



# THE TIMES.

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## A SLIGHT MISTAKE.

DEAREST KITTY,—I write you a word, in haste, to tell you that Cousin Fred has returned from abroad and will be in Boston next week, and I shall send him to call on you. You know that I have always had a great desire that you two should meet, I think you would like each other so much. Now please don't be perverse—that's a darling—but look your prettiest, and smile your sweetest upon him, for he is, as I have always told you, the best and most charming fellow in the world. You know I am not a bit of a match-maker, so don't get up your dignity on that account. I wouldn't venture to select a 'helpmeet' for you, or for Fred, either, for that matter; but I know you will be good friends, right away. Don't forget that you have promised me a visit in January.

Ever your loving friend  
FLORENCE HILTON.

Miss Kitty Tyler read this letter twice, with heightened color, and a gleam in her eyes that betokened mischief. For Miss Kitty was something of a coquette and was very tired of all the victims at present on her list, and had been sighing, that very morning, for "new worlds to conquer." "Cousin Fred" had the reputation, too, of being very fastidious; he was over thirty, and had hitherto been invulnerable to all the assaults of the enemy. He was handsome, rich, cultivated; "a foeman worthy of her steel." Miss Kitty actually executed a pirouette, in her delight.

"I wonder when he'll come;—perhaps to-day! I must do my hair in that new style that Del Norton said was so becoming!"

And Kitty let down her yellow locks, her chief beauty, and devoted herself, for a longer time than I like to tell, to their elaborate arrangement.

But it was all in vain, for no Cousin Fred made his appearance. Two or three days passed, and he came not. Her cousin Lillian, to whom she had confided the important news, recited "Marianna in the Moated Grange," provokingly. Lillian was provoking in a good many ways; in the first place, she was provokingly pretty, for a poor relation, whom one had to have forever in the way; and then, instead of being melancholy and unobtrusive, as became a dependent, she was as gay and light-hearted as a bird, and would not be snubbed, however hard one tried; and Miss Kitty could not try very hard, as well as she would have liked to, for Papa Tyler loved her as well as he did his own daughter, for the sake of her dead mother—his only sister—and Mamma Tyler, fat, comfortable and easy-going, said:

"La, Kitty, don't be jealous of the poor child! She's got nothing in the world but her pretty looks, and you can outshine her in every way!"

But Kitty didn't feel by any means sure of that. Lillian was a beauty, with her clear olive-skin, and her great black Spanish eyes; and, worse than being a beauty, she had a "way with her" that made people—men and women both—fall in love with her.

Now I would not have you think that Lillian was as badly off as Cinderella with her "proud sisters." Kitty was not so bad but that she tried not to be jealous or envious of Lillian, and did, as a general thing, treat her very kindly; but being naturally of a jealous disposition, she did sometimes heartily wish her out of the way; of which feeling Lillian was—apparently—as unconscious as a babe.

Lillian did not manifest the slightest interest in the expected "Cousin Fred." It would not have been well for her if she had. Kitty meant that her pretty cousin should be kept well out of the way of the fastidious gentleman of whom she meant to make a conquest.

A week passed, and still he did not come. On Saturday afternoon a card

was brought up to Kitty bearing the name—Frederick Lockhart.

"O, that horrid sewing-machine agent again!" exclaimed Kitty. "I do wish mamma had not talked with him about a machine, he is such a bore! And the idea of his sending up his card, in that way, as if he were a visitor! The impudence of the thing! Nora, tell the man we don't wish to see him, and he will oblige us by never calling here again!"

Nora departed, and was soon heard delivering her message, just inside the drawing-room door; when suddenly Lillian started up.

"I think that is really too bad, Kitty, for I heard Aunt Laura ask him to call again, and I think she means to buy a machine of him. I don't see that it was anything very dreadful to send up his card; of course he wanted her to know who he was!"

And Lillian was flying down stairs before Kitty had time to remonstrate, if she wished too.

Nora was ushering a handsome and elegantly-attired gentleman out of the hall-door. He turned his head at the sound of Lillian's footsteps, and she encountered a very haughty gaze from a pair of keen brown eyes.

"Wait a moment. I think there is a mistake," stammered Lillian, a little awed by his manner, if he was only a sewing-machine agent. "My aunt—Mrs. Tyler—did wish to see you, I think. She had some idea of buying a machine of you. If you will call sometime when she is at home—"

The keen brown eyes did not leave her face, and Lillian found herself blushing in the most unaccountable and ridiculous way.

A smile flickered faintly about the corners of his mouth, and he hesitated for a moment. Then he bowed gravely, and went, without a word in reply.

"If that's the sewin'-machine agent, it's fine and handsome he's grown since the last time he was here," said Nora.

"Why, isn't it the same man?—but of course it must be. Aunt Laura said his name was Lockhart."

"I was after thinkin' it was a little pindlin' feller; but he might be the same for all I'd know; it's a little notice Nora Finnerty takes o' the men—thrublesome crathurs!"

And Lillian went up stairs to receive a scolding from Kitty for interfering with the message she had sent, and being so polite to a peddler. The truth was that Kitty was a little out of temper because Cousin Fred had not appeared.

The glance Lillian had received from those brown eyes of the sewing-machine agent haunted her more than she would have acknowledged, even to herself.

"If he were a prince he couldn't look any more high-bred," thought she; and she inwardly resolved to see Mr. Frederick Lockhart the next time he called, if possible.

But he did not call again. Lillian mentioned him, one day, to her aunt, and received the information that she had told him, a month before, that she had decided to buy a sewing-machine of another kind, and it was very strange that he should have called again; but then, such people were always so persistent!

Lillian was conscious of a wish that he might be persistent enough to call still again; and though she laughed at herself for it, and was ashamed of it, she could not drive it away.

Lillian was "ridiculously romantic," said her cousin Kitty, and perhaps she was not far from the truth. What would she have said if she had known that Lillian was haunted by one glance which a sewing-machine agent had cast upon her, as she stood in the hall-door!—that she was bewailing the cruelty of fate that would not let them meet again!

But fate was not so cruel, after all. One November day, Lillian, being down town on a shopping expedition, was overtaken by a sudden and violent rain. She had only a few blocks to walk to reach the horse cars, but in that distance she would have been drenched if it had not been for the friendly aid and umbrella of—the sewing-machine agent.

It was very improper, of course. What he ought to have done was to have walked straight by her, and let her get drenched. At all events, that was Kitty's opinion.

But what he did do, was to walk up to her, without the slightest hesitation, and

ask if he might be allowed to shelter her with his umbrella.

And instead of "withering him with a glance of scorn," and insisting upon getting wet, as she should have done, according to Kitty, Lillian said "yes, and thank you," and walked along, demurely and gratefully, by his side.

He asked her, almost immediately, if Mrs. Tyler had purchased a sewing-machine yet. (So he remembered her from that one glance, thought Lillian.) But she did not quite like the manner in which he asked the question; so seriously and earnestly, as if selling sewing-machines was all he thought of in the world! Perhaps he was being polite to her now, only for the possible chance of selling a sewing-machine! Kitty was right they were peddlers; would she quite like her husband to be a sewing-machine agent? And Lillian sighed.

She was about to leave him, at the door of the horse car, with a word of thanks, when he also entered the car, murmuring something about his destination lying in the same direction and seated himself beside her.

It was not at all proper; Lillian acknowledged that to herself; but he made himself so very agreeable! He had such elegant manners, and he was evidently traveled and well-read. Lillian thought that she had never had so entertaining a companion. And it was still raining fast, how could she object to his leaving the car when she did, and accompanying her to her own door? And, when on taking leave of her there, he asked her, with the most charming grace of manner, if he might be allowed the privilege of calling on her, what could she do? She could not harden her heart enough to refuse, even if he was only a sewing-machine agent, at whom Kitty would turn up her aristocratic nose.

So she said yes, with the prettiest blush imaginable, and the sewing-machine agent, in a state of beatitude, went his way.

Once inside the house, Lillian began to realize that she had got herself into a little difficulty, and that a frank explanation was perhaps her best chance of escape from it. She certainly could not have a strange gentleman calling on her without inquiries being made, and she would be obliged to tell, sooner or later, who he was—even if her aunt did not recognize him, which she might possibly do, although she was near-sighted and not blessed with a particularly good memory of faces.

So she related her adventure, freely, though without expressing quite so much admiration for the sewing-machine agent as she felt.

Kitty was very much shocked; she considered it a very great impertinence in the man, and a very great indiscretion on Lillian's part. If it had been a handsome and *distingue* unknown, it might have been a different thing; but a sewing-machine agent! It was too dreadful to think of!

Even good, easy-going Mrs. Tyler was distressed. She uttered the one remonstrance which was always heard from her lips when she was deeply moved:

"My dear, what do you suppose people would say?"

Uncle Tyler only laughed, and said he must have been a "good-looking fellow," or Lillian wouldn't have forgotten the proprieties on his account.

So Lillian understood that she was not absolutely forbidden to receive Mr. Lockhart, and was happy accordingly.

He appeared the very next evening. Kitty, of course, scornfully refused to see him. Mr. and Mrs. Tyler were out, and Lillian had the pleasure of his society all to herself. She was more firmly convinced than before that he was the most agreeable man she had ever met, and this time he said not a word about sewing-machines. Once or twice in his calls Kitty met him, but she treated him with such open scorn, that Lillian was very glad to have her avoid him. The wooing sped rapidly. Before a month had passed Lillian was engaged to the sewing-machine agent! Of course she encountered opposition. Kitty considered that they were all disgraced by such a misalliance. Though Lillian was poor and a dependent, she might look a little higher than a sewing-machine agent, since she was her cousin. Even the thought—which was consoling—that she would be out of her way, was not sufficient to restore Kitty's equanimity.

Good Aunt Tyler was mildly distressed.

"O my dear, it is dreadful to think that you should throw yourself away in that manner, when with your beauty you might, in time, marry a half a million!"

"O aunt dear, when I always had such a horror of the Mormons! Just as if one husband wasn't enough for me!" Lillian would teasingly respond; and poor aunt would give up in despair.

Uncle Tyler advised her not to marry him; when he found that to be of no avail, he aroused himself to inquire into the gentleman's business prospects, reproaching himself for not having done it before. He had an interview with Lockhart, with the result of which he declared himself perfectly satisfied, though he preserved a mysterious silence in regard to the particulars. Lillian fancied that there was a peculiar twinkle in his eye whenever he spoke of her lover. Did he know more about him than she herself? It was true that with her lie was decidedly reticent with regard to his family, his past life and his prospects. She was sure that he had no dishonorable secret; her trust in him was absolute; yet she would have liked to know a little more about him.

Kitty was preparing for her visit to New York.

"Lillian, for pity's sake, don't let Florence Hilton hear of your engagement," said she, imploringly, a few days before she was to leave. "It would be absolute ruin to me! I shall meet her Cousin Fred, and—"

"Don't be alarmed! I'll keep my disgrace to myself," said Lillian.

Just then the postmaster brought Kitty another letter from her friend Florence Hilton, just two months from the date of the first. This was the way it ran:

MY DEAR KITTY,—I don't understand your letter at all! There's some strange mistake somewhere. You say you have not met my Cousin Fred, and he says he not only visits at your house but is engaged to your cousin Lillian. I have written to him for an explanation, but pray write me at once yourself. Can it be that he has never told you he was my cousin? But if he did not I should think you must have known; Fred Lockhart is not a very common name, I should suppose."

Kitty read as far as that aloud. Then there was a tableau.

"Fred Lockhart!" she cried. "I supposed of course his name was Hilton! She never called him anything but Fred. It's all a base plot! O! O! O!"

She was about to accuse Lillian of complicity in the "base plot," when one glance at her bewildered face showed her that she was as much surprised as herself.

Kitty had a mild attack of hysterics, and then resigned herself to the inevitable.

"Well, you have entertained an angel unawares," she said.

### How She Fooled Him.

JOHN SANSKRIT'S wife went to bed Saturday night with her mind made up to fool the old man the next day or die in the attempt. In previous years she had found John impervious to jokes of all kinds, and she realized the Augean task before her on the morrow. With her mind full of her self-imposed task she went to sleep. At daylight she awoke and at once began to operate. Her victim was lying with his back toward her, apparently in a sound sleep. She poked him vigorously in the ribs with her sharp elbow and clawed his shins with her sharp toe-nails, preparatory to startling him with a half-whispered warning.

"John—oh, John—there's some one ringing the door-bell!"

"Lem 'im ring," was the sleepy response.

"But, John, maybe it's the man on the next square, who owes you that \$100 come to pay you."

"No 'tain't, neither," said John, with a yawn.

"But you don't know, and it may be that very man."

"I guess not, for he's buried; died last week. Besides old woman, your ears deceive you. I took the bell-knob off last night to fool April fools."

Heavens, what a mess she made of it to begin with! But when the old man rolled out of bed, yawned, and picked

up his pants, she rammed the sheet in her mouth to plug up her laughter.

"Oh, Jimminy, won't he tumble when he puts his foot in them pants and finds the legs sewed up," she said to herself.

Judge of her rage when the provoking brute innocently carried the blockaded breeches to the wardrobe and inquired:

"Nancy, where's them chocolate colored pants I had on last week?"

"Put on the ones you have in your hands, John; what's the matter with them?"

"I burst a button off yesterday, and they need mending in the seat."

At breakfast she poured out a nice cup of coffee for him, and sweetened it with two spoonfuls of salt.

"You needn't give me any coffee," he said; "keep that yourself."

"Why, John, what's the matter? This is the first time since we were married you refused coffee."

"The blamed stuff has made me nervous, lately; and as this is the first of the month, I thought I'd break off and only drink it for supper. You keep that yourself."

When he came home to dinner she had prepared him a neatly-directed envelope with a sheet of blank paper inclosed within. He eyed it suspiciously, and throwing it into the fire, said:

"I know that handwriting: it's from that crazy lunatic who wants me to vote for him to-morrow. So much for his letter."

In the evening she disguised herself in one of her husband's old suits, and came to the door to beg for charity.

"Please give me a nickel to buy some bread."

"Get out, or I'll give you a nickel with my boot."

"But, sir, consider; I'm starving."

"The devil you are! Now, I'll bet you \$50 against the suit of clothes you wear that you are an imposter."

"But, sir—"

"If I were to search you now I should not be surprised to find you lousy with wealth. For two cents I would see."

"For heavens' sake—"

"Now, none of your soft-soap on me. I don't believe in beggars. Here, you policeman, take this infernal imposter to the station-house."

Just as the "peeler" grabbed the supposed beggar by the back of the neck, a shrill voice yelled:

"John! John! you wouldn't send your wife to the station-house, would you?"

"The deuce I wouldn't," was the cool response. "Anybody who lies to me about my door-bell, sews up my trousers puts salt in my coffee, writes me anonymous notes and steals my clothes, ought to go to penitentiary for life."

"But how did you know—"

"If you women wouldn't talk in your sleep you might keep a secret once in a while."

Mrs. Sanscript says that hereafter, when she attempts an April-fool joke she will sit up all the night previous.

### Why They Lived Single.

There is a romance connected with the life of Dr. Muhlenberg which it is not amiss to briefly relate. It is said when quite a young man and a divine, he and Washington Irving were both engaged to be married to two sisters. As the story goes, the father did not favor Irving's suit, and his affianced married another. The other sister, to whom Dr. Muhlenberg was affianced, died.

The disappointment to Irving was great, but contributed to his later success in life. The bereavement felt by Dr. Muhlenberg was also great, and it appears that both resolved never to marry. They kept their vows. Irving devoted his life and gave his heart and soul to the study of literary pursuits. Dr. Muhlenberg devoted his future to the ministry and the amelioration of the condition of his fellow-man.

It has been ascertained that the beautiful, touching and world-renowned hymn, "I Would not Live Always," was written by Dr. Muhlenberg after the death of the lady he loved, and he published it as a silent though heartfelt token of remembrance of her many virtues. There is reason to believe the story we have related is true. Certain it is that a silent grief seemed never to hang over Dr. Muhlenberg.

Some folks when they bury animosity are very careful to put up a tombstone.