



The Family Circle.

A MOTHER'S DIARY

Morning: Baby on the floor, Making for the fender, Sunlight seems to make its squeeze, Baby "on a bender?" All the spoons upset and gone. Chairs drawn into file, Harness strings all strung across. Ought to make one smile, Apron clean, curls smooth, eyes blue. How these charms will dwindle. For I rather think don't you Baby "is a swindle?"

Noon: A tangled silken floss, Getting in blue eyes, Apron that will not keep clean, If a baby tries, One blue shoe untied, and one Underneath the table, Chairs gone mad, and blocks and toys Well as they are able, Baby in a high chair too, Feeding for his dinner, Spoon in mouth, I think, don't you? Baby "is a sinner."

Night: Chairs all set back again, Blocks and spoons in order, One blue shoe beneath a mat, Tells of a marauder, Apron folded on a chair, Plaid dress torn and crinkled, Two pink feet kicked pretty bare, Little fat knees crinkled, In his crib, and conquered, too, By sleep, best evangel, Now I surely think, don't you Baby is an angel.

Boston Transcript, 1

A STRANGER IN THE SCHOOL

On a warm day, a large school of boys and girls were coming over their lessons. The teacher tried hard to keep order, to make all take to their studies, to help those who needed aid, and to make all happy. He opened the doors and windows to give them fresh air, but all would not do. Some felt discouraged with their lessons, some felt sleepy, some felt cross, and everything seemed to drag. By and by the heavy tread of a foot on the door-steps was heard, and, without knocking, in walked a hard faced man somewhat old in years but with a firm step. The children at first felt afraid of him, but they soon found that beneath his hard looks there was a bright eye, a pleasant smile, and a kind heart. But instead of putting down and staring at the school, he sat down by the side of a little girl who was trying in vain to get her spelling-lesson. There were tears of discouragement in her eyes.

"What's the matter with our little one?"

"Oh, sir, I can't get my lesson. It's so long, and the words are so hard, I can never learn them."

"Let us see. How many of those words are there?"

"Fifteen, sir."

"And how many columns in your lesson?"

"Three, sir."

"Very well. That makes forty-five words to be learned. How many of those are easy, so that you can read them at once? Count them."

"Twenty-five, sir."

"Then you have twenty left which you call hard. Now take the first one, look at it sharp, see every letter in it, count the letters, see just how the word looks. Now shut your eyes, and see if you can still see just how the word looks. Spell it over softly to yourself. There, now, you spell it rightly. Now do so with the next word, and the next, till you have them all."

"Oh, sir, that's very easy. I can get my lesson now."

Then the visitor went to a boy who was puzzling over a sum in arithmetic. He was discouraged, and almost cross.

"Let us see. What's the matter here?"

"This sum, sir. I can't do it, and every sum grows harder and harder. It seems as if the man who made the book tried to see how hard sums he could put down."

"I see. Now what's the rule by which this sum is to be done? Repeat it. Very well, only you have not said it quite right. Turn to it and see. There, now, you left out one important link. If you now understand the rule, try the sum now, putting in the part you left out."

"Oh, sir! It's easy now, I see, and I can now do them all."

"Yes, but you must not be thinking about your ball, and kite, and play. You must give all your mind to the thing you are studying, and then it will all be easy."

The stranger next sat down by a boy who was trying to commit the declension of a noun in the Latin grammar. Over and over he had repeated it but alas, he could not make the memory hold it. He was ready to throw down the book.

"Hold there, my boy. Don't look so discouraged. Take your pen and carefully write down that declension. See how every word is written, and what letter ends every case. There, now, is every one right? Yes! Well, shut your grammar, turn over your paper, and on the other side write it all over again from memory. So ho! How many mistakes have you made?"

"Two, sir."

"Very well. Put away that bit of paper, get another and try it again, and again, till you can write it without a single mistake. You can say it then, for writing will fix it in the memory."

Thus he went from seat to seat, and helped all. The scholars forgot the heat. All had their lessons, the teacher smiled and praised them, and all were very happy. Just as he was leaving, the teacher thanked the stranger, and hoped he would soon call again.

"Oh!" said he, "just send for me at any time, and I will come and give any one a lift."

"Pray, sir, by what name shall we ask for you?"

"Mr. Hardstudy, sir, at your service."

DEBT.

A very nice girl indeed, Martin. I congratulate you. And you've chosen your domicile, too? A pretty villa, you say. And as to drainage? Well, you don't know, really, whether there are any drains or not. You suppose that is all right, and it's the landlord's affair and not yours. Excuse me, Martin, I don't see that. It may be the landlord's affair as to whether they do exist, but it is you, and not your landlord, that is going to live in the lovely little villa; and you will be susceptible to typhoid fever, and not your landlord. You and your beloved! Please to remember, my friend, that drains are often like the Eden to which Martin Chuzzlewit emigrated, on the banks of the Mississippi, a prospective thing, on a map, &c. - matters belonging to the verb to be! While you are settling comfortably down, the damp may, perhaps, be settling uncomfortably up; and the only ditty that you and your fellow villa-ites will be able to sing, is, "There's a good time coming, boys." However, not to depress you, Martin, perhaps your selected villa is drained, and the next thing is to furnish it. Exactly, you say. You're going to manage that admirably. Six rooms, &c., all furnished throughout for £250, and you are to pay the amount off quarterly. It's done now on system, and you are not going to worry about that. Piano extra, so much monthly, till it is paid for. Isn't that glorious? No, Martin, it is utterly inglorious and horrible. You have positively taken my breath away! To think that you, a good, honest, sensible fellow, should be of sound mind, and yet be forging, with your own hands, the detestable gyves and fetters of debt, is absolutely alarming to me. You look hale and cheerful now, but I am already transforming you, in imagination, into a weird, wizened, worried man, old at thirty. What immunity can you and yours claim from the ordinary sickness and trials of humanity? You will have dark, gloomy days, as well as bright, sunny ones, and that cool little arithmetical calculation you have made, as to quarterly instalments, monthly interest, &c., under the vile, damaging system of debt, will break down like a piece of gossamer web. It is horrible enough gradually to get into debt; but you are about to handicap yourself in the difficult race of life by commencing with an entire system of it all ready to hand. I have known men who have been followed all the weary years of life by a ghastly phalanx of I O U's. The cry of "pay, pay, pay," has been the miserable chime of bells that they hung in the belfry of home, with their own hands. You haven't told Alice your idea about furnishing. No, Martin, I felt quite sure of that. She is far too practical and sensible to endorse such an idea. I know her well, and she would rather begin life with a few honestly-bought fittings, however plain, than lie on a sofa that said "debt," and dine off a table that said "debt," and play on a piano that said "debt." Don't you know, my dear fellow, that in a few years all this fine furniture will be rotting and torn, that casters will come off, and china break, and polish get scratched, and dusters fade, and carpets wear out, and then, if in five years or so, you have succeeded in emancipating yourself from the tyranny of debt, what a disappointing vision will meet your eyes? You will then have paid for worn goods, instead of

having the pleasure of investing in fresh and fair furniture as you go on.

Yes, very pretty. A lovely little villa, furnished all over, from kitchen to garret, with somebody else's money. And somebody else's money means - please to remember that - first of all, a dearer price than you need pay for ready cash, and next, heavy interest if your quarterlies are left in abeyance. Look here, Martin, if you eschew debt, you can live on oatmeal if you cannot afford meat, and you can make shift and contrivance in other ways, to the preservation of your self-respect, and the joy and rest of yourself and others. Heart's-ease in the garden of the soul is better than many other more glaring flowers. Plant that, and you will be free from many terrible horrors of the mind. It is one of the saddest influences of debt, that it deadens the delicate feelings of the mind, men and women get, in a way, used to it, they do not feel the shame of it, but only the agony of being dunned for payment. And there is this giant evil connected with it, that, one by one, doors of escape get closed, and the terrible temptation comes to drink, and drown dull care. Multitudes of imbeciles have been made such, not so much by actual love of drink, as by the fact that they can drown painful sensibility in the wine cup. Believe me, Martin, you are contemplating a real leap in the dark. I don't mean as concerns your marriage, a more prudent, thoughtful little lassie I don't know, than your fiancee, as society terms it, though I am not fond of French synonyms. But to furnish according to your ideal is a leap in the dark, and may land you at the bottom of a precipice of ruined health, ruined reputation, and ruined honor. I am all the more earnest because you haven't translated your idea into action yet, and if I thought you would, I feel almost inclined to infringe on the liberty of the subject, lock you up in my room, and take away the key, till you are in a better mind. All right - you won't tempt me to such a daring act, you won't furnish so. You see it now. You won't get into debt, nothing shall tempt you to, by God's help you'll keep out of such bitter bondage, and you're glad you came to see a true friend! Bravo, Martin! Bravo! I feel thankful that you have parted your heels at once. I am glad to hear that you need not even hide a wee, but that if you only partly furnish, and reduce some of your estimates, you can make a cheery little home of a villa all the same; and, let me add, having resolved to begin well, go on in the good way, and don't be ashamed to say, "I can't afford it." You can now easily use the old familiar words which our fathers through so many generations have uttered with faltering voices - "And with all my worldly goods I thee endow," whereas, had you adopted your own plan, you ought to have said, "And with the goods of all the Jews and Gentiles to whom I have got into debt I thee endow, with the mutual bondage of you and me." Good-bye, old fellow, which is only abbreviated English for God be with you, and we know that the Just One will only dwell with righteous men. - Rev. W. M. Statham, in the Quiver.

SLEDGING IN THE ARCTIC REGIONS

BY CAPT. MARKHAM OF THE "ALBATROSS."

In order to give my readers some faint idea of "slogging life," it will be necessary for me to explain as briefly as possible the ordinary daily routine that was invariably followed by all who were engaged in the sledging operations of the late expedition. A description of the clothing worn by the travellers will also, no doubt, prove interesting.

Our travelling costume was somewhat different from that worn during the winter. The underclothing consisted of thick flannel. Over this were worn one or two flannel or check shirts, long sleeved woollen waistcoats, thick knitted guernseys, and duffle trousers. All wore broad flannel belts, commonly called cholera belts, round their loins. Each person wore a suit of duck "overalls," which acted as "snow repellers," and were found very useful. An extra precaution against snow blindness, the men had some device painted on the backs of their duck jumpers in order to afford relief to the eye, the designs, being left entirely to their own imaginations, were more quaint than artistic. On our heads we had the woollen helmet caps so kindly given to us by Her Imperial Majesty the Empress Eugenie, and over these were worn our thick seal-skin caps. Our feet were encased in one, or two, pairs of blanket wrappers, thick woollen hose reaching above the knees, and moccasins. Blanket wrappers were cut from the very best Hudson's Bay blanket, of about sixteen inches square, and were worn wrapped round the feet.

We slept in duffle sleeping bags, and our tent robes were made of the same material. Snow spectacles were invariably used after their adoption we were comparatively exempt

\* Duffle is a thick woollen material resembling hessian cloth, and was used on Arctic expeditions for the first time by the members of the late expedition.

from that painful ailment, snow blindness, which renders all attacked so helpless. We occasionally suffered from it, but only, except in one or two instances, in a mild form. When camped for the night the "snow repellers" are taken off, duffle coats substituted, and the foot gear changed. This was the extent of our toilet.

The important duties of "cook" are equally shared by the whole sledge crew, each performing this office in turn for twenty-four hours. It is, during very cold weather a most severe and unpleasant task, requiring great patience and powers of endurance.

The cook of the day has always to rise in the morning two hours before the rest of the party, and seldom gets into his bag until two or three hours after the others are comfortably settled, and this, it must be remembered, is for a hard day's work. Gladly does he hand over his duties to his successor, happy in the assurance that his "turn" will not come round for another week. His duties commence at an early hour, when, after having lighted his spirit-lamp and converted sufficient snow or ice into water for the morning meal, he re-enters the tent, and, walking round unconcernedly on the bodies of the sleepers, proceeds to brush from the top and sides of the tent the condensed moisture that has been accumulating during the night, and which falls in minute frozen particles on the coverlet. This operation being concluded, the coverlet is removed, well brushed, shaken, folded up, and placed on the sledge. In about two hours from the time the cook is first awakened, the cocoa is reported ready, when the remainder of the party are aroused. If the weather is very cold, breakfast is discussed in our bags, in which we all sit up, resembling, in our grey skull-caps and duffle coats, more a gathering of hospital patients than a band of strong, robust men. The biscuit-bag is then laid in the middle of the tent, spoons, each man being provided with one, are produced, and the pannikins, containing each one pint of warm cocoa, are handed in. When this is finished the pannikins are passed out again to the cook, who has in the meantime been preparing the pemican. So hard is this latter article frozen, that the pieces for use have to be chipped off with an axe before they can be put into the stew pan. While the cook's patience is being sorely taxed, and his fingers alternately burnt and frost-bitten in his endeavors to prepare the repast, prayers are read to those inside, foot-gear is changed, and the sleeping-bags rolled up. This operation of dressing and undressing, although entirely limited to the feet, is one of the most disagreeable duties connected with sledging travelling. The hose and blanket wrappers, although kept inside the sleeping-bags during the night, the wrappers being frequently tied round the knees to protect them from the cold, were frozen so hard in the morning that it was with the greatest difficulty they could be folded over the feet.

Not the least trying part is that of lacing or tying the stuffy frozen strings of our equally hard moccasins, with fingers either aching from cold or devoid of all sensation.

Immediately the pemican is consumed the orders are given to strike tent, pack sledge, and prepare to march. The drag-ropes are then manned, and with a "One, two, three, haul!" the sledge is started and the march commenced. Care must be taken to scrape the pannikins out with a knife before the refuse inside has time to freeze, otherwise it will be difficult to remove.

Water for washing purposes of any description, whilst sledging, is quite out of the question. Should the daily allowance of fuel be sufficient to enable the cook to make a little extra, it is equally shared amongst the men, but unless it is quickly used it is of little avail, as rapidly as it is converted into ice, in spite of the water-bottles being kept inside the waistbands of the trousers! We, in consequence, continually suffered from an intolerable thirst, which could only be appeased at meal-times. The practice of quenching it by putting ice or snow into the mouth is a very dangerous one, and should never be permitted.

After marching for about five or six hours, a halt is called for lunch. This meal consists of four ounces of bacon, a little biscuit, and a pannikin of warm tea to each person.

Although the most refreshing and enjoyable of all our meals, luncheon was, when there was much wind or the weather intensely cold, a very trying one. The halt is of necessity long. Frequently an hour or an hour and a half elapses before the tea is reported ready, during which time the men are compelled to keep constantly in the move to avoid frost-bite. If we are not all suffering from the same cause, the antics of the different individuals in their efforts to keep their feet warm would undoubtedly provoke much laughter. One man sitting down, cross-legged like a Turk is occupied in belaboring his feet with mittened hands, in his energetic endeavor to re-circulate others are "marking time" at the double, or jumping up and down