



# A FAMILY STORY

## MRS. LATON'S TEA.



ENSCONCED in the depths of her big armchair, a smile lighting up her face that her white hair framed with a crown of snow, Mrs. Harmon was considering her nephew Andrew, a fine-looking young fellow of twenty-eight, who, for his part, was considering the timepiece on the mantle, whose hands were already well past 3 o'clock.

"Well, Andrew, do you find my clock very interesting?"

In some confusion the young man stammered an excuse, but she went on: "Now, don't deny it, you naughty fellow. You want to know if your visit had lasted long enough for you to take your departure decently."

"Not at all, aunt. Your guess is quite wrong, for I haven't the slightest intention of going yet. But why do you keep a regular sun-dial like that in your drawing-room?"

"Perhaps because I was born so long ago that it is I and not the clock that is behind time. But come—independently of your drawing-room, tell me what you are going to do when you leave here."

"In the first place I am not going to leave here for some time, but, as I have wearied you with my presence until you cannot stand it any longer, it will be time for me to go to Mrs. Laton's tea."

"Mrs. Laton—Pauline Laton?"

"The same."

"Ah, yes, I used to see her some time ago. She is a widow. I remember her vaguely—a large woman, dark—"

"She is a blonde, aunt."

"Indeed? She used to be a brunette. And so you are sighing at the feet of Mrs. Laton?"

"We are all sighing at her feet."

"She must enjoy it."

"Well, I rather think she does."

"Is it fun?"

"Yes, after a fashion. We are always the same little circle of friends, and then, besides Mrs. Laton, there's a sister, a rather good-looking girl, and a few other young matrons and bachelor girls."

"And what do you do besides look at these women?"

"We take tea, we gossip and we flirt."

"Oh, oh!"

"But, my dear aunt, one must do something between 5 o'clock and dinner."

"Evidently, and flirting is what you have found to do."

"It is a way to kill time."

"I scarcely know what you mean by the term. Explain it to me."

"Oh, impossible. A definition for the world has long been sought, but it has not yet been found. But, given a young woman teetering with a young man who is not a fool, and I warrant you it won't be long before you will have a practical demonstration. Flirting is a manner of being discreetly indiscreet. To know how to flirt is no common accomplishment. It is a veritable science."

"And is love a science, too?"

"No, it is rather an art."

"And marriage—what is it?"

"Oh, that is philosophy."

"Indeed?—at what age does one attain this philosophy?"

"As late as possible."

"It seems to me that at twenty-eight—"

"Aunt, aunt!" cried Andrew, springing from his chair, "confess that you are concealing some terrible plot. You look as guilty as a conspirator."

Mrs. Harmon smiled a fine smile and enjoyed for a moment the consternation in her victim's face. Then she answered, after a pause:

"Yes, you are right. I wish to get you married."

"In heaven's name, what have I done to you?" gasped the young man, with a comical seriousness; and as the old lady still smiled, he continued: "See here, aunt, I should never have suspected you of such a thing. You, a woman of intelligence, a superior woman, descending to the role of matchmaker! It is a terrible shattering of my ideals."

"Come, come, my poor boy, do not be so cast down. The girl is charming, I assure you."

"Of course," Andrew burst out, "the girl is always charming. Oh, I know her; I can see her now; she may not be exactly pretty, but, as you have said, she is charming. She dresses admirably, and makes all her own gowns. She stood at the head of her classes in school, and attends lectures now. Moreover, she has taken cooking lessons and can put up preserves. She plays the piano, she sings, she paints, and she has a tidy fortune in her own right. Bah! No, a thousand times no! I do not want this miracle of perfection. I know a thing or two, aunt, even if I don't look it, and if I marry, I shall marry a woman who suits me, simply for the sole and unique reason that she does suit me. But I know girls—they are all alike, and I know what they are and what they are worth. There isn't

nowadays who care to look for a girl who pleases them. Marriage for them is a matter of business, nothing more, and the woman herself does not count. They marry when they have lost their money, and when the little heart they possessed has been frittered away on some Mrs. Laton or another."

Again Mrs. Harmon arose, and, pretending she had an order to give, excused herself, and hastened to her nephew.

"Well, aunt, she has given us a nice dressing down, eh? For a 'charming' girl, I would back her against the world."

"Hurry, Andrew; it is late, and you have almost missed your tea."

"My tea?" he repeated. "Bother my tea? Is there nothing else in the world but my tea? No, you must find an excuse to bring me into the room, and I'll show that young shrew whether all men are fools. Oh, she need have no fear, I shall try to marry her, for I still have all my hair, a little money and a heart still intact."

Mrs. Harmon could not restrain a smile at the young man's vexation, and five minutes later Andrew entered the drawing room.

But, contrary to all expectations, the conversation did not become a war of words; on the contrary, the girl's fresh gayety disarmed Andrew's anger at once. His preconceptions fled before her dimpled smiles and her gentle voice, and he soon fell under her charm, forgetting his anger in his admiration for her graceful movements, the penetrating timbre of her voice, the sparkle of her wit:

The hour for the tea had long passed, and Andrew was still there. He had lost all desire to run after Mrs. Laton, that faded doll whom Rosamond—as he was forced to admit to himself—had portrayed so truthfully.

And ensconced once more in the depths of her arm-chair, Mrs. Harmon smiled a kindly smile, and silently regarded the young people, who, for their part, looked at one another with looks that did not deceive and in which the old aunt read with joy the hope of a happy union.—From the French, in Argonaut.

### The First Money.

It is difficult to realize that prior to B. C. 700 there were no true coins, that ingots or buttons of gold and silver were weighed at every mercantile transaction. The Lydians of Asia Minor are credited with having been the first to cast and stamp with an official device small oval gold ingots of definite fixed weight, an invention strangely delayed, but of inestimable importance to industry and commerce. A coin has been described as "a piece of metal of fixed weight, stamped by authority of government, and employed as a medium of exchange." Medals, though struck by authority, are only historical records and have no currency value.

The bright, far-flashing intellect of Greece saw the import of the Lydian invention and adopted it quickly, and every Greek State, nearly every city, island and colony, established a mint, generally at some one of the great temples, for all early coin types are religious in character. They bear symbols of some god as a pledge of good faith. The offerings, tithes and rents of the worshippers were coined and circulated as money. Temples thus became both mints and banks. Our word "money" is said to have been derived from the Roman shrine of Juno "Moneta" the earliest Latin mint.

The first shape of these early coins was that of an enlarged coffeeberry, punched on the rounded side, with official letters, or sinkings, as they are called.—Good Words.

### City Nicknames.

Washington—The City of Magnificent Distances.  
 Pittsburg—The Iron City.  
 New Haven—The City of Elms.  
 Cincinnati—Porkopolis. (This name has sometimes been applied to Chicago.)  
 Ancient Rome—The Mistress of the World.  
 Aberdeen—Granite City.  
 Indianapolis—The Railroad City.  
 Raleigh, N. C.—The City of Oaks.  
 Chicago—The Garden City.  
 London—The Modern Babylon.  
 Baltimore—The Monumental City.  
 St. Louis—The Mound City.  
 Boston—Hub of the Universe.  
 Brooklyn—The City of Churches.  
 Brussels—Little Paris. (The name is sometimes applied to Milan.)  
 New York—Gotham.  
 Detroit is known as the City of the Straits; Boston, the City of Notions, the Puritan City, the City of Culture, the Modern Athens and the Hub of the Universe; Philadelphia as the City of Brotherly Love and the Quaker City; New Orleans as the Crescent City; Cleveland and Portland as the Forest Cities; Springfield, Ill., as the Flower City; Rochester as the Flour City; Hannibal as the Bluff City; Buffalo as the Queen City of the Lakes; Pittsburg as the Smoky City; Keokuk as the Gate City; Cincinnati as the Queen City of the West; Nashville as the City of the Rocks, and Louisville as Fall City.—Boston Journal.

### To Clean Soiled Books.

Ink stains may be removed from a book by applying with a camel's hair pencil a small quantity of oxalic acid, diluted with water, and then using blotting paper. Two applications will remove all traces of the ink. To remove grease spots, lay powdered pipe-clay each side of the spot and press with an iron as hot as the paper will bear without scorching. Sometimes grease spots may be removed from paper or cloth by laying a piece of blotting paper on them and then pressing the blotting paper with a hot iron. The heat melts the grease and the blotting paper absorbs it.—The Writer.

### CURIOUS FACTS.

The Bank of England contains ingots of silver which have lain in its vaults for 200 years.

In every school in Paris there is a restaurant where free meals are served to the children who are too poor to pay for them.

A well seasoned old colored woman is Mary Marks, who resides in Brenham, Texas. She was born in the West Indies in 1776, and is therefore 120 years of age.

Paper coffins are the latest novelty in mortuary furniture. They are pressed into shape from a mass of pulp, and, when stained and varnished, look just like wood.

In Deerfield Township, Kansas, a swarm of bees settled on the neck of a horse belonging to D. L. Palmer. Afterward Mr. Palmer picked 300 or 400 stings from the animal.

A willow tree in front of Mr. Barker's house in East Sullivan, N. H., spreads ninety feet and is sixty-five feet high, and its circumference one foot above the ground is sixteen feet.

The sense of smell is keen with cats, even when they are asleep. A piece of meat placed before the nose of a sleeping cat causes the nostrils to dilate, and in a few moments the animal awakes.

The largest bell in France has been hung in the belfry of the Church of the Sacred Heart, in Paris. It weighs twenty-eight tons, can be heard a distance of twenty-five miles and its vibrations last six minutes.

A useful charity called the London Spectacle Mission provides spectacles for poor needlewomen and other deserving persons dependent on their eyesight for a living. Last year 729 applicants were provided with spectacles.

A two-year-old child of the Rev. Arch. Lucas, who preaches in the Kentucky mountains, near Lucasville, has never used his fingers, but does everything with his toes. The toes are as flexible as the fingers of the ordinary child, and about as useful.

Orringville, Ky., feels itself entitled to claim the weather record for the year, inasmuch as a lemon in a drug store sprouted under the heat, shoots springing from eight of the seeds. One of the sprouts protruded through the skin and led to the discovery.

That a candle made from human fat bestows invisibility upon the one who carries the light is a Russian superstition of which two thieves took advantage recently. They killed a handsome boy of eighteen, whose body, with the fatty layers surrounding the kidneys extracted, was discovered.

A Portland (Oregon) man has been exhibiting some rabbits of a peculiar breed. Their ears are described as more than a foot long and covered with unusually long hair. He got them to turn loose for breeding in the thick Nebalem forests and thinks there is no danger of their becoming pests, as English rabbits sometimes do.

### A Musical Mountain.

In the mining district of Truckee, Nev., is the only musical mountain in the United States. It was located by a party of prospectors in 1864.

The quest for gold had led these explorers to the foot of the mountain, where they pitched their tents, and for some time had cause to believe themselves in a wilderness of sound, if not of gold. Each evening, a little after dusk, when all was still, there proceeded from the big mountain soft, mysterious strains, like the tinkling of tiny, silver bells, that seemed to make the whole atmosphere quiver as they floated over the camp, and were wafted far away until lost in the distance, only to be followed by a fresh gust of sweet tones.

As the magic music was only heard under cover of the night, it was concluded that it must proceed from some other source than the wind, and certain of the campers, finding it more interesting than prospecting, gave most of their time to investigating the mystery. Meanwhile several camping parties appeared, and among them a company of Piute Indians. The latter seemed familiar with the musical wonder and called it the "singing mountain."

It was at length ascertained by the searchers that the face of the mountain was covered with thin flakes of hard, crystalline rock. There were immense beds of these flakes, and it became apparent that the mystic music was produced by the uniting and blending of the myriads of bell-like tinklings caused by the huge drifts of stony debris that continually glide, glacier-like, down the steep slope. That it was heard after dark was unquestionably owing to the peaceful quiet of the hour.

Notwithstanding this rational solution of the mystery, the Indians, and indeed many of the white campers, continued to believe that the magic concord of sweet sounds proceeded from some supernatural power within the mountain.—New York Journal.

### POPULAR SCIENCE.

The Red Sea is so called because its surface is frequently covered with minute crimson animalcules.

Quito, Ecuador, is the only city in the world in which the sun rises and sets at six o'clock the year round. The reason of this is that it is situated exactly on the equator.

Dr. Schott, the German hydrographer, says that there are not less than twenty thousand tons of mineral matter per day added to the store which the ocean already holds in solution.

We may accept 92,700,000 miles as the length of the earth's mean orbital radius, according to the results of observations made by Professor Harkness and Dr. Gill. Professor Young gives it as 92,975,500 miles.

A London restaurant uses an electrically heated plate to keep one's food warm. So long as the current is turned on, one can dine in as leisurely a way as he likes. There is no danger of receiving a shock from touching the plate.

M. Chuard suggests the use of the poisonous acetylene as an insecticide. He proposes to mix the carbide with earth so that, under the influence of moisture, acetylene would be slowly given off at the roots of plants, thus preserving them from attack. At the same time the by-products would have a beneficial effect on the soil. M. Chuard's scheme seems rather chimerical.

M. Aime Girard, of Fausanderie, France, has communicated another memoir to the Academie des Sciences, Paris, on his experiments with potatoes as storage for cattle, from which it appears that the tubers are a first-rate food, whether from the point of view of fattening or the yield of milk and butter. Sheep and oxen thrive much better on potatoes and hay than on their ordinary food, and their flesh was found to be superior in quality.

It has frequently been asserted that the brilliant colors of many flowers serve to attract bees and butterflies to them. Experiments recently reported to the Belgian Academy of Sciences seem to show that the perfume rather than color of the flowers is the real attraction. Bright-colored blossoms were covered with leaves and papers pinned closely about them; yet the insects not only visited the hidden flowers, but endeavored to force their way under the papers in order to reach the blossoms which they could not see.

### Will Not Haze This West Pointer.

Speaking of the recent "hazing" outbreak at the United States Military Academy, West Point, in which several plebes or members of the entering class were rather roughly used, one of the prominent members of the Southern Athletic Club said the other day:

"Well, you can just bet any of your spare coin that those 'hazers' will not tackle one little plebe; that is if they know when they are well off. You know who I mean; Cadet John P. Sullivan. Will they haze him? I don't think."

And the sportive clubman smiled knowingly as he thought of the havoc that might be wrought in the ranks of the cadet corps should any attempt be made to impose upon his popular associate.

The other members present agreed unanimously with the speaker's views, and some suggested that if any attempts were made to haze "little Johnny" the custom might be brought to a sudden stop. Those interested in athletics in New Orleans will recognize the significance of the remarks when they bring to mind the great hammer thrower and weight tosser of the Southern Athletic Club, who for the past few years has held the record for the South.

John P. Sullivan, who is a cadet at West Point, is no little boy, although young in years. He stands over six feet and weighs a little over 200 pounds. Every muscle in his brawny body is trained to great development, and his feat of hurling a sixteen-pound hammer 110 feet stamps him as one of the strong men of the country. Cadet Sullivan has also had several years' training in the gentle game of football, and he is well able to take care of himself in any and all situations. Moreover, he is a very good boxer. Take it all in all, Cadet Sullivan bids fair to make a most efficient army officer; one who can fight when the necessity comes. Meanwhile his club mates in New Orleans are waiting to hear of the casualties when some of the swell-headed upper class men attempt to haze "little Johnny."

It is, perhaps, needless to add that in the list of this year's plebes who have suffered the indignities of hazing the name of Cadet Sullivan will not appear. There are reasons.—New Orleans Democrat.

### Fatigue of the Eye.

A star appears more distinct if one looks at a point near it than it does when looking at the star itself. This is due to what is called "fatigue" of the retina. When looking at an object we naturally focus that object on the most sensitive part of the retina and keep the image permanently there. Now, in the case of a star, the image is a microscopic point and covers only an infinitesimal portion of the retina, and the great strain on this portion produces immediate "fatigue." If we look at a point near the star, then, as the eye moves, the image travels over the retina and successive portions of it are called into play so quickly that "fatigue" is not experienced. It does not do to look at another star near it, for then the eye is kept fixed and "fatigue" at once ensues. To most eyes the Pleiades appear far more distinct when we fix our eyes on a blank space of the heavens near them than when we look at them directly.

### Physical Inequalities.

By actual measurement of fifty skeletons the right arm and left leg have been found to be longer in twenty-three, the left arm and right leg, in six, the limbs on the right longer than those on the left in four, and in the remainder the inequality of the limbs are varied. Only seven out of the seventy skeletons measured, or ten per cent., had limbs of equal length.—Lancet.

### A Pinching Boot.

A boot or shoe that is uncomfortable from pinching may be eased by laying a cloth moistened in hot water across the place where the pressure comes, changing it several times as it grows cooler. This simple method causes the leather to shape itself to the foot.

### The Poetic Muse.

#### The Conqueror.

I saw an Angel with majestic mien  
 And radiant brow, and smile  
 Sweet;  
 Strong human passions writhed  
 His feet.  
 There too expired those coward fates  
 Of screen  
 Themselves behind inheritance, making  
 On dead men for their strength, and  
 It meet.

All, all lay prostrate, owing their  
 Lives to the spirit with the eyes  
 I beheld in wonder and in awe.  
 "Oh, mighty One, who art thou,  
 whence  
 Can circumvent heridity, cheat death,  
 And conquer nature? What throne  
 Art thou incarnate Form—the  
 The Angel answered, "I am  
 —Ella Wheeler Wilcox, in Harper's

#### When the Crop's Laid By.

The world is looking brighter  
 When the crop's laid by.  
 The heart is feeling lighter  
 When the crop's laid by.  
 You forget the summer's heat  
 In the fields of corn and wheat  
 And the reaping song is new  
 When the crop's laid by.

There's time for love and  
 When the crop's laid by.  
 A kind of glad life  
 When the crop's laid by.  
 Each day some joy is  
 The sweetest bliss is  
 And you hear your sweet  
 When the crop's laid by.

The world—it goes a-lying  
 When the crop's laid by.  
 And every fiddle's playing  
 When the crop's laid by.  
 And in the mid sun  
 The golden and the  
 And life is joy and  
 When the crop's laid by.

—F. L. Stanton, in Atlantic Coast

#### Bicycle Song.

Light upon the pedal,  
 Firm upon the seat,  
 Fortune's wheel in center,  
 Fast beneath our feet,  
 Leave the clouds behind us,  
 Split the wind we meet,  
 Swift, oh, swift and strong,  
 Rolling down the street.

When the dark comes,  
 Like a firefly in the  
 Before a twinkling  
 Fairly and  
 By the gate of gardens  
 Where the dusk grows  
 Slide like apparitions  
 Through the startled  
 Sparsmen in the desert  
 Maybe fly as deer,  
 Northern lights in beams  
 Sparkles on the steel  
 Swift, oh, swift and strong,  
 Just before we greet  
 The outer edge of nothing  
 Turn rolling up the edge  
 —Harriet P. Spofford, in St. Nicholas

#### The King of Lapland.

I know a tiny monarch who has  
 command  
 Within a quiet region, where a  
 Of people do his bidding, or yield  
 And watch his faintest gesture,  
 As sauls used to do.

His territory's bordered by two  
 arms,  
 And keeping in their shelter, he  
 all alarms;  
 This land is sometimes "rocky" if  
 inclined for a jest,  
 Or lies at peace, a quiet plain,  
 stay at rest.

One mountain rises northward,  
 as Mother's Brow,  
 While east and west are twin-guy  
 flowing, I love,  
 The prettiest bit of Nature that  
 heart can see  
 When'er the little monarch has  
 jubilee.

But when he's feeling weary from  
 out in state,  
 Or bowing to his subjects and  
 mate,  
 Retiring to the castle, his regal  
 —King  
 Lays down in princely grandeur,  
 ing minstrels sing.

If you would find his royal seat,  
 not suit the sea,  
 For—strange enough—his throne  
 this home of the free.  
 Just find the nearest nursery, and  
 command  
 Of the loving little monarch, who  
 all Lapland.  
 —Alice Crury, in Ladies' Home

#### Horn Books.

Some 155 horn books have  
 earthed, of which there are  
 the British Museum and  
 South Kensington Museum.  
 The book was a small alphabet  
 board of oak, of various  
 nine digits and sometimes  
 Prayer. It had a handle and  
 sheet of horn in front to keep  
 soiling, and the back was  
 ornamented with a rude  
 George and the dragon. A  
 frame or border of brass kept  
 in position on the board. An  
 tablet came to be known as  
 not. The earliest record of  
 books occurs about 1450. The  
 high disappeared at the end  
 eighteenth century, although  
 are still persons living who  
 them.

#### Furs of Fabulous Cost.

There are some almost  
 cloaks in existence, most of  
 belonging to members of the  
 bility. Mrs. John Mackay's  
 cloak valued at \$15,000, which  
 consists of 10,000 small skins.  
 costly wrap of this kind is  
 sent to the Empress Dagmar  
 coronation. It cost \$60,000,  
 only sixteen ounces. This  
 ent from city of Irkutsk, in  
 The Duchess of Saxe-Coburg  
 a magnificent cloak from  
 the late Empress of Russia,  
 the French actress, has a  
 valued at \$5000. Other  
 men in this respect are the  
 Potoka, the Countess Grede  
 the Duchess of Leuchtenberg,  
 Russia, the land of furs.

#### ONYX

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