

twinkle in Uncle Thomas's eye. Perhaps after all, this one, who had had experience, might tell him how to act.

"Why," he began with some hesitation, "she recited this afternoon at the kindergarten. An' she didn't grin and she told me her name, an' she game me a sweet. An' then her nurse took her home. What should I do next, Uncle Tom?"

"That's Dotty Patterson, Bill," said Althea. She's coming to play with me to-morrow."

Bill silenced his sister with a look of unutterable scorn. Dotty indeed! Thomas appeared to be pondering deeply.

"Well," he said, "I should escort her home to-morrow when she comes to call upon Althea. Then in about two days I should call, and present her with a box of flowers. I would call regularly every Wednesday and Saturday evening for about three weeks. Then I should ask her for her hand. First, of course, you must see her father about it. Gain his permission, then hers."

"Don't tease him, Tom," said Bill's mother again. Tom was silenced. But Bill remembered it all. He resolved to carry out this plan of action to the letter.

The next day Dorothy came. Bill twisted out of an engagement with "Pirate Pete," and stayed in the nursery, much to Althea's wonderment. He played horse with them. He even taught them how to play pirates. He played doctor to their dolls. Never before had Bill spent so dull an afternoon, but the pleasure of escorting Dorothy home repaid him for it. To be sure, her nurse was there, but she walked behind. She was a well-behaved nurse. She did not interfere. William took great pleasure in giving Dorothy a stick of chocolate and watching her little mouth slowly darken to copper brown.

"Come again to see Althea?" he said, as he left her at the gate.

"You come yourself to thee me, William," she said to him, and smiled.

"I will," he shouted back. Uncle Thomas had told him to call with the flowers in about two days. It was hard to wait so long. It was harder still to hear the remarks of Uncle Thomas about his Best Beloved. For one dreadful moment Bill actually feared that Uncle Thomas was deceiving him, but his fears were soon dispelled.

Bill was uncertain what kind of flowers to take her. There were dandelions in the orchard, but Bill did not like them. In his mother's conservatory there were lovely roses. Bill decided that they would do. He never thought to ask his mother's permission. He picked a bunch of pale Marechal Niels. He placed them lovingly in a tin soldier box, tied up with a beautiful white ribbon he had found in Althea's drawer. He neither knew nor cared that it was her best sash.

He went up the wide front walk of Dorothy's home with a rather scared feeling. Yet Bill was happy. For the first time in his life he really felt like a grown up man.

He rang the bell with a flourish, and waited. Presently a man with a solemn face and a great many brass buttons swung the door open. "Please, please" (Bill felt a little awed before this august personage) "I've come to call on Dorothy."

The man's stern face relaxed a little, and Bill heard a funny little noise. He wondered if this great man were really giggling.

"This way, please," said the man, and Bill followed him up the broad stairs and into the nursery. He was surprised to see two little boys on the floor by Dorothy's side. He had not known that she had brothers.

"Oh, William," she cried, "I'm glad you came. We're having thuch fun. We're building high houtheth out of theth blockth."

William removed his hat upon invitation.

"I brought you some flowers," he said, and he uncovered the box. "Flowerth? How nithe!"

The other little boys glared jealously at Bill.

"They're lovely, William," she said. "Thank you. I will tell Philth to put them in water."

Dorothy danced out of the room. The little boys stared fixedly and suspiciously at Bill.

Bill grew exceedingly uncomfort-

able. Finally he spoke. He said to the largest boy:

"What's your name?"

"Teddy Cartwright. What's yours?"

Bill was stunned. Then one boy at least was not her brother. "William Preston Lawrence," he said. The boys stared with renewed vigor at the possessor of so dignified a name.

Bill grew desperate. "Are you Dorothy's brother?" he inquired of the youngest boy.

The boy grinned an insipid grin. "No," he said. "I'm her sweetheart."

"You aren't!" said the older boy. "I am!"

"You're a story teller!"

Dorothy entered the room and smiled at William. "I want William for my sweetheart now, she said. William cast a look of evil triumph at the other boys.

"I'll lick you after we get out," said the oldest boy to Bill in a whisper.

"I'll lick you!" growled Bill, and he did. In the garden behind the house Teddy Cartwright met his downfall.

Bill crept home with a bloody fist and torn clothes. He was sent directly to bed for taking the roses and Althea's sash. But Bill was happy. Nothing mattered when Cupid smiled at him. Every time he went Dorothy had two or three other boys there. But she preferred Bill. He had met no fewer than six of her followers in battle—and conquered.

Two weeks passed by, and Bill finally decided to ask her father at once. It would be a rather awesome proceeding, but—well, Billy would ask Dorothy first.

On this most eventful day Bill set out with many beatings of heart. He did hope that for once she would be alone; but no, there were three boys and two girls in the nursery. Dorothy knew such a lot of children.

Bill wriggled uncomfortably. How hard is that particular task that mankind must endure! Finally, he approached Dorothy and whispered it in her ear.

"Dorothy, will you marry me?"

He had expected instant acquiescence. But alas! she looked at him coldly. "No, I won't. Algy White 'th my thweethart now."

Bill crept back, stung to the quick. How could Dorothy be so cruel? Oh, he had been foolish ever to care for a girl, anyway. He took up his hat. "I'm going home," he said.

"I don't care," she said cruelly.

Bill crept downstairs and went home.

She didn't care. He went to the barn and flung himself into the odorous hay in the barn-loft. He cried—cried as though his heart would break.

Bill went into the house and ate his supper silently. Far into the night he lay awake. His mother came in softly and kissed him—she thought he was asleep.

Bill started up.

"Mamma," he said.

"Why, Billy dear, are you crying?"

"Yes." Bill poured out the whole wretched story to his mother. It did not matter now. Mothers were nice to have. It was comfortable to be a little boy.

She listened sympathetically; she did not laugh. Perhaps she was one who understands that childish sorrows, though brief, are more severe, and bite deeper into the tender, childish hearts than older people's misfortunes do into their hardened ones.

She stroked his forehead gently, and soothed him. She told him not to mind. She smoothed away the sorrow. She sat by his bed until he was almost asleep. Then:

"Mamma," he said sleepily, "can I be your sweetheart?"

"Yes dear," she said, and stroked his hair until he fell asleep.

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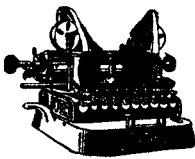
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The Casket.

Professor Wagner, who lectures on political economy in the University of Berlin, delivered an address the other day in which he ridiculed the Munroe Doctrine as an empty pretension of no stability whatever. Incidentally he paid the following tribute to the Latin races:—

As a member of the Germanic race I do not want to see the Romanic element pressed to the wall, because it is indispensable to the world's civilization and is a necessary complement to Germanic culture. This applies to Italy and France and even to Spain. What do we Germans owe to them! What would our civilization be without Italy and without France?

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