



WHEN we cultivate thoughts of strength for others,  
we ourselves grow strong. Habitual thoughts  
of peace bring us tranquility.

—C. B. Newcomb.

## Baby Bunting—Chaperone

By Charles Raymond Barrett.

THE young man walked up and down, and said things under his breath. The baby shook tiny fists in his face and yelled at the top of its lungs. The people in the crowded station looked at the two and smiled sympathetically, if they were women; sardonically, if they were men.

The train caller made the station re-echo as he droned through the itinerary of the next train. The baby, enraged at his bid for public attention, grew red and apoplectic in its attempt to drown his voice. The young man looked at his watch, shifted the baby from one weary arm to one hardly less weary, and quickened his nervous stride.

Through the swinging doors of the station came a young girl carrying an umbrella and a small satchel. Her face was carefully veiled, but still it drew a second glance; her dress was simple but becoming; her manner showed breeding, and—just at present—a considerable degree of nervousness.

Once through the doors she paused irresolute, glanced about the station, espied the young man and the vociferous youngster, looked away, looked back again; and then, seeing the young man beckon her, she threaded her way toward him. As she approached her amazement grew, so that she had hardly breath enough to gasp a greeting.

"Sammy Maxwell! What did you get that baby?"

"Never mind now," answered Maxwell. "We've barely time to make that train. I thought you would never come." He shifted the baby again and caught his other charge by the arm.

"My cab was blocked and I just made it," said the girl. "Where is the mother of that child—on the train?"

"Don't bother me—I'll explain later. Hurry! or we'll miss it yet!"

Through the gate they rushed and down the platform. The Pullman porters had stowed away their little stools, the train had begun to move, and the three travelers were in a fair way to be left behind; but the voice of the baby, loud and importunate, rose triumphant above the din of the train shed and heralded their coming. Help came from all sides, on the jump, curt of speech and inclined to profanity, but none the less effective. On to the train the three were bundled, pushed and hauled like so much baggage, and the child, disheveled but triumphant, in their seats in the parlor car.

"Pretty close call that, huh," grinned the porter, mopping his forehead. "Thank 'ee, sub-think 'ee kindly. Anything I can do for the baby or the madam?"

The baby squalled unintelligent orders and "the madam" blushed rosily. "No—no, thank you," stammered Maxwell. "If there is I'll call you."

"For goodness' sake, Sam, do get rid of that child," whispered the girl, still painfully pink about the ears. Maxwell winced as the little fists clenched on his hair, and answered while the infant was taking breath: "I wish to heaven I could."

"It certainly is," he answered stoutly. "Where did you think I got it?"

"I—I didn't know. I thought perhaps some woman had asked you to back—that's the way they always do in stories."

She took the waiting infant upon her lap—it was the first time that she had offered even to touch it—and began to straighten its twisted clothing and to soothe it with tender voice and hand into at least a semblance of contentment.

"But, Sam! How in the world did Baby Bunting happen to come here?"

"I brought her."

"So I see. But why?"

Maxwell cleared his throat and wriggled a little, and leaned closer to her as he answered: "Well, you see, Claire, you were so afraid someone would get on to the fact that you were doing things I promised to arrange things so nobody could possibly suspect us. I worried over it a whole lot, I can tell you, for it wasn't easy; finally I decided that if we could take a baby along it would be a cinch—we might look young and inexperienced, but if we had a baby—"

He stammered and stopped, warned by the color flowing into the girl's cheeks.

"Well, anyhow," he continued quickly, "I decided Baby Bunting or two, till we could get a witness worn off, so I brought her along. But I don't know"—he ruffled his hair perplexedly—"I never saw the kid act

is undoubtedly having hysterics this very minute—your father is probably calling you all the bad names he can remember—this poor, kidnapped baby will cry herself sick before we can get her back to her mother—and we shall be stopped—arrested, perhaps—and held up to the ridicule of all our friends"—there was a catch in her voice—"and all because you have been so foolish—so absurdly, cruelly foolish!"

She was choked with sobs at the end, and she bent close over the baby to hide her working face. The child was roused afresh by this recital of its wrongs and lifted up its voice in a perfect roar of indignation.

"For heaven's sake!" whispered Maxwell, glancing uneasily at the smiling passengers about them; "can't you do anything to quiet the kid?"

The girl was doing the best she knew how, but her little arts were of no avail.

"She may be hungry," she began doubtfully.

"Why, of course." There was a sharp note of self-contempt in Maxwell's voice. "I've got milk and bottles and everything else in my bag."

He stopped abruptly. His jaw dropped, and he stared helplessly about him, while a sickly yellow over-spread his face.

"And I left my bag in the station!" he groaned.

Miss Claire "looked unutterable things in a way that made him shiver. "I thought your father is right," she observed bitingly. "You are too hopelessly young and irresponsible to be the head of a family."

"Claire!" he cried, wounded to the heart.

Her face softened and the voice lost its edge; but her decree was inexorable.

"You go into the smoker and I'll see if I can get Baby Bunting quiet. And Sam—please try not to make matters any worse than they are."

Maxwell sat in the swaying smoker, pulling moodily upon his cigar and staring determinedly out of the window. He did not care to talk to the other occupants of the car—he had too much to think about; and besides they all wanted to gey him about the squalling child in the car behind, and to relate weird experiences of their own as father and nurses. It was indeed unpleasant and somewhat embarrassing for a young man not yet in his honeymoon.

And unless he could appease Claire somehow, and get that infernal baby back to its mother, he stood a very small chance of enjoying a honeymoon. He could not altogether blame Claire, for he had rather a mess of things; but she seemed to forget that he had done it all for her. He didn't care how many people knew so sensitive to ridicule. And now he had made her more conspicuous than ever by his blazoned "Eloper" on her forehead. It was, it wasn't a very pleasant situation, or a very hopeful one.

He was roused from his reverie by a touch on the shoulder, and looked up to find the train conductor eyeing him curiously.

"You're with the young lady and the baby in the parlor car, aren't you?" asked the personage with the brass buttons.

"Yes," answered Maxwell, somewhat apprehensively.

"Will you come up front with me for a minute? I'd like a word with you—in private."

The railway man's manner was courteous enough, Maxwell not to refuse; so he arose readily and followed the brass buttons, secretly wondering what rule of the road he had transgressed by bringing a crying baby on to the train.

(To be continued next week.)

## Advice to a Daughter

THIS was Emerson's advice to a daughter: "Finish every day, and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. To-morrow is a new day; begin it well and serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense. This day is all that is good and fair. It is too dear, with its hopes and invitations, to waste a moment on the yesterdays."

"Where's its mother? She can't expect you to hold it all day."

The young man looked at her oddly. "Is mother? In Winniepe, I suppose."

The girl gasped.

In Winnipeg! Sam Maxwell, you don't mean to say that some inhuman mother has deserted her child and left it on your hands?"

"Inhuman mother!"—Why, Claire, don't you recognize the kid?"

His companion gave him a look of amazement, not unminged with a certain wild alarm, but found nothing in his countenance to lead her to suspect him of any double meaning. Then she turned her eyes to the baby.

That interesting specimen of humanity, finding itself totally unable to attract the attention that usually attended its less vocal efforts, had paused to recover its breath and—metaphorically speaking—to chew upon this strange morsel. Its face, still red from its attempts upon high C, had already gathered some of the prime inevitable to the traveler, and through that venerable big tears had washed erratic courses. Its cap was awry; its clothing askew; its general appearance rakish and its condition moist.

To a man it would have been just a poor mit of humanity that needed its mother's care; but to the girl—God him, who gave the cunning, knows how she distinguished that baby face from the many that it might have seen.

"Baby Bunting!" she whispered breathlessly, with a sort of awe. "It's—it's not Baby Bunting, is it, Sam?"

so before. She's always been so good—let me hold her and play with her as long as I liked—but she's been squalling herself sick for the last hour.

"She wants her mother," said Miss Claire, with a finality that Maxwell accepted meekly. Then, after a moment of hesitation: "I don't understand how Mollie could let her go."

Maxwell wriggled again.

"Mollie?" he answered, with assumed carelessness. "Oh, she didn't know. I just took the kid and left a note to explain."

The girl gasped her inarticulate horror.

"What did you say?" she questioned, with a calmness that deceived her companion.

"Oh, told her I'd borrowed the baby for a day or two and would return her in good order when I was through with her. Told her not to worry, and all that sort of thing."

"Of course she won't, then."

Even his masculine ears detected the sarcasm in those words, and Maxwell grew red and then white.

"Why, Claire—" he stammered.

"And your father! What do you suppose he'd do when he hears that you have run away with his first and only grandchild? You couldn't have done anything that would have made him so angry—and just when we want him to forgive our runaway marriage!"

Maxwell gulped nervously. "I didn't think, Claire," he began.

"That's quite evident," she snapped. "I didn't think a man could be so foolish. Your sister Mollie