

WIFE.

Oh, the pretty girl is a winsome pearl
And her face is fair to see
But a homely girl is nearer far
What a nice girl ought to be
For a pretty girl is proud and vain
And she frets the heart of man
And she does just what she wants to do
Because she knows she can.

Oh, I would wed could I find a girl
Who quite combines the grace
Of a homely maiden's honest heart
With a pretty woman's face
To win this prize I would search for aye
But alas, I fear I shan't
Though I explore the whole world o'er,
I know full well I can't.

—St. Louis Republic.

"THIS HOUSE TO LET."

Yes, said old Mrs. Pounce, nodding
her orange-colored cap-strings, they
put me in—the House Agency did—to
take care of the house; with a bright-
painted "TO LET" stuck up in front
of the area-windows, and coal and
house-rent free. Which I don't deny
my dear, is an object to a lone female
like me, with neither chick nor child,
and my own way to make in the
world, with fine laundressing out
of the question, on account of rheumat-
ism in the finger joints.

"You seem like a respectable per-
son, Mrs. Pounce, that has seen better
days," was what the house-agent said,
when he handed over the keys, "and,"
says he, "I think we may trust you to
take good care of our doorsteps and
windows, show applicants over
the house, and answer all questions."

"You may say so, sir," says I, with
a courtesy; "there's many houses I've
had charge of, and never has a fault
been found yet. And this shan't be the
first one," says I.

"We've a large business," says Mr.
Eagle, "and if you give satisfaction,
Mrs. Pounce," says he, as civil spoken
as possible, "it's likely you'll never be
without a roof to your head!"

Well, my dear, of all nice houses—
and I've seen a many in my day—
this was the nicest. Brownstone
front, with a bay-window and snug
garden planted all in box-borders, hot
and cold water all through, a little
conservatory with an arched glass
roof at the rear, and the hall floor
covered with real Minton tiles, as
made you think you were walking on
pictures; walls painted with Cupids
and Venuses and garlands of flowers,
and dados of hardwood all through-
out. Neighborhood most desirable;
drainage and sewerage perfect, and
churches conveniently near. Excuse
me, my dear, if it sounds like an
advertisement, but Mr. Eagle, the
agent, wrote it down for me, and I
never rested until I'd committed it all
to memory, so I could speak it off,
easy like, without any stops or hitches.

All this I will say, as can't be
said of all advertisements, there wasn't
a word in the agents description but
what the house bore out!

And the board hadn't been up twenty-
four hours before there was a rush
to look at the house. Young married
couples as wanted to give up apart-
ments; old married folks as wasn't
satisfied with their location; boarding
house keepers as made believe they
were private families; and private
families as wanted to take a few se-
lect boarders. But the rent was put
up tolerably high and most of them
dropped off, after I named the sum.

"Never mind, Mrs. Pounce—never
mind," says Mr. Eagle, rubbing his
hands. "It's a house that there'll be
no difficulty in letting, without any
reduction of rent. 'Just wait,' says
he, 'until spring sets in.'"

But, one day, in trots an old gentle-
man, with gold spectacles, and a
smooth-shaven face, and "business"
written in every wrinkle of his forehead.

"This house is to let, ma'am?" says
he.

"Yes, sir," says I.

"Can I look at it?" says he.

"Certainly, sir," says I. I began, as
smooth as oil, about the hot and cold
water, the marble-floored bath-room,
and the Minton tiles, when all of a
sudden, he put up two hands in a
warning sort of way.

"That'll do, ma'am," says he,
"that'll do. I've eyes, and I can see
for myself."

"Certainly, sir," says I; but I won't
deny as I was tookaback by that queer
dictatorial way of his.

"Any ghosts about the place,
ma'am?" says he.

"Sir?" says I.

"Ghosts," says he, out loud and
sharp. "Mysterious footsteps—lurk-
ing shadows—clanking chains at mid-
night?"

"Mercy, no, sir," says I, beginning
to feel my flesh creep all over.

"Rats?" says he.

"Certainly not," says I, "with solid
cemented cellar floor and sealed
boards."

"Beetles?" says he.

"Look for yourself, sir," says I,
briding up a little.

"I like the house," says he, after he
had gone sniffing about the drain-
pipes and peered into the coal cellar
and wine vault and sounded the cop-
per boiler with his knuckles, just for
all the world as if he was in the plumb-
ing business. "You may tell the agent
I'll take it, if he and I can come to
terms about the rent. When shall
you see him?"

"Most likely this afternoon, sir,"
says I.

"I'll drop in at his office to-mor-
row, at nine," says he. "I'm going to
be married," says he, as composed as
if he were saying that he was going to
take a blue-pill. "And the house will
suit my wife's ideas. She thinks we're
going to board," says he with an odd
sort of chuckle in his throat, "and
she's not a bit pleased with the idea.
It'll be a pleasant surprise for her,"
says he.

Well, no sooner had he gone than
in comes a stout, middle-aged lady, in a
black silk dress, rows of curls on either
side of her face, and cheeks as red
as any cabbage rose.

"I've just come from Mr. Eagle's
office," says she. "He has given me

the refusal of this house in case it
suits me."

"I don't know, ma'am," says I,
"but what it's let already."

"Let already?" says she with a sort
of scream. "But that's impossible!
Don't I tell you I've the refusal of it?
Show me the premises at once."

Well, I was in a pretty puzzle, as
you may believe; but I went all over
the house with the curly lady, and
she declared it met her fancy exact-
ly.

"Possession on the first of May I
suppose?" says she.

"Yes, ma'am," says I, "if—"

"There's no 'if' in the question,"
says she, as short as pie-crust. "You
may take down the 'To Let,' my good
woman."

I courtesies very low, but I says to
myself: "Not if I know it, ma'am
without orders from the agent him-
self."

Away went the lady with the curly
hair and the rose-red cheeks, and I
was just putting on my hat to run
round to the house agency, when in
comes Mr. Eagle himself, all smiles.

"Well, Mrs. Pounce," said he, "so
the house is let?"

"To my thinking, sir," said I, "it's
let twice over."

And I up and told him about my old
gentleman.

"Dear me," says he, "this is per-
plexing. At what time was this person-
age here?"

"The clock struck twelve, sir," says
I, "just as he went away."

Mr. Eagle struck himself a blow over
the forehead like a play-actor.

"Confusion worse confounded!"
says he. "It was twelve precisely, when
my customer left the office. We can't
split the house in two, can we?" says
he.

"Well, we must tell your old gen-
tleman just how it happened. I dare-
say he'll be reasonable about it."

But he wasn't reasonable, Mr.
Eagle told me afterwards; he never
saw anyone in such a rage.

"I've taken the house," says he,
"and I'll have it, cost what it may.
Do you say that the rent is two
hundred pounds? I'll give you two
hundred and fifty down; if my claim
and that of this lady are equally
good, the question of price must settle
it."

Well, we supposed—me and Mr.
Eagle—as that was the end of the
matter. But not a bit of it. The
lady came that same afternoon with
an upholsterer and a tape-measure to
see about the carpets.

"Two hundred and fifty pounds,
indeed!" says she, with a toss of her
curls. "It will take more than a paltry
two hundred and fifty pounds to
unsettle my plans. I'll give three
hundred sooner than I'll lose the
house!"

When my old gentleman hears this,
he grinds his teeth in a manner as was
fearful to hear.

"It's my house," says he, "and I
will have it! Three hundred and fifty
pounds, Eagle!"

"Come," says Mr. Eagle, "matters
are getting lively. Real estate is look-
ing up in the market," says he.

But you should have heard what a
whistle he gave when I told him, the
very next day, that the curly lady
had authorized me to offer four hun-
dred.

"I'll not stand this any longer,"
says Mr. Eagle, jumping up and send-
ing the papers flying all over the office
table. "I've a conscience, if Fate has
made a real estate agent of me. Tell
her to come round this afternoon and
sign the lease. Four hundred pounds
is twice what we asked, and we asked
all the property was worth to begin
with."

So the curly lady had her own way,
after all.

The bald-headed old gentleman
stamped about in a pretty rage when
he heard as the house was let.

"I'll sue the agency," says he. "I'll
have the house if it costs me all I'm
worth!"

"Oh, hush, sir, hush!" says I, all in
a tremble. "Here comes Miss Wix
now!"

"Who?" says he.

"Miss Wix," says I. "The lady as
has taken the house!"

And I got behind the door, fully
expecting a scene after all that had
come and gone. But to my surprise,
she gave a little shriek, and flew into
his arms.

"Dear Josiah! says she.

"Dearest Barbara!" says he.

"How on earth came you here?"
says she.

"I was looking for a desirable resi-
dence for you, my own angel," says
he.

"You duck!" says she.

"And I thought this would exactly
suit you," says he.

"Oh!" says she, "it does. And I've
taken it at four hundred pounds a
year. It seems a good deal of money
to pay, but I've been driven to it by
a horrid old cormorant who was de-
termined to have the house at any
price! However—"

"Barbara," says the old gentleman,
with a gasping sound in his throat, as
if he was swallowing a lump, "that
cormorant was I!"

"You don't mean—" says she.

"That we've been bidding against
each other," says the old gentleman.

"Yes, we have."

"And I was going to give you a
pleasant surprise," says she, pulling
out her pocket-handkerchief.

"It is a surprise," says he. "But as
for the pleasure of it—never mind,
Barbara. Let's go in and measure for
the carpets and curtains. Let bygones
be bygones—but the next time we
drive a bargain perhaps it might be as
well to confide in each other. Two
hundred pounds a year—on a five
year's lease—is almost too much to
pay for a pleasant surprise!"

So that settled the matter, my dear,
said old Mrs. Pounce. They were
married in a month, and they came
there to live. And of all my experi-
ence in house-letting this beat every-
thing—and so everybody says, my
dear, as hears the story.

Plenty of Wind of Their own.

"I hear that South Dakota will
exhibit a cyclone in operation at the
World's Fair."

"Pshaw! It will never be noticed in
Chicago."

A PICTURE OF CLEVELAND.

A PICTURE OF THE "VEILED
PROPHET" BEHIND THE
SCENES.

What Democrats are Pleased to
Term Simple-Mindedness and
Straight-forwardness Takes
on a Different Aspect
When the Veils
Are Blown Aside.

In the self-drawn portraits which he
submits to the public from time to time,
Mr. Cleveland always represents himself as
a plain, blunt, straightforward man, who
knows nothing of "face" or "policy," but is
drawn into public life by an urgent sense
of duty, or, as he most delights to express
it, a sense of "consecration" to the public
good.

Occasionally the veil is blown aside and
the glimpses then caught of the Veiled
Prophet is not a together suggestive of the
simple-mindedness and straight-forwardness
that goes with consecration to any cause.

Thus when notified over his private wire
of his nomination, Mr. Cleve and immedi-
ately sent the following to his chief manager
at Chicago.

BUZZARD'S BAY, June 23.

W. C. Whitney: I must say to you, and
through you, to those who have acted with
you, that I have a grateful appreciation of
the efforts made in my behalf, and that
my admiration is unbounded for the prudence,
sagacity, and generalship of my friends
in Chicago.

How strangely this last joyful message
sounds! Is it possible all this cheering and
gratulation over "prudence" and "saga-
city" and "generalship" on the part of old
office-holders struggling in a convention to
nominate their chief comes from those
that have been so long and so often dilated
on "consecration to duty" and "obedi-
ence to the mandates of the people?"

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