about my fondness for port, I'll not miss this chance of being good to her and of helping her to do you justice. Maria always looks like that when she's pleased."

Maria glared horribly at her brother, and made a noise in her throat like the rasping of a nutmeg grater.

"You see how absurdly prejudiced you are, Jeremy. She's trying to say she hopes you will make a good use of your property. Nothing could be plainer. Mr Wilson has seen Maria's condition, and with what absolutely correctness I have carried out her intentions. I've no doubt she meant me to live with you after her—her departure. You'll find me very useful with the baby. I've always had a theory of my own that babies are fed too much, and I should like to try a series of experiments on yours. Why, what on earth are you doing!"

With a sudden gesture, Jeremy tore up the cards. "If Maud hears what you mean to do with the baby, she'll have you assassinated as the only way of saving the child's life. Now, Mr Wilson, I wonder you countenance this absurd scheme of my Uncle's. Get your hat, Uncle Peter, and come home with me. Good-bye, Aunt. You're not getting as much fun out of your money as you expected; but you shan't be tortured in your last moments by this well-meaning visionary."

"You are quite right, Jeremy. Brother Peter always was rather more or less an idiot, generally more," said Miss Winthrop, sitting up in bed and casting a look of withering scorn at her discomfited brother. "I've had my suspicions he was yearning to try scientific experiments—scientific!—on me!—on me. Besides, Mr Wilson told me all about it so I pretended to be ill just to see what he'd do. Now I know, and if ever you do it again, Brother Peter, I'll send you and your experiments to the Workhouse."

"Don't be so stony, Sister Maria," said the crestfallen Peter. "How was I to know you were only shamming! Don't send me to the workhouse. You know perfectly well how I hate going to a place where I can't get my port regularly. Besides, they'd make me put on striped trousers and a flannel shirt. I don't mind dying for my country, but nothing shall induce me to become a 'flannelled fool!'"

"And they'll make you break stones, before they give you any breakfast," vindictively said Miss Winthrop. "Well, I'm glad of it. Fetch baby, Jeremy. If that brother of mine dares to interfere with her food, I won't go to see him in the Casual Ward on visiting days. Pleased expression, indeed! Why, I glared at him the whole time! Is there anything else of mine you'd like to give away, Brother Peter, before you start for the Workhouse? I've never succeeded in making you eat porridge all these years; now you'll have to put up with 'skilly,' and you won't like it."

"Have mercy, Maria," implored Peter. "Don't be too harsh to your only brother. How was I to know you were shamming! In the general interests of scientific research, individuals should not consider their feelings. Scientific—"

"Fiddlesticks," snorted Miss Winthrop.

"Don't send me to the workhouse, Sister. Who's to look after the garden? You won't let her send me away, Jeremy? Workhouse officials are so—so meddling."

"And so are you," said the indignant Miss Winthrop. "Go to your room, sir, get into bed, and don't presume to leave it until I give you permission. Jeremy," she added, as the crestfallen Peter crept away, "it's no fun quarrelling with you. I daren't stay alone in the house with that man. Fetch Maud and the baby, and live here. We'd betetr end up in the way the books do, after all."

"Of course," said Jeremy. "We must keep Uncle Peter away from the baby, though."

"Certainly. Now, if you'll ring for my maid, I'll get up and dress."

"Uncle Peter meant well," pleaded Jeremy; "and he hasn't had a letter in the paper for a long time."

"Drivelling idiot!" snapped Miss Winthrop. "He never shall have again, if I can help it. Any respectable Workhouse is too good for him. 'Pleased expression,' indeed. Go and fetch the baby."

"Let him have his dinner," pleaded Jeremy, preparing to depart.

"Not a morsel," said the vindictive Miss Winthorp. "He's made me stay in bed all day long, and I'll keep him there all the evening without any dinner. Scientific research, indeed."

Jeremy left the room, and looked in on Uncle Peter.

"Does she mean it?" asked that worthy, ruefully sitting up in bed. "It was all for your good, Jeremy. Maria always was vindictive. Shows such a nasty spirit, too, when she has come back from the verge of the grave. I'm so hungry! Paltry, I call it. Paltry! Can't you smuggle me up a bottle of bass and some sandwiches? Maria is so—so arbitrary."

"Not a morsel," said the inexorable Jeremy, "unless you promise never to meddle with the baby."

"I swear!" said Uncle Peter, with solemn fervour: "that is," he added as an after-thought, "if you don't put too much mustard on the sandwiches."

The Praise of Women.

A poet's compliment to a woman, or to women, is one of the prettiest and pleasantest exercises of words. Francis I. of France once said that a court without women would be like a year without a spring, and a spring without roses; and Malherbe, who was a poet, said that there are only two pretty things in the world, women and roses, and only two dainty morsels, women and melons.

Then, Chateaubriand said: "Man without woman would be gross, rude, and solitary, and would ignore the grace which is the smile of love. Woman hangs around him the flowers of life, like those forest creepers which adorn the trunks of oaks with their perfumed garlands."

In his pretty little book, "Opinion of My Friend Jacques on Women of Mind and the Mind of Women," F. J. Stahl says: "The mind of women has every kind of relation to the diamond. It is fine, it is precious, it has a thousand fires, a thousand rays, it has facets which radiate in every direction, it dazzles and betrays itself, even in the shade, when the slightest opening is made. It cannot be shut up in the jewel-box; it must be seen."

Fontenelle said: "Among women modesty has great advantages. It augments beauty, and serves to hide ugliness."

"A young girl was walking in a garden," said an enthusiastic French poet, "and the flowers began to speak. 'You are prettier than we are, fair damsel,' said they. 'Fresher,' said the rose of May; 'more vermilion,' said the pomegranate; 'whiter,' said the lily; 'sweeter,' said the jasmine; 'more graceful,' said the meadow-queen; 'purer,' said the virgin-spike; 'chaster,' said the orange-flower. The young girl knew nothing of the language of the flowers; her fair, open countenance fell upon each of them without blushing, and she admired them, all without knowing the praises they were giving her. But, perceiving half-hidden among the herbage the blue-eyed violet, she stooped toward it, gathered it with her delicate fingers, and after having inhaled its perfume, placed it near her heart. 'How happy is the violet!' said the other flowers."

We can hardly omit here the saying of Schiller: "Honour to women! They scatter celestial roses on the pathway of our earthly life; they weave the fortunate bands of love; and under the modest veil of the graces they nourish with a sacred hand the immortal flower of noble sentiments."

Stutts (who stammers): Miss d-d-Dimple—d-d—Dollie!—I lul-lul-lul—lul-lul-love you! W-wu-will you b-b—Wu-wul you b-be mum-mum-mum—wu-will you b-be mum-my wu-wu-wu—mum-mum-my wife!

Dollie Dimple (coyly): Oh, Mr Stutts! I—I hardly know how to answer you!

Stutts (desperately): Ac-ac-ac-sus-sus—accept my pup-pup-proposal or I'll sus-sus-sus—or I'll sus-sus-say it all over a-gug-gug-again!

PEARS
SOAPMAKERS
BY ROYAL WARRANTS
to
Their Majesties
THE KING AND QUEEN.
HOLDER OF THE ONLY GRAND PRIX EVER AWARDED
FOR TOILET SOAP—
IN GREAT BRITAIN—ON THE SEA OR BEYOND THE SEAS.