

WHAT A BARE DECISION DID.

[CONCLUDED.]
 "No," said Kate, "what about?"
 "Why, there's to be a grand ball on Monday next at the Town Hall. Everybody will be there, so I came to what you intend to wear."
 "Oh, I suppose plain white; that be-
 comes me best."
 "Well, now mind, look your best, it, please! What is there worth dress-
 ing for in this place?"
 The evening came, and Mary
 ruler, who was asked to be
 belle, endeavored by every art to
 gain the attention of Harry Cullen,
 on his part felt flattered by her
 presence, little dreaming of the
 eyes that were watching his
 every action. He danced with her, and
 Kate, until suddenly he remembered
 the start, as if waking from a dream,
 at the magnetic spell of this girl's
 eyes and manner had so engrossed his
 as to make him entirely negligent
 of Kate. He hastened to her side, and
 the most winning manner, apologiz-
 ing for his long absence, but Kate was
 deeply hurt, at this sudden, strange
 section.
 Perhaps pride and jealousy had some-
 thing to do with it, for she had seen
 him so sorry to be the means of de-
 lving him of such pleasant company,
 it insisted on his leaving her. He
 plied her, but she, seeing the fair
 she had on his affections, was de-
 termined to punish him, for this one
 evening at least, by refusing to dance
 with him, and also by showing him
 that if he could flirt she had a perfect
 right to do the same.
 Twice during the evening she had
 and Charles Brandon's eyes fixed on
 her with a singularly pleased expression
 on his face, as if he had divined her
 true cause of trouble. In a short time
 came round to where she was, and
 led the pleasure of a dance.
 At another time she would have re-
 fused, but now—now was her opportu-
 nity for revenge. What better chance
 did happen to prove her spirit than
 dancing with his rival? She knew
 one two men hated each other on her
 account, and to gratify her anger she
 danced with Brandon, which act
 estranged her from Henry the remain-
 er of the evening.
 The next morning Harry Cullen, be-
 ing sad at heart, and yearning to make
 peace with Kate, determined to call
 on her; but, on consideration, thinking
 it would be advisable to give her time
 to recover from her bad humor, sent
 her a note instead, asking her forgive-
 ness, and intimating that he would see
 her that evening.
 Having despatched the note, he went
 to the woods for a stroll, with his
 gun and gun.
 Kate had spent an unhappy night;
 id dreams had disturbed her rest; the
 one of Brandon, as she had seen it,
 when she refused to become his wife,
 and even the remembrance of his
 one when dancing had caused unpleas-
 ant recollections. She fancied she had
 detected a malicious smile about the
 mouth.
 Then her quarrel with Harry. Would
 she even speak to her again, after the out-
 rageous manner in which she had treat-
 ed him? Could she accept it? Or could
 it justify her conduct?
 And, oh, how she loved him! It
 made her almost heart-sick to remem-
 ber how, in her vindictive anger, she
 had scornfully turned away from him,
 and at last found relief in a
 few tears. Finally, a knock came
 at the door. She listened intently and
 a soft, sweet voice, hoping against
 hope that it might be her darling
 Harry.
 But no, it was not his voice. The girl
 came and handed her a note. She
 glanced at the direction.
 Oh, joy! It was from Harry—her own
 Harry.
 Calmly and quietly she spent the day
 almost happy—reading his note over
 and over again, and longing intently
 for the evening, which, with its dark-
 ness, would usher in his beloved pres-
 ence.
 Never, to her imagination, did a day
 pass so long. The sun, with his
 powerful rays, did not seem to
 could the night would never appear.
 But hark! What crowd is that along
 the road? What is that they carry so
 lightly?
 She goes to the window and asks the
 formation from some boy. He
 informs her that it is the dead body of
 man found in the woods, killed by an
 accidental discharge of a gun.
 She shudders at the tale, and wonders
 how her sorrowing friends will bear the
 news. Perhaps he has a wife to mourn
 for him; perhaps some fond girl who
 has been heartbroken at the news.
 Having left the window, she hears the
 door, thinking herself stupid at not
 having inquired the name. Perhaps it
 might be some one known to her—when
 she was horror-stricken at seeing her
 Harry, pale and bleeding, carried by
 a deathlike swoon.
 When Kate returned to consciousness
 in the gloom and mystery of a lifetime
 seemed concentrated in that one mo-
 ment. Poor Kate Miller! The shock
 was dreadful. She thought she never
 could outlive that time in the sove-
 eign healer of all things, and in youth
 specially, months accomplish-
 ment cannot do in maturity.
 Reader, was she heartless? She never
 shed herself the question when she
 asked Charles Brandon for better, for
 worse. In less than one year after the
 day of that terrible suffering she
 came his wife.
 Years rolled on, bringing a greater
 amount of sorrow than joy to Kate
 Brandon. Little children nestled in
 her arms but for a short while, then
 were carried to their graves, and when
 she was left alone, and worn out
 and all, it had been a long warfare,
 she continued struggle, between her
 husband and herself—the indomitable
 spirit he could not conquer—the temper
 she could not tame. A good, devoted
 mother, an excellent housewife, but a
 companion, adviser, guide to her
 husband, heartless, pitiless man—never.
 But the time had come for her, and
 she great mystery of death, and she
 found her husband looking on her
 one out in the morning, carefully
 reading "how she felt."
 The answer received was:
 "No better; send the doctor as you
 see."
 The doctor came, but the great respon-
 sibility was on her shoulders, and she
 was in the awful majority of death
 when her husband looked upon her
 again.
 F. L. N.

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