



The Family Circle.

THE SIN OF OMISSION.

It isn't the thing you do, dear,
It's the things you leave undone,
Which gives you a bit of a heart-ache
At the setting of the sun.
The tender word forgotten,
The letter you did not write,
The flowers you might have sent, dear,
Are your haunting ghost to-night.

The stone you might have lifted
Out of a brother's way,
The bit of heartsome counsel
You were hurried to much too say,
The loving touch of the hand, dear,
The gentle and winsome tone
That you had no time nor thought for
With troubles enough of your own.

These little acts of kindness,
So easily out of mind,
These chance to be angels
Which even mortals find—
They come in night and silence,
Each chill, reproachful wraith,
When hope is faint and flagging,
And a blight has dropped on faith.

For life is all too short, dear,
And sorrow is all too great,
To suffer our slow compassion
That tarries until too late.
And it's not the thing you do, dear,
It's the thing you leave undone,
Which gives the bitter heart-ache
At the setting of the sun.

—Margaret E. Sangster.

THE LIGHT OVERCOAT.

BY FLORENCE R. HALLOWELL.

"I will be very anxious about you, George; you must write to me as often as you can," said Mrs. Morris, as she stood at one of the front windows of her little cottage one March morning, watching for the stage, which was to carry her only son away from her.

"You need not waste any fears on me, mother," returned George, swinging over his shoulder a strap containing a dozen well-worn books. "I will get along; you can be sure of that."

"I know you have plenty of courage and endurance, my son, but I fear that in your efforts to carry out your desire for a college course, you may make sacrifices that will injure your health."

"I don't think there is any danger of that," said George. "I've made a close calculation, and my money will just carry me to the middle of June."

"But have you allowed nothing for extra expenses, George?"

"Not a cent; for there won't be any extra expenses," answered George, laughing. "Now, mother, just trust me. You'll see that I'll come out all right. Mr. Forbes has promised to let me have a school for the summer term, so I can go right to work as soon as I come home, and be able to earn enough to take me back to college next fall. So there's no need to worry, mother, you can depend—but there comes the stage," as the loud blast of a horn was heard; and he turned to pick up the shabby old black valise which contained his clothing.

"I am so thankful that I was able to buy you this warm overcoat, George," said his mother, laying her hand on his arm. "I would have felt badly to have you go away without one. Now you will, at least, be protected from the cold."

"It was the best present you could have made me, mother. I only wish you had not parted with grandmother's silver spoons to get it. I know how much you have always thought of those spoons."

"Not as much as I have always thought of you, my boy," said Mrs. Morris, smiling, "and you needed the coat far more than I needed the spoons."

The stage was now at the door, and George, giving his mother a fond embrace, and feigning not to see the tears that gathered in her eyes, opened the door, and a moment later was jolting away down the

rough, frozen road to the railway station eight miles distant, where he was to take the cars for the town in which College was situated.

Left fatherless at ten years of age, George Morris had early learned lessons of industry, prudence and economy. He was a boy of the most indomitable courage and perseverance, and having determined when only twelve years old that he would obtain a college education, and thus fit himself to win honor and station, he bent all his energies in that direction, and surmounted obstacles which would have stood like lions in the pathway of almost any other boy of his age. He was such an earnest student that he stood at the head of all his classes in the village school, and conned his books out of school hours to such good result that when but fifteen he was given a place as teacher in one of the country districts.

By the exercise of the closest and most rigid economy, and by denying himself all amusements that involved any outlay of money, he at length succeeded in saving up enough to carry him through one term at college, and he felt very proud and happy as the stage bore him that cold March morning toward the Mecca of his hopes. Not a dollar had he taken from his mother, nor had he allowed her to contribute to his wardrobe anything except the overcoat, which she had given him as a surprise, and which had been bought with the money obtained by the sale of the only articles of any value the poor widow possessed—half a dozen solid silver spoons, left her by her mother. George had an abundance of socks, and several pairs of warm mittens, for these his mother could knit, but he had only one suit of clothes, and knew that he must exercise the greatest care in order to make them last until June.

On arriving in the college town his first movement was to rent a small room, which he furnished at a cost of eight dollars. As may be supposed, the furniture was simple in the extreme, consisting of a pine bedstead, straw mattress, one wooden chair, a small pine table and a second-hand stove, on which he expected to cook all his meals. He bought also a frying-pan, a small iron pot, and half a dozen stone china dishes, and considered himself well prepared for house-keeping.

He passed a very creditable examination, and entered on his work with all the ardor of his strong, earnest nature. So anxious was he to obtain the education on which he had set his heart that he felt it no hardship to live on boiled potatoes, corn-bread, "dodgers," and rice, and to do his own cooking. He saw other young men of his own age, the sons of wealthy parents, dressed handsomely, and enjoying the luxuries of the club-house or hotel, but the contrast made him neither envious nor unhappy, and his letters to his mother were cheerful and sanguine in the extreme.

Three weeks went by, and George was beginning, by reason of his talents and industry, to win the respect of both classmates and professors, when an accident occurred as unforeseen as—in his eyes—it was terrible. He had always been fond of the study of chemistry, and the laboratory of the college afforded him a fine opportunity to make chemical experiments, which hitherto had not been possible, and he spent in this way much of his leisure time. While alone one day, engaged in trying an experiment with sulphuric acid and iron filings, he accidentally overturned the bottle containing the acid, and as he was standing close to the table, and had no coat on, the greater part of it ran over his pantaloons. In the greatest consternation, he seized the bottle of ammonia and hastily applied it; but with little effect. The acid had done its work, and the front of the only pair of pantaloons poor George possessed was burned to the lining from one pocket to the other.

Fortunately, he had his overcoat with him, and putting it on, he buttoned it all the way down, and hurried from the laboratory. Gaining the seclusion of his humble room, he sat down to think over the misfortune which had befallen him. No one who has not been in circumstances somewhat similar, can appreciate the despair which at first overwhelmed him. If he bought another pair of pantaloons, it would be at the sacrifice of several weeks of the term, which he felt he could not afford to lose; and he had determined when starting for college that he would never call on

his mother for a penny, however great might be his need; for he knew how close was the economy she practised, and how hard she had to work in order to make both ends meet.

He was forced at length to the bitter conclusion that a pair of new pantaloons was out of the question; but what was he to do? To wear the old pantaloons in their present condition was impossible. His jacket would not half cover the ravages made by the acid. But his overcoat would. What was to prevent him from wearing his overcoat all the time? He would be called eccentric, of course, and laughed at; he would be made the target of many a joke, perhaps; but he must endure it, however hard and humiliating. Anything would be better than giving up even one week of the college term.

What courage it required to wear that overcoat day in and day out, in chapel and class, may be imagined. It was just at this time that Horace Greeley's white overcoat was so extensively noticed in the newspapers, and as that of George Morris was very light—almost a cream color—his classmates, and soon the people of the town, dubbed him "Horace," and it was not long before he found himself unconsciously answering to the name, so seldom, except from the lips of the professors, did he hear his own. As the warm days of May came on, George found the weight of the overcoat almost unendurable; but a hero without knowing it—he continued to wear it, and never told his secret to any one.

He was thought eccentric, of course, for no one suspected the real reason the coat was worn, or that its wearer found the jests and laughter levelled at it, and the little notices about it in the town newspaper, bitter or mortifying. No one suspected that George had to struggle constantly in order to keep his temper, and to preserve the air of calm indifference he considered necessary to protect his secret.

But the long course of discipline came to an end at last, and one hot day in June, George, wearing the light overcoat, and with just enough money left to pay his fare, started homeward. It was late in the afternoon when the stage stopped at his mother's door, and he sprang down from the seat he had occupied by the side of the driver, very glad to escape further inquiry from that worthy as to his reasons for dressing so warmly with the mercury registering ninety degrees in the shade.

His mother was waiting for him in the cool, darkened "living-room," and embraced and kissed him with true affection; but the first words she uttered after her eager greeting were about the overcoat.

"Why do you wear this heavy coat on such a suffocating day, my son?" she asked, surprise in her tone and on her gentle countenance. "Surely you cannot be cold."

"I have worn it nearly four months, mother, cold weather and hot," answered George, and unbuttoning the coat, he threw it aside. "You can see the reason," he added.

For a moment his mother looked at him; then comprehending all, she burst into tears. George's arms were around her at once, his loving kisses on her pale, worn face.

"Do not think of it, dear mother," he said. "It has been a hard trial for me—I confess that—but it is all over now, and we need never speak of it again. I will buy on credit a pair of pantaloons this evening, and throw these aside. I am to begin teaching to-morrow, you know, and can soon pay for them. And you must think how much I owe that overcoat. But for it, I could not have finished my term."

But it was long before his mother would be comforted, for she knew what bitter mortification and humiliation her boy must have endured, and her loving heart ached for him.

The name of "Horace Greeley" stuck to George throughout his college course, even though he never again wore the light overcoat to which he owed it; but he had too much good sense to resent the appellation, and only laughed when inquiries were made concerning the discarded garment. He graduated from college with high honors, and now occupies an official position of such honor and trust that were I to tell his real name it would be recognized at once as that of a man who has

given the best years of his life to a service which is famous on both sides of the Atlantic. He told me the story of the light overcoat with the earnest simplicity which is one of his chief characteristics, and in conclusion said:

"It is nearly thirty-five years since I wore that light overcoat, but even now I cannot think without a twinge of pain of what I suffered when I was earning the nick-name of 'Horace Greeley.' It has occurred to me sometimes that I suffered more than was consistent with my ideas of true courage."

But I do not believe that it ever occurred to him that he was a hero.—Standard.

STORY OF A SERAMPOOR TESTAMENT.

In commencing the mission to the Afghans the great desideratum was to get a Bible in the Afghan tongue. It was supposed never to have been translated into Pushtoo, and two or three officers at Peshawur had undertaken to translate some of the Gospels.

I at once remembered that in the year 1848, while acting for the Government of the Marajahali Dhuleep Singh in the Derajat, I had seen a Pushtoo Testament in the possession of a fine old Pathan chief, who had received it in his youth at the Hudwar Fair, where he had gone to sell horses, from an English missionary, who told him that if he took care of it, and preserved it from fire and water, it would certainly be of use to him someday, when the English should come to his country.

"That day," said the old chief, "has now come; and here is the book, uninjured by fire or water." So saying, he unrolled it from many wrappers, and I found it had been printed at the Serampoor mission in 1818. I read a few lines of it and saw that it was Pushtoo, in the Persian character. I asked him if he had ever read it. He said, "Our Moollah has read it and says it is a very good book and quite correct, for Father Abraham and Father Moses are mentioned in it." I returned the volume to the old man, though I fear it was for the noble qualities of himself and his son; and not for the sake of the Bible, yet certain it is that Ali Khan Kolachee, never had cause to regret that the English came into his country. Well, this incident flashed across my mind at once, when I heard everybody wondering what was to be done to translate the Scriptures into Pushtoo, and I mentioned it to Colonel Martin.

Application was, I believe, made to the mission library at Serampoor; but strange to say, not a copy could then be found. I then wrote to my old friend Ali Khan, and recovered the precious volume; and I think it is impossible to consider this incident without being struck with awe and humbled at the long foresight of that omniscient and constant God who deposits his sealed-up purposes with unconscious man, and tells Futurity the hour to open and to read them. Thus was one mission at Calcutta, to be established in 1818, made to provide a translation of the Scriptures for another mission at Peshawur to be established in 1855; an Afghan chief was made to preserve one copy of this message to his countrymen for twenty years, when all others had either been lost or forgotten. The Pushtoo Testament thus found was placed by Colonel Martin in the hands of the Afghan branch of the Bible Society, and they most generously undertook to reprint and present to this mission three thousand copies of the Gospels of Luke and John, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistle to the Ephesians.—Speech by Sir Herbert Edwards at Peshawur.

A MODERATE DRINKER became very angry with a friend who argued that safety was only to be found in total abstinence. "What, sir," said he, "do you think I have lost control over myself?" "I do not know," was the reply; "but let us put it to the proof. For the next six months do not touch a drop." The proposal was accepted. He kept to his promise, and at the close of the month he said to his friend with tears in his eyes, "I believe you have saved me from a drunkard's grave. I never knew before that I was in any sense a slave to drink, but during the last month I have fought the fiercest battle of my life. Had the test been tried later on, it might have been too late."