

NIECE AS WELL AS DAUGHTER.

A Too Happy Father Reminds an Uncle that He Too May Smile.

Mr. J. S. Brown was in gloomy frame of mind. Mr. J. F. Brown, on the contrary, was as smiling and chipper as spring morning. Mr. J. S. Brown crooned moodily over the ledgers and complained of the pale ink and rust pens, while Mr. J. F. Brown smiled and smirked and hummed a gentle lullaby over the pages of figures before him.

"Humph!" grunted Mr. J. S. Brown bitterly.

"Ha, ha, ha," softly laughed Mr. J. F. Brown.

"Brown," said Mr. J. S. Brown, lifting himself up from his desk and turning around on his stool; "Brown, I feel called upon to reproach you for the frivolity you have exhibited during the past week. You have neglected your work—you have arrived here late every morning and left here early every afternoon—your business has been done in a loose and incompetent manner, and as a natural result our mutual interests are suffering."

Mr. J. F. Brown looked grieved. Never before had he been addressed in terms of reproach by Mr. J. S. Brown.

"But Brown," expostulated Mr. J. F. Brown, "you seem to forget that—"

"I forget nothing," interrupted Mr. J. S. Brown; "I am perfectly well aware that you have a new baby-daughter up at your house. How could I forget it, when I am reminded of the fact every fifteen or twenty minutes. A daughter, Brown, is good enough and has, I admit, certain advantages in her way, but I submit, Brown, that a daughter is no excuse for the excessive levity and coltishness of which you have been guilty for the past week."

"I—I—I don't understand," stammered Mr. J. F. Brown, blushing deeply.

"I will be more explicit—I will explain," continued Mr. J. S. Brown, still maintaining an air and tone of frigid austerity: "Since the birth of your daughter you have been worldly in your manner and conversation. Have I not heard you, every hour of the day since that event, whistling to yourself certain lullabies and tunes supposed to have been invented purely for the cradle and the nursery? Need I remind you that frequently, when you should have been making out invoices of canned tomatoes and pickled codfish, I have found you dreamily humming a frivolous song entitled 'Peek-a-boo to yourself?'"

"Ah, my dear Brown," sighed Mr. J. F. Brown, sadly, "you do not appreciate how sweet a boon one's daughter is to one."

"There you go again!" exclaimed Mr. J. S. Brown. "There you go again with your maudlin sentiment. Your daughter, indeed! Well—I—I—well—oh, bah!"

And Mr. J. S. Brown nearly choked with chagrin and disgust, while Mr. J. F. Brown sat mutely by and nervously bit his finger-nails, and vainly tried to keep the tears from brimming over his eyelids.

"You seem to forget, Brown," said Mr. J. F. Brown finally, very tremulously and very tenderly, "you seem to forget that while she is my daughter, she is your niece."

Mr. J. S. Brown started as if he had been toying with the business end of an electric battery. A new and bright idea seemed to have dived upon him. His lower jaw fell, his eyes opened to their widest capacity, and a look of combined astonishment and pleasure crept over his face.

"Brown," murmured Mr. J. S. Brown, faintly and unsteadily, "say it again and say it slow."

"You seem to forget," repeated Mr. J. F. Brown, "that while she is my daughter she is at the same time your niece."

"Well, I snum!" exclaimed Mr. J. S. Brown, "I never thought of that!"

"It is, nevertheless, an incontrovertible fact," solemnly added Mr. J. F. Brown.

"So it is, Brown, so it is!" cried Mr. J. S. Brown; "and I am indeed an uncle! Ha, ha, ha—an uncle—woopee! We'll close up the store—the clerks shall have a holiday—and, Brown, come closer to me, we'll have a lemonade and cigars all around till we can't rest! Your daughter, my niece—Brown, old fellow, I congratulate you!"—*Denver Tribune.*

"You're not going to ask me \$17 for that bonnet?" "Indeed," replied the milliner, "I don't make a dollar on it when I throw it away at that price." "Merciful saints," ejaculated the customer, "I can get one half so large for \$20 just down here at Fussandfeathers."

Montana Marble.

In the fall of 1877, Charles Bourassa and others, while hunting horses at the Sweet Grass hills, came upon a ledge of white marble fifty or sixty feet thick, seemingly of excellent quality. An old hunter stated to Mr. Dutro that he had brought away pieces and polished them. The Indians had often spoken of the white stone in that locality and also of a peculiar cave. Mr. Bourassa visited the cave but did not explore it. The marble has black and yellow veins through it. Marble of fine quality is found in the Rocky Mountains—the Egyptian marble found near Helena—but by some con- vulsion of nature pieces weighing more than ten pounds cannot be found.

Mermaids.

Of course there are mermaids. The man who gets up and asserts to the contrary is mad because he never saw one himself. Mermaids do not live in mill-ponds, rivers or lakes, but make their homes in the green sea. Several attempts have been made to induce a band of them to set up housekeeping in Lake Erie, but the waters are too fresh and lake Captains swear too much.

Those who have seen 300 or 400 mermaids agree in pronouncing them all that the most fastidious could desire. They have sparkling eyes, Grecian noses, small ears, delicate hands, white teeth, dimpled chin and swan-like throats, and the way they smile at an old widower is enough to melt the iron nails in the heels of his boots.

The genuine mermaid is half fish, half woman, and there is no more beautiful sight in the world than to stand on the ocean beach at sunrise on a summer morning and watch a dozen of these creatures disporting in the flashing element. At one moment they dive down and secure handfuls of pearls to toss in the air; at another they fan each other with pieces of coral worth \$600 per pound. Their sweet voices blend deliciously as they strike up their morning song, and their ringing laughter sounds to the man on the sands like the steady fall of silver dollars upon a golden bell. Now they swim seawards until almost lost sight of—now they are so close on the shore that it can be plainly made out that every one of them is far better looking than the Circassian beauty of a traveling show.

While the life of a mermaid is full of pearls and corals and diamonds and grottoes and parties, we would not advise any young lady to make the change without proper reflection. In the first place, a young lady who is used to dry land would feel awfully damp for several weeks after becoming a mermaid. Then she would have to change her diet, costume, style of piano playing and singing, and she would probably miss the young man who calls every Sunday evening. So far as can be learned from Paul Du Chaillu, Eli Perkins and New Bedford whaling captains, mermaids never marry. Once in a while an old widower of a sea horse comes spooning around after a second wife, but he gets his walking papers with promptness and dispatch.

It seems horrible to think of a beautiful girl living single forever—for mermaids do not die—but nature's ways are ways of wisdom and everything is for the best. It was probably the intention to furnish them husbands from the sailors who fell overboard, but it seems that such sailors drown before the date of the wedding is fixed, and the mermaid is therefore doomed to warm her cold feet on a flat-iron and do her own marketing.—*Detroit Free Press.*

Lieut. Bell, of the Seventh Cavalry, was detailed from Fort Buford to pursue a band of Canadian Indians, reported to be killing and stealing cattle on this side the line. He came up with them on White Earth creek. They were all half-breeds, numbering eleven men, besides women and children, were well outfitted with ponies, wagons and tents, and had a quantity of stolen meat with them. They were sent across the line minus most of their equipments.

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