ROMANCE OF A DISH-TOWEL.

A STORY FOR GIRLS.

ff TTOW happens it, Tom, that you never married ?" asked Harry Stanhope of his friend Tom Meredith. as the two sauntered slowly along Broadway one fine spring afternoon.

" Because I could never find any woman who would have me, I suppose," answered Tom laughingly.

"No use to tell me that, old fellow," rejoined Harry. "Girls are not so foolish as to decline taking a good-looking man like you, with plenty of money; yet here you are, nearly thirty years old, and no more prospect of settling than you had ten years ago. Now, if it were me, why the case is very different. A doctor, just struggling into practice, is scarcely considered 'eligible' by the match-making mammas, to say nothing of their worldly-wise daughters; but they are all ready and eager to smile upon you, and you might as well make your choice."

"Thank you," answered Tom, still laughing. "When I find a young lady who can come up to my grandmother's standard of domestic virtues, I will invite her to become Mrs. Thomas Meredith."

"And what was your grandmother's peculiar doctrine on the subject?" inquired Harry.

"I presume she had more than one." said Tom, "but this she particularly impressed upon my mind. 'Always look at a woman's dish-towels,' she would remark with much solemnity. 'No matter how well she plays the piano, or sings, or how many languages she can speak, never marry her, unless you see that she uses soft, dry towels, plenty of them, when she wiped dishes! Be sure that a girl who uses soiled or wet dish-towels does not know enough to be the wife of any honest man.' "

Harry laughed at this definition of house wifely knowledge, but presently said in a serious tone.-

"There is considerable truth in the old lady's ideas after all, but I don't quite understand how, in these days, you can apply the test; most young ladies that we know, have perhaps never seen a dish-towel. Now I think of it, I promised to introduce you to my cousins. There are three of them, all bright, pretty girls, though I think it doubtful whether they would fulfill your grandmother's requirements as a wife. Still you may find them pleasant acquaintances, and if you like I will go there with you now."

"Agreed," responded Tom, and the two friends soon found themselves in the parlor of Mrs. Renshaw, Harry's aunt.

The young ladies were all at home, and, as Harry had said, were bright, pretty girls. Ida, the eldest, was a tall, queenly brunette, whose magnificent dark eyes and abundant raven tresses seemed to compel universal admiration, though she had a powerful rival in Adele, the second daughter, whose delicate blonde beauty showed to fresh advantage beside her more brilliant sister. The two were acknowledged belles in their own circle, and few, who knew them, ever paused to give a glance at their youngest sister,-little Violet, As shy and shrinking as her floral namesake, she avoided the gay assemblages in which her sisters loved to shine, and passed her hours pleasantly and peacefully with her books, her music, and her flowers. She was not present when Harry and his sisters entered ; but when her cousin, with whom she seemed a great favorite, asked expressly for her, Miss Adele carelessly desired the servant to call her. Tom, who was conversing with Ida, did not notice her entrance, till aroused by Harry's voice saying .-

forget my revered granduiother's ad-vice until it is too late, when the importaut event of meeting my fate shall arrive,"

"And then remember it for the rest of your life, I suppose," observed Har-ry; "on the principle of 'marrying in haste and repenting at leisure.' Well, Well, I hope my fair cousins will not be the cause of such a catastrophe ; but I must leave you here, as I have a patient in this house."

And he ran hastily up the steps,

Left to himself, Tom sauntered slowly along, thinking of the young ladies whom he had just seen. It must be confessed that little Violet occupied but a very small portion of his thoughts, which were filled with Ida and Adele. "But I doubt if either of them ever saw a dish-towel," was his concluding reflection, as he reached his boardinghouse.

Weeks passed on. Tom was devoted in his attentions to the Miss Renshaw's. Rumor had assigned him first to Ida, then to Adele, and waited with impatience for the time when the engagement should be publicly announced.

Meanwhile, almost every day brought some good and sufficient excuse for him to call at Mrs. Renshaw's pleasant house; a new poem, the latest song, an invitation for a drive, or a plan for some excursion. Of Violet he saw less than of the other sisters, though they were very friendly, and he treated her with somewhat of the same brotherly frankness as Harry.

One lovely June morning, he presented himself at Mrs. Renshaw's at quite an early hour, intending to invite the three sisters to pass the beautiful summer day in a long country drive.

He noticed that there was some delay in answering his ring, which was not usually the case with Mrs. Renshaw's well-trained servants, but at length he heard a light footstep in the hall, and in another moment the door was opened by Violet. She had a broom in her hand, and a dusting-cap covered her bright curls, but she bade him goodmorning with as much cordiality as usual, and invited him to enter, adding.-

"Please walk in the dining-room, for I am just sweeping the parlors."

Secretly wondering, Tom obeyed. As he turned the handle of the dining-room door, there was a sudden rush, a hasty bang of a door, and a hurried exclamation of "O Violet! how could you ?" and he found himself in the presence of the fair Adele, though for a moment he scarcely recognized her in the slovenly dressed girl, with disheveled hair, who stood by the breakfast-table dabbling the cups and saucers in some greasy water and wiping them on a towel which, to say the least, was very far from being spotlessly clean. She colored, and with some confusion of manner said .-

"Ah, good-morning, Mr. Meredith. So you have come to find us all at work this morning. It happens that we have for our three servants a brother and two sisters.

They received this morning the news of their mother's dangerous illness, and mamma at once gave them all permission to go home. We supposed we could get a woman who sometimes does extra work for us, but she was engaged for the day, so we are obliged to do the best we can, ourselves. I assure you," she continued, with a little laugh which Tom before had often thought pretty and engaging, but which now sounded false and affected, "that I am by no means accustomed to such work, nor have I any desire to become so." "Cannot you allow me to assist you ?" asked Tom politely. "I was brought up on a farm, and have often washed dishes and made myself generally useful about the kitchen."

from the dining room. She did not see him, but, addressing Ida, said .-

" Run away now, Ida dear, and dress before callers come for you. I have already sent Adele up-stairs, and will finish the dishes now I have done my sweeping."

"You have been long enough about It, I hope," muttered Ida ungraciously, but nevertheless availing herself of her sister's offer with much alacrity. "Here are the dish-towels, Violet," she said, extending several greasy, blackened articles to the young girl.

Tom had been meditating an escape ; not an easy affair, as the sisters stood directly in his path : but at the word dish-towels he involuntarily stopped and glanced around.

"No wonder my grandmother cautioned me," was his first thought as the solled towels met his sight, and he hastily approved the look of disgust which crossed Violet's face as she quietly laid those aside, and, opening a drawer, took from it a plentiful supply, soft, dry and clean.

Ida and Adele had both disappeared, and Tom ventured to renew his offer of assistance to Violet, who started a little as she for the first time noticed his presence. But she recovered her composure at once, and quietly answered, as she deftly filled the dish-pan with clean hot suda.

"No, thank you, Mr. Meredith. I shall do very well without assistance. My sisters have not left much for me to do. You had better walk into the parlor, and they will soon join you."

"No, indeed," replied Tom. " I will take myself out of the way, with apologies for my untimely intrusion, unless you will really let me be of some service. And believe me," he added earnestly, with admiring glance at the neat little figure tripping so lightly about the kitchen, and mentally contrasted her with her two sisters, "you will make me very happy by allowing me to help you.

"Oh, very well," said Violet, smiling and blushing a little as she met his gaze. " If you are really so much in need of employment, I will try to provide some for you. Suppose you set these dishes on the lower shelf of the closet, as I wash them,-then I can arrange them after they are all done."

Tom obeyed, and was rewarded by being allowed to bring a hod of coal from the cellar, and do various other little errands, all the while he was noticing the neatness and despatch with which Violet worked, and was especially observant of the clean, dry dishtowels, and the skill with which, when done using them, she washed and scalded and hung them to dry.

He declined the invitation to dinner, given by Mrs. Renshaw, when she came and found him assisting Violet, and made his way directly to Harry's office.

"I have made my choice at last, Harry !" he announced : " It is one that would suit even my grandmother !"

" Might I inquire who is the fortunate damsel ?" asked Harry, laying down his book ; " and how are you so sure of your revered relative's approval ?"

Tom told his morning's experience, concluding with " If she will only acept me, I shall be the happiest man alive, and all owing to my dear old grandmother's good advice."

latter. "Since Heaven has willed it, I wish you joy of it : but I do conjure you never to tell any one how you obtained it ?"

" And why not!" asked Dahar.

"Because," said the noble"Arab, "another man might be really ill, and men would fear to help him. You would be the cause of many refusing to perform an act of charity for fear of being duped as I have been."

Struck with shame at these words, Dahar was silent for a moment, then springing from the horse, returned it to the owner embracing him. Nabar made him accompany him to his tent. where they spent a number of days together, and became fast friends for life.

Punctuation in Reading.

The following story is taken from Earnest Legouve's new book, "Reading as a Fine Art:"

A self-satisfied young man once went to M. Samson for lessons. Samson inquired, "You wish to take reading lessons ?"

"Yes, sir."

"Are you in the habit of reading aloud ?"

" Yes, sir; I have recited agreat many scenes from Corneille and Moliere."

"In public ?"

- " Yes, sir."
- " Successfully ?"
- "Yes, sir."

" Please read the fable of ' The Oak and the Reed' from this volume of La

Fontaine ?!! The scholar began : "The oak one

day said to the Reed-" "That will do! Sir, you don't know

how to read !" "Certainly not, sir; if I did, I should not come to you for advice," replied the scholar somewhat annoyed. " But I don't see how in a single line-"

" Please read it again ?"

He repeated : "The Oak one day, said to the Read-"

"I said you didn't know how to read." " But-"

"But," said Samson, calmly, " do we ever join adverbs to substantives instead of verbs? Was there ever an oak nam-

ed 'One day ?' " "No."

" Very well, then, why do you read,

The Oak one day, said to the Reed?" Say, 'The Oak, (comma) one day, said to the Reed.' "

"That is true," cried the astonished scholar.

How Men Get Ahead.

A son of Maine, who went West in early health, and has there attained wealth and honorable position returned last summer to visit his old home. At the village store he saw an old man whom he had known during his younger days. He accosted him, but was not recognized. "So you don't remember

"You!" exclaimed the old man, "you don't mean to tell me that you are John R-911

"I certainly am," said the visitor, shaking him by the hand, "and I'm very glad to see you again."

"Well," persisted the old man. "I never did. To think that this is you. They tell me you've grown awful rich,

DR. WHITTIER.

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" Mr. Meredith, let me introduce you to my cousin, Miss Violet Renshaw."

And turning quickly he was surprised at the sight of the tiny creature, so unlike her elder sisters. There was nothing magnificent and little that could be strictly termed beautiful in the almost childish figure, but something indescribably winning in the clear, gray eyes, and the rich chestnut curls that clustered about the broad, low brow.

Tom had little time for observation, however, as Ida and Adele claimed all his attention, while Harry monopolized Violet in a frank, brotherly way, quite unlike his more formal and ceremonious manner with the elder sisters.

"Well, what do you think of my three cousins?" was Harry's natural question, when he and Tom were once more in the street.

"I can only express my admiration by saying that I wish it were possible to divide myself into three separate and distinct individuals that I might offer each of the fair enslavers a hand and heart," replied Tom with much solemnity.

"What, without even waiting to discover whether their dish-towels are in proper order ?" retorted his friend.

Tom laughed.

"I have a presentiment that I shall

"You ! exclaimed Adele in such an astonished tone, that Tom could not forbear laughing.

"Yes, certainly : why not ?" he inquired.

"Oh-I don't know-only I thought you never did anything," stammered Adele; then endeavoring to seem at ease, she said hurriedly. "Yes, if you will help, please take this heavy teakettle into the kitchen, and set it on the stove."

Tom seized the kettle, and throwing open the door leading to the kitchen, was crossing the room toward the stove, when his progress was arrested by the sudden appearance of Ida from a storeroom in front.

If Adele looked slovenly and disheveled, what shall be said of Ida? An old dress dirty and torn, slippers run down at the heel and burst out at the sides, no collar or ruffle, very little hair instead of the magnificent tresses he had so often admired, and what there was hanging uncombed about her face, no wonder Tom started in blank astonishment.

A heavy frown look the place of the usual smile, as she curtly bade him good-morning. Tom muttered an apology for his intrusion as he deposited his burden on the stove, and turned to retrace his steps, just as Violet entered

AN ORIENTAL STORY.

IN THE tribe of Neggdeh there was a horse whose fame spread far and near, and a Bedouwin of another tribe, by name Dahar, desired extremely to possess it. Having offered in vain for it his camels and his whole wealth, he hit, at length, upon the following device, by which he hoped to gain the object of his desire.

He resolved to stain his face with the juice of an herb, to clothe himself in rags, to tie his legs and neck together, so as to appear like a lame beggar. Thus equipped he went to Naber, the owner of the horse, who he knew was to pass that way. When he saw Naber approaching on his beautiful steed, he cried out in a weak voice :

" I am a poor stranger ; for three days I have been unable to move from this spot to seek for food. I am dying; help me, and Heaven will reward you."

The Bedouwin kindly offered to take him up on his horse and carry him home; but the rogue replied :

"I cannot rise, I have no strength left.

Naber touched with pity dismounted, led his horse to the spot, and, with great difficulty, set the seeming beggar on his back.

But no sooner did Dahar feel himself in the saddle than he put spurs to the horse and galloped off, calling out as he did so :

"It is I Dahar! I have got the horse and I am off with it,"

Naber called after him to stop and listen. Certain of not being pursued, he turned and halted at a short distance from Naber, who was armed with a spear.

"You have taken my horse," said the

John."

John admitted that he had "saved something."

"And they say you're the President of of a railroad, and get a big salary."

Again John had to admit that rumor spoke the truth.

"I'm glad on it, John! I'm glad on it, my boy! It beats all what circumstances and cheek will do for a man."

Better than a Cow.

There is a cow-tree in Venezuela, the milk of which is very much like cow's milk or cream. They go each morning to the fores, make some deep cuts in the trees, and in less than two hours their vessels are full. They use it to drink and to mix with tapioca and maize. The tree is from forty-five to sixty feet in height, and has long alternate leaves. The Government of Venezuela sent to the Paris Exposition several bottles of this milk, which have been analyzed by prominent scientific men. It contains sugar, caseine, and other things found in cow's milk, but is richer and much and more nutritious.

A sweet scented young tulip you are, Caleb, net to know what is meant by "hugging a delusion." Hugging a delution means embracing a pretty girl who is ready to go back on you just so soon as she finds another fellow that suits her better than you do. You ought to be ashamed to confess your ignorance in this unblushing manner.

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"To sum it up, six long years of bedridden sickness, costing \$200 per year, total \$1,200-all of this expense was stopped by three bottles of Hop Bitters taken by my wife. She has done her own honsework for a year since, without the loss of a day, and I want every-body to know it, for their benefit." 14.



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