

## FAMILY CIRCLE.

## A Birthday Greeting.

What shall I wish thee for the coming year?  
Twelve months of dreamy ease? No care? No pain?  
Bright spring—calm summer—autumn without rain?  
Of bitter tears? Wouldst have it thus, dear friend?  
What lessons, then, were learnt at the year's end?

What shall I wish thee, then? God knoweth well  
If I could have my way, no shade of woe  
Should ever dim thy sunshine; but I know  
Strong courage is not learnt in happy sleep.  
Nor patience sweet by eyes that never weep.

Ah! Would my wishes were of more avail  
To keep thee from the many jars of life!  
Still, let me wish thee courage for the strife.  
The happiness that comes of work well done.  
And afterwards the peace of victory won.

## THE STORY.

## Mrs. Goldenrod's Boarder.

Of all the boarders I ever had, none ever interested me like Gentleman George, as we always called him. Who he was, or where he came from, we could not tell. He rang our bell one terribly stormy night, and there he was, standing out in the wind and rain.

"Can you accommodate me with a night's lodging?" he asked. And he looked so poor, and sick, and tired, that Matthew (that's my husband) said, "Let him come in, Maria; he has an honest face, and we'll take the references on trust." So we gave him a little room on our third floor back, not much more than an attic, and quite plainly furnished; but he seemed very grateful. And though he brought nothing with him but the clothes he had on, there was something about him that impressed us, and told us clearly as though it were put into words, that he was by birth and education a gentleman.

He was quite young, not over three and twenty, though he looked much younger; and that very night he was taken down with a fever, and Matthew and I together nursed him for a little over six weeks, (fortunately there were few with us, and we were not very busy just then.) Terribly bad he was, and wandering in his mind for days at a time. Strange things he talked of, disconnected sentences, not often easy to put together, and mixed in with a great deal that was wild and imaginary. He spoke as though he were sorry for himself, and low and lonely; as though every man's hand was against him. But I couldn't believe any bad of him. His face was so pure and innocent like, yet so haggard and withal pretty as a picture.

We watched over him through all the long hours of those weeks, which he spent in feverish unrest and delirium. It seemed to us that he would never come to himself. But one day as I sat by his bedside, all of a sudden he turned over and gazing upon me with a startled, bewildered expression in his wide open, beautiful blue eyes, said:

"Where am I? How long have I been here?"

"You are among friends," I answered. "And have been here a matter of six weeks or so."

He started as though I had killed him almost, saying, "I haven't a dollar in the world. How can I ever repay you?"

"Don't you worry about that," said I. "All you have to do is to get well, then it will be time enough to talk about pay."

"You better have let me die," he replied, with a great sigh. "And thanks I to myself. You're not a very cheerful patient." But all I said to him was:

"Oh, you're weak and low spirited now, and don't see things in a proper light. Wait a little while and everything will appear different."

He shook his head, and I looked the other way and pretended not to see, for there was no use talking to him; but it made my heart bleed to see him so hopeless.

It was only a day or so after that when Matthew says to Gentleman George, (and me in the room with my sewing. I took it up to sit with him, less he should feel lonely.)

"Is there any friend that you like to send word to about your illness? I've had it on my mind to ask, and if so be—"

"I have no friends," he replied hastily, turning as red as Polly looked standing over the fire. "There is no one who cares to hear of me."

"That's very bad. You're young to be so alone in the world, and you look to be just the sort of man calculated to make friends."

"You're mistaken, Matthew. I'm just the sort to loose 'em," he replied with a faint laugh that somehow sounded sadder than funeral words. And I just made a sign to Matthew to say no more. Matthew is well meaning, but not always quick to see when he is on the wrong track, and most prone to words that are least appropriate. Men are mostly so, especially those who have followed the sea. Among polite circles, it may be different.

"All right, my dear, I won't say any more," answered Matthew aloud, like a great gawk. And he got up and went away. With that I drew near and began to talk to him of something else, that the poor fellow might think I hadn't noticed what was said. But it was of no use. He had been set to worrying, and in a minute or so he began again.

"You've been very kind to me. You've took me in a perfect stranger, and looked after me as well as my own mother could have done. I was wrong when I said I had no friends. If you and Matthew aren't friends, I don't know what to call you, and I never can find words to thank you." And he held out his hand to me. Such a white hand as it was against my brown, rough one, and so thin that one could almost see through it. "Thanks are all that I can give you just now," he went on, steadily like, "but if I am spared to go out again, I will repay you somehow for the money I have cost you. The kindness I can never repay."

"Don't you worry about that, sir," says I, "but—"

"Don't call me 'sir,'" he said quickly. "My name's George, and the only friends a man has can surely call him by his name."

That is the way we came to call him Gentleman George, not to his face of course; but when we spoke of him to others or between ourselves.

He gained strength pretty steadily after that, and in a week or so was able to get up and about. Right glad I was to see him walk down the street of a morning with Matthew, a tinge of color gradually making its way into the face that had been so white, and his head held high like one who had nought to be ashamed of.

Then for a few days I scarcely saw him at all. He was down by the Harbor trying to get work, and among so many rough, hardy, sturdy looking men, he stood but a poor chance. It grieved me to see him looking so disappointed as he came in night after night. At last Matthew and I made bold to tell him that he was not adapted for this kind of work. "It is entirely too hard," said Matthew. "You should have something in an office, writing and figuring, that's the vocation for you."

"What office would take me without a recommendation?" said Gentleman George, with a queer look. "No, no, Matthew, I've had enough of offices, and offices of me. To sit behind a desk again would drive me mad, I think."

And with that he got up and went out. "I'd take him if I had an office," said Matthew, after he had gone. "I'd take him with or without a recommendation. There's heaven's own writing on his forehead. I can read it and I can read it."

"He isn't fit to rough it with longshore men, or to live in this way at all. Oh, Matthew, I'm sure that he belongs to a refined family, and I would give a good deal to see him back among his folks again. I feel sure he must have relatives somewhere."

"He says he hasn't and he ought to know," answered Matthew, "but he is a true and worthy man, or I never saw one. All that day I kept thinking and thinking, and worrying more and more about this poor young man; for I had grown as fond of him as though he had been my very own. But the more I thought, the more I worried, so there seemed to be little use in that."

Well, he didn't come home to supper that night, and it was the first time he'd missed since he'd been in our house and Matthew hadn't seen anything of him either.

"He must have gone out to the new works at Martinsville, and that's a long way," said he. "I daresay he thought he might get a job there."

That seemed likely enough, so I thought no more about it. But the children were greatly disappointed when he did not come in; they were all exceedingly fond of him.

It began to grow dark, and still he did not come. I grew uneasy, wondering what could be keeping him, for he wasn't overstrong yet. It must have been near nine o'clock, and dark as pitch, when I heard a step crossing the lawn in front of our door, and I says to Matthew, "There comes Gentleman George," when in he comes, and I saw at once that something good had happened, there was such a laugh in his eyes, and he carried his head so high.

"There Mrs. Goldenrod," said he: "there's the first installment, and I hope to pay the whole of my debt before long now. And with that he hands me one dollar and a quarter, and I didn't know whether to laugh or cry, between the money and the look he gave me and all."

"Thank you, George," said I, "you've always been welcome to the best we could give you, and if we had never seen a penny of your money, we should have never felt different. Have they taken you on at the Works? Take care! I am afraid you are not strong enough for that."

"No, they haven't taken me on at the Works," he answered smiling; "they never had the chance. Mrs. Goldenrod, so we mustn't blame them for that. It's quite another line I've gone into. I'll tell you about it after supper. You'll give me something to eat, I suppose, though I'm awfully late."

We sat down to supper, and soon as we had dined, Gentleman George says:

"I hope you won't object to a little music now and then of an evening. I've brought home a violin."

"Where did you get that, George?" asked I, wondering.

"You're thinking my first day's work has been pretty well paid for. You're right; yet not altogether as you think. But never fear; all that I have brought home has been honestly come by."

"Don't think that I questioned that for a moment, George; I never did."

"You wouldn't have been the first to do it if you had," he answered, quiet like with a little laugh, though not as if he were enjoying himself much. "You and Matthew trust me, don't you?"

"Of course we do," said Matthew; and I added, "absolutely and entirely," wondering what was coming next.

"I'm glad of it," Gentleman George had a pleased smile. He wasn't smiling when he said that, yet I never before saw him look so pleasant. "It does me good to hear you say that, and I shall not forget it in a hurry. Now you must hear my violin."

He took it up and began to scrape away, quick at first as if he was a bit put out; then beautiful and slow, and feeling, so that it almost made me cry.

"How beautiful!" we both exclaimed, soon as we could get our breath.

"You like it, do you? I'm terribly out of practice, or—Hullo, young people, what do you want?"

There, standing in a row behind him, with their fingers in their mouths, and their bare feet on the cold oil-cloth, were the three children. As soon as they spoke to them, they began to laugh, and Polly said in her baby way:

"We've come to pity music. Make it again, George."

"No, no, not to-night," he says, catching her up and kissing her. "George has been making pretty music all day, and he's tired, he wants to go to sleep, Polly."

"Polly wants to go to sleep too, but pity music asked her up. It won't wake her up any more to-night; I'll carry her up stairs, Mrs. Goldenrod, if you'll trust me so far, come along, you small fry."

And off he marches with our Polly in his arms and the boys following hard at his heels, laughing and chattering like a couple of geese.

"And now you can guess what I've been doing all day," said Gentleman George, when he came down again, and was standing by the fire.

"You don't mean to say—"

"That I've turned fiddler? Yes! I'm first violin in the band that we have been playing about town the last few days. That's my new position, Mrs. Goldenrod. And he laughed a queer sort of a laugh. We're all Germans, yet not exactly brass. We're a sort of peripatetic band, constructed on improved principles, and we have a singer or two among us as well. You must come down on the beach one of these mornings and hear us. The gentleman that played the fiddle," and he laughed again, "that was the long and the short of it, and he laughed to take his place. As they had no one else, and my playing happened to please them, they weren't particular about references. It seems that references don't count for much in a peripatetic band. Anyway I am regularly engaged, and we expect to make lots of money, so I'm told."

"Dear me," said Matthew with a grin, and:

"Do you like it, sir?" said I, for I was fair taken back to hear him, and it seemed a queer sort of trade for Gentleman George.

"Like it? No, I don't know as I like it," he replied slow and thoughtful. "I should have preferred something less public and with out a uniform. We wear a uniform, of course. It is pretty but at tracts more attention than I like, being a quiet man; and I find it a little trying. But the work is light, and beggars shouldn't be choosers. Oh, I shall get along very well with the fiddle and the coat of my friend Fritz. I ought to thank my stars that I've dropped into such an easy berth."

Well, the long and the short of it is, that if Gentleman George didn't like his work he never said a word of complaining, and weeks went by, and the season changed, and still he was out day after day, wet or fine, a fiddling away with the rest of them. It gave me quite a turn the first time I saw him. I came upon the band round a corner, sudden like, and there was Gentleman George standing in his uniform coat of green and red, his fiddle on his arm, scrapping away like mad, and a crowd looking on, and a couple of girls dancing near the gutter. He gave me such a look when he saw me that I did not know whether to laugh or cry; but, as I said before, he never complained, and while he set us laughing, children and all, with the stories he'd tell of his "experiences," as he called them, and mighty queer experiences some of them were.

## Varieties.

To do easily what is difficult for others is the mark of talent. To do what is impossible for talent is the mark of genius.

She that good thinketh good may do.

For was never good work wrought.

Without beginning of good thought.

Sorrow for having done amiss is fruitless if it issue not in doing so no more.

A girl's toilet is a part of her character. The maiden who is slovenly in the morning is not to be trusted, however fine she may look in the evening.

What worse chastisement could God give us than to allow us to run in the path of our own folly. The power to love is the power to suffer.

There are three short and simple words, the hardest of all to pronounce in any language, and the ability to utter which is the test of any girl's good sense. The words are, "I was wrong."

The wife who sews on buttons is better than the one who speaks seven languages to some men.

## THE QUIET HOUR.

## A Thought.

God knows success is sweet. And yet He thought  
Not best to give the long-for boon to all.  
Lest the desire to win it had been small.  
And His most wise design been set at naught.

By contrast's law our estimates are made:  
There were no beauty but for ugliness;  
No grandeur but for littleness; and less  
Of joy in heaven's sunshine but for shade.

So, friend, if you, or I, must work in vain,  
Remember that but for our fruitless toil  
Success had missed some portion of her foil.  
Lest that thought blunt the stab of failure's pain.

CARRIE BLAKE MORGAN.

—From *Demorest's Family Magazine* for March.

## Attractions of the Bible.

As a book of religion, around which cluster all our hopes of immortality, the Bible has merits of the very highest order; and these, with every serious mind, will be, as they ever ought to be, its greatest attractions. But, aside from the religion which it reveals to us, and the good news of salvation which it brings us, the Bible has other attractions. It is the book of our learning, not less than our religion; the basis of our civilization, not less than our salvation. It is the charter of our rights and liberties, as truly as it is the oracle of our faith, the manual of our devotions, and the anchor of our hopes. It has moulded into shape, and it has quickened into life, the whole body of our secular learning, as well as our theology. It has breathed its own vital spirit into all our science, literature, legislation, philosophy, social and political institutions. It has led the van of ancient and of modern civilization in its march around the globe. It has been the great well-spring of living water, out of which have issued all the glad streams of intellectual and moral health, that are now found flowing in every civilized land beneath the sun. Thus far, it has been the great educator and civilizer of man; and it is, doubtless, destined to be his greatest educator in all time to come, his most effective civilizer in every dark abode of heathenism throughout the world.

But, whilst it is chiefly as a book of religion, and especially of religious education, that the Bible has spread civilization among the nations; still it is true, that regarded simply as a book of learning, of taste and genius, of history and eloquence, it has exerted an influence which cannot be too highly estimated. As such, it has claims which commend themselves to every cultivated understanding. Independently of all its higher glories—the knowledge which it gives us of the way to heaven, and the hope with which it inspires us of a blessed immortality—there are attractions which may be felt and appreciated even by the irreligious and the worldly-minded.

As ancient Israel was the glory of all the earth, Jerusalem the glory of Israel, and her temple the glory of Jerusalem, even so is the Bible now to Christianity, and to the world. It is the most glorious outward and visible heritage which has come down from the past. It stands to the Christian and to the church as the temple did to the Jew. It is the throne of power. It is the symbol of all greatness. It is the shrine of all good. It is the centre of universal attraction. It is the radiating point of all blessed influences.

We may all look upon the Bible as we look upon the broad domain of nature, or upon the blue heavens above. It is common property. It is all ours. It all belongs to each of us, because our Father made it. We breathe a common air; we gaze upon the same loveliness; the same landscape smiles in beauty at our feet; the same heavens encompass us; in the Bible, as in the book of nature, we are all at home, for God, our Father, is over all and in all.

LE ROY J. HALSEY, D. D.

A Christian is not his own, but keeps himself free for God's work. —*St. Ignatius.*

First let our own inner life be real, and then we may try to draw others to share its sweetness, its comfort, and its battle.

When we have yielded ourselves to Him, body, soul, and spirit, when His forgiveness has lighted the flame of love and gratitude in our own souls, then there flows forth the power of awakening the latent spark in others.

Partings may come, but it will only be for a time such a little time, and then we shall meet, and never part, but be safe with God for ever. When we have that to look for, how little does any sorrow matter to us, and how short it all seems.

God's will must be everything to us, not our own; though we are sometimes tempted to ask for our own. We must "lay hold" on God's promises, grasp them firmly, they never fail; but we must trust and expect Him to fulfil them, and He will.

The Situation that has not its Duty, its Ideal, was never yet occupied by man. Yes, here, in this poor, miserable, tempered, despicable actual, where in thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal; work it out therefrom: and working, believe, live, be free. —*Carlyle.*