

How a Tolstoy Became a Count.

The Russian family of the Tolstoy, to which the great novelist belongs, owes its rise, according to one of the pilgrims to Isnaya Polyana, to a curious episode.

The founder of this family was, in Peter the Great's time, a simple doorkeeper before the apartments of the Emperor. One day, as he was standing at his post, a nobleman approached and asked to be admitted. The doorkeeper, however, refused to let him in, declaring that the Emperor had given positive orders that no one that afternoon was to be admitted to his presence.

"But," said the nobleman, "I am the Prince."

"Still, I cannot admit you, sir," said the doorkeeper.

Exasperated, the noble struck the doorkeeper with his riding whip.

"Strike away, your highness," said the other; "but nevertheless I cannot let you in."

The tumult had been overheard by the Emperor. He now opened the door and asked what the trouble was. The noble told him. He listened in silence, and then he said:

"You, Tolstoy, were struck by this gentleman for obeying orders. Here, take my stick and strike him back."

"But, your majesty," exclaimed the noble, "this man is a common soldier."

"Then I make him a captain," said the Emperor.

"But I am an officer of your majesty's household."

"I make him a colonel of my life-guards."

"My rank, as your majesty knows, is that of general," protested the nobleman.

"Then I make him a general, too, and thus the beating you are to get will come from a man of your own rank."

The nobleman then took his punishment philosophically. As for the young soldier, he was next day commissioned a general, and made a count. From him the present family of the Tolstoy is said to be descended.

Spiders' Webs.

A correspondent has appealed to the "Farmer's Advocate" for the answer to the following question: "Of what do spiders spin webs?" We have submitted this question to Dr. Bethune, one of the leading entomologists in the Dominion, who has answered as follows:

"The material out of which spiders construct their webs is silk, similar in character to that produced by the silk-worm and many other caterpillars, but much finer in texture. The material is secreted by special glands in the body of the spider, in liquid form. When required for use in the construction of webs, enveloping a capture, or making a cocoon for its eggs, the liquid silk is ejected through minute openings among the spinnerets, and at once hardens on exposure to the air. It is then drawn out into threads, composed of many strands, and directed to the purpose for which it is required by means of the hindmost pair of legs. Attempts have been made from time to time to utilize the silk product of spiders, especially of the large tropical species. Silken yarn has been obtained, and small fabrics woven, of an exquisite softness and fineness, but the expense attending the experiments was far too great to warrant any operations for commercial purposes."

"I tell you," said the grocer, "these here trust fellers had ought to be put down. The way they're cornerin' things is something scandalous."

"Oh, I don't know," said Mr. Medderrass, "I don't know. I used to feel that way towards 'em, but jest yesterday I read in the paper that some fellers in Chicago was a goin' to try to corner all the turkeys in the country, an' blamed if I don't sympathize with 'em. Why, I run our old gobbler clear across the township last Tuesday afore I could get him in a corner. Them Chicago fellers has a hard job marked out for 'em."—What To Eat.



An Unwilling Guest.

"Oh, do be quiet, dear Tiddley-Wink, While I tie this under your chin! You shall have something nice to eat and drink As soon as I've fastened this pin."

"Why can't you behave as a gentleman should?"

"Oh, dear! You've tipped over the glass!"

"You shan't have a bite unless you are good; I'll starve you, or make you eat grass."

"And then perhaps you'll turn to a horse or a cow, With horns sticking out of your head; If you won't keep still I shall slap you now, And send you right off to bed!"

"There are thousands of children looking at you— For they all love the 'Advocate'— I'm really ashamed of my pet," said Sue.

"Don't you want to eat off a plate?"

After a lively evening spent with them, I feel inclined to have a chat with a few thousand more of our fine Canadian lads, who will so soon be the backbone of our country. Of course there are many kinds of boys between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans, but the boys who will make the finest men are those who are not afraid of work. I ran into a neighbor's house the other morning and found three boys busily washing the breakfast dishes. "Oh, that's girls' work!" you may say. Well, there was no one else to do it but their grandmother, and don't you think it was more manly to work for her in her old age, than to let her wear herself out working for them?

"Our little lad came in one day With dusty shoes and tired feet— His playtime had been hard and long Out in the summer's noontide heat. 'I'm glad I'm home!' he cried, and hung

His torn straw hat up in the hall, While in the corner by the door, He put away his bat and ball.



An Unwilling Guest.

"I b'lieve you would like a dirty old bone To drag about over the floor, Well, you can go and have dinner alone, I don't love you now any more."

COUSIN DOROTHY.

A Chat with the Boys.

It isn't easy to talk about anything else but "boys" to-day, for yesterday I stretched out the tea-table as far as it would go, and fourteen boys found places round it.

"I wonder why," his auntie said, "This little lad always comes here, When there are many other homes As nice as this, and quite as near? He stood a moment in deep thought, Then with the love-light in his eye, He pointed where his mother sat, And said, 'She lives here, that is why!'"

"With beaming face the mother heard; Her mother heart was very glad, A true, sweet answer he had given— That thoughtful, loving little lad. And well I know that hosts of lads Are just as loving, true and dear; That they would answer as he did, 'Tis home, for mother's living here."

May I give you a hint, boys? If you love your mother—as of course you do—tell her so sometimes. You haven't the least idea how much pleasure you can give her in that easy way. A woman was once left a widow with four small children. She worked for them, gave them a good education, and gave up her whole life to their service. They never thanked her, never thought of trying to make her life pleasant, but took all her kindness as their right. Suddenly she was struck down with a fatal illness. As she lay, almost unconscious, with her children around her—fully awake now to her unselfish love for them—the eldest son said: "You have been a good mother to us!"

A bright smile lighted up the white face on the pillow, and she whispered faintly, with her last conscious breath, "You never said that before, John."

Oh, boys, don't wait until your mother is dying before you show, both by word and act, that you love her.

A boy once gave a birthday present to his mother, with his "love," and next day showed his love by getting up late, teasing the twins till they were as cross as two bears, and making himself as disagreeable as possible all the morning. In the afternoon he began to feel ashamed of himself, and said to his brother, "I say, Bob, how much do you love mother this afternoon?"

Bob was naturally a little astonished, and said, "Why, do you want to write poetry about it?"

"No, that question is more like arithmetic than poetry," answered Billy. "I just want to know 'how much,' that's all. I love her a boxful." He soon explained his meaning by filling up the woodbox with the best sticks in the woodshed.

Bob wasn't going to be beaten in that kind of arithmetic, so he dashed out to the pump with a pail in his hand, saying, "I love her a pailful."

Then Harry, the other twin, followed suit by picking up a scuttle and filling it with coal, exclaiming, "I love her a scuttleful!"

Madge, who was on the sick list, glanced at the clock, thinking to herself, "Mother has forgotten my medicine, and certainly I won't remind her of it." Then she changed her mind and reached down the bottle with a sigh, saying when she had gulped down the nasty dose, "I guess I love her a spoonful."

Then Kitty felt that it would never do to be behind her younger brothers and sister, so she dropped her fancy-work and said: "Don't you think that if we all helped we could love mother this roomful before she finds out what we are doing? I'll clean the stove."

So they swept and dusted and got tea all ready, enjoying themselves even more than the astonished mother did when she came in tired and expecting to find everything in a muddle.

There is another kind of boy who thinks he loves his mother, but who is very polite and gentlemanly everywhere but at home. Strangers think him a very nice boy—but then they don't know him when he is at home with his company manners packed away in the closet with his best clothes. They haven't heard his rude way of speaking to his mother and sisters. He is very willing to do a little kindness for any other lady, but he never does anything more than he can possibly help to make life easier for the people he is supposed to love best. That kind of boy is often very queer indeed. He is too tired to run an errand half a mile away, but he can tramp all day in the woods for his own amusement. He can make himself very spruce when visitors are expected, but he doesn't think it worth while even to brush his hair and make himself reasonably tidy just for the pleasure