



The Family Circle.

OUR OWN.

BY M. E. SANGSTER.

If I had known in the morning
How wearily all the day
The words unkind
Would trouble my mind
I said when you went away,
I had been more careful, darling,
Nor given you needless pain;
But we vex "our own"
With look and tone
We may never take back again.

For though in the quiet evening
You may give me the kiss of peace,
Yet it might be
That never for me
The pain of the heart should cease.
How many go forth in the morning
That never come home at night!
And hearts have broken
For harsh words spoken
That sorrow can ne'er set right.

We have careful thoughts for the stranger,
And smiles for the sometime guest;
But oft for "our own"
The bitter tone,
Though we love "our own" the best.
Ah, lips with the curve impatient!
Ah, brow with that look of scorn!
'Twere a cruel fate
Were the night too late
To undo the work of morn.

CAPTAIN JANUARY.

(By Laura E. Richards.)

CHAPTER IV.—THE VISIT.

A grey day! soft grey sky, like the breast of a dove; sheeny grey sea, with gleams of steel running across; trailing skirts of mist shutting off the mainland, leaving Light Island alone with the ocean; the white tower gleaming spectral among the folding mists; the dark pine-tree pointing a sombre finger to heaven; the wet, black rocks, from which the tide had gone down, huddling together in fantastic groups as if to hide their nakedness.

On the little beach two men were slowly pacing up and down, up and down, one silent, the other talking earnestly. Old men, both, with white, reverend hair; one slender and small, the other a son of Anak, big and brawny,—Captain January and the minister.

It was the minister who had been speaking. But now he had done, and they took a few turns in silence before the Captain spoke in reply.

"Minister," he said—and his voice was strangely altered from the gruff, hearty tone which had greeted his guest fifteen minutes before—"Minister, I ain't a man that's used to hearin' much talk, and it confuses my mind a bit. There's things inside my head that seems to go round and round, sometimes, and puts me out. Now, if it isn't askin' too much, I'll git you to go over them p'int's again. Slow, like! slow, Minister, bearin' in mind that I'm a slow man, and not used to it. This—this lady, she come to your house yisterday, as ever was?"

"Yesterday," assented the minister; and his voice had a tender, almost compassionate tone, as if he were speaking to a child.

"And a fine day it were!" said Captain January. "Wind steady, sou' west by sou'. Fog in the mornin', and Bob Peet run the 'Huntress' aground on the bank. I never liked fog, Minister! 'Give me a gale,' I'd say, 'or anythin' short of a cyclone,' I'd say, 'but don't give me fog!' and see now, how it's come about! But it lifted, soon as the harm were done. It lifted, and as fine a day as ever you see."

The minister looked at him in some alarm, but the old man's keen blue eyes were clear and intelligent, and met his gaze openly.

"You're thinkin' I'm crazy, Minister, or maybe drunk," he said quietly; "but I ain't neither one. I'm on'y takin' it by and large. When a man has been fifteen year on a desert island, ye see, he learns

to take things by and large. But I never see good come of a fog yet. Amen! so be it! And so Cap'n Nazro brought the lady to your house, Minister?"

"Captain Nazro came with her," said the minister, "and also her husband, Mr. Morton, and Robert Peet, the pilot. Mrs. Morton had seen little Star in Peet's boat, and was greatly and painfully struck by the child's likeness to a beloved sister of hers, who had, it was supposed, perished at sea, with her husband and infant child, some ten years ago."

"Ten year ago," repeated Captain January, passing his hand across his weather-beaten face, which looked older, somehow, than it was wont to do. "Ten year ago this September. 'He holleth the waters in the hollow of his hand.' 'Go on, Minister. The lady thought my little Star, as the Lord dropped out of the hollow of his hand into my arms ten years ago, had a look of her sister."

"She was so strongly impressed by it," the minister continued quietly, "that, failing to attract Peet's attention as he rowed away, she sent for the captain, and begged him to give her all the information he could about the child. What she heard moved her so deeply that she became convinced of the child's identity with her sister's lost infant. As soon as Peet returned after putting Star ashore, she questioned him even more closely. He, good fellow, refused to commit himself to anything which he fancied you might not like, but he told her of my having performed the last rites over the mortal remains of the child's parents, and Mr. Morton wisely counselled her to go at once to me, instead of coming here, as she at first wished to do. After my interview with her, I am bound to say—"

"Easy now, Minister!" interrupted Captain January. "I'm an old man, though I never knowed it till this day. Easy with this part!"

"I am bound to say," continued the minister, laying his hand kindly on his companion's arm, "that I think there is little doubt of Star's being Mr. Morton's niece."

"And what if she be?" exclaimed the old sailor, turning with a sudden violence which made the gentle minister start back in alarm. "What if she be? What have the lady done for her niece? Did she take her out o' the sea, as rage-d like all the devils let loose, and death itself a-hangin' round and fairly howlin' for that child? Did she stand on that rock, blind and deaf and e'en a'most mazed with the beatin' and roarin' and onearthly screedin' all round, and take that child from its dead mother's breast, and vow to the Lord, as helped in savin' it, to do as should be done by it? Has she prayed, and worked, and sweat, and laid awake nights, for fear that child's fingers should ache, this ten year past? Has she—" the old man's voice, which had been ringing out like a trumpet, broke off suddenly. The angry fire died out of his blue eyes, and he bowed his head humbly.

"I ask yer pardon, Minister!" he said quietly, after a pause. "I humbly ask yer pardon. I had forgotten the Lord, ye see, for all I was talkin' about him so glib. I was takin' my view, and forgettin' that the Lord had his. He takes things by and large, and nat'rally he takes 'em larger than mortal man kin do. Amen! so be it!" He took off his battered hat, and stood motionless for a few moments, with bent head; nor was his the only silent prayer that went up from the little gray beach to the gray heaven above.

"Well, Minister," he said presently, in a calm and even cheerful voice, "and so that bein' all clear to your mind, the lady have sent you to take my—to take her niece—the little lady (and a lady she were from her cradle) back to her. Is that the way it stands?"

"Oh, no! no indeed!" cried the kind old minister. "Mrs. Morton would do nothing so cruel as that, Cap'tain January. She is very kind-hearted, and fully appreciates all that you have done for the little girl. But she naturally wants to see the child, and to do whatever is for her best advantage."

"For the child's advantage. That's it?" repeated Captain January. "That's somethin' to hold on by. Go on, Minister!"

"So she begged me to come over alone," continued the minister, "to prepare your mind, and give you time to think the

matter well over. And she and Mr. Morton were to follow in the course of an hour, in Robert Peet's boat. He is a very singular fellow, that Peet!" added the good man, shaking his head. "Do you think he is quite in his right mind? He has taken the most inveterate dislike to Mr. and Mrs. Morton, and positively refuses to speak to either of them. I could hardly prevail upon him to bring them over here, and yet he fell into a strange fury when I spoke of getting some one else to bring them. He—he is quite safe, I suppose?"

"Wal, yes!" replied Captain January, with a half smile. "Bob's safe, if any one is. Old Bob! so he doesn't like them, eh?"

At that moment his eye caught something, and he said in an altered voice, "Here's Bob's boat comin' now, Minister, and the lady and gentleman in her."

"They must have come much more rapidly than I did," said the minister, "and yet my boy rows well enough. Compose yourself, January! this is a heavy blow for you, my good friend. Compose yourself! Things are strangely ordered in this world. 'We see through a glass darkly!'"

"Not meanin' to set my betters right, Minister," said Captain January, "I never seed as it made any difference whether a man seed or not, darkly, or howsumdever, so long as the Lord made his views clear. And he's makin' 'em!" he added, "He's makin' 'em, Minister! Amen! so be it!" And quietly and courteously, ten minutes later, he was bidding his visitors welcome to Light Island, as if it were a kingdom, and he the crownless monarch of it. "It's a poor place, Lady!" he said, with a certain stately humility, as he helped Mrs. Morton out of the boat. "Good anchorage for a shipwrecked mariner like me, but no place for ladies or—or them as belong to ladies."

"O Captain January!" cried Mrs. Morton, who was a tall, fair woman, with eyes like Star's own. "What shall I say to you? I must seem to you so cruel, so heartless, to come and ask for the child whom you have loved and cared for so long. For that is what I have come for! I must speak frankly, now that I see your kind, honest face. I have come to take my sister's child, for it is my duty to do so." She laid both hands on the old man's arm, and looked up in his face with pleading, tearful eyes.

But Captain January's face did not move as he answered quietly, "It is your duty, Lady. No question o' that, to my mind or any. But," he added, with a wistful look, "I'll ask ye to do it easy, Lady. It'll be sudden like for the—for the young lady. And—she ain't used to bein' took sudden, my ways bein' in a manner slow. You'll happen find her a little quick, Lady, in her ways, she bein' used to a person as was in a manner slow, and havin' to be quick for two, so to say. But it's the sparkle o' gold, Lady, and a glint o' diamonds."

But the lady was weeping, and could not answer; so Captain January turned to her husband, who met him with a warm grasp of the hand, and a few hearty and kindly words.

"And now I'll leave ye with the minister for a minute, Lady and Gentleman," the Captain said; for Bob Peet is a signalin' me as if he'd sprung a leak below the water line, and all hands goin' to the bottom."

Bob, who had withdrawn a few paces after beaching his boat, was indeed making frantic demonstrations to attract the Captain's attention, dancing and snapping his fingers, and contorting his features in strange and hideous fashion.

"Well, Bob," said the old man, walking up to him, "what's up with you, and why are ye histin' and lowerin' your jib in that onearthly fashion?"

Bob Peet seized him by the arm, and led him away up the beach. "Cap'n," he said, looking round to make sure that they were out of hearing of the others, "I can't touch a lady—not seamanly! But 'f you say the word—knock gen'l'm'n feller—middle o' next week. Say the word, Cap'n! Good's a meal o' vittles t'me—h'ist him over cliff!"

(To be Continued.)

GREATNESS lies, not in being strong, but in the right using of strength.—Henry Ward Beecher.

HOMELY GIRLS.

What is the use of being homely, girls, when you can all be beautiful just as well as not? If you have the white light of the soul within, it will shine through the mud-diest complexions and the thickest swarms of freckles. It can reshape snub-noses and wry mouths; it can burnish red hair until it shines like gold; it can transform anyone into an angel of delight. In other words, the loveliness of a pure spirit imparts its charm to everything connected with it.

As a rule, the prettiest girls lack ambition, for they depend largely upon their good looks to carry them along. We all have heard such remarks, "She would be a very pretty girl if she only knew something," and "She is really a beautiful girl to look at, but when she opens her mouth—my!" On the other hand, happily, we often hear persons say of a middle-aged woman: "She looks so much better than she did when a girl." That is because she has been cultivating the immortal part of herself all these years.

Ask the teachers in the schools who are the best scholars, and they will point out the plain ones, who, knowing they could not count upon personal attractions, sought their charms at a higher source. It is believed that Michael Angelo's broken nose did much to stimulate his genius. The eminent women of our day are not noted for their beauty, and the newspaper reporter makes much of it when he finds one having an ordinary share of good looks.

The world is laughing yet at Pompey's soldiers, who fled in terror when Caesar's rough fellows struck at their handsome faces. Do we not miss nobler victories every day on the battle-ground of the heart because ye have the same kind of vanity!

But we love perfection of any kind, beauty not excepted. The Saviour of mankind was "fairer than the sons of men," and his admiration of the beautiful is written on the page of night in starry letters, and on the page of day in colors that we cannot imitate. The person who, like him, is both fair and good, is the ideal of us all, but ideals are exceedingly scarce. Evil thoughts and evil lives have distorted millions, but God has never made one homely face.—Julia H. Thayer, in *Christian at Work*.

HEALED THROUGH FAITH.

BY REV. A. J. GORDON, D.D.

An opium-eater of the most desperate stamp came into Mr. Moody's evangelistic meetings in Boston in the spring of 1877. His case was one of long standing, in which the coils of habit had closed about him tighter and tighter each year, every medical help, every human remedy having utterly failed. None present will forget his pitiful cry as he rose up in the meeting and begged to know if there was any hope for him in Christ. Prayer was offered in his behalf, and he was led to accept Jesus as his Saviour and Healer. He came the next day with the glad tidings that his appetite was gone. Mr. Moody, knowing how much more powerful is experience than assertion for proving that Christ is "mighty to save," put this man upon the platform night after night, to tell the story of his healing. It was "a palpable confirmation of the Word," not to be gainsaid, and the effect was irresistible upon the great audiences who listened.

The other case was almost identical. A stranger, rising up at a revival meeting in our own church, the marks upon his person confirming the testimony of his lips, confessed that he was a long suffering victim of the opium habit, who had spent all his living upon physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather made worse. Here also, upon the offering of prayer and the surrender of the sufferer to Christ, the cure was instantaneous—at least, so the patient has always claimed. Fifteen and ten years have passed since these respective experiences. The men on whom the cures were wrought are exemplary members of the church, with whom we have maintained a constant acquaintance, and they solemnly testify that from the moment of their appeal to the Great Physician they have been absolutely delivered from their former plague.—*The Christian*.