

# The Inglenook

## Bearing the Consequences.

"I declare, Walter, you grow more careless every day," said Mabel Dewey in a tone of vexation. Two hours previously she had sent a note to one of her friends, and the faithless messenger had just returned without bringing the zephyr she wanted.

"Well, I couldn't help it," said the offender. "I went to see Clarence's pigcons first, and when I thought about the note Miss Nannie had gone driving and Mrs. Forbes couldn't find the stuff you wanted."

Walter threw himself into the hammock with an air of careless indifference that was very exasperating under the circumstances.

"You might have remembered if you had tried," said his sister, reprovingly. "It is so provoking."

"I can't help forgetting things any more than you can help remembering them," said Walter, tartly. "I heard you say this very morning that you were sorry you remembered where father's gloves were," he concluded triumphantly.

Mabel smiled in spite of her vexation. "Those shabby old things that father will persist in wearing! I was sorry that I remembered about them."

"And I'm sorry when I forget things, but I can't help it all the same," said Walter, positively.

"What have you forgotten now?" asked his mother, stepping out on the veranda at that moment.

"Oh, only a note of Mabel's," replied Walter.

Mrs. Dewey looked inquiringly at her daughter, who explained at more length, saying in conclusion, "Now, I can't finish this trip for the afghan as I hoped to do."

"Ho, that thing!" said Walter, with a boyish contempt for fancy work. "I'm sure that's no great matter."

"The work may not be of great importance, but it is of great importance that you should realize how your fault is increasing, and make an effort to overcome it," said his mother gravely.

"Why, I don't think it is a fault, mother. I really can't help it," said Walter.

"You would try to help it, I fancy, if you had to depend on yourself for awhile," said Mabel severely; "but from the time you are called in the morning until you go to bed it's 'Walter, don't forget this,' and 'Walter, be sure to re-

member that,' and from every member of the family."

Walter flushed angrily. "Nothing very serious has come of it yet, anyway. And I could remember my own affairs if I didn't have so much else to attend to," he said importantly.

Mabel laughed at this, while his mother asked quietly, "What do you call your own affairs?"

"Why—why, taking care of my coat and hat, and getting up at the first call, and so forth and so forth," answered Walter vaguely.

"You may try it for a fortnight. It will be good training for your treacherous memory, from which the whole family suffer more or less."

"Except Walter himself," said Mabel.

"I don't understand exactly," said Walter blankly.

"It is very simple," his mother explained, "for the next two weeks you are not to be called upon to do any errands." Walter looked relieved. "Neither are you to be reminded of a forgotten duty or engagement. Furthermore you are to bear the consequences without grumbling; for if you are not to blame for forgetting what concerns you alone surely no one else can be."

Walter looked rather doubtful about this, but catching sight of a smile on Mabel's face, he promptly agreed to the plan; secretly determining to "show her" that he could get along all right. He shouldn't forget anything of importance.

"You better tie a string around your finger to remind you not to forget," said Nellie, when the plan was made known to the assembled family at dinner that day.

But Walter scorned all such aids, and when the fortnight began next morning, he surprised Dick by springing out of bed at the first call. Breakfast over, he set about performing his various little duties before anything occurred to distract his attention, and the day passed without any serious lapses, at least he thought so at bed-time, and boasted of the fact.

"It's only one of the fourteen. Don't brag too soon," said Dick warningly. The next morning when his hat was missing, Walter felt that he had boasted too soon.

"Try to think where you had it last," suggested Mabel, kindly; and after a minute's thought, Walter dashed out into the side yard remembering all too late, that one of last evening's callers had been Jack Gray's collie puppy, a mis-

chievous creature with a particular fondness for destroying hats and handkerchiefs, or in fact anything else left within his reach.

"That horrid dog," exclaimed Walter, picking up the remains of his brown straw from the grass where he remembered throwing it when Jack challenged him to a race around the block.

That he had been the victor in the contest was small comfort when Dick said teasingly, "if hats are valuable, it would be well for you to borrow a hat pin of Mabel and fasten yours to your curls; then you wouldn't forget it so often."

"Forgetfulness is somewhat expensive," said his mother, when Walter returned to the house.

"I had to buy a new racquet when you forgot to put the others away," said Mabel, meaningly.

"You don't mean that I must buy a new hat myself, do you?" asked Walter in dismay.

"You agreed to bear the consequences whatever they were," was his mother's reply, and Walter sadly took enough from his precious "camera fund" to replace the hat.

That was a hard lesson, and he usually remembered to take care of his property after that, and he made no more beasts.

On Thursday morning, when his mother called, he was so sleepy that he snuggled down for another nap, forgetting that there was any special reason for rising at once. A half hour later, he was awakened by the whirl—whirl—whirl of the lawn mower, and though he hurried down as quickly as possible, Dick had already done the greater part of the work, and so was entitled to the lion's share of the pay, the brothers having agreed to an arrangement of that kind early in the summer. "I'll not get that camera at this rate," he said despairingly. "I think Dick might have called me," he added, forgetting that he had agreed to depend upon himself alone.

His mother's reproving glance recalled the latter part of his agreement to his mind, and he said no more.

He was beginning to understand the trouble caused by his forgetfulness and why no one showed any sympathy for him in his various trials, whether great or small.

His worst disappointment during this eventful fortnight, was one Saturday afternoon when he forgot to mention a note his father sent to his mother.

Walter and Dick "took turns" in getting the mail, and that day Walter stopped at his father's office to leave a package. While there, the telephone rang, but he paid no attention to the one-sided conversation which followed, nor observed that when it was ended, his father hesitated a moment as though half inclined to call up some one else; but, after a glance at Walter, he turned away and