

SKETCHES FOR MEMORIAL DAY

A Memorial Surprise Party.

Alma Maynard sat at the window, looking thoughtfully out at the newly budded trees. Poor Alma had been confined to the house all the spring with the scarlet fever which had left her so weak that at first she could hardly lift her head, but now that she was up and her young friends were allowed to visit her, she had been wishing they would come in a party some evening. She did not know that at school that very day her playmates were planning to surprise her on the afternoon of Decoration day, which was the next Wednesday.

The day dawned bright and warm and about 1 o'clock that afternoon Mrs. Nelson said: "Alma, you had better go and lie down awhile."

So Alma lay down and was soon fast asleep. At a signal from Mrs. Nelson the children trooped noiselessly from a neighbor's, where they had gathered, and soon the room adjoining Alma's was filled with gay lads and lassies, all bearing sweet spring flowers which they arranged around the room and then sat down to wait for Alma to awake. At last she opened her eyes, then closed them again, thinking that the flower-filled room with its gay occupants was only a dream.

Then Viva Leland, Alma's most intimate friend, came and took her hand and led her into the room, where the shout of "surprise! surprise! surprise!" met her on all sides. Half dazed, she looked from one to another, then broke into a gay laugh in which they all joined. The afternoon passed quickly and pleasantly, and at 6 o'clock they were called to the dining room for supper. And such a supper! They were seated in couples around the table, Alma and Ray Thornton, her favorite chum, presiding at the head. After supper Alma's father told them stories; and later they returned to their homes, leaving the flowers for their convalescent playmate, and with them many wishes for a speedy return to health.

skipping gaily along, as they all did upon such happy occasions. Last Grace stopped suddenly and said: "Nellie, I don't feel good one bit. I guess we'd better go back. I don't care if the boys were mean, we ought not to be mean, too, and 'tis a mean to run away like this. Lunch is as much theirs as ours. It's most as bad as stealing for us to take it all. Come on. I'm going back. And away she went on a run, Nellie following as fast as she could on her heels.

The boys had not missed them and so they knew nothing of the intended treachery. They seemed to have recovered their usual good humor; and it was a very merry party that started a few moments later for the woods. What good times they did have that day! What treasures woodland wealth they found! How good the lunch did taste, and what it was to eat it out there under green trees all alone. Yes, it was long, glad, beautiful day. They enjoyed every moment of it, and stayed just as long as they dared. But at last they decided that they must start home, for there were the flowers to range yet, and there would be but little time to spare if they hoped to finish their tasks that night. It was a little later than they had thought, they found, when they came to the edge of the woods and saw how low the sun had sunk. So they hurried along as fast as they could. When they came to the fallen tree upon which they had crossed the noisy little creek in the morning, perhaps they were a little careless, and when it came Nellie turned she slipped, and with a frightened cry, down she went into water. The creek was high with spring rains, and the water was over Nellie's head; so it was no wonder that it was a frightened, as well as a shivering little girl that Frank dragged out upon the bank, a moment later.

"Oh—oh, dear!" she cried; "I am wet and cold, and all my flowers are lost," and she pointed a trembling finger at the basket which held all her pretty blossoms and was sailing gaily away with them to some unknown port.

"Never mind," said Frank, cheerily, "I'll get it for you. I can't get any wetter than I am now," and in he plunged again, and in a twinkling the flowers were rescued, and they were on their way home; but Nellie's wet clothes were very uncomfortable, and her teeth fairly chattered before she had taken many steps.

Suddenly Fred stopped and said: "Here, sis; why didn't I think before? You take my coat, and then Frank and I will take hold of your hands and run, and we'll be home in a jiffy. There, that's right—one, two, three, and away we go."

A few hours later, Nellie and Grace, who had returned before the others, were sitting alone, finishing the last of the garlands, when Nellie said, suddenly:

"Oh, Grace, how glad I am that we didn't run away from the boys this morning. I am sure I would have been drowned, if we had," and she shivered again at the thought of her icy bath.

"Yes, I am glad, too," returned Grace. "An—Nellie, I was glad all day. I am sure we had a much nicer time than we would if we had gone alone, and we would have felt so mean if we had taken the boys' lunch away from them."

"Yes, so we would. And, Grace, do you know, after this when the boys are



"ALL MY FLOWERS ARE LOST." "I don't mean to take any notice and see what effect that will have upon their tempers."

This plan Grace and Nellie carried out and it worked so well that harmony has reigned in the little red house ever since.

Only in a world of sincere men is unity possible, and there, in the long run, it is as good as certain.—Carlyle.

Scholars are frequently to be met with who are ignorant of nothing saving their own ignorance.—Zimmerman. A loss of \$2,000 was sustained by the burning of David Ralston's home near Wabash. Insurance, \$800.

consideration of affairs of state, an offer was considered, but no definite answer was given.

Crowds Watch the House.

The newspapers have established temporary headquarters for their reporters in the neighborhood of my Scott residence and a vigil is maintained night and day. Very few families concerning the situation in the rooms are given out, however, except the statement contained in the official bulletins, which are invariably about the slopes of Lafayette. Just across the street, affording a view of the temporary executive

The president's appearance is awaited and his every movement is closely observed. The crowd, ever, is quiet and respectful, allizing that manifestations of enthusiasm are out of place while Mrs. McKinley lies so critically ill.

OHIO IS LAUNCHED.

Big Battleship Companion of the Ocean Now in the Water.

San Francisco, Cal., May 20.—The launching of the battleship Ohio took place on schedule time. It was its great event which attracted to the city coast President McKinley and cabinet, the majority of the Ohio Congressional delegation, Governor Gurney of Oregon, the Governor of Nevada and numerous other state officials and congressmen.

The steel clad hull slid from the cradle 26 minutes after the hour noon in the presence of the chief executive and several thousand spectators. The President met the employees, the builders at the wharf and was presented with a souvenir which the mms prepared for him.

When all but the last rope held the ship was gone Miss Barber, ni of Mrs. McKinley, pressed an electric button, causing the knife to drop, sending the cord which held the last stay. As the ship began to glide down ways Miss Helen Desher dashed its, bottle of champagne which hung ed a ribbon from the bows and christened the vessel.

The naval parade, in command of Rear Admiral Casey, escorting the Presidential flagship, comprised all war vessels in the bay. The Wisconsin led, with the battleship Iowa class alongside the cruisers Philadelphia and Adams, the torpedo boat Farago and the McCulloch followed.

Governor Nash of Ohio, who traveled across the continent to attend the launching, was not present. His eyes were so swollen from the poisoned gas encountered during his visit to the Big Trees at Santa Cruz, that his physicians said it would be unwise to send him to go out.

Heads Society of Dentists.

Rockford, Ill., May 20.—The convention of the Illinois State Dental Society closed today after electing officers as follows: President, M. L. Handford, Rockford; vice president, J. H. Hinkins, Chicago; secretary, A. J. Peck, Chicago; treasurer, C. N. Johnson, Chicago; librarian, J. T. Cummings, Metropolis City.

dancing into my room with an open letter in her hand. "Oh, Bessie, Bessie! what do you think?" she cried, excitedly. "Carlyle—my own dearest brother Carlyle—is on his way to the White Mountains, and thinks of stopping over here for three whole weeks! Just read his letter, dearest. He says he is crazy to meet my friend that I have raved so much about. Oh, Bessie! who knows but what you and Carlyle will fall in love with each other, and sometime you will be my own dear sister in reality! Now, darling, I want you to look your prettiest when he calls. I'll dress your hair myself, and you must wear your rose colored silk tea-gown, the one with the valenciennes lace trimmings, and for flowers I think sweet peas and mignonette would be nicest. I'll go right out and gather some now," and a moment later I saw her with a pair of scissors in her hand, skipping around among the flower beds.

Mr. St. Clair called the next evening. I was sitting alone in a bay window, picking nervously at the flowers in my bouquet, when the bell rang, and directly afterwards, Natalie ushered her brother into the parlor. He was without an exception the handsomest man I had ever seen. Tall and aristocratic-looking, with beautiful, dark eyes, and coal black hair and moustache. He could not have been more than twenty-five or twenty-six years old, and was dressed in the height of fashion.

Years have passed since then, but even at this late day, a feeling of bitter contempt for my own weak credulity arises, when I recall how I blushed and stammered, with my heart beating like a silly school girl's, as I acknowledged the introduction, and listened to his fulsome compliments.

From that evening he followed me everywhere, and appeared the most devoted of lovers. When we were walking or riding together he would sit at my feet, and read love poems out of little blue and gold bound books.

Thus the summer days passed by, and I walked, and talked, and went around like one in a trance, and when one moonlight evening, under the vine-shaded piazza, he told me that he had loved me from the hour we met, and that it was the dearest wish of his heart to make me his wife, the honored mistress of his elegant city residence—why—I—believed every word that he said.

So we were engaged. He bought me an engagement ring, and quoted a verse of poetry as he slipped it on my finger.

Dear little Natalie congratulated us both, amid a perfect shower of tears and kisses, and declared she should take it upon herself to look after "darling Bessie's trousseau, which must be very elegant, as she wanted brother Carlyle to be very proud of his wife when he introduced her to his aristocratic New York relatives."

"I want you to be married in a pearl white silk," she said, "in lace over-dress, and pearls and diamonds for ornaments, and you will not be traveling suit, with everything to match, and several evening dresses for receptions, you know, and, oh, dar! there are so many things to think of, I don't know but what I had better return to the city when Carlyle goes next week, for I know just what to buy, and I think I could purchase to better advantage than you, dearest."

After a long discussion everything was satisfactorily arranged, and one pleasant morning about a week later, my handsome, aristocratic lover and his babyish, blue-eyed sister took the early train together for the city, leaving me disconsolate.

I was sitting alone that afternoon when the door opened without warning, and who should present herself but my Aunt Eunice, who was, without any exception, the most ill-natured, slurring, disagreeable woman it was ever my misfortune to meet.

"Betsey Jane Dobbins," she demanded, wrathfully, "are you going to be married, or are you not?"

"I am, Aunt Eunice, in four weeks, to Mr. St. Clair, and I am the happiest woman in the world."

"O-o-oh Betsey Jane!" and she gave a little shriek, and sunk limply into the nearest chair. "You must be stark, ravin' crazy! What, marry a man you never set your eyes on, till six weeks ago? Be you such a fool that you can't see that he is some buggler and thief that has found out somehow about poor Uncle Saul's money, and is after it? Oh, poor Uncle Saul! he would turn in his grave if he knew that his hard-earned savin's was liable to fall into the hands of jail-birds! O-o-oh!" and she paused from sheer lack of breath, and vented her feelings in a succession of dismal groans.

"Be quiet, Aunt Eunice," I exclaimed, indignantly, "you are insulting! I will not listen to such scandalous language regarding my future husband. If you were not such an old woman, and a relative, I would have you put out of the house. Mr. St. Clair is a perfect gentleman, and belongs to a very wealthy and respectable New York family. He loves me for myself alone, and if you could hear him—"

"Oh, pshaw, Betsey Jane!" she broke in contemptuously, "he couldn't fool me! I ain't got to hear him talk, either. Do you s'pose if he wasn't a rascal and a rogue he would be up here in the country tryin' to marry a homely old woman like you, that might get mistook for his grandmother? No-o-o," and she drew down her mouth until it resembled an elongated soap-bubble, "mark my words, that girl ain't no sister, either, I tell you, Bet's, it's a pair of 'em, two of a kind, clubbed in together, and before they git through they'll skin you hide and taller. Well! well! I've always hearn there's no fool like an old fool, and I feel that I've done my duty," and she snatched up her faded gingham sun-bonnet and flounced out of the house in a rage.

I had been in the city all day on a

shopping expedition, for the wedding was near at hand, and I was resolved that everything possible should be provided for the comfort and entertainment of my guests.

It was evening, and the lamps were lighted when I entered the station to wait for my train, and I was hungry, tired and dusty. A hasty glance into a mirror showed me that I was looking my worst, so drawing a thick, green veil over my face I took a seat in a dusky corner. Heedless of the crowds that were constantly passing in and out, I sat there, building delightful air castles, until I was aroused to a consciousness of what was going on around me by hearing my own name spoken by a woman in the next seat.

"I would like to know what good money is to old Betsey Jane Dobbins," she was saying, "and if we don't get it somebody else will, that's settled. She's the very softest piece of antiquated vanity that I've ever met yet in all my—ahem—career."

"Oh, yes, Nat, it's been a great summer for you, there's no doubt about that. I'm the victim in this case. You've no idea how I despise to toady around that old frump. I have a good mind to throw the whole game up."

"And lose thirty thousand dollars at the least! You must be crazy!"

I leaned forward the least bit and lifted a corner of my veil—Merciful heavens! right in front of me sat Mr. St. Clair and his sister, and I supposed them hundreds of miles away.

There was no mistake; for one moment everything swam before my eyes, and for the first time in my life I really thought I was going to faint, then with a desperate effort, I pulled myself together and awaited my lover's reply.

"Yes, that's it. We're sure to rake in a big boodle anyway, and the best part of the transaction lies in the fact that we're running no risks. I happen to know that the most of old Betsey Jane's money is invested in government bonds, and they are easily disposed of."

"Why, certainly, and once you're married, she is such an ignorant old fool, you can work her out of every dollar she has in the world, and then—"

"Then old Betsey Jane will wake up some fine morning and find herself stranded back in the wilderness, where she belongs, and we'll—"

I could bear no more, but almost paralyzed from the effects of what I had overheard, with the greatest difficulty I struggled to my feet and managed to escape without attracting their attention. Once outside I rallied my scattered wits enough to order a carriage, and directed the driver to carry me to the nearest hotel, where I sat down and penned the following letter, which I forwarded to a New York address:

"The antiquated old frump takes this opportunity to inform Mr. Carlyle St. Clair that his services in the capacity of 'toady' are no longer required, as old Betsey Jane has learned a lesson that she will never forget, and in the future proposes to stay back in the wilderness where she belongs, and guard and protect her government bonds from all thieves and conspirators. B. J. D."

To ease my conscience, and also as a sort of revenge upon myself, I wrote an apologetic note to my Aunt Eunice explaining the situation and intimating that, as my oldest living relative, it might be well for her to appeal to the proper authorities and have a guardian appointed to watch over my interests for the rest of my natural life.

Long after I accidentally learned that St. Clair was a professional crook, and his so-called sister an adventuress, but I never saw either of them again, and as I told you in the beginning, though I have had plenty of offers, I am an old maid, and I intend to remain so.—Georgia A. Harris in Portland Transcript.

Planting Potatoes.

When should potatoes be planted? What variety is best? These questions are uppermost in the minds of potato growers at this season. Prof. Jones, of the Vermont Station, makes the following general suggestions in reply: Potatoes in Vermont are practically grown in three crops—the early, the medium and the late. The larger part of the potatoes grown come in the second or medium crop; but those which pay the largest profit are undoubtedly the early potatoes and the late ones.

The early crop is profitable only on warm, light, quick soils, and where there is a good local market. Such a soil, however, is not suited for a late crop. The late crop is best secured by using a vigorous, long-lived variety, of which Rural New Yorker is a type. This is planted after the ground is well warmed, say, May 10th at Burlington. It then requires very careful attention, the aim being to produce as healthy a growth of leaves as possible, and to keep them green and vigorous until frost time. This means thorough and continuous cultivation so that the field is as free from weeds in September as in June. It also means thorough and systematic spraying, continued until late in the season. The medium crop ripens in August, and is dug early in September. It may be secured from either the early varieties of the Early Rose type, or from the late varieties. In the latter case the medium ripening of the crop comes about as the result of neglected cultivation or insufficient spraying. In either case the yield is small, or, at least, never large. The crop is ready too late to secure the fancy prices of the early crop, and too early to be stored advantageously for winter, so that it is an all-around miss. The moral is that a careful potato grower will grow either early or late potatoes and not be wasting his time on a medium crop.