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### RISE AND FALL OF THE MUSTACHE

\*\*\*\*\* BY ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

Z. CORRECT CONTRACTOR DE LA CONTRACTOR D [CONTINUED.]

The eye he has for immaculate linen and faultless collars. How it amazes his mother and sisters to learn that there isn't a shirt in the house fit for a pig to

wear, and that he wouldn't wear the best collar in his room to be hanged in. And the boots he crowds his feet into! A Sunday school room the Sunday before the picnic or the Christmas tree, with its sudden influx of new scholars, with irreproachable morals and ambitious appetites, doesn't compare with the over crowded condition of those boots. Too tight in the instep; too narrow at the toes; too short at both ends; the only thing about those boots that don't hurt him, that don't fill his very soul with agony are the straps. When Tom is pulling them on, he feels that if somebody would kindly run over him three or four times, with a freight train, the sensation would be pleasant and reassuring and tranquilizing. The air turns black before his starling eyes, there is a roaring like the rush of many waters in his ears, he tugs at the straps that one cutting his fingers in two and pulling his arms out by the roots, and just before his bloodshot eyes shoot clear out of his earth rocks beneath his feet, and he thinks he can faintly hear the angels calling his home. When he walks across the floor the first time his standing in the church and Christian community is ruined forever. Or would be if any one could hear what he says. He never, never, never gets to be so old that he cannot remember those boots, and if it is seventy years afterwards his feet curl up in agony at the recollection. The first time he wears them he is vaguely aware as he leaves his room that there is a kind of "fixy" look about him, and his sister's tittering is not needed to confirm this impression He has a certain half-defined impression that everything he has on is a size too small for any other man of his size That his boots are a trifle snug, like a house with four rooms for a family of thirty-seven. That the hat, which sets so lightly on the crown of his head, is jaunty but limited, like a junior clerk's salary; that his gloves are a neat fit, and can not be buttoned with a stump machine. Tom general, vague impression that it may be so. And he doesn't know that his sisters know every line of it. For he has lived many years longer and got in ever so much more trouble, before he learns that one bright, good, sensible girl-and notice more in a glance, remember it more accurately, and talk more about it, than twenty men can see in a week. Tom does not know, for his crying feet will not let him, how he gets from his room to the earthly paradise where Laura lives. Nor does he know, after he gets there, that Laura sees him trying to rest the leg of the chair. A hazardous, reckthat night, trying to hide the cause of Laura that he de-tes-ted tobacco. the sudden elongation of one leg. and he flitting across his face under the heart-

such things, Tom flatters himself, as when he gets at the foot of the hill. The remark about the weather, to begin with; not the stereotyped old phrase, but a quaint, droll, humorous conceit that no one in the world but Tom could think of. Then, after the opening overture about the weather, something about music and Beethoven's sonata in B flat and Hayden's symphonies, and of course something about Beethoven's grand old Fifth symphozy, somebody's else mass, in heaven knows how many flats; and then something about art and a profound thought or two on science

and philosophy, and so on to poetry and from poetry to "business." But alas, when Tom reaches the gate all these well ordered ideas display evident symptoms of breaking up; as he crosses the yard he is dismayed to know that they are in the convulsions of a panic, and when he touches the bell knob, every, each, all and several of the ideas, original and compiled, that he has had on any subject during the past ten years, forsake him and return no more that evening. When Laura opened the door he had intended to say something real splendid about the imprisoned sunlight of something, beaming out a welcome upon the what you may call it of the night or something. Instead of which he says, or rather gasps: "Oh, yes, to be particularly brilliant or original, or that most any of the other fellows could not say with a little practice, he makes one more effort to redeem himself before he steps into the hall, and adds, "Oh, good morning, good morning." Feeling that even this is only a partial success, he collects his scattered faculties for one united effort and inquires: "How is your mother?" And then it strikes him that he has about exhausted the subject, and he goes into the parlor, and sits down, who lived, and did, and never died in and just as soon as he has placed his re-

position, he proceeds to wholly, com-

ne ever know in the title returns to stranger scent when their voices nusu, consciousness to fine himself, to his own amazement and equally to Laura's acwilderment, conducting a conversation about the crops, and a new method of funding the national debt, subjects upon which he is about as well informed as the town clock. He rallies, and makes a successful effort to turn the conversation into literary channels by asking her if she has read any of Coann Doyle's stories. And in a burst of condicace he assures her that he would not be surprised if it should rain before morning. (And he hopes it will, and that it may be a flood, and that he may get caught in it, without an ark nearer than Cape Horn). And so, at list, the first evening passes away, and after mature deliberation and many unsuccessful efforts he rises to go. But he does not go. He wants to; but he doesn't know how. He says. good evening. Then he repeats it in a marginal reference. Then he puts it in a foot note. Then he adds the remark in an appendix, and shakes hands. By this time he gets as far as the parlor door, and catches hold of the knob and holds on to it as tightly as though some one on the other side were trying to pull it through the door and run away with it. And he stands there a fidgetty statue of the door holder. He mentions, for not more than the twentieth time that evening that he is passionately fond of music but he can't sing. Which is a lie; he can. Did she go to the World's Fair? "No." "Such a pity"-he begins but stops in terror, lest she may consider his condolence a reflection upon her financial standing. Did he go? Oh, yes, yes; he says, absently, he went. Or, that is to half possibly, of thorns without their go to the Fair; he staid at home. In thorns. In the highest heaven of his new head, the boot comes on-or the strap fact, he had not been out of town this found bliss, Tom is suddenly recalled to distracted lover. "it's Laura." pulls off. Then when he stands up, the summer. Then he looks at the tender earth and its miseries by a question little face; he looks at the brown eyes, from Laura which falls like a plummet each other, the dingy old counting-room sparkling with suppressed merriment; into the unrippled sea of the young with the heavy shadows lurking in he looks at the white hands, dimpled and man's happiness, and fathoms its depths every corner, with its time-worn, heavy soft, twin daughters of the snow; and in the shallowest place. "Has her own brown furnishings, with the scanty dash the fairy picture grows more levely as Tom"-as distinguished from countless of sunlight breaking in through the he looks at it, until his heart outruns other Toms, nobody's Toms, unclaimed his fears; he must speak, he must say Toms, to all intents, and purposes swamp something impressive and ripe with lands on the public matrimonial domain meaning for how can he go away with - "Has her own Tom said anything to this suspense in his breast? His heart | pa?" "Oh, yes! pa;" Tom says, "To be trembles as does his hand; his quivering sure; yes." Grim, heavy browed, austere

night, and Tom is gone. tache that night, when in the solitude of | might say, poured out his heart to pa. his own room Tom releases his hands from the despotic gloves, and tenderly idea that the thing was going to go soothes two of the reddest, pufflest feet right along in this way, forever. Tom that ever crept out of boots not half their | had an idea that the programme was all own size, and swore in mute, but elo- arranged, printed and distributed, rosequent anatomical profanity at the whole | colored, gilt-edged, and perfamed. He race of bootmakers. His heart is nearly was going to sit and hold Laura's hands, as full of sorrow and bitterness as his pa was to stay down at the office, and boots. It appears to him that he showed | ma was to make her visits to the parlor off to the worst possible advantage; he is | as much like angels, for their rarity and doesn't know all this; he has only a dimly conscious that he acted very like brevity, as possible. But he sees, now a donkey, and he has the not entirely | that the matter has been referred to, that unnatural impression that she will never want to see him again. So he philosophically and manfully makes up his mind Tom's face; and her coral lips quiver a ed their tender secrets to the noisy never, never, never, to think of her again. Then he immediately proceeds, I believe they are all that-will see and | in the manliest and most natural way in the world, to think of nothing and nobody else under the sun for the next ten hours. How the tender little face does haunt him. He pitches himself into bed with an aimless recklessness that tumbles pillows, bolster, and sheets into one shapeless, wild chaotic mass, and he goes through the motions of going to sleep, one foot by setting it up on the heel. like a man who would go to sleep by toy, her heart grows tenderer, and she And she sees him sneak it back under steam. He stands his pillow up on end, his chair and tilt it up on the toe for a and pounds it into a wad, and he props change. She sees him ease the other foot | his head upon it as though it were the a little by tugging the heel of the boot at | guillotine block. He lays it down and smooths it out level, and pats all the less, presumptuous experiment. Tom wrinkles out of it, and there is more tries it so far one night, and slides his | sleeplessness in it to the square inch heel so far up the leg of his boot, that than there is in the hungriest mosquito his foot actually feels comfortable, and | that ever sampled a martyr's blood. He he thinks the angels must be rubbing gets up and smokes like a patent stove.

This is the only time Tom will ever hobbles all the way home in the same go through this, in exactly this way. It that too. She sees all the little knobs | bright, rosy dream of his life. He may and lumps on his foot, and sees him live to be as old as an army overcoat, fldget on his foot, and sees him fldget and he may marry as many wives as and fuss, she sees the look of anguish Brigham Young, singly, or in a cluster, but this will come to him but once. Let less, deceitful, veneering of smiles, and him enjoy all the delighted misery, all she makes the mental remark that master | the ecstatic wretchedness, all the hea-Tom would feel much happier and much | venly torlornness of it as best he can. more comfortable, and more like staying | And he takes good, solid edifying misery longer, if he had worn his father's boots. out of it. How he does torture himself But on his way to the house, despite and hate Smith, the empty-headed the distraction of his crying feet, how donkey, who can talk faster than Tom many pleasant, really beautiful romantic | can think, and whose mustache is black things Tom thinks up and recollects and as Tom's boots, and so long that he can compiles and composes to say to Laura, pull one end of it with both hands. How to impress her with his originality, and he does detest that idiot Brown, who wisdom, and genius, and bright exuber- plays and sings and goes up there every ant fancy and general superiority over time Tom does, and claws over a few old all the rest of Tom's kind. Real earnest forgotten five-finger exercises and calls things, you know, no hellow, conven- it music; who comes up there, some night tional compliments, or nonsense, but when Tom thinks he has the evening and Laura all to himself, and brings up none of the other fellows can or will an old, tuneless, voiceless, cracked say. He has them all in beautiful order | guitar, and goes crawling around in the wet grass under the windows and makes night perectly hideous with what he calls a serenade. He speaks French, too, the beast. Poor Tom; when Brown's lingual accomplishments in the language of Charlemagne are confined to -"awaw-er ah-vooly voo?" and on state occasions to the additional grandeur of "avy voo mong shapo?" But poor Tom who once covered himself with confusion by telling Laura that his favorite air in "Robert le Diable" was the beautiful aria "Robert toy que jam," considers Brown a very prodigal in linguistic attainments; another Cardinal Mezzofanti; and hates him for it accordingly. He hates Daubs, the artist, too, who was up there one evening and made an offhand crayon sketch of her in an album. The picture looked more like Daubs' mother, and Tom knew it, but Laura said it was oh just delightfully, perfectly splendid, and Tom has hated Daubs most cordially ever since. In fact, Tom hates every man who has the temerity to speak to her, or who she may treat with lady-like courtesy. Until there comes one night when the boots of the inquisition pattern sit more lightly on their suffering victims, when Providence has been on Tom's side and has kept Smith and Brown and Daubs away, and has frightened Tom nearly to death by showing sure; to be sure; ho!" And then, con- him no one in the little parlor with its am here to-to sue-to sue, Mr. Tret-I strangely made up of happiness and If Co Call and examine the scious that he has not said anything old-fashioned furniture but himself and Laura and the furniture. When, almost without knowing how or why, they talk about life and its realities instead of the last concert or the next lecture; when they talk of their plans, and their day dreams and aspirations, and their ideals of real men and women; when they talk about the heroes and heroines of days long gone by, gray and dim in the ages

that are ever made young and new by

the lives of noble men and noble women

those grand old days, but lived and live

glory as the glittering stars that sang at

pletely and successfully forget everythinz | creation's dawn | When the room seems

when the flush of earnestness upon her rora's car; pure as the lily kissed by face gives it a tinge of sadness that dew. This precious blossom, watched by makes it more beautiful than ever; when the dream and picture of a home Eden, and home life, and home love, grows every moment more lovely, more entrancing to him until at last poor blundering, stupid Tom, speaks without knowing beginning to see that Tom is only drunk what he is going to my, speaks without | "Oh, yes, yes, I don't know much about preparation or rehearsal, speaks and his them myself; my wife and the girls honest, natural, manly heart touches his faltering lips with eloquence and tenderness and earnestness that all the rhetoric in the world never did and never will plants the sun can't shine in. Come up inspire, and ... That is all we know to the house, they'll give you all you about it. Nobody knows what is said or | can carry away, give you a hat full of how it is done. Nobody. Only the silent 'em." "No, no, no; you don't understars or the whispering leaves, or the cat. | stand," says poor Tom, and old Mr. or maybe Laura's younger brother, or Tret now observes that Tom is very the hired girl, who generally bulges in drunk indeed. "It isn't that, sir. Sir, just as Tom reaches the climax. All the that isn't it. I-I-I want to marry your rest of us know about it is, that Tom | daughter." There it is at last, as bluntly doesn't come away so early that night, as though Tom hac wadded it into a gun and that when he reaches the door he and shot it at the old man. Mr. Tret holds a pair of dimpled hands instead of | does not say anything for twenty seconds. the insensate door knob. He never clings | Tom tell's Laura that evening that it to the door knob again; never. Unless ma, dear ma, has been so kind as to bring in her sewing and spend the evening with them. Tom doesn't hate anybody, nor want to kill anybody in the dreadful. "Yes, yes. Well, I don't know. wide, wide world, and he feels just as I don't know about that, young man. good as though he had just come out of | Said anything to Jennie about it?" "It a six months' revival; and is happy enough to borrow money of his worst Rubicon to cross; "it's-" "Oh, Julie?

But there is no rose without a thorn.

A hough, I suppose, on an inside com-

putation, there is, in this weary old world

enemy.

as much as, say a peck, or a peck and a say, no, not exactly. He did not exactly attendant roses. Just the raw, bare lips part, and-Laura deftly hides a pa. The living embodiment of business. vagrom yawn behind her fan. Good Wary, shrewd, the life and mainspring of the house of Tare and Tret. "M. Well. There is a dejected droop to the mus- N'no," Tom had not exactly, as you Somehow or other he had a rose-colored it is a grim necessity. Laura doesn't like to see such a spasm of terror pass over little as she hides her flushed face out of sight on Tom's shoulder, and tells him how kind and tender pa has always been with her, until Tom feels positively jealous of pa. She tells him he must not dread going to see him, for pa will be oh so glad to know how happy, happy he can make his little girl. And as she talks to him, the hard working, old-fashioned, tender-hearted old man, who loves his through the long pathway of years, girl as though she were yet only a big speaks so earnestly and eloquently that Tom, at first savagely jealous of him, is persuaded to fall in love with the old gentleman-he calls him "Pa," too, now

But by the following afternoon this feeling is very faint. When he enters the counting-room of Tare & Tret, and stands before pa, oh, land of love, how could Laura ever talk so about such a it. He walks out of the parlor sideways although not three hours ago he told man. Stubby little pa; with a fringe of the most obstinate and wiry gray hair standing all around his bald head; the wiriest, grizzliest mustache bristling business, business, in every line of the hard, seamed face, and profit and loss, barter and trade, dicker and bargain, in every movement of the nervous hands. Pa; old business. He puts down the newspaper a little way, and looks over the top of it as Tom announces himself, glancing at the young man with a pair of blue eyes that peer through oldfashioned iron-bowed spectacles, that look as though they had known these eyes and done business with them ever since they wept over their A.B.C.'s or peeped into the tall stone jar Sunday afternoon

to look for the doughnuts. Tom, who had felt all along there could be no inspiration on his part in this scene, has come prepared. At least he had his last true statement at his tongue's end when he entered the counting-room. But now, it seems to him that if he had been brought up in a circus, and cradied inside of a sawdust ring. and all his life trained to twirl his hat, he couldn't do it better, nor faster, nor be more utterly incapable of doing anything else. At last he swallows a lump in his throat as big as a ballot box, and faintly gasps, "Good morning." Tret hastens to recognize him. "Eh? oh yes; yes. I see; young Bostwick, from Dope & Middleribs. Oh, yes. Well-?" "I have come, sir," gasps Tom, thinking all around the world from Cook's explorations to "Captain Riley's Narrative," for the first line of that speech that Tare & Tret have just scared out of him so completely that he doesn't believe he ever knew a word of it. "I have come-" and he thinks if his lips didn't get so dry and hot, they make his teeth ache, that he could get along with it: "I have, sir-come, Mr. Tret; Mr. Tret, sir-I have come-I am come-" "Yes. ye-es," says Mr. Tret, in the wildest bewilderment, but in no very encouraging tones, thinking the young man probably wants to borrow money; "Ye-es; I see you've come. Well; that's all right; glad to see you. Yes, you've come?" Tom's and eighty revolutions per minute, and apparently not running up to half its full capacity. "Sir; Mr. Tret," he resumes, "I have come, sir; Mr. Tret-I am here to sue-" "Sue, eh?" the old grief, of apprehension and hope; ma. rustle of the newspaper; "Sue Tare & Tret, eh? Well, that's right, young man; that's right. Sue, and get damages. We'll give you all the law you want." Tom's head is so hot and his heart is so cold, that he thinks they must be about a thousand miles apart. "Sir," he explains, "that isn't it. It isn't that. I only want to ask-I have long knownsir," he adds, as the opening lines of his | ing right, from kitchen to dressing-rooms; speech comes to him like a message from looking after everything and everybody, heaven, "Sir, you have a flower, a tender with her hands and heart just as full as something they wanted the work lovely blossom; chaste as the snow that

crowns the mountain's brow; fresh

the breath of morn; lovelier than

your paternal eyes, the object of your tender care and solicitude, I ask of you. I would wear it in my heart, and guard and cherish it-and in the-" "Oh, yes, yes, yes," the old man says soothingly, generally keep half the windows in the house littered up with them, winter and summer, every window so full of house was two hours and a half before her father opened his head. Then he says, "Ch, yes, yes, yes; to be sure; to-besure." And then the long pause is isn't Jennie," Tom gasps, seeing a new Well, I don't-" "No, sir," interjects the despairing Tom, "it isn't Julia, it's-" "Sophie, eh? Oh, well Sophie-" "Sir," says Tom, "if you please, sir, it isn't Sophie, it's-" "Not Minnie, surely? Why, Minnie is hardly-well, I don't know. Young folks get along faster than-" "Dear Mr. Tret," breaks in the

As they sit and stand there, looking at dusty window, looks like an old Rubens painting; the beginning and the finishing of a race; the old man, nearly ready to lay his armor off, glad to be nearly and so safely through with the race and the fight that Tom, in all his inexperience and with all the rash enthusiasm and conceit of a young man, is just getting ready to run and fight, or fight and run, you never can tell which until he is through with it. And the old man. looking at Tom, and through him, and past him, feels his old heart throb almost as quickly as does that of the young man before him. For looking down a long vista of happy, eventful years, bordered with reseate hopes and bright dreams and anticipations. he sees a tender face, radiant with smiles and kindled with blushes; he feels a soft band drop into his own with its timid pressure; he sees the vision open, under the glittering summer stars, down mossy hillsides, where the restless breezes, sighing through the rustling leaves, whisper-Katydids; strolling along the winding paths, deep in the bending wild grass, down in the star-lit aisles of the dim old woods; loitering where the meadow brook sparkles over the white pebbles or murmurs around the great flat steppingstones; lingering on the rustic footand tender in their silent love-light; up flecked and checkered with sunshine and cloud, with storm and calm, through years of struggle, trial, sorrow, disappointment, out at last into the grand, of hard-won and well-deserved success, until he sees now this second Laura, re-imaging her mother as she was in the dear old days. And he rouses from his dream with a start, and he tells Tom he'll "Talk it over with Mrs. Tret, and see him again in the morning."

So they are duly and formally engaged; and the very first thing they do, they make the very sensible, though very uncommon, resolution to so conduct disjointed condition. But Laura sees is the one rare golden experience, the one under his nose; a tuft of tangled beard themselves that no one will ever suspect heartfelt earnestness. He sees only the under the sharp chin, and a raspy under- it. And they succeed admirably. No one | bright, sunny tints and happy figures growth of a week's run on the thin jaws; ever does suspect it. They come into that the tearful, shaded background church in time to hear the benediction every time they come together. They shun all other people when church is dismissed, and are seen to go home the of the background the picture would be longest way. At picnics they are missed not more than fifty times a day, and are discovered sitting under a tree, holding each other's hands, gazing into each other's eyes and saying-nothing. When he throws her shawl over her shoulders, he never looks at what he is doing, but | eight mustard spoons. The three cigar looks straight into her starry eyes, throws the shawl right over her natural curls, and drags them out by the hair | style, blue dog on a yellow background, pins. If, at sociable or festival, they are | barking at a green boy climbing a red left alone in a dressing room a second and a half. Laura emerges with her churns, old pattern, straight handle and rufile standing around like a railroad accident; and Tom has enough complex- of keeping a cow as they have of keeping ion on his shoulder to go around a young ladies' seminary. When they drive out, they sit in a buggy with a seat eighteen inches wide, and there is two feet of unoccupied room at either end of it. Long years afterwards, when they drive, a street car isn't too wide for them; and when they walk, you could drive four | impulsive Tom. Not long after her own loads of hay between them.

And yet, as carefully as they guard their precious little secret, and as cautious and circumspect as they are in their walk and behavior, it gets talked around that they are engaged. People are

so prying and suspicious. And so the months of their engagement run on; never before, or since, time flies so swiftly. Unless, it may be, in bank to meet in two days, that he can't lift one end of-and the wedding day dawns, fades, and the wedding is over. Over, with its little circle of delighted friends, with its ripples of pleasure and excitement, with its touches of home life, that leave their lasting impress upon Laura's heart, although Tom, with man-like blindness, never sees one of them. Over, with ma, with the thousand and one anxieties attendant on the grand event in her daughter's life, hidface, down, away down, under the tender glistening eyes, deep in the loving heart; ma, hurrying here and fluttering there, flushed reappearances, indicating struggles and triumphs in the turbulent world down stairs; ma, with the new-fangled belt, with the dinner-plate buckles, fastened on wrong side foremost, and the flower's dangling down the wrong side of her head, to Sophie's intense horror and pantomimic telegraphy; ma, flying here and there, seeing that every thing is gothey will hold, and more voices calling for five centuries, and had eith "ma" from every room in the house, too poor to get, or Tom had a

conid suswer: . Dur sue answers them all, and she sees after everything, and just in the nick of time prevents Mr. Tret from going downstairs and attending the ceremony in a loud-figured dressing-gown and green slippers; ma. who, with quivering lip and glistening eyes, has to be cheerful, and lively, and smiling; because if, as she thinks of the dearest and best of her flock going away from her fold, to give her life and her happiness into another's keeping, she gives away for one moment, a dozen reproachful voices cry out, "Oh-h, ma!" How it all comes back to Laura, like the tender shadows of a dream, long years after the dear, dear face, furrowed with marks of patient suffering and loving care, rests under the snow and the daisies; when the mother love that glistened in the tender eyes has closed in darkness on the dear old home; and the nerveless hands, crossed in dreamless sleep upon the pulseless breast, can never again touch the children's heads with caressing gestures; how the sweet vision comes to Laura as it shone on her wedding morn, rising in tenderer beauty through the blinding tears her own excess of happiness calls up, as the rainbow spans the cloud only through the migling of the golden sunshine and the falling rain.

And pa, dear old shabbby pa, whose clothes will not fit him as they fit other men; who always dresses just a year and a half behind the style; pa, wandering up and down through the house, as though he were lost in his own home, pacing through the hall like a sentinel blundering aimlessly and listlessly into rooms where he has no business, and being repelled therefrom by a chorus of piercing shrieks and hysterical giggling; pa, getting off his well worn jokes with an assumption of merriment that seems positively real; pa, who creeps away by himself once in a while and leans his face against the window, and sighs, in direct violation of all strict household regulations, right against the glass, as he thinks of the little girl going away to-day from the home whose love and tenderness and patience she knows so well. Only yesterday, it seems to him, the little baby girl, bringing the first music of baby prattle into his home, then a little girl in short dresses, with schoolgirl troubles and school-girl pleasures; then an older girl, out of school and into

society, but a little girl to pa still. And

then -. But somehow, this is as far as pa can get, for he sees, in the flight of this, the first, the following flight of the other fledglings; and he thinks how silent and desolate the old nest will be when they have all mated and flown away. He thinks, when their flight shall have made other homes bright and cheery and sparkling, with music and prattle and laughter, how it will leave the old home hushed and quiet and still. How in the long, lonesome afternoons, mother will sit by the empty cradle that rocked them all, murmuring the sweet old cradle songs that brooded over all their sleep. until the rising tears check the swaying cradle and choke the song-and back over river and mountain and prairie that roll and stretch and rise between the old home and the new ones, comes back the prattle of her little ones, the rippling music of their laughter, the tender cadences of their songs, until the hushed bridge, while he gazes into eyes eloquent old home is haunted by memories of its children-gray and old they may be, with other children clustering about their knees, but to the dear old home they are "the children" still. And dreaming thus, when pa for a moment finds his little girl alone—his little girl who glorious, crowning beauty and benison is going away out of the home whose love she knows, into a home whose tenderness and patience are all untried-he holds her in his arms and whispers the most fervent blessing that ever throbbed from a father's heart; and Laura's wedding day would be incomplete and unfeeling without her tears. So is the pattern of our life made up of smiles and tears, shadows and sunshine. Tom sees none of the background pictures of the wedding day. He sees none of its real, throws out in golden relief; but never stops to think that, without the shadows, the clouds, and the somber tints flat, pale and lusterless.

> And then the presents. The assortment of brackets, serviceable, ornamental and-cheap. The French clock, that never went, that does not go, that never will go. The nine potato mashers. The stands. Eleven match safes; assorted patterns. A dozen tidies, charity fair fence after seal brown apples. The two dasher, and they have as much thought a section of artillery. Five things they didn't know the names of, and never could find any body who could tell what they were for. A nickle-plated corkscrew, that Tom, in a fine burst of indignation throws out of the window, which Laura says is just like her own impulsive Tom catches his death of cold and ruins the knees of his best trousers crawling around in the wet grass hunting for that same corkscrew. Which is also just like her own impulsive Tom.

Then the young people go to work and buy e-v-e-r-y thing they need, the day they go to housekeeping. Everything. Just as well, Tom says, to get every thing at once and have it delivered right some time when Tom has an acceptance | up to the house as to spend five or six or ten or twenty years in stocking up a house, as his father did. Laura thinks so too, and she wonders that Tom should know so much more than his father. This worries Tom himself, when he thinks of it, and he never rightly understands how it is, until he is forty-five or fifty years old and has a Tom of his own to direct and advise him. So they make out a list, and revise it, and rewrite it. until they have everything down, complete, and it isn't until supper is ready hat is now making about nine hundred den away under her dear old smiling the first day that they discover there isn't a knife, a fork, or a plate or a spoon in the new house. The first day the washerwoman comes, and the water in the intense excitement of something is hot, and the clothes are all ready, it is discovered that there isn't a washtub nearer than the grocery. Further along man echoes sharply, with a belligerent with her sudden disappearances and in the day the discovery is made that while Tom has bought a clothes line that will reach to the north pole and back. and then has to be coiled up a mile or two in the back yard there isn't a clothes pin in the settlement. In the course of a week or two Tom slowly awakens to the realization of the fac that he has only begun to get. If should live two thousand years, wh he rarely does, and possibly may not. would think, just before he die thing one hundred mas gotten to bring up. So long a