

"Never mind, old lady, think you kissed her the moment she was visible, and you'll find its all right."

"But its not a bit the same thing," remonstrated his mother, tearfully.

"Oh, you only want a good imagination; that's all."

Mr. Malcolm was now vociferous in his praises of the wonderful projectors, and took so much credit to himself over his Christmas present to his wife and daughter that you would think he had invented, as well as bought it.

After a little they quieted down somewhat. The Malcolms were introduced to, and duly admired, their grandson, Harry made the acquaintance of the fair Betty, and they began to look about them.

"Why, Nelly, you extravagant girl," exclaimed her mother, "fancy having strawberries and peaches on Christmas Day, and what lovely roses!"

"That's only her swagger, mother, just put on for the occasion. What price strawberries to-day, Nell, half-a-crown a bite?"

"You goose," answered his sister, "why the garden is full of them at this time of the year. I wish I could hand them across."

"Yes, its a case of 'so near and yet so far,' ain't it? But your summer frocks, open windows, and daylight, should have reminded us that we are having a peep into almost another world. One can't realise it all at once."

"I wish," said his father, "that with all their fine inventions, travelling was quicker than it is. Its most tantalizing to see Nell and her youngster, and know that only to touch them is a matter of weeks."

"The scientific Johnnies don't go the right way to work," said Harry, with an air of great wisdom, "they only invent quick methods of getting over the earth's surface, while what they ought to do is to make old Mother Earth do the travelling for us."

"What *do* you mean," said his sister.

"Simplest thing in the world, my dear— invent a way of shooting us up outside her

'sphere of influence,' and keep us there until the place one wants to go to turns uppermost, and down you flop. Grand idea, ain't it? I might take a patent out for it."

"Have a sort of monster hotel up there," laughed his sister, "and keep dropping or shooting travellers down to earth again. But how would you keep it fixed?"

"Oh, that's not part of my business: the scientific blokes must settle the details, I only give them the broad idea. They could fasten their guy-ropes to the nearest fixed stars. But I'm jolly hungry, what does everyone say to food? What a mercy servants are 'off' now-a-days, and we haven't them prancing round and spoiling our talk."

With his lively rattle of nonsense, Harry had now got them all into a more equable frame of mind, and when the meals were over there was a 'change of venue,' and they passed a merry happy time in their respective drawing-rooms, until sleepiness drove the English section to bed. Just at last Harry switched on their dining room again to show his brother-in-law the painting of his famous cob, winner of so many prizes, some of which, in the shape of silver cups, adorned the sideboard; then he, too, went off to bed.

Some hours later, as Alan and Betty were in the middle of a hard fought set at lawn-tennis, Nelly came running out, calling, "Alan, Alan, come quick, there's a burglar in the Beanlands dining room stealing the silver!"

"Who told you?" cries her husband, throwing down his racquet and running to her.

"Nobody, I can see him myself; don't you remember when Harry went to bed, he forgot their dining room, and left it in our drawing room?"

"Why, you talk as if he carried the rooms about in his pockets, and strewed them over other people's houses."

"Oh! Hush! There he is, don't you see him?" whispered his wife nervously, and trying to pull her husband behind a door.