

### THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE.

He cannot walk, he cannot speak,  
Nothing he knows of books or men;  
He is the weakest of the weak,  
And has not strength to hold a pen.

He has no pocket and no purse,  
Nor ever yet has owned a penny;  
He has more riches than his nurse,  
Because he wants not any.

He rules his parents by a cry,  
And holds them captive by a smile—  
A despot strong through infancy,  
A king through lack of guile.

He lies upon his back and crows,  
Or looks with grave eyes on his mother.  
What can he mean? But I suppose  
They understand each other.

Indoors or out, early or late,  
There is no limit to his sway,  
For, wrapped in baby clothes of state,  
He governs night and day.

Kisses he takes as rightful due,  
And Turk-like has his slaves to dress  
him;  
His subjects bend before him, too—  
I'm one of them, God bless him!  
—Standard.

### THE BOND BETWEEN THEM.

MRS. LORDIN uttered a faint, frightened cry as a dripping little figure came into her presence that summer afternoon and put up both hands, saying: "I've been in zo river, mamma."

She folded the boy to her in an embrace that soiled her immaculate bodice and dampened the frizzes on her forehead. Wet-eyed and alarmed she asked for an explanation. Reggie gave it in his childish treble.

"So it was Gen. Dartmouth saved you, my child?" half sobbed the naughty beauty, forgetting everything in her ecstasy of joy over the return of her boy, her very all, from the swift waters of the river.

He had fallen in while at play, and the angry current was whirling him toward the rapids below. Gen. Dartmouth, austere and stately, was taking his usual afternoon promenade when the accident occurred.

Although the child's screams brought many people to the scene none ventured to risk life save the General. He sprang at once into the river and snatched the boy from death at great risk to himself.

He treated the affair very coolly, and himself carried Reggie to the door of his own home, and bade him go at once to his mother. Then the dark-faced man with military bearing went to his hotel and exchanged his wet garments for dry ones.

Mrs. Lordin was one of the group of very pretty women at the Riverside resort. She had been a guest at Willow cottage a month when her boy met with his mishap. She had noticed Gen. Dartmouth for the first time a week earlier. He had passed her once, lifting his hat with cool decorum. A hot fire had leaped into Millis Lordin's cheeks, and her heart gave a sharp bound; then the blood receded, leaving her very pale.

"How dared he intrude here?" she thought. "I knew he was at Oakland earlier in the season, and sought this secluded nook, hoping to avoid the sight of his hateful countenance."

To-day, with little Reggie folded against her wildly beating heart, Millis Lordin realized how much she owed to the General. She sat swaying back and forth, the tears coursing down her cheeks. The thought of what might have been had he not been at hand when the cruel waters closed over the blonde head of Reggie quite unnerved the woman of the world.

She straightened herself up at length and sent the boy to his nurse. A maid entered with a card; it bore the name of George Dartmouth.

"It is well," she said, "I will see him and have it over as soon as possible. How I hate that man! Why has fate been so unkind as to permit him to do me a service?"

She entered the drawing-room, never looking more beautiful, not even in the hour when she stood at the altar of the old South church, a bride of 18, seven years before. Her visitor turned from surveying a picture on the wall as she entered. Her visitor was very pale. She grew rigid the moment their eyes met. She noticed a great change in him since the hour of their parting, now some years in the past. There was a whitening of the abundant hair at the temples, a thinning of the cheeks, and a slightly perceptible stoop of the stalwart frame. He was only five and forty. It seemed to her that he had aged with unnecessary rapidity.

"I called to inquire after the boy, Millis," said he, without offering his hand. Doubtless he wished to save himself from rebuff.

"He met with no harm. How can I thank you enough, Gen. Dartmouth?" cried Millis, forgetting herself for the moment, and extending both hands toward her visitor. Then she suddenly bethought herself, and withdrew her hands as swiftly as she had advanced them. His clear gaze ruffled her, and she looked aside, dumb and confused.

"I assure you, Mrs. Lordin, I am amply repaid for the little inconvenience the affair caused me by learning of the boy's escape from injury," said the General, his gaze lingering on the fair face of the woman haughtily.

An awkward silence followed. The drawing-room contained no other occupants save these two. Had they been friendly the hour and place was every way calculated for a delightful tete-a-tete.

"I wish I might repay you in some way, General. Reggie is my all; had the fate been unkind and permitted him to drown I should have been in despair.

"Is that all you have to say to me, Millis?"

She bowed coldly. He regarded that pale, haughty face one moment, and a

great agony rushed over his soul. He trembled throughout his stalwart frame; one moment thus, then he walked to the door; on the threshold he paused unintentionally.

"I got away from nurse and come to see you, Gen'ral," cried a shrill, childish voice. Two small hands clutched the wrists of Dartmouth, and tried to draw him back into the room. "See, mamma's cryin'; won't you say somefin' to her, please?"

The General, taken by surprise, faced about and caught sight of Mrs. Lordin with her handkerchief to her eyes. The sight seemed to move him strangely. He suffered Reggie to draw him across the carpet toward his mother.

"Mamma, don't cry; the Gen'ral wants to speak to you. Tell her not to cry, Gen'ral. Her Reggie ain't drowned. Tell mamma how you did it, please, Mr. Gen'ral."

The child's voice had a pleading ring, and its very sound seemed to effect the soldier deeply. He suddenly lifted the boy in his arms and pressed him closely to him, imprinting a kiss on the smooth, soft cheek.

And Reggie hung both arms about the General's neck and kissed him in turn, seeming pleased at the friendliness of the man whose name was in everybody's mouth, since he had recently received his party's nomination to Congress.

"Reggie," cried his mother, "go back to nurse at once, you naughty boy!"

The "naughty boy" looked appealingly at his champion. The General stood irresolute, regarding him with a longing expression.

"He is our boy, Millis," he said, and then started and trembled at the sound of his own voice.

He seemed to realize that he had ventured on dangerous ground, and in this he was not mistaken. She turned upon him with the menace of an aroused tigress.

"Not yours, but mine, George Dartmouth," cried she, hotly, caressing the blonde curls that lay clustered like spun gold against her skirts. "Think you I would permit him to bear your name after the act of his father made him an orphan, in part, at least? From that hour, three years ago, he has been Lordin, and the name of Dartmouth has not been mentioned to him. He knows you not; his father died years ago, and this boy will never know him as he really was. Go now, before—"

A stern, almost angry look appeared on the face of the listening man while the woman talked. He felt a keen sense of wrong now, and resolved not to permit her words to pass unchallenged.

"Madame," said he, "I would have quitted your presence before now but for this boy. I repeat it, our boy. You had no right to take from him the name of his father. It is an honorable one. No act of mine has ever tarnished it."

"Think a moment," coolly interrupted the beautiful woman.

"What do you mean?"

"Do honorable men desert their wives and children? Was it a mark of manliness to fly from home, from wife and boy in the hour of financial calamity?"

"But you had means, Millis; and I knew that you would not be happy with me after my fortune was gone."

"Ah! You knew this?"

"Yes. I was an austere man of 40 while you were young and vivacious. I was blind enough to think you loved me. I did not know till it was too late that it was my standing and wealth you craved. You filled a high niche in the social world and was satisfied. My heart hungered for love, it was satisfied until the truth dawned one fatal day."

"The truth?"

She seemed to have lost her resentment, and was interested in what he was saying. Reggie covered in his mother's skirts and listened, wondering, to the conversation he did not understand.

"That it was for money and social position you married your father's middle-aged friend."

"You say you learned this one fatal day?"

"Yes, by merest accident. I had gone out, but missing my glove, returned to overhear words uttered in the conservatory by you."

"Indeed?"

"You were talking with your bosom friend, Almada Winans. I heard plainly what was said. She laughingly reminded you of a former lover of yours, Albert Turner. In reply you said if it hadn't been for my money and standing you might have been Mrs. Turner instead of an old man's slave."

"Did I say that?"

The woman's face was white as death, and she seemed scarcely to breathe. He stood up tall and stern, continuing:

"The truth hurt me terribly. I felt like a criminal. Although there had been no coercion on my part, I could see that my money had won you and I was miserable. I think, but for our baby boy, I should have been coward enough to take my own life. The revelation of that hour broke my heart. Scarcely a month later the collapse of a bank nearly ruined me. I had \$50,000 in bonds; these I turned over to you through a friend, then quitted your presence forever. I knew that you could obtain a divorce at the end of two years for desertion."

"It was to please me, that you left me?" the woman asked hurriedly.

"Certainly. I knew you wished to be free from bonds that were galling now that wealth was gone."

"Gen. Dartmouth, what if I tell you that I never received those bonds you speak of?" asked she with changing color. "What if I tell you that my bosom friend, Almada Winans, disappeared at the same time you did, and that gossips coupled your names? What I said that day in the conservatory was the idle prattle of a silly girl, and meant nothing whatever?"

"You did not receive the bonds?"

"No. I have lived on the little left me by my father, who died soon after your disappearance. I have had to

bear the stigma of being spoken of as a deserted wife. Can you blame me if I almost hated you?"

"Perhaps not, but I meant it for the best. Are you sure you were not in earnest when you told your friend that you married old Dartmouth for his money, Millis?"

"Was I so wicked as to say that?"

"I think my memory serves me correctly."

Mrs. Lordin had sudden recourse to her handkerchief. The General stood in an embarrassed attitude.

"It was the boy who brought us together, Millis. For his sake may we not part friends?"

He held out his hand. She did not see the movement, her eyes being hidden in the handkerchief. Reggie quickly divined the situation and seized and conveyed his mother's hand to that of the General.

"We part friends, I hope, Millis?"

"Y—s, if—if we must part, George," faltered a small voice from behind the handkerchief.

"Millis, do you mean—"

"I mean that I have been a silly fool," she said. "I—I never loved any one but you. Can you ever forgive me, George?"

The pitiful little sob that accompanied the request quite did the business for the General. He stepped near her and said eagerly:

"It is my opinion that we have both been foolish, Millis. If it were not for that divorce—"

"There has been no divorce, George."

"Is it possible? Then you are still Mrs. Dartmouth?"

"He trembled like one in a chill. 'I am still your wife, George,' she murmured."

While he stood irresolute a small voice piped from below:

"Kiss mamma, Gen'ral! Kiss mamma!" And Gen. Dartmouth did—Waverley Magazine.

### TOO SMART FOR HERRMANN.

A Card Sharp Who Beat the Wizard by Losing to Him.

"The dead magician, Herrmann, loved nothing better than a game of poker, and by his wizard touch could manipulate the cards beyond the possibility of detection if he so willed," said R. W. Scully, of Boston.

"But Herrmann scorned to do anything crooked. If he ever cheated he did so for a joke and invariably refunded any money won by his art. Once he was tricked in a very funny way. He got into a two-handed game with a noted Western gambler who was almost as expert as Herrmann. The latter had been told to look out for this man, but he hadn't the slightest doubt of his ability to protect himself.

"The pair sat in to play freeze-out for big money. Herrmann had a lot of rather worn paper currency and some gold and silver, while the professional had mostly crisp new bills of large denomination. The game was warm and very interesting, but Herrmann had the best luck, and he managed to get hold of the new bills of high figure, the gambler acquiring the old notes and a major part of the coin. Herrmann quit a heavy winner, and then said to his opponent: 'I want you to take back all the money I have won of you, for I did not play fairly. I wouldn't keep a dollar unless I had won it on the square.'

"To his surprise the gambler absolutely refused to accept the offer. 'I played just as crookedly as you did,' he said, 'and whenever a man beats me at my own game he is welcome to my money.' All efforts of the magician to get him to reconsider were unavailing, and finally Herrmann went away with about \$800 of the fellow's new currency, while the gambler took off something like \$300 that he had acquired from the wizard.

"Later on the wizard saw the method in the professional's madness. He was telling some friends of his queer experience while taking a drink in a bar-room, and Herrmann, saying he was enough ahead to set up the wine, offered a \$50 bill in payment. The bar-keeper, after a second's hesitation, handed him back the money. It was a counterfeited, and so was all the rest. That was Herrmann's last game of poker outside his own circle of personal friends."

### An Heroic Lad of Long Ago.

"In 'The Field of the Cloth of Gold,' in St. Nicholas, Roberta B. Nelson says that it was not King Henry VIII, or Philip I, of France, but the peasant lad, Victor Bacheaux, that was the hero of the day. When 200 young Frenchmen were appointed to storm a hill held by the English archers, their flag was given to him, to bear against the foe. And gallantly he bore it, in the face of cannon-balls and flying arrows; though his companions turned tail and fled down the hill, believing, as he did, that it was a real, and not a sham, battle that they were engaged in. But the English gunners and archers had been instructed to aim above the heads of their assailants, and the gallant boy was welcomed with cheers when he reached the summit of the hill.

### A Little More Appropriate.

"Your wife?" asked the casual acquaintance as the aggressive-looking woman passed.

"Well," replied the little man, doubtfully, "perhaps it would be a little more appropriate to say that I am her husband."—Indianapolis Journal.

### Matrimonial Item.

"Maud says she would be willing to marry if the proper man came along."

"And I guess he would not have to be any too proper at that."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

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