

THE NEW MINISTER.

WHAT do you think, Aunt Violet? The new minister is coming to-night?"

Miriam Blake and her cousin, Effie Towers, burst into the quiet old-fashioned sitting-room like twin gales of wind so fresh and sudden and inspiring they were.

It was a very cheerful apartment with the crimson carpet flooded with October sunshine, the canary singing from his cage among the geraniums in the window-seat, and a bright wood fire crackling from the most burnished of brass andirons on the hearth—for Aunt Violet loved an open fire, and adhered to it through all the modern innovations.

She was a woman past thirty, yet very pretty withal—a woman whose type of face and form would always remain youthful. Brown hair, with rippling lights of gold upon its surface; blue-gray eyes, large and shaded with long lashes; a complexion where the fresh white and red betokened perfect health and a smiling, cherry-red, melting mouth, whose smiles betrayed a singularly regular set of teeth—Miss Violet Brown was perhaps quite as attractive in her mature womanhood as she had been in her fresher girl-days.

"To-night?" said Aunt Violet. "And is the parsonage all in readiness?" "All prepared, I believe. And what do you think, Aunt Violet," went on Miriam, with girlish eagerness, "of old Mrs. Marsh going there with her two daughters to prepare tea, and make it 'sort o' hum-like,' as she says, for him the first night?"

And Violet smiled over her crochet. "Why," struck in Effie Towers, "the Marsh girls are as old as the hills."

"Not quite as old as the hills," said Aunt Violet, quietly. "Sarah Marsh is about my age, and Mehetable cannot be more than a year or two older." "Oh, Aunt Violet!" said Effie, coaxingly, stealing both arms around Miss Brown's slender waist, "nobody ever thinks of your being old!"

"It's an indisputable fact nevertheless," said Aunt Violet, serenely.

"Aunt Violet," said Miriam suddenly, as she sat looking her aunt full in the face, "how I wish Mr. Smith would fall in love with you!"

Aunt Violet shrugged her shoulders. "My dear child, isn't Brown a sufficiently common cognomen but you want to change it into the still more hackneyed name of Smith?"

"I wasn't thinking of the name, Aunt Violet—I was only reflecting to myself what a splendid minister's wife you would make."

"I shall never make anybody's wife, Miriam."

"What nonsense!" ejaculated the gay girl. "Why, aunty, you are the prettiest of our whole set, yet with your sweet-pea complexion and those big innocent eyes of yours—"

But here Effie Towers interrupted, speaking gravely with serious glance. "I know what makes Aunt Violet speak so, Miriam—she has had a disappointment years and years ago."

"Aunty! Did you really?" "Years and years ago," as Effie says, I had a lover," returned Aunt Violet, calmly. "And what interrupted the current of true love?"

"I was foolish, and wished to test my power, Clarence, that was his name, was hasty and impulsive, and my folly incensed him. So we parted."

"And is he married now?" "I do not know. I have never seen nor heard from him since. He was only spending the summer vacation, a college student, in our quiet village."

"What was his last name?"

"N'importe, Miriam, do not let us disinter any more of the horrid past. I have told you my folly. See that you take warning by it."

And none of Miriam Blake's soft coaxings could win from Aunt Violet any further confidences.

"You are not an old maid, darling aunty," said Miriam, "but Sarah Marsh is, and I mean to enter the lists with her myself to win the new minister's favor. The parsonage would make a pretty nest for such a bird as I am, all embowered in roses and clematis, and full of delicious little by windows and maple-shaded piazzas. I hope he's young and good-looking."

"He's just thirty-five," said Effie, "for Deacon Alden told me so."

"Did he say whether he was good-looking or not?"

"No, he didn't, as if Deacon Alden cared for his looks."

"Thirty-five—that is rather old-bachelorish, but a man isn't totally past reform at thirty-five," observed Miriam, pensively. "If Aunt Violet won't have him I'll try my chance."

"I shall never marry," gravely reiterated Aunt Violet, with more seriousness than Miriam's light-jesting way seemed to call for.

"If that's the case," said Miriam, "I'll go and rip up the breadths of my lilac lawn dress, and have the fluted ruffles done up. One can't be too care-

ful of one's advantage of costume at such a critical time, and I know Mehetable Marsh has got a white dress with blue rosebuds all over it."

"Miriam, what a rattlepate you are," said Effie.

"Don't I tell you I need a minister for a husband, just to sober me down?"

And with this Parthian arrow of retort, Miss Miriam quitted the room, with Effie following her.

Presently she came back again, dancing merrily into the room.

"I've found out my future husband's name."

"What is it?"

"A decided novelty—John Smith."

Aunt Violet smiled, and Miriam vanished once more like a twinkling bit of thistledown.

Violet Brown sat gazing into the coral depths of the bright embers that had fallen through the logs on the hearth. Somehow, spite of her assertion of self-reliance and independence, she felt very lonely that October afternoon.

"I'll go for a walk," thought Violet. "Perhaps a little exercise will dissipate this gathering despondency."

She tied a round hat under her curls, put on a coquettish scarlet circle, tasseled with white silk, which, according to her loving nieces, "made her look like a delicious little Red Riding Hood," and went out into the fresh autumn air, where the woods,



"THINKING A LITTLE PENSIVELY."

all radiant with gold and crimson glories, were showering their leafy trophies on the walks below, as she entered their silent aisles.

"Autumn," she thought, sadly, "how soon it has come upon us! And it is but a little while since spring was here with her dew and roses. My spring has vanished, too, and unlike the sacred season of birds and blossoms, it will never return to me again. Heigho! I wonder what I was born into this world for. I don't seem to be of very much use to anybody."

Violet was thinking thus, a little pensively, as she sat on a moss-enameled fallen tree, tapping the drifts of yellow leaves with the point of her parasol, and letting the fresh, fragrant wind blow the gold-brown curls back from her forehead. She was not thinking how picturesque was her attitude, nor how beautiful her face looked in its oval clearness, with pink flushes on either cheek, but both these facts struck the perceptions of a tall stranger carrying a valise in his left hand, who had just crossed the stile leading from the main road, and entered the illuminated glow of the autumnal woods.

He raised his hat with a courteous motion as Miss Brown started at his advancing footsteps.

"I beg your pardon; I fear I have unintentionally startled you."

"Not at all," Violet looked up earnestly at his face as she answered.

"Perhaps you can direct me to the shortest cut across these woods to Millhambury? I am not quite certain as to my localities."

"You are on the direct path now, Clarence Smith."

He started, in his turn, and gazed scrutinizingly into her face.

"I thought it was familiar to me!" he exclaimed, "and now I know it. Violet! who would have thought of meeting you here?"

Violet Brown trembled like an aspen leaf, but she strove to control herself.

"The world is full of just such chance meetings, Clarence."

She had half turned away, but the gentleman put down his valise, and was evidently inclined not to part with her so readily.

"Stop, Violet—do not go away. My love! I have so longed to see you, all these years. Tell me that you have not entirely forgotten the past—that you have still a word of tenderness for the wayward lover who flung away

his brightest chances of happiness long ago! Violet, you were my first love—be my last?"

"Do you love me still, Clarence?" she asked, the blue-gray eyes softening to a strangely tender brightness.

"Do I breathe an exist still? I tell you, Violet, my heart is like the century plant which only blossoms once—and its blossoming is in the sunshine of your love alone."

She was silent—lovelier than ever, Clarence thought, in the momentary indecision, the shy hesitation of her manner, as she stood under the old trees, a gold-tinted leaf drifting down here and there around her, and her tremulous hands clasped to hide their flutter as far as might be.

"Violet, darling! tell me that you love me."

"I love you, Clarence!"

There is a Garden of Eden created anew for every happy pair of lovers—and Clarence and Violet stood in Paradise now!

"But, Clarence," resumed Violet, when the first all-absorbed words and glances of their new happiness had been exchanged, "I don't comprehend this at all. How did you come here? and how did you know where to find me?"

"I did not know where to find you, Violet. Chance has been my friend here, and as for my opportune appearance on the scene, it is very easily accounted for. I have been called to take charge of the parish of Millhambury."

"Clarence, you are not the new minister?"

"But I am the new minister."

"His name is John Smith."

"I beg your pardon, mia amima—it is John Clarence Smith."

And Violet's surprise was sufficiently amusing to the reverend gentleman at her side.

Old Mrs. Bezel Marsh and her two elderly, hard-favored daughters, had got the parsonage all ready, even to lighting the evening lamps on the study-table, and poking the clear anthracite fire that burned in the dining-room grate.

Miss Mehetable had turned the tumbler of crimson currant jelly into its cut-glass dish, and disposed the green sprigs of parsley to the most striking effect round the thinly-cut slices of boiled tongue, while Miss Sarah made a Leaning Tower of Pisa of the buttermilk biscuits, and whisked the flies away from the sugar-basin, in readiness for the expected guest, and like the hero of song, "still he came not!"

"The kittle's bollin', and the tea's all steeped," said Mrs. Marsh, as she sat in the big rocking-chair in front of the fire. "It'll be spiled if he don't come pretty soon."

"He'll be here presently now," said Miss Mehetable, loosening her curls from their confining papers. "Oh, ma! I wonder if he'll be pleased with what we've done!"

"He can't help it," said Mrs. Marsh, mentally congratulating herself on her double chances of being the minister's mother-in-law. But the words were yet on her lips and the triumphant reflections yet in her mind, when a knock came softly to the door, and Miriam Blake entered, rosy with her long walk through the frosty autumn twilight.

"Have you heard the news?" asked Miriam. "I thought I'd come over and tell you. The new minister has come."

"Sakes alive!" ejaculated Mrs. Marsh.

"I don't b'lieve it," said Mehetable. "Oh, but he has for I've seen him. And you needn't stay here any longer, for he has concluded to remain at our house to-night."

Mrs. Marsh and her daughters both stared.

"What an airth does it all mean?" demanded the elder lady.

"I'll tell you a very, very great secret," cried the delighted Miriam.

"He's an old beau of Aunt Violet's, and the engagement has been renewed, and my dear little blue-eyed aunt is to be the minister's wife the very next month that ever dawn upon us!"

"Land o' Goshen!" cried Mrs. Marsh.

"Well I never!" said Miss Sarah.

"I shouldn't think," venomously commented Miss Mehetable, "that he'd want to marry an old maid."

"There are more old maids than one in the world," observed Miriam, philosophically. "So if you'll kindly lock up the room, I'll take the key back to my new uncle—that is to be. I had thought of setting my cap at the new minister myself, but I cheerfully yield the palm to Aunt Violet."

She tripped home, through the dusk, laughing to herself at the discomfiture of the Marsh family. Aunt Violet and Mr. John C. Smith were sitting cozily together over the fire when she returned, and, as she passed through the room, she only paused to throw her arms around Violet's neck, and whisper:

"What do you think now about never marrying, Aunt Violet?"—The Hearthstone.

We don't know that the Latin inscriptions on tombstones stand for, but have an idea that, translated into English, they would mean: "He's all in."



Give Warning of Approach of More Serious Trouble.

Do you experience fits of depression with restlessness, alternating with extreme irritability, bordering upon hysteria? Are your spirits easily affected so that one minute you laugh, and the next fall into convulsive weeping?

Do you feel something like a ball rising in your throat and threatening to choke you; all the senses perverted, morbidly sensitive to light and sound; pain in the ovaries, and especially between the shoulders; sometimes loss of voice; nervous dyspepsia, and almost continually cross and snappy, with a tendency to cry at the least provocation?

If so, your nerves are in a shattered condition, and you are threatened with nervous prostration.

Undoubtedly you do not know it, but in nine cases out of ten this is caused by some uterine disorder, and the nerves centering in and about the organs which make you a woman influence your entire nervous system. Something must be done at once to restore their natural condition or you will be prostrated for weeks and months perhaps, and suffer untold misery.

Proof is monumental that nothing in the world is better for this purpose than Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound; thousands and thousands of women have written us so.

How Mrs. Holland, of Philadelphia, suffered among the finest physicians in the country, none of whom could help her—finally cured by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—For over two years I was a constant sufferer from extreme nervousness, indigestion, and dizziness. Menstruation was irregular, had backache and a feeling of great lassitude and weakness. I was so bad that I was not able to do my own work or go far in the street. I could not sleep nights."

"I tried several splendid doctors, but they gave me no relief. After taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound I soon began to feel better, and was able to go out and not feel as if I would fall at every step. I continued to take the medicine until cured."

"I cannot say enough in behalf of Lydia E. Pinkham's medicine, and heartily recommend all suffering women to try it and find the relief I did."—MRS. FLORENCE HOLLAND, 622 S. Clifton St., Philadelphia, Pa. (Jan. 6, 1902.)

Another case of severe female trouble cured by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, after the doctors had failed.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I was in poor health for several years. I had female trouble and was not able to do my housework alone. I felt tired, very nervous, and could not sleep. I doctored with several doctors. They doctored me for my stomach, but did not relieve me. I read in your book about your medicine, and thought I would try it. I did so, and am now cured and able to do my work alone, and feel good. I was always very poor, but now weigh one hundred and fifty pounds."

"I thank you for the relief I have obtained, and I hope that every woman troubled with female weakness will give Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound a trial. I have recommended it to many of my friends."—MRS. MARIA BOWERS, Millersville, Ohio. (Aug. 15, 1901.)

Will not the volumes of letters from women made strong by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound convince all of the virtues of this medicine?

How shall the fact that it will help them be made plain? Surely you cannot wish to remain weak, and sick, and discouraged, exhausted with each day's work. You have some derangement of the feminine organism, and Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound will help you just as surely as it has others.

Last Request.

An amateur sportsman had mistaken a calf for a deer and the calf was breathing its last.

"T-tell mother," gasped the dying martyr, addressing the sympathetic sheep that stood near by, "tell mother that I died game."

Another struggle and the agony was over.—Chicago News.

To Break in New Shoes.

Always shake in Allen's Foot-Ease, a powder. It cures hot, sweating, itching, swollen feet. Cures corns, ingrowing nails and bunions. At all druggists and shoe stores, 25c. Don't accept any substitute. Sample mailed FREE. Address Allen S. Olmsted, Le Roy, N. Y.

Tribute to Woman's Vanity.

Traveling beauties never take passage on an ocean liner without a spirit lamp to heat their curling tongs. This practice imperils the ship through danger of fire. One of the big steamship lines has fitted every stateroom on its vessels with an electrical apparatus for heating the curling tongs.

FITS Permanently cured. No fitful nervousness after first day's use of Dr. Kline's Great Nerve Restorer. Send for Free \$2 trial bottle and treatise. Dr. R. H. Kline, Ltd., 933 Arch St., Philadelphia, Pa.

A Japanese Custom.

At the birth of a Japanese baby a tree is sometimes planted, which must remain untouched until the marriage day of the child. When the nuptial hour arrives the tree is cut down and a skilled cabinet-maker transforms the wood into furniture, which is considered by the young people as the most beautiful of all the ornaments of the house.

Next Thing in Line.

The oldest mason is beginning to get his name in the papers again, says the Chicago Record-Herald. Look out for another of George Washington's body servants.

Enterprise in Dakota.

Hotel Proprietor—I have a scheme to get ahead of the other hotels.

Clerk—What is the idea?

Hotel Proprietor—I think we might keep a divorce lawyer on the premises and let the guests have his services without extra charge.—Town and Country.

What He Thinks.

When a man boasts that he has an education, he makes a mental reservation that he is pretty smart anyway.—Washington Democrat.

Twins Born in Dublin.

Irish women can boast of having twins more frequently than any other women in the world. Twins are born in Dublin about once in every three births, as against a general world average of one in eighty.

Dizzy?

Appetite poor? Bowels constipated? Tongue coated? Head ache? It's your liver! Ayer's Pills are liver pills, all vegetable. Sold for sixty years. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass.

Want your moustache or beard a beautiful brown or rich black? Use BUCKINGHAM'S DYE. FIFTY CTS. OF DRUGGISTS OR R. P. HALL & CO., MANUFACTURERS.

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