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Mother's Ecdysis

By Thomas Dewey

PART TWO

"Good morning, Mother!" I said in my sweetest voice, but Mother seemed not to hear.

"I say, Good Morning, Mother!" I repeated, and Mother, attracted by my serious tone, passed on her way to the oven with a pan of cut biscuits.

"Why!" she ejaculated, dropping the pan and staring at me, loose ends of her hair straggling over her forehead and ears.

"I'm so sorry!" I cried rushing to rescue the fallen.

"Why, child!" she exclaimed, still gazing hungrily at me, "why, how nice you look! Well—I used to look good when I was your age."

While we finished up the breakfast, I caught Mother staring at me a dozen times and before she sat down I noticed she'd tucked in her wayward locks and put on a clean apron.

"Can't we have a walk?" Aunt Jennie said to me that evening when the supper dishes were put away.

"Yes," I replied eagerly, and after much coaxing Mother went along. We walked through the garden, picked a few pretty flowers which Auntie insisted on pinning on our waists but when she wanted to walk down the shady street, Mother refused saying she was not dressed well enough for that. In spite of all entreaties, Mother persisted and as Auntie insisted on going and was our company, I went with her, though I wanted to walk back with Mother, who looked lovely.

Looking over my shoulder that morning, I beheld Aunt Jennie in the sweetest dress I had ever seen her wear.

"How about cutting a bouquet for the table? Your mother won't care, will she?"

"No," I replied, "the flowers are nice. She can't have time to bother with them. You may have all you want."

"Oh, lovely!" she cried and began selecting flowers. Before we left the garden, she placed on my head and the third she directed me to place on Mother's head while she secured vase and water for the table flowers.

"Now, don't let her refuse," she said to me. "You must insist until she consents. You are working for that ecdysis."

Now what had a crown of flowers to do with an ecdysis? Oh how I wished for a dictionary!

Before Mother called dinner, she slipped up stairs, recombined her hair in a new way to the crown—which I coaxed her to keep on—would fit better and put on a clean dress and apron.

We had never before had flowers on the table and even dear old Dad, usually grave and silent, admired them.

"Has the garden come indoors?" he asked. "Flowers certainly add brightness and cheer. They always do," he added, looking at Mother who wore the wreath as bashfully as a boy.

"No matter where they are placed," Mother blushed, looked at her plate, and left the table, evidently thinking she had forgotten something but just as she entered the kitchen I saw her wipe her eyes with a clean handkerchief. Presently she returned, bringing the dessert, though we were not half through eating. Her eyes were shining—were the flowers the "ecdysis," I wondered?

At three Dad returned from town, took a bundle to his room and reappeared wearing new overalls and shirt and with a new hat in his hand. Taking the old one from its place, he stuffed it in the stove.

"Your father's getting an ecdysis of his own," said Aunt Jennie to me when father went out and I saw a great light. I ran after him to ask what else he had bought in town.

"O nothing," he replied, "just a new hat, shirt and overalls that I have needed so long. That's all."

I turned back, dejectedly wondering if Auntie wasn't mistaken for nothing Father bought could be an ecdysis that Mother needed so badly. I was sure of that. Still puzzled, I entered to find Mother ironing.

"Let me iron while you rest a bit!" I said.

Mother readily consented and while I ironed, she went into the dining-room, closing the door behind her and coming out only when I called for more things to iron.

When the work was done I went into the diningroom and nearly fell over. The table was laid with real linen and our best dishes actually placed about the table. I wondered what it all meant for Mother had not used these for our own meals for years; she always said the odds and ends were good enough for "just us" and Aunt Jennie was always considered "one of the family." I finished setting the table and had got things ready for supper, at the time came out that Mother had been in a peculiar way; once I thought she

wiped her eyes. I'm sure she did after Father walked into the kitchen with his new things on and started his dirty and torn old overalls on a quick, short road to complete extinction.

"Keep the things warm but don't let them burn, dear girl," said Mother, as she sped to her room just when supper was ready. Father, freshly shaved, sat in the old rocker waiting the call. Auntie entered carrying a huge rose with two buds and pinned them on the lapel of his coat which he had forgotten to remove.

"Please sit down, folks," called Mother from the kitchen and while Father and Auntie went to the table I hurried to the kitchen to help Mother.

"O! O!" I shrieked in surprise for there was Mother, water pitcher in hand, wearing a lovely new house dress. Her hair was beautifully dressed and set off the new roses in her cheeks. Dangling from a chain around her neck, hung a dainty little locket, registering rather vigorous heart-beats. Mother looked lovely, so lovely that I swept her into the dining-room screaming at them to look at her.

Father leaped from his chair. "Artella! Artella!" he cried and gathered her in his arms. The old pitcher fell on the floor and went to pieces but no one noticed it. Mother could not see for tears and Father, well he did not try to see. He was busy kissing Mother as I had never seen a man kiss a woman.

"O, George, don't. Quit, you'll mess my hair!" cried Mother, all blushes and confusion.

"That's just what you used to say," said Father, kissing her again. "Remember? 'Don't—quit.' That was what you meant!"

That was a happy meal. Father accused Mother of being vain because she "spruced up," and looked twenty years younger and ten times more lovable than I had ever seen her look.

"I think I needed to spruce up a little for I had grown careless but you are not altogether innocent," said Mother. "You brushed up some yourself. Anyway, I think 'spruce' is better than common 'brush' any time."

What had happened? Tired, shabby Mother was making a joke! "So did I," said Father, "don't know if I will try to 'spruce up' after this!"

"And I shall keep 'brushed up,' promised Mother, carefully laying back a lock Father had sadly misplaced in his playful roughness.

"Helen, bring the big calendar from the hall and hang it over that picture," directed Aunt Jennie, pointing to my parents' wedding picture.

I was growing used to obeying Aunt Jennie so I brought in the calendar and when I stepped back to see if it was straight I noticed it had a big heavy circle about it.

"What date is to-day?" asked Aunt Jennie, innocently enough and I answered: "The fifteenth."

"The fifteenth?" breathed Mother questioningly.

"The fifteenth?" repeated Father, blankly.

"The fifteenth, your wedding anniversary," said Aunt Jennie calmly.

Father blushed and Mother blushed. "Your Mother has a complete ecdysis and your Father has a real promise of one," said Aunt Jennie looking over at me. "And you began it!"

"Father hasn't any! All he bought was overalls, shirt and hat. Will Mother's stay? And how did I begin it?"

"Yes, Mother's stay. I saw her put on her old exuviae in the rag bag! Yes, dear, you began it and have given it to her as a wedding-anniversary present!"

But of course it was all Aunt Jennie's doing and I loved her with all the love of a girl's heart while I resolved to spend my ten dollars on a dictionary. I had to know what exuviae meant!

The End

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Try a Scalp Massage for Falling Hair

There is no better remedy for falling hair than local stimulation or massage of the scalp, but the massage should be applied regularly and systematically.

Cleanliness is also important, and this is only possible through regular and careful shampooing. Avoid soaps that are strong in alkalies. Castile or other soaps made of vegetable oils are best for the purpose. An increasingly large number of people advocate the egg and lemon shampoo mixture, which not only cleanses the scalp, but leaves the hair soft, fluffy and shining.

Two eggs and the juice of two lemons will be sufficient for shampooing a heavy head of hair. The eggs and the lemon juice should be beaten together until well blended. Use this mixture on the scalp and hair as if

were soap lather, but on no account put soap with it, or that would create a sticky, unmanageable mass of hair.

Rub the mixture in very thoroughly and rinse it off. If the hair is oily or very heavy, go over it a second time with the egg and lemon. Then rinse in several waters, warm at first, then cooling gradually until the last water is cold. The rinsing must be thorough, and not a particle of soap or other matter must be allowed to remain; otherwise, the danger of unpleasant after-effects is very slight.

A shampoo should not be indulged in oftener than once in ten days; once in two or three weeks is better. Much depends upon the individual; also, whether or not there is much exposure to dust and dirt, and the amount of natural oil in the hair.

Although it is not advisable to wash the hair while it is wet, massage can begin while the hair is still damp, continuing until the scalp is dry and glowing, the purpose of massage being to bring the blood to the surface or to the hair roots, in order to nourish them.

Massaging one's own scalp is rather tiresome work, but can be accomplished with less fatigue if one sits in front of the dressing table, resting the elbows upon it. This supports the arms and lessens the tension on the muscles.

To massage, place the thumbs at the sides of the face and with the tips of the fingers perform a rotary motion on the scalp, moving it around and around, up and down, and backward and forward. Remember that the scalp is not to be rubbed but loosened. Begin at the front of the head, working along the top and sides of the scalp until the fingers meet at the back. Then start on one of the shoulders and work gradually up toward the nape of the neck, repeating the movement from the other shoulder.

Give the scalp five minutes of this treatment daily, using a good hair tonic two or three times a week. Pour a small quantity of the tonic into a saucer, dip the tips of the fingers into it, then massage as usual.

If the scalp is very tight and dry, a petroleum tonic will be found beneficial. The recipe follows: One ounce of crude petroleum, ten grains of sulphur, twenty grains of quinine.

A quinine tonic is advised for oily scalps. It is made thus: Quinine sulphate, fifteen grains; borax, five grains; fluid extract jaborandi, one dram; tincture cantharides, two drams. Add bay rum enough to make six ounces.

Hairs that have split at the ends cease to grow. Therefore, it is well, after a shampoo, to take small strands of the hair, twist as if curling it, and clip the split ends. By roughing up the hair, these ends can easily be detected. Have some one do this for you about once a month; as the hair is full of electricity after the shampoo, this is the best time for the clipping.

Falling hair frequently follows illness, especially when the illness has been accompanied by fever. Continued low condition of the system is also responsible for loss of hair; so is excessive perspiration, if the scalp is not frequently cleansed. A certain amount of hair must fall out, but if the scalp is in good condition the loss will be normal and new hairs will replace the old ones.

In addition to the treatment suggested, combs and brushes should at all times be kept scrupulously clean; they should be used only by the owner. Dandruff, and still more objectionable diseases of the scalp can be transmitted from one person to another by the indiscriminate use of brushes and combs.

Homely Wrinkles

Snap old fasteners on to a thin piece of tape to prevent their getting lost or separated.

Old felt hats cut the right shape and pasted into the heels of the shoes will save a lot of darning, and will make the socks last longer.

Before buying material for a garment, cut newspaper the width of the goods to be bought, then lay the pattern on the papers, planning to use every inch to the best advantage, so there may be no waste of material.

Old linen dresses and waists can be made into pretty luncheon mats and doilies. An old "duster" in the natural tan shade of linen can be made into table runners and squares. Crocheted edgings finish all these pieces.

Rip and clean the old wool garments that are to be stored for future remodeling. There is not so great a chance for destruction by moths; also, the material will be in good condition to work with when the time comes for using it.

Cut the sleeves from a discarded woollen undershirt, hem them at the upper part and use pieces of tape on opposite sides of each, so they can be tied up over the shoulder or around the leg to prevent slipping down.

Keep these to use in case of rheumatism of the arm or leg, or other cases where a bandage is necessary. They make excellent bandages, as they can be pulled on readily and do not have to be pinned.

Never leave children alone in the house when fires are going. If this seems needless advice, read the newspapers. There is always danger in heating appliances for the house, whether coal, wood, gas or electricity is used. Children will play with fire, or will get to the match supply, and fires, accidents and death follow.

Fruit and other dainties should not be left in a sick-room for a day or two in the hope of tempting the appetite of an invalid, and then given to the children as a treat, after being removed. The patient would enjoy them more if brought in unexpectedly, and their having been in a sick-room makes them unfit to be eaten.

The dye in black stockings is now so poor that if washed in the ordinary way the stockings lose color, and in what they come in contact with while wet. If the stockings are soaked a while in salt and water, to which is added a little vinegar, are then rubbed in this solution, and then thoroughly rinsed, they will be clean without losing color.

Cockroaches or "crotches" bugs make their appearance in March, increasing in numbers as the weather grows warmer. They may be held in check by setting out two saucers, one containing a mixture of one part of flour and four parts of plaster of Paris, and the other filled with water. Strips of card board should be placed so that they form little bridges between the saucers, and incline to the floor. The roaches will climb the inclines, then the flour and plaster mixture, and fall into the water, where they will drown.

The evening of the second day they halted in front of an attractive farmhouse. They went up to the porch and the father spoke thus to the motherly looking woman, who was darning socks: "Ma'am, my son and I are travelling about the country, and wherever we find a place where the husband is boss we aim to give them a horse, and wherever the wife is the boss we give them a chicken. We still have both our horses, but there is only one chicken left."

"Well, sir," responded the lady, "I reckon you'll have to give us a horse; for my husband is boss on this farm."

If I Knew.

If I knew the box where the smiles are kept, No matter how large the key Or strong the bolt, I would try so hard 'Twould open, I know, for me.

Then over the land and sea broadcast I'd scatter the smiles to play That the children's faces might hold them fast For many and many a day.

If I knew a box that was large enough To hold all the frowns I meet, I would try to gather them, every one, From nursery, school and street.

Then, folding and holding, I'd pack them And turn the monster key; I'd hire a giant to drop the box To the depths of the deep, deep sea.

Railway Fire Hazards.

In 1909, the forests of Canada provided 11,000,000 tons of freight for Canadian railways. By 1916 this had been increased to 16,000,000 tons. These figures are a measure of the importance of forests as revenue producers for railways. In addition, railways require immense quantities of lumber and lumber for the construction and repair of their lines and equipment.

The officials of privately owned railways have been subject to the regulations of the Railway Commission as regards fire prevention for a number of years and have shown commendable public spirit as well as excellent business insight in their willingness to comply with them. So long as coal is burned by locomotives which pass through forested regions, the danger of fire will always be serious. All brush and inflammable material must be kept cleared for a distance of from 100 to 300 feet from the centre of the track. Speeder, or velocipede patrols must be maintained in forested regions. Special appliances to check sparkings must be installed in all locomotives and provision made for competent inspection and repairs. All of these factors involve a large expenditure, but the marked falling off in the number of fires on protected lines has demonstrated the wisdom of it. Constant vigilance is the price of safety. For example, in 1918, the first year inspection of locomotives in New Brunswick was enforced, it was found that 89 per cent. of the locomotives were defective. In one year this was reduced to 29 per cent.

Who Was Boss?

A certain farmer who felt that his wife supervised his actions more than was necessary, had a son who was about to be married. He undertook to demonstrate to his son that the wife is generally the boss. He hitched up a team, loaded in two dozen chickens, and took the son with him on a tour of the country.

The evening of the second day they halted in front of an attractive farmhouse. They went up to the porch and the father spoke thus to the motherly looking woman, who was darning socks: "Ma'am, my son and I are travelling about the country, and wherever we find a place where the husband is boss we aim to give them a horse, and wherever the wife is the boss we give them a chicken. We still have both our horses, but there is only one chicken left."

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And she called her husband to look at the horses. They went out to the road together.

"Well," said the husband, "I think we'll take the white horse."

"No, father," said the wife, "let's take the bay horse."

"Never mind," interrupted the traveller. "You get a chicken."

Kindred Souls.

"Mamma, this paper says that cattle when with other cattle eat more and fatten better than when kept alone."

"Yes, my child. I guess that is right."

"Well, Mamma, we must be like cattle."

"Why, what do you mean, child?"

"We always have more to eat and eat more when we have company."

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THEY HAD THE RIGHT IDEA

Some weeks ago a friend of ours was telling how his neighborhood disposed of a no-account neighbor. Most of the farmers thereabouts owned their own farms and had them in a high state of cultivation, but there was one run-down eighty owned by an absent landlord that usually boasted a "poor" family because no good farmer cared to till the barren acres. The buildings needed repairs, the fences were run down, the land needed draining, and altogether nobody but a farmer with little ambition or no credit would attempt to farm the lean acres.

Finally a tenant moved on the place whose very name suggested unpaid debts, trouble over stock, trouble in school, and general unpleasantness. The neighbors talked it over before he got there, and decided to try a new plan to dispose of the worthless farmer.

"Maybe it is common enough in other communities," said our friend, "but it was new to us, and it worked."

Well, the man moved through the rain and spring mud and the season was backward besides. Getting settled put him late with his plowing, and when his progressive neighbors had their seed in the ground not a field had been planted on his place. Without a word of warning, thirteen men with big strong teams descended upon his farm one morning at dawn and by night his entire crop was put in.

According to our friend's story it would be hard to tell who got the most good out of the whole transaction. The man, used to having "every man's hand against him," was completely melted, while the neighbors wondered why they had never thought to be kind and helpful before.

Then they helped with the rickety fences and buildings, the owner gladly furnishing new materials when convinced that it was worth while, and loaned him a small amount of money to invest in some good chickens and a few pigs. The ladies did their part by encouraging the discouraged wife, and making her at home in their social and church activities, while the children had no difficulty in getting acquainted at school. In a word, they treated him exactly as they would any well-to-do neighbor who happened to be in a pinch with his work, and soon even the barren soil began to respond. The accumulation of manure was carried out, the weeds cut, and the trash that had once harbored colonies of rats was burned. In helping the worthless neighbor they also helped themselves to get rid of rats, weed seeds, and other pests.

Now, don't imagine the man was transformed in a few weeks. He still has many of his old faults, but he is on the upgrade. He has better stock, better crops, and better soil on that once run-down place, and the owner has sense enough not to advance the rent so as to force him off. His wife and children are beginning to know what it means to live more than twelve months in the same place, and they are improved in health and spirits, while the man himself has ceased to whine about bad luck and no chance for a poor man, and is planning to buy a farm for himself.

But the best of it all, our friend says, is the help that came to the neighborhood in getting rid of a no-account neighbor. A kinder spirit, a better understanding, a sympathetic feeling for those down and out from whatever cause, a determination to be more considerate, and a real desire to be of service to humanity have taken possession of these prosperous men and women, and they have broadened their views along many lines.

As the man said, it may be a "common way" to get rid of worthless people, but we felt it was uncommon enough to be worth repeating, as it may inspire others to go and do likewise.

England's Largest Hotel Reopens.

As a real sign of the return of the piping times of peace comes the announcement of the reopening of the famous Hotel Cecil, which during the war was taken over by the British Government and used as the headquarters of the air ministry.

The Cecil is the largest hotel in England and has for years been one of the favorite stopping places for tourists. It is being thoroughly renovated and many improvements are being introduced