

## The Family Circle.

### A SALON PICTURE.

(Vanderpoel.)

Just a cradle standing empty, in the twilight's purple gray,  
Covers tossed and pillows showing what it nestled yesterday.  
And a woman worn to silence by the passion of her pain,  
Gazing blindly, dumbly at it, stretching trembling hands in vain;  
Just the hour when once the baby nestled closely to her breast,  
With soft, clutching fingers, soothing all her tired nerves to rest,  
Ah! the downy head of yellow and the tiny velvet cheek;  
Ah! the blankness of forever—and she sinks down pale and weak  
'Neath the burden of her sorrow—hard against the cradle's side  
Pressing tight her aching bosom where the wound throbs deep and wide.  
Drooping low her head so heavy in a yearning, loving reach,  
Till her cheek the cold wood touches, with a pitiful, dumb speech.  
"Empty! Empty!" sigh the shadows, creeping close about her ear,  
And she clasps a weak arm over that she may no longer hear.  
Still a lullaby the winds sob in the casement o'er and o'er,  
And her heart shall hear its echo, crooning to it evermore;  
"He hath given He hath taken; blessed be His name on high."  
But that little empty cradle is the mother's Calvary.

—Carolyn Waldoe Wad.

### QUEEN VICTORIA'S HIGHLAND HOME.

#### A HIGHLAND DANCE AT BALMORAL.

After a day's successful deer-shooting, one of the sights of the season at Balmoral or Abergeldie Castle, but chiefly at the latter, is a deer-dance, wherein the deer do not dance, but lie impassive and dead enough, head and tail, in numbers of two, three, or more, at the chief entrance. After the royal dinner—and the darker the night the better—long heavy torches, called "sownacks," made of splints of dry bog fir bound together with green birchen withes, are lighted and held aloft by a number of stalwart kilted Highlanders, a piper or two, splendidly radiant in tartan and silver, strike up a march, and the royal sportsmen, accompanied by all the princesses, ladies, and gentlemen of their suite, come forth into the lurid circle to view the trophies of the day. After inspection and remarks, a torch is handed to each of the princes, invariably dressed in full Highland costume, four or more of whom take their places at the head of a long line of jagers, keepers, foresters, and gillies, each with a flaming torch, to dance a reel. The piper manipulates a strathspey and reel from his drones and chanter, and all foot the light fantastic "Highland Fling," with whoops and yells and wild hurrahs. To the quick pulsations of "Monymusk" and "Inlathan," tartan kilts and plaids, brawny limbs, and jewelled belts and dirks, fleet and whirl in wild yet measured confusion beneath the lines of scintillating flame. But the powers of muscle and lung soon flag on the dull gravelly surface that serves for dancing-floor. A bonfire is made of the "sownack" stumps, amid a chorus of cheers that resound far through the dark welkin. Jangling glass-essars are charged with the "strong wine" of the country, and emptied to toasts, by the dancers; then royalty seeks its bed-chamber, the great clock overhead chimes forth some hour near midnight, and the grand spectacular display is over—for a night.

All the royal family are fond of dancing, and among the "events" of their

sojourn in the Highlands, balls, to which tonantry and servants are all invited, have held a prominent place. As might be expected, life is gayer at Abergeldie than at Balmoral. At these balls all social distinctions are disregarded. The one fiat is "dance," which the Highlanders are not slow to do. Their dancing is characterized by much vigorous leaping, kicking, swinging reeling, thumb-cracking, and interjectional "woochs."

Another occasion of merrymaking that comes with birthdaylike regularity is the great Scottish festal night of Halloween, celebrated on the 31st of October of each year. The mystic rites of that evening, so graphically portrayed by Burns, are somewhat in abeyance of Balmoral, but instead, the Highland custom of robbing witch-spells of their terrors, through the cleansing agency of fire may here be witnessed in all its pristine glory. Blazing "sownacks," carried round the castle literally in hundreds after sunset, constitute the purifying media, and form, especially at a distance, a sight that must be seen to be fully appreciated.

All these amusements are varied by the attendance of first-class concert and dramatic companies. There is no monotony. The tone of everything said and done, grave as well as gay, is decidedly healthy. Life goes "merry as a marriage bell," whose chimes bring to recollection the fact that Balmoral has ever afforded idyllic facilities for courtship. Besides the Imperial Prince of Germany, here the Grand-Duke of Hesse and the Marquis of Lorne, wooed and won their brides. In each case there was far more wooing and fewer "reasons of state" than sentimental outsiders are in the habit of believing.

Royalty in its free, unassuming, and joyous intercourse with the Highland character of proverbial independence meets with no coarseness of feeling or action, no fawning formalities, no dissimulation, and no mistrust. The social gap between the monarch and the peasant is here bridged with a facility as graceful, as cordial, that might well be imitated by the noble and commoner elsewhere.—From "Queen Victoria's Highland Home," by J. R. Hunter, in *Harper's Magazine*.

#### WOMEN'S EXALTED MISSION.

Certainly there is wisdom for two young people who have sworn to love each other, no matter whether there is poverty or wealth, no matter whether the days are bright or dark, to have a home of their own, writes Ruth Ashmore, discussing "The Mistress of the Small House," in November *Ladies' Home Journal*. Boarding-house life is bad for women, and I do not believe that any man has ever really enjoyed it. God created women to make homes—to make homes for the men they love and for the children whom God will send to them. And a home must be started at the beginning of this new life. Do not wait for a big house and many servants, but make happiness exist in a little house with one maid as a help. It can be done. I know it can. Do not shrug your shoulders, and say you do not like housework. Work is only disagreeable when it is badly done, and from washing the floor and glass to dusting the bric-a-brac and beating up a cake, everything may be daintily done and well done if you go about it in the right way

and with the right spirit. You will have to be considerate and you will have to be patient. You will certainly make mistakes, but each mistake is one step towards success. Burden yourself with patience, consideration and tenderness; you will need to make calls upon them often and often. Then you will gain so much. You will be the happy housewife, the lady of the house, who has the right to dispense hospitality and good will; the mistress, not only of the house, but of the heart of your husband, because for him you have created a home. And that is a womanly work—a better monument to you, my dear, than the painting of a wonderful picture, the writing of a great book, or the composing of a fine piece of music. From out a home all virtues and all great works may come. No man ever made a home. He does not know how. The woman's brain, heart and hands are necessary, and a home is such a beautiful thing. It means rest, it means peace and it means love. Make one for your husband and let him find these three great joys within its four walls.

#### THE SLAUGHTER OF BIRDS.

There is a statement anent the slaughter of birds for millinery purposes in the *Edinburgh Review* that ought to call a halt to the practice of wearing dead birds on bonnets. The presence of these birds is to be attributed to thoughtlessness rather than to cruelty, for women are not cruel as a sex or a class. The same effect and amount of adornment can be secured, to all intents and purposes, from cloth of different colors and textures, or from feathers furnished by birds that it is unnecessary to put to death. In a single province of India 30,000 black partridges were killed, in a hunt of a few days, to supply the European milliners. In Lahore 200 of the somewhat rare kingfishers were killed by one man in a month. At a London auction-room not long ago there was a sale of 960,000 skins of birds freshly received from the tropics. One dealer in London received in a single consignment 112,000 dead birds and 800,000 pairs of wings. In islands north of Scotland there is a constant slaughter of gulls and kittiwakes, whose wings are popular, many of the birds being just out of the nest, and not full fledged. Besides the birds that are actually secured by the hunters, there are thousands that survive the shot, and succeed in getting away with broken wings and bleeding bodies to die in the shrubbery. On one small island in the Scotland group 9,000 birds have been slaughtered in a single fortnight.—*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*.

#### ENGLISH AS SHE IS PRO- NOUNCED.

It appears that Byron called himself Byrn (Burn), and the family name of Cowper is, orally, Cooper. Cholmondeley is pronounced Chumley; Majoribanks, Marchbanks; Wemyss, Weems; Saint John, Senjon or Singin; Arceadeckne, Archdeacon; Colquhoun, Koochoon; Dachesnes, Dukarn; Bethune, Breton; Menzies, Mynges; Knollys, Knowles; Gower, Gorr; Dalziel, Dael; Glamis, Glarms; Geoghegan, Gaygan; Ruthven, Riven; Dillwyn, Dillon; in Abergavenny, the *av* is not sounded; in Hertford the *t* is elided, and the *o* is, as in far, etc. No less remarkable are many geo-

graphical names; Cirencester is pronounced Siceter; Pontefract, Ponfret; Woodmancote, Woodmuckot; Hallahon, Horn; Haddiscoe, Hadesker; Grassington, Geratun; Gunthwaite, Gunfit; Eckdale, Ashdale; Brighthelmstone, Brytun; Brampton, Brian, Brawn; Utrome, Ooram; Meddlothorpe, Threithrup; Uttoxeter, Tuxter; Pevenssey, Pinsey; Rampisham, Ransom; Crostwright, Corsit; Holdsworth, Holder; Kircudbright, Kircoobry; Ilkley, Ethla; Coxwold becomes Cookwood, and Marylebone sounds like Marrowbone.—*Nineteenth Century*.

#### CHURCHES ON WHEELS.

The Russian Government has been for some years building a stupendous railway which, with its connections, will be six thousand miles long, extending from St. Petersburg to Vladivostok, on the eastern coast of Siberia. Three thousand seven hundred miles yet remain to be constructed. The road runs to a village, then to scattered houses, then passes a long stretch of territory in which there are few human inhabitants. The Holy Synod—that part of the Russian Government which controls the national churches—finding it impossible to erect churches which the people could reach, has decided to make churches that can reach the people. Five church cars have already been constructed. Each traverses a particular section, and each is fitted up with the complex arrangements necessary to the Greek worship, with two priests on each car. Each church can comfortably seat thirty or forty people. Two settlements are daily visited, which will be for the five an average of seventy settlements a week. Where the population justifies it, the car stops long enough to hold several services. The people have a time-table, and are on hand when the car arrives, so that no time is lost. These particulars were obtained by the San Francisco *Examiner* from Mr. L. K. Minnock, representative of the English rolling-mills which furnish the rails to the Government for the construction of the road.

#### A QUAKER'S WAY OF "POPPING THE QUESTION."

The career of the Gurney girls is told in detail in *The Gurneys of Earham*, just published. Elizabeth married Joseph Fry, and became famous; Richenda, the Rev. Francis Cunningham; Hannah became the wife of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, Bart., and Louisa that of Mr. Samuel Hoare the third. Joseph Fry belonged to the "plain Quaker," and we have an account of the curious way in which he won his wife:—Mr. Fry had no intention of exposing himself to the possibility of a refusal. He bought a very handsome gold watch and chain and laid it down upon a white seat—the white seat which still exists in the garden at Earham. "If Betsy takes up that watch," he said, "it is a sign that she accepts me; if she does not take it up by a particular hour, it will show that I must leave Earham." The six sisters concealed themselves in six laurel-bushes in different parts of the grounds to watch. One can imagine their intense curiosity and anxiety. At last, the tall, graceful Betsy, her flaxen hair now hidden under a Quaker cap, shyly emerged upon the gravel walk. She seemed scarcely conscious of her surroundings, as if "on the wings of prayer, she was being wafted into the unseen." But she reached the garden seat, and there, in the sunshine, lay the glittering new watch. The sight of it recalled her to