

MR. ROYDON'S BRIDE

By Nancy Cavanagh.

I CAN'T REALIZE it! And, what's more, I don't think I ever shall. If it wasn't for the ring on the third finger of my left hand, I should certainly think I had been asleep and dreaming.

How did it all happen? That's an easy question to ask, but a hard one to answer. People always used to say, from my girlhood up, that Penny Lihaven was born to be an old maid. I wasn't a pretty child. My eyes were too big, and my hair grew too low on my forehead, and there was a sallow look about my skin.

I used to cry sometimes to myself, all about it; but no one else knew how I felt about the matter. Roydon Grey was the most merciless tease of them all. I was always afraid of him when we went to Sunday school together, for he used to hide behind the doors and pounce out at me, and throw stones at my pet kitten, and call me names, and twist me with my pug nose and big eyes.

"You'll be an old maid, Pen," he would say. "Nobody with such a name as Penelope ever got married."

I hated Roy Grey, and yet there was something about the boy I couldn't help liking, after all. I could not forget that when I had the scarlet fever, and lay at death's door, Roydon sat under my window, and I heard him say, the first day I sat up in a big easy chair: "Well, I'm not sorry that Pen is better. She's a queer little concern, but I should have missed her if she had died."

I was just fifteen when he went away to Venezuela, and he told me the night before he sailed, that "he did think I was the queerest girl of my age he had seen—in fact, nothing less than a fright!" I burst out crying at the not particularly courteous criticism.

country, and came back to enjoy it among his friends. Ah! to think that there were so few left! Of course we had a great deal to say to one another, and a thousand and one questions to ask; and, as I don't claim to have anything of the saint in my composition, I don't deny that it did make me feel just a little hard when I saw him sit down by Edith Lonsdale and talk to her, and look into her honest blue eyes, before I had half told him what had happened in the village during the dreary years of his absence. But the feeling didn't last long.

"It's natural enough, I'm sure," I reasoned with myself, "and only what I ought to expect. She is as pretty as a picture, and now, if Roy will fall in love with her, I can be just as happy in their happiness as if it had come to me—the blessing of a good man's love."

So I persuaded myself; yet it was a little hard to feel myself shut out from all the beauty and sweetness of a woman's natural lot. I think I never felt the bitterness of being an old maid quite as acutely as I did that night, when Roydon had gone to the village inn, and Edith lay sleeping on the pillow at my side, and the scent of the honeysuckles came wafting in at every stir of the dewy night breeze.

Well, he came often to our house, and I used to make all sorts of little excuses to leave him with Edith, while I went up stairs to sit by myself and weave little threads of romance in and out of the meshes of my fancy knitting.

One day Roydon Grey came to me, for young Burnham had called, and was chatting with Edith, and I dare say Roy thought I looked lonely with my work in the hall.

"Pen," said he, "what do you think I am going to do?"

A dim idea he was going to make me his confidante fitted across my mind. "I don't know," I said, smiling. "What is it, Roy?"

"I'm going to return the old house. It looks dim and dusky and old-fashioned now; and I want it to be fresh and sunny and winsome. Will you help me with your advice and counsel?"

Of course I promised; and for the next two or three weeks we were as busy as bees. "We mustn't let her know what we are about," he said that night, with a motion of his head toward Edith.

CHARMS OF ROD AND GUN.

Why Do Lazy Men Choose Hardest of Ways to Earn Living?

"There is one thing I don't understand," said the old fisherman, "and that is why so many men who are born lazy take up fishing as a way of getting a living. Now, take any town on the borders of the Adirondacks, for instance, and you will find in it a man or two, or even more, who live by fishing almost entirely. They fish morning, noon and night, all day long and all night, too, sometimes, and then sell their trout at 40 or 50 cents a pound. They are tinner when night comes than if they had been working their farms. They have expended more pounds of force than a carpenter, or even a blacksmith. The reflection of the sun on the water has blistered their faces painfully, and the chances are that they have eaten only a bit of bread and hard-boiled egg for lunch. In the cold days of early spring, just after the season opens, they nearly freeze, but ask one about it and he says it is fun. All tired out, he sinks back in his chair after his day's fishing, smoking a pipe, and the chances are with a smile on his face that tells of genuine comfort. He is really happier after his hard day's work than anybody I ever saw after his regular legitimate labor. Now, what I want to know is, what is there about the labor of one of these fellows that is so comforting? I can't understand it a little bit."

"Yes," said another man, who hunted instead of fishing for fun, "I see just such fellows when I'm out hunting. They'll carry a pack basket weighing 50 or 100 pounds fifteen miles on their backs, besides rifles and loading dogs. They kill a deer and eat some of the meat and sell the rest with the head for \$10—and work the rest. They will trap furs all winter, walking ten or fifteen miles a day over the meanest trails, and come out smiling, having made 25 or 50 cents a day on an average. Why, I knew two men to hunt sixty days and get fourteen foxes, worth at the most \$28, but they smiled at it and thought they had done well. In the same time, working no more hours a day driving a team, sitting down most of the time, they would have made \$128 at the lowest. But after all, I guess the only way to look at it is that they have fifty weeks of vacation a year instead of two or four, like us, and I don't see but what they get as much fun out of living as we do, or more. It all depends on how you look at it."

An Angel Without Wings. One of the principal decorative features of the new city hall in San Francisco was to have been a great white-metal angel, with outspread wings, poised on the top of the big dome. This angel has been the subject of much crabbled controversy between the gruff mayor, Mr. Sutro, and the commissioners. The mayor criticised the angel severely and rather ridiculed the whole thing. But the big angel was at last finished and ready for hoisting to its place on the dome. Then it was discovered that its wings offered too much sail space and that they would undoubtedly in the first high wind pull the angel down from its perch. The shoulder blades were too narrow for the wings to be properly braced. So the wings were sawed off and a wingless angel will surmount the dome.—Exchange.

Didn't Follow Instructions. Irate Patron—You advertise to cure consumption, don't you? Doctor—Yes, sir; I never fail when my instructions are followed. Irate Patron—My son took your medicine for a year and died an hour after the last dose. Doctor—My instructions were not followed. I told him to take it two years.—Tit-Bits.

Giving Her a Lead on Cuba. The young king of Spain recently described an island to his geography teacher as a body of land almost entirely occupied by insurgents.

POINTERS ON FLOWERS. Loosen the leaves and other winter covering from about the hardy bulbs. The beds for the summer plants may now be thoroughly spaded and fertilized, although the plants must not be set out for some time to come—no matter how tempting and balmy are the April days. Don't be discouraged if the garden is small; fertilize heavily now, and plant closely a little later, and with careful planning a surprising quantity of flowers may be raised in even the tiniest yard.

The crocuses are now in full bloom, and many of the outdoor hyacinths budded. But don't neglect them because they seem so perfectly hardy. Keep evergreen boughs and straw convenient for a light covering on cold nights. Now is the time for planting and transplanting hardy shrubbery. Pack the earth firmly about the roots and allow each bush plenty of room to grow. See that all new varieties are carefully labeled for future reference. Remember that it is not too early to plant the sweet peas outside the very first day of April and they should surely be planted before the middle of this month if they are to make good growth and withstand the summer heat. Don't be in a hurry about planting other flower seed outside for some time to come.

The peonies are now sending up thick red stalks and sprigs of green iris are forming thrifty clumps in the borders. Loosen the soil about the clumps, then spread dry leaves or straw over the loosened earth. This loosening of the soil is very important, as the winter covering may become so packed and

FLIRTING AT VASSAR.

GIRLS OFTEN GROW WEARY OF BOOKS AND TEACHERS.

West Point Military Academy is Near by and the Students Manage to Take Occasional Strolls Thitherward—The Brother a Poem.

Vassar Letter. THE happy leap year privileges which 1896 brings may be great marvels to some girls, but it is leap year all the year round and every year with the Vassar girl. The "normal" rules of the college on the hill back at Poughkeepsie prevent many visits from young men, and the still stricter rules of the nearest man's college, at West Point, keep the men from attempts at breaking Vassar's laws. So Malcolm goes to the mountains. Like the Aralus, the Vassar maiden folds her rent and silently steals away. To the faithful observers at the Point it is often a matter for wonder how the girls spend so many delightful stolen hours away from their Alma Mater without being discovered and incurring the penalty for disobedience.

The rules are there, the men are there, and the girls must get their somehow, so perform the clever dance from the halls of learning must bend their superior brains to the work of circumventing these laws. And they succeed. How they do it history says not, but the fact remains that they do. "Many a time and oft," in the words of the immortal bard of Avon, are they seen on the "Rialto" of West Point, to the amazement of the aforementioned thoughtful observer. Two



WHERE VASSAR GIRLS RESORT.

visits a term is supposed to be the rule. Perhaps it holds good with some of the Vassar girls. But there are many more from whose minds the ways of the free and independent West have not yet faded, who scorn the trammels of eastern rules and "effete conventionality," and take the law in their own hands. When fancy dictates and there is a hop or concert on at the Point, "then's the time for disappearing," and they "bob up serenely" at the government dock with gripsack or brown paper parcel containing festive raiment; also a box of candy for the loved cadet. When accommodations are scanty sometimes a dozen or so of girls club together and take one room, and also one trunk, much to the detriment of their voluminous skirts.

At any rate, or any how, and on any train they come, and the stage which runs up from the landing on such occasions is temporarily their own. They take entire possession of the bus and quite fill it up with themselves and their impediments. Vassar songs and class calls, stock jokes and personal remarks about the "sweet creatures" they are going to see enliven the progress up the hill, and woe to the outsider who creeps into this truant company.

No false ideas of conventions and prissy damp their ardent spirits if they have to come without a chaperon. They come just the same, and matronize one another by numbers. Ten of these fair undergraduates were claimed by one elderly man as his daughters, his good nature not being proof against their appeals for so-called protection. Not having a chaperon does not trouble them much at the hotel, for they are not there except to sleep and eat. It is no place for fun—that quiet and respectable parlor. There are much better chances at other places. The hop or concert which alternate on Saturday nights, with inspection Saturday after-



TYPE OF VASSAR GIRL.

noon and chapel Sunday morning, keep them on the go. After chapel there is an hour, a chance for a parade, informal, of course, when each cadet has his "fem," if there are enough to go around. The damsels are also in demand Sunday afternoons. No matter what the reason, no matter what the weather, they are seen in the streets. Sold by Druggists, 70c.

Sentry boxes serve in winter for a slight shelter from cold, and observation. The gymnasium does duty when "flirtation" is too bleak and exposed for comfort.

Sometimes, though, it is not safe to risk staying over Sunday, and the college girls must lie them back to Alma Mater after the hop. There is a convenient up-shore train to Poughkeepsie at 10:30, and so one eye is kept on the clock, while the other tries to gaze soulfully at the gray-clad youth who is murmuring sweet nothings. And then the scramble to catch the train, and the excuses if one fails to get there! "A valuable ring was lost and must be searched for"—dress was torn and had to be mended—watch was too slow—so sorry. And one girl actually went to the length of falling down hill with the idea of straining her ankle. She did more than that, and had to be taken back to the hospital; but there were no complications. She still breathed the same air with the "beloved object."

It would puzzle the average man to invent the stories which used to do duty to account for colds caught "cooling off" in lowest gowns when the hops were held in Grant Hall. Now they are in Academic and conditions are improved, plenty of unlighted, well heated rooms being available for the "cooling-off" process.

And what a boon all this is to the "handicraft"—these raw youths who must learn, as well as "tactics and sh"—the ways of the great world, the proper manner of paying dutifully veiled compliments and managing a partner in the dance! Society manners are a very important part of the equipment of Uncle Sam's soldier boys when they leave after the four years' course, and how are they to learn them unless they have practice? The summer months when more liberty is allowed, are all too short for the exercise of their required knowledge and the development of their social talents.

So these visits "under the rose" are indeed a real boon to the west pointer,

which brings the observer nearer to see the same gray-clad sentimentalist standing sedately apart.

A little poem in the "Howitzer" some months ago showed how a maiden made the "retort discourtois" to the advances of the overbold young soldier:—

She was a merry Vassar girl, A West Point spoonbid he; They sat and watched the waters swirl, About the Point of Geo.

He to his heart would press the maid, Alas! she held aloof; And when his arm around her strayed, Thus harshly gave reproof:—

"Young soldier, you cannot, I'm sure, Protect 'gainst war's alarms Your nation and its flag if you're So careless of your arms!"

Was she really and truly a Vassar maiden? Echo answers not.

When the "Hundred Nights" play comes off many are the devotees of the Poughkeepsie students to get an invitation, and sad and devious are the ways to which some of them have to resort.

"The play is going to be fine this year; you ought to see me in girl's clothes," wrote an unwary "yearling," and his innumerate wrote back by next mail, "Thanks awfully, old boy. I'll be there for the play. I hoped you were going to ask me. Whereat the trapped one tore his hair and thought longingly of the "fem" for whom he had really meant to use that invitation.

"If you will promise to refuse, I'll ask you to the Handicraft Night play," a wiser man, who had been "bitten," wrote frankly to his second best girl, "Then you'll have the fun of saying you were invited, and I can ask some one else."

TREATMENT OF ORCHIDS.

How Our Grandfathers Slowly Discovered Their Disposition.

The essential cultural requirements of orchids were not known till long af-



FLORICULTURE BEYOND BATTERY HILL.

ter they had attracted the attention of horticulturists, says Garden and Forest. It is interesting to note the struggles of our great-grandfathers to discover the conditions most suitable for them. We who know all about it are surprised that any intelligent cultivator should have tried to grow epiphytic plants "in common soil in pots plunged to the rim in a tan bed." Teak baskets, sphagnum moss, peat fiber and charcoal appear to us to be exactly what any intelligent schoolboy would have recommended as supplying the right material for an epiphyte. But, like all useful discoveries and inventions, simple as they appear to us they were not worked out without much thought, experiment and the sacrifice of many plants. One of the shrewdest of botanists working in the van of the horticultural art of his time, Dr. Lindley, stated in a paper read to the Royal Horticultural Society in 1830, that "high temperature, deep shade and excessive humidity are the conditions essential to the well being of orchids." Thirteen years later another orchid authority, Mr. Bateman, recommended the same treatment, adding that a resting season was necessary. This treatment became the only orthodox one and was persisted in for upward of thirty years. We now recognize that fresh air at all times is essential, that many orchids enjoy bright sunshine, that while some require plenty of moisture all the year round, others require it only for a portion of the year, and that some even thrive only when treated as if they were cacti. The temperature for exotic orchids varies from a purely tropical to that of a few degrees above freezing point, and while some species during growth are kept in a hot, steamy atmosphere and after growth is completed are removed to comparatively cool and dry conditions to afford them a rest, others suffer if the conditions are not fairly uniform all the year round.

Another Type. vating society is a sufficient "quid pro quo." He lends her his cast-off buttons, waist plate, chevrons and class ring—in fact, all the decorations on which he can lay hands. And the moth of a "plebe" who seems coming joys afar decorates her hop card with sketches "in kind"—hits on the older men and general "post jokes."

So the Vassar girl who has a brother or a "brother" at West Point is a popular maiden, and her sitting-room is a gathering place for the clans, and her "teas" are much frequented. Her scrap book would furnish interesting chapters of history, with imagination to fill in the spaces.

"Affaires de coeur" move rapidly at the "post." Introductions are easy, and "facile decensus Averni." One evening on the stairs or in an unlighted ante-room; a walk on "Flirtation," a note asking her to come again next week; an answer; an answer to that, with an added touch of sentiment and aspiration after "the love of a true woman," with verses and so forth "ad infinitum" and "ad nauseam"—graduation, oblivion, and two sets of wedding cards—which perhaps cross in the mails and recall an "affaire" of two years ago.

Sometimes the cadets, a stray one here and there, in furlough time, get off to Vassar and are feted and made much of. But opportunities are more numerous down the river, and the leap year methods hold. Beautiful and envying sights are seen on "Flirtation." In the twists and winds of that historic "Academy of Social Science" the callow youth learns the use of his arms, and also the use of his feet and jumping muscles for emergencies when the sound of an advancing step is heard. At one turn of the walk, when the leaves are few, and the wanderers, after a blessed "solitude-a-deux," forget the fact, one may see wondrous vistas of a

Religious Women.

Are not women more religious than men? Even at the time of Christ women displayed more religious fervor than men; they were the last to be converted. Dr. Miles' Remedies Restore Health.

World's Fair Highest Award.