

The Family Circle.

AUTUMN SONG.

Every hill is hung with haze,
Widely woodland banners blaze;
Till the rising of the moon
All day long the crickets croon.

Still the robin keys his flute,
Still the wind is like a lute,
Why should we desire the June?
All day long the crickets croon.

Now is lived the honeyed hoard
Now is every granary stored,
Now the whole world moves in tune,
All day long the crickets croon.

With enchanted links of rhyme
Let us set a snare for Time;
Then were life indeed a boon!
All day long the crickets croon.

—Clifton S. Holland.

A LOST LAMB.

II.

Betty shook her head, and her blue eyes filled with tears. She had no child, and the blue-eyed Nancie was the one possession she envied Westerlaw. But she never suffered the only disappointment of her wifehood to depress others, though it gave her many a sad hour.

"Nancie hasna been here. Archie, since last harvest, when Jeanie brocht her. But hoo did it happen that she got out? Is't naeboddy's business to see to the bairn?"

"Yee, but they were terribly busy in the kitchen, saltin' pork and the mistress bakin'. The bairn was playin' aboot, neaboddy heedin' her muckle; an' she just disappeared like magic."

"An' hae ye socht everywhere?"

Westerlaw made a gesture of impatience and despair.

"There's na a hole or corner aboot the place we hinna rakit. But look at the suaw! She's feet deep in the drift by now; an' we no keunin' where to turn. If God Almighty wantit to punish me for my ill-daen' He micht hae ta'en a' thing, an' welcome, had he but left me my little bairn."

Now Betty had never seen the soft side of her brother-in-law, and at sight of his awful grief her heart melted within her like rain.

"Jamie's at Edinburgh, an' he might no' be hame seein' the weather, or the morn. Bide a meenit, an' I'll gang back wi' you to Jeanie."

He entered at her bidding, but would come no further than the hall, where he sat down stupidly, the picture of despair. Betty ran to the kitchen and bade them get the dogcart out, Westerlaw having evidently walked over the hills. In ten minutes they were on the road, driving rapidly round the long sweep it took at the foot of the hills to Westerlaw, Betty Haldane had not crossed the threshold of Westerlaw for two whole years, but the two wives were friendly enough on their own account, and Mrs. Archie had paid a stolen visit to Easterlaw the previous summer, when the respective husbands were absent at the Highland Society's show at Inverness. She found the distracted mother wandering in and out the house like a mad thing, and when she saw her sister-in-law enter, a strange feeling of relief and strength and hope came to her, and she just ran crying into her arms.

"Yes, yes, my dear," said Betty crooning over her as if she had been a baby, her ample arms protecting the slender, drooping figure most tenderly. "Dinna greet, your sweet wee Nancie's

no lost. God has her safe. D're no mind hoo He took the lambs in his arms."

But though half a country-side was out looking for Nancie Haldane, night fell and her bed was empty, and there was no doubt in the mind of any man or woman that the bairn was, as her father put it, "feet deep in the drift."

It fared in the evening, and the sky cleared, showing patches of heavenly blue, lit by the stars of eternal promise. About nine o'clock, the doctor having given poor Mrs. Archie a draught which would calm her nerves and perhaps give her the merciful oblivion of sleep, Betty Haldane drove home to her own house. She was weary with her own grief and the pain of witnessing the desolation of Westerlaw, and she beheld the light of her own windows with a little rush of joy at her heart. For that light meant that Jamie was home. He had not been in the house twenty minutes and was but swallowing a bit of supper before following his wife to Westerlaw. She came into the room trembling and burst into tears.

"Oh, my man, for the first time I can say I'm glad we're nae bairn. Yon's awful, awful. Puir Jeanie, puir Archie! It breaks my very heart."

Jamie Haldane was not lacking in responsive sympathy, and they mourned for the stricken house of Westerlaw as if there never had been discord of strife in the past.

That night in her troubled sleep Betty Haldane dreamed a dream. The first part of it was confused and had to do with the quarrel about the Binnhill, but suddenly everything grew clear, and she saw a sight in the ewe-bucht which made her heart leap within her. She thought it was full of sheep with their lambs, and that in a far corner, crouching close to the dyke in the bieliest bit of all was an old gentle grey-faced ewe with her own little lamb beside her; but there was something else, a bit of bright color, and a gleam of white above it, and the sheen of a child's golden head.

She awoke with a great start, her face wet with tears, and springing out of bed began to put on her clothes.

"Jamie, Jamie Haldane," she cried, "get up an' come wi' me—Nancie is found! She's in the bucht on Binnhill—come an' help me to carry her to Westerlaw."

"I dare say you're daft, Betty," her husband replied; "the thing's gotten on your brain. Lie down and sleep."

"I tell you she's there. I saw her in my dream. God sent that dream. I prayed ere I fell asleep that the bairn micht be saved, an' she is saved. You can sleep if ye like, I'm no feared to gang myself."

"What o'clock is it, my woman?" inquired Easterlaw, mildly, observing that his wife would not be put past her set purpose.

"Half-past three," she replied, shortly, as she buttoned on her gown.

Fifteen minutes thereafter the two stopped out into the nipping morning air and set out for Binnhill. Easterlaw did not for a moment believe that anything would come of this mad exploit, but Betty walked on confidently, her bonnie blue eyes glowing like two stars under her crimson hood. It took them half an hour to get over the slippery lillie, and Betty's heart almost stood still as they

approached the bucht. But presently she gave a little cry and dashed in among the sheep, causing them to start up with affrighted cries. And there it was, all she had seen in her God-sent dream—the old ewe with her little lamb at her breast, and the other lost lamb cuddling close to it, fast asleep. And the wonder of it sank into Jamie Haldane's soul, holding him spell bound. Betty stooped down with a great sob and gathered the bairn close to her warm breast, scarcely waking her, though she crooned over her in a fashion which made a strange stir at her husband's heart.

"Auntie's bonnie bairnie, her ain wee doo! Sleep, sleep, bairnie, ye'll sune be in your ain little bed."

They were now half way between the farms, and the only course seemed to be to walk straight into Westerlaw, which they reached about five o'clock! The poor mother was still mercifully asleep; but Archibald Haldane, bowed to the earth with his agony, roamed the house miserably, thinking only of his little bairn beneath the snow.

He heard them before they knocked at the door, and when Betty laid Nancie in his arms, safe and sleeping, though her curls were damped out by the snow which had kissed them, he had no strength left in him, but sat down holding her helplessly, crying like a child. Betty had all her wits about her, and she ran to the kitchen and broke up the fire, which is never out night or day in such kitchens, and in a minute had hot milk ready for the bairn, who woke up wonderingly, too sleepy to remember anything. But she took the milk eagerly, and then Betty rolled her in a shawl and laid her in her mother's bed and kissed them both.

"Now, Jamie," she said, bravely, "we'll tramp hame again, my man, if ye like."

But Archie barred the way.

"No' yet. I've been a brute, Jamie, but I'll mak' it up to you; if ye'll tak' my hand."

"Wheesht, man," said Jamie, in that sly, pained way, peculiar to reticent natures who hate displays of feeling. "Haud your tongue. The bucht was no worth quarrellin' over. It's yours, if ye like to keep it. At least, it's Nancie's—eh, Betty?—she's settled the question."

And they positively ran out of the house, nor had they any sense of time or distance as they walked the frozen fields, on account of the joy and thankfulness in their hearts.

These things happened some years ago, and now the two houses are as one, and there are bairns blith and bonnie in Easterlaw, but Nancie remains the one ewe lamb of Archibald Haldane and Jeanie his wife.

I must not forget to mention that when Mrs. Gray, of Stanerigg, heard the wonderful and heart-moving story, which soon became the talk of the country-side, she, seeing in it, as in most earthly affairs, the finger of God, said, with a deep, sweet light in her eyes:

"I wad hae a pieter o't, so that it may be seen of the bairns' bairns in a time to come, an' show them the Lord's loving-kindness. An' what I paid I wadna care, but it should be well done by the best in land."

It so happened that the following summer a great painter from London,

though not of London born, was in the neighborhood, and was entertained at Stanerigg, where gentle and simple alike were made welcome. And while there he painted the picture, which he called "The Lost Lamb." Archibald Haldane paid the price for it ungrudgingly and cheerfully, though it was the value of a year's rent; but when the painter, believing it would be the picture of the year, spoke of taking it away to London to let others see it, Westerlaw made his mouth long and thin and shook his head. Then the painter, who was also a man of spiritual discernment, forbore to press, though his disappointment was very keen, because he saw that the inwardness and sacredness of the matter dwelt with the man, and that he shrank to submit it to the public gaze.

So the great picture, which they say will be worth a king's ransom someday, hangs upon the wall at Westerlaw, and its duplicate at Easterlaw, where they may be seen of the unbelieving to this day.—*British Weekly*.

ENGLISH KITCHEN VOCABULARY.

The early English vocabulary is a curious one. A recipe was formerly called a "nym," from the Saxon word nym or "take," with which it is generally begun. To give a pot "walm" meant to let it boil up, from the Saxon verb, to boil or bubble.

To "swing" eggs meant to beat them. Currants and raisins were distinguished respectively as "raisons" or "corrance" and "raisons of the sun."

A dish was called a "trap," and a pastry of any kind a "coffyn." To "raise a fair coffyn" was the first process in making a venison pastry or a game pie; while, if you wanted a dish of custards, the proper number of "little coffyns" must be got ready to receive them.

In its highest branches, the terms of the ancient as of the modern art were French, or of immediate French derivation. Thus to stew, as in our French, is usually called "to stove" (stover), the primitive meaning of a "stove" as a stewing apparatus being thus made evident. A dish dressed with a sauce at once sweet and acid is called an "egg douce" (aigre doux). An ox tongue is a "lang de beef," and a leg of mutton, as at the present time in Edinburgh, a "gigget" cinnamon is invariably called "canell" (cannelle), and a white mixture of pounded chicken and almonds is a "blank desire" (blanc ecire).

In the matter of utensils, the kitchens at any rate, in a large houses, seem to have been very well furnished. That of St. John Fastolfe, according to an inventory taken in 1453, contained among other things, fourteen brass pots of different sizes, three brass fish kettles under the name of "pike pans," a pestle and mortar both of brass, a sars (sieve or colander) of brass, and another of "trees" (wood), a dropping (dripping) pan, a gridiron, a frying pan, two "grate square spitty," and two little round "brocheys" (spits for small things), a caldron, a flesh hook, two pot hooks, eleven trays and a strainer.

Rev. W. Muir, B.D., B.L., Blairgowrie, has been counselling temperance people to cease aiming at ideals impossible of realization in either this century or the next. He urges action to prevent hotel license, being granted in the town for premises that are really not hotels.