

Cousin Egbert, who exclaims, "Oh, shucks!" each time I make him a payment. He and the Honourable George remain pally no end and spend much of their abundant leisure at Cousin Egbert's modest country house. At times when they are in town they rather consort with street persons, but such is the breadth of our social scheme that I shall never exclude them from our gayeties, though it is true that more often than not they decline to be present.

Mrs. Ruggles, I may say, is a lady of quite amazing capacities combined strangely with the commonest feminine weaknesses. She has acute business judgment at most times, yet would fly at me in a rage if I were to say what I think of the nipper's appalling grossness. Quite naturally I do not push my unquestioned mastery to this extreme. There are other matters in which I amusedly let her have her way, though she fondly reminds me almost daily of my brutal self-will.

On one point I have just been obliged to assert this. She came running to me with a suggestion for economizing in the manufacture of the relish. She had devised a cheaper formula. But I was firm.

"So long as the inventor's face is on that flask," I said, "its contents shall not be debased a tuppence. My name and face will guarantee its purity."

She gave in nicely, merely declaring that I needn't growl like one of their bears with a painful foot.

At my carefully mild suggestion she has just brought the nipper in from where he was cattyng the young fowls, much to their detriment. But she is now heaping compote upon a slice of thickly buttered bread for him, glancing meanwhile at our evening newspaper.