINISTER was traveling in the backwoods, and espying a cabin, I entered on a mission of mercy. The lad of the house (she being present alone, and rightly judging his errand) when I saw him approaching, seized the Bible, and as he entered was to all intents busily engaged in perusing the volume. He noticed, however, that she held the letters reversed, or in other words upside down. After the usual courtesies, the minister inquired what she was reading.

"O, 'bout the old prophets," was the evidently self-satisfactory reply.

"It is very edifying to read the sufferings of Christ," said the minister.

"And so that good man is dead, is he?" asked the matron, evidently getting interested.

"Certainly He is."

"Well, that is just the way. I've been at John a long time to get him to take a newspaper, but he won't. Everybody in the world might die, and we not hear a word 'bout it," said the woman, in a rapid tone.

"Ah, woman you are in the dark," said the preacher, with an elongated face.

"Yes, I know we are. I've been at John a long time to put a window in at the fur end of the house, but he won't do that either."

"I perceive that you are very weak in knowledge."

"I know I am weak, and I guess if you had had the bilious fever, and been taking sassafras and extract pills as long as I have, you'd be weak too," replied the woman, in rather an angry tone of voice, and half an octave higher than usual.

What Becomes of Pins.

Numbers of people have entirely bewildered and stupefied themselves in endeavors to arrive at some rational conclusion on the subject of pins. The statistical accounts of the numbers of pins turned out annually at Birmingham and Sheffield alone, would lead one to expect that the earth itself would present the appearance of a vast pin cushion. Where are those pins of which the yearly fabrication is on so vast a scale? Pins are not consumed as an article of diet. Pins do not evaporate. Pins must be somewhere. All the pins which have been made since civilization set in, must be in existence in some shape or other; we ought to see nothing else, look in what direction we might, but pins. Reader, how many pins are imported into your own house within the course of the year? Do you know what becomes of these pins? There are a few in your wife's pin cushion, and one may occasionally be seen gleaming in the housemaid's waistband; but where are the rest? It is perfectly astounding how seldom one encounters a pin "on the loose." Now and then, by rare chance, as when a carpet is taken up, you may catch a glimpse of a pin lying in a crevice; but even this is an uncommon occurrence, and not to be counted. You often want a pin and take trouble to get one. Where are all the pins that ought always to be in attendance everywhere?

A Knotty Text.

There was once an itinerant preacher in West Tennessee, who, possessing considerable natural eloquence, had gradually become possessed of the idea that he was also an extraordinary Biblical scholar.—Under this delusion, he would very frequently at the close of his sermons, ask any member of his congregation who might have a "knotty text" to unravel, to speak it, and he would explain it at once, however much it might have troubled "less distinguished divines."—On one occasion, in a large audience, he was particularly pressing for some one to propound a text; but no one presuming to do so, he was about to sit down without an opportunity to show his learning, when a chap back by the door announced he had a Bible matter of great "concern," which he desired to be enlightened upon. The preacher quite animatedly professed his willingness and ability, and the congregation was in great excitement.

"What I want to know," said the outsider, "is, whether Job's turkey was hen or gobbler?"

The "exponent" looked confused, and the congregation tittered as the questioner capped the climax by exclaiming, in a loud voice:

"I fished him down on the fast question!"

From that time forward, the practice of asking for difficult passages, was discontinued.