

## THE BATTLE OF LIFE.

Go forth to the battle of life, my boy,  
Go while it is called to day,  
For the years go out and the years come in  
Regardless of those who may lose or win,  
Of those who may work or play

And the troops march steadily on, my boy,  
To the army gone before;  
You may hear the sound of the falling feet  
Going down to the river where the two  
worlds meet,  
They go to return no more

There is a place for you in the ranks, my  
boy,  
And duty, too, assigned;  
Step into the front with a cheerful face,  
Be quick or another may take your place  
And you may be left behind.

There is work to be done by the way, my  
boy,  
That you can never tread again,  
Work for the loftiest, lowliest men—  
Work for the plow, plane, spindle and pen,  
Work for the hands and brain.

The serpent will follow your steps, my boy,  
To lay for your feet a snare;  
And pleasure sits in her fairy bowers,  
With garlands of poppies and lotus flowers,  
Enwreathing her golden hair.

Temptations will wait by the way, my boy,  
Temptations without and within,  
And spirits of evil, with robes as fair  
As those which the angels in heaven might  
wear,  
Will lure you to deadly sin.

Then put on the armour of God, my boy,  
In the beautiful arms of youth;  
Put on the helmet and breast-plate and  
shield,  
And the sword that the fallest arm may  
wield,  
In the cause of right and truth.

And go to the battle of life, my boy,  
With the peace of the Gospel shod,  
And before high heaven do the best you can  
For the great reward and good of man,  
For the kingdom and crown of God

## Our Story.

## HER SON'S WIFE.

BY MARY L. SUGGILL.

"Oh! Tom! Tom! I did not think she could be so cruel!"

The speaker was an elderly woman, in widow's weeds, and the picture she was gazing at showed a girlish face, fair and delicate, with dimpling cheeks and a pair of soft blue eyes.

Tom Raymond was his mother's idol—at least, as much of an idol as was consistent with her devout adherence to the Decalogue; but her love for him had that unselfish quality that always characterizes true mother-love, and when he brought home his young wife, she took the girl to her heart at once, thanking Tom with genuine pleasure for giving her so sweet a daughter. And for a time everything went smoothly, the young people making it a point to go to "Mother's" at least once a week, to take tea and spend the evening. Just how the alienation began it would be difficult to tell. To Tom and his mother it was always a mystery, neither of them being conscious of harboring any unkindly feeling. Perhaps an untimely suggestion in regard to the hygienic treatment of the baby had something to do with it, for Lita was a warm advocate of "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup," of which nostrum Mrs. Raymond, Senior, had a wholesome abhorrence, and perhaps it was partly due to Tom's frequent allusions to his mother's skill in preparing his favorite dishes young husbands are prone to afflict the souls of inexperienced wives by their outspoken allegiance to the traditions of their mothers in culinary affairs; but, whatever may have been the entering wedge, the breach had gradually widened, until all intercourse between the old home and the new was practically at an end.

Even after matters had reached this unhappy pass Tom continued to make his mother's name a household word; but one evening, when, with little Phil on his knee, he began talking of "Grandma," Lita angrily interrupted him.

"I wonder that you ever consented to leave that mother of yours! One would think there was not another such on the face of the earth!" she cried, a red spot burning on either cheek.

Tom looked at her for an instant, his fine gray eyes widening to their utmost limit.

"There are not many like her," he said, quietly, but after that he never praised his mother in Lita's hearing.

One day Aunt Truesdale, a relative whom Lita had not seen for years, walked in, with her satchel and umbrella, and announced her intention of making a week's visit.

"What a sweet-looking old lady!" she exclaimed, the next morning, holding up a photograph that she had found buried under a heterogeneous collection of discarded *bric-a-brac*, from which Lita had told her to help herself to whatever she fancied.

"Who is she, dear?"

"That! Oh! that's Tom's mother!" said Lita, indifferently.

"Your husband's mother? Why, child, you must take me to see her. I know I shall like her."

"We are not on visiting terms," answered Lita, coldly.

"Not on visiting terms?" repeated Aunt True, anxiously. "My dear child, I hope it is not your fault."

"I am sure I don't know whose fault it is," said Lita, pettishly. "Aunt True, I mustn't forget to show you my musical album. It is a real curiosity." But Aunt True was not to be turned from the subject in hand.

"Whoever is to blame, it is all wrong, dear," she said, earnestly. "A wife who sets herself against her husband's friends loses what she can never regain in her husband's regard. Especially ought his mother to be sacred to her. Remember, he can never have another mother; and for his sake, no matter what the trouble has been, you ought to be friendly with her. I beg of you, dear child, not to let it go on another day."

But the good words fell on stony ground; and when, on the day before Thanksgiving, Tom ventured to hint that he would like to ask his mother to take Thanksgiving dinner with them, Lita promptly answered that she had already invited as many guests as the table would accommodate.

The same morning, while they sat at breakfast, a note was received from Mrs. Raymond, begging Tom to bring his wife and boy to spend Thanksgiving with her.

"You will go, won't you, dear?" said Tom, eagerly.

"No, I will not," answered Lita. "You can go if you like; but, as I told you before, I have invited company to dinner, and it would be somewhat awkward to have you absent."

Tom, pushing back his scarcely tasted breakfast, rose from the table in grim silence and marched off, without even giving her the usual good-bye kiss.

"Poor Mother!" he said to himself, and though he intended to write at once, he put it off until the last thing before leaving the office, hoping for some message from Lita that might change the tenor of the answer; but none came, and when at last he took up his pen he was strongly tempted to say that he and little Phil would come, but, in doing that, he would necessarily make Lita seem at fault. So, using as an excuse the fact that his wife had made other arrangements before her invitation was received, he expressed his hearty regret and promised to drop in to see her as soon as practicable.

"Poor Mother!" he said again, as he dropped the letter into the lamp post. "She will be disappointed!"

And could Lita have peeped into the old home the next day, perhaps she too would have said "Poor Mother!" for Tom's letter, owing to his having, in his pre-occupied state of mind, directed it to the wrong number, did not come to hand until dinner was ready to be served; and, sitting down alone, with those empty seats staring at her Tom's own high-chair, that he had used when a baby, waiting for little Phil the widow could not keep back the tears. She had so longed to see them all, and especially "her boy."

"Just for one look from his dear, brave eyes!" she sighed that evening, as she stood gazing at Tom's portrait. From the little easel beside it Lita's girlish face smiled up at her.

"Oh! Tom! Tom! I did not think she could be so cruel!" she said, sorrowfully, "to rob a poor old mother of her only boy."

## II.

One bleak afternoon, some two weeks after Thanksgiving, Mrs. Raymond, Senior, had just stepped from a toy-shop, with her arms full of Christmas bundles, when she heard a glad little voice shouting: "G'an'ma! G'an'ma!"

"Why, Phil, you darling!" she cried, springing toward the boy; but before she could reach him, a horse, of which the driver had lost control, dashed upon the sidewalk, and the next instant the childish figure lay bruised and senseless on the pavement.

"Give him to me!" cried Mrs. Raymond, dropping her bundles and snatching the little fellow from the stranger who had taken him up.

The crowd pressed about her, some full of solicitude, other simply curious.

"What could they do for her?" "Was the child seriously injured?" "Would she have a carriage ordered?" But she did not seem to hear them.

"Permit me, Madam," said a tall, elderly man, who was evidently a physician; and, bending down, he passed his hands carefully over the manimate form. "Not fatally hurt, I think," he said; "but his arm is broken. Take him home and have it set as quickly as possible."

Her own carriage was in waiting on the opposite side of the street, and, the stranger having summoned it and lifted her in, with the boy still in her arms, she directed the driver to lose no time in reaching home.

"It would take so much longer to carry him to Tom's," she said to herself, and then for the first time she wondered how it happened that the child should have been on the street alone.

Where was Lita? Where was the nurse? She must telegraph to Tom at once.

Fortunately, her physician was her next-door neighbor, and fortunately, too, they found him in. Once or twice the child had opened his eyes; but only to close them with a moan.

"Poor little man! He has been pretty badly shaken!" said the doctor. "And I am afraid he won't be able to hold up his head again very soon. He must be kept as quiet as possible." And Mrs. Raymond, hearing it, could not help feeling, in spite of her sorrow and anxiety, thoroughly glad that, since the accident had happened, she had the darling under own roof, where no one could hinder her from caring for him.

At Tom's, meanwhile, the household was in a state of woeful alarm, Maggie, the nurse, having made her appearance some two hours after the time fixed for her return, weeping hysterically and declaring that little Phil had been "stole."

"Shure an' he was standin' forrint me, lookin' in at the windy at the wee Christ-masses, an' whin I turned meself to spake to him, he was nowheres to be sane. An', sez I, the saints bliss the darlint! He's went inside. So I walks in meself, thinkin' loike as not he was at some

o' the counters; but never a sight could I could catch of the charub, though I wint from one end of the store to the other. And whin I comes out, there was an ould ledly (shure, an' she had the look of a ledly, Mom, had as she is), jest alightin' into her kerridge, wid the darlint in her arms. May the blessed Vargin save him! An' afore I could spake the driver was off like a feyther anint the wind; and whin I screamed to the poulice to stop 'im for a thafe, he just laughed in me face. Och! shure, an' I wish I was dead, Mom, ruther than have the bad tidin's for yeas, Yeas kin bate me to a jilly, if ye loikes, an' I'll not say niver a word."

But her mistress sat looking at her with a frightened face, too overwhelmed to speak or act. Tom had disappeared before the girl had half-finished her story, and was already telegraphing in every direction that saddest of messages: "A child lost." Instinctively his heart turned to his mother. "But why trouble her?" he said to himself. It would be time enough to tell her when the suspense was at an end, in whatever way the end might come.

Late in the evening, Lita, watching for him in a state bordering on frenzy, was startled by a sharp peal of the bell.

"Shure, an' it's a telegraph, Mom. P'raps ye kin tell by the writin' who 'ts from," said Maggie, hurrying in with the inevitable yellow wrapper. The mistress tore it open with quaking hands. "Quick, Maggie! Put on your shawl and come with me," she cried. "And tell Bidget to tell Mr. Raymond that we have gone to Mother's." And half an hour later they were at Mrs. Raymond's door.

What words of reconciliation passed between his mother and his wife Tom never knew; but when at midnight he walked in, wan and haggard, he found them sitting hand in hand, watching, with troubled faces, little Phil's uneasy slumbers. He was too overwrought to trust himself to speak; but, going down on his knees, he put his arms about them both and the three wept together. During the anxious days that followed, while nature was knitting together the poor little broken bones in the baby arm, a knitting together of hearts was also in progress, and by the time the child was pronounced "out of danger" Mrs. Raymond had found a daughter and Lita a mother.

On Christmas Eve little Phil sat up for the first time, and on Christmas Day he was brought to the table and placed in Tom's high-chair, where he sat "king of the feast," Grandma having come behind him and dropped a wreath of holly on his yellow curls. "For a little child shall lead them," she said softly to herself.

## THE SUNDAY SCHOOLS OF TORONTO.

In this city there are 19 Episcopalian Sunday Schools, having 6,064 scholars and 604 teachers; 17 Presbyterian, with 3,519 scholars, requiring 356 teachers; 14 Methodist with 4,352 scholars and 406 teachers; 8 Primitive Methodist, showing 1,062 scholars and 135 teachers; 10 Baptist, with 2,083 scholars instructed by 211 teachers; 7 Congregational, with 1,463 scholars and 161 teachers. There are 15 miscellaneous schools, numbering 1,530 scholars and 118 teachers. The total number of schools is 90; of scholars, 19,222; and of teachers, 1998. Of the scholars, 10,700 are girls, and 8,522 are boys, and of teachers 1,094 are ladies and 904 are gentlemen.

A training school for nurses, in connection with the Montreal General Hospital, has been opened under the charge of a competent lady instructor. Special instruction in various departments of technical work will be given by members of the Medical staff.