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R. A. BUMILLER, Editor.

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TOM'S MOTHER.

Two things had never been known to fall Tom's mother—dignity and good health. She was the very personification of dignity in its most imposing aspect, and so impressed was she with the value of dignity that she could not tolerate giddiness, under which head she included all expressions of happiness or light-heartedness. As for poor health she simply had no patience with it, believing, like most persons who are blessed with good health, that it only required an effort of the will to throw off any form of illness.

Now, Tom's wife was nearly as possible the opposite of Tom's mother. Not but that she had plenty of dignity of a sweet, womanly sort; but, bless you, she was anything but stately. And she was not only light-hearted and happy, but she took no pains to hide the fact, letting song and dancing eye betray it to the whole world. But worse than her giddiness was her lack of strength. Not that she was sickly either. She had rosy cheeks, and bright eyes, and a plump figure; but still her back would give out sometimes, and then she would have to lie down and rest.

How Tom ever came to fall in love with her—far he certainly did love her would be hard to tell; for Tom was naturally somewhat like his mother, not only dignified and strong, but firmly convinced that his dignity was something to be proud of, and that his good health was due entirely to himself and quite within his own control.

Still Tom was a good fellow, and Susie admired him immensely, and loved him quite as much as—more, probably—than he loved her; woman's love for a man is deeper and truer than a man's for a woman.

To Tom's mother, Tom's wife was a very painful fact and a constant surprise. Such a lack of dignity was not only unbecoming; it was shocking. She bewailed it to Tom, one day; but Tom had replied, with a dignity equal to her own: "I would not have her different, mother."

Think of it! Brought up to realize the importance of dignity, endowed with it himself, and with his mother's grand example constantly before him, he yet could prefer a giddy, frivolous child as his wife. So be it. Mrs. Atkinson thereafter became doubly dignified, and all Susie's gentle pleasantries froze and fell lifeless before they could reach Tom's stately mother. Susie's other crime of not being strong was yet to be dealt with, however. When they were first married, her occasional lapses from good health had not troubled Tom, though his mother had regarded it with high-minded indignation. But after awhile, when Susie foolishly allowed her back to give her trouble more frequently, it was another thing—then Tom was worried.

You see Tom was not rich; still as he was dignified, it was necessary to have appearance of at least moderate wealth. Anything else would have been undignified, of course. To keep up this appearance Susie must work hard and yet appear to have plenty of leisure. It had not been Susie's way, but if Tom thought it was best, why that was enough, and so she kept up appearances to such an extent that until her back refused to hold her up any longer, she never even told Tom how tired she was.

Finally she gave out one day right before Tom, and for the first time in his life that dignified gentleman saw his wife in tears and heard her declare that she "just could not keep it up any longer."

If Tom had only been sick himself once or twice he might have understood and Susie would have had the dearest medicine a wife can have, the sympathy. As it was, he was only surprised and pained—pained to see his wife so childish.

"There, there!" he said, in his lofty manly way, "you mustn't give way. Keep yourself busy and it will pass away." And he kissed her and was gone.

But he was not to sweep Susie's back out of existence by any such dignified waving of his hand. Again and again, in spite of being foolishly breaking down until at last he was annoyed and concluded to consult his mother, thinking, very wisely, that as she was a woman she could know just what to do.

There is no gainsaying that Tom's mother was a woman, and she was quite sure that she knew what to do, though she received her son's confidences at first with an icy reserve that said the matter was no concern of hers, and with a slight raising of the eyebrows that said equally plainly that she had long been aware of what was now communicated to her. However, she went.

"I will see Susie, if you wish me to, Tom," she said.

help her more than I can. You don't really think, then, she is sick?"

"Not at all, Tom. A little exertion of her will and she will be quite right again."

"I thought so myself," said Tom; "but I wasn't sure. You'll see her, then?"

"I'll go to-day, Tom."

And so great was her anxiety to help poor Susie to overcome her silly weakness that she went at once to see her—went indeed, with an eagerness that very rarely marred that repose of manner which made her chief calm to dignity.

If the truth be told, Susie was not glad to see her, for, strangely enough, what Susie admired in Tom she despised in her mother. A fact of which that stately lady was well aware, but which, nevertheless, did not destroy the pleasure she felt in doing good to Tom's misguided wife.

"Tom asked me to come and see you this morning, Susie."

"I did not know he was going your way," said Susie. "Take off your things. Of course you will stay for dinner."

"Thank you; I cannot to-day."

Tom's mother was never more stately; Tom's wife never nearer to breaking down without doing it.

"Tom is very much worried about you, Susie."

Susie could have kissed her for saying that; for she had only just been thinking with some bitterness, that Tom did not seem to care.

"And he asked me," went on Tom's mother, "to come and talk with you about it."

"You are very kind," murmured Susie, gratefully enough, though she would have liked it better if Tom had talked with her about it himself.

"I have no wish to be harsh," began Tom's mother; "assuming one of her most commanding attitudes. 'I know you really believe yourself sick.'"

Susie's placid look was suddenly gone. She was dignified now. Her lips closed and her brown eyes flashed. She began to understand.

Tom's mother continued: "You should endeavor to control yourself. A little self control—"

"Do I understand you," broke in Susie in a low voice, "that Tom asked you to tell me this?"

"This or the substance of it," answered Tom's mother; "and it is only right—just to yourself and just to Tom that you should overcome these fancies. Exert your will. Look at me, look at Tom—we are never sick."

Susie looked at her and believed her. No, she had never been sick, that was certain. But Tom! Had Tom asked her to say this to his wife?

But this was only the beginning. Tom's mother had much more to say, and she said it with a calm dignity that proved she had only Susie, for throughout it all Susie was not once frivolous; she did not interrupt. Tom's mother went home full of a peaceful calmness her dignity had not known for some time.

When Tom came home that evening Susie said to him:

"Your mother was here to-day, Tom."

"Yes; she said she would come."

"She spoke to me"—Susie's voice was very low—"about the necessity of exerting a control over my—over my—my foolish weakness."

"Yes—yes, that was right. You can do it if you will, Susie. Your will has never been developed, Susie. Look at me—I never was sick."

Susie looked at him. She would have hidden her face and cried; she would rather have lain down to rest her aching back, but no—she would begin to develop her will; she would try and smile; she did smile.

Tom had no more reason after that to complain of Susie's foolish weakness. She worked hard to develop her will and keep down any foolish desire for sympathy. She did not succeed very well at that, but when she foolishly fancied she was in agony from her back, she did not betray the fact.

Her will was not sufficiently developed to control her pain, but it was something that she could smile when she wanted to cry. Oh, yes, she would succeed some day.

Tom often congratulated her on her success, but then he did not know how little real success she was having. Still she was falling in the important item of pain; she just kept steadily on developing her will.

And at last she had her reward. She succeeded in so developing her will that at last she had nothing left her but her will, and then she found that will alone would not do. She could not get up one morning.

Tom and Tom's mother told the doctor when he came down stairs that all Susie needed was to exert her will. The doctor looked at them and listened and knew what had happened. "Exert her will," he exclaimed, angrily, "make

her will you mean. Will! That poor child has more will than dozens like you two. For months she has been dying in agony under your eyes, and I'll stake my soul she has not murmured. Will, indeed! Man!"

The doctor took Tom by the arm and said:

"Your wife is dying. Don't deceive yourself. She is dying."

And so she did die, leaving Tom a heart-broken, remorseful man. Leaving him with a smile and a loving whisper:

"I did try, Tom, dear, but indeed I did suffer so."

VALENTINES.
 (From the New York Observer.)

Surely no reader of the *Observer* would ever think of sending a coarse or unkind valentine. There can be no stronger mark of bad taste than to send anonymously a missive that may offend the recipient. I have known persons who have suffered tortures through the receipt of some foolish valentine, so called, that was sent out of sadly misnamed fun, or with malice aforethought. Unfortunately in such a case, the recipient is very likely to charge the cruel act to some innocent person who would not have made such a stab in the dark on any account. Thus misunderstandings occur and friendships are rudely interrupted. It would be well if ever tempted to do anything that is calculated to hurt the feelings of any one to ask one's self, "How would I feel if this were done to me?" Let us bring the golden rule into action in all these little matters of life, and we shall often avoid paining others and storing up painful memories for ourselves. And this all born in mind, I would say that the custom of sending valentines is a proper and very pleasant one. It is a pity to expend money on very costly ones, however, because the charm is not so much in the cost of the article received as in the fact that one is remembered on St. Valentine's Day. Nor is it necessary to make the valentine a tribute to Cupid simply. There are surely many little boys and girls of our acquaintance who would be gratified by receiving a valentine and who are not old enough to take serious account of its purport. Possibly by a little planning we can so arrange matters that they shall not be forgotten. The young men and maidens may feel that for them it is desirable to send to one and only one friend, but our boys and girls need not be thus limited. Especially let far-off little cousins and friends be remembered. Acquaintances who have gone to distant parts are often greatly pleased at receiving these tokens of love and goodwill from the old home. A certain little grandson is not likely soon to be forgotten by a certain grandmother, and all because last St. Valentine's day bore one of the pretty missives to the old lady, who somehow deigned or discovered the source of her welcome gift. Any custom that leads us to think of others, that enables us to minister to their harmless pleasure, and that tells them they are loved and thought about is a good custom. Those persons are to be pitied who cannot get and give a little amusement out of it, while those who turn it to account to wound the feelings of others ought to be most severely condemned.

The Boy and the Bull-Dog.

Once upon a time a certain little boy observed his sister curling her hair around a hot poker, and when he saw her golden ringlets twist up like Georgia pine shavings, what he considered an over-bright idea struck him: "The folks next door say their pug is better than our bull-dog, because its tail curls over its back so tight. I'll just curl the bull-dog's tail now, and run him up and down in front of their house, and make them feel mean."

So he called the dog, and heated the poker until it was almost red, in order to get a good curl. Grasping the dog's tail, he quickly wound it around the poker; but it was not wound around the poker half as quickly as the dog was wound around the boy. He picked him up by the small of his back, and shook him out of his clothes, and left nothing on him but his freckles and a look of terror. The boy was then obliged to lie in bed until his father could afford to get him a new suit of clothes, which was a month later.

The moral of this little fable teaches us two things; first, that bright, original ideas are dangerous in the hands of people who don't know how to use them, and, second, that when we experiment with a bull-dog we should muzzle him before beginning.—Puck.

ADVICE TO MOTHERS.

Are you disturbed at night and broken by your rest by a sick child suffering and crying with pain of cutting teeth? If so, send at once and get a bottle of **Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for Children's Teething.** Its value is incalculable. It will relieve the poor little sufferer immediately. Depend upon it, mothers, there is no mistake about it. It cures colic and diarrhoea, regulates the stomach and bowels, cures wind colic, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, and gives tone and energy to the whole system. **Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup** for Children's Teething is pleasant to the taste, and is the prescription of one of the oldest and best female nurses and physicians in the United States, and is for sale by all druggists throughout the world. Price 25 cents a bottle.

People who Travel.

Some Experiences of a Depot Master.

"For a nice, every day, go-as-you-please nuisance," said the depot master, "give me an ancient and provincial woman. I am not an old man, nor have I been in this business very long, but I am getting gray just the same, and I believe these women are responsible for it."

"There was one in here the other day. She arrived one hour and a half before the train she wished to take was scheduled to leave. Five trains went out before hers did, but she charged on the gate-keeper at every departure. You cannot get a woman to believe standard and local time are identical. I don't know why, but you cannot."

"Are all travelers obnoxious to you, then?"

"No, sir. We meet with some very pleasant people I can tell you. The nicest travelers come from the East. Massachusetts or Connecticut people are refreshing to deal with. They do what you tell them, mark what you say and don't repeat questions."

"Southern people are seen but seldom around here. Those that come here are mostly of the lower classes and are ignorant in the extreme. The Western traveler is free, a trifle egotistic, but the sharpest of them all. I rather like to have him about. Immigrants are not at all bad to handle."

"Any sharp practices carried on nowadays about this depot?"

"No. I think the depot sharp is a thing of the past. He is not extinct, however, by any means. There are two or three of them who stand on the other side of the street and work everybody who goes in or out. Canadians and country people are the softest prey. Eastern travelers sometimes fall into their snares, immigrants once in a great while, but a Western man, never. They are afraid of Western people, these sharps, and never attempt to work them."

"As a class, which are the most preferable about a depot—men or women?"

"Men by all means. Women are slovenly or careless, I don't know which. They throw the remnants of a luncheon on the floor without the slightest concern, and are generally more troublesome. Give me the men every time in a waiting room."—*Detroit Journal.*

Evolving a Story.

"Ah!" said Smith, a commercial traveler, to a group of friends, "I was witness to a sight just before leaving Chicago." And then he told how he had seen a poor German immigrant with his wife and family of eight yellow-haired children, how he had become interested in them, and had learned that they had left their native land to seek a home in the Northwest. He was touched with the tenderness of the father and saw him purchasing apples for the children. All the family except the father had taken their seats on the train, and he was just making change on the platform for his small purchase when the train began to move out of the station. He made a rush for it, slipped, and then before the eyes of the poor family and other horror-struck passengers, his head was taken off by the cars.

Smith's friends were much affected and it was decided to take up a purse for the poor widow and fatherless children, and this was speedily done and a neat sum presented to Smith to be forwarded. He with tears in his eyes, said:

"My friends, I thank you, but I can conceal it no longer. That train took off the rest of the man, and he still lives."

Smith will not travel this week. He is laid up for repairs.

Why Men Should Not Shave.

"How about shaving, Doctor?"

"It is a dangerous habit. You can trace nearly every case of toothache and facial neuralgia in a man to the habit of shaving. If all men protected their throats by chin-whiskers and the nerves of the face by a liberal growth, you wouldn't hear of half the present ailments. When I was a boy I never heard of a case of neuralgia in the facial nerves. In these days it is as common as cases of ague. Men used to wear beards. The fashion of to-day is meant to encourage ailments. Shaving opens the pores of the face and invites neuralgia to step in and twiddle the nerves."

"Well, is that all to-day?"

"All but one thing. When a barber invites you to have your hair cut on a raw winter day please rise up and punch his head—for me."—*Detroit Free Press.*

A boy who bought a quart of New Orleans molasses at a Cincinnati grocery store the other day found a diamond ring worth \$200 in the stuff. Grocery clerks should have their rings made to fight tighter—somebody will get choked on a cluster ring yet.

How a Rascal Was Freed.

The Duke of Ossoue is celebrated for the many quaint judgements and decisions delivered by him while Viceroy of Naples. Some of them seem actuated rather by a spirit of pleasantry than by one of justice. One day the Duke had to choose a galley slave who should be liberated in honor of some great festival. He went on board one of the galleys, and, standing in front of the first bench of rowers, six in number, he began to question them all as to what had brought them there. The first one contented himself by calling God as a witness to his innocence and protesting that he was there for no reason at all. The second said his punishment and disgrace were the work of his enemies, and not the consequence of any crime. The third protested that a crying injustice had been done him by his being sent there without any trial. The fourth said that the lord of his village had become enamored of his wife and caused him to be sent there out of the way. The fifth declared that he came from the hamlet of Somma, and that he had been implicated in a robbery there in which he really had had no part at all, and that all his neighbors would bear witness to his honesty. The sixth, who had observed that all these excuses and justifications did not seem to please the Duke, took a different tone. "Your Excellency," he said, "I came from Naples; and though the town is a large one, I do not believe that it contains a greater scoundrel than myself. They have been merciful to me in only sending me to the galleys." The Viceroy looked at the man keenly for some moments, and then, turning to those in attendance upon him, said: "Let this scoundrel be released from his chains; he will corrupt all these honest men." Then he presented him with some money to provide himself with clothing, and because himself to try and live a better life in the future.

A Wise Boy.

For an hour yesterday forenoon a woman walked up and down the ladies' waiting room at the Third-street station in her efforts to hush the screams and yells of a child about two years old. The little one was hopping mad about something, and could not be soothed by soft words or sticks of candy. There finally came a moment when everybody saw the mother's face take on a look of grim determination, and at that moment a newsboy who had been warming himself at a register broke for outdoors.

"What's the row?" asked one of his outside friends as he joined them.

"There's a woman in there goin' to spank her young'un."

"Why didn't you stay and see the fun?"

"Um! 'Spose I want to be hauled up as a witness in an assault and battery case and have the lawyers givin' me sass?"

New England Twigs.

A maiden schoolmistress thinks that some of her pupil's compositions are funnier than anything of Mark Twain's. From an essay on "Fashion," written by a boy of 12, she cites the following: "Sensible people wear sensible fashions, and insensible people insensible fashions."

Another hopeful of hers, writing on the subject "A Rainy Afternoon," evolved from an inner consciousness deeper than that of Josh Billings, the following sentence:

"It rained hard, and I could not go outdoors, and so I went out in the shed and sod some wood."

In a little straw frame on her mantel is a sentence from the pen of her young est and brightest, given in answer to the request, "Write in twenty words a definition of 'Man.' " It read thus:

"Man is an animal that stands up; he is not very big and has to work for a living."—*Boston Record.*

Spreading Manure in the Winter.

"Well-rotted manure" is supposed to have some special superiority over fresh. Upon investigation it is found that, what is gained one way, is lost in another, and that actually some loss is incurred in the process of fermentation, and in exposure to the weather. Further it is found, that nothing is lost by spreading the fresh manure; it is made. The only difference; between fresh and well-rotted manure is that the latter contains more soluble and available plant-food, which is desirable when immediate results are wished for. But for top dressing wheat or rye, or as a preparation for spring crops, and to be plowed under, the manure may be spread on the land now, more conveniently than at any other time. The land is not cut up by the wheels, and in many cases a sled can be used, with a great saving of labor in lifting the manure.—(*American Agriculturist* for February.)

ABOUT BABIES.

Some Observations by an Unmarried Man.

The baby, according to my observations, is in almost all climates, and at all seasons of the year, nocturnal in its habits. It is also diurnal a good share of the time; but this, of course, is a fact not worth mentioning.

Unlike the young of most other species, the baby does not recognize any parental distinction, but will lament as bitterly while riding on the paternal arm at the witching hour of midnight as when clasped tenderly to the mother's bosom at sunny midday. Its sole creed and language is a cry; and no Christian or heathen ever lived up to a creed with more conscientious fidelity than does the baby.

The baby is not partial to paregoric; that is failing of its parents. For itself, the infant would much prefer lamentation between meals to sleep. But there is a limit to all things, and, thank heaven! paregoric is cheaper than does the baby.

Judging from my personal experience, a large share of the baby's early life is passed on the cars. I do not know that I ever entered a car without finding a baby ahead of me. I always brace myself for the wail the minute I open the door, and nine times out of ten it is here. The car may be full of passengers, but for all practical purposes it is occupied entirely by the infant.

It is my firm conviction that babies do not like to travel. I may be mistaken, for I base my judgment entirely upon appearances, but I have never yet seen a baby who seemed to be perfectly satisfied with the arrangements provided for the comfort of the traveling public by railroad corporations.

Why under these circumstances, babies should be compelled to travel I cannot comprehend. Perhaps it is because their fond but unselfish parents wish the world to share with them the winsomeness and loveliness of infancy. I believe this is the explanation usually given by conductors.

But there is one disagreeable feature about babies—I will not say which one; some people think it is the nose, others the hair. However that may be, you are expected to admire the little just as much as if they were really beautiful.

The fond mother will never forgive you if you don't say something real sweet about her cherub. You must disguise your real sentiments, and deal in venerated platitudes of the too-sweet-for-anything and perfectly-angelic stamp.

Don't liken the infant to its father, especially if that gentleman is slightly bald and is just beginning to cultivate a sunset tinge at the top of his nose. Say that the babe resembles its mother, and you are safe. If you add that it is a remarkably charming and beautiful child, you are in a fair way to reduce your board-bill by becoming a frequent guest at the house of the little stranger.

The best way to get along with babies is to remember that you were one once yourself.

Your nose was just as red and indeterminate as that; your hair was just as scanty and colorless.

You also bawled from morning till night