The Family Circle.

HYMN.

"What time I am afraid I will trust in thee."

Thy way is hid in darkness, Lord;
Shadows and clouds and stormy wind
Surround Thy holy dwelling place;
Oh how may I Thy presence find?

Fears lurk and tremble round my path;
They pant and quiver in my breast;
And day by day, and hour by hour,
New terrors rob my soul of rest!

New, and yet old—for all my years
Have known these ever new alarms;
No refuge finds my weary soul,
Save in Thine own Almighty arms.

Renew my courage! Let my need
And Thy dear mercy plead for me;
Grant that what time I am afraid,
I evermore may trust in Thee.

—*Evangelist.*

UNCLE JEDUTH'S GAME.

There was great commotion in the old Hackledown farmhouse; not because court was sitting in the county town close by, but because the honorable Jeduthan Hackledown, the learned judge of that court, who walked with a gold-headed cane, and sat in monstrous dignity all the week, had sent word he was coming to make a visit!

"Uncle Jeduthan is a larned man! They say all the lawdyrs take his advice on knotty p'nts," said Mr. Hackledown, solemnly rolling his eyes round the table, and resting them at last on Mink, whose sleeves were still chippy from the armfuls of wood he had been carrying up stairs. "And that isn't all, either. They say he knows everything, pretty nigh."

Mink almost shivered in his shoes. His friendless life in the New York streets, before a charitable society picked him up and sent him to Paradise with the Hackledowns, had given him a horror of judges. Besides that, this one seemed equal to forty of ordinary measure. So monstrous learned, rich and grand; where could Mink hide his diminished tow-white head from his sight?

He did not have long to decide, for bright and early next morning a two-horse carriage drove into the back yard, the driver got down, and with Mr. Huckledown's and Mrs. Huckledown's fluttered assistance, got the carriage-door open, and the judge, gold-headed cane and all, landed on the horse-block.

"Can't I get out to the old back porch?" said Uncle Jeduth, when stories and ceremonies were ended at last. "I should like to take my after-dinner nap there, as I used to when I was a boy."

"*Sartain!*" said Mr. Huckledown, and Mrs. Huckledown bustled into the parlor for the big straw "rock chair," and Uncle Jeduthan settled comfortably into it, threw an enormous silk handkerchief over his face, and silence reigned. Pumpkin pie had conquered learned wisdom, and authority of the law. The judge grew drowsy, he slept, he snored!

At that instant a stealthy step crept toward the porch, and two shining eyes blinked at the judge through the vine leaves at the end of it.

"They say he knows everything," said Mink to himself, gazing at the handkerchief under which the judge's wondrous brain must lie. "How did he ever fetch it? Wisht I knowed how they spell Jeduth, too!"

Mink went mentally over a column in his speller, "truth," "ruth," "booth;" it was of no use, but anyhow, the judge used to drive the cows to the Hackledown pasture once; and look at him to-day! Mink had great aspirations, especially after "knowing things," but wonder got them all in a jog this time.

"Don't care, anyhow," he was just ready to say in despair, when up crept another stealthy step. Didn't old Tab, the tortoise-shell, know where to find Mink, and the game that two could play at on such afternoons?

"Guy!" exclaimed Mink, under his breath, and the game began. One swoop of Mink's right hand caught a fly, and his left set Tab on her hind legs. "Now! 'Open your mouth and shut your eyes, and I'll give you something to make you wise!' One, two, *three!*"

Down came Tab's eyes, open came her mouth and in went the fly. It was a game that never wore out, and the judge and all perplexing questions were forgotten. Flies were getting scarce, but Mink had the ninth one just going, when a stentorian voice called suddenly:

"Dominicus!"

The judge had come to life again! With one wild spring Tab flew away, and with his tow hair ready to stand on end, Mink crept out of the vine to face his honor.

"Dominicus," said the judge, giving the handkerchief a sleepy pull from off his face, "what's that you're saying?"

Mink tremblingly repeated.

"Well, now, I can teach you a game worth two of that. Listen to me!" and the judge struggled up in his chair, and got himself fairly awake. "Open your mouth, and your ears, and your eyes, and I'll promise you something to make you wise."

Mink's mouth and eyes were certainly open, whatever his ears might be, and the judge went on. "Do you know what that means? Well, now, let me tell you. That's been my rule for life, and that's the reason I'm not living here on the old farm, good as it is, and holding the plow while you drive the steers. It means, whenever you are with anybody that will answer questions, ask 'em about the things they know best. A lawyer knows something that a doctor doesn't; a doctor knows something a blacksmith doesn't, and a blacksmith knows a good deal that neither of them ever heard of. Ask 'em! Ask 'em! When you don't happen to meet anybody that's alive, ask the dead ones. Did you ever hear of Noah Webster?"

Mink shook his bewildered head.

"Well, he's dead, but he's an excellent fellow to know; he'll answer you forever. If you can't afford him life-size, get a small one and keep him in your pocket."

The judge leaned back and fumbled into his own, and Mink gazed, expecting to see a ghost of Noah appear.

No! out came something white, but too new and too solid for a ghost. A shining, fresh half-dollar.

"There, take that to the book-store and tell old Bibliothea to give you a Noah that will go into your pocket easy. And mind he comes out easy too. Keep asking him! Keep asking him! That's the way."

Indian summer melted away and solid winter settled into its place, but by the time Medad reported the snow "twelve inches on a level, square," Noah had begun to wear a ridgy place just over Mink's pants pocket, and the judge had made sharper marks yet on Mink himself.

"Don't see what in natur' has come over that boy," said Medad, gazing thoughtfully after Mink as he disappeared with the milk pail one morning. "He's the masterest hand to ask questions, all of a sudden; there's nobody but catches it. What do you think I heard him asking the tin-peddler this morning? Why, he was asking what they put into tin besides antimony to make britannia of it!"

"Antimony!" exclaimed Mrs. Hackledown, with a glance at her bottle on the shelf, "is the boy crazy?" but at that instant the new doctor's sleigh whirled into the yard.

The doctor had a call on a road he had never investigated, and the snow was deep; could he obtain a pilot?

"Send Mink," suggested Medad. "I'll do the milking, and he can find out all about antimony," and in three minutes more the sleigh whirled out of the yard again, with the tip of Mink's nose just visible above the folds of the buffalo robe, and a busy thinking going on under his big cap, with ear-tabs of Mrs. Hackledown's own knitting.

"A doctor knows some things that a lawyer doesn't!" If he could only ask him what a tourniquet was! "Open your mouth, your eyes and your ears!" If he only dared!

They turned corner after corner, and at last the doctor looked suddenly down at Mink's nose. "All right down there? is it pretty cold?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," answered Mink, hesitatingly. "Only"—

"Only what?"

"If you would be so kind as to tell me what a tourniquet is?"

"A tourniquet?"—and the doctor's laugh rang out over the snowy hills—"whatever put that into your head? A tourniquet, my boy, is an instrument we use to stop the flow of blood from wounds, if we're going to cut off a man's leg, for instance."

"The arteries, you know," and the doctor began to warm up, "the arteries carry the blood from the heart downward to the extremities; the veins only bring it back; so when we don't want a man to bleed to death, we put on the tourniquet above the wound. It clasps round the leg or the arm, and by turning a screw, we give it such a grip that the arteries come to a dead halt, and what little veins lose below, amounts to nothing. Clear as daylight, eh?"

Mink nodded, and his eyes snapped under the rim of his big cap.

"And on a pinch, you can make one yourself," the doctor went on. "If you meet a wild Indian and he gives you a stab in your knee that you're afraid is going to run you dry, just take your handkerchief and tie it loosely just above. Then cut a small round stick from the first tree, slip it through the handkerchief, give it a few round turns, and you have a tourniquet of your own. Understand?"

Mink nodded again, and pointed to a weather-beaten little house just in sight.

"Much obliged," he said. "That there's the house."

The snow melted off at last, the long, slow winter was gone, and every one drew a breath of relief.

"Mother," said Medad, "can you get up doughnuts and cold chicken enough for a lot of us to go Maying to-morrow?"

It was all settled; the big two-horse wagon was "hitched up" bright and early next morning, Tom Newman's light buggy following behind, and room made miraculously for everybody, Mink included, of course. All was ready at last, even to Medad's special pride, a monstrous holiday handkerchief, which paraded a red-plaided corner out of his breast-pocket, and a new reel of small rope that he threw into the wagon at the last moment. "Girls are always wanting to tie wreaths, or some such nonsense. Get up, Dick!" he said, and they were off.

It was a five-mile ride to the woods, the May-flowers turned up in great pink and white bunches, the blue eyes and the brown were still distracting, and by twelve o'clock there was a loud call for the lunch-basket. But, somehow, after that, though every one had flowers enough, no one felt like going home. "What was to be done!"

"Let's pitch quoits!" said Medad. "It's just the place—smooth as a barn floor."

"Pitch quoits!" shouted Tom; "you don't suppose smooth stones drop off the pine rocks, do you?"

Medad drew out the precious handkerchief and considered, drawing the red and blue corners through his fingers until it fluttered in the wind like a small sail.

"Tell you what," he exclaimed at last, "there's a thousand or so at the bottom of the ravine yonder."

"Oh!" screamed Cousin Lucy and all the other girls together; "you never could—you mustn't!"

"Couldn't! Don't you believe I could climb down there and back again with the quoits before you really knew you were scared?"

"Let's see you try it," said Tom, with a contemptible challenge in his tone.

In an instant the handkerchief was thrust back into its place, and the challenge was accepted.

"Mede," exclaimed Nettie, springing forward and laying her hand on his arm, "don't let Tom make a fool of you! Don't mind him. Nobody in his senses would try going down there for anything less than a case of life and death."

Medad gave her one look; the eyes were more irresistible than ever, but he never would be dared. He shook off her hand with a laugh, and sprang to the edge of the cliff.

It was almost perpendicular, the ravine seeming like a cleft in a solid wall of rock, at the bottom of which lay a tiny brook, and just width enough for a narrow wagon-track to squeeze beside it. The wall on each side was a ragged mass of clear rock, with nothing to break its sixty feet of surface except its own rough spurs projecting here and there, and the dwarfed pine bushes that thrust their roots into every gurgling crevice they could find.

But over the edge went Medad with a swing, his hands grasping the topmost pine bush, and his feet feeling out for the nearest spur of rock. The blue eyes looked appealingly into the brown, and the brown turned to Tom with an indignant flash.

"Aren't you ashamed, Tom?" and Tom stepped to the edge of the bank.

"Come, Mede, that's enough; you'd better come back," he said. But Mede's blood was up; his feet felt a ridge of rock under them, and cautiously letting go of the bush, he reached down and took hold of a lower one.

The next stepping-place was nearer; he found it easily, and looked up at the anxious faces above him.

"How's that for a beginning, Tom?" But the next moment there was a crackling sound; the branch he was holding by had snapped.

He caught another, but Tom's face began to get white. "Come," called he, that's enough! I'll take back all I said."

"All right!" shouted Medad, and swung off once more.

There was nothing now but to stand and watch him feeling for one scrubby pine and narrow foothold after another, and then cautiously letting go and grappling for a new one. Down, down, nearer to the foot of the cliff with every one; there were not more than twenty feet left.

"He's fetching it," muttered Tom; but at that instant Nettie gave a sudden cry. The bush Mede was holding by was slowly yielding from the roots; he was feeling, with a terrified look, for another, but the next one was below him, and if he stooped for it with his hold still upon this, it started again with a ripping sound, and bits of loosened earth rattled down the side of the cliff.

"The rope!" said Mink, and dashed off toward the wagon.

"Oh, Tom, help him!" cried Nettie, with a face of horror.

"Hold on there!" shouted Tom; "we're coming."

But Medad did not seem to hear; he was groping about wildly for some nearer support, and then made a sudden desperate stoop toward the lower bush.

There was a crackling noise, a shower of loosened earth; the girls covered their eyes. There was a heavy sound of something falling at the foot of the cliff.

"He's done it!" cried Tom, with a groan. "Ned Bankin, take my horse and drive him like mad for the doctor! I'll take the wagon and go round for Mede."

"Here," said Mink's voice, breaking in, "let me down to him first."

He had got back with the rope, and was uncoiling it with flying fingers. In an instant he had slipped a noose round his shoulders, thrust the other end into Tom's hand, and before they really knew what he meant, was over the edge and following in Medad's track.

It was a quick descent. Mink grasped one support after another, like a cat, and they swung him over difficult places with a whirl. It seemed hardly a moment till he stood at Mede's side, stooped, looked quickly at him, and was calling up again to them.

"Throw me down your whip-handle!" he shouted. "Hurry up, or he'll bleed to death!"

"The whip-handle?" muttered Tom, bewildered.

"No matter; go for it," said Nettie, giving him a little push; and Tom ran.

Already Mink had Medad's precious handkerchief pulled from his pocket, knotted round his leg, and was shouting again. "Hurry up, I tell you!" and the grass at his feet was turning suddenly red.

The whip went sliding and floundering down, and landed square across the red spot.

Mink seized it, slipped it through the knotted handkerchief, and gave it one, two, three sharp, strong turns.

"All right!" he shouted up: "Go for the doctor now if you want to, and bring the wagon round two-forty."

The light wagon travelled fastest, and the doctor got there first. Mink had the end of his whip-handle wedged between two heavy stones, and was giving Mede a mullein leaf full of water from the brook.

"You see it was a first-rate grassy spot where he struck, but some mean, sharp stone cut him here just above the knee," said Mink.

The doctor gave a quick look at the handkerchief and the whip-handle, and then at the end of Mink's nose, and recognized it.

"Are you the boy that asked me about a tourniquet?" he said. "You come and live with me, and I'll teach you all the tourniquets I know, and make the smartest doctor in the county of you, too, before you're twenty-one."

And he did, and Mink has been Medad's family physician for twenty years now, though he doesn't leave his practice in the county now for anybody else.—*Isabella T. Hopkins.*

THE GRAVELLING TRUSTEES.

Early one morning, many years ago, I was crossing Tower Hill, on my way to the London Docks, when I saw a poorly-clad woman standing in the middle of the road with a basket in her hand, from which she threw broadcast what might have been pigeons' food, but what really was nothing but common sand. The day was frosty, and the horses stumbled as they pulled their heavy loads up the hill in front of the Mint, but they never fell, because they gained a firm footing by the help of the rough sand or gravel this lady had scattered there. I said she was shabbily dressed, and so she was, but I call her a lady because I am sure she had a lady's heart. People stood round watching (an idle crowd of gapers will always collect in London to look at anything), and while some said, "She's daft, poor thing," others said, "Well, that's kind, anyhow."

Every winter's morning she was there, sometimes accompanied by a sister; and when the snow was frozen into ice, be sure you would see the friend of the poor horses at her post. The police were always ready to protect her when rude boys threw snowballs or otherwise affronted her; and as to the rough drivers, they never said a jeering word, they knew it was for their horses. To one she would say, "Wait till I put some gravel down." Another was urged to get out of his van and take his horse's head, lest the poor animal should go down; and these drivers did as she told them, thanking her in their own rough way. No one knew where she came from, or whither she went. When gravel was not so much needed she might be seen on Tower Hill, where the cabs stand, asking "cabby" to strap his horse's nosebag up so that the poor animal might "have a chance" of getting at his corn; and even the donkeys in the costermongers' carts were treated all the better for her good words.