

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

AFTERWARDS.

There is no vacant chair. The loving meet— A group of friends—smitten. Who knows how long they will remain? One sits silent only; in his usual seat We gaze but once that freedom. Why not now?

LETTERS TO GIRLS.

FEATHERS.

I have been in mind the Greek word from which my subject is derived and do not propose to tell you how to "get on"—how to "fly through the world," or, as the expression of to-day would phrase it, "feather your own nest." I am not going to talk about your associates, which Shakespeare calls, "birds of a feather." I shall not chide you for being in what your father might call "high feather." And though I've been reading Cuvier and Audubon I am not going to tell you about swallows, sandmartins, humming birds, orioles, owls, bats, eagles, hawks or crows. Even your well-beloved "stork" which "high art" has hung on your walls or over your table, I shall not tattle. Of the love I have for the gray ostrich feather, or the queer thoughts which come when I see waving the green, yellow, red or purple feathers of the Bird of Paradise, I shall not speak. I only use this subject to somewhat try and explain an old proverb which I want to alter so as to read, "Fine feathers do not make a fine bird." Both of my young friends have asked questions on the subject of dress, and somewhere in the letter you will find how to answer, "Are we justified in following the fashions of the day when injurious to health?" "Will not a lady who has a great fondness for dress, lose her interest in the cause of Christ?" I know, my dear girls, that you don't like lectures on dress, and you see now why I try to sugarcoat the pill with feathers which you do like! Don't you be too positive that you will not like what I say. I am not going to tell you that for the sake of health you must wear your dresses as short as Dr. Mary Walker, or take off your corsets and go about looking like an animated feather-bed tied around the middle with a string. That to show your Christianity you must wear rusty black and a last year's bonnet. I think it is as much your duty to dress charmingly as I was going to say—to say your prayers. Why? Dr. Mary Walker was once invited out to me in Washington, just as one would draw attention to Barnum's show women. I think it must be very degrading to dress so as to attract attention on the street, don't you? Any style of dress which will draw to a lady the gaze of strangers, is very much to be deprecated. Not long ago I saw a girl go down a street and men, at street corners, ceased conversation, turned and looked at her. I knew the girl and looked at her a second time to see why she attracted so much attention and I found it was only that her dress was suitable for a drawing-room and not for the street, making the supposition natural for those who did not know her, that she might be either exceedingly "green" or a demimode. To be well dressed one must be suitably dressed for the occasion. It does not seem possible, but I actually have seen women at market in the morning with their best garments on, silk-velvet and fine furs. I have seen girls at church in party dresses and opera bonnets. I have seen women in the cars in silk and jewelry. I have seen girls in the school-room with ruffles and flounces on dress, fingers covered with rings, chains

on neck, bracelets and ear-rings. I have seen girls in the kitchen dressed in half worn finery, dragging a train through the dust and catching ruffles on the stove or wood-box. I have seen shop-girls who had sweet intelligent faces but their coiffure and dress was such as to make the heart of any good, intelligent woman ache in pity. Instead of a plainly made, quiet-colored dress, small apron, low heeled shoes, warm undergarments and hair neatly and tastefully arranged, the dress has been some sort of imitation goods made up in a style imitating some fashionable woman's carriage dress, high heeled shoes on which to stand all day, and as she has gone across the store the glimpse of her hose and skirts has revealed a dearth of sense which seemed an impossibility in our educated land. I wish that all my girls could know how intelligent men and women look at these things, and seek their approval instead of striving for the approving glance of young people as silly as themselves. Two years ago I went from St. Louis to New York in a car with the daughter of a late Secretary of State, who once ran for President of the United States. She is not only a lady who has always moved in the best society, but she is a Christian lady. In the section opposite this lady were two girls going to Philadelphia. I wish all my girls could have heard the tone of voice which so clearly implied there must be something wrong about the individuals, when Miss — said, in speaking of these girls, "Have you noticed their jewelry? Diamonds when travelling!" For the first time I noticed the garments of the lady who spoke. Plain gray, except a blue bow at the neck of the dress where the collar fastened. Not a ring or bit of jewelry. It is not the love of dress, primarily, which is doing so much harm to the girls of to-day. It is not the love of dress, primarily, which draws Christian girls away from Christ. It is something back of that and something worse. Why do you want fine clothes? Answer the question honestly. Is it not that others may think you have wealth? That you may attract attention? Why do you envy the woman of fashion? Write on a piece of paper honest answers to these questions. If your answers make you blush—turn over a new leaf. I wish I could show you just how miserable are the lives of the women who devote all their time to their dress, to the covering of their bodies. They have no thoughts higher than this. They are selfish, caring for no one's comfort but their own. Always dissatisfied. Full of jealousy and ever ready with ill-natured remarks about each other. Fashionable women have no time for intellectual or spiritual growth. The years pass by and they think the same thoughts and walk the same weary round. The poor girl who has an inordinate love for dress has even a harder life than she to whom costly garments are procured without worry, and if she is a Christian she must either give up the worldly strife or her Christianity. Look at the motives which induce you to ornament yourself and then study the spirit which Christ inculcates. Can these two spirits walk together? Answer. And, my dear young friends, as you hope to make the very best of yourselves of which you are capable, scorn to make dress the object of your life. If you want to make life a real success, put your foot on the follies of the day, and say, "I will not have these things to rule over me."—By Mrs. C. F. Wilder, in Central Ado.

ARE DREAMS SINFUL?

A most important field of study, hitherto barely entered, is the relation in which dreams stand to our moral nature. Are they proper subjects of blame or praise? Should we feel ashamed or guilty on account of the evil things we see or do in the visions of the night? The ancients apparently inclined to the view that we are, in part at least, responsible, the character of the dreams being determined by the character of the thoughts which the man most willingly cherishes while awake. Plato held that the virtuous man might be known by his dreams; and Plutarch, who describes vividly the wide violation of right and order common in dreams, mentions with evident

approval that Dionysius, Tyrant of Sicily, learning that Marsyas had dreamed of murdering him, straightway ordered his execution, eagerly remarking that if he had not been thinking of the deed he would not have dreamed it. Sir Thomas Browne, in his charming "Religio Medici," argues in much the same way; and in our own day we find the poet Montgomery, in a critique on De Quincey's "Confessions," writing, "Under cover of a night more impenetrable than that which envelops the universe, in a little world of his own, where all is life and light and liberty to him and to him only, the slumberer is thoroughly himself. He acts, he speaks, he thinks and he feels without disguise and without reserve. He cannot help being honest here in the exercise of his virtues or the exposure of his vices." More in accord with common experience and the common opinion is St. Augustine, who, in a striking passage in his "Confessions," bewails the evil character of many of his dreams, but wisely argues that since his waking self was sincere in love of good and hatred of evil, he could not be guilty in God's sight of the iniquities he seemed to commit in his sleep, though he wondered, as we still do, at the contrast between the two states. When such dreams are the wild reproduction of an evil past, stamped on the memory, they are a part of the just and inevitable punishment of sin; the prodigal son must have been troubled in dreams by recollections of the wild orgies of his wanton life, long after he was living quietly in his father's house; but still the dreams themselves, being entirely beyond the control of the will, cannot fairly be classed among sins.

SENSITIVENESS.

That a very large amount of unhappiness results from the possession of a thin skin is a matter of common experience. Very many persons are sufferers from this evil without knowing the cause, and again others are aware of their deficiency and yet do not know the remedy. Let us try to get at the symptoms of sensitiveness. If there is an over-anxiety for praise and an over-sensibility in the face of blame, there is every reason for the suspicion of a thin skin. The sufferer is afflicted by an eager desire for society and afterwards by an immediate repulsion to society. Wounded sensibility, disappointed in its pursuits of praise and popularity, retreats from public view. If the person is reticent by nature the tendency runs to a morbid retirement, but if the person is naturally talkative the airing of grievances in the domestic circle becomes the safety-valve. In practical business and even in social life there comes a gradual hardening of the sensibilities. Sensitiveness settles down into sensibility and sensibility hardens into common sense, perhaps a little too hard for the best uses of religion and charity. One learns to be neither unduly elated or depressed in the rubs and knocks which every day brings. The indispensable thing to know is whether one can attain firmness without hardness. There must be elasticity enough to cushion one's life against sharp corners and hard knocks, and there must also be a limit to this elasticity so that it may not give way into a softness which has no resisting power. Sensitiveness needs only one secret to become as intensely miserable as it has been intensely useful. The power to put one's self in the place of another and the habitual practice of this power in sympathy converts sensitiveness from selfishness to usefulness. When we come to analyze sensitiveness it is nothing more than delicacy of nerve and fineness of organization allowed to run down into self-regarding and morbid exercises. This sensitiveness which is but an over delicacy of touch may be used as tact and sympathy to anticipate the wishes of those around us, to enable us to step softly on the sacred ground of friendly confidence and in the contact of domestic life. Sensitive temperament looking away from self to others, become ministering spirits to the weary and heavy laden. Touched with a feeling of the infirmities of others, the over-sensitive person may share the very high priesthood of the ascended Lord.—Episcopal Register.

The reason why God is trusted so little, is because he is so little known.

THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN.

Sin stands in the door of the tent, Like Jack of old and cries, "Turn in, my lord, turn in, content To abide ere daylight dies." She brings forth with an open hand The butter in lordly dish, Wine and milk doth the board command, And all that the heart can wish. While the murderous deed is planned, Firm grasped, yet hidden away From dazzled eyes, in the other hand Are hammer and nail to slay. With a mantle she wraps us round, And when weary we sink to sleep, Strikes to fasten us down to the ground, Through the temples cloven deep, Sin will show us the board well spread, The butter, the milk, the wine, A flower-decked path for our feet to tread While the summer sun doth shine. And we see not amid the flowers Kemure like a viper creep; The mocking dreams and the lonely hours, And the deep and deadly sleep. Sin will show us a picture bright And whisper a flattering tale, Then softly lead to our couch at night, To strike with hammer and nail. —Central Ado.

THE TIDES.

Various remarkable theories have been advanced regarding the tides. Many of these are truly so absurd that it is hardly worth while to refer to them. Persons find it difficult to understand why the tides are higher at one time than another, and why they rise to the height of sixty feet in the Bay of Fundy, forty in the ports of Bristol, England, and St. Malo, France, and only to a few feet in height at New York and other places, while they are scarcely perceptible in the Baltic and other seas. Descartes was the first philosopher who advanced the theory that the tides were due to the influence of the moon, but Newton was the first who worked the problem and discovered the true cause. Descartes believed that the moon acted on the waters of the ocean by pressure; Newton demonstrated that it acted on the ocean by attraction; that instead of pressing on the waters, it rolled them up directly under it, and also at its antipodes at the same time, thus producing the two tides every day. The tides are attractions of both sun and moon. If the earth had no moon, the attraction of the sun would produce two tides every day, but their ebb and flow would take place at the same hours, and not varying as they do. These tides would also be much smaller than those of the moon. Although the mass of the sun is far greater than that of the moon, and though attraction is in proportion to their mass, yet it is also inversely as the square of the distance. As the sun, therefore, is four hundred times more distant than the moon, the attraction of the waters of the sea towards the sun is found to be about three times less than that of the moon. There are really two ocean tides, the lunar and solar, but the latter is absorbed by the former, which is wholly observable in respect to the time, the solar only as it influences the height of the tidal wave. That caused by the moon is three times greater than that of the sun, and it follows the moon's motion around the earth, rising and falling twelve hours, and each succeeding tide later by three-quarters of an hour than the preceding one is exactly in accordance with the position of the moon, or, as it is commonly called, its rising and setting.—Anon.

MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

A minister of the Gospel who lives in the far famed Western Reserve is very fond of hunting. It is nothing uncommon for him to spend a whole day, now and then, wandering through the woods and fields in quest of the little game that has been left. Sometime ago, and at a time when quail were protected from harm by law, he came upon a flock of these birds, and fired upon them. Although he failed to kill any of them, his crime in the face of the law was as great as if he had. A young friend working in an adjoining field heard the report, and as the minister joined him, and he learned what he was shooting, he said: "Do you not know that you were breaking the law in shooting quails at this season of the year?" "O, I guess I only cracked it a little," was the answer. Ah! little did he suppose when he made that remark that it would be treasured up and reported at a very unfavorable time. Little did he think that this unconverted friend, when asked to come to Christ by this same minister, would bring that sentence up in his mind, and allow it to counterbalance all that he might

say. Little did he think that the incident would be reported to others, to whom it would give an unfavorable opinion of the divine. But so it was. And while such things are noticed to a greater extent when coming from a minister, we should all of us be very careful of our language. Nothing is more true than the old saying, that "a word once spoken, a coach and four can not bring it back." We should be very careful to say nothing that will leave an unfavorable impression of another; for that impression once formed upon the mind of another can scarcely be removed by all that we may afterwards say to the contrary.

BOTTLED TEARS.

In Persia they bottled up their tears as of old. This is done in the following manner: As the mourners are sitting around and weeping, the master of ceremonies presents each one with a piece of cotton wool, with which he wipes off his tears. This cotton is afterward squeezed into a bottle, and the tears are preserved as a powerful and efficacious remedy for reviving a dying man after every other means has failed. It is also employed as a charm against evil influences. This custom is probably alluded to in Psalm 56: 8: "Put thou my tears into thy bottle." The practice was once universal, as is found by the tear bottles which are found in almost every ancient tomb, for the ancients buried them with their dead as a proof of their affection.

A question was once asked in a party of children, which character in "Banyan's Pilgrim's Progress" they liked best. One replied, "I like Christian best;" but another said, "I like Christiana best, because she took the little ones along with her."

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

MY TRAMP. That's he again! I know his whoop, As he sallies down the lane, No need to stay till he calls for "grab," With his face against the pane. As I set me here in my easy chair, I can note the swaggering gait Of his sunburnt feet, but I'll go at once, My tramp does n't like to wait. Little brown breeches and bristling hat I could tarry me yet for awhile, And ponder, my young king democrat, With a mother-philosopher's smile, The possible future of your young rule, The imperious doctrine leamed So early, alack! "Ho mead! ho broad!" Of the store you have never earned; Could divine, of the little, tanned, tired feet, What sort of a road, by and by, They would travel space, and at even-time To what sort of home would lie. "Ho broad! ho mead!" would he find them there? These are all the names he knows For the great God love that makes the home, For the fullness, the repose. Ah, apple cheek and chestnut curls That are lying upon my breast! I wonder if this is typical Of the day's end and the rest! And I lay my little, tired, worn-out tramp On his little bed all white, As I pray that the blessed Saviour's arms May gather him in that night. —Mary U. Sturges.

SAYING AND DOING.

Mary and her father were left at home for a few days while the rest of the family went on a visit. Some of Mary's young friends came in the afternoon with a request for her to spend the evening with them. Papa came home from business not feeling very well, and looking forward to a quiet evening with his daughter. She told him of her invitation, and spoke of some special reasons why she desired to accept it. Her father did not want to deprive her of the pleasure she anticipated, and yet he did not exactly want to pass the evening alone, nor to sit up as late as would be necessary if Mary went out. So he put the matter wholly in Mary's decision, saying, "My daughter, you must do as you think best. I will not say you cannot go." "I don't want to leave you alone, papa," said Mary—but all the same she went. Now I do not mean to say that she did anything wrong. Her father was glad that she should have the pleasure of meeting her friends. There was nothing special that she needed to do for him if she stayed. But she would have been company for him, and her staying would have been proof of unselfish affection. The thing that struck me when I heard of this little incident was its illustration of the difference between saying and doing. Mary said she did not want to leave her father alone for the evening, and

I dare say she did regret doing it. But she did leave him alone. So what she said, you see, went for very little against what she did. Her actions spoke louder than her words. This is true all through our life. We must be judged by our actions rather than by our words. It is easy to make promises and protestations, but by no means so easy to act always in just the right way. Children as well as their elders sometimes cheat themselves into thinking they are better than they are, because they talk so gloriously about their right feelings—their sympathy, their affection, their desire to be of service. But the question is not what they say, but what they do. "I am very sorry for A—" said one, speaking of a man who had met with misfortune, and who was in pressing need of aid. "Yes," said the friend spoken to, "I am sorry for him five dollars; how much are you?" He did not mean that his sympathy should be mere words. There is another matter in which we are very often tempted to let words take the place of something better. We try—is this true of you, dear reader?—to put God off with promises. We try sometimes to make fair words to take the place of a Christian life. How foolish is this! We can not deceive God. He understands us through and through. When he says to any one, "Give me thy heart," he is not deceived for a moment when the reply is, "Yes, Lord, I will," but no corresponding action follows. "By their fruits ye shall know them," is his way of judging, just as it should be ours. Dear children, let us learn not to put mere empty talk in the place of doing the things our heavenly Father would have us do.—Child's Paper.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

A gentleman who was well known for his liberality was besieged by many children who were selling tickets for a fair. A dozen filed into his office at once, and many more would come. He could not be expected to buy of all, yet he hesitated to refuse any without a good cause. Said he: "I will buy tickets of all who can say the Ten Commandments." Of the twelve not one could make the required recitation, and all belonged to the same Sunday school and the same class. Another energetic young salesman made her appearance. "How many commandments should you say there were?" she was asked. "Sixteen," "You place the figures rather high; but let's hear what you know." "Well," she said, slowly, "I know but four." "Say the four for me, then." A moment's pause. "I don't believe I know but two." "We will hear the two, then, if you please." "I've forgot them," said the vender of tickets; a member of the same Sunday school and the same class before mentioned. "Well, then, I guess I can't deal with you," and she was dismissed. As many as fifty applied at that time, yet none could say the commandments except one little girl, of whom tickets were bought. PRAYING AND DOING. "Bless the poor children who haven't got any beds to-night," prayed a little boy, just before he lay down in his nice warm cot on a cold, windy night. As he rose from his knees his mother said "You have just asked God to bless them: what will you do to bless them?" The boy thought a moment. "Why, if I had a hundred cakes, enough for all the families, I would give them some." "But you have no cakes; what then are you willing to do?" "When I get money enough to buy all the things I want, and have some over, I'll give them some." "But you haven't enough money to buy all you want, and perhaps never will have; what will you do to bless the poor now?" "I will give them some bread." "You have no bread; the bread is mine." "Then I could earn money and buy a loaf myself." "Take things as they now are—you know what you have that is your own; what are you willing to give to help the poor?" The boy thought again. "I'll give them half my money. I have seven pennies; I'll give them four. Wouldn't that be right?"—Tailor's Magazine.