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PEACE IN THE HOUSEHOLD:

OR

HOW TO MANAGE AN "UGLY MONKEY."

It was a close and lowering Sunday morning in the beginning of July; it had been a sultry and murky night; few persons had slept, for the thunder had been growling and muttering through the hours of darkness, and when the morning dawned, it disclosed a most tempestuous state of the atmosphere. The clouds were rolling together in masses and seemed at war with each other, and suddenly, just as the "chimes" began to "knoll" for church, a loud crash of thunder shook the earth, a vivid flash of lightning tore open the sky, and struck terror on every side. Another crash quickly followed the first, like the noise of a hundred pieces of artillery, and at the same moment a huge oak, which had braved the storms of nearly a thousand years, was struck prostrate to the earth: and now the lightnings flashed on every side, the thunders multiplied themselves and roared louder and louder, the winds rose, the hail and rain beat down furiously, and a hurricane swept and whirled away the hay-ricks like chaff, toppled down chimney-pots, and curled

up the lead upon the church roof as so much paper. Truly it was a fearful and terrible sight, and well calculated to inspire the mind with awe; but it was a brief tempest—the thunders soon ceased, the lightnings no longer played around, a "bright bit of blue in the sky" appeared towards the north-west, it extended itself gradually over the whole heavens, the clouds dispersed themselves, and the glorious sun burst forth as with a bound, and all was bright and calm.

Sunshine is, indeed, a delightful thing at all times, but never more so than when it follows the darkness of a storm or the fury of a tempest. Then it seems like God's smile upon this warring and contentious world of ours, and a forgiving benediction. Wild and turbulent, fearful and destructive, are the passions of man. The storms and tempests of nature are ministers of goodness to us; but the mighty passions that dwell in our hearts, the earthquakes of our sinful nature, are unmitigated evils; they keep us from God and heaven, and bind us down to the wicked world as with chains of steel. Thunders and lightnings may topple down and destroy nature's fairest products, or man's noblest monuments of grandeur; but the passions of the human heart war against our eternal jewel—the soul.

So at least thought an old man who is now seen wending his way over an upland meadow, towards the village church; his white locks play in the fresh breath of the balmy air. He has a bright and cheerful countenance, and his somewhat quaint and neat attire well harmonises with his meek and peaceful-looking face. There is a heavenly sunshine on his brow, and a smile of

benevolence about his mouth. "His eye is not dim, nor his natural force abated;" his steps are nimble, his breath is not short, for the ascent does not slacken his speed. Now he stoops to pick a lovely flower from the bank; now he listens to the sweet song of the birds; now his eyes glance at the beautiful objects around him, and he feels touched with love and admiration of the great and good Father of all, and of the inexhaustible riches of redeeming love.

Who is this man? He is a small farmer of the district. Rich? No; he is not rich in a worldly sense; but he is rich in grace, in a clear conscience, in a loving disposition, and, above all, in the possession of a happy temper; and it is to this particular trait in his character to which he is indebted for a name, which to my thinking, sounds as sweetly as that of any of the Serene Highnesses of states or empires, and is a great deal more emphatic. The name to which I allude is the one he enjoys by right of his cheerful temper and happy countenance, and which the surrounding district has unanimously bestowed upon him. It is "Johnny Sunshine;" for there is sunshine in his looks, sunshine in his thoughts, and sunshine in his heart.

But this was not always the case with my old friend. In the days of his youth his sun-light was very frequently overcast with clouds, and storms, and tempests. His brows lowered with thunder, and his eyes flashed with lightning. He was a hot-headed, quick-feeling, sharp-speaking man. He would not bear contradiction, much less endure reproof; and he was ever ready with a snarl, a snap, or a bite, if necessary, to those

who opposed his will, his interest, or whim. He was "sudden and quick in quarrel," not bitter or vindictive; and when he was cool, not a bad-hearted fellow in his way, but he was seldom cool. He had a "temper" which he used to call his "ugly monkey;" and ugly enough it was, for it continually kept him in a fret or a fever. How long this "ugly monkey" of his would have befooled and enslaved him, I do not know, but it was a blessing that John Belmont had a little common sense in his head, and a good deal of love in his heart; and this, with the assistance of God's grace, did wonders for him.

John Belmont, for that was his real name, was, I said, a farmer. Every one who knows what farming is, must know that a farmer has much to perplex him, and much to try his *temper:* I do not know that John Belmont had more troubles to try him than other men of his stamp; but there came a great fall in the price of corn; the crops of hay, and roots, and beans also turned out bad; the hay was a failure also, from a succession of wet days, just after John had cut it. When the corn was ready for the sickle, the wet came down day after day as if St. Swithin had been terribly out of temper—wet, wet, wet, nothing but wet. The corn was laid flat, and the wheat grew in the ear, and most deplorable, indeed, was the look of the barley. John Belmont was, of course, sorely discomforted when he went abroad, and when he came home after going the circuit of his little farm, his mind was still further distressed by finding his best riding-horse dead in the stable, owing to the carelessness of the horse-keeper in feeding him on large-cut

beet root. Soured with his losses, when John saw his favourite cob dead and stiff, his rage seemed to lose all bounds. Having learned the cause of this disaster, John took up the first thing that came to hand, namely, a pitchfork, and making a fierce attack upon the person in fault as he supposed, presently laid him low with a blow of it; following up the blow by repeated stabs with the prongs thereof, uttering, at the same time, cruel cries and wicked blasphemies.

Had he killed him? He knew not—for a moment he cared not: but the event, dreadful as it was, soon calmed him. In a few moments he felt that he was a *murderer*, and like the first murderer, Cain, fled from the spot, over hedge, ditch, or swamp, through tangled briars and quick-set, in a most horrible condition of mind. He at first determined to destroy himself; but God's grace restrained him. He listened to some heavenly admonition that came like the still, small voice, after the "tempest and the earthquake." He rushed to the nearest village and gave himself up to the constable. "I am a murderer!" said he; "I am a murderer! Take me! take me! try me! hang me! I wish to die! I wish to die!"

I do not know what the consequences would have been to John Belmont, had the poor horse-keeper been really killed, which he was not, although severely wounded. But He who can bring good out of evil, sanctified this event to John Belmont. Overcome with joy that the man's life was not taken, and feeling gratitude to the Giver of all good for His merciful interposition, the farmer began to look seriously

and calmly into his infirmity of temper. He saw, after a very little reflection, that it was a fiend of discord and mischief to him, that its effects might, some day or other, be fatal both to his body and his soul; so he did what every wise man would have done under such a conviction of mind, he threw himself on his knees before the footstool of divine grace, and prayed for help and strength to enable him to keep his good resolve. His prayer was heard: and as the demon passion left him, angels came and ministered to him; and as his heart became changed, it reflected its light, and peace, and happiness, through that mild and cheerful face, which obtained for him the nick-name of "Johnny Sunshine."

The first thing the "changed man" did after this fearful trial, was to have all the pitchforks in the stable studded with brass nails, with the words, "*Keep your Temper.*" He had the same words put up in conspicuous parts of the stable yard. The same sentence was over his hall-door, in the kitchen, and also in his common sitting-room; nay, he had it put over the pig-styes, as an appropriate motto both for pigs and men.

But John well knew that precept without example, was like a shadow without a substance, and therefore he took care to be the practical exponent of his own religion. A kind, mild, and forbearing manner, took the place of a violent, tetchy, and furious one, and this diffused itself throughout the household; for a sweet temper is like a sweet perfume, which spreads into the remotest corners. Philosophers tell us that a single grain of musk will scent the whole

of St. Paul's Cathedral, even to the dome and lantern. And so it is with a sweet temper and disposition; in John's house, the labourers and servants, finding their master mild and kind-tempered, gradually softened their harshness and hardness of speech, and became more or less good-tempered also, from the power of imitation and sympathy; nay, even the cattle, poultry, and pigs, appeared sensible of the change, and seemed more happy and docile than on former occasions.

The history of this man, John Belmont, which I know to be authentic, may be made use of to bring under our notice the subject of temper. It is a subject of the greatest importance to all of us, for none of us are without a *temper* of some sort or other; some have what they call a *furious* temper, others a *sulky* temper, some a *provoking* and *nagging* temper, some have a *morose*, some a *crabbed*, some a *contentious*, some a *capricious*, some a *churlish*, some a *grumbling*. some a *captious*, and some people have a *dogged*, *obstinate*, and *stubborn* temper. None of them very enviable.

I remember being greatly "amused and instructed" on a visit, some years ago, to the Zoological Gardens, in London. I came to the wild beasts, as they are called, and stood before the cage of the hyena. "An ugly animal," said I to the keeper; "Yes sir," rejoined the man, "but *his temper* is a great deal uglier than his looks. He is one of your sulky, snarling, growling, stubborn, ungrateful beasts; do what you will with him, there is no pleasing him anyhow. I have seen him quarrel with the bars of

his cage, and with the bed he lies on; and if you give him anything, he will never seem to thank you for it, but will grin, and show his teeth, and sneer at you. But we mustn't complain," continued the man, "there are *many men quite as bad.*" We next came to a very ugly baboon. "Here is another ugly-tempered beast," said the man; "he has a dog-like face, the snout of a hog, the nails of a cat, and the teeth of a tiger. He imitates human actions—he robs his fellow-monkeys, drinks wine out of a glass, and stands upright like a man; and like some men, he is *always out of temper*, do what you will with him. He beats his female partner so often, that we are obliged to separate them by this iron-bound door. He is severe and morose; and which is worse, maliciously mischievous. His temper is the ugliest of the ugly; but I *have seen men quite as bad. He* looks like what he is; but *men* don't always show their *inward ugliness* by their *outward features;* they are more like the tigers, and leopards, and panthers; often very well to the eye, but most uncommon ugly in their tempers and dispositions. I have seen lots of it; and the more is the shame, seeing that men and women have sense and reason, which beasts and beastesses have not."

There is, perhaps, no condition of life in which evil tempers are so likely to show themselves, as in what is called "married life." In this condition there is much to try the temper, I will admit, and therefore married people ought to be doubly careful how to manage this "ugly monkey;" most people, however, let it have its own course, till some fatal catastrophe reveals it in

all its horrid deformity. In the domestic circle, women often contrive to make themselves, as well as their husbands and all around them, miserable, by the exercise of a "nagging and provoking temper," which is, perhaps, of all others, the most difficult to deal with; for "the words of a contentious woman are a continual dropping," as will be seen in the following story.

Richard Clowes was a hard-working wheelwright—a steady, sober, quiet sort of fellow. He was up early, and worked late; for he had a little business of his own, and he knew that by labour, and steadiness, and economy, he should be able to keep the wolf from the door, and lay by something for a rainy day.

Dick had married one of the neatest and prettiest little girls of the village; and she was a capital housewife, fond of her domestic duties, and full of energy and activity. She neither cared for "going out pleasuring," nor for "gossipping" within doors, nor for busying herself about her neighbours' slips and backslidings; in short, Jenny was in many respects as valuable a wife as a man could be possessed of, and there is little doubt that Dick would have been a very happy fellow, had it not been for one failing on her part. Jenny loved her Dicky very much; she was very kind to him in a general way, and always took care to put buttons on his shirts, and have his linen in nice order, and to keep the house clean and comfortable; and what was still more to Jenny's credit, as Dick was a very poor hand at pen-work, she kept his books in order too. But alas! alas! *Jenny had a temper.* She

was not a scold, nor a *virago*, nor a sulk, but she had the habit of what is called "nagging;" and of all the varieties of tempers, this is one of the most teasing and perplexing, and well-calculated to wear out the poor wretch who should happen to be the victim of it. And this was the plague perpetual, and torment unendurable, of poor Richard's unhappy life. Jenny was always at him; her tongue was a "perpetual motion;" she would nag at her husband about every little omission or commission. If he did not clean his feet to her mind at the door, there was a "*nag.*" If he came a little too *late*, or a little too *soon*, to his dinner, there was a "*nag.*" If his clothes got torn in his business, there was a "*nag.*" If he came home cheerful, there was a "*nag*;" and if he came home a little gloomy, there was a "*nag*" also! Dick was an easy-tempered man, and wishing to avoid disputes or quarreling, for a long time held his peace, and endured her temper like a Briton. Now he whistled it off; now he laughed it off; but still it went on all the same. There was *nagging* at breakfast, *nagging* at dinner, *nagging* at supper, and sometimes in the hours that should have been devoted to sleep. As I said, the slightest thing would give rise to it. For instance, Dick would, perhaps, put a little too much sugar in his tea, and Jenny would let out after the following fashion.—"Aye, that's the way the sugar goes; by-and-bye you will be saying—'what has become of the sugar?' but you never think of what things cost, not you. There's sugar gone up a penny a pound last week, but what do you men-folk care for that? all they care for is just to satisfy their own palates; and as to

having any consideration for a woman's trials, not they. It was just the same last night with the butter; you make no spare of any thing, not you. Look at that waistcoat, you have had it only three weeks, and now the plush is worn off at the pocket-hole, and there is a great slit in it besides; and there is your new hat, I had that to put in the band-box after Sunday's wear, or that might have been kicking about all the week. Then you never do anything for me; I have been asking you these two days, to put a wheel on the child's go-chair; you care nothing for the poor child, any more than you do for me. You take pretty good care of yourself, though; you could buy yourself a pair of buskins which you did not want; and then to blind my eyes, brought me home a paltry meat-roaster. I did not want a meat-roaster, not I; I could roast ten times as much meat as ever we shall get, with a piece of worstead. I want none of your plaguesome bottlejacks, not I." "Why, my dear," mildly urged Dick, "you were always complaining about not having something to cook with better than a skein of worsted." "Suppose I did," retorted Jenny, "that was nothing to you. If I chose to put up with it, I had a right to talk about it; but I didn't want any interference on your part. You just mind your own business, and let me mind mine; and don't think of coming over me by the buying of meat-roasters and such troublesome trash. I dare say you did not give half what you pretended for it, and spent the odds at the *Jolly Wheelwrights*, or the *Pig in Boots*, or the *Goose and Gridiron*. Never mind, I can bear it, my back is broad enough. Are you going

to have another cup of tea?" "Not after such a jawbation about a bit of sugar," muttered Dick. "I do not know what you mean by a jawbation," replied the wife fiercely; "I am not used to such blackguard terms. I suppose you picked them up where you spent the 'odds' of your roaster, and sported your fine new buskins; no doubt you looked mighty fine in them, and had those to admire you who had no right to do so. No doubt you looked sweet and smiling then, although you look sour and ugly enough now. They should see you at home; they should see me, slaving and toiling from morning till night, with everything done to annoy and worry me, to perplex and confound me; but never mind, (here Jenny began to wash up the tea-things, squeezing a few salt tears out of her eyes at the same time) I suppose I shall be supported through it. I can bear a good deal more yet, but if I was like some women, you would soon find the difference. I should not have a man, when he came home to his breakfast, who would insult me by foul language such as I was never used to; and then if I say ever so little, to give me a nasty, ugly, sulky look, as if he could eat me with a grain of salt, and go off like a heartless brute beast, who does not know how to treat a good wife when he has one." Dick looked quite confounded; he had drank one cup of tea, but had eaten no breakfast; he got up, repressing his anger like a sensible man as he was, and moved to the door. His nagging wife continued, "and to break—(sob)—break—(sob, sob)—break my he—he—he—heart." And so Dick left his poor, ill-used wife, with a broken

heart, till dinner-time, when the same piece of music was played at slow time, with quiet intervals and new variations; and so on from hour to hour, and from day to day; till at last one fine morning it was discovered that Dick had got all the money he could together, and started for Australia, leaving his wife to dispose of his trade, stock, and premises, and live upon the proceeds till his return, which seemed to him very uncertain.

Such is no uncommon picture, my friends, of what is the result of a fretful, nagging temper. And wretched, indeed, is the person who is cursed with such a temper, as well as he who has to endure its effects. No person can possess such a temper with the spirit of love in the heart. Some will console themselves, and find an excuse for it, and say with this as with other bad tempers, "Oh, well, it is my natural temper; it is what I was born to, and I can't help it." If we never improved ourselves beyond what we were born to, we should be lower than the animals of the field. We should neither be able to walk or talk, to read or to write. We are all born with sinful natures; but the end of life is, to cast off this evil nature, and to put on the garment of meekness, patience, long-suffering, and gentleness. We are to ask for God's Holy Spirit, by prayer and supplication, daily to curb our wild and wayward natures, to correct and expel all that is evil, and to implant new and holy dispositions within us. And we may be sure, for God's holy word teaches, that if we "ask in faith, nothing wavering, all good things will be granted unto us."

The most disagreeable of tempers after a nagging one, is that called a *grumbling temper*. It often proceeds from an ungrateful, discontented disposition. In married life a grumbling temper is productive of much misery; and it is often the case, that the poor woman who has to endure it, is made thoroughly wretched. Few wives, indeed, are able to bear with such a temper; and fewer, indeed, know how to manage such a one. There are, however, women with a little forbearance, a little spirit, and a little tact, who can manage even such an "ugly monkey" admirably, as the following little tale will exemplify.

Giles and Patty were a newly-married couple; Giles was one of the better class of farm-labourers; he was a good workman, and had been sober, frugal, and industrious; by which means he was enabled to marry Patty, who was a quick, smart, cheerful, work-loving creature. Giles, having determined to get the fore-horse by the head as he termed it, when he married Patty, thinking she would not have enough to do to attend on him, stocked a little chandler's shop for her to mind when he went to his usual daily labour in the fields. Patty was proud of her little shop, and she would have been proud of her husband also, but alas! Giles was the very perfection of a "grumbler." He loved his wife well enough in his own rough way, nor was he a bad sort of fellow in the main; but he loved himself too much, and thought of his own comforts too much, and cared very little about making other people miserable, so that he was comfortable himself. Especially was he fond of

his stomach, and if the least matter occurred to interfere with his meals, a fit of grumbling was sure to be the result.

One morning after Patty had passed a tiresome night, having a sick baby, and having been much worried with her little shop, from people dropping in one after the other, for small quantities of tea, sugar, butter, and the like, Giles, no doubt tired with his morning's-work, came home to breakfast. Unfortunately, the kettle did not quite boil, nor was the breakfast quite ready. Some men would have had the good sense to see that Patty had been a little bit bothered with the shop and the baby, but Giles could see nothing but that *his breakfast was not ready.* He had been hoeing potatoes, and no doubt he was tired and hungry. He gave a forbidding scowl as his eye glanced round the room, then a boarish grunt, and then a wicked oath and a stamp with his foot, and lastly he began to grumble after the following fashion.—"So no breakfast again," said he, with a growl like some wild beast; "no breakfast again. That's how I'm always served. Here I go out to work, and when I come back there is no breakfast to put into a fellow's mouth. Kettle not boiling, no toast made, no bacon cooked. Why is not my breakfast ready? Only half-an-hour to eat it—kettle doesn't boil—no breakfast—I know I wish I was *somewhere*, and hang me if I don't go *somewhere*—and I won't stand this any longer." And so Giles again stamped with his foot, and looked as ugly as the ugliest orang-outang ever captured. "I shall go *somewhere*," repeated Giles; "I know where to get a breakfast, with a good fire and a

drop of gin and beer;" and he moved to the door.

"Dear Giles, stay one minute," said the nimble little Patty; "there see, I have poked a bit of wood under the kettle, it is now upon the boil, and I'll just turn the bacon; see, dear, it is almost done, and while I put the tea into the pot—"

"The tea ought to have been in the pot," roared the husband, with the voice of a lion; "it will take half-an-hour to draw; the bacon ought to have been ready for me as soon as I came in. I've no time to sit chawing bacon. There's no bread and butter cut, and no vinegar, nor pepper, nor mustard. I'm not going to stand this, and I *won't* stand it any longer; I'll go to the *Pig and Whistle*, that's a comfortable place to have one's breakfast in. I can always get what I want there; a good fire, and plenty of everything, and no squalling babies and scolding wives."

"Come now, dear Giles, do sit down; see, it's all ready now. There is the bacon," said she, "setting it before him, and there's a nice piece of home-made cake for you; and I will give the tea a twist, and it will be quite brewed before you have eaten your bacon."

"I shan't eat it," cried the ill-tempered man, looking uglier than ever. "Who's going to stuff himself with cake and bacon, and can't get a drop of tea? I tell you I won't have it," said he, with a voice like the bellowing of a bull, "you may eat it yourself. Look at the clock; if I can't have my breakfast ready at the proper time, I won't have it at all; you ought to

have had it already to put into my mouth as soon as I came in at the door. I only wish you had been *hoeing of potatoes*, as I have, and then you would know what it is to come in faint and hungry, and no victuals ready."

"Dear Giles," replied the good-tempered wife, "I am very sorry, but you should make a little allowance; you forget what I have to do. I have had to attend to the dear baby, and if I have been once to the shop this morning, I have been seven or eight times this last half-hour; and then there is the washing and baking, you know, and altogether it is as much as one pair of hands can get through. You should make allowances, you should indeed."

"I shan't make allowances; you have a right to get my victuals ready when I come in. When a man has been hoeing potatoes all the morning, he wants his breakfast; it's your place to get it. Who brings the money in, I should like to know? What's the baby to me? It's *your* baby. You always bring that up for an argument. What's the shop? It's *your* shop, it's nothing to me. And what's the washing? 'tis none of mine; 'tis only for your fancy curate; and the baking—what's the baking? The baking will do itself—it's only got to be put into the oven."

"Do eat your breakfast," replied Patty meekly, although she felt her blood rising at the cruel insinuation about the fancy curate; "do eat your breakfast, there's a dear, it shall not happen again, indeed it shall not; do be pacified and eat your breakfast, pray do."

"I tell you again I won't eat my breakfast, you may eat it yourself. If you can't get it ready in

time, it may go." And so saying, Giles gave the table a sweep, and bacon and the tea-things were clattering on the floor.

Patty looked most unhappy, and trembled whether to be in rage or in grief; but at last grief prevailed, and the poor woman burst into tears.

"It's all very well for you to sit snivelling there," replied the ill-tempered man. "Why don't you get my breakfast ready then? I only wish you would go and hoe potatoes; you would know what work is then. What have you to do that you make so much fuss about? why, it's nothing to my work. What's getting a bit of breakfast ready, and waiting upon a few customers? what is that to standing in the broiling sun for two or three hours, with no victuals inside you? See how you would like it. You would soon be tired of hoe, hoe, hoe, scrape, scrape, scrape, I'll warrant you. Your work is nothing to mine, and I won't stand it any longer, hang me if I do; and you may eat your breakfast by yourself." So saying, Giles, in spite of the entreaies of his ill-used wife, rose from the table, and walked sulkily out of the house to the *Pig and Whistle*, close by, where he sat grumbling and drinking hot gin and beer, till the sun was high in the heavens, and came home in the afternoon in a state much easier to be imagined than described.

Now, what must be the ultimate effect of this habitual "grumbling?" All the kindness, temper, and management of a wife has but little effect upon it. A selfish, discontented, and sullen spirit, is the most difficult to manage.

The only remedy is from within. The heart must be changed by divine grace, and then selfishness will give way. The spirit that is filled with love and gratitude to God, will soon be full of gratitude to man. To those who should be so unhappy as to have a "grumbling temper," I would advise, as the best cure for it, earnest supplication to the Giver of every good gift, who will not fail to create anew a right spirit within us, and a strong determination to make allowances for the defects and infirmities of others. With regard to the unhappy Giles, he happened to have a wife who had the grace of God in her heart. She being reviled, reviled not again; she returned kind words for unkind rebukes, and would have given a kiss for a blow. In time her prayers and her love and kindness prevailed, and Giles became a godly man. A spirit of contentment, and of charitable allowances for his wife's many difficulties, took the place of grumbling discontent, and heavenly cheerfulness of a sullen and dogged irritability.

In the wretched tempers which belong to men, the poor women have a great deal to put up with. But in dealing with an ill-tempered person, we should do as we do with other species of mad people. To oppose or to contradict is only to arouse fresh strife. The "soothing system," is the best after all. Sometimes, however, a well-disposed and kindly wife, has her good resolutions set aside by bad advice. Some kind female friend steps in and tells her that the best way to cure a bad husband of his "tempers" or vices, is to scold him out of them; and many a fatal mistake has been made in this manner.

A very troublesome husband was John Trott. He was a stone-dresser at a mill, an occupation by which he earned a good deal of money. John, like a good many persons in his situation of life, having good wages, thought it no harm to make himself a "little comfortable," now and then. He was not an habitual drunkard; indeed, he called himself a "temperate man." He liked a pipe, and a glass of grog, and a dish of chat at the *Old Mill Tail;* now and then John liked a little variety and recreation, such as a bit of a spree and so forth. He sometimes came home rather latish of a night, or he went off early of a Sunday morning, to enjoy what he termed "rural felicity," keeping out the whole day, away from his wife, instead of going to a place of worship, and enjoying his Sunday in peace and happiness within doors. As to his poor wife, he left her at home to mend his working-clothes, and do odd jobs of a similar kind for him; to clean and cook, to look after the children, and get on as she could. Emma, his unfortunate helpmate, bore this treatment with meekness and patience for some time. She often expostulated with him on the sinful errors of his ways, especially his Sabbath-breaking, but to no effect; worse and worse did John Trott become. Emma was almost despairing of reforming him; and in an evil hour took the advice of a neighbour who lived close by her, who persuaded her to give her husband a good "roasting," as she termed it, every time he came home in an "improper state," and to use freely the woman's weapon about John's ears so as to reform him. But what man was ever reformed by a wife scolding him?

"The more you give in to a man," said her advising friend, "the worse he becomes; but if you fire away at him like pepper and mustard, he will soon alter his tune, I can assure you." So Emma, in an evil day, took the advice of her friend, Mrs. Crowley, with the full determination to keep her husband in order by hen-pecking him, which Mrs. Crowley did to perfection; and she determined that upon the first occasion of John's coming home "comfortable" from the *Old Mill Tail*, to give him a "bit of her mind." She did not feel in herself particularly waspish, for she was of a meek and forbearing temper; but she wanted to cure John of his bad habits, and was silly enough to think that this could be accomplished by scolding him, and so she worked herself up a little bit for the occasion; and as she sat darning stockings, without a fire, by the miserable illumination of a rush-light, John, full of gin and beer, and particularly happy with himself, came blundering to the door. "Open the door, my chicken," said John; for John was one of those men who, unless roused by some taunt or other, was rather good-tempered than bad-tempered, when he was a little fuddled; besides, John was very fond of his wife, who had endeared herself very much to him by her forbearance and kindness, and he had more than once made a firm resolve to leave off his bad ways and be a good husband. Indeed, he had done so on his road home that very night, and determined, in his own mind, first, that he had got a good wife, and next, that she had got a bad husband who did not know her worth; but John had too great confidence in his own strength; he

thought it was only necessary to will a thing, to do it. He forgot that One alone could give the will and the power to do; and he never asked for Divine strength—for that help and assistance of Divine goodness, without which all our best efforts are but vain.

John came, as I said, staggering to the door of his cottage; he fumbled about for the latch, but he could not find it, and then he gave a loud thump on the panel. Emma had, at other times, always let her husband in, and had received him with a smile on her countenance; but now being fully charged with a sense of his wrong doings at the instigation of her friend Mrs. Crowley, she refused to open the door. At last the drunken man's hand found the latch; the door flew open, and he fell forward into the room upon the floor. "Why did you not open the door, you hussey?" said John, the moment he had partly recovered himself. "Because I did not choose it," returned Emma. You drunken sot, to come in at this hour of the night, and in such a state too! But I will be your slave no longer. As to your clothes and shoes, muddy as they are, so they may go. I won't clean and scrape them as I used to do, I can assure you; you may go to work in them just as they are, for all me. I will do no more for such a filthy, dirty sot, depend upon it."

This was quite a new reception to John; and having balanced himself as well as he could, by putting one hand on the table, and with his eyes fixed in a kind of drunken glaze, he vociferated—"Rebellion! flat rebellion! The angel's gone out of her, and the devil is got in. Going to

scold, hey? I'll soon put a stop to this nonsense." "I'll soon put a stop to you if you do," tartly replied the wife; "you had better go back to the company you have left. I dare say that you have been spending your time with those you like better than you do me. I should advise you to go back and finish your evening's entertainment, and not come home to me like an idiot, for me to put you to bed like a baby. You call yourself a man! you are less than a beast! you are not fit for a pig-stye, much less to go into a decent bed! and you may help yourself up-stairs as you can, for I won't give you a finger-push, not I! The best place for you is the door-mat, and there you may take your night's lodging for what I care." So saying, Emma walked up-stairs, banging, with assumed fury, the chamber door behind her.

John was "staggered." This change in his wife's conduct seemed like a dream. After a few moment's bewildered thought, he said to himself, "Somebody has put her up to this dodge; some of her female friends, depend upon it. This is quite in the "rowley powley" style; but I will have it out of her before I go to bed. A pretty life I shall lead if this be suffered to go on. Why, I shall not be able to make myself comfortable without a jawbation when I come home." So cursing and swearing as he fortified himself with an extra drop from the gin-bottle standing in the corner cupboard, and feeling monstrously ugly in temper, John staggered up-stairs.

The wife, at first, feigned sleep. She had forgotten to put up a prayer for herself and poor erring husband; but she somewhat regretted the

cross and crooked words she had spoken, and if John had not taken that extra drop of gin, and come upstairs kindly, there would probably have been a reconciliation; but John had his temper thoroughly roused, and that little drop made it boil over. So with many a savage oath, he began pushing about the tables and chairs, to make as much noise as he could. Finding his wife still retaining her silence, he first pulled off his muddy jacket and threw that on the bed, and next his thick "highlows," which he threw on to the bed after his jacket. When Emma saw this, her temper returned, and she commenced again to say all kinds of provoking things to John. He at first tried to say as many wicked and provoking things as she did; but no man is a match for a woman in the art of scolding. John at last, what with his former state of drunkenness, the last little drop of gin, and his wife's provoking tongue, became perfectly maddened. He took up the water-jug and threw it over the bed. She, poor woman, returned the compliment by sending the heavy boots at her husband's head, and jumping out of bed at the same time, and seizing the poker, stood upon the defensive. John closed with her to wrest the poker out of her hand, and the poor woman fell with the back of her head on the edge of the fender, having fractured her skull. She had only time to give John one kind but reproachful look, and to say "Kiss me, John," when she expired.

I leave to my readers to imagine the state of this unhappy man. But such is neither an uncommon or over-strained picture of the evils of *bad tempers*, and of an ungodly life. I pray

of my friends to take a warning in time, and to think of those words of eternal life—"In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin, but he that refraineth his lips is wise." *Prov.* x. 19. "As coals are to burning coals, so are the contentious to kindle strife; and strife is the companion of confusion and every evil work." *James* iii. 16.

We should also be on our guard against a *furious temper.* This belongs to what are generally termed passionate men—such a one as "Johnny Sunshine" once was—but sometimes a hasty, passionate temper, is united with a bad disposition; when this is the case, there is no knowing to what cruel and wicked crimes it may not lead. Fortunately, however, for the world, the union of a hasty temper and a bad heart, is not common; but a hasty temper is very common indeed, and one instance of it which lately came under my own observation, fully impressed upon my mind the importance of our being on our guard at all times.

It was not long ago that I was passing over a heath where a number of shooters were engaged "partridge shooting." Unfortunately I had come across the field of sport, and I have no doubt that I, unconsciously, scared some of the birds, so that the shooters could not get at them. When I came to the corner of a road, I suddenly came upon a very honest farmer, with whom I was slightly acquainted. I knew him to be a good man, and to my thinking, a most consistent christian. I held out my hand to him; but alas! I was met by a face red with rage, a scowl such as the very worst of demons might have put

on, and with a volley of the bitterest words I ever heard in my life; while the actions of the poor man's arms, the stamp of his feet, truly ludricous as they were, exhibited my christian friend in a towering passion. I had spoilt the sport, he said, and ruined the day; disconcerted his friends, and—and—a good deal more. He did not blaspheme with his *tongue*, but he did with his *eyes*, with his *gestures*, and his *looks*. Ah! Satan had him on the hip then. Had the bursting of his gun carried away his arm, or part of his jawbone, I could not have felt more for him; I pitied him exceedingly. I don't think I would have been in such a passion for all the partridges in Suffolk; but I learned this lesson—that although a man may be his own *game-preserver*, he is not always his own "keeper;" and I believe a man is never more open to the assaults of the evil one, than when he gives way to this fury of the feelings. Just as a kettle which boils over and puts out the fire, so does a man who boils over in his temper, quench the flame of God's love in the heart. This man was a spiritually-minded man, a zealous labourer in the Lord's vineyard; but the arch "fowler" threw a snare over him, and brought him down to the ground like one of his own partridges.

Some people say that they can't govern this kind of temper. They can't if they do not try, but we may often observe how well people do govern their tempers when fear or interest prompts them to do so. Had I been the Duke of Hamilton or Lord Rendlesham, I have no doubt my farmer friend would have been as meek as a lamb instead of resembling a roaring lion. To show

how people can command their tempers when they have a mind, I was once made acquainted with the behaviour of a "mercer" in our town, a man of the most furious as well as the most froward temper. Nothing could be meeker and milder than he was when behind the counter, and yet nothing was more savage and fierce in every other part of his life. This man behaved himself "ugly" to such an extreme, that when he was provoked by the whimsicalities of ladies, or their impertinent remarks, he would keep his temper down in the most marvellous manner, underneath obsequious bows and fawning courtesies; and then, as soon as the customer was gone, he would rush upstairs to let off the steam, and begin scolding and even beating his wife and children in the most savage manner, and be as furious for some minutes as a man chained down in a mad-house. When his storm of passion was over, he would sometimes sit down and cry like a peevish child, and after this change, would go down to the shop again, and be as humble, meek, deferential, courteous, and calm, as any man could be. *Self-government in* the shop, and *savage ferocity out* of it. *Up-stairs*, a furious animal that would resent everything and brook nothing; but *down-stairs*, among the mercery, a smiling, polite, fawning, and most agreeable gentleman; who could even stand jibing, brook insults, and bear with the whims, capriciousness, and tedious behaviour of even his lady customers.

That our tempers may be managed by a resolute effort on our part, it would be easy to show. There is nothing so powerful as gentleness and

kindness: a spoonful of oil is worth a cart-load of grit.

Many are the instances that might be given from the lives of the great and good of all ages, to prove that those who *try*, may command their tempers. Socrates, the greatest of the heathen philosophers, was born with a hot and fiery temper; but by self-discipline he subdued it, and kept it under control. He was so unfortunate as to have a scolding and contentious wife; who, in one of her moments of fury, threw a jug of water over the philosopher's head. He contented himself by saying, "After so much thunder, one must needs expect a shower." It is recorded, too, of Archbishop Leighton, who in his youth had a very bad temper, that once, when he was preaching, a man violently assaulted him, and struck out two of his front teeth. The good Archbishop mildly said, "Without any just provocation you have struck out two of my teeth; but if I could do your soul any good, I would give you leave to dash out all the rest." The great Sir Isaac Newton, too, had well disciplined his temper; and it is recorded of him, that so calm and equable was his mind, that nothing could disturb its quietude. One day his little dog, Fido, accidentally upset a candle amidst papers that contained some of his most abstruse calculations, and in a few moments the intense mental labour of years was destroyed. Newton neither beat the dog, stamped with his feet, or uttered wicked words, and only said, "Oh Fido, Fido, thou little knowest what mischief thou hast done!"

But we have a greater example before us. Our

great pattern is not of earth, but of heaven. It is our adorable Redeemer, "Jesus Christ the righteous," the Prince of Peace, the everlasting Son of the Father, a Lamb without blemish and without spot; in whose kingdom "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and young lion and fatling together, and a little child shall lead them." It is to *Him* we should look, for He cast out devils, discomfited our arch-enemy, and stilled the tempest. It is in His steps that we should walk, for He went about in love, meekness, and forgiveness. "He came like a lamb to the slaughter, and opened not his mouth." He "gave his back to the smiters;" He was crowned with thorns, buffetted, and spat upon, but He murmured not; and in the agonies of a cruel death upon the cross, He prayed for His murderers, and said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

Let us then, my friends, look up to Christ as our model. Let us pray to our Heavenly Father in His name, for strength to combat with our unruly tempers and angry dispositions; that His "kingdom may come" in our hearts, and His "will be done on earth as it is in heaven," where all is love, peace, and gentleness. Let us pray for the constant outpouring of the Holy Spirit, that we may "put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, forgiving one another; if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ also forgave us," so let us do.

By thus doing, not in our own strength but in

His grace, the storms and tempests of life, however they may rage around us, will be powerless for injury; however the lightnings may flash, they will fail to strike. The clouds that obscure the path of our progress, will be quickly dispersed; for the "*Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings;*" and in His glorious sunshine our hearts will unfold and expand from day to day, like the petals of sweet flowers, evermore turning to *Him*, the "author and finisher of our faith," to ripen in us the "fruit of good works," and to bring forth the eternal seeds of love, gentleness, meekness, and joy, for evermore.

THE END.

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