

The Family Circle

LOVINGEST FACE IN THE WORLD

'I love you, mamma,' my little one said,
As close to my heart crept her golden head,
'I love you lots,' with a clasp and a kiss,
'The best of all mammas my mamma is.

'And I think,' said she, looking up in my eyes
With a glance that was tender and grave and wise,
'That you've got just the loveliest face. Oh, oh,
I'm glad you're my mamma, I love you so.'

What was the praise of the world to me
To the love of my little one throned on my knee?
And this was my prayer as I kissed the eyes
That were smiling up to me, pansy-wise,
'May the face of thy mother forever be
The loveliest face in the world to thee!'

THE BOY WITH A BACKBONE

'I say there, boy, want to earn a nickel?'

Tommy Tolliver, the new errand boy at the factory, jumped to his feet. Want to earn a nickel? Was there ever a boy who wanted it more, Tommy wondered. Had he not been studying the 'Want' columns of the daily papers for weeks in the hope of finding a job, so that he could help his mother to keep all the little Tollivers in food and clothing?

'Just you run round the corner to the saloon and get this two-quart pail full of beer. Here's the change. We'll pay you the nickel when you come back,' said one of the group of men who sat eating their lunch in the corner of the room.

Tommy's face flushed, and instead of reaching out a willing hand for the extended pail, he clasped both hands behind him.

'I can't do it,' he said.

'Why can't you?' sneered one of the men. 'You ain't much of a kid if you can't carry a two-quart pail of beer two short blocks.'

'That's just the trouble,' answered Tommy, with a flash of the eye. 'I'm a lot too strong to carry a two-quart pail of beer even one block. I've had enough of the stuff. If it hadn't been for beer I wouldn't be working here doing what my father ought to be doing, taking care of my mother and the youngsters. I'd be in school like other boys.'

The faces of the men clouded with anger. 'Who set you to preach to us, you young upstart? Don't you know we can make it mighty unpleasant for you here if we's a mind to?'

'I can't help it,' replied the boy firmly. 'I can't touch the stuff.'

'Say, sonny, you better do it this time,' counselled a good-natured young man, 'or they'll complain to the superintendent about everything you do.'

'You'll have to do it, that's all there is to it,' said the first speaker. 'The boss put you here to run our errands. So, just you take that pail, and don't you show up here again until it's filled. Hear?' And the pail was thrust into the boy's hand.

Just outside the door Tommy hesitated for a second, thinking hard.

'That man in there isn't the head man,' he argued. 'There are men way ahead of him. Of course, if it comes to the boss telling me, I've got to do it. I'll have to hunt for a new place, but I'm not going to give up easy.'

Straight around the corner went Tommy to the main entrance, up the broad steps to the elevator. The elevator man directed him to the room where the whole push, president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, are holding an important meeting.

'Well, my boy, what's the trouble?' asked the gentleman who seemed to be at the head of affairs.

'I'm Tommy Tolliver, the new errand boy in the factory,' said Tommy bravely. 'I just came yesterday, and the men down there say I've got to get this pail of beer or I'll be fired quick. I came up here to find the real boss. Say, is it so? Have I got to carry their beer for them?'

The man looked seriously down into the anxious boy's face as he answered with another question:

'What do you propose to do?'

Quick as a flash the answer came back, in a respectful but spirited tone:

'Do? I reckon there ain't but one thing to do, and that's to hunt another job. I'm not going into the beer business for anybody.' There was a subdued murmur of applause in the room.

'Well, my boy, neither are we in the beer business, and I think it's about time we had some pretty stiff rules posted up in our building concerning that very thing. What do you say?' he asked, turning to the other gentlemen in the room.

'I suggest that we draft such a notice immediately, have it written out on the typewriter, and put a copy in that pail and send it back by this young man. Then the men can't say he didn't bring back a full pail.'

Before the day was over notices were posted all over the building forbidding the use of beer and liquor of all kinds on the premises. Neither did the president forget the new boy in the factory, but when, a few weeks later, a new office boy was needed in the head office, he sent word to the superintendent of the factory that he would like to have 'the boy with the backbone' sent up to take the position. And although no name was mentioned, the superintendent smiled a knowing smile and called out loud so that all could hear:

'Tommy Tolliver, the president wants to see you in his office.'

WHEN THE MOON SHRUNK

Tommy was taking his first lessons in astronomy, and, in his usual way, was putting a number of awkward questions to his parent.

'What I want to know, father,' he said, confidentially, 'is this: Can you tell me if the moon is inhabited?'

'Well, Tommy,' said his parent, 'some astronomers think it is not, but some think that there are people on it.'

'Many people live there, father?'

'Yes, according to statements I have read.'

'I say, father!'

'What is it?'

'If there are people there, mustn't they be crowded when there's a new moon?'

WHY HE WAS PROMOTED

A lessonful little story from an unidentified exchange is a forcible commentary on the value of thoroughness and despatch.

A business firm once had in its employ a young man whose energy and grasp of affairs soon led the management to promote him over a trusted employe.

The old clerk felt deeply hurt that the younger man should be promoted over him, and complained to the manager. Feeling that this was a case that could not be urged, the manager asked the old clerk what was the cause of all the noise in the front of their building.

The clerk went out, and returned with the answer that it was a lot of wagons going by. The manager then asked what they were loaded with, and again the clerk went and returned, reporting that they were loaded with wheat.

The manager then sent him to ascertain how many wagons there were, and he returned with the answer that there were sixteen. Finally he was sent to see where they were from, and he returned, saying they were from a city twenty miles to the north.

The manager then asked the young clerk to be sent for, and said to him: 'Will you see what is the meaning of that rumbling noise in front?' The young man went out and returned, saying: 'Sixteen wagons loaded with wheat. Twenty more will pass to-morrow. They belong to Smith and Co., of A—, and are on their way to Cincinnati, where wheat is bringing one dollar and a quarter a bushel.' The young man was dismissed, and the manager, turning to the old clerk, said: 'My friend, you see now why the younger man was promoted over you.'

THE ACTOR AND THE COCKATOO

An amusing story concerning Mr. Andrew Mack is going the rounds in Melbourne. He and Mr. Harold Ashton were motoring back to Melbourne from Geelong, after a recent performance there. In the darkest hour of the night the motor-car broke down. They found a farm-house close by and knocked at the door for assistance. A response came immediately in a somewhat raucous voice—'What's that?' Mr. Ashton courteously and apologetically proceeded to explain the trouble. Again when he had finished came the question, 'what's that?' Mr. Ashton, in a higher key, again explained their difficulty, and again came the query, 'What's that?' In a still louder voice Mr. Ashton once more detailed the circumstances of the breakdown—and still 'What's that?' was all he could elicit from