

## A Bit of Suggestion.

"How is your Latin class getting along, Herbert?" asked his father at the breakfast table.

"Oh, tolerably, sir," said Herbert with a half scowl which was becoming very familiar with his face. "I don't like Latin much myself. And some of the boys are such bad scholars they keep the whole school back. I wish I was in some other class."

"Will you have some more potatoes, Herbert?" asked his mother.

"Well—I don't believe I want any; I don't think this is a very good way of cooking potatoes. We used to have them a great deal nicer."

"Can you spare a quarter of an hour after breakfast to help me with my examples, Herbert?" asked his sister.

"Oh, I suppose so. I did want to stop to speak to Jack Lee about that book of mine he borrowed and hasn't returned. I wish folks wouldn't borrow; but if they will borrow, I wish they would return things. What are your examples?"

"In the least common multiple."

"That's easy enough, I'm sure. I wonder if you're bright at arithmetic, Lill? But, of course, I'll show you. Seems to me this steak is tough."

"We'll have to be looking after the wood supply soon," suggested mother. "And then there'll be more piling for me, of course," remarked Herbert. "Bridget must burn a lot of wood in the kitchen."

"While you are helping your sister with the examples, Herbert," said his mother, "I'll put a stitch into that necktie if you'll hand it to me. Something about it seems to be wrong."

"It's a miserable fitting thing, scarcely worth mending. I wore it last night, and it bothered me all the evening."

"By the way, did you have a pleasant time last night?"

"Oh, rather. But I expected to hear something finer. I could have done nearly as well myself."

Herbert's father folded the newspaper he had been reading, laid it beside his plate, and turning towards the boy, gazed at him so fixedly and so critically that he looked enquiringly at him, at length asking:

"Well, what is it, father?"

"Herbert, do you know that we all love you?"

"Why," exclaimed Herbert, greatly astonished at the question, "I suppose you do."

"Are you not sure of it?"

"Yes," said Herbert laughing a little, "I am quite sure of it."

"You are sure that you, with your sister, are the object of the most constant, loving care and solicitude on the part of your mother and myself?"

"Yes, father," said Herbert, more thoughtfully. "But why do you ask?"

"You are sure that your best and highest welfare is the thing most earnestly sought by us?"

"Yes, sir."

"And that there is nothing in the world so precious to us at this table as just we four?" "Yes sir,"

"You are a bright boy—yes, bright as the average, perhaps a little brighter, although my thinking so may come of my being slightly partial to you—well-looking, too, well-kept and healthy. You are able to take in the full delights of out-door boy-life; and you enjoy your school in a general way, don't you?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you are fairly happy in your surroundings?"

"Yes, father, in everything. But will you please tell me what all this means?"

"Yes, I've come to that now. You wake in the morning with the full enjoyment of every earthly blessing. You come to the table surrounded by those to whom your happiness is dear."

Herbert looked into his father's eye, waiting to hear more, as he made a slight pause.

"It seems as if a boy of your condition of life ought to find happiness in everything. But instead of this, everything, to your own showing, seems to bear a thorn for you. Of the half-dozen things touched upon within the last fifteen minutes, some pertaining to your studies, some to your amusements, some to your small duties to others, everything has been met by you with either a direct or indirect complaint or my fault-finding. I really am afraid, boy, that life is becoming a burdensome, unhappy thing to you."

"Oh, you are mistaken, father," said Herbert, with a rising colour. "I really don't mean to keep up a scowl and growl about things. I don't think of it half the time."

"Then," said his father, with a half-jesting expression on his face giving place to one wholly serious, "isn't it time you were thinking of making dear to you the happiness of those to whom your happiness is dear? Do you ever reflect how a spirit of fault-finding casts a shadow about you upon those who are entitled to something better than shadows from you—how a complaining voice and a scowling face take away all the sweetness and beauty from the hours which should be highly prized—hours in which we who love each other are together?"

"Indeed, father, I never took it to heart before. But I will."

There are many boys in the homes all over the world. Wouldn't they do well to take it to heart?

## Eating Under Difficulties.

The dogs had been out at the chase all day, and had come back hungry and tired. Perhaps that was the reason they did not attack their enemies. For, will you believe it, when they ran into the stable to get their food, they found their trough full of rats!

Yes, the rats were coolly helping themselves to the bones and broken biscuit put there for the dogs. It was hardly fair, for the dogs had really earned their dinner, and the rats were only thieves. Generally the dogs would have made short work with the rats, but to-day they were so hungry they could only think of their own immediate needs, and eagerly munched away at the bones.

It was not a very pleasant meal; but wait till the dogs' appetite is somewhat satisfied, and then what commotion there will be among the long-tailed thieves!

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