



The Family Circle.

## THE PIGEON AND THE OWL.

There once was a Pigeon, as I have heard say,  
Who wished to be wise;  
She thought to herself, "I will go to the Owl,  
Perhaps he'll advise;  
And if all he tells me I carefully do  
I'll surely get wisdom." Away then she flew.  
When little Miss Pigeon arrived at the barn  
She found the Owl there,  
Most humbly she cooed out her wish; but the Owl  
Did nothing but stare.  
"Well, well!" thought Miss Pigeon, "of course  
I can wait;  
I won't interrupt him; his wisdom is great."  
She waited and waited. At last the Owl blinked  
And deigned a remark;  
"You'll never be wise, foolish Pigeon, unless  
You stay in the dark.  
And stretch your small eyes, and fly out in the  
night,  
And cry 'Hoo-hoo-hoo!' with all your might."  
So little Miss Pigeon to practise began;  
But all she could do  
Her eyes would not stretch, and her voice would  
not change  
Its soft, gentle coo;  
And she caught a sad cold from the night's damp  
and chill,  
And, lacking the sunshine besides, she fell ill.  
Then little Miss Pigeon gave up being wise:  
"For plainly," said she,  
"Though owls are the wisest of birds, theirs is  
not  
The wisdom for me;  
So I'll be the very best Pigeon I can."  
And what do you think! She grew wise on that  
plan!  
—Wide Awake.

## THE LIFE OF HATTIE BRANT.

From Readings for the Girls' Friendly Society.

BY SUSAN FENIMORE COOPER.

Hattie Brant lived in a small town on the Hudson River. Her father and mother were worthy people, much respected by their neighbors. Both were communicants of the parish of Trinity church, to which they belonged, although the husband, who was a very hard-working man, did not always attend the services as regularly as he might have done.

Hattie's mother went to church pretty regularly, although she was a very hard-working woman; she had some excellent qualities, but some foolish notions also. Hattie was her eldest child; she had only one younger, a boy, having lost several others while infants. It was really wonderful how much work Mrs. Brant could do in twenty-four hours; up very early in the morning to get breakfast for her husband, and often still at work washing or ironing or mending when the town clock struck twelve at night.

Hattie was very different from her father and mother. She was entirely ornamental; and very ornamental indeed she considered herself. She was rather good looking, but thought herself a beauty. She had a fine head of light curly hair, and made a great show of it. Hattie commenced school life when five years old, beginning her studies in the primary department of a graded school in the town. From that time until she was fifteen Hattie's thoughts and time were entirely engrossed by school, dress, and beaux, the dress and beaux filling a space in the school education also. Her flirtations began when she was about seven, and were carried on vigorously from that date.

As for real home education, Hattie received very little indeed. Most of the notions she gathered from her mother, to state them frankly, might be condensed into incessant lessons as to a showy appearance, a ridiculously high opinion as to her claims upon the world at large, and an unceasing strain after a grand position of one kind or another. It pains me to write this, but, my dear young friends, I am telling you only what I know to be true.

The Brant family were very well known to me, and it was a constant source of

surprise and regret to me that so worthy a woman should make such mistakes in the education of her daughter.

Hattie had an aunt, a sister of her mother, who lived on a fine farm about six miles from the town. She was a good woman and had much more common sense than had Mrs. Brant. She was fond of Hattie and much interested in her.

Mrs. Strong had brought up her own three children very well. They were all respectably married and settled near her. She was older than Mrs. Brant, and a widow. Her eldest son worked the farm. He was a young married man, and his wife, who had a small baby, was not in good health. Mrs. Strong wished Hattie to come and help her with the housework for the summer months, promising her very good wages. She called one Saturday to speak to Mrs. Brant and Hattie on the subject.

"You know our farm is a nice place in summer, Hattie, and we will make things pleasant for you while you are with us. The work will not be heavy."

Hattie turned up her nose!  
"I haven't brought up Hattie to work," said Mrs. Brant.

"I know that, sister; but don't you think it is time she learned to work?"

"I've no time for anything but my studies," exclaimed Hattie. "You don't know how many lessons I have to learn; Aunt Jane. Why there's mathematics, and grammar, and geography, and astronomy, and civil government, and chemistry, and physiology, and French, and German, and Latin, and—"

Mrs. Strong put her hands up to her ears, laughing: "Stop, Hattie; that's enough learning for an old body like me! But don't you think you could come in vacation time? The country air would do you good; you look paler than you used to do."

"But I have got my music to practise in vacation—singing, and the piano, and the banjo; and ma wants me to learn the violin."

"Squire White's girl opposite is learning the violin, so I thought Hattie might learn it," said Mrs. Brant.

"But Hattie don't really care for music, sister. She says so herself."

"No; she don't care for it very much. But music is fashionable."

"Well, if she comes to the farm she can sing all day long. And she can bring the banjo with her if she wants to; you know I've offered her the best of wages, and the work isn't heavy. She would only have to help me in the kitchen. Housework is healthy work."

"I'll never work in anybody's kitchen, not even my mother's!" exclaimed Hattie, with a toss of her head.

Mrs. Strong was pained and shocked to hear her niece using language so desperately silly and unreasonable; but she happened to have heard very much the same words from several other young girls not long before.\* Coming from her own niece this language distressed her more than ever.

"What do you intend to do, then? You will have to do some kind of work unless you expect to live all your life on your father's wages as teamster or what your mother earns by washing. Do you mean to learn fine washing?"

"I never washed a rag in my life, and I never will!" This was another speech heard from several of Hattie's school-mates.\*

"What do you expect to do then?"

"I'm going to be a saleslady, in Albany!"

And this plan was carried out soon after Hattie was sixteen. Her wages as saleslady were less than what her aunt had offered her for her housework. The confinement was very close. She was compelled to stand behind a counter all day, and she was obliged to spend all her earnings on her board. Her clothes were sent home to be washed by her mother, and she frequently wrote to her parents for money to buy new dresses. Her mother was an excellent laundress and earned a good deal of money in the course of a year, but a large portion was spent on Hattie. The family were often in debt for rent, food, and fuel and frequently Mrs. Brant had borrowed money to spend on Hattie, her music, and her finery.

\*Fact.

Now, my young friends, perhaps you think Hattie was born with a particularly bad heart; that she was much worse than other girls, as she showed herself so selfish and thoughtless about her parents. Not at all. Hattie had naturally rather an affectionate disposition and a pleasant temper. She had been a Sunday-school scholar all her life. At fifteen she was confirmed and became a communicant. She knew what was right as regards truthfulness, honesty, and a moral life. She meant to do what was right; she actually thought she was doing right. She considered herself a good girl. Her mother had often told her she must do all she could to better herself; to better herself, in Hattie's opinion, meant to make a show in the world. In fact, poor Hattie was suffering from a dreadful disease, a sort of blindness which prevented her from seeing things in their true light. She was stuffed full of pride. She had pride on the brain. She had pride in the heart. Her tongue was swollen with pride. She knew nothing of the blessings of a pure humility. She seemed never to have had a really humble thought in her life. And she knew nothing of self-denial. Self-indulgence was Hattie's rule.

She wrote home brilliant accounts of her life as saleslady. On certain evenings, when it was her turn for an outing, she went to the theatre or to the public dance. She had a succession of beaux. Her only regret was that she could not spend more money on her dresses. After she had been a year in Albany her parents wished her to go home for a visit. But Hattie never cared much for her home. The plain kind of house her parents rented, and the plain kind of work by which her father and mother earned their living disgusted her. She was ashamed of the hard-working parents who had been so generous to her. She would not go home.

When Hattie was rather more than seventeen she wrote to her mother that she was married! She said she had been married on Thanksgiving Day. She wrote that her husband, Orlando Jones, was very handsome, very genteel, well-off, had an excellent situation, a large salary; that he kept a horse and buggy in which he took her out every Sunday, and that they were now living at a boarding-house, where we have everything in style. Orlando went to his business every day, and she was still saleslady, but expected to make a change soon, as Orlando did not like that kind of life for her.

Mr. and Mrs. Brant were startled by this letter. They thought Hattie ought to have consulted them before she actually married. But when did Hattie ever consult her parents? She had scarcely given the Fifth Commandment a serious thought in all her life.

Hattie's letters grew shorter. But her mother always made excuses for her. Her father, however, wrote some questions which he desired her to answer. What was her husband's work? What was his salary? How much did they pay for their board? An indignant answer came very soon; she was displeased by these inquiries. Orlando was agent for a large manufacturing company; his salary was \$2,000 a year; he paid eighteen dollars a week for their board. This was a good deal, but they had "everything in style." She was very happy. Orlando took her to the theatre very often; Hattie had a passion for the theatre. Her only trouble was that Orlando, being the most trusted agent of the firm, was obliged to make business journeys quite often. He had been away twice in the three months of their marriage, and would be obliged to go off again in a few days.

From this last journey Orlando did not return for four months. And when he came to Albany again it was with handcuffs on his wrists, and in charge of the sheriff! Poor Hattie! Of all her many follies her marriage was the greatest. In fact, it was no marriage at all. Her Orlando had already two other wives in different parts of the country! The young man was a great scoundrel. He came to Albany a stranger, with some money in his pocket, earned by crime, and with the object of making more as a gambler. His occupations in life thus far had been various; he had been a bartender, a gambler, a horse thief, and a burglar. He had already served a short term in a state prison in Missouri, and his photograph

was in the rogues' gallery at St. Louis. But having dyed his light hair and beard a rich black, he had not yet been recognized in New York. He was connected with a gang of the very worst kind of men, but his showy appearance, studs, rings, watchchain, and boastful talk had completely blinded Hattie. His aim in passing Hattie off as his wife was to put on a respectable appearance as a married man for a while, as a blind to several criminal plots. The crime for which he was brought back to Albany was a heavy burglary in the same large establishment where Hattie worked as saleslady, and included also the death by manslaughter, of a private watchman. Sad to relate, poor Hattie was suspected of being an accomplice in the crime. She was, in fact, perfectly innocent of anything beyond extreme folly, but she was considered his wife, known to have been employed in the warehouse which had been robbed, and a trunk containing some of the stolen goods was found in her room. She was taken to gaol where she nearly died of horror and grief.

Her unhappy parents saw the report of the burglary in the papers. Orlando Jones and his wife were said to be the guilty ones. The wretched father and mother set out for Albany at once, and found their daughter in gaol. But they were at least soon relieved on the important point of Hattie's innocence of the crime. She convinced them that she was in utter ignorance of the contents of the trunk which held the stolen goods, and which "her husband" as she still called him, had brought to their room. It contained laces; and she was saleslady with several older ones in the lace department. But she had never even seen the contents of the trunk. The young man had told her it contained papers belonging to his firm. The fact of Hattie's innocence of the crime was a great relief to her parents, who were both thoroughly honest people. The very day they passed in gaol with Hattie there appeared an article in one of the papers giving an account of the criminal career of "Orlando Jones"—that was but one of a half-dozen names he had taken. Among other facts it appeared he had "married" another wife in Vermont a month after he had "married" Hattie.

Why will young girls in our country keep up flirtations with young men who are entire strangers to them so far as their previous careers are concerned?

Why will fathers and mothers weakly allow young men who are quite unknown to them to visit at their houses and to become familiar with their daughters? Our country is a large one; it is easy for a rogue in Kansas to pass himself off for an honest man on the Hudson. Poor Hattie!

Her father went home and raised money on his team and waggon to pay a lawyer to defend her in court—the team and waggon she had so despised. Her mother stayed in Albany to be near her, and took in fine washing to pay her own board and to purchase some comforts for Hattie. Her aunt Jane also sent money from the farm where the young girl had disdained to work.

The trial did not come off so soon as was expected. There were other cases to come first. Hattie pined away. Her child was born dead in gaol!

The young man, when tried, was found guilty of such very serious crimes that he was sentenced to the state prison at Dannemora for five-and-twenty years.

Hattie was, however, clearly proved to have been entirely ignorant of the burglary. The poor father and mother sat near her during the trial. "Not guilty," was the decided verdict of the jury. The next day her poor parents took her tenderly back to the home she had so despised. She never really rallied in health, but pined away and only lived a year. But a great change came over her as she sat propped up in her rocking chair. Her aunt Jane was with her often, and the clergyman of the parish, an old and experienced man, read to her, talked to her, prayed with her. She became truly penitent.

"If I could only live my life over again it would be very different! I'd be a good daughter to you, father and mother." She said this many times, with tears.

Once she said to a young cousin, "Nelly, be sure you don't live for show and pride! Live what our good pastor calls a 'worthy life.'

"Live a real Christian life."