

# The Head of the House

A Story For Young Men About to Be Married.

By EDWARD B. KNIGHT  
Copyright by American Press Association, 1911.

Sam Martindale and Theodora Trask had been engaged a week. There had been more kissing and cooing and kissing in that one week than there would be in five years of the married life before them. Then Sam called a halt to look practically at the future. He was not a man to drift through life; he preferred to prearrange everything. It seemed that there was a great ocean ahead of him and Theo, of comfort or suffering, of anxiety or discord, of contentment or unhappiness, and across this ocean it became him as the head of the house, the pilot, to steer their bark. Before taking a voyage does not the mariner familiarize himself with the areas of probable storm and sunshine, of navigable water and sunken rocks? Why should not he as commander lay down on a chart the exact course the family ship should sail?

To begin at the bottom, was he to be the commander? The very fact of his asking himself the question shows the depth of his understanding. If a general is to conduct a campaign it is necessary that his word be the law for his army. Martindale realized at once that if he were to pilot the family bark he must have no interference.

Having thus settled the matter by deliberation, Martindale concluded to broach the subject to his fiancée, merely as a preliminary reconnaissance in order to feel the enemy.

"Theo," he said gravely, "since you and I are to pass our lives together it may be well for us to come to an understanding on one important point. In every government, every business, every family, in order that the wheels may run smoothly, there must be one head. I would like to know how you feel about the matter."

"It seems to me," said Theo after thought, "that we should both be head."

Martindale was not prepared for what he considered flying right in the face of the fundamental principles of order. What was the family but a miniature state? And the idea of a state having two governors! Absurd! Theo saw by the expression of his face that she had assumed too much. So she hastened to say: "Why, dearie, don't you know that a woman just loves to lean on a man for guidance? You're to be head, of course."

This was a great relief to Sam. He took his fiancée in his arms, kissed her and said:

"Sweetheart, you have no idea how happy you've made me by saying that. Our future happiness depends upon it. There must always be a head to a family. And how hard it would be for both of us if you had a disposition to usurp the husband's place."

"I would never think of such a thing."

He gave her a dozen kisses and left her, filled with joy that the basic principle of married life—in his case—had been settled without a word of dispute. Indeed, it eliminated all the rest of the problem, for since he was to be undisputed captain he had no doubt that he could guide the family bark safely.

The couple were married. There was a big wedding—its galore, rice throwing, a trip and a last settling down in a home of their own. During the engagement Theo had never expressed an opinion, much less made a decision, that would have interfered with Sam's position as heir apparent to the sovereignty of the family.

Theo had long been connected with a charitable association of which she was the secretary. One morning a fortnight after the couple's return from their wedding trip she woke up with an aching of the bones, in a feverish condition and in other ways indicating that one must be taken to avoid a severe illness, perhaps death. But there was to be a meeting that day of the charitable society, and the secretary was expected to be there. Sam was astonished to see his wife preparing to go out in a storm, already ill and with the probability of coming back to face pneumonia.

"What do you mean by even thinking of going out?" he exclaimed.

"Why, dearie, they can't get on without me."

"They will get on without you. I forbid your going."

"Oh, I couldn't possibly stay at home. I'll wrap up well, wear my rubbers and keep dry. There's not a bit of danger."

Martindale sat with his morning paper on his lap, looking fixedly at his wife, while she continued to put on her belongings with as much sang froid as if she had not heard the command of her lord and master. When she was ready she took up an umbrella, bent over her husband, kissed him and went out.

"Well, by Jove! I like that!" exclaimed Sam to himself as soon as the door was closed behind his wife.

It would be impossible to give an adequate description of the disappointment, chagrin, mortification and forebodings the young husband experienced at this utter disregard for his word of command as captain of the family ship. He carried out the simile thus: In the face of a storm he had ordered precautions, whereupon the crew had crowded on sail to wreck the vessel.

What was to be done? Fight it out to a finish, conquer now or never.

When Mrs. Martindale came home from the meeting her husband was not there. He had gone to business. Time came for him to return, but his key did not rattle in the lock of the front door. He had gone to his club and was sitting with the evening paper before him, trying to persuade himself that he was reading it, but really in a mental turmoil. The question of the domestic supremacy had come up for settlement, and it must be settled his way.

He ordered his dinner at the club and when it was served went into the dining room and ate it alone—that is, he ate a few mouthfuls; he couldn't eat any more. His wife would know where to find him, and if she wanted him very badly she would telephone for him. Then he would insist on an apology and a promise never to do so any more. After that he would go home and forgive her. It might be a good lesson for her if she would be very ill in consequence of her stupid, obstinate defiance of his order not to invite pneumonia. At one moment he almost wished this would happen; at the next he was in terror lest it should.

Dinner over, he sauntered out into the cafe, lit a cigar and—suffered.

Several men he knew were there, but when he saw one of them advancing to speak to him, pretending not to see him, Sam turned and walked the other way. He hoped every minute to be called to the telephone. Whenever a waiter came toward him he looked at the man anxiously, and when the waiter passed him without the summons he desired he crushed back a moan.

But he wouldn't yield.

By 9 o'clock he was in despair. He concluded that if he didn't get a message from Theo before 10 he would go home and upstairs to a room by himself without paying any attention to his wife. Meanwhile his actions had made it apparent to every waiter in the club that he was eager for a telephone message. At 9:55 he went into the coat room for his hat and coat, and when he emerged a waiter ran into him, shouting:

"You're wanted at the telephone, sir!"

Martindale ran to the booth, knocking down another waiter who was hunting him to tell him he was wanted there, brushing by three more who were making dives for him from different directions to give him the same news. Inside the booth he took up the receiver and heard in a faint, husky woman's voice:

"Is that you, dear?"

"Yes."

"I thought you must be at the club. I just called you up to say—I'm talking from the phone next to the bed—that the doctor has been here to see me and said I had a high fever. That was about 6 o'clock. Since there was no one here to take care of me but the cook he telephoned for a trained nurse. I knew you must be having a nice time at your club with all your old friends, and I didn't like to spoil your fun. But nurse says that I'd better try to get some sleep now, and I preferred to tell you about it before doing so. Don't hurry home; have a good time."

"I told"—He was about to give her the usual "I told you so," but checked himself, saying instead that he would be at home as soon as he could get there.

"You were very unreasonable this morning," the voice continued, "but I have forgiven you, and you needn't trouble yourself about that at all. But don't make a noise when you come in. I don't believe I shall get any sleep, but—"

There was a click, followed by a ring, and a different woman's voice said:

"Mr. Martindale?"

"Yes."

"I'm speaking to you from the lower hall telephone. Your wife is very ill; threatened with pneumonia; temperature 104 degrees."

"I'll be there in five minutes. Why the devil didn't you?"

He dropped the receiver and bolted for the street door.

Mrs. Martindale fortunately escaped a long illness, but she was for several days in a condition not warranting her husband bringing up any other subject than toast, tea, temperature and time to take medicine. During the danger period he was in an agony of fear lest he should lose the woman who would surely dominate him through life, for this first episode bearing on the balance of power in his family had opened his eyes. It was too late to go back and choose some other woman who would permit him to assume his position as head of the family, and he wouldn't have done so if he could. He quietly made up his mind, as many another man has done before him, that in the case of woman certain laws that regulate the universe are suspended. His wife had disobeyed an order he had given her for her own good, thereby showing a perversity for which he as well as she had suffered. And for having brought upon them both this suffering, including a fifty dollar doctor's bill, she had—forgiven him!

Sam Martindale had joined the innumerable throng of married men who joke with one another about their position as head of the family and take their orders from their wives dutifully as become obedient husbands, their wives the while, or many of them, not doubting in the least that they are themselves willing slaves.

But one year brought him revenge. A small lump of flesh came who could neither walk nor talk. He hadn't even a tithe of the sense Mrs. Martindale possessed, but he assumed command of the whole household.

## Kranke Menschen.

Die Eigenschaften dieser haben müssen, um erfolgreich zu sein.

Der Andrang zu dem ist ein...

verantwortungsbewußten...

jeden Jahre ein Härter, und...

hatten sich sehr viele nicht den...

Ständen angehörenden jungen...

älteren Mädchen für „aussergewöhnlich“...

sich im Verufe der Krankenpflege...

zu befähigen, in dessen wenige...

in der That dazu — ausgeführt, resp.

„berufen“, so daß dieselben recht bald...

aus dem Amte scheiden, nachdem sich...

deren Unfähigkeit zur Evidenz erwiesen...

hat. So möge denn hier eine...

kurze Schilderung derjenigen „Eigenschaft“...

ebenfalls interessant wie...

geheimtätig sein, welche für die Krankenpflege...

erforderlich sind, ihren...

aufreißenden Verufe zur Zufriedenheit...

der Ärzte und Patienten, sowie zur...

eigenen Befriedigung auszuführen.

Wenden wir uns vorerst den rein...

körperlichen Eigenschaften zu, so ist...

notwendig zu betonen, daß sich nur...

solche Mädchen, Frauen und Damen...

für den Beruf der Krankenpflege...

melden sollten, welche im Vollbesitz...

der Gesundheit sind, einen festen und...

widerstandsfähigen Körper besitzen...

fomit also den an sie heran tretenden...

Strapazen durchaus gewachsen sind.

Leider hat man in den letzten Jahren...

die unliebsame Entdeckung und Beobachtung...

machen müssen, daß gerade...

schwächliche und mit Krankheit behaftete...

Mädchen usw. sich der privaten...

Krankenpflege zuwenden, ohne eine...

Ahnung davon zu haben, daß hier...

schwere Pflichten und körperliche...

Anstrengungen ihrer barren, unter...

denen sie nach kurzer Zeit zusammen...

brechen. Infolge dessen kann an dieser...

Stelle nur der bringende Rath...

ertheilt sein, daß sich nur solche...

Elemente der freiwilligen und beruflichen...

Krankenpflege zuwenden, welche...

in körperlicher Beziehung zu den be-

stehen und widerstandsfähigen gehö-

ren.

Ganz besonders verdient hervor-

gehoben zu werden, daß jede Kranken-

schwester und Krankenpflegerin, die...

sie ernsthaft mit ihrem Berufe...

nimmt, eine Eigenschaft unbedingt...

in erster Linie besitzen muß, nämlich...

— Geduld. Es ist ganz erklärlich,

daß alle Kranken, Genesenden und...

der Pflege Bedürftigen ungeduldig...

und theilweise recht nervös sind, und...

je größer die Ungebuld und Nervosität...

bei den Patienten ausgebildet ist, resp.

in den Prozeß des Heilungsver-

fahrens störend eingreift, um so ge-

duliger und langmüthiger muß die...

Krankenpflegerin sein, denn sonst...

wird sie ganz unmöglich imstande...

sein, für längere Zeit mit dem Kranken...

auszuhalten, mag derselbe...

männlichen oder weiblichen Ge-

schlechts sein. Es soll hier nicht, um...

Wissensstände zu vermeiden, der...

Ausdruck „Hypothese“ gebraucht...

werden, aber es ist dennoch oft nöthig...

und sehr nützlich, wenn die Kranken-

schwester imstande ist, „beherrschend“...

auf den Kranken oder die Kranke...

durch Gebuld und Lebenswürdigkeit...

einzuwirken, so daß dadurch ein ge-

wisser wohlthuerender und beruhigender...

Einfluß ausgeübt wird. Aber...

auch ein großes Maß von Lebens-

würdigkeit muß die leistungsfähige...

und erfolgreich wirkende Kranken-

schwester besitzen, was wohl...

im allgemeinen weniger mit körper-

licher Schönheit zusammenhängt,

sondern vielmehr im ureigenen Wesen...

Burgel findet und derartige Lebens-

würdigkeit des Charakters läßt...

sich bei nur einigermaßen gutem...

Willen recht leicht und schnell erwerben.

Außerdem sind nun noch zwei be-

sondere Eigenschaften zu erwähnen...

in deren Besitz jede zuverlässige Kranken-

schwester ebenfalls sein muß...

wenn sie sich den beruflichen Anforder-

ungen gewachsen zeigen will, und...

gwar lauten diese beiden Eigenschaften:

Unmüdigkeit und Geduld!

Denn sozusagen mit „einem“ Blicke...

muß jede Krankenpflegerin die neue...

Umgebung zu beurtheilen wissen, die...

sich ihr darbietet, und sofort Maß-

nahmen zu ergreifen verstanden, durch...

welche Abhilfe geschaffen werden...

kann. Dann gibt es bekanntlich...

Krankenpflegerinnen, die leider eine...

„harte“ Sand haben, und es muß...

den vorbereiten gesagt werden, daß...

diese bedauerlichen Mädchen und...

Frauen sich absolut nicht für die...

aktive Betheiligung im Krankenpflegerin-

nenwesen eignen, sondern nur solche,

die im glücklichen Besitze einer „wei-

chen, aber energielosen“ Sand sind,

welche von dem Kranken nicht unan-

genehm, sondern wohlthuernd und...

sympathisch empfunden wird.

So sollte sich denn eine jede Frau...

oder Dame, resp. ein jedes Mädchen,

gleichviel, aus welchem Stande sich...

dieselbe rekrutiert, stets gewissenhaft...

prüfen, ob sie diese Eigenschaften be-

sitzt, und namentlich die Schwie-

rigkeiten nicht unterschätzen, welche...

dieser verantwortungsvollen Beruf in sich...

birgt.

Die Jugend jeder Zeit verpor-

tet gar vieles, was sie zur Mann-

galt, adten und verehren wird;

und sie bemerkt, worüber sie einst...

lächeln wird. Reizner.

## QUACK! QUACK! QUACK!

There are folks in every neighborhood...

Who surely have the knack...

To keep the whole place lively...

With their quack, quack, quack!

There's that gossip with the twirling...

tongue.

Just like an endless chain,

Who quacketh here and quacketh there...

And quacketh back again.

Oh, you old quack, when do you sleep?

How do you eat your grub?

With tongue a-twirling overtime...

A-rub-a-dub-a-dub?

Then there's that Mr. Goody Good,

Who thinks all others black.

He tells us all our awful faults...

With his quack, quack, quack!

Look here, you whitewashed Pharisee!

When do you pray for us?

When do you practice what you preach...

With tongue always in play?

I fear when you reach yonder gate...

Peter will say to you: "Too late!"

You can't come in because you're lacking...

You wasted your whole life a-quacking."

But now, lest you charge me with quack-

ing,

I guess I'd better just be slacking.

For if I mention every quack...

I might put you, too, on the rack.

C. M. BARNITZ.

## POINTERS FOR HOUSING DUCKS.

Ducks aren't partial to palaces; but...

like human quacks they can't sleep...

with cold feet. Therefore, in building...

make your duck house simple, but be...

sure to have a dry floor, for cold...

tribbles mean dead ducks.

Quacks can stand more cold than a...

hen, as their thick feathers seem cold...

proof, but as they sleep sitting a good...

dry earth floor covered with leaves,

swamp grass or straw and protected...

from drafts is necessary.

Select a well drained site, have floor...

higher than outside surface and calcu-

late a space of 12 by 14 feet for every...

fifteen old ducks.

Use rough inch boards, strip all...

cracks, have a water tight shed roof.

HOUSE AND RUNS FOR DUCKS.

place windows to catch the sun and...

keep floor space clear, as ducks roost...

and lay on the ground, and obstruc-

tions mean crippled ducks.