

THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE.

He cannot walk, he cannot speak,
Nothing he knows of books and men,
He is the weakest of the weak,
And has not strength to hold a pen;
He has no pocket and no purse,
Nor ever yet has owned a penny,
But has more riches than his nurse,
Because he wants not any.

He rules his parents by a cry,
And holds them captive by a smile,
A king, strong through infancy,
A king, from lack of guile.
He lies upon his back and crows,
Or looks with grave eyes on his mother,
What an he mean? But I suppose
They understand each other.

Indoors or out, early or late,
There is no limit to his way,
For wrapt in baby robes of state,
He governs infant and day.
Kisses he takes as rightful due,
And, Turk-like, has his slaves to dress
him.
His subjects bend before him, too,
I'm one of them. God bless him!
—John Dennis, in Spectator.

The Fireside.

RUBY ANN'S FORTUNE.

BY SYDNEY DAYRE.

"It seems just the same, tug, tug, tug, all the time," said Ruby Ann, "and no end to it, as I see."

She was taking up the heavy basket of clean clothes to carry to the farm-house. Her mother was leaning wearily over a wash-tub, and two little boys were tearing about, looking as if very much in need of decent clothes and a little training. Her father was dead, and it would be a long time before the boys could be earning anything; so it was no wonder that poor Ruby Ann could see "no end to it."

Worst of all a cold fear lay at her heart that she might not be able to go to school this coming autumn. She was twelve years old and had not had a chance for much study, and was already beginning to feel ashamed of being behind the other girls. All summer long she had worked her very best in helping mother, who washed for boarders at the surrounding farms. But there was a mortgage on their bit of a cottage, and by the time the interest on it was paid nothing was left for school-books and clothes nice enough to wear to school. For Ruby Ann had a dainty feeling of self-respect, which would not permit her to go among others unless she could "go respectable," as her mother expressed it. Yes, the burden of life looked heavy to Ruby Ann as she trudged with her basket to old Squire Larkin's white farm-house, where a little girl was spending the summer with her grand-parents. For two or three weeks past Stella had cast longing eyes upon a branch well laden with apples, which hung over the bee-hives.

"Too early to pick them yet," grandfather had always said when she teased for them.
"But I'm sure they're ripe, grandpa."
"No, they are hard and sour. Don't be in a hurry, and don't ever go near the hives," said grandfather, looking back as he walked away, remembering that Stella had a way of thinking that she knew best about things.

"I can climb trees," thought Stella. "I like to climb trees. I could do it just as well as Pat. I won't go near the bee-hives—I'll only go above them; grandpa didn't say I mustn't do that. I know they're ripe. Grandpa's gone to the men in the hay-field, I guess."

The little lassie cautiously drew herself up into the tree and crept out upon the branch. Looking down, it seemed frightfully near the hives, and she gave a nervous little grip at the branch in order to get a better hold. One or two apples were shaken off and they fell on the hives with a hollow sound, which brought a number of bees out.

"O dear," cried Stella, "I wish I hadn't got up. I'll get down."
She made a hasty backward scramble, which sent down more apples and brought out more bees. As they came angrily buzzing around her she completely lost her presence of mind, and with it her balance. With a wild scream she went down, and catching by her skirts on the sharp point of a tall picket hung there, with head and feet down, close between the bee-hives, and the fence which stood behind them.

At the dreadful sound, grandpa came hobbling out with her crutch. "Keep still, Stella," she called, in great terror; "whatever you do, keep still. Huldah! Huldah! do come!"
Huldah came, and wrung her hands. "For the blessed land's sake! And I always the scariest creature o' bees! They can't abide me, and I can't abide them. I'll run for the men."

"I'll help her," cried a welcomed voice at this moment, and Ruby Ann, who had been coming up the long walk to the house, dropped her basket of clothes and flew towards Stella.

"Keep still, miss; please, keep still," she implored, as she tugged and lifted with all her might. But

Stella was getting a taste of the sharp stings, and under the most favorable circumstances was not much in the habit of obeying. She kicked and struggled and fought against the bees, making matters much worse than they already were.

At length Ruby Ann managed to free her and she had rushed away from the hives, still screaming and beating at the bees, when her grandfather came into sight.

"Keep still!" he shouted in tones which almost silenced Stella. But he was running towards the hives and paid no attention to her.

Ruby Ann was trying to squeeze out from behind them, anxious not to further disturb the bees. But as soon as she understood that Squire Larkin was speaking to her she stood still.

"Keep still—still!" he repeated, hurrying towards her. "Don't move a finger or a hair." He stopped a moment to catch his breath and then went on, "Don't be frightened, my little girl. The bees are swarming, I see, and they seem inclined to settle on you, but if you can only control yourself and keep quiet I don't believe you will get a single sting."

Even as he approached Ruby Ann had turned pale at seeing her hand covered with bees, but she had no impulse except to obey the commanding voice, and with a great tremble at her heart she stood like a statue, while her arm became black with bees.

Grandfather's heart went out towards her in warm admiration, as with kindest words and tone he strove to encourage her.

"You are a brave, obedient, little girl. Don't be frightened; hold your arm still. Bees seldom sting people who show no fear of them. Now, my child, I am going for a while to take them in. Stay just as you are, and I will soon let you out of this."

Grandma came near to add her words of cheer. The bees had gathered upon Ruby Ann's arm in a thick mass, covering its entire length and making it heavy for her to hold. She let it hang motionless and waited patiently, the confused buzzing sounding very loud so near her ears, while the honey smell made her feel almost faint.

But the hive at length was placed below her hand, and with a few vigorous shakes the bees were all off and she thankfully, and still carefully, made her way out of their neighborhood.

"You dear child!" exclaimed grandpa, leading her towards the house. "Huldah, come and make her a cup of tea."

Ruby Ann wanted to cry, but she set her lips tightly together and would not give way to it. Huldah came from doctoring Stella's stings to wait upon her, and with their kind petting and the good things which they coaxed her to eat she was soon quite over her excitement.

Stella presented a woefully swollen face and whimpered dolefully over her catastrophe, but nobody felt much inclined to pet her.

"You shall have that swarm for your own, Ruby Ann," said Squire Larkin. "I'm sure you've earned it. You'll make a capital little bee-keeper, for you're one of the sort that bees like, you see."

When Stella's mother came, a short time after, Huldah said to her; "Yes'm, that child o' yours 'd 'a been stung to death if that blessed little creature hadn't happened here in the very nick o' time—and that's a livin' fact—and stood there like a marble stun, a-lettin' them bees go crawlin' and crawlin' over her!"

"Is that really so, father?" asked the lady.
"Like as not, like as not," said the old man, soberly. "Nothing could have kept Stella quiet, and if Ruby Ann hadn't let her loose before the bees swarmed there's no telling."

Stella's mother went to see Ruby Ann's mother. And Ruby Ann had books, and clothes to "go respectable" to school, and many other good things came to the little cottage in so delicate a way that no one could feel under obligation. And then the mortgage was cared for in the quietest possible manner, and when Ruby Ann asked questions about it she was answered, "Now, Ruby Ann, when father said, 'Keep still,' to you, you obeyed as he never saw any one obey before. And when I say, 'Keep still,' you're to mind me just the same." Then, throwing her arms around her, the lady went on, "You little darling, do you think I'm not to have the comfort of doing something for you, when you saved Stella's life?"

But it was the bees which made Ruby Ann's fortune. Stella's mother sent her the best books on bee culture, and Ruby Ann gave her bees the intelligent, faithful care which always insures success. In two years after the little honey gatherer had selected her arm for a resting place, she had a dozen hives, and a ready market at the best price for the hundreds of pounds of clear golden honey which they brought her.—The Congregationalist.

TROUBLES OF A SALOON-KEEPER.

Last nite we wuz all sitting comfortable in Bascum's. It wuz a delightful evening we wuz a spending. The nite wuz cold and chill, and the wind wuz whistlin' drearily through the dark, but the cheelisin' uv the weather outside only made it better for us. The stove wuz full uv wood and red-hot on top, diffusin' heat, which is life, and Bascum, yielding to the seductive influences of comfort that wuz in the place, hed hot water on the stove, and Mrs. Bascum mixed with her fair hands the hot punches which ever and anon we ordered.

"What a happy life yours is, Bascum!" sed Kernel M'Pelter.
"Happy!" remerkt Issaker Gavitt, "I shoold say so. Nuthin to do but to sell liker at a profit of 200 per cent. and every customer yoo git ded shoer for life."

"Gentlemen," sed Bascum, on-bending, for he was drinking hot whiskey, too, "there is advantages in running a wet grocery but it has its drawbacks. It is too, that there is 200 per cent. profit, or would be ef you get paid for it. A ingenious youth comes to my bar, which hez a small farm, and gets to takin his sustenance. That woud be all rite for me ef he cood only take his sustenance and take care of his farm at the same time. But he don't, and whenever the necessity uv takin sustenance begins to be regler, jest when he mite be uv the most yoose to me, I have notis ther wuz all a fallin off in his corn crop. Corn woud grow unless you plant it, hoe and tend it; and a man wich becomes a regler customer uv mine don't plant, hoe and tend to advantage."

"Then, not having corn to sell he can't pay for liker, and ez he must have it he goes tick, and finally mortgages his place. Troo, I alluz git the place, but it woud do better for me ef he cood keep on working it, spending the proceeds at my bar. There is very few men wich ken do this."

"And then deth is another drawback to my biznis. Ef a man cood only drink regler and live to be seventy it woud be wuth while. But they don't do it. They are cut off by the croel hand of deth jest when they git to be yooseful to me. This one goes uv liver disease, tother one uv kidney trouble, rheumatism sets in and knocks one uv 'em off his pins, softenin' uv the brane kills another."

Joe Bigler, who jist dropped in, doubted the last disease. "No man wich had a brane to soften woud tetch the stuff," said he.

"And then," continyood Bascum, "ther is chronic diarrhea, and ef one uv 'em gets hurt he never gits over it, and then bronckitis comes in on 'em, and dyspepsy,—wat good is a man for work wich hez dyspepsy,—and there are so many diseases that hits the man which takes himzen reglerly, that they die altogether too early. Them ez holds on can't work after a certain time, and them as don't have the constooshin to hold on perish like the lillies of the valley, jist when they git regler enuff to be profitable."

"And then other troubles interfeers with me. When a noo man gets too full he quarrels and comes to an end from injoedishusnis. I have been in this room twenty-five years, and I hev seen mor'n a dozen uv my best customers, some of 'em wuth two dollars a day to me, stretched out on the floor with bullet holes or knife wounds into 'em. It was a hard blow when Bill Rutledge wuz killed rite where Deerskin is sittin'. He spent on an average \$4 a day with me, and wuz snuffed out in a minit. And then they hung Sam Kittridge, wat shot him, and there wuz another uv about the same. Both on 'em, had they lived, woud hev been my meat for years, for they wuz both strong men and cood have endured a pile uv it."

"There are other troubles. It is not pleasant to hev men inflamed with liker beatin each other over the heds with bottles and tumblers, for it destroys glassware and furnitur is apt to be broken. I have often wished I had a kind uv whiskey wich didn't make maniacs uv them wich drink it, but I never saw any of that kind. I have often seen a dozen rollin on the floor tu wunst, and when they come to draw pistols and shooting permiskus, it ain't pleasant nor profitable. I have had pistol balls after going thro' a man smash bottles in the bar, and how are you going to tell whose pistol did the damage?"

"Besides these drawbacks, comes sich ez yoo. Wat yoose are you to me? Its 'Bascum, a little old rye strate,' and after my good liker is gone, comes the everlastin remark, 'Jist put it down.' That's the disgusting part uv it. Ef you cood work and ern suthin, and pay cash, ther woud be suthin to the biznis, but you don't."

"To make the s'loon biznis wat it ought to be, I want a noo race of men. I want a set of customers with glass-lined stumicks backt up with fire brick. I want a lot uv men

with heds so constructed that they kin go to bed drunk and wake up in the morning and go about their work. I want a set of customers with stumicks and heds so constructed that liker won't kill 'em jist ez soon ez it becomes a necessity to 'em. There ain't no rose without a thorn."—Nashby.

LET THE BOYS HELP.

Why is it that boys are allowed to sit around a house doing nothing, while their overworked mother is struggling against nature and fate to do about half the work waiting for her hands? Only the other day we saw three large, able-bodied boys lounging about the house, not knowing what to do with themselves, while their mother, tired and pale, was trying to do all the work for a large family and company alone. Not a boy's work to help about the house? Why not? Is there anything about washing dishes that will injure him or which he cannot learn to do well?—or about making beds, or sweeping, or setting the table, or washing, or ironing, or cooking a plain meal of victuals? On the contrary, there is much to benefit him in such work, the most important of which is the idea that it isn't manly to let the "weaker vessel" carry all the burdens when it is possible for strong young hands to help. Most boys would gladly help in the house if they were asked to do so and were taught how to do the work properly. Many a smart boy wants to help his tired mother, but doesn't know how beyond bringing in the wood and water and shoveling a path through the snow. That done, she tells him to go and play while she plods wearily on. Not a boy's work! For shame! It is a positive harm to a boy's moral character to allow him to think it right to be idle while his mother is staggering under her burdens. Let the boys help, and those who can't get help "for love or money," as they often write us, will see their troubles disappear.—Selected.

CHILDREN BE PROMPT.

Never say, when told to do anything, "in a minute," or "by and by;" this leads to a bad habit, which, if not overcome, will prevent all confidence in you as you grow up. You will then put off duties you owe your neighbor in the same way, and he will lose confidence in you also. Many men lose the respect of their neighbors, not so much because they mean to do wrong, as through mere carelessness. "By and by" and "to-morrow" have ruined thousands, robbed them of their character and made them anything but blessings in a neighborhood. Little confidence can be placed in their word, not because they mean to tell falsehoods, but because of their carelessness. No obligation is fulfilled when it should be. And it is something so in their affairs. They lose days and weeks because business is not attended to promptly. A tool is lost because not promptly put away when done with. Fulfill every promise promptly. Put it not off an hour.—Selected.

DISCOMFORT AT MEALS.

By the by, it is strange, is it not, friends, that the table, which should be the scene of dear delight at home, should so often be the place where harsh words and repellent looks are most frequent? This ought never to be. The family gathering at meals should be a social reunion, in which everything disagreeable should be kept in the background, and where the children and guests should be made to feel happy and at ease.

Good digestion waits on cheerfulness as much as on appetite, and the household in which three times a day there is an interlude in the day's work, sweet, bright, merry, gay, with words of compliment uttered, as well as words of complaint withheld, is a blessed household indeed.

HOME HINTS.

CORN STARCH CAKE.—Whites of two eggs, one cup sugar, one cup of flour, one-half cup of corn-starch, one-half cup sweet milk, one teaspoon cream tartar, one-half teaspoon soda.

INDIAN ROLLS.—One cup milk, one cup corn meal, one-half cup white flour, one teaspoon sugar, one teaspoon cream tartar, one-half teaspoon soda, one-half teaspoon salt.

GOOD BREAD WITHOUT KNEADING.—For each loaf bread, use one quart flour, two tablespoons lard and one-half cup yeast. Mix lard, flour, salt and yeast together, then pour in warm water enough to moisten it, stirring very stiff. When light, bake quickly.

STEWED BEEF STEAK.—Roll with a rolling pin, flour, season, and fry with sliced onion to a light brown; then lay them in a stew-pan, pour as much boiling water as will serve for sauce, stew half an hour, and add a spoonful of catsup before serving.

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