

The Mill on the Floss

BY GEORGE ELIOT

(28. Instalment.)

Nevertheless, there was a visible improvement in Tom under this training; perhaps because he was not a boy in the abstract, existing solely to illustrate the evils of a mistaken education, but a boy made of flesh and blood, with dispositions not entirely at the mercy of circumstances.

There was a great improvement in his bearing, for example, and some credit on this score was due to Mr. Poulter, the village school-master, who, being an old Peninsular soldier, was employed to drill Tom—a source of high mutual pleasure. Mr. Poulter, who was understood by the company at the Black Swan to have once struck terror into the hearts of the French, was no longer personally formidable. He had rather a shrunken appearance, and was tremulous in the mornings, not from age, but from the extreme perversity of the King's Lorton boys, which nothing but gin could enable him to sustain with any firmness. Still, he carried himself with martial erectness, had his clothes scrupulously brushed, and his trousers tightly strapped; and on the Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, when he came to Tom, he was always inspired with gin and old memories, which gave him an exceptionally spirited air, as of a superannuated charger who hears the drum. The drillings were always protracted by episodes of warlike narrative, much more interesting to Tom than Philip's stories out of the "Hlad"; for there were no cannon in the "Hlad," and besides, Tom had felt some disgust on learning that Hector and Achilles might possibly never existed. But the Duke of Wellington was really alive, and Bony had not been long dead—therefore Mr. Poulter's reminiscences of the Peninsular War were removed from all suspicion of being mythical. Mr. Poulter, it appeared, had been a conspicuous figure at Talavera, and had contributed not a little to the peculiar terror with which his regiment of infantry was regarded by the enemy. On afternoons, when his memory was more stimulated than usual, he remembered that the Duke of Wellington had (in strict privacy, lest jealousies should be awakened) expressed his esteem for that fine fellow Poulter. The very surgeon who attended him in the hospital after he had received his gunshot wound, had been profoundly impressed with the superiority of Mr. Poulter's flesh: no other flesh would have healed in anything like the same time. On less personal matters connected with the important warfare in which he had been engaged, Mr. Poulter was more reticent, only taking care not to give the weight of his authority to any loose notions concerning military history. Anyone who pretended to a knowledge of what occurred at the siege of Badajos was especially an object of silent pity to Mr. Poulter; he wished that prating person had been run down, and had the breath trampled out of him at the first go-off, as he himself had—he might talk about siege of Badajos then! Tom did not escape irritating his drill-master occasionally, by his curiously concerning other military matters than Mr. Poulter's personal experience.

"And General Wolfe, Mr. Poulter? wasn't he a wonderful fighter?" said Tom, who held the notion that all the martial heroes commemorated on the public-house signs were engaged in the with Bony.

"Not a all!" said Mr. Poulter contemptuously. "Nothing o' the sort!" Heads up," he added, in a tone of stern command, which delighted Tom, and made him feel as if he were a regiment in his own person.

"No, no!" Mr. Poulter would continue, on coming to a pause in

his discipline. "They'd better not talk to me about General Wolfe. He did nothing but die o' his wound: that's a poor business, I consider. Any other man 'ud have died o' the wounds I've had. One of my sword-cut 'ud 'a' killed a fellow like General Wolfe."

"Mr. Poulter," Tom would say, at any allusion to the sword, "I wish you'd bring your sword and do the sword-exercise!"

For a long while Mr. Poulter only shook his head in a significant manner at this request, and smiled patronisingly, as Jupiter may have done when Scudde urged her too ambitious request. But one afternoon, when a sudden shower of heavy rain had detained Mr. Poulter twenty minutes longer than usual at the Black Swan, the sword was brought—just for Tom to look at.

And this is the real sword you fought with in all the battles, Mr. Poulter?" said Tom, handling the hilt. "Has it ever cut a Frenchman's head off?"

"Head off? Ah! and would it 'ud 'a' had three heads."

"But you had a gun and bayonet besides?" said Tom. "I should like the gun and bayonet best, because you could shoot 'em and spear 'em after. Bang! Pow-ee!" Tom gave the requisite punctuation to indicate the double enjoyment of pulling the trigger and thrusting the spear.

"Ah, but the sword's the thing when you come to close fighting," said Mr. Poulter, immediately falling in with Tom's enthusiasm, and drawing the sword so sedulously that Tom leaped back with much agility.

"O but, Mr. Poulter, if you're going to do the exercise," said Tom, a little conscious that he had not stood his ground as became an Englishman, "let me go and call Philip. He'll like to see you, you know."

"What! the bunglered lad?" said Mr. Poulter contemptuously. "What's the use of his looking on?"

"Oh, but he knows a great deal about fighting," said Tom, "and how they used to fight with bows and arrows, and battle-axes."

"Let him come then. I'll show him something different from his bows and arrows," said Mr. Poulter, coughing, and drawing himself up, while he gave a little preliminary play to his wrist.

Tom ran in to Philip, who was enjoying his afternoon's beating at the piano, in the drawing-room, picking out tunes for himself and singing them. He was supremely happy, perched like an amorphous bundle on the high stool, with his head thrown back, his eyes fixed on the opposite corner, and his lips wide open, sending forth, with all his might, impetuous syllables to a tune of Anne's, which had hit his fancy.

"Come, Philip," said Tom, bursting in; "don't say nothing 'a' 'a' there—come and see old Poulter do his sword-exercise in the carriage-house!"

The joy of this interruption—the discord of Tom's tones coming across the notes to which Philip was vibrating in soul and body—would have been enough to unbalance his temper, even if there had been no question of Poulter's drilling-master, and Tom, in the hurry of seizing something to say to prevent Mr. Poulter from thinking he was afraid of the sword when he was away from it, had alighted on this proposition to fetch Philip—though he knew well enough that Philip hated to hear him mention his drillings. Tom would never have done so immediately a thing except under the severe stress of his personal pride.

Philip shuddered visibly as he passed from his music. Then turning red, he said, with violent passion—

"Get away, you lumbering idiot! Don't come bellowing at me—you're not fit to speak to anything but a cart-horse!"

It was not the first time Philip had been made angry by him, but Tom had never before been assailed with verbal missiles that he understood so well.

"I'm fit to speak to something better than you—you poor-spirited imp!" said Tom, lighting up immediately at Philip's fire. "You know I won't hit you, because you're no better than a girl. But I'm an honest man's son, and your father's a rascal—especially so!"

Tom flung out of the room, and slammed the door after him, with a stamping defiance by his anger, for to slam doors within the hearing of Mrs. Stelling, who was gradually not far off, was an offence only to the wipid out by the noisy lines of Virgil. In fact, what had

did presently descend from her room, in double wonder at the noise and the subsequent cessation of Philip's music. She found him sitting in a heap on the lawn, and crying bitterly.

"What's the matter, Waken?"

"What was that noise about? Who slammed the door?"

Philip looked up, and hastily dried his eyes. "It was Talaver who came in—to ask me to go out with him."

"And what are you in trouble about?" said Mrs. Stelling.

Philip was not her favorite of the two pupils; he was less obliging than Tom, who was much useful in many ways. Still, his father paid more than Mr. Talaver did, and she meant him to feel that she behaved exceedingly well to him. Philip, however, met her advances towards a good understanding very much as a crossed mollusc meets an invitation to show himself out of his shell. Mrs. Stelling was not a loving tender-hearted woman; she was a woman whose skirt set well, who adjusted her waist and parted her curls with a precise, cold air when she inquired after your welfare. These things, doubtless, represent a great social power, but it is not the power of love—and no other power could win Philip from his personal reserve.

He said, in answer to her question, "My headache came on, and made me hysterical again."

This had been the first time, and Philip was glad of the respite. It was like an inspiration to enable him to excuse his crying. He had to accept one-to-Ginige, and to refuse exercise in consequence, but that was easy.

Meanwhile Tom, who had for the first time sent a poisoned arrow into Philip's heart, had returned to the carriage-house, where he found Mr. Poulter, with a fixed and earnest eye, wasting the perfection of his sword-exercise on probably obnoxious but sympathetic rats. But Mr. Poulter was a host in himself; that is to say, he admired himself more than a whole army of spectators could have admired him. He took no notice of Tom's return, being too entirely absorbed in the cut and thrust—the solemn, one-two, three, four, and Tom, not without a slight feeling of alarm at Mr. Poulter's fixed eye and hungry-looking sword, which seemed impatient for something else to cut besides the air, advanced the performance from as great a distance as possible. It was not until Mr. Poulter paused and wiped the perspiration from his forehead, that Tom felt the full charm of the sword-exercise, and wished it to be repeated.

"Mr. Poulter," said Tom, when the sword was being finally sheathed, "I wish you'd lend me your sword a little while to keep."

"No, no, young gentleman," said Mr. Poulter, shaking his head dismally, "you might do yourself some mischief with it."

"No, I'm sure I wouldn't—I'm sure I'll take care and not hurt myself. I shouldn't take it out of the sheath much, but I could ground arms with it, and all that."

"No, no, it won't do, I tell you, it won't do," said Mr. Poulter, preparing to depart. "What 'ud Mr. Stelling say to me?"

"Oh, I say, do, Mr. Poulter! I'll give you my five-shilling piece if you'll let me keep the sword a week. Look here!" said Tom, reaching out the attractively large round of silver. The young girl, who had been a philosopher,

"Well," said Mr. Poulter, with still deeper gravity, "you must keep it out of sight, you know."

"Oh yes, I'll keep it under the bed," said Tom eagerly, "or else at the bottom of my large box."

"And let me see, now, whether you can draw it out of the sheath without hurting yourself."

That phrase having been gone through more than once, Mr. Poulter felt that he had acted with scrupulous conscientiousness, and said, "Well, now, Master Talaver, if I take the crown-piece, it is to make sure as you'll do no mischief with the sword."

"Oh yes, indeed, Mr. Poulter," said Tom, delightedly handing him the crown-piece, and grasping the sword, which he thought might have been lighter with advantage.

"But if Mr. Stelling catches you carrying it in?" said Mr. Poulter, pocketing the crown-piece provisionally while he raised this new doubt.

"Oh, he always keeps in his upstairs study on Saturday afternoons," said Tom, who disliked anything smoking, but was not disinclined to a little strategem in a worthy cause. So he carried off the sword in triumph, armed with broad-bladed that he might encounter Mr. or Mrs. Stelling—to his bedroom, where, after some consideration, he hid it in the closet behind some hanging clothes. That night he fell asleep in the thought that he would astonish Maggie with it when she came—to it toward his room with his red comforter, and while he believed that the sword was his own, and that he was going to be a soldier. There was nobody in Maggie who would be silly enough to believe him, or whom he dared allow to know that he had a sword, and Maggie was really coming next week to see Tom, before she went to a boarding-school with Lucy.

ROYAL YEAST

IMPROVED MOISTPROOF SQUARE PACKAGE

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Children Cry FOR FLETCHER'S CASTORIA

If you think a bad of children would just have been so children, you must be an exceptionally wise man, who, although you are devoted to a civil calling, requiring you to look blind rather than formidable, yet never, since you had a heart, threw yourself into a martial attitude, and dreamed before the looking-glass. It is doubtful whether our soldiers would be surprised if they were not pacific people at home who like of fancy themselves soldiers. War, like other dramatic spectacles, might possibly cause far more of a "pull."

CHAPTER V

Maggie's Second Visit.

This last branch between the two had been not really needed, and for some time they spoke to each other as men to men was necessary. Their natural antipathy of temperament made resentment an easy passage to hatred, and in Philip the reaction seemed to have begun: there was a malignity in his disposition, but there was a susceptibility that made him peculiarly liable to a strong sense of indignation. The one way to venture to assert on the authority of a great classic is not given to use his teeth as an instrument of attack, and Tom was an excellent bowman, who ran at questionable objects in a truly ingenious bowman manner, but he had blundered on Philip's tenderest point, and had caused him as much acute pain as if he had studied the means with the most precision and the most consummate spite. Tom saw no reason why they should not make up this quarrel as they did many others, by behaving as if nothing had happened; but though he had never before said to Philip that his father was a rascal, this idea had so habitually made part of his feeling as to the relation between himself and his father's school-fellow, whom he could neither like nor dislike, that the new attitude did not make such an epoch to him as it did to Philip. And he had a right to say so when Philip hastened over him, and called him names. But perceiving that his first advances to words only were not met, he resolved to try his last formidable disposition towards Philip, and resolved never to appeal to him either about drawing or names again. They were only so far civil to each other as was necessary to prevent their state of feud from being observed by Mr. Stelling, who would have "put down" such nonsense with great vigor.

(To be continued.)

For Our Little Ones

THE DUSTMAN

It was a warm lazy morning, and when Sally's mother gave her the dustpan and told her to dust the living-room, Sally went obediently to the bright pleasant room, and dropped into a big chair and stood in the sunshine. She intended to begin dusting in just a few moments.

As she looked around at the smooth polished top of the living-room table and noted that it was gleamed with dust, she wondered why how dust could accumulate so fast. It seemed almost as though some one had brought it purposely to make her work. She didn't feel like dusting every morning, anyway.

The piano was so dusty that she asked herself if she could have forgotten it yesterday. And as she stared at it, and thought what fun it would be to get up and write her name in the dust, if only she weren't so lazy—she toppled back into the depths of the big chair, went fast asleep, and dreamed about the Dustman.

The Dustman was a nimble, busy little fellow. He looked like an elf, and was exactly the color of the dust which he scattered over the earth. If he'd stamp his foot great clouds of dust shook from him and enveloped him like a cloud. If he'd wave an arm, or even shake his head the dust fell from him and settled thickly over everything near him. When he ran he left a wide trail of dust in his wake. On his busy days he carried enormous bags of fine dust with him.

The Dustman loved hot, dry weather and was a great friend of the hot dry Wind; indeed they travelled together ninety-nine times out of a hundred. They were a mischievous pair and did no end of things to the model houses of model housewives.

"You must work all night," said Sally to the Dustman.

"I never stop working," returned the Dustman briefly.

"I wish you'd skip our house just one single day," sighed Sally.

"I'd be neglecting my duty if I did," replied the Dustman tartly.

"Besides, I treat your house to a light evening usually. It gives you just enough to keep you busy, Sally."

"Everything is white with dust this morning," complained Sally quickly.

The Dustman laughed, and Sally was forced to retreat in order to escape a veritable storm of dust which came from the Dustman.

"Why, you don't call that dust, I hope," exclaimed the Dustman. "I don't believe you know what dust is! My friend, the Wind, and I are going out tonight, for a bit of fun, and I think we'll stop at your house, Miss Sally, and show you what a really truly dust storm is. Then you'll never say another word about mild, everyday dusting chores," concluded the Dustman threatening her merrily.

He whisked himself off then, for Sally's mother was calling her to know if the dusting were done. Sally rushed herself and hastily set to work. She thought what a funny dream she had had. That night she thought about it again when she heard the wind raging vehemently about the old house.

"Sund sleep," muttered Sally's father, as loose dirt and tiny pebbles were blown against the window.

"Oh, the dust!" breathed the wife with the anxiety of the model housewife. "Sally, you'll have to get up early in the morning to begin dusting in the living-room."

As Sally dusted the next morning she wished fervently that some one would capture the Dustman. There was certainly ample evidence of the frolic he and the wind had had the night before. The window sills were so buried in dust and dirt that Sally needs must get dust-pan and brush in order to remove all signs of their mischief.

Every stick of furniture had to be gone over twice in order to remove all traces of the storm. Dust was even ground into the outer edges of the big rug. Books had to be taken, one by one, from their shelves and dusted.

Before Sally had finished her task she felt as tired as she did after a "thorough cleaning day," when every thing was washed and scoured and swept and polished with the same vigor that a house-cleaning always demanded.

Such storms, as the one of the night before, were rare, but Sally firmly believed, for a very long time, that the Dustman, of her dream had come to do with it than people knew.

And whenever she felt like complaining of the every-day dusting, she remembered what the Dustman had brought in answer to her last complaint, and she'd close her lips tightly and go briskly about her work.

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WOMAN'S WORLD

Training Little Children

Be Kind, but Firm, in Your Insistence on the Right—Once Actuated by This Motive a Child Will Become Considerate and Generous. Begin to Form Habit of Self-Reliance With Children When They Are Little.

By Mrs. Ruth Hoppner Swaine.

The child is a primitive little being. His desires are near the surface, and primarily very selfish. He wants all things for his own. He must also be first in everything, and, if he is the biggest force in the play group, what more natural than that he should try to make everything conform to his wishes? But this child, if once actuated by the right, becomes the most generous, the most considerate and the gentlest of little fellows. A few words, a firm but kind insistence on your part, and he knows the pleasure of giving up for others.

All children have their difficulties with one another, and sometimes, if one judges by the noise in the back yard, they are very big ones.

A moment's wait will usually show whether it is wise to run and help the children readjust their little world. Do this only when necessary. Hold your breath behind the door, and see if happily they are not righting the situation themselves. Even the physical hurts need much less sympathy than the average mother is apt to bestow. Would we coddle our children into becoming physical cowards? From earliest babyhood, begin to turn their attention when hurt to some new interest, and observe how quickly the pain is forgotten.

A strong conviction has grown out of the passing years of my motherhood that the greatest service a mother can do her child is to teach him self-reliance. If you begin with the baby, the habit forms easily, and before you know it self-reliance has really become a habit with him. Hold yourself free from fear as he tries out his growing powers. Watch alertly, but wait. Let him try the reach that may topple him over, but secures for him the bright ball. Let him make all the moves he wants to, and if necessary, be there to catch him as he falls. Hesitate long before you turn a child deliberately away from the thing he has set his heart on doing. Strong initiative is too glorious a characteristic to nip in the bud. Try for one day to stop and think before you deprive your child of the pleasure of simple achievement.

There are countless little tasks a child can do for himself to help mother. Each mother will think of many of these in the course of a day. Remember that in the child's world of new impressions the most trite acts to us are, to him, the most delightful of plays.

Play is the vital employment of childhood. The art of playing alone, being friends with himself, is a foundation for self-reliance in greater things later in life. A child cannot be more than contented. So hesitate, dear mother, to interfere when your child is quietly employing himself in his own chosen way, even if it is only baby with his toes. Let the spell last as long as it will; the next will last longer. Soon your child of three will play hours by himself. The busy mother often needs this respite.

Recipies

WHAT TO MAKE WITH PEANUTS (Continued from last issue)

To MAKE PEANUT BUTTER.—If you do not have a food chopper, first cut fresh-roasted peanuts as fine as possible, then mash with a heavy wooden potato masher. There is usually a peanut-butter attachment with food choppers; if missing, grind twice with the finest knife. Add salt to taste. The resulting "butter" may be used as it is, thinned with a little water for spreading, or moistened with a little salad oil or sweet butter. Pack in small glasses, with a layer of melted paraffin poured on top before adding the cover.

PEANUT DROP COOKIES.—For this use one-quarter of a cupful of shortening, half a cupful of sugar, one egg beaten separately, two

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