

THE EYE OF THE MIND.

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CHAPTER VII.—(CONTINUED.)

"But why should he have done this?" I asked. "To prevent your marriage? You are young—he must have foreseen that you would marry some day."

Carriston leaned toward me, and dropped his voice to a whisper.

"This is his reason," he said—"this is why I come to you. You are not the only one who has entirely misread my nature, and seen a strong tendency to insanity in it. Of course, I know you are all wrong, but I know that Ralph Carriston has stolen my love—stolen her because he thinks and hopes that her loss will drive me mad—perhaps drive me to kill myself. I went straight to him—I have just come from him—Brand, I tell you that when I taxed him with the crime—when I raved at him—when I threatened to tear the life out of him—his cold wicked eyes leapt with joy. I heard him mutter between his teeth, 'Men have been put in strait-waistcoats for less than this.' Then I knew why he had done this. I curbed myself and left him. Most likely he will try to shut me up as a lunatic; but I count on your protection—count upon your help to find my love."

That any man could be guilty of such a subtle refinement of crime as that of which he accused his cousin seemed to me, if not impossible, at least improbable. But as at present there was no doubt about my friend's sanity, I promised my aid readily.

"And now," I said, "my dear boy, I won't hear another word tonight. Nothing can be done until tomorrow; then we will consult as to what steps should be taken. Drink this and go to bed—yes, you are as sane as I am, but, remember, insomnia soon drives the strongest man out of his senses."

I poured out an opiate. He drank it obediently. Before I left him for the night I saw him in bed and sleeping a heavy sleep.

VIII.

THE advantage to one who writes, not a tale of imagination, but of simple record of events, is this: He need not be bound by the recognized canons of the story-telling art—need not exercise his ingenuity to mislead his reader—need not suppress some things and lay undue stress on others to create mysteries to be cleared up at the end of the tale. Therefore, using the privilege of a plain narrator, I shall here give some account of what became of Miss Rowan as, so far as I can remember, I heard it some time afterward from her own lips.

The old Scotchwoman's funeral over, and those friends who had been present departed, Madeline was left in the little farm-house alone, save for the presence of the two servants. Several kind offers had been made to come and stay with her, but she had declined the offers. She was in no mood for company and, perhaps, being of such a different race and breed, would not have found much comfort in the rough homely sympathy which was offered to her. She preferred being alone with her grief—grief which after all was bound to be much lightened by the thought of her own approaching happiness, for the day was drawing near when her lover would cross the Border and bear his bonnie bride away. She felt sure that she would not be long alone—that the moment Carriston heard of her aunt's death he would come to her assistance. In such a peaceful God-fearing neighborhood she had no fear of being left without protection. Moreover, her position in the house was well-defined. The old woman, who was childless, had left her niece all of which she died possessed. So Madeline decided to wait quietly until she heard from her lover.

Still there were business matters to be attended to, and at the funeral Mr. Douglas, of Callendar, the executor under the will, had suggested that an early interview would be desirable. He offered to drive out to the little farm the next day, but Miss Rowan, who had to see to some feminine necessities which could only be supplied by shops, decided that she would come to the town instead of troubling Mr. Douglas to drive so far out.

Madeline, in spite of the superstitious element in her character, was a brave girl, and, in spite of her refined style of beauty, strong and healthy. Early hours were the rule in that humble home, so before seven o'clock in the morning she was ready to start on her drive to the little town. At first she thought of taking with her the boy who did the rough outdoor work; but he was busy about something or other, and besides, was a garrulous lad who would be certain to chatter the whole way, and this morning Miss Rowan wanted no companions, save her own mingled thoughts of sadness and joy. She knew every inch of the road—she feared no evil—she would be home again long before night-fall—the pony was quiet and sure-footed—so away went Madeline in the strong, primitive vehicle on her lonely twelve miles' drive through the fair scenery.

She passed few people on the road. Indeed, she remembered meeting no one except one or two pedestrian tourists, who like sensible men were doing a portion of their day's task in the early morning. I have no doubt but

Miss Rowan seemed to them a passing vision of loveliness.

But when she was a mile or two from Callendar she saw a boy on a pony. The boy, who must have known her by sight, stopped, and handed her a telegram. She had to pay several shillings for the delivery, or intended delivery, of the message, so far from the station. The boy galloped away, congratulating himself on having been spared a long ride, and Miss Rowan tore open the envelope left in her hands.

The message was brief: "Mr. Carr is seriously ill. Come at once. You will be met in London."

Madeline did not scream or faint. She gave one low moan of pain, set her teeth, and with the face of one in a dream drove as quickly as she could to Callendar, straight to the railway station.

Fortunately, or rather unfortunately, she had money with her, so she did not waste time in going to Mr. Douglas. In spite of the crushing blow she had received, the girl had all her wits about her. A train would start in ten minutes' time. She took her ticket, then found an idler outside the station, and paid him to take the pony and carriage back to the farm, with the message as repeated to Carriston.

The journey passed like a long dream. The girl could think of nothing but her lover, dying, dying—perhaps dead before she could reach him. The miles flew by unnoticed; twilight crept on; the carriage grew dark; at last—London at last! Miss Rowan stepped out on the broad platform, not knowing what to do or where to turn. Presently a tall, well-dressed man came up to her, and removing his hat, addressed her by name. The promise as to her being met had been kept.

She clasped her hands. "Tell me, oh, tell me, he is not dead," she cried.

"Mr. Carr is not dead. He is ill—very ill—delirious and calling for you."

"Where is he? Oh, take me to him!"

"He is miles and miles from here—at a friend's house. I have been deputed to meet you and to accompany you, if you feel strong enough to continue the journey at once."

"Come," said Madeline. "Take me to him."

"Your luggage?" asked the gentleman.

"I have none. Come!"

"You must take some refreshment."

"I need nothing. Come."

The gentleman glanced at his watch. "There is just time," he said. He called a cab, told the driver to go at top speed. They reached Paddington just in time to catch the mail.

During the drive across London, Madeline asked many questions, and learnt from her companion that Mr. Carr had been staying for a day or two at a friend's house in the West of England. That yesterday he had fallen from his horse and sustained such injuries that his life was despaired of. He had been continually calling for Madeline. They had found her address on a letter, and had telegraphed as soon as possible—for which act Miss Rowan thanked her companion with tears in her eyes.

Her conductor did not say much of his own accord, but in reply to her questions he was politely sympathetic. She thought of little outside the fearful picture which filled every corner of her brain; but from her conductor's manner received the impression that he was a medical adviser, who had seen the sufferer, and assisted in the treatment of the case. She did not ask his name, nor did he reveal it.

At Paddington he placed her in a ladies' carriage and left her. He was a smoker, he said. She wondered somewhat at this desertion. Then the train sped down west. At the large stations the gentleman came to her and offered her refreshments. Hunger seemed to have left her, but she accepted a cup of tea once or twice. At last, sorrow, fatigue, and the weakness produced by such a prolonged fast had their natural effect. With the tears still on her lashes, the girl fell asleep, and must have slept for many miles; a sleep unbroken by stoppages at stations.

Her conductor at last aroused her. He stood at the door of the carriage. "We must get out here," he said. All the momentarily forgotten anguish came back to her as she stood beside him on the almost unoccupied platform.

"Are we there at last?" she asked.

"I am sorry to say we have still a long ride; would you like to rest first?"

"No—no. Come on, if you please."

She spoke with feverish eagerness.

The man bowed. "A carriage waits," he said.

Outside the station was a carriage of some sort, drawn by one horse, and driven by a man muffled up to the eyes. It was still night, but Madeline fancied dawn could not be far off. Her conductor opened the door of the carriage and waited for her to enter.

She paused. "Ask him—that man must know if—"

"I am most remorse," said the gentleman. He exchanged a few words with the driver, and, coming back, told Madeline that Mr. Carr was still alive, sensible, and expecting her eagerly.

"Oh, please, please drive fast," said the poor girl, springing into the carriage. The gentleman seated himself beside her, and for a long time they drove on in silence. At last they stopped. The dawn was just glimmering. They alighted in front of a house.

The door was open. Madeline entered swiftly. "Which way—which way?" she asked. She was too agitated to notice any surroundings; her one wish was to reach her lover.

"Allow me," said the conductor, passing her. "This way; please follow me." He went up a short flight of stairs, then paused, and opened a door quietly. He stood aside for the girl to enter. The room was dimly lit, and contained a bed with drawn curtains. Madeline flew past her traveling companion, and, as she threw herself on her knees beside the bed upon which she expected to see the helpless and shattered form of the man she loved, heard, or fancied she heard the door locked behind her.

IX.

CARRISTON slept on late into the next day. Knowing that every moment of bodily and mental rest was a precious boon to him, I left him undisturbed. He was still fast asleep when, about midday, a gentleman called upon me. He sent up no card, and I supposed he came to consult me professionally.

The moment he entered my room I recognized him. He was the thin-lipped, gentlemanly person whom I had met on my journey to Bournemouth last spring—the man who had seemed so much impressed by my views on insanity, and had manifested such interest in the description I had given—without mentioning any name—of Carriston's peculiar mind.

I should have at once claimed acquaintance with my visitor; but before I could speak he advanced, and apologized gracefully for his intrusion. "You will forgive it," he added, "when I tell you my name is Ralph Carriston."

Remembering our chance conversation, the thought that, after all, Charles Carriston's wild suspicion was well founded, flashed through me like lightning. My great hope was that my visitor might not remember my face as I remembered his. I bowed coldly, but said nothing.

"I believe, Dr. Brand," he continued, "you have a young relative of mine at present staying with you?"

"Yes, Mr. Carriston is my guest," I answered. "We are old friends."

"Ah, I did not know that. I do not remember having heard him mention your name as a friend. But, as it is so, no one knows better than you do the unfortunate state of his health. How do you find him to-day—violent?"

I pretended to ignore the man's meaning, and answered smilingly, "Violence is the last thing I should look for. He is tired out and exhausted by travel, and is in great distress. That I believe, is the whole of his complaint."

"Yes, yes, to be sure, poor boy. His sweetheart has left him or something. But as a doctor you must know that his mental condition is not quite what it should be. His friends are very anxious about him. They fear that a little restraint—temporary, I hope—must be put upon his actions. I called in to ask your advice and aid."

"In what, Mr. Carriston?"

"In this. A young man can't be left free to go about threatening his friends' lives. I have brought Dr. Daley with me—you know him, of course. He is below in my carriage. I will call him up with your permission. He could then see poor Charles, and the needful certificate could be signed by you two doctors."

"Mr. Carriston," I said, decidedly, "let me tell you in the plainest words that your cousin is at present as fully in possession of his wits as you are. Dr. Daley—whoever he may be—could sign no certificate, and in our day no asylum would dare to keep Mr. Carriston within its walls."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A WONDERFUL EFFECT.

Whistler's Daring Scheme of Color in His Dining Room.

One of the most daring bits of coloring on record in the way of household furnishing is the dining room of the artist Whistler. It may be said to be a symphony in yellow, or in blue and yellow. All of the walls are painted blue, the blue being of a decidedly greenish hue. The cornice is painted in stripes of dark green, blue and yellow, the ceiling being pale yellow. The surbase is the color of a ripe lemon, as are the doors and all the woodwork about the windows and the high wooden mantel. The hearthstone is also yellow, and about the fire-place is a set of lemon-colored tiles bordered with blue. Two sets of shelves, one on either side of the fire-place, are painted yellow. The woodwork of the cane-seated chairs is yellow and the seat blue. The floor is covered with a blue and yellow Chinese matting, cubic pattern. This is all a very cheap sort of furnishing, but here the cheapness ends. The curtains are of rare needlework, of various shades of yellow upon fine white linen, which fall unconfined to the floor. The shelves mentioned hold bits of rare blue china; on the mantel are Japanese curios, blue, sea green and yellow. A half-opened fan is in one corner. There are no mirrors and no pictures. Opposite the fire-place hang midway between the floor and ceiling two Japanese flower pots, each holding a yellow primrose. The table service is of old blue. Who but an artist would dare undertake such a scheme of color, and who but an artist would succeed?

Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle which fits them all.—Holmes.

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

"A KING EATING GRASS" SUNDAY'S SUBJECT.

From the Text—"And He Was Driven from Men and Did Eat Grass as Oxen, and His Body Was Wet With Dew from Heaven."—Daniel 4:33.



BETTER shade your eyes lest they be put out with the splendor of Babylon, as some morning you walk out with Nebuchadnezzar on the suspension bridges which hang from the housetops, and he shows you the vastness of his realm. As the sun kindles the domes with glisters almost insufferable, and the great streets thunder up their pomp into the ear of the monarch, and armed towers stand around, adorned with the spoils of conquered empires, Nebuchadnezzar waves his hand above the stupendous scene and exclaims: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" But in an instant all that splendor is gone from his vision, for a voice falls from the heaven, saying, "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken: The kingdom is departed from thee; and they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven years shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." One hour from the time that he made the boast he is on the way to the fields, a maniac, and rushing into the forests he becomes one of the beasts, covered with eagles' feathers for protection from the cold, and his nails growing to birds' claws in order that he might dig the earth for roots and climb the trees for nuts.

You see there is a great variety in the Scriptural landscape. In several discourses we have looked at mountains of excellence, but now we look down into a great, dark chasm of wickedness as we come to speak of Nebuchadnezzar. God in His Word sets before us the beauty of self-denial, of sobriety, of devotion, of courage, and then, lest we should not thoroughly understand him, he introduced Daniel and Paul, and Deborah, as illustrations of those virtues. God also speaks to us in His Word as to the hatefulness of pride, of folly, of impiety, and lest we should not thoroughly understand him, introduces Nebuchadnezzar as the impersonation of these forms of depravity. The former style of character is a lighthouse, showing us a way into a safe harbor, and the latter style of character is a black buoy, swinging on the rocks, to show where vessels wreck themselves. Thanks unto God for both the buoy and the lighthouse! The host of Nebuchadnezzar is thundering at the gates of Jerusalem. The crown of that sacred city is struck into the dust by the hand of Babylonian insolence. The vessels of the temple, which had never been desecrated by profane touch, were ruthlessly seized for sacrilege and transportation. Oh, what a sad hour when those Jews, at the command of the invading army, are obliged to leave the home of their nativity! How their hearts must have been wrung with anguish, when, on the day they departed, they heard the trumpets from the top of the Temple announcing the hour for morning sacrifice and saw the smoke of the altars ascending around the holy hill of Zion, for well they knew that in a far distant land they would never hear that trumpet call, or behold the majestic ascent of the sacrifice. Behold those captives on the road from Jerusalem to Babylon! Worn and weary, they did not dare halt, for onward about are armed men, urging them on with hoot, and shout, and blasphemy. Aged men tottered along on their staves, weeping that they could not lay their bones in the sleeping-cradle of their fathers, and children sobbed at the length of the way and bobbed themselves to sleep when the light had fallen. It seemed as if at every step a heart broke. But at a turn of the road Babylon suddenly springs upon the view of the captives, with its gardens and palaces. A shout goes up from the army as they behold their native city, but not one huzza is heard from the captives. These exiles saw no splendor there, for it was not home. The Euphrates did not have the water-team of the brook Kedron or the pool of Siloam. The willows of Babylon, on which they hung their untuned harps, were not as graceful as the trees which at the foot of Mount Moriah seemed to weep at the departed glory of Judah, and all the fragrance that descended from the hanging-gardens upon that great city was not so sweet as one breath of the acacia and frankincense that the high priest kindled in the sanctuary at Jerusalem.

On a certain night, a little while after these captives had been brought to his city, Nebuchadnezzar is scared with a night vision: A bad man's pillow is apt to be stuffed with deeds and forebodings which keep talking in the night. He will find that the eagles' down in his pillow will stick him like porcupine quills. The ghosts of old transgressions are sure to wander about in the darkness and beckon and hiss. Yet when the morning came he found that the vision had entirely fled from him. Dreams drop no anchors, and therefore are apt to sail away before we can fasten them. Nebuchadnezzar calls all the wise men of the land into his presence, demanding that by their necromancy they explain his dream. They, of course, fail. Then

their wrathful king issues an edict with as little sense as mercy, ordering the slaying of all the learned men of the country. But Daniel the prophet comes in with the interpretation just in time to save the wise men and the Jewish captives.

My friends, do you not see that pride and ruin ride in the same saddle? See Nebuchadnezzar on the proudest throne of all the earth, and then see him graze with the sheep and the cattle! Pride is commander, well plumed and caparisoned, but it leads forth a dark and frowning host. The arrows from the Almighty's quiver are apt to strike a man when on the wing. Goliath shakes his great spear in defiance, but the smooth stones from the brook make him stagger and fall like an ox under the butcher's bludgeon. He who is down cannot fall. Vessels scudding under the bare poles do not feel the force of the storm, while those with all sails set capsize at the sudden descent of the tempest.

Do you not also learn from the misfortune of the king of Babylon what a terrible thing is the loss of reason. There is no calamity that can possibly befall us in this world so great as derangement of intellect; to have the body of man, and yet to fall even below the instinct of a brute. In this world of horrible sights, the most horrible is the idiot's stare. In this world of horrible sounds, the most horrible is the maniac's laugh. A vessel driven on the rocks, when hundreds go down never to rise, and other hundreds drag their mangled and shivering bodies upon the wretched beach, is nothing compared to the foundering of intellects full of vast hopes and attainments and capacities. Christ's heart went out toward those who were epileptic, falling into the fire, or maniacs cutting themselves among the tombs. We are accustomed to be more grateful for physical health than for the proper working of our mind. We are apt to take it for granted that the intellect which has served us so well will always be faithful. We forget that an engine of such tremendous power, where the wheels have such vastness of circle and such swiftness of motion, and the least impediment might put it out of gear, can only be kept in proper balance by a Divine hand. No human hand could engineer the train of immortal faculties. How strange it is that our memory, on whose shoulders all the misfortunes and successes and occurrences of a lifetime are placed, should not oftener break down, and that the scales of judgment, which have been weighing so much and so long, should not lose their adjustment, and that fancy, for the attainment of its objects, should not sometimes maliciously wave it, bringing into the heart forebodings and hallucinations the most appalling! Is it not strange that this mind, which hopes so much in its mighty leaps for the attainment of its objects, should not be dashed to pieces on its disappointments? Though so delicately tuned, this instrument of untold harmony plays on though fear shakes it and vexations rack it and sorrow and joy and loss and gain in quick succession beat out of it their dirge or toss from it their anthem. At morning and at night, when in your prayer you rehearse the causes of your thanksgiving, next to the salvation by Jesus Christ, praise the Lord for the preservation of your reason.

See also in this story of Nebuchadnezzar the use God makes of bad men. The actions of the wicked are used as instruments for the punishment of wickedness in others or as the illustration of some principle in the Divine government. Nebuchadnezzar subserved both purposes. Even so I will go back with you to the history of every reprobate that the world has ever seen, and I will show you how to a great extent his wickedness was limited in its destructive power, and how God glorified himself in the overflow and disgrace of his enemy. Babylon is full of abomination, and wicked Cyrus destroys it. Persia fills the cup of its iniquity, and vile Alexander puts an end to it. Macedonia must be chastised, and bloody Emilius does it. The Bastille is to be destroyed and corrupt Napoleon accomplishes it. Even so selfish and wicked men are often made to accomplish great and glorious purposes. Joseph's brethren were guilty of superlative perfidy and meanness when they sold him into slavery for about seven dollars, yet how they must have been overwhelmed with the truth that God never forsakes the righteous when they saw that he had become the prime minister of Egypt! Pharaoh oppresses the Israelites with the most diabolical tyranny; yet stand still and see the salvation of God. The plagues descend, the locusts, the hail and the destroying angel, showing that there is a God who will defend the cause of his people, and finally, after the Israelites have passed through the parted sea, behold, in the wreck of the drowned army, that God's enemies are chaff in a whirlwind! In some financial panic the righteous suffered with the wicked. Houses and stores and shops in a night foundered on the rock of bankruptcy, and healthy credit without warning dropped dead in the street, and money ran up the long ladder of twenty-five per cent to laugh down upon those who could not climb after it. Dealers with pockets full of securities stood shouting in the deaf ears of banks. Men rushed down the streets with protested notes after them. Those who before found it hard to spend their money were left without money to spend. Laborers went home for want of work, to see hunger in their chair at the table and upon the hearth. Winter blew his breath of frost through fingers of icicles, and sheriffs with attachments dug among the cinders of fallen storehouses, and whole cities joined in the long funeral procession, marching to the grave of dead fortunes and a fallen commerce. Verily, the

righteous suffered with the wicked, but generally the wicked had the worst of it. Splendid estates that had come together through schemes of wickedness were dashed to pieces like a potter's vessel, and God wrote with letters of fire, amid the ruin and destruction of reputations and systems that were thought impregnable, the old-fashioned truth, which centuries ago he wrote in His Bible, "The way of the wicked he turneth upside down." As the stars of heaven are reflected from the waters of the earth, even so God's great and magnificent purposes are reflected back from the boiling sea of human passion and turmoil. As the voice of a sweet song uttered among the mountains may be uttered back from the cavernous home of wild beast and rocks split and thunder-scarred, so the great harmonies of God's providence are rung back from the darkest caverns of this sin-struck earth. Sennacherib, and Abimelech, and Herod, and Judas, and Nero, and Nebuchadnezzar, though they struggled like beasts unbroken to the load, were put into a yoke, where they were compelled to help draw ahead God's great projects of mercy.

Again, let us learn the lesson that men can be guilty of polluting the sacred vessels of the temple and carrying them away to Babylon. The sacred vessels in the temple at Jerusalem were the cups and plates of gold and silver with which the rites and ceremonies were celebrated. The laying of heathen hands upon them and the carrying them off as spoils was an unbought offense to the Lord of the temple. Yet Nebuchadnezzar committed this very sacrilege. Though that wicked king is gone, the sins he inaugurated walk up and down the earth, cursing it from century to century. The sin of desecrating sacred things is committed by those who on sacramental day take the communion cup, while their conversation and actions all show that they live down in Babylon. How solemn is the sacrament! It is a time for vows, a time for repentance, a time for faith. Sinai stands near, with its fire split clouds, and Calvary, with its Victim. The Holy Spirit broods over the scene, and the glory of heaven seems to gather in the sanctuary. Vile indeed must that man be who comes in from his idols and unrepented follies to take hold of the sacred vessels of the temple. O, thou Nebuchadnezzar! Back with you to Babylon!

Rev. William Jay met a countryman who said to him, "I was extremely alarmed this morning, sir. It was very foggy and I was going down to a lonely place and I thought I saw a strange monster. It seemed in motion, but I could not discern its form. I did not like to turn back, but my heart beat; and the more I looked the more I was afraid. But as I approached, it was a man and who do you think it was?" "I know not." "Oh, it was my brother John." Then Mr. Jay remarked, "It was early in the morning and very foggy, and how often do we thus mistake our Christian brethren."

Just in proportion as men are wrong will they be boisterous in their religious contentions. The lamb of religion is always gentle, while there is no lion so fierce as the roaring lion that goes about seeking whom he may devour. Let Gibraltar belch their war flame on the sea, and the Dardanelles darken the Hellespont with the smoke of their batteries, but forever and ever let there be good will among those who profess to be the subjects of the Gospel of gentleness. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men."

What an embarrassing thing to meet in heaven if we have not settled our controversies on earth. So I give out for all people of all religions to sing John Fawcett's hymn, in short metre, composed in 1772, but just as appropriate for 1897:

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love,
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

From sorrow, toil and pain,
And sin we shall be free,
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity.

NOT A NOODLE.

The Farmer Did Not Care to Stop the Wedding.

I was standing on the corner of ~~High~~ and High streets when a frisky looking old farmer came to me, says a writer in the New York World, and said excitedly:

"Stranger, does a minister of the gospel live in yonder brick house with the green blinds?"

"The Rev. Mr. Sawyer lives there," I replied.

"Thank goodness," he said, with a sigh.

"Sickness in your family?" I asked.

"No sickness there, stranger," he replied, "but daughter Libbie run away from hum with a feller this mornin'. Soon's I heard of it started after 'em an' got sight of 'em jes' outside the city an' kep' sight of 'em till they went into yonder house."

"Why don't you go into the house and stop the wedding?" I asked.

"Stop the wedding? Me? Say, stranger, do I look like a noodle? Do I look like a gawk that would kick at havin' thirty-eight years of care an' worry lifted off his shoulders in a minute?" he asked sarcastically.

"Not exactly," I replied.

"Guess not, stranger. I jes' run after the guilty pair to keep 'em from changin' their minds. I'll jes' wait here as happy as an angel with a new pair of wings 'till the happy pair come out, then I'll give 'em my blessin' an' hurry hum an' kill the fatted calf. Stop the wedding? Nixey."

Almost a Hint.

Dudely—What lovely little fingers you have got, Miss Fanny. They are hardly larger than a baby's fingers.

Fanny—Yes, ma always said that it would hardly cost anything at all to get an engagement ring to fit my finger.