

BATTEN'S DILEMMA

Henry P. Batten, of Pennsylvania, was furious. There was rage in his voice, grease on his hands, and dust on his clothes. He was engaged in sitting on the dry white road, with spanners, hammers, files, screw-drivers, and various other mechanical implements strewn about him. A few minutes before he had made his final "do-it-or-die" effort to induce the internal arrangements of the motor-car under which he sat to resume their normal functions, but he didn't succeed and he didn't die. In fact, he was much more alive than before, as the strength and fervor of his language plainly showed.

"Perdition take the confounded thing!" he exclaimed (only he used much stronger terms). "I can't make it out at all. That's what comes of buying plaguy things from Germany instead of the genuine American article. It's only the true American productions that are any good. Waal, it serves me right for sending to Europe for a motor-car, that it does. But never again, Henry; never again; oh, dear no! Once let me get this confounded old thing home and I'll give the thing as a present to the field artillery for a target. Perhaps a few of their six-inch shells would move it a bit, though I almost doubt it, judging from the way the thing has acted to-day."

"Can't you get it right, poppa, dear?" inquired a young lady who was gracefully reclining on the luxurious cushions which formed the upper exterior of the vehicle.

"What a time you are at it, and it's so hot up here in the sun. Why, I almost believe I could have made it go again in far less time than you have been."

There was a saucy gleam in her eyes as she spoke, and she gaily bobbed her scarlet sunshade up and down, to and fro, as if trying to raise a breeze, burning rays.

"Huh! you do, do you?" was the half-grunted reply. "Then I wish to goodness you'd come and try; that's all I wish. No, it's only a part of what I wish, though. I wish the car, the man who made it, the ship that brought it, and the fool who bought it—that's me—were a thousand leagues under the sea. Hot up there in the sun? My word! Why, I kind of calculate that it's freezing up there in comparison with this down here—I'm about five hundred degrees above

boiling point. Don't talk to me about being—Yaowh! Ger-ee-ee! Wowl!" Alas! the spanner Mr. Batten was using slipped off the nut he was trying to turn, and caused the luckless man to knock the skin off several of his knuckles.

"Oh, dear, what's the matter?" inquired the girl, anxiously, peering over the side of the car; "are you hurt?"

"Oh, it's nothing; nothing," was the reply, in a strained, hard voice which belied the words and showed that the speaker considered it a great deal more than he said. "It only makes the third time I've knocked the flesh off my fingers, but it's the last. I've done with the business, I'll have nothing more to do with it, for the thing's bewitched—that's the only way to account for its not going. There is plenty of electricity in the batteries, the petrol is good and fresh, the engine is all right, and there is nothing broken; yet she won't go. But we will—off home, sharp, and leave the thing to its fate. Come on, Jess!"

"Oh, poppa; but I really can't walk all that way. I—I'm so tired!"

"Tired! Tired of sitting still all the afternoon, doing nothing, while I've been working away there, harder than all the nigs in the States put together. Tired! Then what'd you expect to do if you can't walk? Push you back home in this two-ton affair as if 'twass a blessed baby's pram, eh?"

"No-o, of course not; don't be so silly! But sit down with me and rest a few minutes, you poor dear; you must ache so. Perhaps the works will get right again presently; then we shall go sailing home beautifully. Now, if only Charlie were here, he would put it—"

"In ten thousand times worse a state than it is now!" interrupted poppa, with an angry snort.

"How can you say so?" indignantly protested Jessie. "See how splendidly he manages the machinery at the Central. The lights have not failed once since he has been there. He's very clever!"

"He is," grimly responded Mr. Batten. "Clever enough to come buzzing round you because of your dollars, I'll admit; but at nothing else that I can see. Anyway, he's got more than his match in me. He'll have to get up early in the morning if he wants to take a rise out of Henry P. Batten. Trust me for that."

"Or stay up late at night," said Jessie to herself, with apparent irrelevance.

to retire and take him into the family, but until then—" Words for the appropriate completion of the sentence failed him.

Now Charles Sampson was the one great bone of contention between Mr. Batten and his motherless, only child. A handsome, intelligent young electrical engineer was he who loved, and was beloved by, Jessie, the millionaire's daughter, so richly endowed with beauty and wealth.

But the father disapproved of the love-match, and sternly forbade all intercourse between a clandestine since the discovery of a clandestine meeting, a little while previous to the time of this story, had never allowed his daughter out of his sight nor permitted her to send or receive letters without first submitting them to his censorship, for, alas! in addition to being poor, Charlie had the misfortune to actively and openly differ from his father's father in politics, and that was a crime far, far beyond the pale of pardon.

"Jess, with all her wealth, must marry some English duke or lord, and that's who she shall, and no one else," her father had always declared; and to accomplish that (to him) very desirable object, he had made all arrangements to visit England, for the dual purpose of selecting for his daughter's consort a nobleman of the requisite status, and keeping her at the same time out of the way of "that low-down, ranting Sampson," who, though of good birth, was not counted fit to marry the daughter of a man who had "made his pile" out of a lucky "corner" in land.

The first stage of the journey to Europe was to be made on the morning of the day to which this narrative refers. On this particular afternoon Mr. Batten and his daughter were making a round of farewell visits on the motor-car, and just returning from a rather long trip on a lonely and unfrequented road, when suddenly, for some unaccountable reason, the car stopped and refused to budge again, notwithstanding the frequent stirring up of its vitals by its owner.

For nearly an hour had he worked heroically at it, but without avail. It would not go; the motor would not move. Yet still now it had always travelled splendidly, with never a hitch, so that the present contretemps was all the more surprising to Mr. Batten, who prided himself upon his perfect management of the car and his ability to cope with every contingency which might arise without the assistance of a chauffeur.

"Waal, it's no good sticking here all day that I can see," he presently remarked to his daughter. "Reckon as how I have to go to—"

"Holloa! What's up? Had a breakdown?" inquired a cheery voice, as a bicyclist, wearing large green goggles to protect his eyes from the dust and glare of the road, rode up and dismounted upon seeing the implements lying in the road as Mr. Batten had left them.

"Can I be of any assistance?" he continued. "I have had some experience with motor-cars and may be able to help you, if you will allow me."

"Oh, I'd allow you 'fast enough, colonel, if I thought that it would be of any use. But it wouldn't, because I've tried myself and can't make her go," was Batten's somewhat egotistical reply.

The stranger smiled—a curious little twitching smile.

"Well, you might give me a chance to see what I can do, anyway," he urged.

"Please yourself, please yourself," said Mr. Batten, turning away with a sniff of disdain; and taking a huge cigar out of his pocket, and planting it between his teeth at the angle one would adopt if trying to shoot a star near the zenith, proceeded to light it, and then, burying his hands in his pockets, watched for the stranger's discomfiture.

Meanwhile, the new-comer had carefully laid his bicycle down by the roadside and then examined the car's machinery.

"H'm! I thought so," was his remark, after a somewhat lengthy inspection.

"Thought what?" sharply inquired the car's owner.

"Why, that you had not been driving it properly. Everything is all right; there is nothing wrong with it. That's so, I assure you."

"Oh! all right, is it?" echoed Batten, grimly, remembering the exertion he had expended so vainly in trying to get the engine to work. "Then perhaps you'll have the goodness to start her," he suggested, with the calm confidence of a man who has the winning card up his sleeve.

"Certainly I will." And, true to his word, he did start her, and at once, too. The gear being disconnected, the car remained stationary, while the fly-wheels of the engine revolved at a terrific speed.

"Perhaps you'd better let me take a little spin in her, to see that she goes on all right. May I?"

"Do, by all means—if you can persuade her to keep going."

"Would you prefer to remain in the car or get down, miss?" politely inquired the stranger of Jessie.

"Oh, I guess I'll stay right here," was the young lady's reply. She seemed to be enjoying the situation.

So the good Samaritan climbed into the driver's seat, and Henry P. Batten settled himself comfortably on a cushion by the roadside to watch the trial. Then the clatter was thrown in and the car glided along the road towards the five-mile-off city.

On and on it went, with ever-increasing speed and none of the jolting predicted by its owner, faster and faster, until to Mr. Batten, who still sat watching it on the straight road, it diminished into a mere speck in the distance, and finally disappeared altogether over the brow of the hill.

"Waal, if that ain't strange!" exclaimed Mr. Batten, taking the cigar from his mouth to give vent to his surprise at the good behavior of the car in the stranger's hands, and to exasperate at the main long way, and if Jess wasn't with him I should begin to think it was his intention to scoot altogether with the thing. But Jess is a smart girl, and she'll see the matter through all right, I know," and having thus assured himself of the safety of his property he composed himself to finish his cigar in peace.

Minute succeeded minute and quarter-hour quarter-hour, but still there was no sign of the return of the car. Mr. Batten at last began to grow really anxious, and strained his eyes in vain towards the hill over which he had seen the sly glimpse of it on its return.

Now an hour had elapsed since its departure; then two, and Mr. Batten grew thoroughly alarmed.

"I suspect the tarnation thing has broken down again," he told himself.

Then a more horrible thought suggested itself to him, and sent a thrill of terror to his heart, for in his way he dearly loved his daughter. Perhaps evil had befallen her; robbery, or even murder. The bare thought of it drove him almost frantic and he blamed his folly in thus letting a stranger go off with his girl and the car.

"Oh, if I could only ride this bike and go in search of them!" he cried, picking up the bicycle which the stranger had left by the roadside, only to put it down again immediately with a boyish whoop of delight.

Against it in any way, but that you wouldn't be able to find out why it stopped, because I should only touch it sometimes. When I left it alone the motor went all right. Then he arranged that when we got to that place where we 'broke down' I was to press this funny little thing, which I did, and so the car stopped, as you remember, and while you were trying to find out what was the matter I bobbed my sunshade up and down as a signal for Charlie to come up and 'help' you as we had arranged.

"Of course he came disguised so that you should not know him, and when he tried to make the engine go you may be sure I did not press that switch thing, and so the car went again all right. So we rode off and got married, for Charlie had made all arrangements with a clergyman friend of his to fix us up tight and safe. Coming back to you we took off the little switch, and that is why the car has gone so well since."

"You know all the rest, only you don't know how it grieved me to have to deceive you. But we had to do it because we loved each other so dearly and you were so determined that we shouldn't have each other. Then we should have been miserable all our lives, and happiness is the most important thing in life after all, isn't it?"

"'Twas all your own fault, you see, though you're the dearest and best poppa in the whole wide world," and tears glistened in her eyes as she threw her arms lovingly round her father's neck and kissed him.

Mr. Batten extended his right hand to his son-in-law and said: "Charlie, I always hoped to get a smart man as Jessie's husband, but she got a sight smarter one than I could ever have found. I'm proud of you, although you trumped my cards so cruelly. Shake!"

And he shook.

JUST LIKE A WOMAN.

Alice is a dear little girl of about 5, who is possessed of that quality termed from the point of view, firmness of character or obstinacy. Recently, one cloudy day, she drew her little rocking chair up to the window and began to enjoy a rock. Presently the sun came out with such force as to fall with disagreeable intensity and glare across the little one's face. She blinked and blinked, but instead of moving out of the way, kept on rocking.

"Yes," said Mr. Batten, musingly, one evening, shortly after the grand "Society" wedding of his daughter, to Charlie Sampson, "I've often wondered what made the motor-car job so that day. She always went well before and she's gone perfectly since. I hate to have anything 'get over me,' and I'd willingly give a thousand dollars to know the cause of that curious breakdown that afternoon."

Charlie lazily extended his hand.

"What's that for?" inquired his father-in-law, in surprise.

"That thousand dollars. I can tell you the cause of the breakdown; at least, Jess will, and as we are one I'll take the money while she tells the story—that's a fair division of labor, isn't it, Jess?"

"Well, poppa," Jessie explained, "when Charlie heard you were going to ship me off to England to find a husband he decided—I mean, we decided—to fix up our marriage somehow, in spite of you. For all your strictness over the letters we managed to write to each other, and I told Charlie how we were going to Aunt Eliza's to say goodbye that afternoon in the car. Then Charlie asked me to be in the carhouse at eleven o'clock the night before, as he had something important to tell me."

"So I slipped out of the house, unknown to anyone, and when I got there I found Charlie waiting, he having climbed over the wall. We went into the car-house, and Charlie did something to some wires in the car—I don't quite understand what—"

"Put in a switch to short-circuit the electric current," said Charlie.

"Well, he put the little switch thing hidden away near my seat so that it would not show, and told me that it would be all right."

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"Alice," suggested her mother, "the sun is shining right in your eyes. Why don't you move away?"

"I won't!" responded the stubborn youngster. "I was here first."

ABOUT THE HOUSE

TOOTHsome MEAT DISHES.

Veal Loaf.—Take one pound of veal and one pound of pork and mince up fine. Then soak one-half pound bread crumbs in milk and squeeze out mixing three eggs well with it. Now add this to the meat and season well with salt, pepper, and a little sage, put in the loaf a baking pan well, put in the loaf, and bake in an oven, not too hot.

Stewed Chicken.—Lay the disjointed chicken compactly in a porcelain or granite pot, sprinkle baking soda the size of a navy bean over the chicken. Cover with boiling water and allow it to come to the boiling point quickly. Pour off the water and scum, and again cover with boiling water, and allow to simmer till tender; then season and thicken the broth for a cream gravy. This method will overcome any bad taste and odor.

Pot Roast.—Most any kind of beef, chicken, prairie chicken, pigeons, may be cooked in this way: Slice an onion, a few slices of pork, and put in the bottom of a kettle. Place on top whatever meat is to be cooked; add just water enough to stew it. Be careful not to use too much water; keep turning the meat and let it stew or roast slowly till brown and tender; then take out the meat; strain and thicken the gravy.

Hamburg Steak.—Chop fine one pound round steak, one small onion minced fine, add three-quarters of a cupful of sweet milk, salt and pepper to taste; knead as you would bread until thoroughly mixed and smooth. Make into small flat cakes. Broil over a clear fire or fry out a piece of suet and when smoking hot drop in the cakes. These are fine served with a tomato sauce.

Beef Burrs.—For a family of four: Get two pounds of round steak about one-half inch thick and pound out flat; then cut into strips two inches thick and six inches long. Make a dressing of stale bread, one egg, one onion, a small piece of butter, sage, salt and pepper to taste. Spread this dressing on strips of meat, roll up and pin each of the burrs with toothpicks so as to hold them together firmly so they will look like little roasts. Put butter and lard in a kettle and brown nicely on both sides, then add water enough to cover. Simmer for one hour and a half. Enough dressing will boil out to make a nice brown gravy.

As Bandages.—For bandages for cut finger the neatest, procurable, and can often be used as binding.

On Hem of Skirt.—With one-half inch for protection on edge of hem of petticoats, and for supporters on gents' drawers.

For Patching.—Widest obtainable, makes a neat patch over a small rent in undergarments, repairs worn petticoat bands, when a new buttonhole is required, the same with skirt bands.

For Drawstrings.—Medium width for drawstrings in under-garments and bags, also for skirt hangings, and for attaching the large eyelet bone buttons to children's underwaists. A loop of this width forms a strong buttonhole, at the same time enlarging a band that is too small.

THE ADVANCE OF YEARS.

Which People Fail to Realize, Says Mr. Flickerton.

"Isn't it curious," said Mr. Flickerton, "how we get lost about the age of people, and particularly of people whose age we might well be supposed to know?"

"We hear, for instance, of the death of Walkinshaw, aged 64, and we say to ourselves: 'Good! you don't mean to tell me that Walkinshaw was 64? We may have known him intimately and have seen him daily for forty years, since he was 24; and if anybody ought to have known his age we ought.'"

"As a matter of fact it is those very people whom we do see continually whose ages we fail to realize; for the reason that age, so far as its outward signs are concerned, steals on them gradually."

"If we see a man only at intervals of ten or twenty years, why, then the changes in him may be so apparent that we cannot fail to note them; but in the man we see from day to day we see no change at all; there is no sinking sign to make us realize that he is growing older, and so we are likely to carry him forward in our minds as of the age at which we first knew him. It is then that he makes his first strong, clear impression on us; and that impression we are likely to hold for many years and against many changes."

"I know I do this commonly. I carry me forward as of the age at which I first knew them; they always seem so to me. Then something happens that brings up the question of age and my friend says to me that he's 57, and I say: 'What! 57? Really it is a great surprise to me, and I find it hard to realize it.'"

"I can scarcely believe it even though I have known him for thirty years and when I first knew him he was 27. He may be now but little or he may be greatly changed, but however that may be I have never realized it any more than I have the lapse of time passing day by day."

"Happily this is true also as to ourselves. We don't realize our own advancing years. Even though we look in a mirror now and then we see no signs of age, or none to amount to anything. We may be gray as badgers to other people, but our hair doesn't look that way to us. We may be growing positively portly, but over that we smile. At heart we are still young."

"Providence has many kind ways."

a half quarts of flour; to this add one cup of your bread sponge in the morning. Mix this with two pints of lukewarm milk and add the chopped meats of the butter. Set in a warm place to raise, knead it into loaves and bake in an even oven.

Bread Rolls.—Three-quarters tablespoonful of lard, three-quarters tablespoonful of butter, one-quarter tablespoonful of salt, one tablespoonful of sugar, one-half cupful of scalded milk, three-quarters cupful of cold water. Stir this together well, add one-quarter cake of compressed yeast dissolved in one-quarter cupful of lukewarm water. Then stir in one and one-half cupfuls of flour. Proceed as in bread, except that they should be shaped into rolls.

Cakes from Old Bread.—When cut bread is left over from the table it is usually thrown away. Instead of doing this, put it in a tin can of some kind and save it until you have sufficient to make up a loaf of bread. Soak this bread in milk or water and let stand for half an hour. Then add salt, one egg, and sufficient flour to make a batter. After it is well mixed put on a hot griddle and bake. If rye bread is used, one-half cake of compressed yeast should be put into the mixture and the batter allowed to stand overnight.

USES FOR TAPE.

Corset Stay Cover.—For stitching over worn corset stays it is unequalled.

Corset Laces.—Narrow, in linen, for emergency corset laces, also draw strings in corset covers.

Used as Ties.—Any width desirable for ties on different garments, such as bibs and aprons.

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NEW IDEAS IN BREAD.

Butternut Bread.—Take one and