

to think hard, and the more he thought the more he was horrified. Finally he sat up in bed and said suddenly to his wife:

"Do you know, Spot," (her pet name was Spot), "I have been thinking"—

"Don't be silly, dear," responded Spot, "Go to sleep, if you don't take care you will have ideas."

But the idiot was not to be put off that way this time; the warning was too late, he had commenced to have ideas and very unpleasant ideas too. One horrible idea that had forced its unpleasant presence into his brain was that his whole system of life had been and was wrong. He thought of his marriage,—how he had married the girl of his choice on \$750 a year and spent \$300 on his wedding trip. That was a wrong to the girl and to himself, for when they got back they had to finish furnishing on the instalment plan. He thought how he lived now at the rate of \$2,500 a year on a salary of \$1,500; he thought of his cigars, of his good clothes, of his children going to a good school; he thought of his \$700 piano on the instalment plan, of his wife's afternoon teas, of his two servants, of his rent \$630 a year, of his debts, how they grew; and the more he thought the more he concluded that these things were all wrong, because he could not afford them. He thought of his salary—\$4.10 per day—and wondered how he had ever expected to manage to keep four children, himself and wife and two servants on it. Then he thought of his notes floating about and how he had to juggle them every month and rob Peter to pay Paul. And it looked wrong.

Of course he was only an idiot to let these things worry him. But he explained all his thoughts to his wife, and the poor woman began to think and have ideas too. It was a cruel blow to her,—she had never had an idea in her life but had lived at peace, and now peace was gone.

She agreed with her idiot husband that it was all wrong, and like a good, brave, dutiful and thoughtful woman agreed to help him to right it all as far as possible or further.

So these two poor idiots began to right things. They cancelled the lease of their house and discharged their servants, took the children from the private school and sent them to a 50 cent a month school, the idiot stopped smoking cigars and took to a clay pipe and *tabac catholique*, they moved in to six rooms at \$12 per month, sold most of their furniture, gave up the instalment piano, never kept a drop of anything in the house, and never received any friends.

Rumour then said the idiot had got squeezed in stocks, and the rumour got to his employer's ears. The fact of the terrible reduction in the expenses of the idiot seemed to substantiate the rumour, and so he was discharged.

Debts that would have waited indefinitely during the idiot's apparent prosperity now began to press him, suits in law piled up costs against him, and he walked the streets without employment, and thought on and on and on. His friends said he had lost his position because he had money that did not belong to him; his enemies said he was a thief.

His wife became prematurely old, slovenly and hopeless; the children ragged and tough; the idiot himself struck odd jobs now and again, but being unable any longer to hold up his head over a clean collar and shirt, on account of his thoughts, he never recovered his lost faith in himself. He drove a grocery waggon for two years at \$9.50 per week and then died,—his wife said of a broken heart. The wife soon followed the idiot, and now his children are stablemen, cooks, waitresses and things like that.

Moral:—Don't be an idiot and think, just saw wood and keep up with the procession.