



### The Family Circle.

#### THE WEALTH OF A WIFE.

"*Eheu! quam infortunii miserimum est fuisse felicem.*"

The wealth of a wife that will work for a man  
Is the wealth I will have, nothing less, if I  
can!

Let others look out for the silver and gold,  
But mine be the metal no miser has told.

'Tis not the hard hand that a husband needs  
fear,  
But the hand that is helpless when Poverty's  
near;  
The heart but unchanged, be the hand as it  
may,  
It is still the same hand that the heart gave  
away.

Poor mortals are they who regard as a sin  
That a ray of God's sun should slight on the  
skin;

What though it may render the lily less fair,  
'Tis but an exchange for the rose that is there.

Oh, never be mine the gay nymph with her  
eyes

For ever on nothing but life's vanities;  
Can ye wonder, fair maidens, that love should  
grow less,

With so little, so often, to cherish or bless?

No; mine be the wife that will deem it a duty  
To remember, while grateful to God for her  
beauty,

That He who first robed out the fields in their  
pride

Put the daisy therein for a grace and a guide.

And mine be the wife, though temptation  
surround,

That will seldom be far from her fireside found,  
Who will see little charm in the home of an-  
other,

While her own is all heaven, in each to the  
other.

Who will turn a dull eye to the trinkets and  
toys

For the which may the bosom have bartered  
its joys,

And in womanly pride, to her innermost blest,  
Point, proud, to a brighter that hangs at her  
breast.

Ah, that is the wife that will cheer me in age,  
Who, when I look back upon life's early page,  
And call to my mind the dear days that are  
fled,

Will still, with a smile, bid me hold up my  
head.

Yea, when grey is the hair that is brown on  
my brow,

She will sit by my side as contented as now,  
And tell me in looks, as no language can say,  
I never was happier, lad, than to-day.

FRANK JOHNSON.

Ascot, E. Townships, Q.

#### THE HERO OF THE "ARETHUSA."

BY ETHEL C. GALE.

It was soon after the Indian mutiny had been quelled, and men felt that it would again be safe to have wives and children by their sides in India, that my father sent for me to join him in Calcutta. The "Arethusa," upon which I took passage, was a fine, new sailing vessel, fitted up with great care for her first voyage round the Cape. There were comparatively few male passengers, but the ship's ample accommodations were crowded by wives, mothers, and daughters, embracing their first opportunity to join those of their dear ones who had survived the horrors of the mutiny. Of those on board probably not one had escaped the loss of some friend near and dear.

With all its freight of sorrow-stricken passengers the social atmosphere of the Arethusa, though not bright, was far from sombre. Each sufferer unselfishly sought to make life less a burden to the others, and the result was if not happiness, yet at least as much of cheerful rest as often falls to the lot of mortals.

Of course we had our bit of romance, though there was small chance for such a thing where most of the ladies were wives or recently made widows, and all of the gentlemen were either accompanied by their wives, or crippled, or too much given over to the morose humors which beset the age of an English East-Indian, to have patience with such follies. So our innocent trifle of romance was only a violent attachment between a handsome little fellow of ten, the youngest of the

merchant-servants middies—of whom there were on board about a dozen of all ages up to nineteen—and the pretty seven-years-old daughter of our most distinguished passenger, a General, and a K. C. B. As a general thing, any passenger-ship going to Calcutta can number from twenty to forty children, but Joe and Nelly were the only ones on the "Arethusa," and they became the pets of us all.

After more than three months of almost uninterrupted good weather we were overtaken by one of the deadly calms which sometimes fall upon the Indian Ocean. The great ship lay motionless upon the water which, was as dull, and seemingly as dense as tarnished brass. The sun was invisible through the thick atmosphere, but the whole heavens seemed a glaring, burnished vault of copper. There was no distinguishable horizon line: the copper and the brass seemed to be fused together by the intense heat, and formed around us a great hollow ball in the lowest depth of which we were immovably fixed. As far as our eyes could reach there was no sign of life. If we looked downward, the dense, dull, brazen surface gave back only a reflection of heat. If we looked up, the burnished copper scared our eyeballs with its fiery glow. The sailors forgot to swear, the incorrigible jokers were silenced, the chronic complainers for once wore mute, and even the flutter of fans ceased from sheer exhaustion.

Little Joe and Nelly sat on the stairs at the foot of the companion-way as mute as all the rest. Suddenly Nelly exclaimed:

"My feet are hot!"

"Of course they're hot," said her father;

"What isn't hot I should like to know?"

"But, papa, it's a fire-hot, feel!"

The general did not stir, but Joe put down his hand and touched the iron square, like a furnace register, which was inserted in the floor, and which may sometimes have served as a ventilator to the hold below.

"It is hot!" he exclaimed, so excitedly that the general's attention was aroused and he, too, felt the iron, and immediately grasping a screw-driver which lay conveniently near—the children having been using it in their play of the early morning—began hurriedly removing the screw which prevented the register from turning. Looking through it at the same moment that he did, I saw what appeared to be a ball of flame resting on a barrel directly under the register. Quickly closing this, the general said to me in a hurried undertone:

"Say nothing, Miss Gordon, let no one turn it," and he sprang up the stair to call the attention of one of the officers.

Such, however, was the languor that no one noticed the little episode, and my watch was uninterrupted. Standing thus over the register, already so heated that it burned through the soles of my slippers, and breathing an atmosphere of scorching heat, my very heart grew cold as I looked upon the unconscious faces of the passengers scattered about the cabin in every attitude of languor and depression, for I remembered the nature of the cargo. In Liverpool we had been told that the "Arethusa" was laden only with cannon and balls, going out to the troops. But three days before this, I had heard the captain sharply chiding the third officer for allowing a lighted candle to be carried into a "hold full of brandy and gunpowder." Now I was standing directly over a ball of fire placed certainly in the hold with the gunpowder, and perhaps on one of the very barrels which contained it. Probably I did not keep my station more than a minute, but, to measure time by sensations, it was long hours before my heart grew warm enough to beat again; and then I looked about the cabin in a sort of stupid amaze to see the same people in the same position they had filled so long ago, and wondered in a dazed way whether death had not come and chained us all in our places instead of scattering our dismembered bodies far and wide over the brazen sea, as an explosion should have done.

"Miss Gordon!" it was little Nelly pulling at my dress, "Miss Gordon, please come upstairs with me to look for Joe."

Thus brought back to consciousness, and finding that no one was likely to disturb the register, we ascended the companion-way, Nelly to look for Joe, and I to see if any one had gone into the hold.

We were just in time to see Joe's tiny figure flashing up from the hold, grasping at arm's length a flaming mass of something which he cast over the ship's side into the hissing sea. The chief mate, running after the boy, caught him in his arms and extinguished the flames by pressing the brave little fellow against his own broad chest, while a sailor quickly threw a blanket around the two. The poor boy's hands and arms and chest and one side of his face and neck were found to be fearfully burned, but for awhile his intense excitement made him insensible to the pain, and he declared he was not hurt.

The sudden confusion on deck roused even the most exhausted of the passengers, and all came thronging up to learn the cause, feeling no apprehensions, but full of the aimless curi-

osity which is the stimulant of the idle. The ship's officers and the middies, pale and excited, gathered around poor little Joe, eagerly questioning. The general with a sob caught and pressed his little daughter closely in his arms.

"You see, sir," said Joe, touching his cap with the piteous, ragged, brave, right hand, "when I felt the iron so hot I remembered all at once what was in the hold, and how I saw somebody going down in there a while ago with a lighted candle in his hand. So I just ran down and found the hold wasn't locked, and the candlestick, all afire, was on top of one of the queer barrels, sir, close up under the cabin-floor."

The captain gave a startled glance around to see if Joe's intimation of something dangerous in the hold attracted attention; but all those who had not previously known it were too interested to heed the allusion.

"There was nothing particular in the hold, Joe, you know; nothing very particular," said the captain, with an uneasy bluster of unconcern. "But the candlestick all afire! How was that? Candlesticks are not made of wood or pasteboard."

"I don't know how it was, sir," but I suppose it was so hot in the hold that the candle melted and ran down, for the bottom of the candlestick was full of fire, and I just grabbed it and ran, and that's—"

Just here, poor, brave, little Joe became conscious of his pain, and turning white, fell into the captain's ready arms.

The tearful surgeon—his eyes were full of tears, though no one would have dared to tell him so, pronounced the boy's burns to be so very bad, but not of themselves dangerous, if only the weather would cool and he could have perfect quiet. The results of the nervous shock, he said, were more to be feared than the injuries, bad as they were.

I could not do much, but at least I could give him a more quiet resting-place than his own, and at my urgent request he was carried to my stateroom after his cruel burns had been dressed on deck. He fainted twice during the operation, but gave no groan or cry. I was glad when at last he lay untormented in my berth, and quieted by the powerful opiate.

Very few of the passengers knew the peculiar danger from which we had been saved by the wonderful presence of mind and active courage of the noble boy; but all knew that if the ship, dry as it was from the long-continued, rainless heat, had once taken fire there would have been hardly a possibility of extinguishing it, and that we should then have had to take to the boats. That the cask, already charred by contact with the intensely hot metal candlestick, held gunpowder was fortunately known to but few.

At last the opiate took its effect, and I listened, quietly fanning him the while, to the troubled, heavy, unconscious breathing of the narcotized boy. The general stood looking at him with a working face.

"Miss Gordon," he said after a little, "I've no son; I'll adopt that boy if I can get him. Do you know if he has parents living?"

I did not know, and said so. The surgeon, too, had come in, though it was close standing for us all in the stateroom, and he now spoke.

"Parents! I hope not, poor little chap."

"Do you mean—"

The general spoke huskily, drawing his thick eyebrows down hard with the effort to look calm.

"Do you think—"

"It was the nervous strain and shock, you see," proceeded the surgeon. "He knew what was there in the hold, and I believe he felt that all the lives on board were in his hands. I don't think he thought of his own. He might have stood the shock without the burns, or the burns without the shock; but both and this awful heat, no."

Poor, brave, little Joe!

While we were talking, a sudden commotion came on deck, and the vessel began to rock heavily. The hurried stamping of feet, the rattle of cordage, and shouting of orders, portended a swiftly coming storm, though there was not yet a breath of wind, and we still sweltered in the little airless stateroom, through which no draught could be coaxed. Soon the deadlights were put on and hatches butted down. The one sperm-oil lamp in the cabin flickered heavily, as if oppressed by the lifeless atmosphere, casting only the dimmest of rays through the stateroom door. In the cabin were assembled most of the passengers, ghastly-looking from the sickly yellow cast of the lamp, not yet from fear.

The storm that came with such sudden fury did not beat down upon us, but rather kept plucking the great ship from her brazen bed and hurling her back upon it in a rage of spiteful cruelty that would never be satisfied. Little Joe, locked in his berth for safety, already unconsciously suffered for breath. Several of us by turns tried to fan him; but, beaten and tossed from side to side as we were, the effort was nearly useless. No air penetrated our grave-like confinement. In a world full of hurrying winds, we, helpless, locked up

with death, grasped for one mouthful of air. More than one in the low cabin lay in a death-like swoon long before morning, but while despair is a narcotic, terror is a powerful stimulant, and the most of us, stifling and panting as we were, were yet intensely alive to every sound.

Nothing can convey to the ear that has not heard them the awful dread inspired in the helpless passengers of a storm-tossed ship, by hearing the strange sounds whose cause he cannot see. The tortured groans of the straining timbers; the shrieks of the shrinking cordage; the rushing, maddened whirl and flap of the riven sails—like nothing so much as the wild scream of a terror-crazed animal, the hurried, stumbling tread of storm-beaten men, bravely frowning an unseen, terrible force; the sharp crack of a breaking spar; the sullen thump of the vessel as it falls back upon its cruel bed; or the ponderous blows of the waves as they fall with vicious thud upon the poor ship's quivering sides, are all a thousand times more dreadful to the useless passenger than would be the most horrible dangers which he could see and face.

Underneath these sounds, common to every ship in a furious storm, we heard a sound for which none of us could account. A long, thunder-like roll and a sudden blow, then a sharp knock and heavy fall; again the roll and blow; again the knock and fall. Endlessly repeating itself, this sound which was below, and not above us, or on either side, acquired a monotonous awfulness like the pangs of a useless remorse. It conquered all other sounds, and with them all thoughts or emotions not connected with itself. Life, death, hope, fear, pain, sorrow, were as nothing compared with that one undertone of mysterious menace. We even—and this is much more wonderful than that we should have forgotten the greater things—forgot the petty discomforts of our situation, the drizzles and sometimes streams of water that poured through the draught-shrunken boards of the ceiling, the heat, and the many knocks and bruises. Small things as well as great passed unheeded under the nightmare oppression of this uncomprehended terror.

Afterwards we learned its simple meaning. Besides the brandy and gunpowder, we really had on board a number of the unmounted cannon which with the balls we had been told in Liverpool formed our cargo. One of these, a monster, more insecurely lashed than the others, had broken loose during the storm, and rolled and tumbled from side to side over its slumbering fellows, in sullen resentfulness trying to beat its way out of its unquiet prison in the lower hold, down to the region unvexed by storms. It was a real danger, this vagrant cannon, but had we known just how real and imminent was the danger of its beating a hole through the ship's bottom, I think we should have suffered less than we did through that long night of darkness and fear. The unknown is immeasurable; and the immeasurable defies courage, while it crushes reason.

Was it only one night, that long agony of suffocation and dread? They told us so afterwards, the captain and the others to whom the fierce battle had made the night seem short; but we never believed them.

Through that time—whether it was one night or twenty—we watched our poor little Joe as well as we could amid the tumult and dismay; but when the morning came, and the storm had raged away from us, leaving the gay "Arethusa" torn, battered, and half a wreck, and we were once more permitted to let in the daylight and the freshened air, we saw a coming glaze and set of the brave eyes and mouth, and a distressful heaving of the noble little frame, that told us all care was vain.

Once only, during the night the noise of the storm had overcome the effects of the opiate, and he said with a sort of wondering fear in his voice:

"What is the matter? Did'n't I do it in time?"

"Yes, dear," I answered, putting the hair softly back from the uninjured side of the pale forehead, "Yes, you were quite in time to save us all."

"Thank God," he whispered reverently. Then a moment or two later, speaking a little thickly, as if the tongue was doing its work unwillingly, "Tell my mamma that I knew she would wish me to try to save them, and I am glad."

Then I knew that his noble act had not been one of accidental heroism, but that he had fully appreciated the risk he ran and its consequences, and had faced them consciously. And in the heart of the racking storm and terror I prayed earnestly that as the bereaved mother must know that she had lost her son, some one of us, at least, might be spared to tell her how unselfishly his brave young life had been given up.—*Christian Weekly.*

—He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.—Proverbs XIII., 20.