

THE HONORED GUEST.

A SHORT CHAPTER FOR WIVES.

"Well," said I, one fine morning last week, "I have the prospect of a leisure afternoon—a somewhat unusual thing with me—and, all being well, I will do a little needful shopping; call and pass an hour with my old friend Mrs. Ashburton, whom on account of the distance, I have neglected of late; and then drop in to take a friendly cup of tea with my niece, Clara Whitford."

Having completed my household arrangements, I accordingly set out, after an early dinner, and, the shopping done, made my first call. Mrs. Ashburton's warm welcome, pleasant talk, and cheerful fireside, would have proved strong temptations to induce me to accept her invitation to remain for the evening, had I not felt anxious to see my niece, whose residence was much nearer my own.

On arriving at Clara's door, I was a little surprised to see no light in the front part of the house. "I am afraid they are from home," thought I, with a regretful mental glance backward at the pretty home picture I had just left. But I was mistaken. A servant came, in answer to my ring at the door-bell, and, ushering me into the dining-room, lit the gas, and went to summon her mistress. I had ample time to look about me before Clara made her appearance, and could not help admiring the perfect order and good taste which prevailed in both the apartment and its furniture. I was the more pleased to note this, as my niece when unmarried, did not promise to become very notable as a housewife.

I was beginning to tire of waiting—as, my brisk walk over, I felt chilly in the fireless room—when Clara entered, fastening a little article of dress, evidently just assumed. Her greeting was most cordial; yet there was a shade of regret in her tone when, our first salutations over, she said: "Why, my dear aunt, did you not let me know you were coming, and I should have been better prepared to receive you?"

"Surely, Clara," I replied, "no preparation is needed before you can bestow a cup of tea on so near a relative as I am. Pray do not make my friendly call into a ceremonious visit, or I shall be tempted to run away again, in place of waiting until after tea, and begging Mr. Whitford's escort home."

"Pray, dear aunt, do not think of such a thing. I will light this fire in a moment, and the room will soon be warm and comfortable." So saying, Clara was about to apply a light between the bars of the grate, when I stopped her.

"You must have a fire somewhere, my dear," I said; "and where you were sitting when I arrived will, I am sure, suit me the best. If I am to disturb any of your arrangements, I will leave you forthwith."

"Then, if so, aunt, you will have to excuse my taking you into the nursery."

"Anywhere to a warm fireside, Clara; but is Mr. Whitford from home?"

"No, aunt, he is here," replied my niece, her color rising as she spoke.

I laughingly congratulated her on her husband's liking for the company of his first-born; but, perceiving no evidence of pleasure on her countenance, I asked if the baby were well.

"Oh yes, quite so, thank you, aunt. To say the truth, it is my doing that we are in the nursery to-night, and Frederick is not too well pleased about it; but it saves so much trouble, and the other rooms have just been cleaned and put in order. But do not say a word," she added, as she opened the nursery door.

My nephew advanced, shook me warmly by the hand, and then, turning to Clara, said: "I hope, my dear, you do not intend to make your aunt a nursery guest. If you do, I shall not wonder if her visits become still more rare."

I hastened to assure him that I had been brought there at my own request, and begged no difference might be made; but quietly ringing the bell, he desired a servant to light the dining-room fire, and bring word when it was well burnt. Clara bit her lip, and looked red and uncomfortable, while I, feeling still more so, occupied myself in admiring the baby. I could, however, distinguish easily enough two or three little articles which convinced me that a tea equipage had just been removed; and certainly this was not what I should have expected to see in Clara's home, knowing the comfortable and even affluent income of her husband. I felt sorry my unceremonious visit should have produced such an alteration in the arrangements; for I could tell, from the production of sundry keys, etc., etc., that many articles not in common use were to be brought out, and the evening meal deferred on my account. Besides this, I felt grieved at Mr. Whitford's ill-concealed vexation, not displayed towards me, but his wife.

At length we were summoned to the dining-room; and truly a wonderful change had been effected there. A bright fire illuminated every corner; an elegant tea equipage was on the table; in short, everything looked—as I had hoped at first to find it—in accordance with the position of the owners. Moreover, the pleasant aspect of affairs banished the cloud from Mr. Whitford's face, and so agreeably did the time pass, that I quite regretted when obliged to bid my niece "good night."

"Good night, dear aunt," said Clara, affectionately kissing me; "do come again very soon, but do let me know when to expect you."

"And then," added Mr. Whitford, after the door was closed, "the dining-room fire will be lighted before your arrival. Dear aunt, what do you think of Clara's new notions respecting domestic economy? When we were first married, she was rather ignorant of household

matters; now we are so exceedingly orderly and careful, that everything is too good to use. The drawing-room first became so; then the dining-room underwent a thorough renovation; and the nursery, resorted to for temporary convenience during the repairs, has become our regular abode, the others being only used on state occasions. Probably our next remove will be in the kitchen. I go into other houses, and find that their masters can introduce a friend at any time, with the certainty of causing no embarrassment. In my home, on the contrary, the call of a relative even produces quite a domestic revolution; for plate, china, in fact everything presentable, is laid up in lavender, like the rooms. I wish you would say something to Clara on the subject, as I know you possess great influence in that quarter."

"Have you named the matter, Frederick?" I asked.

"Oh, yes, a thousand times, I think; but I cannot effect any change. I trust you will be more successful."

"I will try, at any rate," said I, as I took leave of my nephew-in-law.

Having thought over the matter, I arranged my plan of operation. I decided it would be better to try the effect of an opposite picture on Clara's mind, before giving utterance to any remonstrance, for I well knew that young housewives do not generally relish the pointed interference of their elders. I therefore called for Clara—having previously given her due notice of my intention—to accompany me in a long ramble; and I contrived to be near Mrs. Ashburton's just as tea-time was approaching, and we were thoroughly tired.

"Clara," said I, "what is to prevent our obtaining rest and refreshments? I can assure you a welcome to both, and, beside, you are not quite a stranger to Mrs. Ashburton."

"Oh, dear aunt, I could not think of such a thing; we should be sure to cause inconvenience."

"You shall judge for yourself, Clara," I answered; "and if you think so half an hour hence, we will journey homeward."

The moment we were admitted, I frankly told my friend that I had come expressly to claim her oft-tendered hospitality for my niece and self, as we were tired, but still had a long walk before us.

"How glad I am that my house lay in your route!" replied she. "Tea is just coming in, and my husband will be here directly."

In a few moments he arrived, and we were all seated, prepared to join in the social meal. I noticed Clara's glances at the perfect order which surrounded us, and the elegant but simple preparations for the repast. Besides these, it was impossible not to feel the thorough comfort diffused around us.

"My niece," said I to Mrs. Ashburton, "was afraid of causing you inconvenience by coming unawares, and taking two places at your tea-table by storm."

A cheery laugh from Mr. Ashburton, and a bright smile from his wife, followed my words. "Mrs. Whitford," said the gentleman, "I am the most fortunate fellow in the world, for nothing ever causes my wife inconvenience. You understand me, I dare say—I mean none of those domestic invasions which are usually expected to cause a bustle. She has a peculiar theory of her own, which she most thoroughly reduces to practice, consequently we are always able to welcome a friend, however unexpected the guest may be."

Clara blushed, and stammered a few words in reply; and, perceiving her confusion, I changed the conversation.

On our way home, after spending a delightful evening, my niece was unusually silent; but at length she asked if I could tell her what theory Mr. Ashburton alluded to when he said—

—Here she hesitated.

"I understand you, Clara," I answered; "and I can explain it in a very few words. Mrs. Ashburton says that, being sure of the daily presence of one guest at her table, whom she wishes to honor above all others, she always prepares for that one, and is of course ready for any visitor, and at any time."

"But I saw no guests beside ourselves, aunt."

"Did you not? And yet the person I allude to was there."

"Where?—whom do you mean? You are jesting."

"Indeed, my dear Clara, I am not. The one whom Mrs. Ashburton considers worthy of all honor is her husband. She says, and I think justly, that she should deem her marriage vow but ill performed did she bestow pains to make her home attractive in the eye of a stranger, and grudge doing so for him whom she has promised to love, honor, and obey—her husband, and the father of her children."

I have little doubt that when I next visit my niece, I shall find her opinion is changed as regards the guest more deserving of honor.

LIFE IN WASHINGTON.—According to the Washington States; they are a pleasant set of fellows at Washington. On Saturday night last, a young man named Fancett was married, and while the occasion was being celebrated by a few gathered friends, some ten or twelve gentlemen came in, uninvited, and, with characteristic playfulness, struck the groom over the head with a slung shot, and after blowing out the lights, proceeded to make merry in their own fashion, by breaking the furniture, and frightening the ladies present. After remaining as long as they chose, they retired outside, where they remained till about 2 o'clock, a.m., throwing occasional stones and brickbats at the house. It is said that the groom knows the captain (?) of this pleasant party, but having a due regard for his life in his new domestic relation, refuses to inform on him.

How Congress Behaves.

Those who are not accustomed to witness the proceedings of Congress, and who have not the means, from personal observation, of comparing the present House with that body as it existed twenty or thirty years ago, would find it difficult to believe the truth in regard to it. A visitor to the House for the first time is astonished at the want of dignity and decorum and the positive disorder and tumultuousness which attract his attention.

The scene which ordinarily presents itself is one of confusion. One-half of the members are out of their seats—walking to and fro; standing in the alleys, or in the area in front of the Speaker's desk; gathered in knots here and there, and engaged in conversation, not unfrequently so loud as to vie with a speaker who may be formally addressing the House; and members probably lying and even sleeping upon the luxurious sofas and couches which surround the member's seats.

Some are sitting listlessly, and with apparent indifference to the proceedings, in their easy chairs, with both their feet, it may be, upon their elegant carved oak desks. Others, among the few, comparatively, who seem to be aware of the business before the House, are constantly interrupting the speaker who is entitled to the floor; not unfrequently two or three members will be addressing the Chair at the same time. What with this and the conversation going on about the hall, in every direction, a pretty good idea of Babel may be formed.

Every few minutes the Speaker's hammer is vigorously but vainly plied, for the purpose of restoring order; and ten times an hour the clear voice of the Speaker is heard above the tumult of tongues, requesting members to resume their seats, and admonishing them that conversation is too loud in the hall, and that he cannot entertain any motion or proceed to business till order is restored. Ten times an hour, however, there is renewed occasion for this interference of the Speaker. It must be a firm and durable material which withstands the constant and severe application of the Speaker's hammer.

During the long term of years in which Henry Clay was Speaker of the House, he seldom or never used his hammer. Either through his influence as a presiding officer, or a better sense of decorum among the members, dignity and order marked the proceedings of the House at all times.

But if ever there were occasion to call to call to order—and a slight departure from the rules of the House was deemed an occasion—it was done, and effectually done, by a simple tap upon the Speaker's desk with his folder or penknife.

If, while a member was addressing the House, two others were out of their seats and whispering, even in front of the Speaker's desk, Mr. Clay would request the member to suspend his remarks till order was restored.

An anecdote related recently by a venerable gentleman and a model legislator, who was a member of Congress thirty years ago, will illustrate the sentiment which pervaded the House at that time in regard to the deportment of members while in their seats. Now, as has been remarked, members are constantly seen with their feet, both feet, upon the tops of their desks, in the most vulgar and ungainly position imaginable. The desks, as is known, are elegant and expensive, being made of oak richly and elaborately carved. It is mortifying to the spectator, and it would be no doubt grating to the feelings of your Messrs. Doe & Hazleton, the manufacturers of these desks, to see the heels of members of Congress, which, like their heads, are not always of the most delicate structure, in such rough and destructive contact with their beautiful handiwork.

The anecdote alluded to is this:—Mr. Vance, a member of the House, was lame, and to relieve himself from pain he one day raised his foot to the edge of his desk. Mr. Clay, observing his position, sent one of his pages to remind him that he was out of order. He looked up, and catching the Speaker's eye, gracefully bowed an acknowledgment of the justice of the rebuke and resumed his customary dignified and decorous position.

At the time referred to, no interruptions of members while speaking were allowed. Now, such interruptions are constant, and are so generally and indiscriminately indulged in as sometimes to create the extreme confusion. Then, speaking to the question, even in committee of the whole, was strictly insisted upon, and the Speaker was accustomed to remind members whenever they rambled or deviated from the question in debate. There was, of course, no occasion for members to call one another to order, as they now do incessantly. That office was then properly discharged by the Speaker. Now, the latitude and longitude of debate in committee of the whole is unbounded, and unmeasured by any rules of the House or any laws of propriety. Then, when the House resolved itself into committee of the whole, it was customary for the Speaker to go down and take part in the debate. Now, the Speaker retires to his private room, which is fitted up with palatial magnificence for the reception of his friends, and is seen no more till the rising of the committee, which, during his absence, scarcely rises to the dignity of a political caucus, much less to that of a town meeting or a debating society.—[Cor. of Boston Courier.

TO DRIVE AWAY POLL EVIL.—At the first appearance, and before it has broken, rub on a few drops of oil of cedar once every two days, for a short time, and it will soon disappear.

The Power of the Wind.

The papers continue to publish descriptions of the wonderful whirlwind which recently destroyed the village of Ellison, in Illinois. Some incidents are given below, and they would hardly be credible, if they were not corroborated by other accounts.

It would seem impossible to convey an adequate description of the terrible and mighty force of the sweeping tornado. We saw large and sound stumps which had been torn from the ground, and carried some rods. Small hickories, four to six inches in diameter, were twisted to a withe. The very ground was torn up and the grass swept away. Small hazel bushes were cut off, and in many places taken up by the roots. Large and heavy logs were carried for rods.

As we passed on we found portions of Mr. Johnson's house in the shape of small splinters, which had lodged against some low stumps or had been run into the ground. Occasionally, might be seen a portion of a carpet the size of a man's hand, and then a piece of bed quilt, a chair round, pieces of crockery broken as fine as half dollars. We found small pieces of a two-horse farm wagon, the largest remaining was the hub, and that was split; not even a whole spoke was left. A portion of the tire we found imbedded in the ground two feet and a half. A tin tea-kettle was carried against the body of a sapling, and was there found clinched.

When about a quarter of a mile from the house, or rather where it once stood, we found a small splinter about four inches in length which from the paper which was pasted upon it, was pronounced a portion of the trunk which contained Mr. Hurd's money. A few rods distant we found the pocket book of Mr. H., which contained notes and money to the amount of over \$400. We also picked up eight silver tea spoons. Nothing of the gold and silver lost could be discovered.

We returned to Ellison to take a more particular view of the ruins. The large and beautiful timber immediately west of the town was crushed down for the space of nearly a quarter of a mile wide. Many of the marble slabs in the graveyard were broken. There were some twenty-five dwellings in the place, and all but three were demolished. One of the three remaining was the house of Mr. Joseph Knowles. Another remaining house belonged to Mr. Kelly, a carpenter. His shop was destroyed, and he has not been able to find the first vestige of his chest and tools. The third was occupied by a widow Frazier.

The school house was taken up about 30 feet in the air, when it broke into a thousand fragments, and not a vestige of it has since been seen.

Several cattle, horses and hogs were killed. One horse, we learned, was taken several feet in the air, and fell into a slough uninjured. Some of the wounded testify that they were carried fifty to one hundred feet in the air, and suffered by the fall.

THE DUST AND HOT WINDS OF INDIA.—Campaigning can only be conducted at an enormous cost. The hottest day that comes, let some one who is sincerely desirous of understanding what the dry winds of India are like, repair to an iron-foundry in full activity, and let him stand in front of the fire when the furnace door is opened; but unless he can add to it the odors procurable by standing over the grating of a Strand cookshop in the dog-days he will have but a poor idea of the nastiness of the blast, which, sweeping over burning sandy plains, covered with putrefying remains, whisks clouds of pulverized animal matter along with it, and rushes in dense yellow volumes all over the city and the plains around it.

To the increasing heat there is added length of days, greater power to the wind, and, if possible, more dust. Of the latter it is quite beyond the powers of writing to give a description. It is so fine and subtle that long after the causes which raised it have ceased to exert their influence you may see it like a veil of gauze between your eyes and every object. The sun, while yet six or seven degrees above the horizon, is hid from sight by it as though the luminary were enveloped in a thick fog, and at early morning and evening this vapor of dust suspended high in air seems like a rain cloud clinging to a hill side. When this dust is set rapidly in motion by a hot wind, and when the grosser sand, composed of minute fragments of tale, scales of mica, and earth, is impelled in quick successive waves through the heated atmosphere, the effect is quite sufficient to make one detest India for ever. Every article in your tent, your hair, eyes and nose are filled and covered with dust, which deposits a coating half an inch thick all over the tent.—W. H. Russell in London Times.

A SIMPLE AND EFFECTUAL METHOD OF extracting air from fruit cans has been patented, and the invention is now for sale in this city, at No. 104 south Eighth street. The fruit can when filled is entirely closed except a small hole in the top for the air to escape, which hole is covered with oiled silk. Over the can is placed an empty vessel, called an exhauster. A small piece of sponge on the end of a stick, and wet with alcohol, is lighted and dropped in, and an India rubber ball placed on top of the exhauster. The combustion of the alcohol consumes and expels the air in the exhauster, and the ball prevents its return, consequently a vacuum is formed. When the exhauster is removed, the silk drops and prevents the return of air to the can, which affords an opportunity to seal the aperture with wax. The invention seems to be a good, practical one, and if so, housekeepers will not be long without it.—[German town Telegraph.