

*(From the painting by Emily Osborn.)*

“‘POOH, POOH, MY DEARS! TUT, TUT!’ WAS ALL THE REPLY THEY GOT FROM THE IMPATIENT DOCTOR.”



of evolutions were performed, partaking of the beauties of the Irish jig, Scotch reel, and college hornpipe. Amongst the dancers our friends William and Rachel were conspicuous, as true heroes and heroines always are, and they both forgot the morrow in the excitement and pleasure of the present. Pally and the other old women looked on and applauded, and declared they could almost fancy the good old times were come back again. But every pleasure must have an end, and our merry party were sorry to find that time and the clock went steadily forward, when they would fain they had stood still. Another dance, a few well-beloved Welsh airs on the dear Welsh harp, and all was over.

But there was the fair to-morrow, and more pleasure was anticipated by all but Rachel.

She, accompanied by William, slipped away first. They had not far to walk, therefore little was said; but sometimes

a great deal is conveyed in few words. William ventured to hint that if Rachel would be a little obstinate, maybe she needn't go to service after all; but Rachel, who was a good girl and a dutiful daughter, declared she would never go against her father's will in anything.

"But suppose——" began William, and hesitated.

"Suppose what, William?" inquired Rachel.

"Suppose he should insist upon your marrying somebody you didn't like?"

"Oh! he would never do that, William—and if he did—why——"

"Why what, Rachel? just say it out."

"Why I *couldn't* do that, William."

"Only say you *wouldn't*—just only say you wouldn't, dear Rachel."

"I do not think I would—but I am sure he will never ask me—no, he will never ask me."

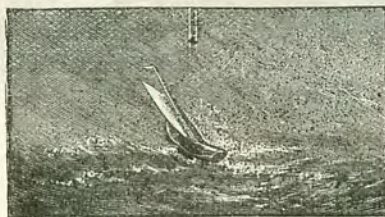
Rachel felt she scarcely knew how at William's little word "dear," for it was the first time since their childhood that he had so addressed her; and as they stood for a moment on the threshold of the door, she trembled all over. William held one hand, the other was on the latch of the door.

"One word—only one word, Rachel," he said. "If we could ever hope to get your father's consent, would you—could you think of me—would you promise me only——"

"Oh!" falteringly, but hastily, replied Rachel, "don't ask me—indeed, I don't know—I mustn't promise anything—it would be wrong—indeed, it would be wrong—but I will never think of anyone else, William—no, never—good-night, good-night, God bless you!"

Before William could add another word, the door was opened and Rachel disappeared.

(To be continued.)



## DR. JOHNSON AND THE LADIES.

VERY various and contradictory accounts are given of Dr. Johnson's ways and words in the presence of the fair sex. His faithful biographer does not throw clear light on the matter. In the first place, Boswell did not know the Doctor till the year 1763, when he was more than 56 years of age; and only occasionally was with him during the last twenty years of his life. Besides, his close attendance on Johnson was chiefly at the Club, or in taverns, while his chief purpose was to listen to the conversation, and record the table-talk. He saw less of Johnson than many other friends did in his home or in society. We must glean from other sources facts bearing on this point in his life and character.

The truth probably is, that Johnson's manner and speech towards ladies depended very much, as is the case with most men, on the temper he was in and on the character of those with whom he was in company. He could be very gracious, and he could be very rude. For instance, on one occasion there was a very shallow and talkative lady in the room, of whom he took little notice. "Why, Doctor," she said, "I believe you prefer the company of men to that of the ladies." "Madam," he replied, "I am very fond of the company of ladies; I like their beauty, I like their delicacy, and I like their *silence*." On another occasion he went to drink tea and spend the evening at the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Miss Reynolds, on his entering the room, said, "See, Dr. Johnson, what a preference I give to your company, for I had an offer of a place in a box at the Oratorio to hear Miss Linley; but I would rather sit with you than

hear Miss Linley sing." "And I, madam," was his gallant reply, "would rather sit with you than sit upon a throne." He was not to be outdone even in a passing compliment!

Remarks have been made by ignorant writers as to his never having been in good society till he was far advanced in life. From his earliest years at Lichfield he was a favourite in the family of Mr. Gilbert Walmesley, whose house was the centre of most that was refined and cultured in his native city. Here he enjoyed the amenities of the best female society, of Mrs. Walmesley and her sisters, the daughters of Sir Thomas Aston, with other ladies of good position and education. In the struggling years of his literary life, and with the homely widow whom he made his wife, he may have lost much of his outward politeness, and acquired a certain roughness of manner, but his heart was as gentle and his ways as truly courteous as ever. Nothing could surpass the tender affection he showed to Mrs. Johnson, though much his senior in years, and this to the last hour of her life. His kind and considerate ways to the blind Mrs. Williams, and to the other poor or afflicted ladies who were generously allowed to be inmates of his house, were noticed with admiration by his friends. When he lived at Mr. Thrall's house at Streatham, his deferential courtesy to Mrs. Thrall, and to the guests invited to meet him, was always most marked, although he must soon have seen that his hostess was mainly moved by vanity, in having the great giant of letters attached to her train. Many anecdotes are told of the studious politeness and the delicate flattery he paid to ladies, with whom he was generally a favourite.

It depended, however, as we have already hinted, on what he *thought of the character* or principles of the ladies themselves. Mrs. Macaulay, the Republican historian, whose house was a place of resort for the learned, insisted on Johnson's frequent presence, notwithstanding the rude speeches and remarks the old Tory made to her. During the famous visit to Scotland, he came in contact with many ladies, even in the remote Hebrides, whose accomplishments and manners surprised and charmed him, and he has celebrated them in his Letters and in the Journal of his Tour. With Mrs. Boswell he was no favourite, but he made reparation in his subsequent letters for any offence he had given in smiling at her housewifely prattle, and dropping grease on her new carpet.

In his old age, when less seen in society, his quiet den in Bolt-court was not unfrequently invaded by curious visitors. The artist has humorously depicted one of these scenes, when two fair young ladies forced their way into his study, requesting leave to read there and then some complimentary verses. "Pooh, pooh, my dears. Tut, tut," was all the reply they got from the impatient Doctor. He no doubt looked as fierce as he could, and no doubt laughed heartily when he got rid of the clever interrupters of his studies. As a set-off to this artistic record, let us conclude by referring to another picture, which was on the walls of the Royal Academy this season, "Mrs. Siddons visiting Doctor Johnson." He received her with great cordiality, talked to her with much feeling, and took leave of her, as the artist shows, with most respectful politeness.