

The Family

CRADLE SONG.
I see a cradle rocking, rocking—
When I was a baby, and will not rest.

HER HUSBAND HAS OUTGROWN HER

THE words were caught in passing two strangers on the street, a mere fragment of conversation wafted on the wind, like a seed breeze-borne, to find lodgment where it might.

One makes to oneself a picture of the poor wife who has been outstripped in the race. Fifteen or twenty years ago she and her husband were side by side, in mental equipment, in fitness for social enjoyment, in opportunity for congenial association.

It is the little rift within the lute that by-and-by will make the music mute. But there was no rift here, for they retained their common interests, sat in the pew as of old, brought up their children, paid their debts, and were seen together in company.

Something was wrong. If her husband had outgrown her, whose was the fault? Had she, like Rosamond in Middlemarch, refused to keep pace with him, preferring the ease and inertia of purple and fine linen to the self-denial and homely sacrifice incidental to mental and spiritual progress?

The truth is, that wife and husband, for good or ill, are bound in one bundle. If possible, they should grow together in purity, in love of all that is good, and in reciprocal generosity, so that how different soever may be each day's work, at each day's end they may sit happily down, lovers yet.

READ WITH ATTENTION.

A GREAT many persons dawdle over books as they do over sweeping a floor, or buying a ribbon, or as men usually clean a street. A person can look lazily over a page, and not know a word there is on it.

It was said of Edmund Burke, the great English statesman, that he read every book as if he were never to see it a second time. Rufus Choate's great

power as a lawyer was in his concentration upon the subject in hand. He scarcely ate or slept until his case was so decided. Guizot, the French historian, was so eager for reading, even when a boy, that you could pull his hair or pinch his arm without his seeming at all conscious, so absorbed was he in his books.

MY STORY.

BY A PISTOL.

WHEN I was about twelve years old, I decided that I was old enough to own and carry a pistol. Other boys not as tall as I was could boast the ownership of a pistol; so one evening, as father was drawing on his gloves, I astonished him by asking permission to buy a pistol.

"A pistol! Whom do you want to shoot?"

"No one, sir. I only want to learn to shoot properly."

"What do you call proper shooting, my son?"

"Hit what you aim at, of course."

"Indeed, some people hit things they do not aim at."

"Certainly; but I should try to avoid blunders."

"My son, I don't think you have any real need of a pistol."

"But, father, suppose I should meet a mad dog, or a— a gorilla?"

Father smiled. "John," said he, "I am a great deal older than you, and I have never met either a mad dog or a gorilla; whenever I do I will get you a pistol, not before."

Where there is a will there is a way. My will was good enough, if I could only contrive the way, so I kept planning over and over how to get the coveted treasure.

I lay awake thinking of nothing but a pistol. I had been in bed about thirty minutes when there came a rap at my door; supposing it was my mother, I said, "Come in."

"How do you do?" said the pistol, walking up and seating himself on my bed. I stammered out something about not expecting company.

"Of course, it is an unusual hour for callers, but, knowing how much you wanted a pistol, I felt it my duty to come immediately."

"I believe I prefer a dumb pistol," I faltered.

"Ha! ha! one that won't fire, with a gorilla within two feet of you?"

"I—I mean, sir, one that can't walk off and leave me, you know."

"Well," said the pistol, "I did not suppose you would want me, no one does when he hears my story. It is a very sad one, and I never tell it to any one but boys."

And without further delay he began: "When I was quite young, a very foolish father bought me for his son John. He was about your age and size. He was very kind to me, handled me tenderly; kept me well polished, fed me well, took me with him almost everywhere he went, except to school. This the principal positively forbade; but as my education was born with me, all completed, I did not care about going to school. I was allowed to go to all the horse-races, fairs, circuses, etc. I even went to church once when the twins were christened, and when Miss Bess was married I occupied a place on the mantel where I could see the wedding ceremony. Ah! those were happy days."

Here the pistol stopped as if unable to continue.

"Will you please finish your story, Mr. Pistol," I ventured to remark.

"Ah! yes; I was thinking of the last time I accompanied my young master. It was the night of the Fourth of July. We went out to have a good time. All the boys were out sending up sky-rockets, etc., etc. In the midst of the fun, two of the boys got into a quarrel about some fire-crackers. My master was called up for a witness. One of the boys disputed his word; this brought on another quarrel. My master called the boy a liar, whereupon the boy struck my master; then—Oh, the horror of that moment!—my master drew me out of his pocket, and before I could utter a remonstrance, fired! There was one piercing shriek. The boy fell dead at my master's feet. Then the horrible cry of murder rang out. My master dropped me and fled for his life. I tried to conceal myself under the sidewalk, but I was found and brought into a court as a witness against my loved young master. I was forced to speak the truth, and after a long trial the jury brought in a verdict of 'guilty.' Oh, it makes me heart-sick whenever I think of it! How white my young master was, and when the verdict was rendered he fainted. Then the father cried out: 'Oh, it was all my fault! If I had not bought that miserable pistol! Oh, my poor boy!' Then everybody began to cry. That was the last time I ever saw my beloved master. Since then I have

had several owners. The next one shot himself in the leg by his careless handling of me. The next one fired me off accidentally in the house, and scoted the baby into fits. My next owner, in trying to kill a chicken for dinner, shot his neighbour's pet dog, and had to pay ten dollars to keep it out of a law-suit. The next man who got possession of me came near killing his wife, supposing her to be a burglar. Just now I don't belong to anybody; my last owner lost me after paying eight dollars for me. I hope no one will ever find me. I was born an unlucky creature. I don't think I was ever of any real use to anybody. On the contrary, I have been the indirect cause of a great deal of trouble. I have caused the death of one person, imprisoned one, wounded a third, threw the baby into fits, killed a pet dog, made enemies of friends, narrowly escaped killing a man's wife, cheated a man out of eight dollars, and have never had a chance to kill a mad dog, or a gorilla. I'm a dangerous companion for boys. Parents have no business to buy pistols for the careless handling of passionate boys."

Just here somebody gave me a vigorous shake, and mother said: "How sound you do sleep, John! Will you never wake up this morning?"

When I went down, father asked me if I still wanted a pistol. I told him no, I'd rather have a tin rattle.

"But if you should meet a mad dog, or a gorilla, what would you do with a tin rattle?"

"About as much as I would do with a pistol. throw it down and run."

I am now forty years old. I never did own a pistol, never had any use for one. I have never met either a gorilla, or a mad dog. I'm thankful that Mr. Pistol came and told me the story of his adventuresome life, or I might have owned a pistol and been a murderer.—The Housekeeper.

AFTER MANY DAYS.

THE following interesting narrative is written by Mrs. J. Williamson, an American missionary at Chefoo, China.

After a busy day in the dispensary, just as the winter sun was disappearing behind the hills overlooking Toong Shin, and the last lingering ray was slanting on the hospital tower, I heard the trampling of a large cavalcade of mules. The tinkling of the bells on their necks suddenly ceased as they all stopped in front of the hospital. I heard a gruff voice in conversation with the dispenser, and immediately after, in a loud commanding tone, the words,—

"I'm all right. We have found the place. It is here that they know all about Jesus the Son of the Heavenly Father. Go on to the I Shing Ign. I'll follow."

Crack went eight or ten whips. Linker, tinkle, went the bells; tramp, tramp, and the whole of the mules were again in motion, trudging away to Chefoo.

The dispenser, who was going off to relieve some poor sufferer, returned and said,—

"Here is a man from Yichoo-foo wishing to speak to you. Shall I stay?"

"No; it is not necessary," I replied, and walked into the operating-room, where I found a tall sheepskin-clad Chinaman, with an immense fur cap on his head, staring all round.

After gazing at me for a minute, he began to droibe. Very leisurely he took off his heavy sheepskin coat, then a second jacket, and from around his waist he proceeded to untie a girdle of blue cotton cloth, half a yard wide and about three yards long. From the centre of the girdle, where it had circled from his broad back, he took most carefully a book, protected by two pieces of card-board. It was a New Testament in Wenli, in good preservation, though evidently much read. He was a shrewd-looking man, civil and intelligent.

"We brought this from the son of my master. I cannot read, but I promised to find out here all I could about this Jesus that the book tells of." Out he pulled his pipe, and asked politely, "Lady, may I smoke?"

"Yes, certainly," I replied, knowing that this meant he had a long story to tell.

Between many draws of his pipe and much shrugging of his shoulders, he told me that this New Testament was bought more than ten years ago by an inmate of his master's house. It lay about for a long time till a brother of his master, an old man who could not walk much, but usually sat all day in the library, took it down. He read, and read, and read, and in fact did nothing but read this book. He often, as they all sat in the court-yard on moonlight nights, told them the story of Jesus, and how he was crucified. After a while the old man became very sick. When he was dying he gave the book to his nephew, and said,—

"This book is true; read it. I have seen Jesus in the midst of heaven, and I am going to Him."

The young man did not for some years read the book. He married, and was very busy with his ground, for they were rich people, and had many hundreds of acres of land. After some time he fell ill, and then, as his uncle had done before him, he read the book,—and read, and read, and did nothing but read it. Since the cold weather he had become very weak, and coughed a great deal. So he had sent this man to find out about Jesus, for he was sure the book was not complete.

The man said he had forgotten many of the questions that he was to have asked. Some he did remember: What was Jesus like? When would he come out of heaven? Who was the man called Isaiah? Was there any more of the book? Were all the four people that told about Jesus' life his pupils?

I asked the man if his young master had taught him anything that was in the book. He said,—

"I can't read, I'm a very stupid man, and have no memory. But he spoke to me about 'a little lamb,' and about 'a golden candlestick.'"

On looking at the Testament I found the Gospels had been much read, also the Epistles of Peter and James, and the Revelation. The chapter in the Acts of the Apostles about Philip and the eunuch was particularly marked. I gave him a copy of the New Testament that had just been published, with the headings and introductions to each book, also a volume of the Old Testament, containing the prophecy of Isaiah, some books, a catechism, and a book of prayer.

He said they had come to Yental to sell a quantity of scarlet dyestuffs, and when they had sold all he would come and get more books, for which he had brought money to pay.

The sun was long set as I said goodbye on the hospital steps, and I walked home praying that this people, who now sit in darkness, may be blessed by being able to perceive the rays of the unsetting Sun of righteousness, whose brightest rays are the words of his own book. D.

PUNISHMENT VERSUS FALSEHOOD.

[NOT A FANCY SKETCH.]

"I HAVE punished and punished," sighed a mother, "yet I can't believe a word that child tells me."

"Is he of a scheming, sly disposition?" asked a sympathizing friend.

"Oh, no, in the least! He is transparent to the point of simplicity. His little deceptions are never deep. There is no skill about them."

"You wouldn't think, would you," rejoined her friend, "that I was contented a confirmed liar when I was a child?"

The mother looked at her with wide-open eyes.

"If I have one friend in whose word I would trust more than another," she exclaimed, "you are that one!"

This was entirely true. The lady in question, a woman of high Christian character, was sincere and honest to a fault.

"Nevertheless, I am ashamed to say that I can remember telling many lies in my childhood," she confessed calmly, "and I can remember why. I regarded lying—a distinguished man has put this into an aphorism for me—as 'an intellectual method of meeting a dilemma.' Its moral quality did not impress me. I knew I should get a whipping if I confessed my misdemeanor. There was a chance that I might escape if I told a lie. I was terribly, cravenly, afraid of the rod. My good mother meant to do me good, but she came very near ruining me for life. Naturally, I was of an open disposition, as you say your little boy is. I believe that whipping will make a liar of any timid child, if not of all children."

"But what would you do when a child had exhausted all the methods of punishment you could devise? You would not let him go without any punishment at all, would you?"

"I believe that would be better than making a liar of him."

The mother was deeply impressed by her friend's words. The next time that her little boy offended, this scene transpired:

Mother: "Bridget tells me, Henry, that you told her if she did not let you in quick, you would cut the back door with a hatchet."

Henry (six years old): "I never said such a thing—there!"

Mother: "But you had the hatchet in your hand."

Henry: "Oh, the great story-teller! I haven't had the hatchet to-day."

Mother: "Henry, come here. Here is the mark of the hatchet where you struck the door—it is fresh—and the hatchet made it, and you did it."

Henry (defiantly): "I never!—then beginning to cry—"I didn't make near so big a mark as that. I didn't mean to make any mark, but Bridget was so mean!"

Mother (with tears gathering in her eyes): "O Henry, what shall I do with you?"

Henry (screaming): "Oh, don't whip me! I won't ever do it again—truly, truly!"

Mother (clasping him in her arms): "My dear boy, I am not going to whip you. This is too serious for that. Now tell me all about it."

(Henry, reassured, tells the same story which Bridget has just told)

Mother: "There! Now I know how it happened. I always want to know, and you can tell me nicely. I don't see why you didn't do anything. That made me feel mixed up about it."

Henry (sullenly): "I didn't want you to whip me."

Mother: "Do you think I ought to let it go without punishing you at all?"

Henry: "Ye-es."

Mother: "But you might cut the door with a hatchet again, when Bridget has her hands in the bread."

Henry (earnestly): "No, I won't."

Mother: "But, if you are not sorry now, how shall I know that you will be then?"

Henry (slowly): "I am sorry now."

The mother, having made him apologize a little more fully, explained to him still further the enormity of what he had done, and then they had a little prayer, the child repeating after the mother the words which she put together for him.

Henry told several falsehoods after this, but the mother dealt with him in a similar way, making everything very plain to him. He is now ten years old, and more truthful than, perhaps, most children of his age. A similar course may not affect all children alike, but try something else besides hard punishments for lying.—Selected.

DRUDGERY.

MANY a woman finds the romance of life fading out as she is confronted day by day with the ever recurring tasks of daily life. Said such a one the other day:

"I do hate to do the ordinary routine drudgery of housekeeping! I never was systematic. Things get out of order, and there they stay till I get around to pick them up. It takes so long, especially the dishes. I seem to be doing dishes a good deal of the time; they seem like climbing up a high mountain, the top of which I never reach."

The friend to whom she was talking made this reply:

"I really have learned to enjoy my dishes. I make it a point to have abundance of clean-cuptowels. I know that artists and musicians obtain their fine effects by the less attention to details. I take this principle into my every-day life. While I am doing the dishes I study the best method of doing them—the quickest, the easiest, the most agreeable. Generally, I attack the pots and kettles first, and get them all scraped as clean as cold water will do it. While my hands are busy with the routine, I have time to think. I plan my other work, think what needs doing most, and what can wait, think over my Sabbath-school lesson, the last new book or magazine I have read, recall my own actions, and think how I could have done better. Thus the time passes quickly, if my mind is profitably occupied. It is not spent alone in getting my work done."—Exchange.

GRACEFUL HOSPITALITY.

FASHION has extended her laws even into the realm of hospitality and her requirements are such as to shut off the exercise of much that was once known as old-fashioned hospitality. We read of yellow or pink or blue teas, of floral adornments, elegant china and exquisite glass, and the whole picture shows and glitters like fairyland, and yet, somehow, the idea of "friendship in communion," is overshadowed in this display. We are so delighted with the spectacle that our hostess has prepared for our entertainment, that we almost incline to think we have fulfilled all that is required of us when we offer in return an expression of our appreciation and admiration of our hostess' beautiful taste in the adornments of her table.

But, we rather shrink from the attempt to return this gorgeous glow with only the simpler hospitality which it would be in our power to offer. We have the feeling that it would be a sort of dishonesty to make such an unequal return! Now, if we were entertaining angels unawares, we would be sure that our kind intentions were appreciated—but, in view of the whispering tongues which, alas, are but too often heard contrasting Mrs. So-and-So's grandeur with her neighbour's simplicity, we become faint-hearted; and we feel "uncomfortable" about inviting the friends who can entertain so royally and exhibit their bounty upon a "lordly diab."

Were you as old as I, you could recall tables laden with the dainties that Dutch hospitality could supply. Even then there was a certain pride in the display of old silver and delicate china, but it was not allowed to outglitter everything else. You recognized the fact that the table was spread for your entertainment, and not to measure the wealth of your hostess. But this backward glance has nothing to do with the question before us—Shall we entertain friends who can make a much greater display than we can? The feeling against doing so springs from the very natural desire to appear as well as our neighbours; we feel it unnecessary to contrast our comparative poverty with our friends' opulence. But (and does not this solve the problem?) but, if we to the simplicity of the table can add the charm of intelligence, and a well-bred capacity to entertain with conversational powers the guests whom we have gathered around our board, have we not given a higher charm to our entertainment? Need we fear the comparison between the glitter of silver and glass and the nobler glow and sparkle of wit and wisdom? We may not be able to give those prismatic, perhaps we might call them spectacular, entertainments, but surely it does not require warmth to give to our friends the glow and warmth of our heart and mind.—Gertrude L. Vanderbilt, in Christian Intelligencer.

THE fairest and finest impression of the Bible is to have it well printed on the reader's heart.—Dr. A. A. Smith.

The Children's Corner.

TO-MORROW.

I WILL plough my field to-morrow," said Jeannot. "I must not lose any time, as the season is advancing; and if I neglect to cultivate my field I shall have no wheat, and, as a consequence, no bread."

To-morrow arrived. Jeannot was up by daylight, and was about going out to get his plough when one of his friends came to invite him to a family festival. Jeannot hesitated at first; but, on reflecting a little, he said: "A day sooner or later makes no difference for my business, while a day of pleasure once lost is always lost." He went to the festival of his friend.

The next day he was obliged to rest himself because he had eaten a little too much, and drank a little too much, and had a headache. "To-morrow I will make up for this," he said to himself.

"To-morrow came; it rained. Jeannot, to his great grief, was unable to get out all day.

The following day it was fine, and Jeannot felt himself full of courage; but unfortunately his horse was sick in his turn. Jeannot cursed the poor beast.

The following day was a holiday, and he could not, of course, work. A new week had commenced, and in a new week a great deal of work may be done.

He began by going to a fair in the neighbourhood; he had never failed to attend it, and it was the finest fair held within ten miles. He went afterwards to a christening of a child of one of his nearest relations, and afterwards to a burial. In short, he had so many things to occupy him that when he began to plough his field the season of sowing was past; thus he had nothing to reap.

When you have anything to do, do it at once; for if you are master of the present, you are not so of the future, and he who always puts off his business till to-morrow runs a great risk of never being able to finish any thing.—Ex.

WILFRED'S GRACE.

"Come, Willy boy, dinner is ready, said Grandma Crofts. "But stop," she added, as the little boy pulled up the high stool and began to climb upon it; "stand up first and say grace; repeat after me."

"Don't say much, grandma," whispered Wilfred as the old lady shut her eyes, "cause we haven't much dinner, you see."

"Wilfred," said grandma presently, when the little boy had devoured two dumplings and was considering a third, "what do you think Johnny Pole and Ettie have for dinner?"

"I don't know, grandma; what do you think?" asked Wilfred, with eager curiosity.

"I know, for as I passed their house to-day I looked in. Their mother had gone out to do a day's washing, and Johnny was left to take care of Ettie. She had left them each a slice of bread with a little molasses on it for their dinner, but they felt hungry as soon as she went away, and ate up both slices. So Johnny said they would have to eat crumbs for dinner."

"Grandma," cried Wilfred, jumping down off his stool, "there are two dumplings left—one for you and one for me, let's give 'em to Johnny and Ettie; will you, grandma?"

"Indeed, I will," answered the old lady; and Wilfred was almost out of the house with the dish in his arms when she called him back.

"Willy boy," she said, softly, "your way of saying grace beats mine. I told you about Johnny's crumbs to make you feel that we had a great deal to thank the heavenly Father for. But feeding His hungry little ones is the best sort of grace anybody can say. Now, don't walk too fast."—Selected.

THE WAYS OF CAMELS.

If any other animal gives out it is still possible to make it travel a few miles by judicious use of patience and a club; but not so with a camel. When he lies down he will get up only when he feels like doing so; you may drag at the string which is fastened to the stick through his nostrils till you tear it out, he will only groan and spit. It was my first experience with camels, and I vowed that it should be my last; for, taking them altogether, they are the most tiresome and troublesome animals I have ever seen, and are suited only to Asiatics, the most patient and long-suffering of human beings.

Besides their infirmities of temper, resulting, I believe, from hereditary dyspepsia, as evidenced by such coated tongues, offensive breaths, and gurgling stomachs as I have seen with no other ruminants, they are delicate in the extreme. They can work only in the winter months, for as soon as their wool begins to fall, Samson like, their strength abandons them.

They can travel only over a country where there are no stones, for the pads of their feet wear out and then they have to be patched, a most troublesome operation. The camel is thrown and a piece of leather stitched on over the foot, the stitches being taken through the soft part of it; in this condition it may travel till the skin has thickened again; or, what is more likely, until it refuses to take a step.—January Century.