

"THAT LITTLE HAT."

I find it in the garden path, Its little crown half full Of wild flowers; where is the rogue Who dared my roses pull? I find it on the roadside there, The flowers tossed away. And in the crown, packed carefully, A load of stones and clay.

I find it in the daisied field, Hidden in the clover, Inspected by the wandering bees. And crawled by insects over, I find it on the old barn floor, Or in the manger resting, Or swimming from the beams above, Where cooing doves are nesting.

I find it 'neath my busy feet Upon the kitchen floor, Or lying midway up the stairs, Or by my chamber door. I find it in, I find it out, 'Neath table, lounge, or chair; The little, shabby, brimless thing, I find it everywhere.

But on the curly, golden pate For which alone 't was meant, That little restless, curly head, On mischief always bent, Oh, baby boy, this problem solve, And tell me darling, whether Your roguish pate and this old hat Were ever seen together.

Serial.

JIM, THE PARSON.

Author of "Brightside," "Hilda and I," "Glenarchan," etc.

BY E. REDELL BENJAMIN.

CHAP. X.—MR. HOGEBOOM.

The warm days continued, and Kate did not look for her missing dress, so she was very naturally surprised at the gift from Mrs. Ray of an entire trousseau. I wish to represent Kate as above the wild enthusiasm shown on the dress question; but truth obliges me to state that the inconsistencies of her character were as evident here as in other points. She expressed her delight in a choice selection of those extreme exclamations of admiration, which dress alone inspires. You may be sorry, but so it was.

There are those who would have deferred the marriage, rather than omit the preparations; so Kate may be pardoned, when we consider the importance of the matter is so great that young girls have married for the sake of the trousseaus, accepting the husband as a key to a trunk.

Mrs. Ray's gift was but the beginning of a torrent of articles of possible or impossible value, to testify the love of the people for their pastor. Among the unique selections was a tame crow from a crippled child, white mice from a lame boy, a pair of rabbits, a Newfoundland dog, a peacock from a farmer's wife, and various articles of furniture from those who made them.

One afternoon, Kate was at the future parsonage consulting with May when the hardware wagon drove up, adding a snow-shovel and garden-rake to all the other things.

The boy who brought them dragged a mouse trap from his pocket, presenting it with much shyness. "Tain't much, you know; but mother says they're dreadful handy to have in the house."

Kate thanked him with a becoming composure rather hard to retain during May's cough.

"May, I entreat?" exclaimed she; "do not make it harder for me; our presents are so remarkable, I cannot keep my face straight."

"The mouse-trap is just what we want," she returned, "we can experiment on the crow and white mice; it will save poison. Here is Job Beers with something else."

"Please, sir," said Job, "I'd like to give you sumfin, an' I hain't nothin' but my billigut."

"Your—what, my boy?" asked Mr. Thornton.

"My billigut; he is real good in a sled. I know you'd be kind to him;" and two red fists were screwed into two equal red eyes.

"My dear boy, perhaps you had better not part with your—your—what is it?"

"He ain't no it—he's a he," nearly sobbed the boy. "He's a real beauty too."

"Don't cry; I will be very kind to him—but is he a dog?" "No—a billigut! Didn't you never see one! There's billiguts, and manni-guts. Nanniguts gives milk and billiguts don't."

May's cough recommenced, but Mr. Thornton rose to the occasion.

"Yes, yes; I understand. I am very much obliged. It is so good in you to make a sacrifice for me. Now, suppose you keep him for me: it will be a great favor. Then when I want to use him to a sled you can drive him for me—will you not?" "I reckon!" said the delighted boy.

"I will have to trust you to buy the food for him, and will pay you for keeping him: here is a dollar; you must keep an account of how you spend it."

A happier boy than Billigut's former master could not be imagined. It had been a hard struggle for him to give up his only pet; but Mr. Thornton had been very kind to him through a long illness, and the boy wanted to show his gratitude. This happy turn of affairs was a great puzzle to him, as he thought it over.

"I gived him tew him, an' he tuk him; an' I's got him, an' he's got him; I'm to keep him, an' he's ter have him; it beats all natur'! He's to pay the feedin', so there won't be no more blowin' 'bout that. I won't take no money for keepin' of him; that 'ud be meaner than pussely. It's a kind of double-fisted, double-barrelled bargain! I don't see it right clear; it's just like the Parson—when he touches a thing, it's all right."

As he disappeared, May explained to Kate, who had no idea what sort of an animal was under discussion. "A goat, my dear; I know 'billigut' in a minute; it took me back to my early experiences in Third Avenue. Both a billigut and a manningit resided in a yard in that distinguished locality. I had to let Jim find out for himself; his expressions was delicious."

"It was a good thought to make the boy keep it; perhaps we can dispose of the crow and the mice in the same way; we certainly have too many animals."

"Rather," said May, drily. "And before any one sacrifices some pet rattlesnake or sea-serpent on this matrimonial altar, you had better go for your walk."

"Even Mr. Thornton's gravity succumbed to the necessities of the situation, and their walk was a merry one. Kate pictured their making parochial visits in Job's sled, with their two-horned steed, and had a thousand comical fancies for the use of the other gifts. It was impossible that afternoon to make any arrangements for the ceremony; Kate was not in the mood. Fortunately, there were two days yet; and on one of them, the "conspirators," as May called all concerned, planned the whole affair so that there could be no possibility of any mistake.

"You know, Jim, it would be dreadful if you married the wrong person, or if Kate endowed you with her worldly goods; do be patient while we instruct you." So the chief actors listened to all directions—and went off for a final talk, forgetting they heard them.

CHAP. XI.—"TILL DEATH US DO PART."

Of course, in a story like this, a simple detail of every-day life, the wedding-day was clear as crystal—just warm enough, and just cool enough. Of course the birds, Kate's nearest relatives, were wild about it all. They flew around in the merriest way, resuming the whirl-wind of song which they had dropped after the fireworks of Independence Day. It all began over again, and the "old, old story" was sung from "five o'clock in the morning," to the last stroke of the wedding peal. Of course the church was hung with flowers, and filled with delicate perfumes, till Araby the blest could have been no more fragrant.

Kate passed the morning in her room, singing in a low voice to herself, or pausing as the events of her life came back to her in review. At eleven she began her toilette, putting on her white crape dress in a reverie. Then Aunt Alice appeared, to arrange the cloud of tulle, which falling around her like a dream, gave the requisite air of mysticism. When she was dressed Mrs. Ray held her off and looked at her; her eyes filled with tears as she exclaimed, "My Kate, my darling! My home angel! Kate of my consolation! No words

can tell what I feel in parting with you." Unable to say more she hastened away.

Calm, fair, exceeding lovely, Kate met Mr. Thornton in the hall. The effects of tulle were unknown to him; he started as if he saw a vision. She held out her hand; its touch and her whispered word words restored his sense; but he told her afterwards that he could not overcome the fear that she would take some sudden flight and escape him. The church was full to its utmost capacity—hardly a pathway up the aisle. The stillness was intense, so that none lost the solemn words that made James and Kate man and wife. The organ pealed out its joyous music, and the pastor and his wife, turning to the people, waited while all present came to speak to them.

At the church-door Billigut and his master were standing. Job was raised to a region of bliss, by Kate's stopping to pat the goat with her dainty glove. "I know'd she would," exclaimed the boy. "It's his'n, her's an' his'n. I keeps him for 'em."

"Kate," said her husband, when they were in the cars, "do you know you have never asked me where we are going for our journey?" "I have trusted my future to you," she returned in a low voice.

"Thank you, my own precious one. I have ventured to plan for one month; but when I tell you, you must decide for, or against."

"I will bring my deepest philosophy to bear on the subject," she said, turning a bright glance to him.

"Then if you have the slightest wish of changing the programme, will you tell me?"

"I will; and that is my second promise to-day."

"First, then, to New York, to see the church where little May became the arbiter of our fortunes, and where my Kate felt the first interest in my sister. Then to Philadelphia for one day; and then to D—, where Richard will meet us at the station, and Sarah will welcome us to the parsonage. It has been my one extravagance to keep it exactly as we left it, till I could take my bride there to pass her honeymoon."

"Nothing could be more perfect," was the answer.

"May has been my confidante in this, and if your countenance had suffered one shadow, I would not have told you—she is bound to inviolable secrecy."

"It is fortunate for me that my face was good enough to express my feelings, else you would have had a secret from your wife, and May would have lived a guilty accomplice," laughed Kate.

On the third day they reached D—. At the depot, Richard was waiting; he was older, but no less vigorous than when he lifted "Master Jeems" into the carriage so many years before. He could hardly speak for joy, and Kate felt as if he were an old friend.

When they drove to the gate, the sun was touching the topmost ivy; the birds' evening song was over but the old home looked out cheerfully from below its heavy crown of clustering vines. The windows were all open, and through them a glimpse of a tea-table gave the touch of domesticity, that comes like a prophecy of happiness into the most romantic of bridal tours. Sarah was a portly dame now, and with her gray hair and carefully-arranged cap, stood in the doorway, ready to give master Jeems and his wife a warm and true welcome.

"You are no stranger too me, Sarah," said Kate, as she followed the old servant to the guest-chamber, so long ago prepared for her husband. Whereupon Sarah began, and if she had not remembered the condition of the tea-kettle, would have given an entire history of the family then and there.

Mr. Thornton's heart was to full for speech; but Kate, in her perfect sympathy, could express for him all he would say, and yet brighten for him the life-picture which he too often painted in shadow.

Tea was served in Sarah's best fashion, and after it they went to the room where stood the table with the

open Bible, the music-book on the organ, and the knitting on the sofa, where the "vanished hand" had laid it.

"For the last year," said Mr. Thornton, "May played the hymn at prayer-time; our grandfather could not keep to the theme. I have wished for a picture of the old man at his organ, rapt in the beauty of his own creations. We have portraits of both. In this one of my grand mother, the lids droop over the sightless eyes as if she were looking at her work. In this, the eyes have my grandfather's far-off look. I fancied, when a boy, that he was gazing into heaven; now that I am a man, I know the boyish thought was true."

"I cannot bear to have anything in the room moved," said Kate, with tears in her eyes.

"Now that you have seen it all, it is better that it should come into our present life," he said, gently. "There is just light enough for me to show you where we have laid them. Come."

In the churchyard the fading light lingered for a moment on a pure white stone: on it Kate read:

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heaven laden, and I will give you rest."

The next morning when Kate came down, the memorials had been removed, the organ was closed, her husband was seated beside the Bible table waiting her coming.

"I fear I have kept you waiting," she said.

"No, my darling, I am never ready till you come; one cannot wait till after he is ready," was the answer, its tone being itself a caress.

Kate opened the organ; and as Sarah and Richard entered, said:

"We must sing our praises together to-day. Do you know the morning hymn?"

"That we do," they said, feeling as if life had begun again. "We will be right glad to sing once more."

Kate's marvelous musical genius made a drama of whatever she played. She delighted in the organ; her sympathy with it, her power over what to a master seems its soil, brought out its response in loveliest tones. The old harmonies of Tallis seemed alive with song, even before her voice raised the grand soul-call. "Wake! and lift up thyself, my heart, And with the angels bear thy part, Who all night long unwearied sing, Glory to Thee, Eternal King!"

As they sang verse after verse, all were strangely impressed with the feeling that those who used to read the devotions in that room were uniting with them; Kate felt it so deeply that as the last strain ceased, she changed the key without breaking the chain of thought, and sang like one inspired, the unrivaled solo: "Therefore with angels and archangels, And with all the company of heaven, We laud and magnify Thy glorious name."

Mr. Thornton looked at her as if one of the angel choir had brought down a "cloud of glory, from heaven which was her home," and could scarcely control his emotions, or his voice to read the chapter he had chosen for the day. The one selected was the last one read by his grandfather. While the old man was reading, his voice had failed, and May, who was always beside him, took up the words: "Knowing that He which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also. . . and shall present us with you." As she went on, a satisfied look came in the far-reaching eyes of the old Christian, as if he had gained a glimpse of the glory-land. After the words—"The things that are not seen are eternal"—May heard a whispered "Amen."

It was the last word he ever spoke; they carried him to his room; May helped the slightest wife to an arm-chair by his side. In a few days after this, both had seen the "King in His beauty." The eyes were opened; the tongue was loosed.

No wonder Mr. Thornton's voice trembled, and Sarah and Richard wept again. But in the prayer of thanksgiving that followed, all became composed.

"It was your heavenly music that overcame me, Kate," said her husband; "but come to the present realities of Sarah's coffee and cakes; no more reminiscences of sorrow. I have ever so much to show you to-day."

After breakfast, like two happy children, they investigated the premises; everything had a story of early days. The rooster screamed his warning to his wives, just as his ancestor did when May tried to gain his friendship. "Kac-a-kaw-daw-dah-caw," was shrieked to his frightened harem, as his protective sides were sought.

"What idiotic chickens! May told me how they acted."

"Remarkable instance of hereditary fear," returned the Rev. James. "These must be descendants in the tenth generation of May's chickens."

They wandered by the river bank till called to an early dinner, ordered to give time for a long drive. The shaded room was a relief from the noonday light; and the wealth of Richard's garden was spread before them on the table. Sarah blandly remarked:

"The gardens in Yankee land can't hold a candle to our'n in Pennsylvania. Richard was up north one time, and he said it made his heart ache to see the watery vegetables folks eat. And the butter wasn't more nor less than a digrace."

"He never saw my garden; but I will yield to your butter—it is wonderful," said Kate.

"I was brought up on Sarah's bread and butter," meekly said Mr. Thornton. "The result is before you."

"Proved," laughed Kate; and yet Mr. Hogeboom said we had butter worthy of his dairy."

"Poor fellow, the pained look he gave me went to what was left of my heart."

But it is unjust to the present dignity of these then irresponsible beings to repeat the nonsense which they thought was conversation.

Kate intensely enjoyed her husband's jokes, and traitorously remembered them all for May's edification.

(To be Continued.)

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