

MRS. DELISLE'S BOARDERS.

I AM more than grieved to hear of dear Aunt Laura's trouble, and surprised to hear that her husband's death involves her in poverty. You write that she is anxious to open a boarding-house, but lacks capital.—Please make arrangements for her to take immediate possession of my great, empty house on Thirty-fifth street, and tell her to fill it with boarders from cellar to attic. I should like her to keep my room ready for me in case I return, and ask her to pile in there such articles as are valuable from association—she will know what to select. I write to her by this mail, but as she is very delicate about accepting favors, I trust to you to see that she needs nothing till my return. As the house is fully furnished, she will only need fuel and provisions open it at once."

It was this paragraph and the letter mentioned as accompanying it, that put Mrs. Delisle in possession of the splendid brown-stone house, superbly furnished, that was a portion of the estate of Henry Whitney, her sister's son. He had been in Europe traveling for five years, when the news reached him of his aunt's widowhood and poverty, and he lost not a moment in stretching a helping hand, even across the wide ocean.

The old lawyer, to whom the letter quoted above was written, understood perfectly the wishes of his generous young client, and Mrs. Delisle afterward declared, obeyed orders by turning an entire coal yard into her cellar, and one grocery store at the least into her large parlors.

Being well-known, and offering such desirable accommodations, the widow had no difficulty in filling every room in the large house, at handsome prices, always reserving the one her nephew had occupied before leaving New York; and this one, it was her pride and her pleasure to keep in dainty order, while she hoped for its owner's return.

Her first application for rooms came from a wealthy widower, who wished for three rooms, for himself, daughter and niece. He gave his name as John Gregory, and his references were good.—Mrs. Delisle found he was a purse-proud, uneducated man, a petty tyrant, fault-finding and bad-tempered, but willing to pay handsomely. His only child, Isabel, was a feminine copy of her father, a superbly handsome brunette, fond of dress and display and *parvenu* to her fingers' ends.

But the niece, Sadie Gregory, a brown-haired, brown-eyed girl of nineteen, still mourning the death of both parents, was gentle and refined, and while far less beautiful than her cousin, had a winsome sweetness all her own.

Mrs. Delisle's heart opened to the girl at once. Two fair daughters of her own lay under the churchyard sod, and the spring of mother love once touched could never quite close again in such a nature as her's. Even after her house was full, and there were other women old and young to claim her attention, she always found some spare moments in every day to give to Sadie.

She knew well, though the girl herself made no complaint, how cramped her life was, with the companionship only of her pompous uncle and the cousin whose loftiest ambition was to reach perfection in becoming and costly attire.

So Sadie, after she had been with her a month, Mrs. Delisle trusted the key of the library, allowing only her the privilege of taking out the volumes. And the girl, sensitive and lonely, soon found a fascination in the volumes quite apart from the mere printed matter.

Marginal notes of power and thought, sometimes critical, sometimes carrying still further some leading idea, first attracted her, and then, in many books she discovered sheets of paper, upon which in the same bold handwriting as the notes, she found original verses, quaint paragraphs, and bold sketches.

She had already heard from Mrs. Delisle of the young owner of the house, of his generous, frank disposition, his love of literature, his large wealth, and had admired the painting in the lady's own room, of Harry Whitney at seventeen. It represented a curly-haired, blue-eyed lad, leaning against a noble horse.

"It was taken nine years ago," Mrs. Delisle said, "the winter I was married and went South. I have not seen Harry since, although he did not go abroad till his father died, four years later. He was an affectionate boy, and all the love he would probably have given his mother, had she lived, he gave to me from the time he was six years old. He writes to me very often, and his letters are as entertaining as a book of travels. You shall read some of them."

But Mrs. Delisle told Sadie nothing of her own praises of her favorite in the letters sent abroad, nor did she show her this paragraph in one:

"Among the numerous experiences of my new life, are the many speculations about the absent owner of the house.—Miss Isabel Gregory, a very overwhelm-

ing brunette, whose 'pa' is rich, is especially anxious to know all about the young millionaire, and I am sufficiently wicked to allow her to believe that her charms would prove irresistible. Do come home. I miss you sorely now that I am in your old home."

But apparently Harry Whitney found Paris more attractive than New York, for he gave no promise of speedy homecoming. Early in October, when Mrs. Delisle had been six months in possession of her nephew's house, Mr. Gregory sent for her, in mighty wrath.

"I understood," he said, loftily, "that this was a first-class boarding-house."

Mrs. Delisle merely bent her head with an air of quiet dignity.

"A first-class boarding-house," repeated Mr. Gregory, swelling visibly, "and yet Miss Isabel, my daughter, has to occupy a seat beside a man who is, I understand, a clerk, and whose clothes are but one degree above shabbiness."

"You refer to Mr. Worth?"

"I do, madam. If this is to become a home for beggarly clerks, we will leave."

"Mr. Worth is a gentleman," was the quiet reply; "his references were unexceptionable, and he is related to some of the leading people in the city.—Still, if you desire it, I will remove his seat to the other side of the table."

"I do request it, and since accidents are always to be guarded against, I also request that Mr. Worth will not consider the fact of occupying the same house in any way an introduction to our acquaintance."

"Very well, sir."

Then Mrs. Delisle left the room, and straightway proceeded to a small sitting-room, next the drawing-room, where Mr. Worth was seated, a handsome man, with a heavy brown beard, expressive eyes, playing a brilliant fantasia upon the piano, while Sadie Gregory nestled in a deep arm-chair, listened attentively.

Very gravely Mrs. Delisle repeated the insulting message, and request of the autocrat, and very gravely Mr. Worth listened.

But, Sadie, springing to her feet, crimsoned with mortification and anger and the little hand that rested on the back of the arm-chair trembled with excitement.

"It is perhaps better for me to leave you," Mr. Worth said, while from under the humbly drooped eyelashes he stole a look at the young girl beside him.

"It may be," said Mrs. Delisle, quietly, "that Mr. Gregory will be satisfied with moving your seat. But, if not, you must not think hard of me, Mr. Worth, if I make some sacrifice to keep my best-paying boarders."

"Certainly not! The little I pay for a ball room, upon the upper floor, can make no material difference in your income. Still, if it can be arranged, I should like to remain here."

He bowed gravely still as he spoke and left the room. But, Sadie, after the door closed, dropped upon her knees by the chair and broke into passionate tears.

"Sadie, dear child," Mrs. Delisle said, kindly, "what troubles you?"

It was long before the answer came, but the tears were spent at last, and the girl stood up.

"I am ashamed to bear the same name," she said, impetuously, "to be of the same blood, as that of my uncle and cousin. The bitter humiliation of hearing such insults offered a gentleman, crushes me."

"Sadie! child!"

"You think me unmaidenly to take up his cause," said the girl, quickly, "but you are wrong. It is not only because I know how immeasurably he is above my uncle in refinement and intellect; it is not because I know him to be noble and good, though he may be poor. It is not for his sake at all, but for theirs.—The narrow, purse-proud meanness that can insult any man for his poverty, disgusts me. My father was not so; he was a gentleman, if he was unfortunate enough to be John Gregory's brother, and my gentle, sweet mother was a lady."

"Sadie, do not get so excited. No one will connect your name with this trouble."

But the girl would not be comforted. Her sensitive nature was touched to the quick. It hurt her, too, that Mrs. Delisle, who had been altogether perfect to her girlish worship, could let self-interest so govern her as to carry the message that so touched her.

All the world seemed to her hard and narrow, as she went sadly to her own room. And the man who had been to her only a pleasant, congenial friend in the great house full of people, suddenly rose to the dignity of a hero, in the light of persecution.

She had been only quietly dignified and friendly with him during his six weeks' sojourn in the house, but there was a gentle kindness in her manner after that morning that told him more eloquently than words of her sympathy.

Nobody knew exactly where Mr. Worth's clerkship was located, but he

was quite frank about speaking of his duties, his small salary, and his inability to join the other young gentlemen of the house in expensive pleasure-seeking.

They all liked him, even although he was too proud to share in pleasures that he could not pay for, and in spite of his shabby wardrobe, he was rather a favorite in the drawing-room, where the boarders, as a rule, spent the evening hours.

He was a brilliant pianist, conversed well, danced gracefully, and was full of bright sympathy for all that was going on. Even Miss Isabel, in spite of her father's wrath, could not deny that Mr. Worth was one of nature's noblemen.

And Sadie—ah, sweet Sadie, found all her heart turning from the fancied hero she had created from Harry Whitney's penciled scraps, to give loyal love to this actual presence, that filled every attribute she gave to manhood in her girlish dreams.

He courted her frankly before them all, and she, in spite of her cousin's sneers, her uncle's wrath, accepted his attentions, and did not say nay to his whispered wooing. It was wonderful how often the two met in Mrs. Delisle's private sitting-room when that lady found miles of sewing to detain her, and Mr. Worth read aloud, or awakened all the music sleeping in the piano. Sometimes, conquering her shyness, Sadie sang in her sweet, clear voice, or read from her penciled scraps, carefully guarding the secret of their discovery.

And when winter was nearly gone Mr. Worth, in the same cosy sitting-room, won Sadie's promise to be his wife.

Mr. Gregory's dignity rose to sublimity at this presumption. He gave the audacious young man an audience in his own sitting-room, insisting upon the presence of his daughter, niece and Mrs. Delisle.

"It is quite useless for you to deny, young man," he said, "that you were aware of my niece's small fortune, a trifle in comparison with my daughter's expectations, but sufficient to tempt a needy fortune-hunter."

"Uncle!" Sadie exclaimed, flushing hotly.

"It will better become you to be silent," said her uncle, "while I dismiss this man."

But Sadie rose then, and quietly took her lover's arm.

"You have no legal control over me or my fortune," she said, with gentle dignity, "and Mr. Worth, when he leaves here, takes my promise to be his wife."

"Very well—very well. You will go with him then, and at once, for Mrs. Delisle may as well understand that either that young man or I must leave this place before sundown."

"You are in earnest?" asked the landlady.

"Most certainly. Either Mr. Worth or I must cease to be your boarder."

"Then, sir, though I regret to lose you, I am afraid you must suit yourself at once."

"I—I—Mrs. Delisle, are you insane?"

"Not at all. But my nephew, Mr. Henry Worth Whitney has informed me that he will prefer, after his marriage with your niece, to occupy his own house, which he so kindly lent to me."

Three pale faces of utter consternation were turned to the young man, who saw no one but Sadie. She shrank a little from him, but he only held her closer, whispering:

"Don't be angry. I so craved real love, not the worship of my wealth.—Aunt Laura made me love you, even before I saw you."

"I hope, Mr. Whitney," said Isabel, sweetly, "that you will not cherish resentment because my father's love for my cousin led him to, perhaps, unnecessary harshness."

"No—my dear fellow," said Mr. Gregory, and then choked abruptly, and was silent under the cool contempt of Mr. Whitney's eyes and his sarcastic smile.

"I think we fully understand each other, Mr. Gregory," said that young man, with chilling courtesy; "but allow me to say, that the very short notice you gave yourself in finding another boarding-house, need not be binding. You are quite welcome here until you are perfectly suited elsewhere."

But Isabel, after giving Sadie her private opinion of the contemptible fraud practiced upon them, with the clearly expressed taunt that she was probably in Mrs. Delisle's confidence from the first, lost no time in leaving the scene of her father's mortification.

There was a speedy wedding, and Mrs. Delisle, having dismissed her boarders, consented, after much coaxing, to still preside over the stately brown-stone house that had been the scene of her nephew's masquerade.

There is no harm in a glass of whisky—if you allow the whisky to remain in the glass.

An Unnatural Father.

JUST before the battle of Saratoga, Burgoyne, finding that his boats containing army supplies were not safe from the American troops, determined to land his provisions. The landing was effected under the fire of American guns. An old Scotchman, living near the place, sympathized so strongly with the American cause that he lost all affection for his son, who was in the British army. Curious to see what was going on at the place where the provisions were being landed, he, with a companion, crept up to the opposite bank and cautiously peeped over. The stream was so narrow that they could see a man in a blanket-coat loading a cart. At that moment the man turned so as to expose his face. "That's my son, Hugh," whispered the Scotchman; "but for a' that, I will gie him a shot." The unnatural father fired, but happily for his future peace of mind, without effect. The son, hearing the cocking of the gun, ran to the other side of the cart, and the ball lodged in the fellow of the wheel. The report of the gun drew the attention of the guard, who opened a fire upon the two men. The companion, in fleeing, received a ball in the shoulder. The American troops, when they heard of the unnatural incident, expressed the wish that the bullet had hit the old Scotchman in the head.

How Four Pins Preserved a Man's Reason.

IN the show window of one of the leading jewelers of Vienna is exposed to view a brooch, magnificently studded with gems, in the middle of whose elaborate chasing is inclosed the most singular of centres—four common, old, bent and corroded pins. This brooch is the property of the Countess Lavetskoly. The pins have a history, of course. Seven years ago Count Albert Lavetskoly was arrested at Warsaw for an alleged insult to the Russian Government. The real author of the insult, which consisted of some careless words spoken at a social gathering, was his wife. He accepted the accusation, however, and was sent to prison. In one of the lightless dungeons in which the Czar is so fond of confining his Polish subjects, the unfortunate martyr for his wife's loose tongue spent six years. He had only one amusement. After he had been searched and thrown into a cell he had found in his coat four pins.

These he pulled out and threw on the floor, and then in the darkness he hunted for them. Having found them, perhaps only after hours and even days, he scattered them again. And so the game went on for six weary years. "But for them," he writes in his memoirs, "I would have gone mad. They provided me with a purpose. So long as I had them to search for I had something to do. When the decree for my liberation from exile was brought to me, the jailor found me on my knees hunting for one which had escaped me for four days. They saved my wife's husband from lunacy. My wife, therefore could not desire a prouder ornament."

A Frightful Scene.

During an exhibition of some wild beasts a few days ago at the theatre of a small town in Thuringia a frightful scene occurred. A leopard was not nearly so submissive to the tamer as usual, and dashed wildly about the cage. Suddenly two of the bars gave way, and the animal sprang with a tremendous bound among the spectators in the pit. The terrified people rushed pell-mell to the door, but the beast attacked the hindmost of them furiously with teeth and claws, and in four minutes had killed a woman and a child and fearfully lacerating four other persons about the face and neck. The moment the leopard escaped from its cage the beast tamer and his assistants hurried after it, armed with spears, but were unable to overcome it until it dropped dead from its wounds. On examining the broken bars of the cage it was discovered that they had been filed. An attendant lately dismissed for drunkenness, has been arrested on suspicion of being the author of this atrocious deed.

A colored man once said in class meeting: "Bredren, when I was a boy, I took a hatchet and went into the woods. When I found a tree dat was straight, big, and solid, I didn't touch dat tree; but when I found one leaning a little and hollow inside, I soon had him down. So when the debil goes after the Christain, he don't touch dem dat stan' straight, an' true; but dem dat lean a little an' are hollow inside."

"I have become a Christain," said a gentleman to his friend.

"Good," was the reply; "and now I hope you will pay that bill you owe me."

"No," he answered; "religion is religion and business is business." Isn't there too many such christians?

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