

SOME SWEET TO-DAY

I will not light the lamps until I've thought
What was the sweetest thing
In all my day;
I will not seek to speed
The lingering ray
Until my anxious eye somewhere hath
Caught
A word, a smile, or something that hath
Passed
In my small sphere. O memory, thou hast
Some sweet to-day!

Now fancy travels out and conjures up
A long and brilliant train—
It all floats by,
Joy and sadness go
With laugh and sigh,
And dregs of pain lie deep in pleasure's cup
But now I see two tender hazel eyes
Turn on me—lips that smile—Ah, herein
Lies
My sweet to-day!

A perfume breathes from pictures of the
Mind,
And in our fancy memory carves her lore,
Our dearest treasures in the air we find;
I knew my happiness to-night was for
Some sweet to-day!

—Boston Transcript.

A PATCHWORK QUILT.

BY HATTIE WHITNEY.



HIGGINSVILLE was very sure that Rob Redwood and Charity Meadows would make a match of it if they could keep from falling out with each other long enough at a time.

But Charity was pretty and liked to flirt—at least Bob thought she did—and Bob was jealous, especially of Jake Hargood.

"I don't care for him, Bob," Charity said once, glancing up at him, with soft depreciation, from under her curled brown lashes.

"Then tell him so," said blunt Rob.

"What a big silly you are, Rob!" she answered. "He might say I better wait till he asked me to care. The time to refuse anything is when it is offered."

But Rob shook his head, and failed to see the logic of this.

"Better let him know before he does ask," he said, sagely.

Notwithstanding this good advice, Miss Charity very reprehensively went buggy-riding that same evening with Jake Hargood. But as she tied on her hat and smiled at the pretty vision of blue eyes, corn-silk curls and baby pinkness in the looking-glass, the thought of Rob did come up and trouble her peace and her conscience.

"He's a dear boy," said she, "and it's too bad to be treacherous to him; but it shall be the last time. After this evening I'll reform right straight."

But the "last time" often proves the fatal one time too many.

Rob saw them as he was driving up the cows from pasture, went home in a rage, and did not go near Charity that week.

"Reckon you're about to lose yer beau, Charity," said Aunt Hulda Pitcher, who dropped in one day to borrow a yeast cake. "I hear tell how Rob Redwood is going off to the Injies or some sich furrin place, to stay with a uncle."

"Lawdy!" said good Mrs. Meadows, concernedly. "I hope not. That's awful hot land. He'll get plum scorched up yaller!"

"Oh, I reckon he won't stand no chance of that," replied Aunt Hulda, cheerfully. "Betwixt the wild animals and the savages, he'll git eat before he gets scorched."

Anything at all "furrin" necessarily embraced cannibals and wild beasts in Aunt Hulda's mind.

"I don't believe it!" said Charity, to herself. "I don't think Rob would make up his mind to go off there without letting me know about it."

But the next day Rob's mother was over.

Charity saw her from a window where she was sitting, busily engaged in putting squares of patchwork together with blocks of pink and white muslin for a quilt.

She was going to have a quilting the next day, and had not quite finished her own work on it; so she did not go down stairs now, but she could hear the conversation on the porch below.

"This here they're a-tellin' about Rob a-goin' off to the Injies ain't true, is it?" Mrs. Meadows asked, as she set out the big cushioned rocker for her visitor.

"Yes, shouldn't wonder if it was," returned Mrs. Redwood, shaking her black sunbonnet dolefully. "His Uncle 'Lijah, he got rich out there, and wants him to come mighty bad, and he ain't plum made up his mind, but he's a-studyin' about it considerable."

"Shucks! I hate to see him a-goin' off there. He'll get baked to a crisp. I 'low to tell him so. I s'pose him and Tillie'll be over to Charity's party to-morrow?"

"Tillie will," replied Mrs. Redwood. "I do no whether Rob will or not. He says maybe he might and maybe he might'n't. It'd depend on circumstances."

"Now, that's too bad of Rob," said Charity, dropping her head on the window sill and brushing away a sudden tear with a square of patchwork, "when he's went and stayed away so long already. He's just right cruel to me! But if he don't want to come to my party he needn't, and I'll dance with Jake Hargood till I drop on the floor."

According to the Higginsville etiquette regulating quiltings, the ladies usually assemble in the morning, and on the principle of duty before pleasure, devote themselves wholly to the task of getting the quilt done.

By the time that is accomplished, the young men begin to drop in, and so continue to do until dark, when "the fiddler" arrives, and the grand fun of the occasion commences.

The morning of the quilting, while Miss Tillie Redwood was embellishing her charms as befit the occasion, her brother Rob sought the privacy of the smoke-house, there to address himself to the business of writing a note to Charity.

After an hour's hard work he wiped his perspiring brow, and surveyed the following:

"DEAR CHARITY: I want everything to be settled to-night for good and all. If you care for me more than for Jake Hargood, and will drop him and set our wedding day, send word by Jimmy Tibbs before night, and I'll come to your dance too happy to live, for you don't know how good I love you. If you're undecided-like and want to stick to Jake, don't send no word nor look for me. I'll go to the Indies, and I don't keer if I scorch and all s'rivel up and die.

"Your loving Rob.

"P. S.—Please send Jimmy quick if it's yes. I'm awful nervous-like."

"Look-a-here, Tillie," said Rob, waylaying his sister at the gate as she was setting out for the festal gathering, "you give this here note to Charity, but not till you find her alone. You hear?"

"I hear," said Tillie, securing the note in her blue-bordered handkerchief, which she tucked through her belt, "and all right!"

Charity, in morning costume of pink gingham, and several other young ladies were on their knees on the sitting-room carpet, spreading layers of white cotton upon the lining of the quilt when Tillie arrived.

"It's a scandal I didn't have it all ready," apologized Charity. "There's been such piles to do. We're all ready now for the top. Tillie, we'll get you to help us spread it on."

"It's awful hot," said Tillie, pulling out her handkerchief, forgetful for the moment of its contents, and wiping her round face, which her walk had heated.

Charity brought forth the gorgeous-hued patch-work of her quilt.

"How pretty that basket pattern is!" said Tillie. "I'm a-making the mousechase pattern."

And then the top was spread on, and no one saw anything in the cotton that did not belong there.

But an hour after, when Tillie found Charity alone, and prepared to fulfill her brother's behest, she found no note in her handkerchief, and no ideas in her head as to what could have become of it. Hunting for it was in vain.

"Oh, dear!" sobbed Tillie, "Rob'll be so mad. I daren't tell him I lost it."

Tillie Redwood was one of that numerous class of feminine cowards who will stoop to deceit, subterfuge, or even lies, rather than encounter the just wrath of any dark-browed lord of creation for any sin or blunder committed against him.

"Anyhow," she quieted her conscience with, "if it was so awful important he can come over and tell her himself. And if he finds out she didn't get it, I'll go home with Jinny Hicks and stay till they've fixed it all right, and by that time he won't care."

And so Rob waited in vain for Jimmy Tibbs—Farmer Meadows's chore boy—whose tow head and freckles he would have hailed as a welcome vision that day. He cherished a feeble hope until after dark.

"It's just possible," he said, loth to resign himself to his doom, "that Tillie forgot to give her the note, or something. I'll step in there for a minute, and I'll know mighty quick by the looks how things air."

So Rob stepped in, and ran against Tillie in the passage way, on her way to the kitchen.

He clutched her by the arm.

"Tillie," said he, "did you give it to her?"

And Tillie laid up future worry for herself by telling a flat fib, as the only way of dodging an immediate scolding.

"Did she say anything?" queried Rob, anxiously.

"No! Let go, Rob!" said Tillie, twisting her arm away and darting off. The door of the dancing room swung open, and Rob could see in. A quadrille was in progress, in which Charity—having concluded that he was not coming—was dancing spiritedly with Jake Hargood.

A couple of young fellows arriving at that moment swept Rob into the room, and the swinging door concealed him.

Jake and Charity were not far away, but had their backs toward him.

"They say Rob Redwood's goin' off to furrin parts," said some one in the pause of the dance. "Is that so, Charity?"

"I suppose it is," replied Charity, coolly.

Rob slipped from the shadow of the door and walked out unobserved.

"Rob Redwood's gone to the Indies," was the news Charity heard two days later. It was Aunt Hulda Pitcher who brought it. "For a whole year," she added. "His uncle made him promise to stay that long, if he come at all, an' I reckon he will."

"A year—a whole year?" went echoing through Charity's head.

How would the world seem without any Rob Redwood for a whole year—twelve months—three hundred and sixty-five days?

She went into a brown study over the matter, while her mother and Aunt Hulda talked on indifferently about the fall soap making, preserving, quilt-piercing, etc.

"I've got a awful nice new pattern of a quilt," Aunt Hulda was saying. "Hit's called the Calendar—takes three hundred and sixty-five squares to make it. Better sen' an' git the pattern, Charity."

"Maybe I will," answered Charity.

"Rob don't care for me—not a bit," said Charity, that night. "He wouldn't have gone off this way if he did. And I'll be a fool if I don't marry Jake Hargood if he asks me. But then," she added, half ruefully, "I always was a fool?"

In proof of which she flatly refused Jake Hargood when he did ask her. And she borrowed Aunt Hulda's quilt pattern, and straightway set to work piercing her "Calendar" quilt, making only one square a day, and remarking to herself as she finished each one:

"One day less to wait. Not," she added, shaking her head, dismally, "that it'll do me ary good when the

time is up. If he didn't care for me then, he won't now. But it'll be a comfort to know it when he's home again."

There were several squares yet to be pierced before the quilt would be finished, when word came to the Redwoods that Rob would be home in three days.

"Just the day of that quilting last year," said Charity, all in a nervous flutter. "I'll hurry and finish this right off, and have a quilting the very same time; and maybe Rob'll come to this one."

She got out her invitations in a tremendous hurry, pressed Aunt Hulda into immediate service to get the requisite amount of cooking done for the occasion, and devoted herself to the finishing of her quilt.

"Rob'll be home to-morrow morning, sure," said Tillie, who had run over the day before the quilting to render Charity what assistance she might. "We had a telegram. Uncle's coming, too, to start an establishment here and take Rob into partnership. He'll be awful rich—Why, Charity Meadows, what are you ripping up that lovely basket quilt for?"

"Have to," answered Charity, "to get the cotton for my new quilt. The store was plum out, and wouldn't get any before next week; and besides, I never could bear the sight of this quilt. I wanted to get rid of it—Look a-here, Tillie, how do you reckon a letter got inside of it? Why, it's sealed, and it's for me, an—Oh, Tillie, it's from Rob, as sure as you live!"

Charity tore it open with breathless eagerness, while Tillie looked on, scarlet and apprehensive.

"Charity," said she, "it must 'a fell out of my handkerchief that day when we was putting on the top of the quilt. Rob did give it to me for you, but I lost it, and didn't want to tell you nor him; and I didn't s'pose it would make a sight of difference."

"It's kept Rob and me apart for a whole year," said Charity, almost breaking into a sob.

"Oh," said Tillie, remorsefully, "I never s'posed 'twas that! I—I thought 'twas your flirting with Jake Hargood did the harm, an' dancin' so hard with him that night. Rob was there, and seen it; but he sayed afterward I shouldn't tell he was there. An' I just 'lowed all along 'twas Jake made him get mad an' go off. I s'pose," added Tillie, faintly, as Charity read her note again, with dewy eyes and flushed, dimpled cheeks, "that Rob's got to know all about it now."

"I reckon he has!" said Charity, in a tone that left no room for doubt.

And so, the next afternoon, Rob Redwood, smoking his pipe on the porch of his ancestral halls, was startled by the vision he had looked so eagerly and so vainly that day a year ago—of Jimmy Tibbs, freckled and tow-headed as of yore, scrambling over the fence and making toward him, flourishing a note.

"Good land!" quoth Mrs. Redwood, as she looked out of the window, shortly afterward, "Whatever's the matter with Rob? He's a-dancin' round there on the porch like as if he was a plum idi't."

Charity's quilting was a brilliant success this time, as far as she and Rob were concerned; and they never fell out again—at least not before they were married. And of all her house-keeping outfit, Charity most prizes her Calendar quilt.—Saturday Night.

An Odd Happening.

A lumber schooner which lately arrived at San Francisco reports an odd happening. When three days out from Gray's Harbor, on a dark night, there suddenly appeared in the west a huge meteor, which looked as large as the moon. It seemed to grow larger in size to the frightened watch on deck, and was apparently bearing down on the vessel. But it wasn't, or else no one would have lived to tell the tale. It passed across the bows and plunged into the sea, 300 yards away. An explosion took place, which was like a great clap of thunder, when the meteor struck the water, and then all became dark.—Atlanta Constitution.