



The Family Circle.

THE HERITAGE.

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

The rich man's son inherits lands,
And piles of brick, and stone, and gold;
And he inherits soft white hands,
And tender flesh that fears the cold,
Nor dares to wear a garment old;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

The rich man's son inherits cares;
The bank may break, the factory burn,
A breath may burst his bubble shares,
And soft white hands could scarcely earn
A living that would serve his turn;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One would not wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit?
Stout muscles and a sinewy heart,
A hearty frame, a hardier spirit;
King of two hands, he does his part
In every useful toil and art;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit?
Wishes enjoyed with humble things,
A rank adjudged by toil-won merit,
Content that from employment springs,
A heart that in his labor sings;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit?
A patience learned by being poor;
Courage, if sorrow come, to bear it;
A fellow-feeling that is sure
To make the outcast bless his door;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

O rich man's son! there is a toil,
That with all other level stands;
Large charity doth never soil,
But only whiten soft white hands—
This is the best ope from thy lands;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Worth being rich to hold in fee.

O poor man's son! scorn not thy state;
There is worse weariness than thine,
In merely being rich and great;
Toil only gives the soul to shine,
And makes rest fragrant and benign!
A heritage, it seems to me,
Worth being rich to hold in fee.

Both, heirs to some six feet of sod,
Are equal in the earth at last;
Both, children of the same dear God,
Prove title to your heirship vast
By record of a well-filled past;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Well worth a life to hold in fee.

THE TWO MOTHERS.

Late was the hour when Mrs. Sever, the mother of four children, retired to rest. She, as was her usual custom, arose early, and the family had finished their frugal meal ere the first rays of the rising sun had illumined their humble abode. Her first care was to place the dinner, which she had prepared and enveloped in a snow white cloth, in a nice basket, and giving it to James, her eldest son, he with his father, armed with his axe, started for the woods.

The younger boys went out to play, and as the mother followed them with her eye, she said to herself, "Those dark patches on their clothes, which took me till midnight to set on, certainly do look better than holes; but school will begin in three weeks, and the boys must have better clothes. How shall I finish that piece of cloth, and get it dressed and made by that time?" And she hastened to get the morning avocations of sweeping, dusting, and washing up, making beds and so forth, done. Her little daughter Susan, a child of four years, followed her all the time, making the best use possible of her tongue. Mrs. Sever then, having pinned a blanket round the child and placing a shawl on herself, went up into an unfinished apartment, where stood her loom, and very soon the swiftly flying shuttle and heavy slam of the loom told of her occupation, while Susan amused herself with a basket of spools, placing them along in a row.

"See, mother," said she, "little boys and girls going to school."

"Yes, yes; but I cannot stop to look at them now," said the mother.

Soon Susan began to complain of being cold; then she worried her mother to give her

something to eat, who, saying, rather impatiently, "When shall I get my piece out?" took the child downstairs just as William and George entered the house.

Having ordered them to make up a good fire and give their sister something to eat, she returned to her loom, and wrought until she was so cold that she could work no longer. But what a scene presented itself as she entered her nicely-scrubbed kitchen! Those only who know what the hands of three children can accomplish when left to themselves, can imagine it.

The boys had indeed made a fire as directed but had also scattered wood chips and shavings from the door to the fireplace, and had plastered the floor with snow and mud. To satisfy Susan's and their own cravings for food, they went to search the pantry. "I don't want any of the brown bread, do you, Bill?" said George. "Mother made some gingerbread yesterday; I guess it's in that pan on the high shelf."

William put both his muddy feet on the lower self, and reaching up his hand he plunged it into the pan; but suddenly drew it back covered with thick cream which dribbled from shelf to shelf till it reached the floor.

"It's not there," said William thoughtlessly wiping his hands on his trousers.

As they could not find the gingerbread, they helped themselves and their sister to some bread and treacle, leaving traces of the latter on the shelves and dishes.

Susan just then noticing a piece of sparerib, seized it with eagerness; and after eating the meat, amused herself by tracing figures on the floor with the greasy bone.

The boys meanwhile, having brought in their selected sticks and full complement of mud, commenced whittling.

Just then poor Mrs. Sever, weary and cold, entered the room. She was not remarkable for self-government, and though a very affectionate mother, was far from being a judicious one.

"Oh, what work!" she exclaimed. "Now see the floor that I took so much pains to clean covered with dirt and litter, and grease spots that will not come out all the winter, and look at the pantry—what a place! You are the most troublesome children I ever saw. There, go out of doors, boys, and if you behave so again, I'll whip you both."

The boys received their reprimand with sullen looks, went out and banged the door after them, while the toiling mother, after rearranging her kitchen and taking a morsel of food, returned to her loom, taking Susan with her. But she did not feel perfectly satisfied with herself; there was an unexplained consciousness of having done wrong; but she neither analyzed her feelings nor reasoned on the effects of her proceedings.

"I suppose I was rather hard with them," she said to herself; "but, then, it was so provoking. Some mothers would have whipped them heartily." With this thought she grew calm, and sang at her work, keeping time with the loom.

The boys, being sent out of doors, felt at liberty to be their own masters.

"There's Jake Harding going up the hill," said William. "Let's go and have a game at snowballing."

"I don't want to," answered George. "Frank Howland's mother will not let him play with Jake because he swears; and I don't like him either, for he swings me round and hurts me; and then when I cry he says it's only in play, and calls me baby. I had rather go and play with Frank."

"Pooh! Jake only teases you because he knows he can. He never thinks of teasing me because I am almost as big as he is; and mother has never told us not to play with him, so come along."

"You may," said George, "and I will go and play with Frank."

Before George reached the door, he saw Frank, who was picking up wood.

"Hallo! stop a minute," said he, but Frank only worked the faster, and soon disappeared with his wood.

George felt a little offended, but presently he saw Frank, with a smiling face, running to meet him.

"Why did you not stop when I called you?" said George.

"I was getting wood for my mother then," said Frank. "I am really glad you are come; for Frederic and Amos are both gone with father, and Sarah wants to play with her dolls."

"Your shoes are very dirty, George," said Mrs. Howland, pleasantly; "just step out and scrape them, and then wipe them on the mat, as Frank does, and you will not dirty the floor."

"We ain't got no scrapers at home," said George by the way of apology, doing as he was desired.

"I have done all my sums, mother," said Frank; "may I play with George?"

"You may," answered his mother.

"May we get some pieces of wood, and whittle?"

"Yes, but you know on what conditions," said his mother, patting his curly head.

"Yes, mother," said Frank, and away they went to the wood-house, where there was a pile of old wood, which they began to pull down.

"We must select the poorest," said Frank, proceeding to do so with the judgment of a man.

"Now we must pack them up again," said he, as George was starting.

"Oh, never mind now," said George; "we can do that by and by."

"Mother would not like that; she says we must always put things in their places when we have done with them. Here, George, take hold of this plank; this is what I call my partition." This was to part off one corner which Frank called his workshop, and they commenced cutting away in good earnest.

Little Sarah, a child of four years old, amused herself with a blanket pinned up for a baby, a basket of rags, a box of old buttons, and other et ceteras equally valuable in her estimation.

Mrs. Howland, who had been spinning some yarn, took it upstairs to double it, and Sarah had very soon scattered her playthings about the room.

"Sarah," said Frank, in a pleasant tone, "run and pick up your playthings. Mother does not like to have them littered about, you know. Don't you remember she laid them all up one morning because you did not keep them together? Hurry, hurry!"

Sarah quickly gathered them all up.

"How different Sarah is from Susan!" said George; "she will not mind us."

"Sarah does not mind us, but when mother is away we try to get her to do what mother likes. Mother says she learns of us older ones, and we ought to teach her to do what is right."

"I am hungry," said Sarah.

"Never mind," said her brother, "mother will soon be down."

"I want something now," said she.

Frank went to the pantry and brought her a piece of crust.

"I don't want that; I want pie," said she pouting.

"Oh, never mind," said Frank: "I did not see anything but this on the lower shelf; let me taste it. Oh, what a nice crust! You can call it cracker, and give some to your baby."

Frank returned to his play, and under the name of cracker the crust very soon disappeared.

Just before sunset Mrs. Howland reminded her son that it was time to set about his evening work. He arose immediately, gave his sister the rude chairs George and he had constructed, put away the tools they had been using, gathered up their litter, shouldered the plank, and restored everything to its proper place. He then proceeded to bring in a quantity of wood, fed the pig and chickens, and then told George his work was done.

"Do you have all this to do every night?" asked George.

"Always. Mother says it's a good plan for boys to feel as if they had something to do, and take care of themselves; and besides, every little helps where there's a great deal to do. Frederic and Amos have to milk and fodder the cows, and chop wood, and light the fire; but mother says I am not big enough to do hard work yet."

"Well, how funny!" said George.

"Why, who does these things at your house?" said Frank.

"I don't know. I guess mother brings in the wood and lights the fire. We boys never get up till breakfast is ready. Mother says she does not want to have us in the way. But would your mother scold you if you didn't do all these things?"

"No, mother never scolds; but one night last autumn I forgot to bring in my wood, and went to bed. I had just got into a nice snooze when I heard mother call me. I felt very sleepy, but thought it was morning. I dressed myself, and went downstairs, when my mother handed me the chip-basket, and said, 'We have no wood.' You may be sure I never forgot this. Mother does not scold, and seldom whips us, but we must always obey her."

When George got home he found that his father and brothers had arrived before him. William had spent the afternoon with Jake, and they had ended their play with a fight, and he had his share of mud and bruises; but he said he was satisfied, as he had given Jake as good as he sent. His mother chid him for being quarrelsome, but did not explain to him his sinfulness, and of course made no impression on his mind.

Several years after this Mrs. Sever was passing a social evening with Mrs. Howland. They had been companions in childhood, and though their characters were dissimilar, they were still on terms of intimacy. They talked of their early days; both were animated, es-

pecially Mrs. Sever, who, suddenly recollecting herself, sighed deeply, and said,—

"I was happy then; but I did not know it. How little did I then look forward to such a life of toil and care! I shall have to sit up till midnight to-night to make up for coming here; but I would come," and she exercised her knitting-needles with redoubled energy.

"You must look on the bright side, Emmeline," said Mrs. Howland. "You've a great deal to enjoy now, I think. You must do less yourself, and get your children to assist you. But how the time passes! I must put on the tea-kettle," and she took a pail and was hastening to the well.

"Mother," said Frederic, "I'm coming," and added playfully, as he took the pail out of her hand, "I think you are rather out of your place, mother. Can I do anything else for you?" said he, as he laid down a large armful of wood.

"No thank you, dear," said his mother, and Frederic went whistling away.

"Dear, what good boys you have got!" said Mrs. Sever. "My boys would sooner sit still and see me go and draw the water, and then have to be asked to move their feet aside when I bring in the tea-kettle."

And this was true; they had never been taught to relieve their mother, but, as a matter of course, supposed that she must always wait on them.

Time rolled on, and Mrs. Sever sank into an early grave. She had been an affectionate mother, and the children wept over her remains in silent grief; but it did not occur to them that they were in great measure the means of her early departure.

Mrs. Howland had as much love for her children as Mrs. Sever for hers, and possessed as much of the mother's yearning and self-sacrificing spirit, but she reasoned from cause to effect. She early taught her children habits of industry and self-denial, and never allowed them to seek their own pleasure, regardless of others. She also remembered the divine injunction—"Ye parents, provoke not your children to wrath;" and, without scolding, exercised over them a mild and perfect control, and in return they loved and honored her. The evening of her life was passed in eternity, and her children and her children's children arose and called her blessed.—S. B. M. in *Mother's Friend*.

KITTY'S FORTY.

It doesn't do men any good to live apart from women and children. I never knew a boys' school in which there was not a tendency to rowdiness; and lumbermen, sailors, fishermen, and other men who live only with men, are proverbially a half-bear sort of people. Frontiersmen soften down when women and children come—but I forget myself, it is the story you want.

Burton and Jones lived in a shanty by themselves. Jones was a married man, but finding it hard to support his wife in a down-east village, he had emigrated to northern Minnesota, leaving his wife under her father's roof until he should be able to "make a start." He and Burton had gone into partnership and had "pre-empted" a town of three hundred and fifty acres.

There were perhaps twenty families scattered sparsely over this town site at the time this story begins and ends, for it ends in the same week in which it begins.

The partners disagreed, quarrelled, and divided their interests. The land was all shared between them except one valuable forty-acre piece. Each of them had claimed that piece of land, and the quarrel had grown so high that the neighbors expected them to shoot at sight. In fact, it was understood that Burton was on the forty-acre place, determined to shoot Jones if he came, and Jones had sworn to go out there and shoot Burton, when the fight was postponed by the unexpected arrival of Jones' wife and child.

Jones' shanty was not finished, and he was forced to forego the luxury of fighting his old partner, in his exertions to make wife and baby comfortable for the night; for the winter sun was surrounded by "sun dogs." Instead of one sun there were four—an occurrence not uncommon in this latitude, but one which always bodes a terrible storm.

In his endeavor to care for wife and child, Jones was mollified a little, and half regretted that he had been so violent about the piece of land. But he was determined not to be backed down, and would certainly have to shoot Burton or be shot himself.

When he thought of the chance of being killed by his old partner, the prospect was not pleasant. He looked wistfully at Kitty, his two-year-old child, and dreaded that she should be left fatherless, but he would not be backed down. He would shoot or be shot.

While the father was busy cutting wood, and the mother was busy otherwise, little Kitty managed to get the shanty door open. There was no latch as yet, and the prying little fingers easily swung it back. A gust of cold wind almost took her breath away,