

THE FAMILY STORY

A PAIR OF BLOOMERS.

BEFORE bicycling became a craze with women there had never been even so much as the shadow of a quarrel between Mr. and Mrs. Cranston. But after Mrs. Cranston bought a bicycle and learned to ride well there was a disagreement which came very near breaking up a happy home. They had been married three years, and they had often said that their married life had been one long honeymoon.

Tom had yielded so readily to all of his wife's whims that she had unconsciously gained an opinion that her word was to him like the laws of the Medes and the Persians.

But this idea was all knocked to pieces when one morning as they sat at breakfast Mrs. Cranston said:

"Tom, I'm going to order my dressmaker to make a suit of bloomers for me to-day. I do so much bicycling now that skirts are too heavy for me."

"What!" shouted Tom, dropping his spoon in the oatmeal and spattering milk all over his necktie, looking at her as though she had announced that she was going to commit suicide.

Mrs. Cranston also dropped her spoon and looked in surprise at her husband.

"I said," she repeated, "that I was going to get a bloomer suit. What strikes you as particularly strange about that?"

"What strikes me as particularly strange?" he repeated, with a wild look in his eyes. "Do you think for one instant that I will allow my wife to race around town looking like a lithograph of a variety entertainment? Not much."

"But, Tom," said Louise, in a tone that had never failed to persuade her husband that she was right and that he was wrong. "I don't see why I can't have bloomers. Mrs. Kynaston and Mrs. Bentley and Mrs. Jennings all wear them and their husbands don't object, so why should you?"

"It makes no difference why I should," said Tom, doggedly. "I don't intend to have my friends on the exchange coming to me and saying 'Tom, I see your wife is wearing bloomers.' Not if I know it."

"But, Tom," she began, "I—"

"Oh, don't talk any more nonsense, Louise," he broke in. "I am sick of it. You shan't wear bloomers, so that settles it." And Mr. Cranston, whose appetite had been entirely taken away by his wife's announcement, got up from the table and started for the door.

"Good-by," he called from the hall, and then the door slammed, and Louise sat at the breakfast table wondering how it was that she had never before known that her husband had a will of his own.

She had told all of her friends, only the day before, that she would be wearing bloomers within a week, and when they had suggested that her husband might object she had said:

"What! Tom object? Why, he never objects to anything."

And now Tom had absolutely refused to allow her to wear them, with a facial expression which showed that he would not stop short of the divorce courts to prevent it.

Finally she arose from the table and went to her room.

She had an idea which she thought, if properly carried out, would win Tom's consent to the wearing of bloomers. She wrote a hurried note to her dressmaker ordering a bloomer suit of a pattern which she had already selected, and then donned her old bicycle suit to pay a call on Mrs. Kynaston, who had a husband that did not object to bloomers.

She told her troubles to the vivacious Mrs. Kynaston, who was not sparing in her sympathy for the poor friend who had a narrow-minded husband who objected to a convenient bicycle dress.

"Why, how foolish of him," she said. "I don't believe the poor man has ever seen a proper bicycling costume. I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll all go bicycling this afternoon, and come back by your house at just the time your husband gets home, and he will see what a bloomer suit looks like."

And so the bicycle party was arranged, and when Thomas Cranston arrived at his house that evening he saw five women riding in front of the house and four of them were in full bloomer costume. The fifth, who wore skirts, was his wife.

He was not so badly shocked as he thought he would be, and he wished that he had not been so decided in his refusal of his wife's request, but he made up his mind that it would be unmanly to yield after his remarks of the morning, and so with a bow to his wife and her companions he went indoors and began to dress for dinner.

That night Louise again broached the subject of bloomers, but her husband silenced her by saying:

"Now, see here, Louise, don't speak to me about bloomers again. You may go

in for women's rights if you like, and you may wear standing collars and men's waistcoats, but you shall not wear trousers, even if bicycling does justify it in your eyes."

"Trousers!" cried Louise, indignantly. "Who said anything about trousers? I was talking about bloomers."

"I know you were," said Mr. Cranston, "and please don't talk about them any more. I'm tired of it, and I won't hear it mentioned again."

The next morning when Mr. Cranston put on his coat to start for his office his wife called him back and said:

"Tom, I'll promise you never to mention bloomers again, but if you ever change your mind about them please tell me, for I'm really very anxious to wear them."

The smile which for twenty-four hours had been absent from Tom Cranston's face came again, and he kissed his wife.

"That's a dear good girl, Louise," he said. "I hated to refuse your request, but really I don't like the idea of your wearing those things. And now if there is anything else you want me to do for you just name it, and I'll do it."

He went away, but returned in a moment and called out:

"Oh, Louise, I'm going to a dinner at the club to-night, and I want you to have my dress suit handy when I come home. Good-by."

"Now, then," said Louise, as she went upstairs, "I'll see if I can't make Mr. Tom change his opinion about bloomers. That promise of his was the very thing I wanted."

The hour longed for by both came at last. Tom entered the house and rushed to his room to put on his dress suit.

"Oh, Tom!" Louise called while he was dressing, "come down here; I want you to redeem your promise of this morning and do me a favor."

"All right!" he called; "I'll be down in a minute and I'll keep my promise."

He found his wife sitting on the floor with a dress pattern in front of her and dress goods scattered all around.

"Well, what's all this?" he asked. "Are you making a rag carpet? What is it you want me to do for you? If it's to clean up all this mess here I shall refuse, for I have some work to do next week."

"No," she said, laughing, "I don't want you to clean up the mess and I'm not making a rag carpet. I'm making a bicycle dress, which I must have early to-morrow morning, and I want you to let me drape the skirt on you so that it will hang all right."

"But, Louise," he objected, "I've got to go out to that dinner at 8 o'clock, and it's now nearly 7. I won't have time."

"I can't let it go, for I must have it to-morrow morning," she insisted. "You've promised to do what I asked, and now when I want you to do a little thing like this you refuse, and I think it's real mean."

Mrs. Cranston stood up holding a pattern in one hand and an unfinished dress in the other, and looked as though she were about to burst into tears.

"Oh, come now, Louise," he said, impatiently. "Can't you see that your request is trivial and unreasonable and I must go to that dinner?"

The tears that had seemingly been held back with such an effort now became visible and rolled down her cheeks.

"I think it's mean," she sobbed, "You promised to do anything I wanted you to, and now you won't keep your word. I've cut up my other dress and the bicycle party is of just as much importance as your old dinner."

Mr. Cranston looked grave. He did not want to lose that dinner and he didn't want to break his promise.

"How long will this fitting business last?" he questioned, after several moments' silence, broken only by the sobbing of his wife.

"About half an hour," she replied, brightening up a little.

"Well, then, hurry up," said Cranston, throwing off his coat and standing erect. "Bring the thing here."

And so the gown was put on Mr. Cranston, and Louise dropped on one knee and began pinning the draperies in a hurried manner.

"You see, Tom," she said, as she tucked up the first fold and surveyed it with a critical eye, "this is of the greatest importance to me and I know you will help me out."

"Um," was the only answer her husband made. He was looking straight at the clock and wondering how it was that the minute hand was moving so fast.

He thought that the clock must be out of order. He pulled out his watch and saw that the minute hand there moved with the same railroad speed, and it was 7:30 o'clock.

"Are you anywhere near through?" he asked, impatiently.

She shook her head and turned her attention to the dress. Tom fumed as he noticed that it was now 7:45.

"Have you any idea how soon you will be through?" he asked, with a forced calmness.

"Not the slightest," she replied, in a voice that was either muffled by pins or laughter. Tom couldn't tell which, for she was stooping and studying the hem of the dress.

At that moment the door opened and Mr. Kynaston, the husband of Mrs. Cranston's bloomer-wearing friend, threw open the door and stood gazing in open-mouthed astonishment.

"Why, Tom," he said, when he recovered himself, "I thought you were going to call for me if you left downtown first? You know you told me so, and said if I got ready first I was to come here and walk right in. Are you going to the dinner?"

"This will be all over the exchange to-morrow," groaned Tom, inwardly. "Yes, I'm going to the dinner if Louise ever gets through with this miserable skirt," he added, aloud.

"Oh, nonsense, why don't she wear bloomers? Come on. We are late already," said his friend.

"Louise," whispered Cranston, "if you'll call my promise off you may have bloomers or anything else you want."

"Oh, you dear, good boy," cried Louise, with well-feigned surprise. "Go to your dinner. Now hurry or you'll be late."

Then Tom, after kissing her good-by, rushed off to the club.

Louise put on her bonnet and went to Mrs. Kynaston's house.

"Katie," she cried, as her friend welcomed her at the door, "I'm to have bloomers."

And then she told the story of the manner in which her husband had been induced to change his mind.

And she said in conclusion: "I bought the bloomers yesterday, and I'll wear them to-morrow."

"You really cried, did you?" asked Mrs. Kynaston. "Well, Louise, if you went in for woman suffrage we would have it in twenty-four hours. Talk about men's executive ability! Why, I believe you could make your husband wear bloomers himself."—New York Evening Sun.

Knew Lawyers' Ways.

The sudden manner in which the team that was coming down the road halted was enough to show that the driver was surprised at something. He took his broad-brimmed straw hat off and waved it at a man who was working in a field, at the same time calling at the top of his voice:

"S-a-a-y t-h-e-r-e!"

"What do you want?" asked the man who was working, as he came and leaned over the fence, without letting go of the lines over his team.

"Didn't ye hear 'bout it?"

"'Bout what?"

"It's goin' on."

"What's goin' on?"

"Land sakes! There's a man fur ye. Ye'll be sayin' next yer uncle didn't die an' leave a will that mentions you ter have a hull lot o' money, if the other fellers don't succeed in breakin' it."

"'Course I knowed that."

"An' the case come up fur trial this mornin'."

"I knowed that, too."

"Then why wasn't ye up to the courthouse takin' an interest into it, same ez the rest on 'em did?"

"Wal, ye see this here's a busy season with me. If I hedn't nothin' else ter do, I wouldn't mind droppin' in an' hearin' 'em argy back an' forth. But I dunno's I care much which o' the lawyers gits the money."—Detroit Free Press.

Marvel in Mental Arithmetic.

Wolf Bluestone, who died at Hot Springs recently, came to Orange a very poor man in 1876. He began merchandising, and while here acquired a capital estimated at between \$60,000 and \$75,000. He could neither read nor write, yet he was a marvel in mental arithmetic. Fractions nor interest had any hard places in them for him. He offered the principal of the city schools at this place \$100 if he would teach him to write his own name within a year. The professor undertook the job and worked with great energy, but discovered that on each Monday morning every trace of the previous week's work had entirely faded from the mind of his pupil, and after five months of close attention to his undertaking, abandoned it as a hopeless case. A peculiarly constructed "BXX" was the nearest approach he ever made to penmanship, but that signature is attached to many valuable documents now of record in this country, and has for several years passed current at the banks in New York, Galveston and Orange, often for large sums of money. It was quite as difficult to counterfeit the characters as affixed by him as it would be to successfully imitate the signature.—Galveston Daily News.

No woman's hair is as long hanging down her back as it looks to be in the wad on top of her head.

Let a wise man have good luck a few years, and he will do as foolish things as anybody.



Photographing the Center of Bones.

French surgeons have succeeded, with the aid of X rays, in producing photographs of the bones of a living person which reveal the existence of disease in the center of the bones, while the outer portions are sound.

A Vanished Land.

According to views recently explained before the Geological Society in England, the island of Jamaica was once connected with both North and South America by a stretch of mountainous land covering the region of the West Indian archipelago. There are indications that this ancient land was elevated no less than two miles and a half above sea-level.

A Gorilla's Portrait.

A curiosity exhibited at a recent meeting of the Zoological Society in London was a daguerreotype of a gorilla, believed to be the first animal of that kind ever brought alive to Europe. The picture was made as long ago as 1855. In these days of snapshot photography it is easy enough to get photographs of animals, but the thing was not so simple forty years ago.

Can Fear Be Cured?

Professor Angelo Mosso, of Turin, in his book on "Fear," which has recently been translated into English, says that fear is a disease to be cured. He particularly condemns the methods, which are sometimes practiced by parents and nurses, of governing and controlling young children through a sense of fear. Even more pernicious is the practice of awakening a sense of terror in children by stories of "bogies," hobgoblins and witches. According to Professor Mosso, mankind can be made more courageous by proper cultivation.

Insects and Flowers.

It has frequently been asserted that the brilliant colors of many flowers serve to attract bees and butterflies to them. Experiments recently reported to the Belgian Academy of Sciences seem to show that the perfume rather than color of the flowers is the real attraction. Bright-colored blossoms were covered with leaves and papers pinned closely about them; yet the insects not only visited the hidden flowers, but endeavored to force their way under the papers in order to reach the blossoms which they could not see.

Modifying Milk.

Laboratories for modifying and sterilizing milk through scientific processes have now been established, according to the Scientific American, in Boston, New York and Philadelphia, and others are to be opened in several Western cities. The milk is freed from superabundance of fat and from bacteria, and then is so sealed in bottles that it cannot become contaminated until opened for use. It is claimed that "modified milk" has saved the lives of many children who, if improperly nourished, would have succumbed to the maladies of early childhood.

Taste and Smell.

Physiologists have long known that many sensations ordinarily ascribed to taste are in reality due to smell, but this fact has lately been made clearer than before by the investigations of German savants. Air enters the olfactory chamber, where the nerves connected with the sense of smell are centered, both through the nostrils and through an inlet leading from the mouth. In consequence, a breath of perfumed air manifests its odor not only when it is breathed in, but when it is breathed out. For this reason we are sometimes deceived as to the source of the pleasure we derive from things taken into the mouth, the agreeableness of the impression being due, in some cases, rather to smell than to taste.

Wonderful Sun.

Astronomers are not yet all agreed as to the causes of the variations of color and brilliancy which are exhibited by many stars. In the constellation Cepheus, in the northern sky, there is a star named Delta Cephei, which, in the course of about three days, alternately gains and loses a large part of its light. The spectroscopic has proved that Delta Cephei consists of two stars revolving around one another in a very elliptical orbit, although they never get far enough apart to be separately visible from the earth. Even when viewed with a telescope their light is blended into a single star disk, although if we could go near enough to them we should find that they are, in reality, millions of miles apart. When brightest, the united light of the twin stars is two or three times greater than when faintest. One

of the explanations recently offered by astronomers to account for these changes is that one of the stars composing Delta Cephei has a very thick atmosphere veil, consisting of clouds of condensed metallic vapors, and that when the stars draw near one another in their orbital motion the increase of heat dissipates the obscuring veil, and permits the star to which it belongs to shine with a splendor that it cannot obtain when its rays are interrupted by its envelope of clouds. It is hard to believe that inhabited worlds could exist in the neighborhood of such a pair of suns as that.

A Backwoods Postoffice.

It is doubtless true that business is done in a very slipshod, unbusinesslike way in some small, out-of-the-way post-offices, but most readers will probably suspect a measure of exaggeration in the following story, which is related by the Detroit Free Press. It is hard for a newspaper humorist not to exceed somewhat the bounds of truth.

I had directed that my letters should be forwarded to the postoffice at Mountville, and I reached the place to find it composed of a store, a blacksmith shop and three dwelling houses. I inquired for the office, and was directed to the store. There was no sign of a postoffice in connection with it, but I asked of the old man who came forward:

"Is this the postoffice?"

"Reckon 'tis," he replied.

"I don't see anything like a postoffice."

"Mebbe not. We ain't never done a power o' business here as a postoffice. What's wanted?"

I gave him my name and added that I expected some letters, and after thinking for a moment, he replied:

"Them letters—three of 'em—done come several days ago. Lemme see what I did with 'em."

He looked along the counters, up on the shelves, and behind boxes and barrels for a long ten minutes, and finally said:

"It's mighty quare whar them letters has gone to. We was all a-lookin' at 'em yere fur two or three days, but I doan' reckon nobody carried 'em off home. Jest set down till I look further."

He made a pretty thorough search of the store this time, even getting down on his hands and knees to peer under the molasses barrel, but the letters could not be found.

"Say," he said, as he got up and brushed his knees, "that's my home over yan. Mebbe the old woman's took the letters home."

I went over and knocked on the door, but got no answer. I passed around the house, and found the woman smoking her pipe as she minded the fire under a kettle of soft soap.

"Letters?" she repeated. "Yes, I brung 'em over and put 'em under a pan on the shelf, and I reckon the peck rats hain't got at 'em yet."

She went in and got them, and when I returned to the store the postmaster said:

"Now, then, if yo' ar' gwine to want a postage stamp this week yo'd better let me know to-day, so's I kin order it from Knoxville."

Blackie, the Enthusiast.

John Stuart Blackie's superabundance of energy is evidenced by the eagerness with which he entered into whatever interested those with whom he came in contact. In his biography we find an extract from a characteristic letter which he wrote while in Rome to a sister who had remonstrated with him for being so much addicted to verse-writing.

"You see I am verse-mad," he wrote. "But you know I am subject to various kinds of madness, and of frequent recurrence. In Aberdeen I got religious mad; then I got Latin-mad; now I am verse-mad and drawing-mad, and am fast getting antiquity-mad."

"Out of this never-ending fermentation may something good arise, that I may not be eternally driven about by every wind of doctrine. But as it is, I have no more command over my whims and fancies than a henpecked husband has over his wife."

"Bulls" Not Irish.

Those who are not Irishmen sometimes trespass on Irish prosperity. A French cure, preaching about sudden death, said, "Thus it is with us. We go to bed well, and get up stone dead."

An old French lawyer, writing of an estate he had just bought, added, "There is a chapel upon it in which my wife and I wish to be buried, if God spares our lives."

An English lecturer on chemistry said, "One drop of this poison placed on the tongue of a cat is sufficient to kill the strongest man," and an English lieutenant said that the Royal Navy Company wished to kill him to prevent him going up the river until next year.

A merchant who died suddenly left in his bureau a letter to one of his correspondents which he had not sealed. His clerk, seeing it necessary to send the letter, wrote at the bottom, "Since writing the above I have died."

The First of Many.

The first white child born on United States soil was the grand daughter of White, the Governor of Roanoke Island. She was christened by the name of Virginia Dare, and her birthday was Aug. 18, 1587.