

The Home Circle.

FULL OF DAYS.

Life's gathered fullness lies afar
From numbered years of sun and shade,
Unless the fleeting moments are
By honest use immortal made.

If life be all one giddy round,
And self-concentrate all thy ways,
Until thou reach its utmost bound—
Then thou art old, not full of days.

To strike with vigor in the strife
And in the race brook no delay,
To serve the right, nor deem it life
To dream away the drowsy day.

With motives pure that do not fear
The crowd's vain babble, nor the sting
Of envy, nor the scorner's jeer,
Nor all the bitterness they bring.

With purpose sure that never swerves
From honor's path or nature's plan,
But through all changes still preserves
Unflinching faith in God and man.

While glowing charity appears,
That sweetens life to him who lives,
And gathers with his growing years
The wisdom that experience gives.

Days when thy thoughts were of the tomb,
And life's sweet light was flickering low;
When all thy world was wrapt in gloom,
And heaven itself seemed draped in woe.

Bright days that moved thine eager choice
About the beautiful world to roam,
And days that found life's purest joys
Among the dear delights of home.

Among thy brethren dwell at ease,
In heart sincere, in conduct just;
Upon thy lips the words of peace,
And on thy brow the calm of trust.

Breathing the planet's wholesome air,
With calm delight that never cloy;
Not weary of its toil and care,
Nor wedded to its fleeting joys.

And when thy spirit shall go forth,
For thee all time's vain tumult stilled;
Then men shall miss thee for thy worth,
And not for duty unfulfilled.

Though not of earthly faith possessed,
And tongues be silent in thy praise;
Until the day breaks thou shalt rest
In honored age and full of days.

AFTER THE STORM.

"Arthur, take this letter to your mother, and here is your week's pay. You have a good mother," added Mr. Powell, looking intently into the lad's face as he took the missive with a polite "Thank you, sir."

The communication to Mrs. Howard ran thus:—

"DEAR MAM:—We are sorry to return your son Arthur with this, but repeatedly, articles, and occasionally money, have been missed from the store. No one but he could have taken it. It is very trying, we assure you, to have such an issue forced upon us, for we had supposed him incapable of an sort of dishonesty. Respectfully,

"R. POWELL & CO."

Mrs. Howard perused the note and then without looking up from her sewing, gently bade her boy remove and thoroughly dry his overcoat, whitened by the driving snow. She could not just then look upon that young and joyous face. He should not know a breath of the foul suspicion, but should go to his pillow unconscious of the stain on his good name. In the morning she would visit the firm.

While Arthur slept, his mother passed the anxious hours in alternate watchings by his bedside and prayers at her own. The restraint which she had placed upon herself was now removed. Toward daylight the storm subsided, and the morning dawned on a fair day. The calm comforted her, and when Arthur arose from the breakfast-table she said, cheerfully:—

"I am going out this morning, dear, and you must remain at home. Be a good mother to brother and sister, and if any work comes in remember carefully all particulars; but first run out and sweep me a clean crossing through the fresh snow."

Quickly wrapping herself, she proceeded to the gate. She stood resting against it and gazed on the pure scene—the trees, the hedges, the roots of buildings, every nook and crevice piled up with the glistening snow. But purer than all was her son Arthur—in her eyes the fairest feature of the picture. His clear eye was "not that of a thief" and the mother's face beamed upon him with confiding love.

At this moment Mr. Powell came toward mother and son. Mrs. Howard received him as calmly as she had his letter, bidding Arthur run over to Mrs. Ames', to Old John's, and to other childless homes, and sweep off their paths. Mr. Powell was full of regrets and apologies for the note sent on the previous evening. Accidentally the real culprit had been discovered, and Arthur is fully cleared.

"The firm wish him back. They will increase his wages, give him every opportunity for improvement, in short they will atone, if possible, for the cruel wrong so hastily done."

Mrs. Howard replied,—

"On one, and only one condition can he return, and that is neither, he nor any of the clerks in your employ learn one word of this affair. I would not have him suffer the knowledge of this suspicion for worlds. I would not have his self-respect so injured."

The next morning found Arthur in his accustomed place, and the pleasure with which he that evening communicated to his mother his delight and astonishment at a sudden increase of salary, was without a shadow. Years after, the firm proposed receiving Arthur into it, and in response to his glad thanks, Mr. Powell placed his hand on his shoulder and said:—

"No thanks, my boy. Thank your mother. Only on the shining shore can you know her worth."

THE NORMAN BRIDE.

The Norman bride was not, like her Anglo-Saxon sister, the slave, the property of her husband by purchase.

Probably a heiress, carrying for her dower rich domains, castles, and vassals and in her lofty and erect bearing showed full consciousness of her independence and self-confidence. When two parties desired to be married they were asked three times in church, as our publishing of banns, unless a dispensation had been previously procured, which was a new step on the part of the Church to secure its interference on matters concerning marriages.

French dress has varied little from Anglo-Saxon times, but the names of the garments had been changed. The "gusus" now becomes a "robe," had the body made close to fit the figure and form the "surcoat." The sleeves of the extravagant proportions hung pendant from the arms, and were tied in knots to prevent their trailing on the ground and being trodden on. The form of them exactly resembled the well known "munneel" of the Hastings arms. The high-born Norman lady wore her hair long and flowing until a certain age, when she was allowed to plait it in two tails, or to bind it with ribbons, much in the style of a pig-tail. On her wedding day she unplaited it, and let it hang loosely scattered over her shoulders, as indicating her noble birth, but after her marriage she cut it off, to show that she accepted the condition of bondage to her husband. But as civilization advanced, the sacrifice of the hair was dispensed with; only brides were required, after the marriage ceremony, to bind it in folds round the head. In jewellery and rich materials for dress, luxury increased. Silk stuffs, called cendal, siglaton, samit, velvet, etc., were used considerably, some home-wrought, others from the Levant and Sicily, and some from Chinese looms, tasty, gauze-like stuffs, "resembling in colour the flowers of the meadow, and rivaling in fineness the work of the spiders." Of these showy textures, the knight wore over his armour a long, sleeveless gown, slit up almost to the waist on both sides. In the twelfth century cotton had been introduced, and Mosul had gained her reputation for her textures of cloud-like fineness, which derive their name of muslin from this Asiatic city. That the Norman bride should hold quite a new position, may be inferred from the state of society in this age of chivalry. Her countrymen had become distinguished all through Europe for their military skill, their love of literature, the splendour of their attire, and their courteous bearing—courtesy meaning the manners of the court; that is, of the society within the castle walls, as distinguished from the bourgeoisie or people of the towns. Women were then the objects of knight's idolatry; she armed her lover for the fight, and sometimes led his palfrey to the field by the bridle. She attached her scarf to his arm or his helmet, and by her encouragement made the coward bold. The knight looked upon woman as his patron, and himself as bound to risk his life in her defence. Hawking was one of the favorite accomplishments of the Norman lady. Mounted on her richly-embroidered steed, she would go forth in pursuit of the game, her hawk or merlin on her wrist. In the castle surrounded by her tirowoman, she would work at tapestry, and while she listened to the reading of tales of chivalry, would reproduce them with the needle to drape the bare walls of the castle. The harp, the dance, chess and the garden were the other amusements of the day.—*London Society.*

A DOG'S LOVE.

Wherever exhibited, love is a pleasant thing. In dumb brutes it is the more touching that it has no voice, and appeals to our sympathies by a kind of helplessness. The contractors engaged on the Boston (U. S.) water works had a valuable cart-horse injured some time ago. The animal was led home to the stable, where about fifty horses were usually kept. The hostlers had a water-spaniel, who for some months had been among the horses in the stable, living on terms of great intimacy with them. Immediately after the disabled horse was led in, he lay down and began to exhibit signs of great distress. The spaniel at once ran to the horse and commenced fawning around him, licking the poor animal's face, and in various other ways manifesting his sympathy with the sufferer. The struggle and groans of the horse being continued, the dog sought his master, and drew attention to the wounded animal, and showed great satisfaction when he found his master employed in bathing the wounds, and otherwise ministering to his wants. The

hostler continued his care of the horse until a late hour of the night. Forty-eight hours after the horse was injured, had not left the stable, day or night, for a minute, not even to eat; and from his appearance it was believed that he had scarcely slept at all. He was constantly on the alert, not suffering any one to come near the horse, except those attached to the stable and the owner of the horse; his whole appearance was one of extreme anxiety and distress. He often laid his head on the horse's neck, caressing him and licking around the eyes, which kindness the poor horse acknowledged by a grateful look and other signs of recognition. This fact furnishes a remarkable and affecting exhibition of animal kindness, and should cover with shame the unfeeling men who beat and abuse the noble and most useful of animals, without stint or remorse, and are utterly destitute of sympathy for the whole brute creation.—*Human Journal.*

DON'T BE DISCOURAGED.

Don't be discouraged, if in the outset of life, things do not go on smoothly. It seldom happens that the hopes we cherish of the future are realized. The path of life, in the prospect, appears smooth and level, but when we come to travel it, we find it all up hill, and generally rough. The journey is a laborious one, and whether poor or wealthy, high or low, we shall find it so to our disappointment, if we have built on any calculation. To endure cheerfully what must be, and to elbow our way as easily as we can, hoping for little, striving for much, is perhaps the true plan. But don't be discouraged, if occasionally you slip by the way, and the neighbors tread over you a little; in other words, don't let a failure or two dishearten you—accidents happen; miscalculations will sometimes be made; things will often turn out differently from our expectations, and we may be sufferers. It is worth while to remember that fortune is like the skies in April, sometimes clouded, and sometimes clear and favorable, and it would be folly to despair of again seeing the sun, because to-day is stormy; so it is equally unwise to sink into despondency, when fortune frowns, since, in the common course of things she may be surely expected to smile again. And again: don't be discouraged, if you are deceived in the people of the world; it often happens that men wear borrowed characters as well as borrowed clothes, and sometimes those who have long stood fair before the world are rotten at the core. From sources such as these, you may be most unexpectedly deceived; and you will naturally feel sore under such deceptions; but to those you must become used; if you fare as most people do, they will lose their novelty before you grow gray, and you will learn to trust men cautiously, and examine their characters closely, before you be discouraged under any circumstances. Go steadily forward. Rather consult your own conscience than the opinion of men, though the last is not to be disregarded. Be industrious—be frugal—be honest; deal in perfect kindness with all who come in your way, exercising a neighborly and obliging spirit in your whole intercourse, and if you do not prosper as rapidly as your neighbors, depend upon it you will be as happy.

BIRTHDAY FESTIVITIES.

Life is but a road-coach journey, said the old song, broken into short stages by birthdays. Rather a quaint conceit, but acceptable. It brings us directly to our subject—the advisability of "keeping" those landmarks of life called birthdays. These are charming institutions to the little ones, if suitably remembered, and every child looks forward to the birthday with infinite delight. It is his or her day, when they play at being the small king or queen of the occasion. There are the presents—those blissful presents—the doll that has been coveted for so long from the stores of the older sister, matronly in her thirteen years, and thinking it time to leave off dolls for graver things. To be sure the dear old wax darling is a trifle battered, and more than a trifle faded; but is the princess of all dolls in the eyes of the little one who has coveted it, and invested it with every beauty possible to its race. And there is the big ball which the brother hands down; and the picture-book, which has already the names of two young owners scrawled across its title-page, and now has a third. For the birthday presents among the children themselves are as often as not "old stock" transferred. They do not quite as well as new things bought with money. New things bought with money come from papa and mama, and maybe the eldest of all—the great, grown-up things who are papas and mammas of a secondary kind, and who have pocket-money and liberty. It would be a disgrace if they transferred old stock, so they buy new, and are thanked with almost tears of joy. Then there is the cake. The life of childhood is made up of small things; and the small thing of cake with frosted initials makes a mark in the memory that remains for all time. It is a charming custom—this "keeping" of birthdays—and it fills life with pleasant memories which no after grief can deaden. In some houses, the custom of giving family fetes on birth-anniversaries continues to old age. To be sure, every one disclaims the attention as time goes on, and the birthday is only a step nearer to the end of all things and another gap in the battlements; but if it has been the custom, no one likes to give it up, and the

letters and presents remain to the end. It is very pleasant while it lasts; and the custom of remembering the birthdays of friends is pleasant, to. It may be nothing more costly than a letter. No one of sense regards the present of any value, save, indeed, when it is of real personal value, as from a rich friend to a poor one. But, in general, the things that are given as presents on birthdays and other times are scarcely worth the room they take up, and never worth the money they cost.—*Waverley Magazine.*

FEMALE RESOLUTION.

A memorable instance of courage was displayed on the occasion of the defence of Erlau, during the period of the last and most arduous campaign of Castallo, Count of Piadena, against the Turks in Hungary, under the Emperor Charles V. In respect of fortifications, the town of Erlau was scarcely competent to resist the feeblest enemy; but its deficiency in this point was supplied by the constancy and valor of its garrison and inhabitants. The very women displayed an enterprise that the more vigorous sex can seldom boast to have exhibited. In one instance a heroine of this sort was seen fighting in the presence of her mother and her husband. Her husband fell dead by her side.

"Let us my daughter," said the mother, "remove the body, and devote the rest of our care to its honorable funeral."

"May God," returned the impassioned widow, "never suffer the earth to cover my husband's corpse, till his death has been amply revenged, this is the hour of battle, not a time for funerals and for tears!"

So speaking and seizing the sword and shield of the breathless champion, she rushed upon the enemy; nor did she quit the breach till by the slaughter of three Turks who were ascending the scaling-ladders, she had appeased the fury in her breast and the ghost of her departed husband. Then raising the corpse and pressing it to her bosom, she drew it to the great church of the city, and paid to it the last honors with all possible magnificence.

PLEASURE.

Blessed be the hand that prepares a pleasure for a child! for there is no saying when it may bloom forth. Does not almost everybody remember some kind-hearted man who showed him a kindness in the quiet days of his childhood? The writer of this recollects himself at this moment as a barefooted lad, standing at the wooden fence of a poor little garden in his native village; with longing eyes he gazed on the flowers that were blooming there quietly in the brightness of a Sunday morning. The possessor came forth from his little cottage—he was a wood-cutter by trade—and spent the whole week at his work in the woods. He was come into the garden to gather flowers to stick in his coat when he went to church. He saw the boy, and breaking off the most beautiful of his carnations—it was streaked with red and white—gave it to him. Neither the giver or the receiver spoke a word; and with bounding steps the boy ran home; and now, here at a vast distance from that home, after so many events of so many years, the feelings of gratitude which agitated the breast of that boy, expresses itself on paper. The carnation has long since withered, but now it blooms afresh.

KEEP THEM BUSY.

When unoccupied, children inevitably prove the proof of that old adage concerning mischief and Satan. The surest way to keep them out of mischief is to keep them busy. Require a certain amount of work, and provide an abundance of recreation. The trouble is, that babies begin to throw out the hands and feet after the things within reach, and we begin by saying "No no" and holding them back. And by and by, when the little ones get out of our arms and we say "No, no!" they turn faster than we can follow them, to something else, only to be again reproved, until they are glad to get out of our sight, and find vent for their activity in liberty. Begin rather by supplying the out-reaching fingers, and as the desires develop and enlarge, keep the busy brain and body interested in harmless ways, and there will be little cause to fear that they will so far astray. Does the task seem irksome? It can be made so, but even then it is not better to be wearied in seeking employment than to be broken-hearted over a ruined son or daughter? And it need not be so irksome. Let mothers and fathers interest themselves in their children's tasks and sports, and the elders will keep young and the children will keep happy.

WHAT DO YOUR CHILDREN READ?

A bad book, magazine, or newspaper, is as dangerous to your child as a vicious companion, and will as surely corrupt his morals and lead him away from the paths of safety. Every parent should set this thought clearly before his mind, and ponder it well. Look to what your children read, and especially to the kind of papers that get into their hands, for there are now published scores of weekly papers, with attractive and sensuous illustrations, that are as hurtful to young and innocent souls as poison to a healthful body.

Many of these papers have attained large circulations, and are sowing broadcast the

seeds of vice and crime. Trenching on the borders of indecency, they corrupt the morals, taint the imagination, and allure the weak and unguarded from the paths of innocence. The danger to young persons from this cause was never so great as at this time; and every father and mother should be on guard against an enemy that is sure to meet their child.

Our mental companions—the thoughts and feeling that dwell with us when alone, and influence our actions—these are what lift us up or drag us down. If your child has pure and good mental companions, he is safe; but if, through corrupt books and papers, evil thoughts and impure imaginings get into his mind, his danger is imminent.

Look to it, that your children are kept as free as possible from this taint. Never bring into your house a paper or periodical that is not strictly pure, and watch carefully lest any such get into the hands of your growing up boys.

HUMOROUS.

A STORY OF AN OLD BACHELOR.

There was a fine old general once, who, having spent most of his life in the field of Mars, knew very little about the camp of Cupid. He was one of those rough and honest spirits, often met with in his gallant profession, innocent as an infant of almost everything save high integrity and indomitable bravery. He was nearly fifty years old, and his toils were over, when Master Don Cupid brought him acquainted with a Widow Wadman, in whose eyes he began to detect something that made him uneasy. Here was the result!

During his service he had never seen anything worthy of notice in a woman's eye. In fact, he would scarcely have observed whether a woman had three eyes in her head, or only one; for, no matter where his own eyes were, his thoughts were ever among "guns, and drums, and wounds," and love was a thing that lived in his memory just as he remembered once reading a visionary story-book called the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments," when a boy.

Well, the general had settled down into an amiable, gentlemanly fellow, living alone with comfortable feline around him, and having little to do, save now and then to entertain an old comrade in arms, when companionship afforded opportunity for him to "tight his battles over again." But alas! over this calm evening of the old general's day, a deal of perplexity was doomed to fall, and he soon found himself in troubled waters, the depths of which he could by no means understand. He floundered about like a caged rat under a pump, and such another melancholy fish out of water never before swallowed the bait, hook and all, of the angling god of love.

The poor general! We must give him a name, or we can't tell the story; and the best name for such a story is Uncle Toby. The poor general debated abstractedly about his new position, and never had siege or campaign given him such perplexity before.

At length, however, the blunt honesty of his disposition rose uppermost among his conflicting plans, and his course was chosen. At school he once studied "Othello's Defence," to recite at an exhibition, but made a great failure; and he now recollected there was something in this "Defence" very much like what he wanted to say. He got the book immediately, found the passage, clapped on his hat with a determined air, and posted off to the Widow Wadman's with Shakespeare under his arm.

"Madam," said General Uncle Toby, opening his book at the marked place, with the solemnity of a special pleader at the bar. "Madam,—

"Rude am I in my speech, And little blessed with the set phrase of peace; For since these arms of mine have seven years' pith, Till now, some nine moons wasted, they have used Their dearest action in the tested field; And little of this great world can I speak, More than pertains to fairs of broils and battle; And therefore—"

Here the general closed the book, wiped his forehead, looked up at the ceiling, and said, with a spasmodic gasp,—

"I want to get married!"

The widow laughed for ten minutes by the watch before she could utter a syllable, and then she said, with precious tears of humor rolling down her good-natured cheeks,—

"And who is it you want to marry, General?"

"You!" said Uncle Toby, flourishing his sword arm in the air, and assuming a military attitude of defiance, as if he expected an assault from the widow immediately.

"Will you kill me, if I marry you?" said the widow, with a merry twinkle in her eye.

"No, madam," replied Uncle Toby, in a most serious and deprecating tone, as if to assure her that such an idea had never entered his head.

"Well, then, I think I'll marry you," replied the widow.

"Thank you, ma'am," said Uncle Toby; "but one thing I am bound to tell you of, madam—I wear a wig!"

The widow started, remained silent a moment, and then went into a longer, louder, and merrier laugh than she had indulged in before; at the end of which she drew her seat nearer to the General, gravely laid her hand on his head, gently lifted his wig off, and placed it on the table.

General Uncle Toby had never known fear in hot battle, but he now felt a most decided inclination to run away. The widow laughed