

THE HOME CIRCLE.

We turn again to the pure hearts and the gentle affections that welcome us home. What a contrast! What a change comes over the weary spirit? How the feelings soften in unison with the cheerful scene that greets the eye, and in sympathy with the bright faces that look up to you in joy and gladness? And then the many welcomes that fall upon your ear from innocent lips that never yet have practised guile or flattery! What a contrast, we say again, with the cares, the doubts, the apprehensions you have just closed the door upon?

But we fear it is not always so. The door, it is true, is closed behind us, but, alas! it does not always shut out those evidences of a ruffled temperament which bring sorrow and disappointment to the lovely group within. Nay, it is not always possible for men to shake off all the sober reflections of the day at once, and to appear in the full tide of animation. The incessant claims of business have almost exhausted the mental and physical energies. Labour and anxiety have, indeed, triumphed over all the energies of manhood, but not over all the affections of the heart; and so long as these have been sustained free from entanglements or contamination, those triumphs must necessarily have only a brief duration. The bright faces, the soothing and endearing exclamations, the quiet comforts of home soon dissipate all the clouds that lowered o'er the brow of care. The heart receives a new impulse, which soon glows on the cheek, and sparkles in the eye.—The feelings are at once invigorated, the thoughts and memories of pleasant places, and the hopes and anticipations of youth are all renewed and happily realized. The spirit itself mounts higher, and overflows with gratitude to Heaven for all its blessings. The world and all its cares are shut out; the door is secured and barred against them all, and virtue, love and affection are secure in the enjoyment of a happy home!

Then, let us all be careful how we estimate the joys and the pleasures of the home circle. It is there only that grief is assuaged. There only does sorrow find a true comforter. There only are disappointments incident to a life of business alleviated for there only do we find those cherished sympathies, whose tones are as the melodies that float from the harps of angels.

SOCIAL CUSTOMS IN HOLSTEIN.

Few American readers probably know much about the duchy of Holstein, beyond what they learn by the frequent allusions in European news to the war which has for some time been carried on between that duchy and Denmark the following brief description of some of the domestic customs of the Holsteiners, which we find among the foreign correspondence of the *New York Independent*, will perhaps tend to increase our interest in this people, and in the contest they are waging with the Danes.

The whole life here has something extremely generous, and almost patriarchal, about it. When we meet in the morning at "morning coffee," we all shake hands as if we had been to a distant country, and wish each other almost solemnly the morning salutations. Every one pays great deference to the father, a simple, dignified old man; and the *Bauer* come up constantly to the house as though they were members of the family, for his advice and assistance. And as I walked over the farm, I could not but be most pleasantly struck with the politeness of all of them to him, and his to them. We meet again about eleven for the breakfast,

a more formal meal. Here, as nearly every where in Germany where thanks are offered at all at a meal, it is done in silence. And I must say that it has a much more solemn effect than the hurried, careless form, so prevalent with us. It is very difficult for most persons to preserve the life in words so often repeated, or to invent new words for each occasion; but in these few moments of solemn stillness thoughts can be breathed which are real prayer.

After this morning meal comes the principal business of the day; and in this family, as in most of the families of Germany, whether in city or country, the ladies do the principal part of the house-work. Again, in the middle of the afternoon, we meet at the great meal of the day, the dinner. This is a long, social meal, with a strange variety of dishes, which I will not venture to enumerate. After it is over we all rise and shake hands, with the words, "*Gesund die Mahlzeit*," (blessed be the meal!) in quite a serious manner. In the beginning of the evening again, tea and bismitt; and at the end another hearty supper of meats, &c.

This arrangement of meals, so common in Germany, is rather surprising at first to an American, and quite upsets all his previous theories of dietics. The Germans, however, appear to bear up under it very well.

DOCTOR'S VISITS.—It is not only for the sick man, but the sick man's friends that the doctor comes. His presence is often as good for them as for the patient, and they long for him yet more eagerly. How we have all watched after him! what an emotion the thrill of his carriage wheels in the street, and at length at the door, has made us feel! How we hang upon his words, and what comfort we get from a smile or two, if he can vouchsafe that sunshine to lighten our darkness! Who hasn't seen the mother prying into his face, to know if there is hope for the sick infant that cannot speak, and lies yonder, its little frame battling with fever? Ah, how she looks into his eyes! What thanks if there is light there; what grief and pain if he casts them down, and dares not "hope!" Or is it the house-father who is stricken. The terrified wife looks on, while the physician feels his patient's wrist, smothering her agonies, as the children have been called upon to stay their plays and their talk. Over the patient in the fever, the wife expectant, the children unconscious, the doctor stands as if he were fate, the dispenser of life and death; he must let the patient off this time, the woman prays so for his respite! One can fancy how awful the responsibility must be to a conscientious man; how cruel the feeling that he has given the wrong remedy, or that it might have been possible to do better; how harassing the sympathy with survivors, if the case is unfortunate—how immense the delight of victory!—*Pendennis*.

A HORSE STORY.—The following story is vouched to us by first rate authority as fact. A valuable horse of the Canadian breed, belonging to Josephus Baldwin, Esq., on one of the slippery days last week, had much difficulty of maintaining his standing in society, owing to the smoothness of his shoes, and came to some little bodily harm in consequence. When he was unharnessed, the teamster left him to his head, not doubting that he would go directly to the stable, as he always did. Instead of doing so, however, he passed by the stable, and went directly to the blacksmith shop of Vincent & Woodward, where he had been shod some months before. He was found there patiently "waiting his turn," with several horses, as every well bred