AUNT MARY'S SUGGESTION.

[Arthur's Magazine.]

"John!" Thomas Belknap spoke in a firm, rather authoritative voice. It was evident that he anticipated some reluctance on the boy's part.

John, a lad between 12 and 13 years of age, was seated on the doorstep reading. A slight movement of the body indicated that he heard; but he did not make any response.

"John!" This time the voice of Thomas Belknap was loud, sharp and imperative.

"Father," responded the boy, dropping the volume in his lap, and looking up with a slightly flushed but sullen face.

"Didn't you hear me when I first spoke?" said Thomas Belknap, angrily.

"Yes, father."

"Then why didn't you answer me? I always respond when you are spoken to. I'm tired of this ill-mannered, disrespectful way of yours."

The boy stood up, looking now dogged as well as sullen.

"Go and do what I tell you. Get your hat and jacket."

The boy moved slowly, and with a very reluctant air, from the room.

"Now don't be all day," Thomas Belknap called after him. "I'm in a hurry. Move briskly."

How powerless the father's words fell upon the air! The motions of John were not in the least quickened. He passed out into the passage and up the stairs, while the impatient Thomas Belknap could with difficulty restrain an impulse to follow after and hasten the sulky boy's movements with blows. He controlled himself, however, and resumed the perusal of his newspaper. Five, ten minutes passed, and John had not yet appeared to do the errand upon which his father designed to send him. Finally Thomas Belknap dropped his paper, and, going hastily to the bottom of the stairs, called out—

"You John, John!"

"Father," replied John.

"Didn't I tell you to hurry?"

"I can't find my jacket."

"You don't want to find it. Where did you lay it when you took it off last night?"

"I don't know. I forget."

"If you're not down here with your jacket on in one minute, I'll warm your shoulders well for you."

Thomas Belknap was quite in earnest in this threat, a fact plainly apparent to John in the tone of his father's voice. The boy opened a closet, and, singularly enough, there hung his jacket in full view. At the expiration of the minute he was standing before his father with his jacket on and buttoned up to the chin.

"Where's your hat?" asked Thomas Belknap.

"I don't know, father."

"Well, find it, then."

"I've looked everywhere."

"Look again. There; what is that on the hat-rack, just under my coat?"

The boy answered not, but walked moodily to the rack and took his hat therefrom.

"Ready at last. I'm out of all patience with your slow movements and sulky manner. What do you stand there for, knitting your brows and pouting your lips?"

The lad, thus angrily rated, made a feeble effort to throw a few rays of sunshine into his face. But the effort died fruitless. All was too dark, sullen, and rebellious within his bosom.

"See here." Thomas Belknap still spoke in that peculiar tone of command which always stifles self-respect in the one to whom it is addressed.

"Do you go down to Leslie's and tell him to send me a good claw-hammer and three pounds of eightpenny nails, and go quickly."

The boy turned off without a word, and was slowly moving away, when his father said sharply:

"Look here, sir."

John paused and looked back.

"Did you hear me?"

"Yes, father."

"What did I tell you to do?"

"Go get a claw-hammer and three pounds of eightpenny nails."

"Very well. Why didn't you indicate in some way that you heard me? Haven't I already this morning read you a lecture about this very thing? Now go quickly; I'm in a hurry."

For all this impatience and authority on the part of Thomas Belknap, John moved away at a snail's pace. As the former, in a state of considerable irritability, gazed after the boy he felt strongly tempted to call him back and give him a good flogging in order that he might clearly comprehend the fact of his being in earnest.

"If that stubborn and incorrigible boy returns in half an hour it will be a wonder", muttered Thomas Belknap, as he came back into the sitting-room. "I wish I knew what to do with him. I never saw such a boy. He knows I'm in a hurry, and yet there he goes, creeping along like a tortoise. What is to be done with him, Aunt Mary?"

Thomas Belknap turned as he spoke to an elderly lady with a mild, open face and clear, blue eyes. She was a valued relative, who was paying him a visit.

Aunt Mary let her knitting rest in her lap, and turned her eyes upon the speaker.

"What is to be done with that boy, Aunt Mary?" Thomas Belknap repeated his words. "I've tried everything with him."

"Have you tried—"

Aunt Mary paused, and seemed half in doubt whether it were best to give utterance to what was in her mind.

"Tried what?" asked Thomas Belknap.

"May I speak plainly?" said Aunt Mary.

"To me? why yes! the plainer the better."

"Have you tried a kind, affectionate, unimpassioned manner with the boy? Since I have been here I notice that you speak to him in a cold, authoritative tone. Under such treatment, some natures that soften quickly in the sunshine of affection grow hard and stubborn."

The blood mounted to the cheeks and brow of Thomas Belknap.

"Forgive me if I've spoken too plainly," said Aunt Mary.

Thomas Belknap did not make any response for some time, but sat, with his eyes upon the floor, in hurried self-examination.

"No, Aunt Mary; not too plainly," said he, as he looked at her with a sobered face. "I needed that suggestion and thank you for it."

"Mrs. Howitt has a line which beautifully expresses what I mean," said Aunt Mary, in her gentle, earnest way. "It is

'For love hath readier will than fear.'

Ah! if we could all comprehend the wonderful power of love! It is the fire that melts, while fear only smites, the strokes hardening or breaking its unsightly fragments. John has many good qualities that ought to be made as active as possible. These, like goodly flowers growing in a carefully tilled garden, will absorb the latent vitality in his mind, and thus leave nothing from which inherent evil tendencies can draw nutrition."

Aunt Mary said no more, and Thomas Belknap's thoughts were soon busy with a new train of ideas.

Time moved steadily on—nearly half an hour had elapsed, in which period John might have gone twice to Leslie's shop and returned, yet he was still absent. Thomas Belknap was particularly in want of the hammer and nails and the delay chaffed him very considerably—the more particularly as it evidenced the indifference of his son in respect to his wishes and commands. Sometimes he would yield to a momentary blinding flush of anger and resolve to punish the boy severely the moment he could get his hands on him. But quickly would come in Aunt Mary's suggestion and he would again resolve to try the power of kind words. He was also a good deal strengthened in his purpose by the fact that Aunt Mary's eyes would be upon him at the return of John. After her suggestion and his acknowledgment of its value, it would hardly do for him to let passion so rule him as to act in open violation of what was right—to wrong his son by unwise treatment, when he professed to desire only his good.

The fact is, Thomas Belknap had already made the discovery that if he would govern his boy he must first govern himself. This was not an easy task; yet he felt that it must be done.

"There comes that boy, now," said he, as he glanced forth and saw John coming homeward at a very deliberate pace. There was more of impatience in his tone of voice than he wished to betray to Aunt Mary, who let her beautiful eyes rest, for a moment or two, penetratingly upon him. The balancing power of that look was needed, and it performed its work.

Soon after the loitering boy came in; he had a package of nails in his hand, which he reached, half indifferently, to his father.

"The hammer?"

John started, with a half-frightened air.

"Indeed, father, I forgot all about it!" said he, looking up with a flushed countenance, in which genuine regret was plainly visible.

"I'm sorry," said Thomas Belknap, in a disappointed, but not angry or rebuking voice; "I've been waiting a long time for you to come back, and now I must go to the shop without nailing up that trellis for your mother's honeysuckle, as I promised her."

The boy looked at his father a moment or two with an air of bewilderment and surprise, then he said earnestly:

"Just wait a little, father; I'll run down to the shop and get it for you in a minute; I'm very sorry that I forgot it."

"Run, then," says Thomas Belknap, kindly.

How fleetly the lad bounded away! His father gazed after him with an emotion of surprise not unmixed with pleasure.

"Yes, yes," he murmured, half aloud, "Mrs. Howitt never uttered a wiser saying, 'For love hath readier will than fear.'"

Quicker than even Aunt Mary, whose faith in kind words was very strong, had expected him, he returned with the hammer, a bright glow on his cheeks and a sparkle in his eyes, that strongly contrasted with the utter want of interest displayed in his manner a little while before.

"Thank you, my son," said Thomas Belknap, as he took the hammer; "I could not have asked a prompter service." He spoke very kindly and in a voice of approval. "And now, John," he added, with the manner of one who requests, rather than commands, "if you will go to Frank Wilson's and tell him to come over and work for two or three days in our garden, you will oblige me. I was going to call there as I went to the shop this morning; but it is too late now."

"Oh! I'll go, father—I'll go," replied the boy, cheerfully. "I'll run right over at once."

"Do, if you please," said Thomas Belknap, now speaking from an impulse of real kindness; for a thorough change had come over his feelings. A grateful look was cast by John into his father's face and then he was off to do his errand. Thomas Belknap saw and understook the meaning of that look.

"Yes, yes, yes"—thus he talked with himself as he took his way to the shop—"Aunt Mary and Mrs. Howitt are right. Love hath a readier will. I ought to have learned this lesson earlier. Ah! how much that is deformed in this self-willed boy might now be growing in beauty!"

Lotteries in Prussia.

[Chicago Tribune.]

It seems to be only in Anglo-Saxondom that lotteries are tabooed. The Prussian lotteries yield the state an income of $1,000,000. In the landtag a motion has been made to do away with the prohibition put upon the sale of foreign lottery tickets, in order to satisfy the "legitimate" desire for lottery playing, and thus to increase the revenue from that item.

F. Marion Crawford: It is only a man of imagination who has no vanity. He cannot imagine himself any better than he is.

"SCORING A "FUNNY MAN."

SOME REVELATIONS WHICH PROVE THAT HE IS NOT SO AGREEABLE AS HE MIGHT BE.

"Stephenson" in Boston Budget.

Sitting here, delightfully remote from the roars of laughter which your fondly cherished distinguishing characteristic is probably causing somewhere, it is difficult to realize your existence, for Miss Upright remarked, "You are actually incredible." She said so because she had found you smiling happily and sweetly at the efforts of a poor old apple woman to save her stock from the pillaging fingers and greedy mouths of the street Bedouins who, having overset her stand, were intent on gathering up the spoil.

The grotesque attitudes into which the old woman fell as she crept hither and thither, clamoring shrilly, now dropping an orange while she paused to fling an especially well adapted name at her tormentors, and leaving a telling vituperation unfinished, in order to snatch an apple from the very fingers of a marauder, amused you while one of our street blockades went through the regular wearisome stages of blundering, of willful entanglement, of stubborn profanity, of absolute despair and of sudden resolution into perfect order, and until Miss Upright, who charged bravely upon the boys and drove them from the field at the point of her parasol, and stared at your smiling face with angry amazement. You could not make her see the humorous side of the affair, and assued her with exquisite affability that she deprived herself of much pleasure by her persistent blindness to the fun which you had found in the scene, and the lady was heard to mutter something about having the spirit of a man before she declared you incredible.

Master Adam sold the same thing years ago, when he found you chuckling over the girations of little Greyson, who, essaying his new pocket fishing tackle in the corridor, when sent on an errand, had caught himself very neatly by the scalp, and was undergoing tortures in his double capacity of angler and fish. Master Adam told you then that nothing but suffering would make a man of you, and alas! the suffering has not come, and you are the funny man of your circle, and there is nothing too low and nothing too high to be a mark for what you call your humor.

There is no church of any denomination which you can attend without seeing something absurd, not only in the clergyman, but in the congregation and in the form of worship, and you have made a great many puns on the most solemn passages in all the creeds. There is no politician and no point in politics upon which you will not jest; no scientific truths so lofty or so profound that it may not be the topic of your jests; no poetry which you will not debase by your parodies, and no character, no person who is too absurd to furnish fuel for your crackling laughter. Not even that feeling which you call love acts as a safeguard between you and its objects, and both your mother and the wife, whom you won in spite of yourself, are liable at any moment to become the subjects of verbal and practical jokes, and how your children survive the course of ear-tweaking, hair-pulling, frightening and teasing through which they have passed is incredible even to your mother-in-law, who declared when her daughter married you that she should never be surprised at anything again.

SURVIVALS OF THE PREVIOUS.

Philadelphia Record.

The two little splints in the horse's foot could never be accounted for on the principle that every part of an animal is now as it was from the beginning, and has its uses. They are perfectly useless, but they are the last remains of toes that were very useful to the ancestors of the horse. The world is full of such useless organs, each replete with historical interest. The muscle that moves the ear in a quadruped is present in man; but, as a rule, he cannot use it, and it would be useless to him if he could. Of what use are the two buttons on the back of a coat? None; but in the days when it was the mark of a gentleman to carry a sword they served to secure the sword-belt.

The articles man makes present on every hand these survivals from previous fashions. Sham laces on boots, buttons down fronts that do not open, buckles on bands that are fixed, neckwear in the form of ties but secured by other methods, are cases in point. Nature works in the same way that man does; or, rather, since man is part of nature he works by nature's methods. Changes are gradual; one of a series of bones, muscles, teeth, etc., that is used more than the others increases in bulk, while its neighbors diminish and perhaps finally disappear. If an animal acquires added powers in one direction because of circumstances that press it in that direction, it loses it in another. It is so with mind also. Do we not know that after long application to one class of subjects—probably the most useful to us—we lose much of what we previously knew?

A HINDOO RELIGIOUS TOY.

In the vast array of children's toys designed to instruct as well as amuse, doubtless no duplicate will be found of a device which is thus advertised in a native paper of India: "The wonderful Python—these reptiles are made of horn and can be lengthened to sixty inches. They are made expressly to teach children what hell is, and what it contains—as even an old man would be frightened at its sight. They are put in boxes measuring about one and a half inch. We would recommend parents to buy one for each of their children, as they are not only a toy, but a toy from which benefit may be derived."

"HEAT LIGHTNING."

New Orleans Times-Democrat.

From observations made in Switzerland Prof. Tyndall shows that the silent flashings called "heat lightning" are not, as supposed, harmless, but indicate thunder storms which may not be more than twenty miles away.