

Kitty Howard's Journal.—SECOND SERIES.

BY ELIZABETH OAKES SMITH.

MAY.

I ALWAYS grow young and hopeful with the spring. Indeed, I throw off the little megrims engendered by a coal fire, and come out as good as new with the spring sunshine.

The Runyons are very annoying, they send in for David at all hours, now for a dance, and now for a ride, and I begin to feel the anxieties incident to a mother with boys growing up. My ideas of a rightly educated family are preposterous in their eyes. More than this, they have offered Hannah double the wages I could pay her, even if I paid her any, which I do not, treating her more like a child than a servant. Hannah was not to be seduced by their offers and treated them with high looks and sharp words. They also tried my cook, offering her "any sum per month, an easy birth, good home, and plenty of every thing," which was all meant to be a covert reproach to the careful management of my household. Biddy was indignant but cutting; she answered,

"I have always lived with ladies, and will not serve any but ladies. Mrs. Howard is a lady from the crown of her head to the sole of her foot, and I shan't leave her to serve you, Mrs. Runyon, with all your money."

I made another report to the Judge, who took me on his knees, and smoothed my hair (it is quite gray now) and replied most tenderly.

"The real trials of life are just beginning with us, darling. These vulgar neighbors of ours, with their extravagance, and ostentation, and foolish vanity must be borne with, and we must not be affected by them if we can help it. You grow very beautiful, Kitty, but I sometimes wish back your old, pretty wilfulness. I fear the angels will own their sister too soon," and he hugged me to his dear heart, as if afraid he might lose me.

June—We are able to keep horses and a carriage, now. Tom did not say a word about it till he rode home, and I saw him alight with such an imposing air. His bright eyes, gray hair, and fullness under the waistcoat, make him a very handsome man. Rachel asked me if I thought the King of Russia (I did not correct the term), was a better looking man than Papa!

June 7.—I was playing chess with our good Pastor, Tom being busy with his books, when suddenly the latter spoke out so sharply to David, that I turned to see what was the matter. Sure enough, I do not like such familiarity with a growing boy. Annie has taken David quite under her wing. At first I was rather pleased than otherwise, for mothers like to see that their sons are well affected by the girls—partly because a pretty idyl, a sweet reminiscence of our youth, and first-born tenderness of sex is thus revived, and partly, it may be, from an unconscious vanity. But, I have not told what had raised the ire of the dear Judge.

Annie and David were seated upon the sofa, the former with her arm around the boy's waist, and they were whispering in a continuous buzz. "Sit up, young man," cried Tom, certainly in no gentle voice. Kitty reddened, I am sure, for mothers always take the part of their sons, if they fall into trouble and disgrace, and when they are just emerging from boyhood, they are tender of their feelings, as they should be.

David arose to his feet, bowed haughtily to his father, and left the room. He looked terribly mortified at such open reprimand, but he is kingly in air at all times. Annie, on the contrary, actually approached my Tom, my Judge, of whom I always have a wholesome awe, which does a tender wife no harm, and actually put her finger, covered with rings, under his chin and lifted his head up from his book, and looking straight into his eyes, she said, slowly:

"Judge Howard, are you not ashamed of yourself? Poor David!"

Tom did not laugh; he smiled faintly, and said, "Annie, you are a foolish girl; you live without any purpose, you will not do well unless you learn to reflect."

Annie leaned her elbow on his shoulder a while, pouting, and then went to the piano and began to sing the pretty ballad of Ellen Percy, which carried Rachel to her side, who joined her sweet voice to the music.

I have thought much of this little scene, partly because Tom has such dignity that I wondered at Annie—"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," and in part because I see my husband seriously disapproves her man-

ners, which I have thought idle and careless, but not pernicious in the family.

To-night the Judge, tired and sleepy, came into my room, where I was writing up my journal (it is a deal of company for me), and walked across the room, and then he kicked off his slippers with emphasis, and said:

"Kitty, you had better send Annie home."

"Yes, dear," I answered, not quite convinced, but relying upon his better knowledge of character, and better wisdom, I shall obey; and now he is fast asleep, and Kitty must wipe her pen and go and give the dear sleeping children—all of them nearly as tall as their mother—a good night kiss upon their brow, then kneel and ask for a blessing upon us all, and then to sleep. A careful wife and mother is the genius of the house.

MAM. Our Pastor plays a good game of chess.

June 12.—The loveliest of days this has been. Have been busy with flowers, and busy also in putting winter-garments away in linen bags and cedar trunks, to preserve them from moths. Every article has been thoroughly examined, and repaired where needful; and such as will be no longer of use are put in the beneficiary chest, to be given away in the chilly autumn days. In this work, my dear, good Hannah has been very useful, and my pretty Rachel has contributed her share of help. I wish her to be a thorough housewife.

June 14.—David came to me this morning in my chamber, while I was putting away some of the winter curtains, and shutting the door carefully behind him, whispered with a boyish blush, "Look here, mother, don't you think it is time for me to shave?"

He had knelt down in front of me, and I examined his upper lip critically; in spite of myself, I burst into a merry laugh, for the "down" was as yet very meager in quantity.

"Don't laugh, mother," he cried, with a deeper blush, a half-laugh, and some irritation, but I could not resist, and I hugged him closer to my heart and gave way to an old, irresistible laugh, such as used to come over Kitty Howard before she knew what love meant. It subsided at length, and I examined chin and lip anew, followed by another burst of merriment, in which the boy now joined with right good will, exclaiming:

"I see how it is, mother, I must tarry awhile at Jericho, but don't tell, don't tell father;" and he was soon at the piano to practice, but it was of no use, there was a squeak, a bass, and all sorts of sounds but the right one. David is in

that transition process, so solemn, so momentous in itself, but so generally treated as most ridiculous.

"David does not speak pretty, and is so cross," Rachel said, but I told her she must be very kind and patient with him.

June 15.—I carried Annie home in the carriage to-day, and when we parted she shed abundance of tears, declaring I was a dear, pious old soul, and she loved me with all her heart. Her tears will soon dry up, and as to the whole little heart, an avalanche of all its contents will not crush any one. Annie has her pretty round of attractions, which recommend her to the young and giddy; and it is to be hoped she will find a mate in life of about her own mental caliber; otherwise, a superior man will find himself perplexed and troubled by her, as

"No sense puzzles more than sense,"

and he will be trying to find meaning in her, where no meaning exists.

MAM. Men are very apt to think women more clever than they really are—misled by our *smartness*, and they look for results which can not be attained; trying to find a gallon measure in a quart pot.

June 16.—Our village has been thrown into great excitement to-day, because of the arrest and examination of Mrs. Dale, for whipping *mercifully* her little step-daughter, a girl of ten years. No sooner did I hear of the tumult, than I ordered the carriage and took her myself to the court-room, for Mrs. Dale is nearly a stranger in the place, and an unjustifiable prejudice exists against her. She has been very reserved, going little into society; and I apprehend they are poor, and not quite happy in their domestic relations. The girl, it seems, ran screaming from the house, where she was encountered by a score of idle women, who carried her before the justice to testify. A warrant ensued, and I was just in time to save poor Mrs. Dale from being dragged through the street, and being hooted at by the mob. She wept bitterly, and was terribly frightened; whereat I was very sorry, for I knew she was incapable of any intentional wrong, and could have wished to see her carry her head well up on the occasion.

Arrived at the Justice's, the clamor ran high, and the child writhed and wriggled, and whimpered; whereat all the women—and men, too, as to that—were loud in their wrath against poor Mrs. Dale. Happily, Dr. Bitem entered this moment, and suggested that some matrons

should see if the child were really injured, and named me as the first matron. The result was that Kitty Howard's hands itched to inflict just what she complained of having had too much of, and what she richly deserved. I was, however, composed, a perfect Judgine on the occasion, and testified that "there was no cause for action." I took Mrs. Dale home again, and lectured Josephine all the way, upon her ill conduct. She is an obstinate, sulky-tempered girl, who would inflict injury upon herself in order to spite another.

' *MEN.* Some malignant star must be in the ascendant; all the women-folk seem bent upon mischief.

June 17.—Tom said to me this morning, and with a kiss besides:

"Kitty, you grow very wise and dignified with your years, and yet to me you are not a whit older than when I first made love to you;" whereat I felt the blush come to my cheeks, and replied:

"Love, you know, is always young. Swedenborg says the oldest Archangel is the youngest looking of all the heavenly hierarchy, being nearest the throne of God, and representing Love. Those who marry without a solid foundation of mutual respect will soon find mere passion yield to indifference—it may be to disgust and hatred."

"Ah! my honored *Aspasia*, wise and eloquent, and beautiful, if I were one of the Greeks, I would be thy *Pericles*; and yet there is a touch of *St. Elizabeth of Hungary*, and of *St. Theresa* about you. Do not wander away even to a heavenly spouse."

Almost twenty years a wife, and yet so flattered by my husband!

Tom went on. "Queeny (another name for me), you can never know how often you have helped out my own ideas. You can never know how many suggestions, good for the soul, and good for me in my official capacity, I have received from your unpremeditated utterance. A true woman, a self-poised woman, thinking her own thoughts, governed by her own convictions, is an oracle more to be revered than any *Delphic Priestess*. I go into court, and I carry with me a more humanizing spirit, imbibed from my wifely *Kitty*. A moral power is the throne of womanhood."

The tears came to *Kitty's* eyes, to be thus told that her influence extended even to the judicial bench, and when I looked out a shower was falling, followed by a most perfect rain-

bow, whereat I sat down and wrote the following *Sonnet*, addressed

TO MY HUSBAND.

Right royally, beloved, thou hast pressed
A nearer to God's oracles to-day.
Man's Yes makes woman lowlier than his Nay.
Thy soft ideal yesterday confessed,
Was womanhood, hands folded on her breast,
And cheek whereon the downward lashes play;
A vestal, bending at her shrine to pray—
Or trembling dove escaped the sheltering nest.
To-day, a loftier look, a deeper smile
Has shown thee nearer unto God—and I,
More lifted in mine own esteem the while,
Have lowlier grown, and my communing eye
A level with thine own, thou dost beguile
Unto a softer look when thou art nigh.

June 30.—This morning *Annie* came rushing in, her face radiant with smiles, and a hurried fit-out with finery. *David* was at his Greek lesson with his father in the library, and though *Annie* was bent upon seeing him, no excuse offered itself for her to do so, as I was indisposed to have him called. She pouted in vain. With her came *Blanch Runyon*, a handsome girl, but returned from Europe, with many foreign airs, and a sprinkling of French. *Annie* is to pass a space with them (the *Runyons*), which will be more to her taste than the studious, orderly routine of the *Howards*.

July 2.—Our children have never been to school, nor will they go to college, except to pass examinations. I was not pleased with this plan at first, but as my husband was resolved upon a home education, I yielded, as I believe a wife should in all such matters. I was the more willing to do this, because Tom did not cast all the burden upon me. He has been a diligent and faithful instructor to his children, exacting from them regular hours, and lessons, as well as a ready obedience to himself and me. I have heard their recitations when convenient, but have had no onerous duty exacted; and here, in their lessons, I have insisted upon thoroughness as carefully as has the Judge. In other matters *Kitty* is inclined to be rather indulgent than otherwise, most especially since my beautiful *Elizabeth* was called away.

Every day of my life I thank God for the gift of such a husband as dear Tom; upright, temperate, considerate for others, but unflinching in principle. Then he is so neat in person, so odorless; and women know very well that these things have much to do with the sweetness and harmony of married life.

I think there is no greater misfortune in a family than for the whole discipline of the children to devolve upon one parent, most especially if that one be the mother. Boys *will slip* out of maternal rule; they may not wantonly despise such government, but they are pretty likely to elude it in some way or other, by wheedling, evasion, and the many wiles likely to disarm a tender, or inconsiderate mother. Tom has always been on the alert to prevent any such proceedings on the part of my boys, and as Kitty has herself no trickishness nor deceit in any way or shape, and all can trust her under any stress whatever, the boys have most generally submitted to all requirements in a manly, filial way.

M.M. It is a great thing when a household have faith in each other. I sometimes think ours is Heaven.

July 10.—David has decided to study the law with his father, a plan I greatly approve, for he learns with so little effort that he would scarcely be thorough under a less exacting teacher. Paul listened to the discussion of the subject with much apparent interest, and when his father turned to him, saying with a laugh, "I suppose you will come into the office, too, some day, my son," he grew quite red in the face, and replied, "No, sir-ee."

Tom frowned at the slang phrase, and Paul continued:

"I said *sir-ee* to make it strong, sir. I am but a dull boy, I can't learn like David and Rachel. Somehow my head won't work."

His father put his arm round the boy, and said, "You are a straightforward, honest boy, brave enough to own to dullness, and resolute enough to counteract it by solid endeavor."

"I mean to be a farmer," continued Paul, "I like it; I will have horses and cows, and sheep, and corn, 'like serried host,' as Milton says. I think Milton gave me the idea of being a farmer."

"And what will my little daughter be?" asked the Judge.

"A music-teacher," responded Rachel.

"Yes," I replied, "she shall be thoroughly instructed in music, so that she can earn her bread thereby, and she shall be faultless in all womanly avocations. Our children shall not be left without resource in life, in case of trial and reverse; and, what is better still, they will have no foolish contempt for work, or the worker."

July 11.—David studies well, but is too much

at the Runyons, where there is a round of company—a general gala life, music and dancing, rides and picnics. Even my own more thoughtful children have caught the infection, and being constantly in demand, are quite well pleased to be from home. Paul, I found this morning exhibiting a litter of pups to Lily, a pretty girl, younger than himself, who showed her interest and delight by innumerable expressions of tenderness.

I begin to see that my birdlings will at length desert the nest. For the first time in my life, I have a sense of loneliness, and my husband is growing more dear every day to me. When I discovered this new phase of feeling, I detected with it a poor, forlorn sensation, best indicated by a drawing down of the corners of my mouth; at which I put on my hat and went out among some of my best and brightest neighbors, determined to never yield to such a mean aspect of life, but to meet the inevitable with a cheerful heart and resolute will.

I had written thus much, when I felt a kiss upon my brow—Tom had been looking over my shoulder, and he now took me on his knee and called me "good, brave, darling little wife."

THE best service that physiology is doing for our time is in banishing that old prejudice which excluded the knowledge and heed of the physical part of human life from the appeal to his higher nature; in getting rid of the pre-Raphaelite idea that spirituality and sanctity must have a colour and form of their own, other than the natural and healthy colour and form of life where the Lord has placed his children; in insisting that health everywhere is the safest sign of holiness, and that heaven and the angels come in the homes where the babes are rosy, and the mother is happy in folding them to her breast. When that is taught and believed, it is of no consequence what we think about the double nature of man. We see his soul in his visible life, and we feel that this positive substance is too real to be lost.

Absinthe is, by some people, regarded as a chief one among the many causes of the decadence of France. Men holding this opinion might, if they would make a point of it, observe that, inasmuch as Ireland has been very nearly ruined by her absentees, so France has been very greatly endangered also by her absinthess.