

The Home Circle.

WHAT SHE SAID.

A pretty maid lived in our town
A quiescent little elf,
With eyes of blue and tresses brown,
With stately step,
As though she kept
The time to music all her own.
But not a bit of pelf.

And I was young with hopes as bright
As e'er to youth are given,—
As bright as Sirius in the night,
That shines afar,
'Bove many a star
That sparkles with its crystal light
The broad full arch of heaven.

But who will blame that when I met
This maiden fair to see,
Inflamed with love, that I should let
Young cupid dart
Into my heart
An arrow sharp that rankles yet,
Nor ever lets me be!

But so it was—and when I sought
This maiden without pelf,
To tell her that my love I brought
And hoped the same
Had waked a flame
Within her breast
Like my unrest—
She answered with a moment's thought:
"You know how 'tis yourself!"

—Waterley Magazine.

IF WE WOULD.

If we would but check the speaker
When he spoils his neighbors fame,
If we would but help the erring,
Ere we utter words of blame;
If we would, how many might we
Turn from paths of sin and shame.

Ah, the wrongs that might be righted
If we would but see the way!
Ah, the pains that might be lightened
Every hour and every day,
If we would but hear the pleadings
Of the hearts that go astray.

Let us step outside the stronghold
Of our selfishness and pride;
Let us lift our fainting brothers,
Let us strengthen ere we chide;
Let us, ere we blame the fallen,
Hold a light to cheer and guide.

Ah, how blessed—ah, how blessed
Earth would be if we'd but try
Thus to aid and right the weaker,
Thus to check each brother's sigh;
Thus to talk of duty's pathway
To our better life on high.

In each life, however lowly,
There are seeds of mighty good;
Still we shrink from souls appealing,
With a timid "if we could;"
But a God who judgeth all things
Knows the truth is, "if we would."

A HUMOROUS WIZARD.

The following good story is told of a certain wizard:

The naughtiest thing he ever did was to disturb a negro meeting some years ago in Belknap street, Boston. The story is not generally known, as it would perhaps have led to some personal trouble to him, had it been represented to the authorities.

All Boston has known or heard of the negro preacher, Father Snowden, who held forth to his "called bredderin" in Belknap street for so many years. It was a quiet summer's afternoon, when the house was pretty well filled—there being a revival of religion going on among the "gemmen of color"—when Blitz with some other persons (although he is himself as dark as any mulatto, and has "curly hair" to boot) entered the house. It was pretty warm weather, and consequently the hall was not a little offensive to the senses polite; but things went on nicely enough until the minister had got warmed up in his subject, and was using words almost too long for a common-sized dictionary, when Blitz thought it was about time to do something.

"And the Lord said unto Moses,"
"Bow-wow-wow," came apparently from behind the speaker.

The congregation looked each other in the face with countenances darker than ever, while Father Snowden, after staring behind himself, seemed to come to the conclusion that the noise proceeded from the street, and so he commenced again.

"And the Lord said unto Moses,"
"Stand under!" cried a voice apparently at the top of the house.

The startled congregation rolled up the big whites of their eyes to the ceiling in amazement, while the minister drew suddenly to one side, expecting something was coming down. But, after a moment's pause, all seemed quite, and so Mr. Snowden resumed:

"And the Lord said unto Moses,"
"Ain't you ashamed of yourself?—take your hands off of me," said a voice apparently from a very neat mulatto girl, who sat in the front pew, and upon whom all eyes were now turned.

"I didn't touch yer," said the man next her, in amazement.

Some smiled and said, "Sam Johnston ought to be ashamed of himself to act so in meeting," and the minister frowned upon him in a way that would have thawed a snow ball outright, after which Mr. Snowden attempted once more to resume his remarks.

"And the Lord said unto Moses,"
"Well, what did he say?" came suddenly from the big lips of an attentive listener in the side aisle.

The minister was astonished. He looked at the man as though his boldness had electrified

him, while some of the congregation began to think that, under the circumstances, the inquiry was a very natural and appropriate one. As to the minister himself, he was a little vexed now, and repeated with emphasis:

"And the Lord said unto Moses,"
"Fire! fire!" roared a voice, which seemed to come from the entrance of the house, with startling earnestness.

This was too much to bear tamely. Even the minister rushed to the door, and the affrighted women screamed like mad, as they huddled and pushed each other out of the pews and down the aisle. Bonnets suffered some on the occasion, and when they all got fairly out, they looked up to the top of the meeting house, patiently awaiting to see the flames burst through the slated roof.

And there he left them standing, their eyes rolled heavenward, and Parson Snowden in a brown study.

VALUE OF A GOOD REPUTATION.

A young man had volunteered, and was expecting daily to be ordered to the seat of war. One day his mother gave him an unpaid bill with the money, and asked him to pay it. When he returned home at night she said:

"Did you pay that bill?"

"Yes," he answered.

In a few days that bill was sent in a second time.

"I thought," she said to her son, "that you paid this!"

"I really don't remember, mother, you know I have had so many things on my mind."

"But you said you did."

"Well," he answered, "if I said I did, I did."

He went away, and his mother took the bill herself to the store. The young man had been known in the town all his life, and what opinion was held of him this will show.

"I am quite sure," she said, "that my son paid this bill some days ago; he has been very busy since, and has quite forgotten about it, but he told me that day that he had, and he says if he said then that he had, he is quite sure that he did."

"Well," said the man, "I forgot about it; but if he said he did, he did."

AMUSEMENTS.

Here is a new way of spending the long winter evenings, when home amusement of some kind is in demand. After you've all read the papers and are tired of talking seriously, try "blowing cotton" for a little fun. Let as many as may sit around a table, with hands folded and arms extended along the edge of the table, each person touching elbows with his neighbor on each side of him, take a small piece of common cotton batting picked up to be as light and airy as possible. Put this in the centre of the table. Let some one count one, two, three, and then let each one blow his best to keep the cotton away from himself and drive it upon some one else. The person upon whom it alights must pay a forfeit. No one must take up his arms to escape the cotton. When it alights, take it up and start anew. It will be a very sober set indeed who can play two or three rounds without indulging in uproarious laughter.

CLEVER JAPANESE.

The Japanese are an interesting and a clever people. Sometimes, however, they are too clever by half, as an anecdote in the *Marquis de Beauvoir's* "Voyage Round the World" will show: "The Japanese, who are as thoughtless as they are bold and enterprising, amiable, but as simple as children, and who believe they know anything when they have seen it once, threw themselves eagerly into steam navigation. They bought a number of vessels, and insisted on managing them themselves. They obtained one from the firm of Dent, a splendid ship—the *Laimoun*. It arrived one morning in the roads; at midday they had turned out all the European sailors and engineers, and sole masters of their vessel, off they went at full steam. So far so good; but when they wanted to stop—impossible; they did not know how. Then our imprudent friends put the helm a-port, and began to turn round constantly in a circle, calling out for help, to the great delight of all the crews in the roadstead, till one of our men-of-war, taking pity on them, sent them a boat with an engineer to stop the insane engines."

THE HUSBAND.

Ladies do not sometimes value their husbands as they ought. They not unfrequently learn the value of a good husband for the first time by the loss of him. Yet the husband is the very roof-tree of the house, the cornerstone of the edifice, the keystone of the arch called home. He is the bread-winner of the family, the defense and its glory, the beginning and the ending of the golden chain of life which surrounds it, its counselor, its law-giver, and its king. And yet we see how frail that life is on which so much depends! How frail is the life of a husband or father? When he is taken away, who shall fill his place? When he is ill, what gloomy clouds hover over the house? When he is dead, what darkness, weeping, agony? Then poverty, like the murderous assassin, breaks in at the windows, starvation like a famishing wolf, howls at the door. Widowhood is too often an associate of sack-cloth and ashes. Orphanhood, too, means desolation and woe.

A HINDOO STORY.

A tiger, prowling in a forest, was attracted by a bloating calf. It proved to be a bait, and the tiger found himself trapped in a spring cage. There he lay for two days, when a Brahmin happened to pass that way.

"O Brahmin!" piteously cried the beast, "have mercy on me; let me out of this cage."

"Ah! but you will eat me."

"Eat you! Devour my benefactor? Never could I be guilty of such a deed," responded the tiger.

The Brahmin, being benevolently inclined, was moved by these entreaties and opened the door of the cage. The tiger walked up to him, wagged his tail, and said,—

"Brahmin, prepare to die; I shall now eat you."

"Oh, how ungrateful! how wicked! Am I not your savior?" protested the trembling priest.

"True," said the tiger, "very true; but it is the custom of my race to eat a man when we get a chance, and I cannot afford to let you go."

"Let us submit the case to an arbitrator," said the Brahmin. "Here comes a fox. The fox is wise; let us abide by his decision."

"Very well," replied the tiger.

The fox, assuming a judicious aspect, sat on his haunches with all the dignity he could muster, and, looking at the disputants, he said,—

"Good friends, I am somewhat confused at the different accounts which you give of the matter; my mind is not clear enough to render equitable judgment, but if you will be kind enough to act the whole transaction before my eyes, I shall attain unto a more definite conception of the case. Do you, Mr. Tiger, show me just how you approached and entered the cage, and then you, Mr. Brahmin, show me how you liberated him, and I shall be able to render a proper decision."

They assented, for the fox was solemn and oracular. The tiger walked into the cage, the spring door fell and shut him in. He was a prisoner. The judicial expression faded from the fox's countenance, and, turning to the Brahmin, he said,—

"I advise you to go home as fast as you can, and abstain, in future, from doing favors to rascally tigers. Good morning, Brahmin; good morning, tiger."

TOO APPROPRIATE.

The presiding clergyman of the parish of Briersport was chairman of the committee on ornamentation of the new church, and it was decided that a suitable quotation from Holy Writ should be graven upon the capstone of the portal over the main entrance. In accordance therewith, the workman was directed to carve upon the stone the sentence,—"*My house shall be called the house of prayer.*" The man acknowledged his literary deficiencies, and in order that he might make no mistake, he asked for an exact copy of what was wanted. The clergyman being in somewhat of a hurry, and having a small pocket Testament with him, took it out, and opening to the twenty-first chapter of Matthew, and pointing to the thirteenth verse, he said: "There, my man, you have it just as we want it."

The craftsman took the book, and the clergyman went his way.

The dedication of the church was postponed a week to await the finishing touches of the capstone. It was done in time, and raised to its place, and the consternation of the good minister and his companions of the committee can be better imagined than described, upon beholding how literally with a vengeance the workman had copied the text of Scripture. Commencing at the point designated by the clergyman, he had re-produced the whole verse, so that the stone bore upon its face the startling sentence:—

"My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves!"

There was further postponement of the dedicatory services, and in the end the lower half of the capstone was adorned with a network of chiselings and clippings not contemplated in the original plan.—*Ledger.*

OUR FATHER.

A good woman, searching out the children of want, one cold day last winter, tried to open a door in the third story of a wretched house, when she heard a little voice saying, "Pull the string up high!" She looked up and saw a string which, on being pulled, lifted a latch; and she opened the door upon two half-naked children, all alone. Very cold and pitiful they looked.

"Do you take care of yourselves, little ones?" asked the good woman.

"God takes care of us," said the oldest.

"And are you not very cold? No fire on a day like this?"

"Oh! when we are very cold, we creep under the quilt, and I put my arms round Tommy, and Tommy puts his arms around me, and we say, 'Now I lay me;' then we get warm," said the little girl.

"And what have you to eat, pray?"

"When granny comes home she fetches us something. Granny says God has got enough. Granny calls us God's sparrows; and we say 'Our Father' and 'daily bread' every day. God is our Father."

Tears came into the good woman's eyes. She had a distrustful spirit herself; but these

two little "sparrows" perched in that cold upper chamber, taught her a sweet lesson of faith and trust she'll never forget.

Sawdust and Chips.

A gentleman having presented his church with the "Ten Commandments," it was wittily said that he gave them away because he could not keep them.

An Irish housemaid who was sent to call a gentleman to dinner found him engaged in using a tooth-brush. "Well, is he coming?" asked the lady. "Yes, ma'am, directly; he is just sharpening his teeth!"

A French woman said that she never loved anything. "You loved your children?" suggested a friend. "When they were little," she replied. "And you love diamonds?" "When they are large."

"What can be more harrowing to your soul than the thought of wasted opportunities?" asked a teacher of a bright boy. "A peg in my boot harrows my soul more than anything else," replied the bright boy.

The Koran has the following passage: "Mahomet, in one of his visions, saw an angel in the third heaven so large that his eyes were seventy days' journey apart." What an awful "bridge" he must have had to his nose.

A worthy deacon in a town somewhere or other gave notice at a prayer meeting the other night, of a church meeting that was to be held immediately after, and unconsciously added, "There is no objection to the female brethren remaining."

A lover once wrote to a lady who had rejected him, saying that he intended to go "to some secluded spot and breathe away his life in sighs!" to which the lady replied by inquiring whether they were to be medium or large size. The man has not since been heard from.

A Kilkenny sentry challenged an intruder on the Irish encampment during the recent English manoeuvres. "Who are you?" said Pat. "I'm the officer of the day," was the reply. "Then, by the powers, what are you doing here at night, at all, at all?" immediately asked Pat.

"Do you eat castings here!" inquired a chap the other day, as he sauntered into a foundry and addressed the proprietor. "Yes, we do."

"You cast all kinds of things in iron, eh?" was the next query. "Certainly; don't you see it is our business?" "Ah! well, cast a shadow, will you?" He was cast out.

That was a good, though rather a severe pun, which was made by a student in a theological seminary (and he was not one of the brightest of the class, either), when he asked: "Why is Prof. I—the greatest revivalist of the age?" and on all giving it up, said, "Because at the close of every sermon there is a great awakening."

An elderly lady who was handling a set of false teeth in a dental office, and admiring the fluency with which the doctor described them, asked him, "can a body eat with these things?" "My dear madame, mastication can be performed with a facility scarcely equal to nature itself," responded the doctor. "Yes, I know, but can a body eat with them?"

A farmer told a friend of his, who had come from town for a few days' shooting, that he once had an excellent gun that went of immediately upon a thief coming into the house, although not charged. "Wonderful gun, indeed," said the sportsman; "but how the deuce did it happen—must have been an Irish gun?" "Not at all," said the farmer, "the thief and it went off together, and before I had time to charge them with it."

Two rival Detroit grocers, each having a score of baskets of grapes, the other day began running each other. One put out a sign at eight cents per pound and the other made it seven. The first came down to six, the second to five, the first to four and the second to three. The first then sent a man around who took all the grapes at three cents per pound, delivered them to number one, who put out his old sign of "eight cents," and made four or five dollars out of his neighbor.

Two darkeys, in the west went out to hunt possums, and by accident, found a large cave with quite a small entrance. Peeping in, they discovered three young bear whelps in the interior. "Look heah, Sam, i'ze gwine to go in dar and get de young bears—you jest watch dis yer hole for the old bear." Sam got asleep in the sun. When opening his eyes, he saw the old bear scouring her way into the cave. Quick as wink, he caught her by the tail and held on to her like grim death. "Hellow, dar, Sam, what for you dark de hole, dar?" "Lord bless you, Sambo, save yourself, honey; if dis year tail comes out, you'll find out what dark de hole!"

At the conclusion of a murder trial in one of the eastern circuits of Virginia, the prisoner was convicted and sentenced. In passing sentence, Judge Richard Coleman made a very affecting speech, but the doomed man apparently was not affected. After he was taken to the cell, a friend of the judge asked him how he felt when the sentence was passed. "What," said the criminal, "what do you mean?" "I mean when the judge was telling you that you were to be hung, and urging you to prepare for the awful doom that awaited you." "You mean when he was talking to me?" "Yes." "Oh! I never paid no 'tention to Dick Coleman, he ain't no public speaker, nohow."

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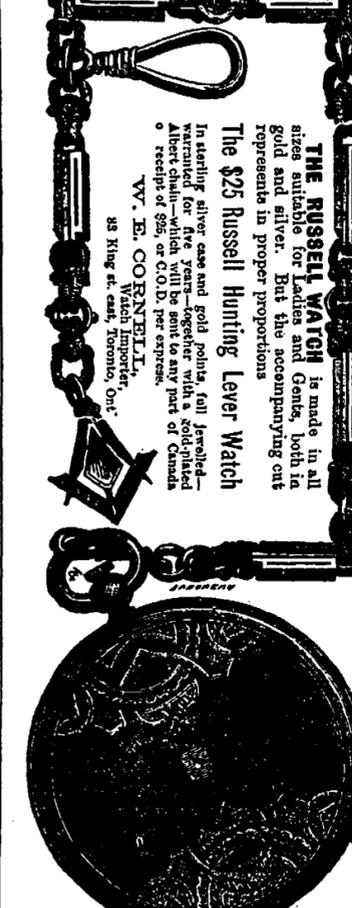
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