

"Yes," said the friend, "I've never seen her pettish in my life. That she sometimes gets exceedingly weary goes without saying, but she seemed to have schooled herself out of that common heritage of woman—the desire to be cross and unreasonable when tired."

"Why, even when I get a cold in my head," said the wife of an army officer, "I get simply snappish, just as all other women do, and my husband says warningly, 'Remember Mrs. McKinley, dear,' and I at once am ashamed of myself."

#### HER FAVORITE NOOK.

I spoke of the favorite place in the McKinley home. It is around a great window that looks on a neighbor's house and the side terrace, while the two French windows in front open on the wide veranda which leads down to a spacious terrace.

Mrs. McKinley's chair is drawn near the bow window. The nearby table is a feature of the room. It is the one exhibited at the World's Fair in the Ohio Building, made of handsome Ohio woods, and afterward presented to the Governor and his wife.

It is exceedingly large and beautifully carved, with great claw feet. On it lie the periodicals of the day, the mounted and framed photograph of the Governor's horse, "Midnight," cabinets of beautiful women and sandwiched everywhere, bowls and vases of glorious roses.

I should not say the roses were "sandwiched,"

for all else were pushed around to make room for the splendid June beauties that friends keep this corner abundantly supplied with.

One great vase of them was sent by the fair graduates to whom the Governor had presented diplomas the night before. And one massive jar of the most superb red ones were just unpacked, sent by a Philadelphia florist, asking that they might have the honor of being named "the Mrs. McKinley," as they were a new variety.

This room is furnished in simple but artistic taste. This is more of a living room than a sitting room.

The pictures are mostly of family and friends. Mr. and Mrs. McKinley, Sr., are there, and Mr. and Mrs. Saxton. President and Mrs. Hayes in a double frame are mounted on an easel, and Mrs. McKinley pointed out to me the small daguerreotypes of the wee one that died, and of her husband and herself when they began life in an unpretentious way, but even then with "dreams of future greatness in the eye."

Autograph pictures of great artists in the literary and musical world dot the cosily papered walls, and the fine piano—also rose-covered—shows the musical taste of the hostess.

Behind this sitting-room is Mrs. McKinley's sleeping apartment. It is furnished daintily in old chipendale and brass couch with hangings of French cretonne. The toilet table is loaded with lovely silver articles and long windows open out on more green grass.



In truth, there is no outlook in summer from the McKinley home where the eye doesn't meet verdure and flowers.

As to the dining-room, one glance at the long dining-table verifies what Fred, the colored major-domo of the Governor, would tell you, that "the family is two, but the table is set for twelve."

This shows the hospitality of the home.

If Mrs. McKinley becomes mistress of the White House, I don't believe any exigencies in the social life will be too much for her, accustomed, as she is, to constant entertaining. And her entertaining, mind you, is not confined to their Canton home. Mrs. McKinley goes everywhere the Governor goes, and all over America she has boundlessly entertained and been entertained.

Some one spoke of her possible White House duties. She shook her head and laughed.

"I've tried that once," she said, "and have ever since said I never wanted any longer duration of it. I was Lady of the White House for two weeks during Mrs. Hayes's absence.

"Mrs. Hayes and I had always been on most cordial terms, and I was as often at the White House as she at our hotel. So she persuaded me to stay there during a fortnight of unavoidable absence on her part during the season. And I repeat, the position is no slight tax."

Mrs. McKinley is an excellent hostess. She was either born with—although I don't believe anybody

is—or she has learned the gift of listening and of bringing the guests out. And you know if one proves that you are clever you are convinced of the cleverness of the one who does so.

So people go away from the Governor's wife with a snug, comfortable conviction about the region of the heart that they have proved themselves most entertaining persons.

Wonderful gift, isn't it?

But no one would laugh more at the suggestion of such a trait on her part than Mrs. McKinley. "But, my dear, I am really so interested," she would say.

#### HER WOMAN'S RIGHTS.

When I said good-by to her I almost told her how charming she was. I hope my eyes told it to her.

In the secret recesses of my better sense I knew I had been lured into staying too long, and yet her parting graciousness was such that my sub-coating of conceit was gratified. That is another straw which shows her power of making friends.

Going down the terrace, where the men portion of the callers sat on garden chairs, taking their ease while they talked on matters of quivering importance, I turned back to get a last glimpse of the favorite corner.

The setting sun touched the rose petals into prismatic colors and glinted on the yellow curls of a baby caller seated in one of the little chairs.



Mrs. McKinley sat in her large chair; in her firm white hand she held a great-hearted crimson rose; on her shoulder was lightly laid the hand of the man of the hour; back of her stood several powers in the affairs of the nation.

And I knew that whatever the political creed of those men, they believe in woman's rights—the right of their chivalry and tenderness and loyalty and devotion and homage to such a wide-minded, great-hearted, fine-souled lady.

Of such is the kingdom of woman.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### McKINLEY ON THE DAY OF HIS NOMINATION.

His good nerve and thoughtful courtesies—He was quiet through the storm and gave the good news with kisses to his wife and mother.

JUNE 18th, 1896, was an ideal June day at Canton; the air full of golden sunshine. The expectation and strain of excitement of the people, who have a passionate admiration and affection for Major McKinley, were unmistakable, but they waited with the supreme dignity of confidence.

Major McKinley was awakened rather early from a sound sleep by the clicking of the telegraph instruments in his office making an unusual clamor that penetrated the walls, but his eye glowed with energy, there was a fiery spark under his dark, shaggy brows, and the fine, strong lines of his mouth were accentuated. The day was not far advanced when a group of newspaper men gathered on the shady porch of the Major's residence, which seems to be in the midst of a vast park, adorned with pleasant homes, standing in glossy lawns and amidst lovely trees.