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THE OREGON SCOUT.

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RED LETTER DAYS.

"Moments make the year, and trifles life." "Wait just a minute, Frank," said Carrie Dean, as her husband drew on his overcoat in preparation for his nightly two-hours' trip to the "post office," (three minutes walk from the door).

"Well," said he, for she hesitated. "What is it now?"

"O, nothing, but have you remembered," paying a little unnecessary attention to the clasp of her bracelet, "to-morrow will be our sixth anniversary?"

"Let's see—the twenty-first. No, I hadn't thought of it. Why?"

"Why, I've been thinking and wishing we might plan some little celebration, just to recognize the day."

"Didn't we celebrate our fifth, last year? There's nothing new until the tenth. Are you getting out of wooden nutmegs?"

"Oh, I don't mean anything of that kind"—with a little faltering of the voice, unnoticed by Mr. Dean, who is already in the hall—"just a little something to make it in some way different from other days."

"Why, what ails other days?" he inquired dryly. "I don't think we want to make any fuss. I'll send down an extra course or two for dinner, and I hope you'll see that they come on all right, or get a cook who can serve a dinner decently without being watched," and closing the hall door, he joined the crowd of comfortable pilgrims, setting towards the "post-office" shrine.

Mr. Dean was not unkind at heart; on the contrary he considered himself a very remarkable husband indeed; possibly not in the matter of sentiment—that was an uncommercial commodity with which a business man could have little to do—but of his indulgence there could be no doubt. Had he not established a model home, well located, furnished, and appointed? Did he not promptly respond to every application made by his wife for financial aid, and leave the matter of domestic service wholly to her? Furthermore, was not his own life well ordered and irrepensible? Beyond doubt his wife was fortunate among women. He had not much time for home life, himself. He went every day to his office when real or fancied emergencies did not call him out of town; and evenings—well, evenings there were always errands to be done, and one must keep the run of things at the club, and lodge meetings must not be neglected, and at this season there were at least local politics of interest. Clearly, his evenings were fully occupied. Carrie had the best of it. She had the home all to herself.

But to night the highly-favored wife was not in a mood to appreciate her blessings, particularly the crowning one of solitude, nor did the prospective pleasure of the morrow produce great exhilaration of spirits.

"Another course or two for dinner; that is, a little more time than usual spent in the kitchen," she sighed.—"that is only a type of what my Red Letter Days have been, and"—the sigh grew heavier—"what I suppose they will always be."

And then, though the chandeliers shed soft light on the home, made beautiful by the exquisite blending of Oriental tints, though the last new book contested claim with the latest craze in embroidery, though an obtrusive little white-pawed kitten rubbed and purred against her bowed head, the loneliness of her heart found vent in tears.

"Unreasonable!" every strong-minded woman will declare. Very; yet the return of a joyful anniversary with the joy left out, has been known to wring stronger hearts than that of poor Carrie Dean.

"What could I have said," she questioned, "to make him take some interest in the day?" but the white-pawed kitten, her only auditor, answered not. He would hardly have regarded a proposition to spend the day, or even the evening, at home, in the light of an entertainment—they had been six years wed—and she was deterred from proposing any outside expedition, by a peculiarity of temperament, none too common. She had retained one characteristic of her girlhood, which is commonly supposed to become extinct with marriage—a delicacy which prevented her from making overtures. Frank Dean had counted it one of her sweetest graces in the old days. Perhaps since marriage his perceptions had dimmed, and he may not have noticed that she had never invited him to tase her out, or solicited from him any gift, unless the occasional laying before him of an emptied purse might be held—so unfathomable is the domestic partnership to the uninitiated—to be associating of aims! As a natural result of this reticence, she was much at home, and the charming little belongings that sur-

rounded her, were not the gifts of affection, but had for the most part been ordered in much the same matter-of-fact way as the daily bread. Frank had often told her that he preferred to buy what things he needed, and she might do the same; and she, who loved gifts, and invitations and surprises, with the fresh heartiness of a child, felt that somehow all her life was prose, not the least prosy page being that on which was just inscribed the programme of her anniversary day.

And Frank Dean went on with the rest, thinking of to-morrow's business, and to-night's relaxation. As he was just turning to ascend to the spacious apartments of the "Federal Club," his old friend Al Worthington, passed, and then turned back.

"Say, Frank! Come over to Gray & Green's with me, will you? I want to get something in the pottery line, and your foreign sight-seeing ought to have educated you up to a critical standpoint. Come over and give me the benefit of your experience."

"Are they open to-night?" said Dean, not displeased at the prospect of indulging his taste for a ceramic art.

"Yes, and every evening till after the holidays," replied Al, "but I must make my choice to-night, as to-morrow will be Della's birthday, and I like my gifts to be timely."

"Do you always observe birthdays?" inquired Frank Dean with uncomfortable recollections.

"Every time," said Al, promptly. "They only come once a year, you know; quite often enough at that, most of us think, even when the pangs of antiquity are softened by the application of a little balm."

"Do you observe any other anniversaries?" inquired Frank, thankful that Carrie was not in hearing.

"Should think we did! Fact is, old fellow, life is humdrum enough, do the best we will to brighten it. Della's family always used to have great times at Christmas, and every other holiday that was ever invented—every kind of folks, you know—and I began that way to keep her from pining for home, (you know I took her from all her friends) and I find I look forward to the good times almost, or quite as much as she does."

"What in the name of sense do you do to celebrate?" demanded Dean, with more severity than the case seemed to warrant.

"Well, for one thing," replied the imperturbable Al, "we exchange presents, on every occasion where we can work a present in."

"Gimcracks, I suppose," growled the uncomfortable listener.

"Well, some gimcracks," replied Al, placidly. "Of course, Della, being a woman, must have spells of making canvas slippers, and such, but they are generally thrown in as extras, rewards of merit, you know, but the fact is, you would take it as a great joke if I told you how we really do manage the matter of gifts."

"I should probably laugh out of the wrong side of my mouth," said Frank to himself, adding audibly, "make a clean breast of it, old boy."

"Well," said Al—for the first time showing some confusion—"we are two children, may be, but it makes a mighty lot of difference with a woman's happiness whether you indulge her little enthusiasms, or suppress all her freshness of feeling, and a fellow likes to keep on terms with himself, besides."

"Well, well," said Frank, in a good-humored tone, "this moralizing will keep; how about the grand secret?"

"All easy enough when you know how," said Al, who had quite recovered his composure. "You know when we began house-keeping we did not start out with everything the shops would afford—we fill in along by degrees. Now, when we get ready to buy a picture, or a fancy chair, a cabinet, set of books, or even some attractive piece of table furniture, it is purchased in the form of a gift, on some of our calendar days. How is that for generosity?"

"I must confess I fail to see where the fun comes in."

"Well, it is largely in the complete uncertainty what the gift will be, added to the certainty of receiving one. For example, on my own birthday, a few weeks ago, I had a great hunt on my return home, for my 'surprise,' and when I fairly gave it up and took a seat at the table, I found my wayfarer feet reposing on a fine, soft, fur rug—my especial delight. Della knows my weakness for fur. I must have been an Esquimaux, at some stage of my career."

"Or a moth," suggested Frank, "but when do your feet find time to extract the virtues of the rug?"

"O, I stay in evening and get the good of things," said Al, breezily. "This is an exception, but it will show to-morrow on the mantel cabinet. Let's walk back now to Gray & Green's, and make sure of it."

"Well, just one thing more. Do you do anything but furnish your house by piece-meal, on your holidays?"

"Why, we like to do something to break the monotony. If circumstances admit, and they can usually be made to bend, I believe as many women die of monotony, as of any organized disease. I don't want to see Della's face take on the look that two-thirds of the faces of women wear in repose."

"And so?" questioned Frank, in a constrained tone, as his companion seemed to relapse into thought.

"O, yes; and so I plan my business now and then, to take little trips out of town on some of our days, and take Della along. She never knows anything about time, if she can shop, visit art galleries, and all that, and then after business hours we have the evening at our disposal."

"Do you do that every time?" persisted the inspiring listener.

"Bless you, no! She likes to go to her home whenever she can, and though it is quite a trip, we take it once a year, usually on our wedding anniversary. You see, Dean, a single bad habit would absorb more money, twice over, than I spend in all these directions, and be the smallest part of the cost, at that. I don't recognize any expense that goes toward keeping a home what a home should be!"

"Well, all you two babes lack is a fairy god-mother," laughed Dean, after an uncomfortable pause. "I feel like the proverbial beast in a china shop, coming in here to choose pottery for Utopia, but I will at least keep you clear of jars!" And with the expression of this laudable design, he passed with his companion into the alluring departments of Gray & Green.

Carrie Dean, not being of the scenic order, having had her eye out, did her best to remove the traces thereof—a penance which goes far toward spoiling the "good" of any woman's "ery."

She had so far succeeded before her husband's return, that had not his eyes been opened in an unwonted way, he would have been blissfully ignorant of the entertainment she had enjoyed. He noticed it, however, with a pang not rendered less—mark this, ye wives—by the smile with which she greeted him.

"Well, Carrie," said he, seating himself beside her, capturing the hand nearest him, "how is it about bonnets, and gloves, and gowns and things? Could you start east to-morrow on the 8:45 express?"

"Why Frank! are you going to dispatch me without mercy?" she exclaimed between a smile and a tear, her nerves having not yet regained equipoise.

"I thought of going along, if you did not object," he answered gaily. "We'll spend the day with your Aunt Marion, and get some of her good doughnuts and pumpkin pies." (Thus the man, whose probable descent from heights of sentiment to gastronomic considerations is a matter of history.) "So you will not have to bother around the stove here. A bride ought not to work, you know, on her wedding day."

"O, Frank! the best of it all," said Carrie with a rising sob, "is that you care, and that you will come too."

"Yes, dear," said he gravely, "I do care. Have you felt that I did not?" and not waiting for the dreaded answer, he drew her to himself, saying, as he kissed her quivering lips, "If to-morrow is our first Red Letter Day, darling, it shall not be our last."

That was years ago, but the promise held, even after the fairy god-mother came to their home, to add her steadily recurring birthdays to the illuminated list.—*Georgia A. Peck in Good House-keeper.*

The King's English.

The correct expression is "King's English." We nowadays transposing this to "Queen's," because a woman sits on the throne of England. Many have ascribed it to a revision of the Bible, ordered to be made by King James, stating in corroboration of the theory the fact that many people objected then, as they do to-day, to the new version on the ground that it contained many errors, and referred to it contemptuously as "the King's English." Subsequently, it is claimed, this term came to be used in referring to all abuses of the English language. I enn, I think, show conclusively that this theory is erroneous. James I. was King from 1603 to 1625, but Elizabeth was Queen from 1558 to 1603, yet we find the term used by Shakespeare in his "Merry Wives of Windsor," which was written during the Elizabethan period, and, of course, before James was elevated to the throne. In act I, scene 4, of the play, I have named occurs the words: "Here will be an old abusing of * * * She King's English." I am inclined to the belief that the expression and its origin right there in Shakespeare's day.—*Dylander in Philadelphia.*

MR. RUSKIN'S FIRST LOVE.

A Story That is Told in His Autobiography—A Combination of Twaddles, Toots and Winkles.

The early love of great men is a favorite topic in these days with the minor fry of literature. Mr. Ruskin is depriving them of at least one opportunity, for he is himself telling his first love story. In the new chapter of his autobiography, he turns from music and dancing to love. Mr. Domecq's four daughters came to stay at Herne Hill. They were Clotilde and Elise and Cecile and Caroline—a most curious galaxy, or southern cross, of unconcealed stars floating on a sudden into my obscure firmament of London suburb."

How my parents could allow their young novice to be cast into the fiery furnace of the outer world in this helpless manner the reader may wonder, and only the fates know; but there was this excuse for them, that they had never seen me the least interested or anxious about girls—never caring to stay in the promenades at Cheltenham or Bath, or on the parade at Dover; on the contrary, growling and mowing if I was ever kept there, and off to the sea or the fields the moment I got leave; and they had educated me in such extremely orthodox English torism and evangelicism that they could not conceive their scientific, religious, and George III. roving youth wavering in his constitutional balance toward French Catholics. I was thrown, bound hand and foot, in my unaccomplished simplicity, into the fiery furnace, or fiery cross, of these four girls—who of course reduced me to a mere heap of white ashes in four days. Four days, at the most, it took to reduce me to ashes, but the "Mercredi des cendres" lasted four years.

It was Clotilde (Adele Clotilde in full, but I called her Adele because it rhymed to shell, spell, and knell) who reduced the poor boy to ashes; and here is the description that he gives of his love-making:

In my social behavior and mind I was a curious combination of Mr. Traddles, Mr. Toots, and Mr. Winkle. I had the real fidelity and single-mindedness of Mr. Traddles with the conversational ability of Mr. Toots, and the heroic ambition of Mr. Winkle—all these illumined by imagination like Copperfield's at his first Norwood dinner. . . . My shyness and unrepresentableness were further stiffened, or, rather, sanded, by a patriotic and Protestant conceit, which was tempered neither by politeness nor sympathy; so that, while in company, I sat jealously miserable like a stock fish (in truth, I imagine, looking like nothing so much as a skate in an aquarium trying to get up the glass), on any blessed occasion of tete-a-tete I endeavored to entertain my Spanish-born, Paris-bred, and Catholic-hearted mistress with my own views upon the subjects of the Spanish Armada, the battle of Waterloo, and the doctrine of transubstantiation.

To these modes of recommending himself Mr. Ruskin did not fail to add an imposing display of his literary powers, and it is to his early love that we owe most of these scattered poems which were originally intruded in "Friendship's Offering" and other annuals, and are now so highly treasured by Ruskinian bibliophiles. The first of them were "The Last Smile" and a prose legend (containing a song) called "The Baudin Leon," whom I represented as typical of what my own sanguinary and adventurous disposition would have been if I had been brought up a bandit. These appeared in the "Friendship's Offering," in 1837, and as late as 1840 we see there was a poem "To Adele." It may interest the reader to see some specimens of the songs, which we accordingly reprint from the 1837 annual:

"THE LAST SMILE."

She sat beside me yesternight,
With lip and eye, so blandly smiling
So full of soul, of life, of light,
So sweetly my lone heart beguiling,
That she had almost made me gay—
Had almost charmed the heart away—
(Which, like the poisoned desert wind,
Came sick and heavy o'er the mind)—
That memory soon mine all would be,
And she would smile no more for me.

SONG IN "LEONL."

Full broad and bright is the silver light
Of moon and stars on flood and fell;
But in my heart is starless night,
For I am come to say farewell,
I do not ask a tear, but while
I linger where I must not stay,
Oh, give me but a parting smile,
To light me on my lonely way,
To shine a brilliant beacon star,
To my reverted glance, afar,
Through midnight, which can have no morrow,
O'er the deep, silent, surge of sorrow.

The fair Adele accepted the verse—not, alas! at all in the spirit in which they were offered. Over the "Maiden Guileta," in which all perfections were portrayed, "she laughed in rippling ecstasies of derision, of which I bore the pain bravely, for the sake of seeing

her thoroughly amused," and when her lover sent after her to Paris a letter, "seven quarto pages long, descriptive of the desolations and solitude of Herne Hill," sisters wrote to say that "she had really read it, and laughed immensely at the French." As for the old people, they took it all very quietly.

Mr. Domecq, who was extremely good natured, and a good judge of character, rather liked me, because he saw that I was good-natured also, and had some seedling brains, which would come up in time; in the interests of the business he was perfectly ready to give me any of his daughters I liked, who could also be got to like me, but considered that the time was not come to talk of such things. My father was entirely of the same mind. My mother—who looked upon the idea of my marrying a Roman Catholic as too monstrous, to be possible in the decrees of heaven, and too preposterous to be even guarded against on earth—was rather annoyed at the whole business, as she would have been if one of her chimneys had begun smoking, but had not the slightest notion her house was on fire.

With the boy himself it was very different. He was "not a whit dashed back out of his daily swelling foam of furious deceit," and he had at any rate gained "a true and glorious sense of the newly revealed miracle of human love in its exaltation of the physical beauty of the world he had till then sought by its own light alone." But for the rest he sat under the mulberry tree in the back garden writing a Venetian tragedy in which the sorrows of his soul were to be enshined in immortal verse. Mr. Ruskin forgets all else that took place in that year: "it is now all blank to me except looking out over Shooter's hill, where I could see the last turn of the road to Paris." Here is his frank summary of the situation: "I had neither the resolution to see Adele, the courage to do without her, the sense to consider what was at last to come of it all, nor the grace to think how disagreeable I was making myself at the time to everybody about me. There was really no more capacity nor intelligence in me than in a just-fledged owlet, a just open-eyed puppy, disconsolate at the existence of the moon."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

Travel in Florida.

It was easy to come to De Land, and it had not occurred to us but that it might be equally easy to leave it, when once one had decided to go. It is true that things are not managed here just as they are in some other places. Not long ago two gentlemen stopping at a hotel near us had resolved upon leaving here upon the early train which is currently supposed to meet the early boat going up the river. When they reached the station they found the fireman asleep, and the engineer—I know not where. This drowsy officer was aroused and persuaded to "get up steam." Now, this is not the operation of a moment, and it was half an hour before the engine was ready to start. When they reached the landing the boat had been and gone. Everybody save the strangers was perfectly placid over this circumstance. What if the boat had gone? In the course of time another would come up the river.

It may be that a like circumstance will not so readily occur now that there is a railroad to which one can flee in such a disappointment. When we had set the time to depart, we remembered this incident, and said we would make sure. We chose the night boat, and the train had started heretofore at 5 o'clock in the afternoon. The station agent, on being questioned, appeared surprised, and said he "didn't know what time the train would start the next day. Perhaps we had better come down to-morrow and see." This seemed inexplicable to us, but we had to make the best of the oracle. The next day we went and inquired what time we should come down in the afternoon, so that we need not miss the connection with the boat. The man looked up in a startled and dazed way, and then remarked that "he did not know; he reckoned about 5."

"No," spoke up another man who was present, "if you are here at 6, it will be ample time;" then, making another calculation, "half-past 6 will do."

So we were, in a measure, left to select our own time, and naturally we selected it so early that we waited an hour and a half at the station. The cars started 7, and the boat had been waiting a long time for us. This arrangement is inscrutable. We stop thinking of it, with the conclusion that it is unnecessary for us to understand everything, and I challenge anybody to fathom the mysteries of the complications here.—*Cur. New York Evening Post.*

Mr. Gladstone has declined to appoint a commission to inquire into the advisability of transplanting to the colonies the surplus population of Great Britain.