



The Family Circle.

WARFARE.

My hand has lost its cunning and its power,
I cannot fight;
My arm hangs helpless, like a wounded flower,
Killed by a blight!

My tendons, once of steel, are limp and shrunk—
Each yields, and bends;
My iron fame is like the blasted trunk
That lightning rends!

And where my armor? Is it also gone?
I wake to find
That I am standing here, disarmed, alone—
With youth behind—

And strength and beauty, and all else that dies,
Locked chill in death,
Gone like a vision of the night that flies,
At morn's first breath!

What has my warfare brought me? What great
gain?
How much renown?
Where are thy trophies? Where my conquered
slain?
And where my crown?
What are my victories that I should share
The victor's sent?

I fought as one who vainly beats the air,
And gained—defeat!

And this the end is! this the climax grand,
The acme won!
The final downfall of a house of sand,
The last road run!

And what my profits are, I ask in vain,
For none are shown:
Nothing is left that I can count as gain,
Or call my own.

I toyed with shadows, while the sands of time
Rolled swiftly on;
And said not, "This is youth," until its prime
Was past and gone!

And now, in shame, before the Head Supreme,
With garments rent,
I crave for grace that I may yet redeem
The time mispent!

—Chambers' Journal.

ONE WOMAN'S WAY.

BY M. E. WHITNEY.

"This Molly of yours must be quite an exceptional woman," I remarked when Mr. Borden came to a full stop, after finishing his account of the way she managed the newsdealer and "Young America" in the matter of dime literature of the blood and thunder description.

He stood absently running the leaves of a magazine through his fingers. Being resolved not to lose this chance to find out more about this, to me somewhat mythical woman, I asked, "Does she try her reform measures upon the community at large?"

Mr. Borden laughed: "Oh, yes, wherever she sees an evil or a fault she is sure to attack it front and rear, and is usually victorious. It is needless to add, after the specimen I have given you, that it is much to the improvement of the vanquished. Moreover, she is so good-natured and tactful about it that after the battle is over and the smoke cleared away they generally have the grace to acknowledge that they are the better for it."

"There was one unusually bad habit," continued Mr. Borden, "among the young ladies, and some older ones as well, that she entirely cured the Gardner girls of. She went at it, too, in a way that was simplicity itself; yet the plan never seemed to occur to any one else."

"It was in this way: One day I received a card of invitation to her home for an evening only a couple of days in advance. That was after I had become quite well acquainted with her, and flattered myself that I was familiar with her peculiarities. I have since learned that she is a woman of exhaustless resources."

"But the party, on such short notice, I expected to be quite an informal affair. She had a way of chinking in little entertainments of one kind or another when there was any danger of stagnation in Gardner society."

"When the evening came I found only gentlemen present, and was soon aware that they only were invited. Of course the

novelty of the thing put us all on the *qui vive* for a denouement of some sort. After a little general conversation (and Molly is a delightful hostess) she stated in a few words why she had invited us, namely, to form an 'Anti-tease Society.'

"That never will do, Aunt Molly," exclaimed one of the boys. "If I want anything I will tease until I get it, and that's the short of it."

"Not too fast, Fred; this is something that you surely do often want, ask for, and always have to tease if you get it, yet you would be much sooner gratified if you did not tease—that is, if you could persuade the other gentlemen to refrain also."

"A conundrum," exclaimed John Hale.

"A riddle," with a wise shake of the head from Charley.

"Well, then, guess it," said Molly with a smile.

"Let us see the chromo first," put in Fred.

"O, Aunt Molly tell us, we never can guess your riddles."

"Do tell us," from one and another. All were interested, some curious, but the most of them a little shy, afraid that she was trying to encroach upon their liberties in some way.

"After getting us thoroughly awakened, she proceeded to tell us that it was a serious fault of the girls that she wished to enlist our services against. It was a very bad habit indeed; it grieved their friends, and was uncommonly aggravating to the young gentlemen of their acquaintance; moreover, it made them appear silly and disobliging in society, as well as at home."

"Molly was so in hopes she could get the boys to help her; she had thought of a way, but if they could suggest something better she would be glad; if not she trusted that they would help her carry out her little plan."

"There she sat in a low chair, her fingers busy with some plain knitting, her face lighted up, and looking ten years younger than when in repose."

"Aunt Molly, this is rich!" exclaimed Charley Gardner. "Only just to think that the ladies need reforming, and above all, to have one of their number own it! Are you to be reformed with the others?"

"I am happy to say, Charley, that the habit I now have under consideration is one I became ashamed of and abandoned years ago; but there is still room for improvement, and I hope you boys will take my faults in hand when you have nothing more important to do."

"Now, here were more than twenty young men, from eighteen to thirty years of age, every one curious and waiting anxiously for an explanation, and at this instant Molly rose, saying: 'Pray excuse me for a minute,' and left the room."

"Within the time for which she asked, she returned, followed by an Abigail bearing some light refreshments, which we were soon discussing with zest. I learned afterward that Molly was famous for these little treats, always seasonably rare, and just enough to take the edge from formality and promote good fellowship."

"The boys talked and wondered for a full half hour with but little help from Molly, when, suddenly, as she was apt to do even the thing expected of her, she asked if we were ready to help her."

"We are ready to hear what it is that you want us to do," said John Hale, feeling his way.

"Cautious as usual," remarked Molly with a smile. "Afraid your aunty wants to trap you, I suppose. Never mind; I know you all want to hear what that fault is, and I am as anxious to tell you, only this is to be a secret society, and you are all to promise before I reveal this short-coming of my sisters never to tell a person, or even let any one guess that you know it."

"Oh, we promise."

"It shall be a dead secret."

"Secret as the grave."

"Mum is the word."

"Administer your oath," were some of the responses.

"Well, then, listen. This fault is a habit the girls all have of refusing to play or sing till they have exhausted everybody's patience with teasing."

"This announcement was received with a clapping of hands."

"But how, then, are we ever to have any music?" asked Charley with a rueful face. "The girls never will give in until

we are just tired out with teasing—in fact, too tired to more than half enjoy the fruit of our labors."

"Only too thankful, if anything, but teasing will get the music," remarked Will Castleton; and Molly declared that we could have just as much music for once asking as soon as the girls understood that they would be asked only once.

"We were all skeptical, but finally agreed to sign a paper binding ourselves to ask a lady only once on any occasion for music, either vocal or instrumental, the promise to hold us for only one month, unless it was satisfactory. Molly also insisted upon our promising never after this evening to speak of this agreement, even among ourselves. This being fully understood and settled after many words, Molly, glancing at the clock, said:

"I believe we all have invitations to the Armstrong's party next week. We will undoubtedly get a good deal of amusement out of this, but we must be very careful not to betray ourselves by word or glance. Meanwhile many of you will have opportunities to try the plan at home. Now you may talk and laugh over this matter as much as you please for half an hour, then it will be time that all reformers and good little boys were jogging quietly home."

"That was the first of Molly's reform societies that I was invited to join, and I certainly never enjoyed an evening more," remarked Mr. Borden after a reflective pause.

"That society was a success. I am sure my surprise was almost equal to my pleasure, when I first witnessed the alacrity with which the ladies of Gardner responded to a request for music. You may be sure that more than twenty young men enjoyed that party at Mr. Armstrong's hugely. It was near breaking up, before the ladies studied out where the hitch was. We had only two pieces of music, one by Molly and the other by a young lady whom the gentlemen not in the secret teased until she consented to favor them."

These gentlemen, however, saw through the plan about as soon as the ladies, and tacitly joined the 'Anti-Teasers,' and thereafter, one request was all that was necessary to start a lady to the piano. If a lady for any cause refused, it was considered final."

A LESSON FOR THE GRADUATE.

The *Christian Union*, in a recent issue, inculcates a great lesson of duty and of trust to the graduate of our schools who fail to secure at once the position of honor and apparent usefulness expected. These are the outlines of the incident: A young lady graduates at one of the foremost of the colleges of our land. No call to teach comes to her except that of a very small school in a manufacturing town. She accepted with a feeling of dissatisfaction and ingratitude. In a little time, however, to cherish this spirit seems to her wholly wrong and unchristian. She determines, therefore, to overcome it and give herself in helpful effort to her scholars. She devotes her life entirely to them, and seeks in every way to instruct them and develop them for the better. One day, in strolling with them, she explained the subject of strikes and the loss which usually comes by them to the laborers. We now let the *Christian Union* close the story and mark the timely and important moral:

"Among the listeners was a ragged Irish boy who seemed to be immensely interested, and at the close of the conversation requested the teacher to repeat what she had said. That afternoon, when school closed, the same ragged boy went to the desk and asked permission to bring his father to hear what the teacher had to say about strikes. The young girl was naturally timid, and it took all her courage to assent to the boy's proposal. The next day the father came—a rough, big, dirty, and eminently unattractive Irish factory hand. He evidently looked for no new light, but, at his boy's request, had come to hear what the slip of a teacher had to say about strikes. Trembling within, but with a bold exterior, the young girl repeated her conversation, elaborating her points to make them a little clearer; the man seemed interested. Not long after that the teacher learned that the man to whom she had talked was the leader among the operatives of the town; that he had

organized a strike, which was on the point of being put into operation when her talk with her children took place, and that she had impressed so deeply the leader that the whole matter was postponed. A great strike had been averted by the school-mistress who thought that little place offered her no opportunity worth using! This incident might be multiplied a thousand fold in every field of labor. Opportunities which open the widest doors to usefulness and influence are constantly coming to men in the humblest possible guises. There is only one way of making sure of one's great opportunity, and that is to treat every opportunity as if it were great."

A PAIR OF ORIOLES.

The following illustration of humanness in bird life comes from an article by Olive Thorne Miller in the *Atlantic*. Having captured two orioles, she kept them for some time; and this is only one among many interesting and amusing traits that they revealed:

"Not all the time of the beautiful orioles was passed in contentions; once having placed themselves on what they considered their proper footing in the family, they had leisure for other things. No more entertaining birds ever lived in the room; full of intelligent curiosity as they were, and industriously studying out the idiosyncrasies of human surroundings in ways peculiarly their own, they pried into and under everything,—opened the match-safe and threw out the contents, tore the paper off the wall in great patches, pecked the backs of books, and probed every hole and crack with their sharp beaks. They ate very daintily, and, as mentioned above, were exceedingly fond of dried currants. For this little treat the male soon learned to tease, alighting on the desk, looking wistfully at the little china box whence he knew they came, wiping his bill, and, in language plain enough to a bird student, asking for some. He even went so far, when I did not at once take the hint, as to address me in low, coaxing talk, of very sweet and varied tones. Still I was deaf, and he came within two feet of me, uttering the half-singing talk, and later burst into song as his supreme effort at pleasing or propitiating the dispenser of dainties. I need not say that he had his fill after that."

THE LAPSED MASSES.

It seems to us that much ingenuity and sentiment is wasted upon this question of the non-attendance of the masses at church. The result of it all has been practically to make the said masses look upon themselves as much injured people, who want to attend church if those wicked millionaires would only let them—i.e., would pay pew rent for them, furnish velvet cushions, and perhaps send their carriages. Anxious people make the excuses—pew rents, too stiff and starched, poor preaching, caste feeling, discourtesy, fine clothes—and the masses accept, use them, and finally think they are terribly used.

If a man wants to worship God, and believes he honors him by attending public worship, he'll go to church, though a hundred millionaires curled their noses at him; if he doesn't, well, he'll stay at home, and use any excuse that is handy. As a rule, it lies in the man's own will.

A communistic feeling is often traceable in many of the letters which so-called workingmen have written to account for non-attendance on Church ordinances. Practically, it is jealousy of wealth—natural, no doubt, to a man who has little but hardship in his life, and he has all our sympathy—that often makes him forswear all approach to places where he thinks wealth does congregate. Attractive preaching on labor topics might, one correspondent suggests, draw the artisan to church. Well, it much depends on the artisan, his intelligence, etc. Nor can we agree that education is a hinderance to the ear of the masses. People may quote Christ if they will as the example of an artisan preacher, but Christ never decried education, and in addition chose St. Paul, the most active of apostles, as also the most laborious. A workingman summed up our opinion in a late issue, "Why do not the masses attend church? Because they don't want to!"—*Canadian Advance*.