

MY OLD HOUSE.

Written by a Lady of Ninety-Four Years. I hall once more my natal day, till in my tenuous clay, With many favors blest, He who placed the structure here...

The Middy's Captive

BLUBBERING won't do any good; you had better report the matter to Capt. Wilson at once," said the navigating lieutenant of her majesty's ship Triumph...

abroad, believing to the end that he was a murderer! "And Alice is still ignorant of her father's sad history?" queried the lad.

With the course of true love running thus smoothly, and the crisp, frozen ground under their feet, the twain started upon their ramble.

With buoyant steps they breasted the "Hog's Back," from which favorite vantage ground a splendid view of the surrounding country could be obtained.

"Yes, there's the dear old Towers," said Alice, "where I should be living now if the pater had not died."

"You've found another home," whispered Charley, "and other parents."

"I know that, dear," responded the girl. "But you cannot imagine what it feels like to have one's birthplace given over to ruin and decay, and to know that one hasn't a single living relative."

"How dreary it looks!" said the girl. "I wonder if that scullery window is still unfastened?"

Charley tried, and, to his surprise, the sash slipped up without difficulty. "It's a case of gentlemen first this time," said he, stepping through the aperture.

"Please, sir, it's the 'First Lord'; he's bolted! He ran off while we were shipping the soft tack—I mean the bread!" incoherently stammered Robson.

"The 'First Lord' bolted with the soft tack!" exclaimed Wilson, in astonishment. "What does he mean, Stuart? Who's the 'First Lord'? Is the boy a raving maniac?"

Lieut. Stuart had perforce to explain that the cadet, being in charge of a boat sent ashore to ship provisions, had lost one of his men—an able-bodied seaman answering to the name of West, but who was, by reason of his superior bearing, nicknamed by his companions "the First Lord of the Admiralty."

Charley Robson meekly endured the reproach of his commander, who was a stern martinet, and made no allowance for youthful inexperience.

The usual steps taken to secure the arrest of the deserter were of no avail. His description was circulated by the police throughout the country, and all the majesty of the law invoked to capture the runaway, but the man disappeared as completely as if the earth had opened and swallowed him up.

There was one person, however, who did not forget the runaway. Robson often in imagination ran the scoundrel to earth.

Little did Charley Robson imagine as at the commencement of his long-deferred leave he lounged in a first-class smoker on his way to Guildford how soon, or under what strange circumstances, he would meet the villain of his melodrama.

the man I was to marry, smiling lightly murdered "Although conscious of my innocence, I dared not face the inquiry which was sure to follow as who would believe my own theory of the matter, which was simply that I committed the terrible act in my sleep, as from childhood I had been subject to attacks of somnambulism."

Robson colored at the hint delicately conveyed by his mother, and so well understood by himself. To see their only son mated to their ward was the dearest wish of Admiral and Mrs. Robson, yet they had the good sense to restrain the impetuosity of the youthful couple until both arrived at years of maturity.

"He was a villain, Sir Richard!" cried Robson, in wild excitement. "It was he himself who killed Lord Marcus, and artfully foisted the blame upon you in order that you should not discover his defalcations. My father possesses his dying confession to that effect."

The sudden revulsion of feeling was almost too much for the baronet. Tittering to the nearest chair, he buried his face in his toil-worn hands. Silence reigned in the room for a few intense moments. Then Sir Richard, feeling a gentle hand upon his shoulder, looked up into a sweet but still scared face and two half-frightened gray eyes.

"Daddy, dear," Charley heard a tremulous voice murmur softly as he stole from the room. "Powerful friends at the admiralty soon glossed over the delinquencies of the seaman West, and Sir Richard Westerne once more assumed his proper rank and station. As time wore on, and the vividness of his past misery faded, he could afford to joke about the matter; and sometimes, upon the rare occasions that he saw a certain young officer, would, much to the amusement of his daughter, simulate extreme terror and cry in affected dismay: 'He has come for me at last!'"

When some few years later a very excited youth, with a golden circlet upon the arm of his new uniform coat, burst unceremoniously into the room, he was greeted by the same old joke, and in response blushing replied: "I'll let you off this time if you will give me Alice as a hostage." And as the girl seemed to be a willing sacrifice, Sir Richard gave them his blessing.—Chicago Times-Herald.

A SHOE FOR A SHUTTER. The Cleverly Contrived Plan for Awakening Sleeper Goes Happily Awry.

Evidently there is no prescribed limit to the ingenuity of a woman. A striking example of this occurred recently in the home of a prominent physician. He has in his household two young lady boarders. One evening, Kate wanted to attend a concert and, as the house is not provided with latch keys, she did not know how to get in upon her return.

After much thought, Mary solved the problem. She would tie a string to her toe, fasten a pasteboard to the other end of the string and drop it out of the window. When Kate came home all she had to do was to gently pull the string and wake Mary, who would then let her in. An easy, beautiful scheme, and one which could hardly fail. Kate went to the corner with her best beau and Mary went to bed. The doctor was sitting in his study, when there was a queer flapping against the window. Made him think of Poe's raven, which came "tapping, tapping at my chamber door." It was a windy night, however, and he didn't pay much attention at first. Then it continued and seemed to get worse.

"It is a loose shutter," he thought, and went to fix it. He opened the window and gave an exclamation. There, flopping in his face, was a big square of pasteboard. He couldn't solve the mystery, and, finding the string, gave it a vicious yank, for he thought some boys were trying to play a trick on him. Heaven! what was that? From over his head came a piercing shriek. He yanked at the cord and again and again came the yells. Then some one came to the window above and yelled down; then there was a violent jerking at the cord from above and when he saw it went into the girls' window he let go. He went inside and called up to Mary to "come down and explain immediately." She dressed and came down blimping and tearfully explained her scheme. The doctor read the riot act to her and she sat up until Kate returned and let her in the usual way.—Chicago Chronicle.

Short Whist. This revolution was occasioned by a worthy Welsh baronet preferring his lobster for supper hot. Four first-rate whist players—consequently four great men—adjourned from the house of commons to Brookes' and proposed a rubber while the cook was busy. "The lobster must be hot," said the baronet. "A rubber may last an hour," said another, "and the lobster may be cold again or spoiled before we have finished." "It is too long," said a third. "Let us cut it shorter," said the fourth. Carried nem. con. Down they sat, and found it very lively to win or lose so much quicker. Besides furnishing conversation at supper, the thing was new—they were legislators, and had a fine opportunity to exercise their calling.—"Short Whist."

Shaving Between Bayonet Charges. A barber was doing a rushing business in the Kansas trenches Sunday. The barber solicited custom from one soldier who preferred to wear illaces and was greeted with the cheerful reply: "No, I had a close shave yesterday coming into Calococan."—Manila American.

Her Explanation. "A woman," remarked the man who assumes superior airs, "has no sense of humor." "Well," answered his wife, "when you consider how often she is requested to laugh over serious matters like house-cleaning and Easter bunnets I—Washington Star.

Marital Conversation. She—Do you remember how you said, when you were courting me, that if I would marry you I would have nothing to do all my days but sit around and look pretty? And how different it is now! He—Well, it ain't my fault if you can't look pretty any more.—Indianapolis Journal.

A Reproof. Come, bear with the weather and don't make a fuss—The bright side of earth will soon swing round to us: Where now you sit grumbling and toasting your feet. You soon will sit frowning and roasting the hat.—Detroit Free Press.



Mr. Brownrigg (an absent-minded old gent)—Let me see—does Mr. Brownrigg live here? New servant (not recognizing her master)—Yes, sir; but he's not in at present. Mr. B.—O, well, never mind. I'll call again.—Punch.

Work and Play. The professional musician His duty never shirks. Yet when he works he always plays, And when he plays he works.—L. A. W. Bulletin.

Time Wanted. "My wife never buys a hat, a gown or even a pair of gloves without first consulting me." "Is that so? Well, old man, your wife's a wonder. You ought to be able to save money." "I could, probably, if she didn't always go and get what she wanted just the same as if I had agreed to it."—Chicago Daily News.

Discouraged. First Hobo—Why ain't ye workin' the hero of Santlager graft any more? Second Hobo—Say! Yer oughter seen the chromo wot sprung on me an' kissed me, an' didn't give me a thing to eat, the last time I worked it!—Puck.

Ventured No Opinion. "What's the matter with you?" asked the friend. "I haven't the least idea," answered the very cynical invalid. "The surgeons are going to operate for appendicitis."—Washington Star.

Naturally. "So you have no house of lords in this country?" said the visiting Englishman. "No, we haven't," replied the American; "this is a nation without a peer."—Harper's Bazaar.

Every Facility. "Is he a person of much refinement?" asked the young woman. "Necessarily," replied Senator Sorghum; "his family is in the sugar business and owns at least half a dozen refineries."—Washington Star.



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