

**Two Minutes of Optimism**

By HERMAN J. STICH

**Why Not Begin at Home?**

A MAN once went into his cellar looking for a gas leak with a lighted candle. He found it.

A close relation of the man who donned the first conical cap squinted down the barrel of his shotgun to find out if it was loaded.

He found out, but he never used the information.

Chicago was reduced to an ash heap because a watchman left a few burning oil lamps in an excelsior factory.

One of the most tragic conflagrations in the city of New York would never have been if a porter had extinguished his cigarette before flinging it onto a rubbish pile.

Every once in a while a town is blasted into broken bits, and a few score men are dispatched to Kingdome Combs, because somebody tried to bake dynamite.

Every war has its pathetic bungles.

A commanding officer once wrote out an order so slovenly that an entire regiment of shock troops charged into instantaneous eternity.

heedlessness of ordinary precautions, disregard of vital little acts of prudence, familiarity with and consequent contempt for common dangers, exact their frightful toll in the coin of human life and personal and property loss.

Every twenty-two minutes some one is injured on the streets of New York.

And every two and a half hours careless use and disposal of live tobacco, lamps, candles or matches start a damaging fire.

The average man is criminally thoughtless and neglectful even of his own well-being.

Almost three-quarters of a million persons die each year in the United States from preventable disease.

Half of the 3,000,000 or more sickbeds constantly kept filled in this country are unnecessary.

Fifteen years are lost to the average life through neglect and failure to apply common, vital knowledge.

Almost 200,000 persons are sick in New York and Chicago every day, the great majority of them because they do not give to their bodies the attention they give to their carburetor.

In myriads of little ways carelessness keeps us from doing more and from having more. Careless use of money, careless use of time, careless remarks and insinuations, careless performance of daily duties, careless idleness, carelessness of person, careless eating, careless reading, physical and intellectual carelessness, careless checking up of ambitions and progress, and so on.

If everybody were just a little bit more careful—if everybody were a lot less careless—if carelessness were eliminated from the category of universal ills—the world's moral, material and spiritual welfare would be vastly augmented; everybody, everywhere, would live longer, better and happier lives; the millennium would soon be within hailing distance.

It's a large "if"—and it's everybody's business.

Why not begin at home?

**THE DAILY NOVELTTE**

A Little Bit Smug  
By L. B. LANDDALE

"HEY in Sam Hill," muttered Thomas Bradley Morse, "can't Elsie and Belle let me alone? Why should I, just to please a couple of half-baked sisters, get a girl to tag around after? I hate girls."

Suddenly he whistled. Such an idea as he had, which would put an end to his family's endeavor to interest him in the other sex! Elsie had really been responsible for the idea, although, to be sure, she was not going to have the satisfaction of knowing it. There had been a discussion concerning itself with his queerness and unlikeliness to other boys. "It makes a boy appear so odd," had lamented Elsie, "not to even look at a girl!"

"Yes," Belle had agreed, "the girls are always declaring that it's mean to not take him around more. And I always tell them frankly that he may have good looks but his disposition is something awful!"

Then Elsie, addressing her brother directly, had chimed in pathetically. "You know, Tom, I wouldn't care if I could only say, 'Oh, my brother's terribly interested in the stock market—such a nice little thing!' But, you know, Tom, you'd be perfectly indifferent to a girl from Mars!"

And there she had given him, unwittingly, his big idea. He would be interested; more than that, he would be engaged to an out-of-town girl! That would fix them! His business trip to St. Louis next week would provide just the opportunity for consorting such a story. On his return he would inform them—and they would tell the world—that he was irretrievably spoken for and henceforth—hands off, please!

Three weeks later Thomas returned, and so interesting had his journey been, partly because of its success from a business point of view, partly because of the stock market, and partly because of the daughter of the man with whom he had been dealing, that he had almost forgotten his plan.

The family had gathered in the living room when—"How old are you, Tom, next month?" remarked Belle without awaiting an answer to her question.

"Sam Blake is going to be married next month," remarked Belle without awaiting an answer to her question.

"Oh, Tommy," Elsie evidently could not contain herself longer, "there's the nicest girl staying at the Bronsons!"

So that was it! Tom rose with dignity and, his hands in his pockets, gazed blindly at Elsie. "She's there too late," he said. "My affections are fixed elsewhere!"

"Tom!" The word was the amalgam-

**Things You'll Love to Make**

**Kitchen Filing Case**



You surely save kitchen clippings of one kind or another for which you have no convenient place. Make a kitchen filing case and always have your clippings neatly filed away where you can find them. Lay back to back two pieces of white cloth twelve inches wide and sixteen inches long. Fold up the bottom five inches, as indicated by the dotted line. Overcast the edges with heavy blue thread. Stitch the pockets as shown. Paint the simple design in blue. Sew two brass rings at the top on which to hang this handy and ornamental kitchen filing case.

tion of two shrieks. Then, "Where does she live?" and "What does she look like?" were hurled at him significantly.

"Well, she doesn't live in this burg," said Tom grimly.

"It must be St. Louis!" cried Belle. "And Tom, reflecting that St. Louis was a good big city, let it go at that. And then, as he saw that he might as well go the whole length, having gone at all, he gave himself up to a detailed description of his fiancée—her dark blue eyes, her light yellow hair, her red lips, her fair skin, her slender form.

"And her name?" prompted Belle.

Now partly because he was taken un-

aware, partly because the pretty, brown-haired daughter of his host in St. Louis had been so constantly in his mind—before he thought, "Mary Smith!" he gave her name! At first he was ashamed. Then he consoled himself with the thought that, after all, his sisters would never hear of the real owner of the appellation.

But if Tom had thought the acquisition of a fiancée would end his worries he was sadly mistaken. To his horror, Elsie and Belle took it upon themselves to see that their brother was not wanting in the duties of a betrothed—and that he wrote regularly and often.

came a Sunday afternoon when Tom, a blank sheet of paper before him, labored desperately in the presence of his sisters to think what to say. For Elsie, as a special favor, had begged him, just once, to show her an actual love letter. Elsie had never seen one—it would please her to read Tom could not refuse!

And so at last he wrote:

"Dear Mary: "I think of you all the time, dear. You are always in my thoughts. As the days go by, I love you more. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have a little home of our own?"

"Always devotedly,"

"T. B. MORSE"

Resignedly, he showed it to Elsie, folded it, put it in an envelope, addressed it—wrote the real Mary's address on it—for the mere pleasure of doing it—slipped it in a book with the intention of consigning it later to the waste basket, as usual—and forgot all about it.

A week later he received the shock of his life. "Here, Tom," said Belle, meeting him as he came in at the door and handing him a small blue envelope. "I fancy

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Feverishly, Tom opened it and read.

"Dear Mr. Morse: "You are a very sudden person. But I like it. When are you coming to St. Louis again?"

MARY"

Tom folded it and smiled beatifically at Belle and Elsie, curious to know the contents. "It was meant for me alone," he said.

But one question always worried his sisters. Why, before he was married, did Tom fold them her hair was yellow and her eyes were blue?

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