

would come to me after offering himself to them!"

Then she repaired to the telephone, and soon had the womanly and domestic Beatrice at the other end of the line. After sufficient preliminaries, she put her full, red lips (they were triple charged magnets, those lips, powerfully compelling) close to the transmitter, and, modulating her voice, passed the secret once more.

"Oh, Be," she called, "I've just got to tell some one! Glen proposed last night!"

For a few seconds there was silence, save for the muffled roar carried in by the mechanism of the instrument. Then a gay, guileless laugh tinkled over the wire, and—oh, womanly, domestic Beatrice!—Gladys heard this:

"What! To you too? Really, Gladys, Glen carries his flirting too—"

Gladys would hear no more. She hung up the receiver with a vicious click, and rushing to her room threw herself regardlessly into the heap of pillows in her cozy corner. There for a time she palpitated and with snapping eyelids strove to keep back the tears. Then her anger began to subside, and hiding her face from the light—the same light that shone on him—she soaked her favorite gift pillow with the brine of her woe.

It was all, all, over, she thought. She was now prepared to cast him, his image, and even his memory, forever out of her heart. At that moment she would not have been surprised to have heard that he had proposed to every young woman he had ever met. Her first intention was to write him a note and laconically command him never, never, to speak to her or look at her again. But in the course of an hour that decision lost weight. She would let him come and have the maid take his card, very distantly, and bring it up to her; and then she would send word down that "Miss Gray says she is sorry, but she can't receive you any more." Oh! wouldn't that pierce his perfidious, conceited heart?

At that climax of contemplated revenge the luncheon bell rung. Gladys only nibbled and sipped; but it revived her better spirits. Eating, at best, may be a material performance; but in cases of dejection, and even those of injured love, it is often singularly efficacious as a restorative.

Having lunched, Gladys again altered her plan. She would not only let him get into the paradise that contained her radiant presence; she would go down and appear before him. And then when, drawn to her by irresistible force, he was about to crave a priceless boon from her lips, she would put him from her,—not harshly or roughly; no, not that way, but gently, pityingly. In an even, composed tone of voice she would reveal to him, to his lasting regret, the knowledge that, whatever weak woman's shortcomings, she is loyally reciprocal with her sisters in the matter of secrets, even to the most sacred of them. Yes, that would be much the best plan. So she let it stand and waited impatiently.

At eight-thirty that evening Glen had not yet invaded the paradise that held the radiant presence, and Gladys was getting anxious. True, he seldom came much earlier than that on summer evenings, but he was always at least a few minutes before eight-thirty. Could it be possible that fate was to deprive her of her revenge? No, not revenge, now; only her duty to rebuke him as he deserved. Doubtless some one of those four arch-conspirators against her happiness had warned him that she knew, and he would remain away. Well, his coming or not coming would make no difference; she would quietly and effectually efface him from her thoughts just the same.

At eight-thirty-two Gladys began to pace restively. He couldn't stay away and remain a man! He had promised to come, and was therefore bound on his honor. Surely, he had not fallen so low as to break his word?

At eight-thirty-four Gladys's head was beginning to ache. Her heart was already—not quite aching, but beating fast and hard.

At eight-thirty-five—the bell, and Glen! The maid, unconscious that she was sending a man to his doom, delivered him unto Gladys, who seized him and thrust—no, that was all; she just seized him.

"You are late!" she declared. "Over five minutes late!"

For reply he was about to take a priceless boon without bothering with the craving, when she remembered

"Oh!" she said dramatically. "Don't touch me!" And then she did thrust him from her, but immediately drew him back. "To think," she went on with abrupt directness (abrupt directness is one of the innumerable ways of a maid with a man), "that you would make love and propose to all those other girls, and then not only propose to me, but add insult to injury by swearing that I was the first!"

"Why, Gladys," began Glen, who

appeared to be astounded, "you don't mean—"

"Miss Gray, if you please!" Gladys cut in frigidly.

"Why, honestly," continued Glen, "you're the first girl I ever proposed to—er—that is, in earnest, you know."

"Glen Morgan," Gladys asked imperatively, "do you mean to tell me that you never proposed to Alice Fisher and May Gates and Helen Jewett and Beatrice Woods? They said you did!"

"I most certainly do!" Glen responded emphatically, seeing that Gladys was terribly serious. "I presume that because I was a bit nice to those girls and paid them a few—er—casual compliments they imagined I was asking them to marry me. Actually, it seems that a fellow can't be civil to a girl without being suspected of having matrimonial designs on her. Anyway, whatever I may have said to them was only in fun. Me propose to them! The idea! How ridiculous!"

"Then you didn't propose in earnest to a single one of them?" Gladys wished to give force to the denial.

"N-o-o!" he replied solemnly.

"Really, truly?" She loved to hear him say it.

"Really, truly," he repeated.

"Oh, Glen!" And with happy abandon the Titian head was deposited on Glen's broad shoulder; and he proceeded to avail himself in rapid fire fashion of the priceless boons, which had been left—accidentally, it may be assumed—conveniently exposed.

From the first sweet ecstasies of that reconciliation so speedily accomplished Gladys emerged as from a dream. The last twelve hours seemed like a dismal fantasy.

"How foolish I was, dear," she whispered as the Titian head was nestled more comfortably on the broad shoulder, "to believe them!"

## LETTERS FROM A NEW CONGRESSMAN'S WIFE

Continued from page 4

I told her, and then tried not to let her see I'd noticed her start of heightened interest.

"Ah! Come on ahead of the season to get your gowns, I suppose?" she went on.

I sprang to Hopeville's defense as if I was a veteran of our volunteer hose company. "No, indeed! I shouldn't think of going to anyone but Miss Sally," I cried.

"Miss Sally?"

"Yes, Miss Sally Tibbetts. She makes all the dresses for our town." I explained, feeling a tender thickening up at the very memory of Miss Sallie's portable teeth that always click in time to her enormous shears. "And she's always up on the latest styles," my pride urged me on, "because her sister's left Hopeville and gone to be a saleslady in the Mirror Cloak & Suit House in Chicago, and she sends word if they ever change the number of gores in the skirts—"

"Well, well! Who'd want a Paris ready-to-wear garment, Mrs. Rural, with a genius of that kind presiding over the town lapboard?" exclaimed the little woman enthusiastically.

Whereupon I was flushed to the verge of being unduly confidential, I'm afraid. "In Hopeville there is a feeling that these French clothes are not quite refined," I whispered. "Of course, Julie Duval, the milliner who goes about and spends the

day at our houses trimming and fixing up our hats, had a French Canadian for a father; but her things do not have that daring, imported look, I can assure you."

And my listener said, very emphatically, "No, indeed!"

It all seemed very cozy and homelike too, whispering in snatches between the times when the blond woman would come out in another kind of corset; but what do you think, Etta? This morning there was an account of that meeting in the paper, and there was every last word I had whispered to that nice little woman, printed right out there too. I thought Amos would be dreadfully mad; but he said Teale had always told him that it was better for a Congressman to have a picture of the back of his head in the newspaper than no picture at all, and that even the publication of his wife's loyalty to the dressmaker standards in Hopeville might serve to remind his constituents that he had not taken a shelf in the political morgue at Washington. Amos is getting so imbued with his work that even when he talks privately to me it sounds like a campaign speech.

By the way, when I was coming away from the corset talk, I met Congressman Teale right by that parlor door. He said he had been looking all over the house for Amos. I asked whether he had stopped by the White House, because Amos had spoken on the train of several matters he would like to set the President straight on.

Mr. Teale said he had not thought of that. Then he glanced into that room where they were packing up the corset woman's belongings. But he didn't seem at all embarrassed. He just looked me right in the eye and added the funniest remark, which couldn't have had anything to do with Amos, that I see.

"It was a personal offense to me," he said, "when some enterprising shoe firm adopted the portrait of Queen Louise to their advertising needs, and, though it isn't any of my business, I should hate to see a Madonna head grafted on a modern fashion plate."

He is queer, isn't he? But such lovely manners!

I hope you won't think me disloyal, but I sometimes wish Amos did not think a book on etiquette is merely a joke book. You know he told you, when you were trying to persuade the selectmen to put "Social Usages" on the list of new books to be bought for the library, that when a man tried to learn how to bow and scrape out of a book, it was because he was trying to fill up the chinks in his brain with putty. And Amos certainly has solid brains.

This is not the great news nor the diplomatic secrets I promised, but you know Amos does not take the oath of office for a week, and it is only after Congress opens that he can get that appropriation for the new court house and really establish confidential relations with the Cabinet and foreign officials.

These are just my first experiences as a Congressman's wife, and they do not sound any more jumbled than they are in the mind of your affectionate, ambitious, but just a little bit homesick friend,  
BEULAH RURAL.

To be continued next Sunday

## THE PAR-LOR KIT-TEN

Extract from *Ill Nature Studies*, No. III.



Drawing by W. W. Denslow;

Rimes by Dudley A. Bragdon

The Par-lor Kit-ten next we see.

Ob-serve her cun-ning pose!

What do I think that she'll do next?

My dear, no-bod-y knows.

Sur-prise-ful leaps she loves to make,—

Per-haps it is her plan

To scam-per straight a-cross the room

And pounce on yon-der man

And paw him, as do cats a mouse.

He'll try to run a-way;

But best laid plans of mice and men

Too oft-en gang a-gee.