

The Home Circle.

MEASURING THE BABY.

We measured the riotous baby,
Against the cottage wall—
A lily grew at the threshold,
And the boy was just as tall;
A royal tiger lily,
With spots of purple and gold,
And a heart like a jewelled chalice,
The fragrant due to hold.

Without the blue birds whistled
High up in the old roof trees,
And to and fro at the window
The red-rose rocked her bees.
And the wee pink feet of the baby
Were never a moment still;
Snatching at shine and shadow
That danced on the lattice sill!

His eyes were wide as blue-bells—
His mouth like a fussy white-blow—
Two little feet, like flannel white mice
Peeped out from a snowy gown;
And we thought with a thrill of rapture
That had just a touch of pain,
When June rolls around with her roses
We'll measure the boy again.

Ah me! in a darkened chamber,
With the sunshine shut away,
Through tears that fell like a bitter rain
We measure the boy to-day;
And the little bare feet that were damped
And sweet as a budding rose,
Lay side by side together,
In the hush of a long repose.

Up from the dainty pillow,
White as the risen dawn,
The fair little face lay smiling,
With the light of Heaven thereon—
And the dear little hands like rose leaves
Dropped from a rose lay still,
Never to smatch at the sunshine
That crept to the shrouded sill.

We measured the sleeping baby,
With ribbons as white as snow,
For the shining rosewood casket
That waited him below!
And out of the darkened chamber
We went with the children's moan—
To the sight of the sinless angel's
Our little one has gone.

FROM WINTER TO SPRING.

Loudly pealing, sad revealing,
Now the northern blasts are stealing
O'er the meads with bold array,
And the blushing rose has faded
In the woodland closely shaded
By the grasses thickly braided
Through the long sunshiny day;
Passed away, beauteous, gay,
From the quiet wood unaided
Through the wintry months to stay.

Bells are ringing, girls are singing,
And the laden sleigh is flinging
O'er the roads of glistening snow;
Trees with sil'ry shrouds are gleaming,
Snowbirds notes are softly teeming,
Raven's voices harshly screaming,
Mingling sweetness as we go
O'er the snow—o'er the snow;
Joyful songs from young lips streaming
Through the hills and valleys low.

Winds are shrieking, trees are creaking,
And the poor a home are seeking
While the wintry tempests ring;
Out the surging storm is wailing,
And the drifting snow is trailing:
Through the woods and valleys sailing
Like a bird upon the wing,
Let us sing, let us sing;
Weary hearts again are hailing
For the warm returning spring.

Brighter, clearer, sweeter, dearer,
Warmer days are drawing nearer,
And the earth again is gay;
Songsters in the groves are singing,
Others on the breeze are winging;
And the sunny days are bringing
Blossoms for the cheerful May—
Joyful May, Beauteous May—
Flowers from the earth are springing
Now the winter's passed away.

MURMURING.

I was tired of washing dishes; I was tired of drudgery. I had always been so and I am dissatisfied. I never sat down a moment to read that Jamie didn't want a cake, or a piece of paper to scribble on, or a bit of strap to make bubbles. I'd rather be in prison, said I one day, than to have my life teased out, as Jamie knocked my elbow as I was writing to a friend.

But a morning came when I had one plate less to wash, one chair less to set away by the wall in the dining room; when Jamie's little crib was put away in the garrett, and it has never come down since. I had been usually fretful and discontented that May morning that he took the croup. Gloomy weather gave me the headache, and I had less patience than at any other time. By and by he was singing in another room. I want to be an angel, and presently one of the metallic cough. I never hear that hymn since that it don't cut me (O. H. H.) for the croup cough. I went out at night. He grew worse towards night, and when my husband came home he went for the doctor. At last he seemed to help him, but it

merged into inflammatory croup, and all was soon over.

'I ought to have been called sooner,' said the doctor.
I have a servant to wash dishes now; and when a visitor comes I can sit down and entertain her without having to work all the time.

There is no little boy worrying me to open his jack-knife, and there are no shavings over the floor. The magazines are not soiled by looking over the pictures, but stand prim and neat on the reading table, just as I leave them.

'Your carpet never looks dirty,' said a weary, worn mother to me.

'Oh no,' I mutter to myself, 'there are no little boots to dirty it now.'

But my fate is as weary as their's—wary with sitting in my handsome parlor at twilight, weary with watching for the curls that need to twine around my neck, for the curls that brushed against my cheek, for the young laugh that rang out with mine, as we watched the blazing fire, or made rabbits with the shadow on the wall, waiting merrily together for papa coming home. I have the wealth and ease I longed for, but at what a price! And when I see other mothers with grown up sons, driving to town or church, and my hair silvered over with grey, I wish I had murmured less.

MARRIAGE.

Marriage is the happiest and most virtuous state of society, in which the husband and wife set out early together, make their property together, and with perfect sympathy of soul graduate all the expenses, plans, calculations and desires, with reference to their present means, and to their future and common interests. Nothing delights me more than to enter the neat little tenement of the young couple, who within, perhaps, two or three years, without any resources but their own knowledge or industry, have joined heart and engaged to share together the responsibilities and duties, interests, trials and pleasures of life. The industrious wife is cheerfully employing her own hands in domestic duties, putting her house in order, or mending her husband's clothes, or preparing the dinner, whilst, perhaps the little darling sits prattling upon the floor or lies sleeping in the cradle—and everything seems prepared to welcome the happiest of husbands and the best of fathers, when he shall come home from his toil to enjoy the sweets of his little paradise. This is the true domestic pleasure—the "only bliss that survives the fall." Health, contentment, love, abundance, and bright prospects, all are here. But it has become a prevalent sentiment that a man must acquire his fortune before he marries—that the wife must have no sympathy, nor share with him in the pursuit of it, in which most of the pleasure truly consists; and the young married people must set out with as large and expensive an establishment as is becoming those who have been wedded for twenty years. This is very unhappy. It fills the community with bachelors, who are waiting to make their fortunes, endangering virtue and promoting vice; it destroys the true economy and design of the domestic institution and it promotes idleness and inefficiency among females, who are expected to be taken up by a fortune, and passively sustained with any care or concern on their part; and thus many a wife becomes, "not a help-mate, but a help-cat."

AIM HIGH.

Without some definite object before us, some standard to which we are earnestly striving to reach, we cannot expect to attain to any great height, either mentally or morally. Placing for ourselves high standards, and wishing to reach them without any further effort on our part, is not enough to elevate us in any great degree. Some one has said that "Nature holds for each of us all that we need to make us useful and happy; but she requires us to labor for all that we get." God gives no value unto men unmatched by need of labor; and we can expect to overcome difficulties only by strong and determined efforts.

We are to be in every duty cheerfully, and here, I think, are the rocks upon which so many good resolves and noble aspirations have been wrecked. The every-day duties of life seem to many of us very insignificant. We long to do something that shall bring rich blessings to ourselves or others. We feel that just before us there is a great work to do, and we will keep all our energies and powers in reserve for the accomplishment of this. And we watch for its coming, wait through long months, perhaps years; wait till our hearts grow weary, and sighing, wonder if we have no mission on earth to fulfill—if God has no work for us to do.

Here is a great and noble work lying just before us—just as the broad blue expanse of ocean lies over beyond the rocks which line the shore. These rocks are nearer, and unless we are able to pass these safely, we cannot reach that which lies beyond. So we must perform each duty faithfully, and by so doing we shall be led out to greater work, to higher positions of honor and trust. But in our strivings for something better than we have known, we should work for others' good rather than our own pleasure. This is the object of their lives and our happiness find at last that their lives are sad failures. We need to do some-

thing each day that shall help us to a larger life of soul; and every word or deed which brings joy and gladness to other hearts, lifts us nearer a perfect life; for "a noble deed is a step toward God."—Waverly Magazine.

AN ARABIAN FABLE.

An Arabian fable narrates that an evil genius became enamored of the beautiful daughter of a bashaw of Bagdad. Finding his affections engaged, and that she would not listen to another wooer, the genius resolved to revenge himself upon the maiden by mastering the soul of her lover. Having done so, he told her he would remove the malignant possession only on condition that she would give him her heart. She promised. The lover was restored, and the wicked spirit demanded the fulfilment of her word. She answered,—

"I would yield you my heart if I had it, but I have it not. It is in another's keeping; it belongs to the man I adore. Ask him for it. If he will surrender it, my compact will be preserved. If he refuse, you have no redress, for you cannot twice possess the same soul, and your allegiance to Amalmon compels you to abide by any covenant you may make with mortals."

The genius saw that he was foiled, and, roaring with impotent rage, disappeared. The daughter of the bashaw was a woman. She was a tactician. Woman, by her tact, has always been able to control her brother, and exercise the spirit of evil. The Eastern tale is as true to-day as it was when written. "Give woman half a chance with the devil, say the Spaniards, and the devil will be outwitted." The argument of Eden does not disprove the aphorism. It was Eve's curiosity, not Satan's cunning, which undid her. Her most dangerous foe was within. Relieved of that, she would have cajoled the Prince of Darkness out of his glooms, and turned his mockery and sarcasm to the tune of tenderness.

NECESSARY UNITY.

To be a genius one must also be a labourer. Alexander Hamilton once said to an intimate friend: "Mon give me some credit for genius. All the genius that I have lies just in this: When I have a subject in hand, I study it profoundly. Day and night it is before me. I explore it in all its bearings. My mind becomes pre-occupied with it. Then the effort which I make is what the people are pleased to call the fruit of genius. It is the fruit of labor and thought." Mr. Webster entertained similar ideas, and would not speak on any subject until he had thoroughly imbibed his mind with it. Demosthenes was once urged to speak on a great and sudden emergency. "I am not prepared," said he, and he obstinately refused. The law of labor is equally binding on genius and mediocrity; the results differ, of course, for genius must inevitably distance mediocrity; but labor is necessary to all who would succeed.

DOING OUR BEST.

Every one has observed one disparity in himself; the difficulty of keeping his abilities always level, so that work may never be up hill. No human is always at his best. It takes a thousand circumstances of weather, season, diet, repose, social stimulus, interior consciousness, to put a man or a woman into the highest working condition. Most of us labor under some physical or mental disability in much that we do. A headache or an east wind, an untimely interruption, a grief or a sudden joy steps in just at the wrong time, and hinders or mars our work so that we cannot get it done to our satisfaction. These things are common to all. "I must have been mad when I painted that," said a distinguished artist, as from the walls of a public gallery he surveyed one of his masterpieces; and he ordered it back to his studio that he might retouch what displeased him. Most of us in surveying our work can see where it might have been done better, and yet in doing it again we are apt to fall into fresh errors. Notwithstanding, we must press on, doing the best we can in spite of humors, oppositions, difficulties, ever keeping our sails in such trim that when a favorable wind does blow we may be wafted swiftly along our course.

USE OF COLORS.

Judiciously used or applied, color is the very element of beauty in a home; and we wonder to see the study of it so often neglected in what might otherwise be tasteful rooms. In furnishing their houses, young people are apt to run into of one two extremes; their apartments are either over-crowded and made conspicuous by gaudy furniture, or present a severely simple appearance which destroys all approach to artistic effect. It is seldom that the congeniality of walls and woodwork is considered when the carpet is purchased; and the first error in color generally springs from the lack of harmony in those three. A hint may be taken from the Orientals in this connection. Though we talk sneeringly of "barbaric taste from scarlet and gold," yet they never err in combined colors. They clothe the assembly of people in uniform hues of white, grey and brown, while the few who are meant to be conspicuous, shine resplendently in gold and jewels, and all gorgeous tints. In their houses the same principle is carried out

the floors are covered with plain, greenish-white matting, and at the side of the room is a gayly-embroidered divan, in front of which is a small carpet almost as finely tapestried. There is no medley of furniture to distract the eye, but perhaps a white screen, with sentences from the Koran painted on it in vermilion. Here lies the secret of using pure tints—those which we name "bright colors"—they must be introduced in small masses upon a neutral groundwork. Very ordinary house furnishings may be made to appear more valuable than they really are if the effect of color be carefully studied in their arrangement. This hint is well worth the consideration of those who desire to have an attractive home, for beauty is the most obvious element of attractiveness.

A MOTHER'S WORTH.

Many a discouraged mother folds her hands at night, and feels as if she had, after all, done nothing, although she had not spent an idle moment since she rose. Is it nothing that your little helpless children have had some one to come to with all their childish griefs and joys? Is it nothing that your husband feels "safe" when he is away to his business, because your careful hand directs everything at home? Is it nothing, when his business is over, that he has the blessed refuge of home, which you have had that day done your best to brighten and refine? Oh, weary and faithful mother! you little know your power when you say, "I have done nothing." There is a book in which a fairer record than this is written over against your name.

A WORD TO MOTHERS.

Every mother is an historian. She writes not the history of empires or of nations upon paper, but she writes her own history on the imperishable mind of her child. That tablet and that history will remain indelible when time shall be no more. That history each mother shall meet again, and read with eternal joy or unutterable grief in the coming ages of eternity. The thought should weigh on the mind of every mother, and render her deeply circumspect and prayerful in her solemn work of training up her children for immortality.

The minds of children are very susceptible and easily impressed. A word, a look, a frown, may engrave an impression upon the mind of a child which no lapse of time can efface or wash out. You walk along the seashore when the tide is out and you can form characters, or write words and names, in the smooth white sand which is spread out so clear and beautiful at your feet, according as your fancy may dictate; but the tide shall, in a few hours, wash out and efface all that you have written. Not so the lines and characters of truth or error which your conduct imprints on the mind of your child. There you write impressions for the everlasting good or ill of your child, which neither the floods nor storms of earth can ever wash out, nor Death's cold finger erase, nor the slow-moving ages of eternity obliterate. How careful, then, should each mother be in her treatment of her child! How prayerful and how serious, and how earnest to write the eternal truths of God on his mind!—these truths which shall be his guide and teacher when her voice was silent in death, and her lips no longer move in prayer in his behalf in commending her dear child to her covenant of God.

ADMIT THE SUN.

Nothing is so prejudicial to health as continued shade. A room into which the sun never enters is unfit for occupancy, since it must necessarily be damp. Among the indispensable requisites of a healthful dwelling are, that it shall be absolutely free from damp; because a damp house is a potent, active, and ever present cause of disease, especially of rheumatism, neuralgia, colds, coughs, consumption, and such like. The site, therefore if not naturally dry, must be rendered so by means of asphalt or cement, throughout the foundation, and the roof, and gutters, and drainage, must be perfect. All the house drains should terminate outside the house on an open grid or trap; that is, they should be ventilated by having a pipe run up from every soil-pipe and every bend in the house. And, second, that the house shall be so placed that the direct rays of the sun shall have free admission into the living apartments; because the sun's rays impart a healthy and invigorating quality to the air, and stimulate the vitality of human beings, as they do those of plants, which without sunlight would sicken and die. The aspect, therefore, should be southeast.

A WICKED DOG TRAY.

And now the intelligent dog has developed literary tastes. The inhabitants of a certain town for some weeks experienced a determined war against their morning dailies. The raids had been so regular, general, and successful, that positive action in the matter became a necessity. A meeting of the residents was held, and it was unanimously agreed to employ a watchman to arrest the abject thief. Day after day passed, the papers still disappeared, and the thief remained undiscovered. The watchman then claimed that his career failed to leave his papers at the doors of his subscribers. The movements of the carrier were then closely shadowed, but this only resulted in proving that the papers were delivered regu-

larly. The idea of being thwarted in the attempt to capture the author of the mischief added to the fury of the subscribers. They finally decided to watch and wait themselves, and it was agreed that a guard should be appointed for duty each evening. After many tedious hours of investigation and anxiety, early on Tuesday morning, a King Charles spaniel was observed to walk up cautiously, and remove one of the cherished papers. This action was repeated systematically, house by house, several times before the guards followed their victim to his place of refuge. Near the foot of a prominent street, behind a large pile of rubbish, was found the receptacle sought for, and revealed fully one hundred of the stolen papers.

BABIES.

Babies are not to be blamed for being disagreeable; they can't help it. They want to be let alone and kept out of sight, if they are well-bred; but their foolish parents won't let them have their way unless the word is differently spelled. The unfortunate babies must be taken into the light, and looked at, and criticized, and poked in the ribs, and asked to laugh a little. The idea of laughing under such circumstances! Crying is more natural, and they cry, of course. Who wouldn't? To put a sensitive and sensible baby on exhibition, and insist on its playing a comedy part with a dozen pins in its flesh, and several doses of medicine internally, revealing the ignorance of physicians, is much like insisting that a bereaved son should dance a hornpipe at his mother's funeral.

Nor are babies bound to resemble their father, or mother, or both at a time. They must have a confused notion what their personal appearance is after being assured they are exact counterparts of their parents, aunts, uncles, grandfathers, grandmothers, and all their cotemporaneous relatives. The truth is, they don't look like anything in particular but themselves. Beauty is impossible to them and they know it. Their family pride is revolted at the thought of being compared to their ancestors who may chance to be comely. Their intuitive sense of art is quite sufficient to inform them that seven to thirteen pounds avoirdupois, with imperceptible noses, protuberant eyes, and entire absence of symmetry, do not constitute beauty. They are conscious that they suffer by comparison with other little animals, even with geese and pigs, so far as aesthetics go, and, therefore, beauty is a delicate subject they would prefer not to have discussed. Babies have no individuality of appearance whatever, and discovering a likeness between them and mature persons, is as if we compare the tender loin of a steak with the expression of a human countenance.

A BEAR STORY WITH A MORAL.

A man killed a bear and brought the meat to town to sell. I asked him if it was good to eat. He said, certainly it was, and cheap as dirt at twenty-five cents per pound. I asked him why bear meat should be any higher than any other meat. He told me bear meat had a peculiar effect on the human system; that those eating it would partake for a time, not only of the meat, but of the nature of the animal; that bears were great fellows to hug; that if I was a married man I should buy some for my wife and get her to eat it for supper, and she would undoubtedly hug me.

Now, my wife isn't an angel, so I bought four pounds and paid that man a dollar—my last dollar, and he folded it up, rolled a paper around it and put it down in his pocket. Then he slapped his pocket to see if it was there. He then went on to say that sometimes when the bile wasn't right the meat had the contrary effect, and made the woman growl; and sometimes in place of wanting to hug her husband she would want to hug the man that killed the bear. I told him that I didn't like bear meat, and never did; that I felt sick if I owed a man the dollar and he would sue me if I did not pay him right off. But he told me that he had just paid his internal revenue tax and hadn't a cent in the world. I thought then, and still think, that he must have told me a lie. In fact, after thinking over the matter, I would not believe him under oath. Now, I am a poor man, and could not afford to throw the meat away, and so I took it home, and Mary Ann (that's my wife's name) cooked it, and we ate it for supper. It tasted good. I think bears and possums are made out of the same timber, only put up on different plans and specifications.

After supper we sat down by the stove. Mary Ann went to sewing, and I sat looking at her. Directly my bear meat began to take effect, and I felt like I wanted to hug my Mary Ann. So I put my arm around her, and she told me to take it away, and wanted to know if I hadn't been drinking again. (I never drank a drop in my life.) I hugged her a little and she growled. I knew then the jig was up; and the bear meat had gone back on me in her case, but I thought I could try it again. Her arm flew back and I saw a thousand stars. This riled me, my bear meat turned on me, and I slapped her square in the mouth. "Well, I have continued remembrance of seeing her spring towards me, of feeling a frightful roaring in my head, and feeling a sensation as if I was being run through a threatening machine, and then all was blank. I lay on the table with one eye this morning, and can sit up in bed with a pillow behind me. Mary Ann has gone out to buy some bread. The servant says she says they all get back and I feel sore and hot, and I don't want any more bear meat in my house, and if ever I get hold of the man that sold it to me—well, you know how it is yourself."