

The Lincoln Courier.

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She Has No Husband.

'What is that figure on the dome?' inquired a female visitor of a Capitol guide yesterday.

'Liberty ma'am,' he replied with a tremulous, fifty-cent-an-hour politeness.

'Liberty?' she repeated with questioning scorn. 'And it's a woman.' 'Yes,' he responded humbly; 'but she ain't married, ma'am. Leastways her husband ain't never around.'—*Washington Star.*

Warned.

Mamma Julie—"Looky heah, Linkum, don't ye' nebbah ag'in lem me see yo' shinnin' up one ob dem telegram poles—mind dat!"

Linkum (aged 16)—"Why, mammy, whar's de ha'm?"

Mamma Julie—"Ha'm, boy? Yo' climb up dar so tech one ob dem wabs when hits full ob 'lectricitism en yo'! Come walkin' home dail—dars whar de ha'm is, my son!"

Papa—I hear you were a bsd girl to-day, and had to be spanked.

Small Daughter—Mamma is awful strict. If I'd a known she used to be a school teacher I'd a told you not to marry her.—*Rochester Jury.*

Stuck in a Hole.

Mamma—"Johnny, what's a year?" Johnny—"Three hundred and sixty-five days."

Mamma—"What's a day?" Johnny—"Twenty-four hours—and an hour's sixty minutes—and a minute is sixty seconds."

Mamma—"What is an instant?" Johnny—"An instant? An instant's a hole in the ground."

Mamma—"A hole in the ground? Why, how do you make that?"

Johnny—"My book says 'the dog fell in an instant.'"

A gentleman married a young lady because she behaved so admirably when, at dinner one day, the waiter soiled the front of a beautiful silk dress by spilling soup over it. She smiled and joked about it in so good-natured and calm a mood that he fell in love with and married her. Some time after their marriage he referred to the incident. She said she would never forget it as long as she lived. He told her that it was then he had made up his mind he would like to marry her. "Yes," she answered, I remember behaving very well about it at the time; but good gracious, you should have heard me when I got home that night."

From the Old Homestead.

MY ICELANDIC MAIDEN.

'Many happy returns of your birthday, Percy,' said the dear old gentleman who sat opposite me that morning at the breakfast table. The old gentleman was Lord Fairmount, my uncle, and I was Percy Tremayne, his adopted son and heir—age twenty-three, height six feet, general appearance passable. I had lived with him for the last eighteen years, and during those years he had never been able to persuade himself that my increase in age, height, or wisdom was at all sufficient to be taken any particular notice of. The custom of placing Christmas and birthday gifts under my napkin at the breakfast table was one to which he still firmly adhered, and, being accustomed always to fall in with his humor and make a pretense of infantine curiosity and eagerness on such occasions, I now lifted each corner and peeped, in a manner which must have been highly artistic, as it caused him to chuckle and rub his hands together with a show of the most lively satisfaction!

The 'find' was generally a check, but to-day something hard and boardy, instead of crisp and thin, greeted my fingers, and I drew out from its hiding place, somewhat to my astonishment, nothing more valuable than a large photograph of a beautiful schooner yacht, with the name 'Wave' engraved below on the margin. Astonishment, however, was soon lost in admiration, and, without even remembering to say 'thank you,' I exclaimed, heartily, 'By jove, she is a beauty!'

'What will you do with it, Percy?' asked Lord Fairmount, in the very tone of soft indulgence in which he had been used to make the same inquiry on occasions of half-crown presentations in my days of babyhood. I verily believe if it had been money, and I had carried on the delusion by answering, 'Buy thweats,' as I invariably answered long ago, he would not have been very much surprised.

'I suppose, sir, I shall hang it up in my dressing room,' I said. 'Ah, yes; you will hang the photograph up, of course, but what will you do with the thing itself? What will you do with the wave?' The situation burst upon me, and being rendered completely speechless by it, I allowed my uncle to continue uninterrupted.

'You see,' he explained, gently, 'the schooner was just a little too large to hide under your napkin, my boy, and so I had her photograph taken to put there instead. Any day you have a fancy to see her on the water rather than on paper you may take a run to Cowes.' She is there ready for you, crew and all. I got an old hand to choose the men, so you will be quite safe with them.'

Here I managed to stammer forth a poor attempt at thanks for this princely gift, but he talked on, presending not to hear me. 'She is eighty tons,' he said. 'I thought that would be large enough to take you anywhere you would want to go, and at the same time it is not too large. I always hated big, lumbering vessels myself,' and so on, and so on, winding up with a repetition of his first query: 'And now that you know all about it, Percy, what will you do with it?'

'I should like above all things to take a trip northward, sir; say to Iceland, but—' seeing a sudden look of sad gravity come over his face, I added quickly, 'if there is any other plan you would like better, you have only to mention it.'

'Nonsense, boy; nonsense! Your travels must be to suit yourself, not me. Go to Iceland by all means if you have a fancy, only take care you don't tumble into one of the geysers, that's all.'

'I thought you looked as if you didn't like the idea, uncle,' I said, feeling quite sure that his change of countenance was not for nothing, and anxious that his generosity to me should not be the cause of any annoyance to him. 'It was the sound of the name, child; only the sound of the name,

nothing more. I should be very glad that you went to—*Iceland, especially as I have been there myself.*

'Ah, I did not know that. I knew you had been yachting about Norway, but you never told me you had gone farther north.'

He muttered something about painful circumstances and remained silent for a short time, then, with an apparent effort to summon resolution, he volunteered an explanation, begging me at the same time never again to allude to anything that he might now tell me.

The gist of his sad little story was this: He had, as I already knew, married late in life, and, his young bride, having a fondness for roving, it was decided that, for at least a year or two, they should live on Lord Fairmount's yacht, traveling in her from place to place, according to his lady's wish. A winter in the south was succeeded by a summer in the north, and finally Lady Fairmount elected to pay a flying visit to Iceland. While lionizing in the interior of the island she was taken ill, and at a hospitable farm house, where she had intended only to stay another night, she and the young heir of Fairmount expired together. The heart-broken widower returned at once to England, which he never left again, and in a short time I, his sister's only son, was taken to fill the dead child's place.

My good uncle soon succeeded in persuading me that sad associations did not necessitate any objection to my meditated trip, and the upshot of it all was that, about the middle of June, I found myself, with a beautiful boat and a good crew, fairly on my way to Iceland.

I had to difficulty in finding two old friends ready and willing to accompany me—Ned Hamilton, a doctor who never practiced, and Frank Balfour, a barrister innocent of briefs.

Arrived at the harbor of Regkjavik, and having made acquaintance with the town and some of the kind-hearted inhabitants, we decided that the next thing to be done was to hire ponies and make an expedition to the geysers. Three days' impetuous traveling brought us to the goal of our desires, and all that now remained to be done was to wait for an exhibition of feeling on the part of the boiling fountains. However, like babies and inferior animals, they obstinately refused to show off just when most wanted, and so we had to pitch our tents and attend on their convenience.

After having waited for a couple of days one of the lesser springs showed signs of life, then became greatly excited, and finally condescended to do its very utmost for our entertainment. This was all very fine in its way, but it was an exhibition of the great geyser we had come to see, and we were fully determined not to move on without being satisfied. On the fourth day, however, I awoke to find myself afflicted with a very heavy cold, doubtless the result of overdozes of open air, and Ned Hamilton gravely declared his opinion that it was absolutely necessary I should sleep under a solid roof, for the next two or three nights at least. Accordingly, taking the guide with us, Balfour and I set off, late in the day, to ride to the nearest farmhouse, and, as Frank knew a few words of Icelandic and the guide a few words of English, they undertook between them to secure a good reception for me and make all necessary arrangements for my accommodation. However, very few efforts on their part were needed to bring about a hearty welcome from the good people of the farm, who, like all Icelanders, were only too glad of an opportunity to exercise hospitality, and who appeared highly pleased at the prospect of entertaining me, rejecting all offers of payment in a manner too decided to allow contradiction.

The family consisted of an old man and his wife and daughter. The two former were like any ordinary people of the farmer class in Iceland, not endowed with any great share of good looks, but neat

quiet, and kindly. Their daughter, Thora, was a creature cast in an entirely different mould—not that she did not possess the above characteristics as well as they, but she added to these others which awakened more admiration both in Balfour and myself than anything else we had seen in the country. She was a greater beauty than any we had ever met in London drawing-rooms and had as sweet and graceful a manner as the most perfect good breeding could have compassed.

We glanced involuntarily from the large rough hands of the father and mother to the delicate and shapely hands of the lovely girl, and stole covert looks at her small arched feet whenever her movements offered us a chance of admiring them. Her tall, slight figure was perfection, but her face—ah, that was the crowning attraction. What a face it was!—a pure, pale oval, with glorious, long-lashed eyes, dark hair growing low, in soft waves, over a smooth, white forehead, and a mouth and chin such as might have been the despair of all the artists in the world. I could not keep my eyes from following her, and at last, I think the old man must have noticed it, for, with a slight tremor in his voice, he bade her leave the room on some trifling errand, and until the evening meal was served she did not again return. Then she and her mother attended most assiduously on Balfour and myself, and, indeed, between the strange sensation of being served by an angel and our strenuous efforts to eat enough to satisfy our entertainers, neither of us felt altogether comfortable.

Having most heroically sacrificed his digestion to good manners, Frank Balfour took his leave, having arranged that I should appear at the camp early next morning, and he departed, cursing the luck which rendered him less liable to cold than his friend. I saw that it was expected I should at once retire for the night, and as I rose to go the daughter of the house immediately prepared to show me the way. I knew that this proceeding on the young lady's part was quite a customary thing, so that it surprised me more when the father, whose jealousy I had already noticed, laid his hand on her arm, apparently desiring her to remain with him, and at the same time signed to his wife to accompany me. My first feeling was one of disappointment, but on reaching the great chamber and understanding what the full programme was to be, I was conscious of nothing but deep thankfulness that the beautiful Thora's mother had taken her place.

She first laid beside my bed some provisions, which I knew I should be expected to consume before morning, and then proceeded to help me off with my coat and boots. Having got so far, I made a profusion of bows and, begging her to trouble herself no farther, wished her good-night impressively over and over again. It is probable that she did not understand me, and that, even if she did, she would have felt impelled to adhere to the customs of her country, but it seemed to me that the good woman was possessed with the same ideas as my uncle concerning my extreme youth and helplessness, for she insisted on divesting me of all my garments, and, having helped me into bed most carefully, kissed me soundly before taking her departure for good.

I felt that I would have died rather than have allowed Thora to act as my tire woman, but the kiss—ah! that, indeed, from her soft lips would have been something to dream of for many nights. I lay awake wondering whether custom would require that at any time—perhaps on the occasion of my departure—she should offer me such a salute, and then I fell asleep and dreamt many times that her lips were close to mine, but always before they touched the old man's hand thrust me back and separated us.

In the morning I was aroused by

a delicious sensation of something cool and soft resting against my face, and slowly opening my heavy eyes, I looked up to find bending over me the beautiful being who had filled my dreams, but alas! it was only her hand that had touched my forehead. She gave me one bright, bewildering smile, and saying a few words, whose meaning I supposed to be a hint that it was time to rise, glided from the room like a spirit and left me to my reflections, which, I need hardly say, were filled, as my dreams had been, with her wonderful loveliness.

On arriving at the camp I was assailed with a perfect storm of chaff by those two envious beggars, Ned and Frank, but it was my turn to laugh when Hamilton declared his intention of accompanying me back to the farm house when evening came, "just to make sure that my quarters were properly aired." Balfour had never ceased raving about Thora's beauty since the night before, and poor Ned's curiosity and natural love of the fair sex had completely got the better of him.

For three nights I slept at the farm house, returning every morning to our camp to watch the movements of the great geyser, which still persisted in a provoking quiescence, and during that time I never had the smallest chance of exchanging more words with Thora than civility required. The old man looked with extreme disfavor on my mild endeavors to advance my education in Icelandic by any conversation with his fair daughter, and on one occasion, when I tried to induce them all three to spend a day at the camp, his refusal was abrupt and almost rough.

My cold was now so much better that I felt it would be obtaining shelter under false pretenses to take advantage any longer of the kindness of these people, and so I made the old lady understand that I would not return again until I came to say a last farewell. She looked honestly distressed, and both she and her husband said a great deal—doubtless expressing their regret—not one word of which I understood. They accompanied me to the door and stood for a minute or two watching me as I walked away, but of Thora, to my great disappointment, I saw nothing just then. I had not gone very far, however, when I saw coming toward me a lithe, graceful figure, which, in so short a time, had grown wonderfully familiar, and I felt my heart give a great bound, the energy of which even surprised myself. It was Thora, fresh and fair as the morning whose sweet air she had come out to drink. I had not sufficient self-assurance to suppose that a suspicion of my departure could have prompted this early rambles, and I hastened to meet her with outstretched hands and a face which must have told its own tale of delight at the unexpected encounter.

She gave me time to stammer forth a morning salutation, which was, I knew, a horrible outrage on all rules of grammar and pronunciation, and then, looking up with a mixture of amusement and shyness in her dark eyes, asked: "Know you I can some words English speak—*et un peu Francois?*"

"Why did you not tell me this before?" I cried. "It would have given me such pleasure to hear you speak, to teach you more—to do anything, in fact."

"*Enc si quick,*" she interrupted, with an impatient little gesture of her hand. "To understand *n'est pas facile*. Talk plus slow."

I was quite willing to spend ten minutes over each word if I could but succeed in making her understand what delightful music to my ears was this extraordinary mixture of French and English, and by supplying a word of one language when that in the other seemed to puzzle her, I was soon made happy by finding myself in the midst of quite a flowing conversation. She explained to me that her 'education was made' by a learned lady from Regkjavik, who had been paid a great deal of money by her father

for spending two years in teaching her, during which time the learned lady had resided at the farm house! This of course, Thora added, with an air of great age, was a long time ago, and she had forgotten much of what she had learnt.

"*Mais now, I have long spoken—il faut that I go,*" she said, holding out her hand and looking, I thought, as if she were really a little sorry for the necessity.

"Will you give me that as a souvenir?" I asked, fixing covetous eyes on a little bunch of bright ribbon that pretended to fasten her bodice—it could only have pretended, because when she took it away and laid it in my hand the bodice remained quite as fast as before.

I must have said or done something extremely foolish next—probably I kissed the little crimson loops—for her sweet face colored, and, turning away without another word, she walked quickly in the direction of the farm house, and, having watched her until she had passed out of sight, I set off towards the camp in a tremendous hurry, to make up for time which could not however exactly be called lost.

"You see," said Hamilton, as I made my appearance in the tent, "we went to breakfast without you; we thought you must have arranged to spend the last morning with your friends. Didn't she wake you in time to-day?"

Taking no notice of this facetious inquiry, I announced myself extremely hungry, and was about to begin on the fragments of the feast, when—just in time to save the credit of my assertion—in rushed the guide, in a state of high excitement, to tell us that the long-expected event had come at last—the great geyser was about to perform!

We all hurried off to the basin in less time than it takes to tell, and there our ears were greeted by the welcome sound of subterranean thunder and our eyes delighted by certain troubles and significant movements in the pool. Suddenly, before our minds had time to prepare themselves for the possible grandeur of the coming spectacle, there arose a wonderful mass of water to a height of about twelve feet, which, having burst and fallen, was quickly succeeded by a number of silver columns wrapped in brilliant vapor, springing upward and upward—seeming to our excited imaginations to dash themselves against the bright sunlit sky with the despairing energy of a brood of baffled giants. Having exhausted themselves, they sank to rest again almost as suddenly as they had arisen, falling back into their deep holes, there to remain for a time, gathering fresh strength for their next outbreak.

At first we stood staring at one another with a mixture of awe, astonishment, and extreme gratification in our countenances, and then—greedy for more beauty and excitement—we turned by common consent towards one of the lesser geysers, determined to rouse its anger by insisting on its swallowing large doses of soda which we employed ourselves by tearing from the ground.

Just as we had elicited a faint growl from the provoked spirit of the pool, another cry from the guide announced that a smaller spring was about to begin action, and in our mad scramble for a first sight of it some chance (although I have always really and firmly believed that some well-disposed attendant sprite must have given me a push on that occasion) caused me to slip, and I fell heavily to the ground, with one leg doubled under me, and lay there quite unfit for further active service.

[Concluded next Week.]

"My wife is the most ingenious woman who ever lived," said Jones. "I believe you," returned Smith, politely. "But you don't know why you believed me," intimated Jones. "To tell the truth I don't," replied Smith, looking bored. "Well, I'll tell you. We've been married twelve years, and lived in the same house all the time, and this morning she found a new place to hide my slippers."

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