

appreciate. Mamma, for one, could not see anything amusing about it, and she proceeded to disentangle the children, her energy being stimulated by the cries which proceeded from Adolphe, who was not only at the bottom of the heap, but whose face was dark enough to suggest imminent danger of strangulation. At last the heap was resolved into its component parts, and Adolphe scrambled to his feet: but even then his face did not assume a particularly brilliant complexion, and as mamma noted his hair, which was a mass of jet-black kinks of extreme tightness, she determined that he might not have been in danger of strangulation after all, for Adolphe's ancestors had evidently emigrated, probably under compulsion, from Africa's sunny climes, and had preserved in all its intensity the original family complexion.

Within a very few hours mamma was thoroughly ashamed of herself for the heart-sinking and subsequent indignation which followed this discovery. In these cooler moments she saw clearly that Adolphe's extraction had not prevented his being a boy of exquisite manners, a carriage more graceful than that of either of her own children, an innocent, honest, child face, and a voice that was music itself. But, within a moment of her first full view of Adolphe, she had the elbow of Fred's jacket tight between her thumb and fore finger, and was moving into the front parlour with a tread so determined that Fred was terrified even out of asking what was the occasion of the demonstration. The sliding-doors were closed with a crash. Fred was quickly twitched into a chair in some way that he did not exactly understand, and then he saw before him his mamma with eyes ablaze and uplifted finger, and heard her say:

"How could you do it?"

"Do what?" asked Fred, hurrying through his mind to recall the latest dreadful act of his own that had not yet been discovered, and that he had not collected courage to confess.

"Do what?" echoed mamma so loudly and sharply that Fred shivered uncontrollably. Then mamma paced to and fro with her hands behind her back and Fred confided to Bertha at bed-time that mamma looked just terrible while she was doing it. Then mamma repeated, "Do what?" before Fred had recovered from the first shock, and, as she continued her walk, she imagined just how Ellie, who came of a tall tale family, would tell her mamma that the Mayburn children invited little darkies to their house, and Ellie's mamma would tell every one she knew, making special tours of calls for the purpose, and everything would be dreadful. Mamma knew one thing very distinctly; she could never again hold up her head among her own friends, and she was just going to tell her husband when he came home that she should go house-hunting at once in Brooklyn, or Jersey City, or some other suburban town where she was not known.

As for Fred, he began to gain courage, partly from mamma's silence, and partly because he could not for the life of him recall any particularly wicked act of his own, so he began also to feel aggrieved, and he asked:

"What's it all about, mamma, anyhow?"

"What is it about?" was the reply, as mamma stopped short and fiercely faced him. "It's about that boy—that—that—Mamma had herself enough in control to remember that she came of a family of abolitionists, so she concluded with, "that Adolphe."

"I don't see anything the matter with him," said Fred. "What do you see?"

"His colour," said mamma, shortly.

"Why, you always said you doted on dark com-

plexions," said Fred, "which I don't think is very nice of you, seeing we children are all very light."

"There are different degrees of dark," said mamma, while Fred disappeared behind a great pout, and muttered that he wished there was any way for boys to find out how to please their mammias.

"You said he lived just around the corner from the avenue," resumed mamma, ceasing for a moment her restless walk.

"So he does," asserted Fred, "and over the hand-somest stable I know of. And *don't* his papa drive a splendid pair of black horses, and sit on a very high seat to do it?—oh, my!"

Mamma's tramp recommenced, and with a step considerably quicker than before. A short period of silence was broken by Fred asking timidly:

"Don't you think his hair curls perfectly lovely?"

"No, I don't," mamma answered with extraordinary decision. Then she stopped, drew a chair to Fred's side, and said:

"My dear little boy, I can't say that you have done anything wrong, but you have made a great blunder. You mustn't bring Adolphe here any more; I am very sorry you brought him this afternoon."

"Why?" asked Fred.

"You can't understand now," said mamma, "but you must trust me and obey me. I wonder if—but no." Mamma had thought to ask him to ask Ellie to consider the tea-party a great secret, about which nothing was to be said by any one; but remembering how leaky are the receptacles of children's secrets, she refrained, and determined to make an early call upon Ellie's mother and many other ladies, and take the sting out of the story by telling all, as a laughable illustration of childish ignorance. This inspiration so comforted her that she kissed Fred, and returned to the dining-room with him to bid the guests good-bye. Adolphe had really a very attractive face, so mamma relented as soon as she saw him, she even put oranges into his pockets for the two sisters she learned he had at home. Then, seeing it was after five o'clock, she managed to dismiss the visitors without seeming to send them away, and the spectacle of Adolphe escorting Ellie home so delighted her that she wished she could follow them and see how acquaintances of Ellie's family would regard the two as they met them on the street.

As she stood smiling in the doorway, however, glancing after the couple, she heard a sound which reminded her that she had left The Jefful sitting upon the dining-room floor, so she hurried back to her baby to find that enterprising infant badly mixed up with a high chair which she had toppled over. To console The Jefful was not a hard task, and then mamma flew upstairs with the young lady, undressed her, fed her, and, in spite of a thousand maternal promptings, which made her hate Fremdhoff more than ever, she put the baby to bed and dressed to receive her husband's guest. When in the midst of the mysteries and miseries of her toilet, she remembered with horror that the beer and Lamberger cheese, which her husband had requested, had not yet been purchased, so Bridget was summoned to her own disgust from her preparations for supper, and was begged to hurry out and purchase the detested delicacies. Bridget, in turn, impressed Fred into the household service, and his memory failed him so badly that he brought back Brie instead of Lamberger, because all that he could remember of his instructions was that the cheese he was to buy was "the devil's own, an' smelt that bad that no chaze in the wurld cud hold a candle to it." So Fred, forgetting the name, had asked for whatever cheese smelled worse than any other.

(To be continued.)