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A LAUGH IN CHURCH.

She sat on the sliding cushion,
The dear, wee woman of four;
Her feet, in their shiny slippers,
Hung dangling over the floor,
She meant to be good; she had promised,
And so, with her big, brown eyes,
She stared at the meeting-house windows
And counted the crawling flies.

She looked far up at the preacher,
But she thought of the honey-bees
Droning away at the blossoms
That whitened the cherry trees.
She thought of a broken basket,
Where, curled in a dusky heap,
Three sleek, round puppies, with fringy ears
Lay snuggled and fast asleep.

Such soft, warm bodies to cuddle,
Such queer little hearts to beat,
Such swift, round tongues to kiss
Such sprawling, cushiony feet;
She could feel in her clasping fingers
The touch of the satiny skin,
And a cold, wet nose exploring
The dimples under her chin.

Then a sudden ripple of laughter
Ran over the parted lips
So quick that she could not catch it
With her rosy finger-tips.
The people whispered, "Bless the child,"
As each one waked from a nap,
But the dear, wee woman hid her face
For shame in her mother's lap.

—Sam Walter Foss.

A Bookworm's Love Story.

DAY after day, for some months, I had sat in near company of a young girl in the British Museum, who, without being beautiful, was the possessor of infinite charm. Whether she worked so energetically for the mere love of the thing or from necessity I could not tell. I chose, however, to fancy her the help of a widowed mother who on slender means had perhaps still younger lives than my fellow worker's to give her anxieties. Suffice it to say, on this point, my near fellow worker labored with zest, and often her example inspired my own somewhat flagging efforts; I found myself possessed of an unconquerable desire to make her acquaintance, yet I could not summon the necessary courage to address her.

A cold but bright day in January found me on my way to interview a notable member of Parliament, with the hope to secure through his aid a ticket for the House of Commons.

I had proceeded as far as the top of Charing Cross Road, when I bethought me to take a 'bus. I became an "inside." There was but one other occupant—a lady.

Presently the conductor's voice startled us both; the lady turning about revealed to me the well known face of "my lady" of the reading room.

The conductor's call upon us for "Fares, please!" together with the suddenness of mutual recognition, had rather flustered us. Presently a vivid blush spread over her face, as she plaintively gave the conductor to understand she had left her purse and money at home.

The collector of fares was somewhat inclined to be coarse and offensive, as he remarked:

"Ho, I dessay; that's a tale wot ain't good enough for me. I've bin 'ad that way afore to-day. Wot are yer goin' to do?"

At this juncture I deemed it advisable to expostulate, warning him that it was no part of his duty to be uncivil. Then I begged the lady's permission to settle so trifling a matter, at the same time pointing out to her that the fact of our being fellow workers at the British Museum would at least privilege me in so small a service.

"That is fortunate," she replied. "Thank you so much. May I ask your name?" I gave it "Richard Athelstane."

"Thank you so much, Mr. Athelstane. I am Eunice Frith."

After delivering herself of this gracious bit of information she departed on her way, leaving me in a seventh heaven of delight. For was not the ice now broken?

At the period of my first interest in Eunice Frith I was busily engaged in efforts to graft in some manner the American family of Shaddee upon the parent stock in England. It was a work of great wearisomeness.

On the next occasion of my meeting with Miss Frith the merest form of greeting followed. As she handed me the bronze obligation, her renewal of thanks was accompanied by the faintest change of color, but her words, "You were very kind to help me out of my dilemma," left no opening for extension of an acquaintance so auspiciously begun. Our sittings were within one of each other. We took them, and thus far there was the end. She evidently knew full well the existence of the rule of "silence" which the superintendent [illegible] the time ever strives so energetically to enforce.

Eunice Frith, whether or no she divined that I desired a closer acquaintance, never bargained for the catastrophe, which though it brought fear and trembling for awhile to her, won for me the "open sesame" I had so longed for.

In a week's time we were on speaking terms, within a month an acquaintanceship had ripened marvellously. Gradually we came to understand each other. We sat side by side, the dividing chair separated us no longer.

Then the time came when she assented to my invitation to drink tea with me in the gallery room. Over that delicious Souchong we chatted freely. She spoke to me of her mother—an invalid; of her brother—a clerk in a banking house. I gathered that the united earnings of these young people represented nearly the whole of the wherewithal of their otherwise happy little home.

My work of pedigree creating had palled sadly upon me for some time, and I began to think living among the bones—so to speak—of departed nobodies, far from exhilarating.

Once it happened Eunice's mother accompanied her to the British Museum. As they were descending the stairway from the galleries, I was passing through the hall. Eunice introduced me to her mother, and we remained in conversation for the best part of an hour, when Mrs. Frith suddenly remembered her doctor's instructions not to "try herself too much," and pronounced for home. To her alarm, on our arrival at the vestibule of the Museum, it was raining smartly. Once again luck favored me. My umbrella, a property which nine days out of ten I left at home, proved a ready friend for once. Under its shelter Mrs. Frith reached her 'bus in comparative dryness. I offered it to her. "Oh, no, Mr. Athelstane, I won't deprive you," she said.

But my insistence carried the day, and suggested that Eunice might find it useful in the morning. That young lady, however, declared she "had one of her own."

Mrs. Frith settled the question by saying:

"I will take it, Mr. Athelstane, on condition that you will bring Eunice home this evening, and join us at our little tea dinner, and then, you see, you can take possession of your umbrella." To this I consented.

After leaving Eunice and her mother I returned to the reading room, intending to put in an hour or two of work, but in this I was frustrated by the receipt of a telegram, which announced the serious illness of my father and desired my early attendance at his side.

Here was a call that brooked no inattention. I showed the wire to Eunice and begged her to express to her mother my regrets, and bidding her what was intended to be an impressive "Good-by," left for my home at Wells, in Norfolk.

Little did I think that two long years would elapse before I again set eyes on Eunice Frith.

I was away in Norfolk for some three months, my father's condition varying to such an extent, owing to frequent relapses, as left me no alternative but to stay with him. I was his second son, my brother Christopher being two years my senior; our mother had been dead many years.

My father had been dead some six weeks, during which period I had been busying myself in the administration of his little estate and winding up my enforced rest from pedigree hunting and other such trifles, when the great change in my life began. The African mail brought me a letter from my brother Christopher, or rather from a friend of his, acting as amanuensis. Christopher had met with a very serious accident in the mine. Most of his ribs had been broken, and the doctors feared that much internal laceration had also taken place. Chris was anxious to see me, fearing a fatal ending. Would I come at once to Kimberley? He had also enclosed a draft for $500 to cover traveling expenses, and in case the world had not used me kindly.

To pack up my traps was but short work, and the old home I left in charge of a maiden aunt.

After I had booked my passage I had a few hours to spare. These I spent in a vain search for Eunice Frith. I could hear no tidings at the house where they had lived. The landlady only knew they had left—gone, she thought, into "unfurnished" rooms.

I did not feel easy on the matter, but I hoped for the best, and made my way to a hotel near Waterloo whence I had to start the next morning on my first venture beyond the white cliffs of old England.

The Castle liner on which I had taken my passage did her voyage well and rapidly. The succeeding day to that on which I landed in Cape Town saw me being transferred, as rapidly as a South African railway can manage it, northward. I arrived too late. Poor Chris had gone to the bourne whence none return.

His lawyer met me soon after my arrival, condoled with me, and eulogized poor Chris's many virtues. He said that my brother had been a most successful man up to a certain point. But lately owing to—to—er—scruples, he had been placed at a disadvantage. Still, he remarked:

"Still, Mr. Athelstane, your brother died pretty warm. His personality, I should say—well, let me see—er, well—is quite $350,000."

I explained that my brother had never confided either to his father or myself the degrees of success which he had attained.

"Indeed, sir," I added, "we know very little about his South African career. I presume he has a wife and—children?"

"Not so, sir. Your brother lived a very retired life, rarely joining in any of the many functions our citizens delight in. He was a good man, and a charitable one."

"Charitable?" I questioned. "Then I presume he has left large sums to your local institutions and hospitals?"

"No, sir; not a penny."

"Then to whom does his money revert? Surely he did not die intestate?"

"Not a man in the world less likely to do so. No, sir, you are a happy man. By will—here it is, sir, in black and white—'all that I die possessed of I leave to my brother, Richard Athelstane, to be by him used and disposed of as may appear best to his own good and charitable disposition.'"

I was not inordinately puffed up by this sudden acquisition of wealth. One thing flashed first upon my mind, and that was that I should be for ever done with my old occupations. No more grinding and paragraphs. No more pulling about the dead and gone ancestors of mighty present-day pork butchers.

No more of ill-ventilated reading rooms, whether under red tap or otherwise. I should live in Utopia. To do this, I deemed it wise and best to return to England. In due course, I arrive in London, and at once went back to the scene of my old struggles, the British Museum. It seemed as if I could not keep away. "Why did I go there?" you ask. To look for Eunice, or, maybe, get some news of her. But no, I could learning nothing; and it came into my mind that I had seen the last of Eunice Frith.

I had been one evening at King's Cross station to inquire after a package I had transmitted. I made a short cut back in the direction of Russell Square, when my attention was drawn to a knot of children on the pavement. At first I could see nothing, but as I drew near I noticed one or two articles of furniture, with a box or two corded over.

"One of those hateful cases of distraint—some poor, lone, aged widow," I thought to myself. Even as I looked, a poor, worn woman, yet neat and tidy withal, looked up, her face by its pained expression, telling a tale of woe. Where had I seen that face before? I had not gone on my way many steps before my recollection cleared. I hastened back to the forlorn creature, and pushing my way to her side asked in an undertone:

"Are you not Mrs. Frith—Eunice's mother?"

"Yes, oh, yes! But you—who are you?"

Before I could make reply, another figure appeared on the scene. Eunice herself—but, great heavens! how changed that face had become. In its thinness and wanness even the mother's sank into nothingness, as in heart-tones she gasped:

"Oh, mother, mother! Have they turned you out like this? I came as soon as I knew the state of affairs."

Then she caught sight of me, knew me at once, as I could see, and drew shyly back.

I held out my hand to her, saying:

"You know me, Miss Frith. You are in trouble. Your mother cannot remain here, you must come with me."

In the twinkling of an eye I had put Mrs. Frith and her daughter inside of a growler, and jumping on the box told cabby to drive to King's Cross station.

In one of the waiting rooms I heard the painful story my friends had to tell. Eunice's brother had lapsed from the direct course. In their endeavors to rescue him their small capital of hardly earned savings had melted like snow before the sun.

A new home was soon found for them. Money can do that. I begged them to let me be their banker until such time as Eunice's health was completely restored. Their common sense was equal to the occasion, and they showed it by accepting my offer. A month's perfect rest in town, another at the seaside, soon mended the health of these broken ones, more than ever dear to me. My old home in Norfolk forms a peaceful haven of rest for Mrs. Frith. At present Eunice is with her. If I am lucky, there will be a bridal ceremony in the village church before I return to town.—New York News.

HONEYMOON HOTELS.

How Brides and Bridegrooms Are Looked After in Europe.

The latest feature is the equipment of the first class hotel is the provision of special honeymoon suites, says the London Express.

Many of the best hotels in London now have these sets of rooms specially furnished to suit the tastes of young brides and bridegrooms.

The rooms are superbly decorated and adorned with delecate wall coverings and rich brocades. The floors are laid with faint colored carpets, and the furniture is mostly of dainty Sheraton, Chippendale, or Louis periods.

Antique shapes in chairs, sofas and secretaires are used, and art collectors, esthetic people, and others who are fastidious about their surroundings invariably choose these suites.

The color scheme of the whole set of rooms is often of one shade, and it is a curious fact that rose color is the favorite.

The recent vogue for striped wall papers has subsided a good deal, and the newest idea is to hang the rooms with a flat-colored paper of delicate tint, at the top of which a deep and elaborately moulded frieze of white plaster forms the main wall decoration.

On this are hung old French prints, Watteau copies, or, in some, Sauber originals, all framed with gilt mouldings, while old-fashioned ormolu girandoles of the Louis periods hold the electric lights, shaded to harmonize with the other color effects.

Ceilings are treated in a wonderful manner, the background representing sky, with masses of white clouds, while trails of roses are frequently painted in as a border.

For these apartments the carpets are all specially woven to harmonize, and the wall papers in many cases are expressly designed and copyrighted by the hotels.

The china tea services in use are of the most exquisite patterns, mostly copied from a Sevres or Dresden model, and the silver is also fit for a queen.

At a certain West End caravansary a splendid electric car, with light upholsterings, is available for the millionaire bridegroom, who wants to do his honeymoon in a regal way, and it is astonishing how great the demand has been this season for this special car.

IN RETROSPECT.

One was a stately damsel on literature intent;
Two was a sprightly maiden of a rather domestic bent;
Three had a pensive yearning for Ibsen things and "sich;"
Four had her charm by proxy (papa was very rich);
Five was a college girlie—captained her baseball nine—
Six weighed a hundred and forty (the one whom he asked to dine);
Seven could waltz divinely, looked like a poster girl;
Eight had a fetching dimple and an over-the-shoulder curl;
Nine had a nose patrician, but an irritating walk;
Ten balked at conversation, but could make a piano talk;
Eleven was sympathetic, laughed at his oldest jokes;
Twelve was refined and pretty, but he couldn't "stand for her folks;"
Thirteen — unlucky lady — had never a charm, 'tis said,
But out of a "baker's dozen" she was the one he wed.

—Anna Marble, in the New York Times.

Stella—"How does Jack make love?" Bella—"Well, I should define it as unskilled labor."—Life.

"The fact is, my husband doesn't seem to know his own mind." "Oh, that's a very small matter."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

He once was making money,
Much more than he could use;
Detectives caught him at it,
And now he's making shoes.
—Philadelphia Press.

"Ferdy's rich uncle must be dead; he's cracking jokes at libitum." "Yes; and must have left him lots of money; everybody is laughing at them."—Puck.

"A French savant says that borrowing is a disease," remarked Mifkins. "Yes," rejoined Bifkins, "and he might have added that lending is insanity."—Chicago Daily News.

"One o' de sad things 'bout dis life," said Uncle Eben, "is dat it's so much easier to depend on de enmity ob yoh enemies dan on the friendship ob yoh friends."—Leslie's Weekly.

"What's this?" screamed the tank-drama actor. "My pay is $4 short." "Eight baths at fifty cents," blandly replied the manager; "six nights and two matinees."—Newark News.

Skids—"Did your friend, Chesteriss McRanter, the tragedian, enjoy his vacation?" Scads—"I can't say as to whether he enjoyed it or not, but the public did."—Baltimore American.

Said the widow, a pretty young Mrs.
"Sir, I really don't know what a krs."
Then the bold man in haste
Put his arms 'round her waist
And exclaimed: "My dear madam, thrs."
—New Yorker.

"Oh, I've got a winner—something absolutely new!" cried the playwright. "What's that?" "A fat villain that smokes a pipe instead of the customary cigarette kind."—Chicago Evening Post.

"Do you think our forefathers set up an enduring republic?" "I should say they did. And it's enduring a whole lot more than they ever thought it would have to, I'll bet."—Chicago Record-Herald.

"Yes," said Miss Howells, after her solo, "I intend to go abroad to finish my musical education." "Huh!" snorted Miss Gowells, "why not finish it right now, and save the expense?"—Philadelphia Press.

Funniman—"He's undergoing a species of voice training, I believe, to fit him for his political work." Jenkins—"Voice training?" Funniman—"Yes. He's training his 'voice of conscience' to keep still."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Henley—"So you liked my brother's singing at the vaudeville show last evening? And yet some people say he can't sing at all!" Bentley—"He can't. That's what makes it so interesting when he tries to."—Boston Transcript.

Dashaway—"A few short hours ago I was sitting with a girl, telling her she was the only one in all the world I ever loved, and so forth, and so forth." Cleverton—"And she believed you, didn't she?" "How could she help it? Why, I believed it myself."—Life.

Sydney's Railway System.

The most complete street railway system in the Southern Hemisphere is said to be located at Sydney, New South Wales. While the system has not been completely electrified, there being a few reminders of the past in the shape of cable and steam trams, the conversion of these modern electric systems is being carried on rapidly.