

## The Family Circle.

### WHEN LIFE HAS JUST BEGUN.

When we are young, before us  
Fair lies the path untrod,  
Heaven smiles in sunshine o'er us,  
And underfoot the sod  
Is green and sown with flowers  
That woo the morning sun,  
How glad a world seems ours  
When life has just begun!  
Fleet foot and light heart timing  
Each bright hour of the day,  
With pulse and footfall chiming,  
We face the untried way.

When we are old, behind us  
How fair again they seem—  
Through tears that almost blind us—  
The joy, the hope, the dream!  
Remembrance on the showers  
That come when such thought rise  
Casts rainbow hues. The flowers  
Rebloom before our eyes!  
We look no more before us  
At dawn or set of day,  
But all our days restore us  
The hours gone by for aye!

### A SWIMMING ADVENTURE.

Into the waters of the Bay of Fundy the shark comes but seldom; and when he does come he is not in an aggressive mood. He seems to be in search of no nobler prey than gaspereaux or shad or herring. Nevertheless he is a shark, and his name carries consternation.

Last summer a small party of us encamped near the mouth of the storied Gaspereaux River, not far from the spot where the unhappy Acadians were embarked to sail into exile. The party consisted of us three Nova Scotian college men and a young American from Norfolk, Va. Jack Darby, before venturing to swim in these historic waters with the rest of us, had made special inquiries on the subject of sharks. He had once had an experience with these sea-wolves off the Florida coast, and the memory had left him apprehensive.

"Oh, any shark that comes into Minas Basin will be very careful where an American summer visitor is concerned," exclaimed my friend, Allison. "No good Nova Scotian shark would be so short-sighted as to kill the goose that lays the golden egg!"

"If it's a Blue Nose shark I have no anxiety!" answered Darby. "But what I fear is some wanderer like myself from more southern latitudes."

"The sharks which visit these waters are never known to attack men," remarked Davidson, with quiet and convincing dogmatism. He was a science professor, and his statement was not to be questioned. Thenceforth Darby went in swimming with an easy mind, and daily put us to shame by the gorgeousness of his bathing trunks.

As a glance at the map will show, the Basin of Minas is a spacious arm of the Bay of Fundy. Its tremendous tides deposit vast beds of red silt around the shores. One day we were swimming when the incoming tide was near the full, and when a strong sea wind had raised a yellow surf on the muddy shore. The water was deeply discolored all the way out to the edge of the ship channel. At length we all came ashore but Jack Darby, and sat sunning ourselves like a row of sea gulls along the ridge where the fallow-colored salt grass overhung the red slope of the flats. Darby, who was a strong and enthusiastic swimmer, remained disporting himself in the green waves beyond the belt of opaque and creaming shore waters.

Suddenly we were startled to hear him

utter a cry of fear. The next instant he dived into a large billow; and on his reappearance he headed for shore, swimming desperately. His particular chum, Allison, at once plunged in and swam out to meet him. The rest of us, perceiving no cause for his alarm, and knowing from the vigorous manner in which he swam that he could not be suffering from a cramp, remained on shore and waited somewhat anxiously. On the swimmer's face, as it came into clear view every few moments on the crest of a billow, was depicted a ghastly terror, and from time to time he glanced over his shoulder in a fashion that made our flesh creep. It was as if he saw some spectral horror, the sight of which was shut from our eyes.

All at once, as Darby neared the edge of the opaque water, we caught a glimpse of a great black body, which seemed to wallow hideously in the trough of the wave at no great distance from him. "A shark!" gasped Davidson; and the tone in which he spoke shattered at once my faith in the science professor's infallibility. A wave of something like anguish passed over me as I looked at the peaceful, sun-steeped landscape. The wide marshes were so green and wore so protecting a countenance. Strong and sheltering rose the huge blue bulk of Blomidon across the waves, and poignantly remote from all suggestion of peril or violent death stood the familiar farmhouses on the hill-slope behind us. All I had read from boyhood up of the shark's ravening ferocity flashed across my brain at once; and the secure beauty of our surroundings seemed cruelly incongruous. But there was no help for it. My comrades must not be left unaided in their extremity. Even while I thought so painfully I was getting the long sheath-knife out of Darby's belt; and the next moment I was swimming to the rescue with swift arms, but reluctant spirit. I saw Davidson snatch up a sharp stake and spring forward as if to follow me. But he changed his mind and stood motionless on the shore; and my heart grew hot within me at what I deemed his failure. To lose faith in his knowledge was a small thing; but to see him convicted of cowardly infidelity, that gave me a keen pang.

By this time Jack Darby had reached the muddy water. As he emerged from the clear sea-green, a look of infinite relief passed over his face.

"It's all right now!" he panted to Allison, who had just come up. "Those beasts can't see in mud like this. He'll keep out where it is clear."

Resting one hand on his chum's shoulder he paused to recover his breath; but Allison was uneasy in that neighborhood, and insisted on getting back to shore.

"Who knows but this particular individual may have better eyes than you give him credit for!" he murmured, gazing around him, nervously.

At this moment I arrived, swimming hard, with the knife held in my teeth, and looking much more heroic than I felt.

"Good for you, Old Man, to think of the knife!" exclaimed Jack; and the three of us hastened shoreward side by side.

We had gone but a few strokes, and Jack was explaining to us confidently that there was no need of further alarm, owing to the shark's aversion to water in which it could not see, when we caught another glimpse of that ominous black hulk. It rolled for an instant under the lip of a

wave, some twenty paces to our left, but actually, to our horror, nearer the shore than we were. With desperate vigor we struck out; and I momentarily expected to feel my legs in the monster's grasp, beneath that obscure and seething flood. My blood stood still at the thought, and it took my utmost nerve to refrain from doubling up my feet under my stomach.

In a minute or two, which seemed to me like an eternity, we got into shallow water. As convulsively we dragged ourselves out upon the blessed grass we observed, with wondering indignation, that Davidson was laughing—yes, laughing, laughing inextinguishably and holding on to his sides. It was atrocious. But something in the haggard faces which we turned upon him melted his scientific heart—and he pointed with his finger. We looked. There in the frothing shallows, rolling cumbrously, was the harmless but unlovely body of a dead porpoise!

When breath and self-possession were partly recovered I inquired, in marveling tone: "How could that dead brute follow us in as fast as we three live men could swim?"

"The creature did not follow you in, by any means!" asserted Davidson, professorially. "It had simply no concern for you whatever. It started a long way to your left—you were all too badly rattled to see how far off it really was—and came bobbing in serenely on the eddy that makes behind this point. The same eddy was running strong against you, so that your pace was nothing much to boast of!"

"Aoh!" said we, like three small boys, very meekly.—Charles G. D. Roberts, in *New York Independent*.

### SHALL BOYS GO TO COLLEGE?

Rev. Charles H. Parkhurst, D.D., in his paper to young men, in *May Ladies' Home Journal*, discusses "Shall We Send Our Boy to College?" answering the query with the assertion, "That depends a great deal on the boy." He announces himself to be a thorough believer in the college, but holds that "it might not be best for him [our boy] to go to college; it might not be best for the community that he should. College can fit a man for life, and, also, it can unfit him. There are styles of education that disqualify the student for doing what he is competent to do, without qualifying him to do that which he might like to do, but for which he lacks, and always will lack, the prerequisites. . . . As a general principle, the more a man knows the better, but so long as the present order of things continues a great amount of very ordinary work will require to be done; and ordinary people will do ordinary work better than extraordinary people will, and be a great deal more comfortable while doing it. Hordes of both sexes are entering college for the reason that they do not enjoy doing commonplace things. The result is that commonplace things are left undone, and uncommonplace things fare still worse. Agriculture is the material basis of a nation's strength and prosperity. We could dispense with either lawyers, doctors or ministers better than we could with farmers. Probably we should not quarrel so much if there were fewer students of the law; should not be sick so much if there were fewer students of medicine; and should not be so wicked if there were fewer students of theology. All of these could contribute liberally to

the ranks of the agriculturalists with advantage to the professions and to the grain and vegetable markets. I am not disparaging anybody, neither am I saying that it would not be a good thing, in itself considered, if everyone, however material or menial his occupation, could receive all that the finest school or college training could confer; but that is not practicable at present, and never will be till people get over thinking that there is a disgrace attaching to the doing of ordinary things."

### PROMPT PEOPLE.

Don't live a single hour of your life without doing exactly what is to be done in it, and going straight through it from beginning to end. Work, play, study—whatever it is, take hold at once, and finish it up squarely; then to the next thing, without letting any moments drop between. It is wonderful to see how many hours these prompt people contrive to make of a day; it is as if they picked up the moments which the dawdlers lost. And if ever you find yourself where you have so many things pressing upon you that you hardly know how to begin, let me tell you a secret: Take hold of the very first one that comes to hand, and you will find the rest all fall into file, and follow after, like a company of well-drilled soldiers, and though work may be hard to meet when it charges in a squad, it is easily vanquished if you can bring it in to line. You may often see the anecdote of the man who was asked how he had accomplished so much in his life. "My father taught me," was the reply, "when I had anything to go, go and do it." There is the secret—the magic word now! Make sure, however, that what is to be done ought to be done. "Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day" is a good proverb, but don't do what you may regret.—*Merchant Sentinel*.

### THE SCOTTISH COVENANTERS.

The struggle of the Scottish Covenanters has in it all the elements of a national *epos*. The cause for which they lived and died was epic in its grandeur. It was not merely national in the narrow sense. Like every object for which nations have earned the world's gratitude, and a conspicuous niche in the world's history, the cause of the Scottish Covenanters was the cause of humanity. The humanitarian interest, indeed, of the conflict was often obscured by the narrowness of local ideas and sentiments. But that is not a defect peculiar to the Covenanters. The universal and eternal purposes of the Infinite Spirit who moulds the life of men can be but imperfectly grasped by any individual or by any nation; and the Covenanters of Scotland could labour for the Divine cause of human progress only under such forms as were possible amid the conditions of their country and their time. But it was really the cause of human progress for which they fought. Their cause was the right of men to develop their religious life under the free play of their own spiritual convictions; and it is only under the condition of such freedom that any real progress in religious life is possible. On this ground, therefore, if on no other, the Covenanted struggle claims the sympathetic interest of the world.

But not on this ground alone. A