

RURAL FELICITY.

BY H. S. KEELE.

The chickens are snapping
On the rosy-tinted fender;
The maid is in the cellar,
Where her papa he did send her
To draw a mug of cider.
To bring some golden pippins,
Some doughnuts and some ginger snaps
To fill the eve as chip-lins.

The hired man is greasing
His kipskins with the tallow,
The wife he sneers some taffy
O'er the butter-maker callow;
The little boy is pinching
Poor pussy's tail in anger;
The granddame she is trying
To thread a needle frantic.

The horses they are rubbing
Their noses 'gainst the manger;
The cock is softly cautioning
His wives against the stranger;
The shadows on the hillside
Are turning into black;
The young folk they are hurrying
From candy frolic back.

The watchdog he is barking
At the moon about the stable;
The tramp is softly drawing
The lock out of the staple;
The water wheel is silent,
The pig lies fast asleep;
A most convenient nodus
Operandi in cold weather.

PEGGY'S DOUBLE.

BY MATTIE GORDON.

There's no use talking, Rose; I can work all day long and live on such snails! Black, muddy coffee, heavy is that I would defy the strongest mach to digest, and such cooked 's—Je-whit-taker! I can't abide it!" And, after kicking the dog several es, and venting his anger on the r, inoffensive cat by giving her a over-gentle rap with his cane, he nmed the street door after him, ring the astonished Rose to digest tirade at her leisure.

What should she do? She had never ned to do any cooking in her life, this was the consequence. The jeymoon had scarcely expired, and e she stood with great tears rolling n her cheeks, the beauty of her mplexion destroyed by her vain enor to prepare a dainty meal, and, at, of all, the first harsh words that passed her husband's lips since r marriage, had been uttered, while left her in anger. She sank upon sofa and cried aloud.

When the floodgates of grief had sed, she arose, and, bathing her obbing temples and swollen eyelids, i in the act of performing the daily tie of household duties, when a id peal at the door-bell caused her rop her dish-towel and wonder who caller might be.

A pale face and slight figure met her e, neatly, though plainly, clad in a ss of gray serge, set off by a dainty he of white at the throat and wrists, le a knot of cherry-colored ribbon rned the former; a spotless white on completed the attire.

"Please, ma'am," came almost apolo- ically, "Mr. Caruthers sent me here rial, saying as how you wanted o a girl to do general work for you. pe I will suit you, but I understand kinds of work, but I've never hired before, my lady."

"Come in!" Rose said, a glad expres- looking out from her dark, blue s, "and we shall soon be able to de that point beyond a doubt. Can cook?"

"Yes! My mother has been cook gentleman's family for years, and says that I am very passable."

"That is good. When can you comce work—let me see, what is your ce?"

"Peggy, ma'am!"

"When can you come, Peggy?"

"I will begin now, my lady, if you n."

"Very well, then," said Rose, noting uringly the modest droop of the eye- over the meek gray eyes, "you may sh washing the dishes and tidy up room."

When the master of the house came inner he was met at the hall door radiant and forgiving face, while air of soft arms wound about his s, and a pair of rosy lips pressed to reminded him of former days of

How does your servant suit, dear?" the question, as they proceeded to dining room arm-in-arm.

Oh, she is altogether too perfect for thing!" was the extravagant answer. ggy is just an ideal of laundress, woman, and, Oh, you must taste cooking, Henry."

"Very well! I am glad that you have d such a prize, Pet," he said ly.

And the dinner was certainly a ess—fit food for a dyspeptic. ly, juicy and tender; potatoes, ly, and not over-done; light biscuit h caused Henry Caruthers' impair- ppetite to blossom forth with red vigor; the cottage pudding was ly delicious, while the pie-crust d not be excelled for flakiness. sprits rose with his appetite, his ty laugh ringing out loud and r, until Rose was disagreeably surd when the half hour had expired, ring it might continue forever. The kfast was simple in its construc- causing home to appear like a far- ed elysium to Henry Caruther, ere imprinting the parting kiss, aid to his wife:

"One week from to-night, love, there e a grand hop at Mrs. Trueman's; is the card of invitation which I e- id to-day. We must certainly cal- e to go."

As the evening arrived, and great was e's anticipation for the coming t, Henry entered his wife's room e before the time, and throwing all package upon her dressing- e, remarked, carelessly:

"Here is a slight token, Rose, dear; e them to-night to please me."

He curiously undid the fastening, h revealed to her delighted eyes most magnificent sight that ever magination had pictured. Lying e bed of pink perfumed cotton was e of real diamonds; eardrops and e which sparkled and resparkled their lustrous, dazzling beauty e the eyes of Rose, until she could ain herself no longer, but caught impulsively to her lips, and press- es upon kiss on their shining sur- ery lovely she looked as she en- d the illumined parlors of her sho- leaning upon the arm of her proud, gient husband.

It was late that night when the ball broke up, and Rose Caruthers, tired and weary, unfastening her shining jewels and tossing them carelessly upon her dressing-table, hurriedly disrobed.

The sun was shining brightly in at the dormer window when she awoke the next morning, and the breakfast-bell was ringing for the second time. She found Henry awaiting her arrival with a little frown disfiguring his handsome face, as the rolls and coffee had been served and were cooling upon the table.

"I did not know but you were still dreaming of your diamonds," he said, a little jealously.

"Oh, no, indeed; you do me injustice, Henry. I declare to you that they have not, even for one moment, entered my thoughts since I unfastened them last night after the ball. I am not quite so vain, I hope," she said, with a pout of her red lips.

"Well, never mind, Puss," he rejoined, as he kissed away the pretty pout. "Come now, we will break our fast, and after that I will remove your new jewels to the bank, as I am on my way to the office, and lock them up in the casket with the others, for they are the pure stuff—warranted."

As soon as they had finished their repast, Rose ran gayly up to her room, keeping time with her dainty slippers to the waltz she was humming as she went, and bursting in ran straight to her dressing-table confidently, to grasp the precious diamonds. The next moment her face assumed a blank, puzzled expression, as she stood riveted to the spot.

The diamonds were not there. She placed her hand to her forehead in a dazed manner, striving to recall some other place in which she might have secreted them.

But, in vain. She felt as sure of casting them upon her table as that she was awake when doing so.

Had burglars entered her chamber? Impossible! The windows were all fastened securely, and the doors all locked.

She stepped to the landing, and in a faint voice called "Henry."

He ran wondering to her, noting with anxiety her white face.

"Why, Rose, have you seen a ghost?" he queried, assuming a playful tone.

When told what had occurred, he gave a prolonged whistle, while his first suspicion startled while it angered her.

Peggy! Such an idea! That honest countenance allow her hands to commit a theft? Never. The thought alone seemed wholly preposterous to her mind.

"No, Henry, she never did it! I could swear that Peggy is innocent," Rose said, with positive assurance.

"Nevertheless I shall call her, and allow her the privilege of protesting her ignorance of the affair," he said, suiting the action to the word.

But, no; he felt that Rose must be right in vindicating Peggy's cause, when he beheld the clear, honest gray eyes unflinchingly deny the unjust accusation, while the lips unfalteringly proclaimed her entire innocence.

"Strange! strange! strange!" was his only comment, as he left the room.

Later in the day, as Rose sat pondering on the strange disappearance of her diamonds (she thought of little else now), a slight circumstance occurred to her, which had taken place just after her husband had left the room the night of the ball.

After kissing them several times, she had looked around, ashamed of her folly, when a pair of keen gray eyes, with an expression of gloating admiration in their depths, were fascinatingly fixed upon her treasures, through the door, slightly ajar.

She remembered now the start of confusion evinced, undoubtedly occasioned by her (Rose's) sudden change of position.

And yet was it not very natural for Peggy, in passing the slightly open door, to peep in, and, having done so, pause to admire the dazzling brilliance which must have caught her eye?

She refrained from relating the incident to Henry, for fear of rekindling the slumbering suspicion.

Days flew into weeks and weeks into months, bringing no clew to the missing diamonds; but, strange to relate, many small articles of lesser value were found missing, and all remained enveloped in a mystery unfathomable.

One evening, after dusk, as Henry Caruthers was returning from his office, he saw the rays of a bright light streaming from the one little window in the unfurnished and unoccupied attic chamber, just over the kitchen.

Somewhat puzzled, he ascended the steps leading from the street to the front door, and was in the act of crossing the hall to seek Rose, when his attention was drawn to the back staircase by the closing of a door near the attic, and soon after Peggy descended the back staircase, and hurriedly passed through the rear door, bearing a huge bundle with her.

"Has Rose discharged her?" he asked himself.

But upon questioning Rose no information was gained as she knew absolutely nothing about it.

"Peggy has been in the dining-room for a half hour certain," she told him.

"And I have just come from there, Henry, instructing her a little in the art of economy. She must have flown, to have been in the attic when you came."

"Run, Rose, and ascertain if she is in the house now," he said, impatiently.

She did go, returning in a second, her countenance as puzzled now as his had been a moment before.

"She says that she has not been from the dining-room since I left her," Rose said, in an awed tone.

As before, the only word that Henry Caruthers could utter was: "Strange, strange, strange!" And the mystery deepened.

Upon leaving his office one noon to go to dinner, he was startled at beholding a figure crossing the bridge and coming toward him, strangely familiar.

"How are you Peggy? Are you leaving for good?" he asked, as he noted the good-sized bundle in her hand, inclosed in a large yellow bandana.

But she hurriedly drew her veil down over her face, and passed him without vouchsafing him even a nod of recognition.

"By George! gone off in a huff," he ejaculated, gazing back at the now dis-

tant Peggy. "I wonder what she has been doing now, to arouse my lady's displeasure?" he mentally added.

But, what did it mean? Surely that was Peggy crossing the hall from the kitchen to the dining-room.

"I shall investigate this matter ere the setting of to-morrow's sun," he determined, as he silently entered and took a seat at the table.

In consequence, toward evening of the same day, Henry Caruthers was privately closeted with a proficient detective, to whom he explained as explicitly as possible the facts in the case.

The next day, as Rose was engaged with some fine needle work in the little sitting-room, she was certain that she heard some one sobbing, and other sounds of distress from an adjoining bedroom. She hastily opened the door communicating, and saw Peggy in great distress, sitting upon the side of the bed, which she had begun to make up.

"Why, Peggy, you poor child! What is the matter?" exclaimed the warm-hearted Rose, placing her hand upon the girl's bowed head.

"I can't tell you, ma'am! You would despise me. I can't tell any one, leastwise you who have been so kind to me."

But, where are you going? she asked, observing Peggy donning her cloak and hat.

"I have to go down town, my lady. I am sent for."

And Rose, on glancing through the half-open door, saw for the first time a man standing in the hall, dressed in a blue detective suit.

In a few words he explained to her his painful duty; that of arresting Peggy for theft. He had come to conduct her to the station house.

The evening before he had tracked her from the house where she was employed, away beyond the city limits, and had there lost trace of her. That morning she had stolen in at the back entrance to the Caruthers domain very early, ere the family were astir, minus the bundle which she had borne away with her.

Peggy, amidst expostulations and entreaties, was searched, all to no purpose. When questioned as to how she came by the bundle so frequently seen with her, and as to their contents, she maintained a confused silence, while her eyelids drooped guiltily.

"Peggy," and Henry Caruthers' tone was stern and commanding, "the sooner you explain this matter the better it will be for you. Are you guilty or innocent of the crime?"

Peggy hung her head for a few minutes thoughtfully, then expressed her willingness to confess all that she knew of the affair. Her story is as follows:

"My home is five miles away from here, to the east. My family consists of a father and twin sisters, besides myself. My father, sir, is an inebriate, spending all our earnings in liquor; he is very quarrelsome, and never thinks of doing one stroke of work, so that, sometimes, my sister and myself find it difficult to make both ends meet."

"My twin sister, sir, is the very counterpart of myself in appearance, but she is deaf and dumb. I am very sorry, sir, but I could not resist the temptation of taking the things, although I knew it was stealing. I began to think that you were so well off that perhaps you might never find out what became of them and that the crime would not be as bad as when taken from a poorer person."

"Where is your sister, Peggy?"

"In your house, sir, in the attic chamber, she is waiting for me."

A bright light dawned on the mind of Henry Caruthers. This, then, accounted for the light he had seen there, and cleared, in his mind, the remainder of the mystery.

"I will fetch her," he said, and left.

He soon returned, leading Polly by the hand.

Polly wrote rapidly the answers to the questions put to her, and her story coincided in every way with the one Peggy had told, but when questioned as to the manner in which she had committed the theft, Peggy sprang forward excitedly, while she exclaimed, with flashing eyes:

"She never did that! I it was who stole the things, when you were absent from the room, and wrapped them up for her. She merely received the bundle from my hands in the attic chamber, and carried them home. They are all there, now, unharmed. Oh, sir, do not blame Polly," And Peggy wrung her hands entreatingly.

"My poor girl," Henry Caruthers exclaimed huskily, while his eyes looked moist. "You both have been more sinned against than sinning. I will send some one to recover the articles, and will make this proposition to you: Peggy, I will take you back again into my employ, and give your mute sister a home on one condition, and that is, that you swear here before a witness that you will never repeat the crime, but always strive to be honest."

Peggy was too much astonished for a time to answer. That any one should trust her after her acknowledged theft never occurred to her. She sprang forward impulsively, and grasping her benefactor's hand before he could restrain her, she covered it with her tears and kisses.

"To provide for my sister was all that tempted me!" she exclaimed, brokenly. "Oh, sir, I thank you more than I can tell you."

And Henry Caruthers never regretted the adoption of Peggy's double.

She Was No Dead-head.

"Ma! I've made up my mind to marry Mr. Glibtongue, and I shall rely on you to win pa's consent."

"Indeed, miss, and what reason have you to believe me equal to this reluctance?"

"Well, ma, you see Glibtongue is the new coroner for our district, and as pa's political aspirations are all dead, I can insure them a very quiet interment in his honor."

"I presume I'll have to humor you, my dear."

"That's a dear mamma! and, besides, you always said I had such killing ways, and it may be that a coroner in the family won't prove such a deadhead to us after all."—*Yonkers Gazette.*

The Use and Abuse of Fun.

What should we be without this gift to brighten our existence on our earthly pilgrimage? A love of fun is most often accompanied by a cheerful and lively disposition. We can imagine no drearier state than that of an individual who, during the whole of his lifetime, can obtain no fun or pleasure in the slightest degree, in his daily intercourse with his fellow-creatures. But it is a well-known fact that even of the best of things one can have too much. Even fun has its limit, and a more wearisome thing can scarcely be imagined than an individual who, at the most inappropriate time, cannot refrain from turning the most commonplace of conversation into fun and ridicule. This is certainly a great failing; but of course there is a graver aspect under which it can be regarded, namely, the love of ill-natured fun. A laugh raised at the expense of a well-meaning person is highly injudicious, and in many cases rarely forgotten. The turning into ridicule of another person's words and ideas in a most uncharitable and hurtful habit, when long forgotten by the speaker, rankles in the mind of the victim. There is nothing more disagreeable to a very sensitive nature than the fear of being made fun of or turned into ridicule, and the very slightest inclination toward this unchristianlike habit will cause the victim of it such pain and shrinking a less sensitive mind would scarce deem possible. We should be especially careful of these sensitive ones, the more so as one can never tell the harm a careless word leveled in mere jest may do. It rankles in the mind of the sensitive one, and gives a pernicious precedent to the hearers, which happily is not general, and brings its own punishment; for those few who find real pleasure in giving pain to others by ill-natured and personal fun are rarely well spoken of, even by those who profess to see no harm in it. A sarcastic person may have many admirers, but no real friends, as, directly personal intercourse with them ceases, and when one's back is turned, then one trembles for one's own character. But this is a spiteful and uncharitable fun, only resorted to by those who, disgusted with and weary of the world, can find consolation only in the endeavor to convert others to their opinion.

There is one more abuse of fun which is necessary only just to touch upon, and which, while the love of pure and holy things exist, can never become a habit—I mean the danger that one has to guard against of speaking in fun of sacred and holy things, or in any way bringing them into ridicule. It may be that, to a really witty person, the inclination to this irreverent practice has to be more carefully guarded against than to those whose sense of wit is less keen. If a witty speech or joke is on our lips which would turn into the slightest fun or ridicule things which are necessary to the life of the soul, and which, while the love of pure and holy things exist, can never become a habit—I mean the danger that one has to guard against of speaking in fun of sacred and holy things, or in any way bringing them into ridicule. 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