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THE BABY'S VICTORY.

By Henry L. Sabin.

THE west-bound "Atlantic Express" was running toward Chicago—rattling over bridges, roaring through cuts and dashing through stations.

With one exception the passengers were dull and disgruntled. Nothing was to be seen outside, and little inside. Even the train-boy had subsided into gloomy despair, recognizing the futility of trying to dispose of his wares to such an unresponsive company.

The only trace of animation in evidence down the aisle of the whole train was found in the coach behind the smoker. Here a baby lustily protested against goodness knows what, and here a group of sympathizing children endeavored to comfort him.

Occupying a double seat opposite Horace Kilroy, general superintendent of the western division of the road, fumed and remonstrated under his breath. He repeated having come into one of the ordinary coaches, but, on the other hand, how otherwise can he pursue his pet method of keeping posted on all the workings of his department? He argued that unless he sometimes defied his official privilege of private car and pass, and rode on a ticket, like everybody else, he could not gain the complete knowledge which he was after.

In the Chicago office the force of clerks was waiting in fear and trembling the arrival of the executive. From a single curt, decisive message addressed to the chief clerk all apprehended that trouble was in store for somebody. Whenever the general superintendent came back cross and nervous his immediate subjects paid the penalty for being present.

Superintendent Kilroy gazed on the baby as an intolerable nuisance. He made a resolve that he would propose to the management of the system the inauguration, as an experiment, of a special coach, noise-proof, for the convenience of babies and party. No doubt the traveling public would hail this as a blessed innovation.

Perhaps he would favor the prohibiting the carrying of children without an adult escort. Here was a case in point across the aisle. Reclining half at length in his corner, from beneath his hat tipped over his eyes he wrathfully scrutinized the "case." Five children unattended—two a baby, and the eldest one a mere chit—outrageous. Had a mother or other mature person been with them of course that baby would not be acting so; it would be quiet somehow. The superintendent possessed vague ideas concerning babies, he being a bachelor.

The little family obtruded itself upon the superintendent's observation rather more than he desired. He could shut it out from neither sight nor hearing. The fact was very irritating. He was of the opinion that at least two of the children badly needed washing. Yet conscientiously he could not blame the busy young body in charge.

She herself was disheveled, but was doing her best. She had a worried, motherly way about her that was quite at variance with the two slender figures who hung down her back. Her face was round and pink, and her eyes were a clear gray-blue. She wore a plain, sober-colored frock, with none of those pretty ribbons and dainty tucks so dear to the heart of any girl. However, she bore an air of neatness, as much neatness as was compatible with the intimate supervision of four active juniors—a miss of eight, a miss of six, a rogue of three, and a regular rascal assuredly, no more than ten months. With these to right and to left and in front, and a huge telescope bag threatening her from the rack above—ah, what a plight, even were not the baby crying incessantly?

John it was who unceremoniously plumped down upon his lap and affectionately embraced him. "Oh, Johnnie, don't!" pleaded Louise, horrified at the audacity. "Never mind; let him stay," spoke the superintendent, bravely.

Johnnie stayed, to be joined within a moment by Gusta, equally as ambitious. Said the grinning brakeman, who long ago had recognized the official, but had pretended ignorance, to the conductor, who also was in the secret, "Look at the 'old man' will you! Regular happy family, isn't he! Somebody ought to take a photograph of him!"

Could the superintendent's many friends and associates, business and social, have seen him thus engaged when the train pulled into Chicago they would have gazed agape, thunder-struck, nearly incredulous. And the sight of this same superintendent conveying those children into the station would have clapped the climax!

"You're to stay here, remember, until five o'clock," he instructed, when Louise and her youngsters and bags and all had been safely ensconced upon a seat in the waiting-room. "One of the men in red caps will tell you when your train is ready—and I'll see to it that they take you to Fargo."

"Do you own all the railroads?" asked Hilda, admiringly. "Not quite, Hilda," he replied. "Goodbye!" On his way to the door he beckoned to a station attendant, "George," he directed, "you see those children over there—four and a baby. Look after them, will you, please? They're friends of mine—going to Fargo, and I'll depend on you to put them aboard the five o'clock L. & D. And, George," handing him a dollar, "you might get some sandwiches and oranges and other truck. They've lost their money. Children always want to eat. I believe."

"Yes, sir; I'll look after them, Mr. Kilroy, sure," asserted the man. With this the superintendent hurried to the curb, sprang into a cab, and was whirled off to his office. All the day the atmosphere throughout his suite had been depressing, for it was suspected that he was returning in a temper which meant a general and brusque upheaval. No clerk, however humble, but feared that the first victim of displeasure might be himself. The superintendent's heel's striking sharply along the floor of the corridor were heard in the outer office, and by that subtle species of wireless telegraphy termed "intuition" the word was passed from desk. "The 'old man' is coming!"

He opened the door—and he was whistling! Actually whistling! As he strode through his own private apartment he whistled on! The clerks glanced at one another in relieved surprise. A smile showed here and there, and it seemed as if the sun were shining again. Hardly had Mr. Kilroy entered his sanctum ere he rang his bell imperatively. "Send in Johnson," he ordered. Johnson, not entirely devoid of foreboding, obeyed the summons. "I want you to make out an application—in the usual way—to the L. & D. for transportation to Fargo—charge to my account—for Louise Swanson and family. S-w-a-n-s-o-n—got it? All right. Go over with it yourself and wait for the pass, and take it down to the station and give it to Miss Swanson. She's in the ladies' waiting-room with three children and a baby. She's to go out on the five o'clock. A girl of fifteen, three other children and a baby—you can't help find them. The chances are you'll hear the baby before you reach the station!"

The bewildered clerk had sense enough left to smile at the concluding sarcasm of his superior. "Yes, sir; I'll go at once, sir," he stammered. "And—here, Johnson—you might give the young lady this. Tell her it's for the baby." "I—I hope you had a pleasant trip, Mr. Kilroy," he hazarded, boldly, as a test to know the worst—if there was a worst. Perhaps the superintendent's urbanity was only surface deep. "Oh—quite pleasant; in fact, unusually pleasant, thank you," averred the superintendent unconcernedly. "Things are in good shape. Now don't fail to get the transportation to the station. Go right away."

As the clerk made his exit, with him through the open door drifted the welcome sound of Superintendent Kilroy's whistle—cheery, satisfied and reassuring.—Woman's Home Companion. Publicity as a Panacea. We have in this country an almost superstitious reverence for publicity, as though it were a panacea for political and social evils. Give the people the facts, is our comfortable doctrine, and conditions will remedy themselves. But there is as much difference between diagnosis and cure as applied to printers' ink as to medicine, and the time will come, even if the writer be wrong in thinking it is now with us, when the feeblest of tonics will do us more good than the most drastic of these modern literary emetics.

It is a curious fact that, when we speak of publicity and its value, we have in mind publicity in its narrow and restricted sense, as the searchlight of public knowledge thrown upon something which is wrong. We make it serve as a sort of social scavenger, as though that were its great function instead of its very least. As though that great instrument of civilization was being employed at its best task when engaged in probing, with a prying-hook, our social garbage barrels.—George W. Alger, in the Atlantic.



The recent classification at the British Patent Office shows that cooking is the popular subject of invention, having been the subject of 3775 British patents in forty-eight years, or an average of seventy-three a year.

Stone sawing is now carried on successfully by means of a wire in place of a saw. An endless wire works over pulleys, as in the handsaw. It is driven at a uniform speed and the cutting is done by sand mixed with water.

For the first time in history, it is said, one of the pyramids has been struck by lightning. The pyramid struck has been that of Khephren, and the fact is another illustration of the gradual change that is being brought about in the climate of Egypt by the great dam at Assouan and the irrigation works made possible since British occupation of the Nile Valley.

A stereoscopic star chart is the successful novelty of T. E. Heath, the English astronomer. The stars in a given section of the heavens are drawn from two points of view that are supposed to be twenty-six eight feet apart, and under a large stereoscope the double view gives a rough but very instructive impression of the stars floating in space at an approximation to their relative distances, instead of as points against the dark background of the sky. The result is a most interesting one.

Tea drinking is an acquired habit, and M. Jules Rudolph expresses the belief that it would not be difficult to transfer our liking for Chinese tea to any one of the various infusions having the same effect in aiding digestion and stimulating the nervous system. Some of these infusions of leaves and flowers have been known to us as medicines. Camomile, veronica, sage, ambrosia, horse-mint and wintergreen are among the locally well known of many common plants yielding agreeable teas, and Paraguay tea and false tea are already much used in South America.

When one can't do anything else with it one can turn his telephone to account as a barometer. Having planted two iron rods in the garden, at a distance of about twenty feet one from the other, connect both with the wire of the telephone. The soil in which the rods stand must be well soaked every eight or ten days with a solution of hydrochlorate of ammonia. Then, by listening to the telephone, one will be able to forecast the weather at least twelve hours in advance more accurately than with any barometer. If a crackling or pattering noise, like that of hailstones on a roof, is heard, a rain storm is not far distant. A low, murmuring sound, described poetically as "like the distant twittering of birds," foretells a change in the temperature.

REASONING POWER IN ANIMALS. Wonderful Instincts Possessed by the Insect Creation.

As scientific investigations extend it becomes more and more difficult to draw the line between the higher and the lower animals and the plants, and even between the plants and inorganic substances. It no longer suffices to say that man is the highest animal because he alone has the gift of reason; nor to say that a plant is different from a stone because it grows. These supposed distinctions are now known to be erroneous, for the broadly scientific man now knows that other animals have habits which must be attributed to a well-developed instinct, and that inorganic bodies such as crystals, can grow.

Investigations on these lines are being widely carried on at the present day. A writer in La Nature gives an ingenious explanation of the wonderful instincts possessed by the insect creation. Most of these insects are very short-lived, and there is apparently no time for educating the young. Yet how unerringly do they follow out the round of their existence; in many cases they are, by their blind instinct, able to defy all the reasoning power of man and they ravage his crops, etc., doing great damage.

The writer in question points out that in an earlier geological age there were not such seasonal changes of climate as we now have. In those days, as witnessed by fossil remains in coal, etc., insects grew to a large size and probably lived as long as many higher animals. Their instinct was developed in that age, he thinks, and has been transmitted through countless generations to the present, in spite of the constant shortening of the period of the insect's life, by the closing in of climatic conditions.

Overheard on a Staten Island ferry-boat Saturday afternoon: Little Girl—"Oh, mamma, where is the bell ringing?" Mother—"That is a bell buoy ringing on the water." "And does the boy ring the bell all the time?" "No, dearie, but you had better go over to the rail and look at it." "Mamma, mamma!"—running back greatly excited—"there is no boy ringing the bell! He must have fell overboard!"—New York Press.

His Reason. Charlemagne was in need of amusement. "Why," they asked him, "do you have such a large number of court jesters in constant attendance on your royal person?" "Because," he replied, with a right regal chuckle, "I could not earn the surname of 'The Great' were I not careful to keep my wits about me." It is said that the courtiers died aughing.—The Independent.

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