

The Home Circle.

LOVE'S REASONS.

Why do I love my darling so?

Good faith, my heart, I hardly know,
I have such store of reasons;
'Twould take me all a summer day—
Nay, saying half that I could say
Would fill the circling season.

Because her eyes are softly brown,
My dove, who quietly hath flown
To me as to her haven?
Because her hair is soft, and laid
Madonna-wise in simple braid,
And jetty as the raven?

Because her lips are sweet to touch,
Not chill, nor fiery overmuch,
But softly warm as roses.
Dear lips that chasten while they move,
Lips that a man may dare to love,
Till earthly love time closes?

Because her hand is soft and white,
Of touch so slender and so light,
That where her slender finger
Doth fall or move, the man to whom
The guards of Eden whispered, "Come!"
Beneath its spell might linger?

Because her heart is woman-soft,
So true, so tender, that I oft
Do marvel that a treasure
So rich, so rare, to me should fall,
Whose sole desert—so small, so small,
Is—loving past all measure?

Because she has such store of moods,
So archly smiles, so staidly broods,
So lovingly caresses;
So that my heart may never tire
Of monotony, or more desire
Than, she, my love, possesses?

Ah, me! what know, or what care I?
Of what hath love to do with "Why?"
How simple is the reason!
I love her—for she is my love,
And shall while stars shall shine above,
And season follow season.

ONLY A WORD.

A frivolous word, a sharp retort,
A parting in angry haste,
The sun that rose on a bower of bliss,
The loving look and the tender kiss,
Has sent on a barren waste,
Where pilgrims tread with weary feet
Paths destined never more to meet.

A frivolous word, a sharp retort,
A moment that blots out years,
Two lives are wrecked on a stormy shore
Where billows of passion surge and roar
To break in a spray of tears—
Tears shed to blind the severed pair,
Drifted seaward, and drowning there.

A frivolous word, a sharp retort,
A flush from a passing cloud,
Two hearts are scathed to their inmost core,
Aye ashes and dust forever more.
Two faces turn to the crowd,
Masked by pride with a lifelong lie,
To hide the scars of that agony.

A frivolous word, a sharp retort,
An arrow at random sped.
It has cut in twain the mystic tie
That had bound two souls in harmony,
Sweet love lies bleeding or dead.
A poisoned shaft with scarce an aim,
Has done a mischief sad as shame.

A frivolous word, a sharp retort,
Alas! for the love and lives
So little a cause has rent apart,
Tearing the fondest heart from heart
As the whirlwind rends and rives,
Never to reunite again,
But live and die in secret pain.

A frivolous word, a sharp retort—
Alas! that it should be so—
The petulant speech, the careless tongue,
Have wrought more evil and more wrong.
Have brought to the world more woe,
Than all the armies age to age
Record on history's blood-stained page.

NEVER PUT OFF TILL TO-MORROW.

"I would like to have you run down to Mrs. Brown's for me, Katy, before sundown," said Mrs. Nelson to her little daughter, who sat busily stitching away in her little willow chair.

"Oh, mother, couldn't I go just as well before school time to-morrow? I have this pair of pillow-cases almost done for my dolly, and Aunt Martha is going to give me two nice pillows and a feather bed for her, as soon as I have the bed-clothes all made neatly."

"But, my dear, I wish you to take the money for the work she sent home to day. She is a poor woman, and may need it."

Still Katy looked reluctantly at the dainty sewing work before her, and laid down the tiny ruffled pillow-case with a sigh.

"Perhaps the poor woman is wondering how she shall buy food for her children to-morrow," continued the mother. "Think what a relief it will be to have the care off my mind."

That thought was enough for Katy's really benevolent little heart, and she quickly laid up her work, in her pretty rosewood box, so

it wouldn't be in anyone's way, and prepared herself for her walk.

"Here is a basket, with some of Anne's tea biscuit, and plate of butter," said Katy's mother; "you may take that to Mrs. Brown's, if it will not be too heavy."

"No, indeed, mother," said Katy, her eyes sparkling with pleasure; "I shall love to do it. I don't think they have biscuit and butter very often. Lucy sometimes brings just dry bread to school for her dinner."

"Why, Kate, I did not think they were so poor as that. Here, take this cup of jolly and some grapes to the little sick boy. I daresay they will be refreshing. I must call around and see them as soon as I can."

Katy returned from her kind errand that night a little weary, but very light-hearted.

"I am so glad I went to-night, mother," she said. "They were just sitting down to supper with only a little cake made of corn-meal and a pitcher of water on the table. The woman cried when I gave her the basket, she seemed so glad. She gave the sick boy his biscuit and grapes first, and I wish you could have seen how happy his face looked."

"I am very glad, too that you went to-night," said the mother, and I hope you will learn this lesson from it—never to put off a kind act till to-morrow, when you can do it to-day. A good man was urged not to go out on a stormy evening, to pay a bill to a poor laborer, as to-morrow would certainly do as well, but he answered, 'Think what a blessing a good night's rest is to a poor man. This may relieve some anxiety which would cause him a sleepless night.' The command to God's ancient people is one which we should remember: 'The wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.' So you see, dear Katy, it was an act of justice, as well as kindness, to take the money to-night, instead of putting it off till another day."

A MOTHER'S LOVE.

Happily, a mother's love is something upon which the great majority of mankind can look back—reverently and fondly look back—for an objective representation of its main characteristics. Oh, the unselfishness of it! How, months before it can be returned by anything beyond a momentary dance of light in her child's eyes, or a curvature of its toothless mouth into a smile, or a crow, or a fling of the limbs, expressive of enjoyment, it pours itself out in seemingly wasteful superabundance, intent on giving rather than receiving, rejoicing, to minister rather than be ministered to, accepting without a murmur days of care sometimes flecked with pain, and nights of broken rest, and rendering without stint unnumbered services which to others would be self-denial, but the irksomeness of which her ever-gushing affect on, without a moment's pause of self-consciousness, cleanses away, and renders invisible! And then the patience and long-suffering of it—the faults it will cover over with its ever-ready mantle, the negligences it will drop tears over in secret and openly forgive, the affront it will survive, the disappointments it will endure and conceal, the ingenuity it will display in devising plausible excuses and even satisfying reasons for manifest wrongs, and the eagerness with which it will take upon itself, if possible, the consequences of transgression. There is nothing quite like it in this world of ours—nothing so morally beautiful; a self-fed, self-sustaining love, which can traverse wide deserts, and, like the camel, keep itself alive upon its little hoards of remembered joy, when all other love fails—the one human love that spends itself wholly upon its objects, and the roots of which even ingratitude cannot entirely kill. But, when returned, as in some measure it mostly will be, to what strength and beauty of self-sacrifice will it not grow!—yet, under any circumstances, chiefly a sorrow-bearing love, of which the joys are cares, the duties are afflictions of pain upon itself, the pride is nourished to be bestowed elsewhere, and the fondest gain is the sorest loss. About every true mother there is the sanctity of martyrdom—and when she is no more in the body, her children see her with the ring of light around her head.

THE HOME CIRCLE.

Somebody says, and truly, that there are few families anywhere in which love is not abused as furnishing the licence for impoliteness. A husband, father, or brother will speak harsh words to those he loves best, simply because the secrecy of love and family pride keep him from getting his head broken. It is a shame that a man will speak more impolitely at times to his wife or sister than he would to any other woman, except a low, vicious one. It is thus that the honest affections of a man's nature prove to be a weaker protection to a woman in a family circle than the restraints of society, and that a woman is usually indebted for the kindest politeness of life to those not belonging to her own household. These things ought not to be so. The man who, because it will not be resented, inflicts his spleen and bad temper upon those of his hearthstone, is a small coward and a very mean man. Kind words are circulating mediums between true gentlemen and ladies at home, and no polish exhibited in society can atone for the harsh language and disrespectful treatment too often indulged in between those bound together by God's own ties of

blood, and the most sacred bonds of conjugal love.

TRIFLES.

There are many little things in the household, attention to which is indispensable to health and happiness. The kind of air which circulates in a house may seem a small matter, for we cannot see the air, and not many people know anything about it; yet if we do not provide a regular supply of pure air within our houses, we shall inevitably suffer for our neglect. A few specks of dirt may seem neither here nor there, and a closed door or window appear to make little difference; but it may make the difference of a life destroyed by fever, and therefore the little dirt and the little bad air are very serious matters, and ought to be removed accordingly. The whole of the household regulations are, taken by themselves, trifles—but trifles tending to an important result.

SILENCE.

How eloquent is silence! Acquiescence, contradiction, difference, disdain, embarrassment and awe, may all be expressed by saying nothing. It may be necessary to illustrate this apparent paradox by a few examples. Do you seek an assurance of your lady-love's affection? The fair one confirms her lover's fondest hopes by a compliant and assenting silence. Should you hear an assertion, which you may deem false, made by some one of whose veracity politeness may withhold you from openly declaring your doubt, you denote a difference of opinion by remaining silent. Are you receiving a reprimand from a superior? You mark your respect by an attentive silence. Are you compelled to listen to the frivolous conversation of a fop? You signify your opinion of him by treating his loquacity with contemptuous silence. Are you in the course of any negotiation about to enter on a discussion painful to your own feelings, and to those who are concerned in it? The subject is almost invariably prefaced by an awkward silence.

Silence has also its utility and advantages. And first, what an invaluable portion of domestic strife might have been prevented, how often might the quarrel which by mutual aggravation has, perhaps, terminated in bloodshed, have been checked at its commencement by a judicious silence! Those persons only who have experienced them are aware of the beneficial effects of that forbearance, which to the exasperating threat, the malicious sneer, or the unjustly imputed culpability, shall never answer a word. Secondly, there are not wanting instances where the reputation, fortune, the happiness—nay, the life of a fellow-creature, might be preserved by a charitable silence.

COMPLIMENT TO WOMEN.

Perhaps a more just and beautiful compliment was never paid to women than the following, by Judge Story: "To the honor, to the eternal honor of the sex be it said, that in the path of duty no sacrifice is with them too high or too dear. Nothing is with them impossible; they shrink not from what love, honor, innocence or religion require. The voice of pleasure or of power may pass unheeded by, but the voice of affliction never. The chamber of the sick, the pillow of the dying, the vigils of the dead, the altars of religion, never missed the presence or the sympathies of woman. Timid though she be, and so delicate that the winds of heaven may not too roughly visit her, she assumes a preternatural courage, which knows not and fears not consequences. Then she displays that undaunted spirit which neither courts difficulties nor evades them; that resignation which utters neither murmurs nor regret; and that patience in suffering which seems victorious even in death itself."

VERY DIGNIFIED.

There is an old fellow in New Hampshire who, whatever his condition, never loses a sense of his dignity.

One warm summer's day he was seated on the top of a stage coach which was slowly wending its way over the sandy roads above Concord. Frequent application to his pocket flask had rendered his position somewhat unsteady, and at last a sudden jolt tumbled him off into the sand by the roadside. The driver stopped, and with aid from the passengers, he was at last set up again in the coach, between two other men who were to guard against a recurrence of such an accident.

Our hero looked very solemn for a mile or two, without any remark, and then spoke:

"I shay, driver, we had a pretty bad upshet."

"Upset! We haven't upset," replied the driver, a little hurt at the suggestion.

"Yes we did upset! I shay we did upset! I'll leave it to this gemmelman if we didn't upset."

The umpire decided at once against him.

The solemn look came back to his face. He meditated some minutes, and then gravely responded:

"I shay, driver, if I had known we didn't upset I wouldn't 'ar got off."

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SING MORE.

Cultivate singing in the family. Begin when the child is not three years old. The songs and hymns your mother sang, bring them all back to your memory, and teach them to your little ones; the hymn and the ballad, funny and devotional, mix them all together to meet the similar moods, as in after life they come over us so mysteriously sometimes. Many a time and oft, in Wall street and Broadway, in the very whirl of business; in the sunshine and gaiety of Fifth avenue, and amid the splendor of the drives in Central Park, some little thing wakes up the memories of our early youth—the old mill; the cool spring; the shady tree by the little school-house—and the next instant we almost see again the ruddy cheeks, the smiling faces, and the merry eyes of schoolmates, some gray-headed now, most "lie mouldering in the grave." And anon, "the song my mother sang" springs unbidden to the lips, and soothes and sweetens all these memories.

At other times, amid the crushing mishaps of business, a merry ditty of the olden time pops up its little head, breaks in upon the ugly train of thought, throws the mind into another channel; light breaks in from behind the cloud in the sky, and a new courage is given to us. The honest man goes singing to his work, and when the day's labor is done, his tools laid aside, and he is on his way home, where wife and child, and tidy table and cheery fireside await him, he cannot help but whistle or sing.

The burglar never sings. Moody silence, not the merry song, weighs down the dishonest tradesman, the perfidious clerk, the unfaithful servant, the perjured partner.

ECONOMY.

To the majority of young people—the formation of whose habits exercise such an important influence on society—economy has, unfortunately, a disagreeable significance. Their impression seems to be that a spendthrift is an amiable and rather attractive character, while prudence and forethought, in the matter of money, certainly do not attract, and perhaps repel a little. Now this is simply a matter of prejudice. If thrift meant selfishness, and imprudence meant unselfishness, there might be some color of reason in the prejudice. But, at the best, it is only a question between wise selfishness and foolish selfishness. The money of spendthrifts is always spent on themselves, even if they pour it out in the lap of young companions. They are never philanthropists; they never seek out those to whom their money would be bread and health and life. Their prodigality is due to a deep-seated habit of self-indulgence—the unwillingness to sacrifice the present to the future. And this careless disregard of consequences often places them under the unpleasant necessity of borrowing from more prudent friends. The truth is that economy is always a necessary and noble quality—is often an heroic one. It is especially fine in those men who care little for money in itself. Thrift may become a passion just as self-indulgence may become a passion; it is the duty of reason to curb and regulate both. The man who has once begun to save soon finds it to be a greater pleasure to add fifty dollars to his little pile than to spend that sum upon a tailor or a caterer. As soon as he begins to confuse the means with the end, reason should demonstrate that the present has its demands as surely as the future has its exigencies. So, when long habits of self-pampering have taught one to think that he must have everything he wants, it is good to learn to deny himself. The great virtue of economy is to economize to-day and not to-morrow. We all remember the adage concerning procrastination, which, in this case, is apt to be the thief of money as well as time.

A CHICKEN'S STORY.

The first recollection I have of myself, I was shut up in a little dark prison house. I didn't like it, and I pecked very hard at the walls, and somehow, I hardly know just how, I by-and-by found myself free. I soon discovered that I was a very queer little fellow, with two nice legs, and two really elegant little wings. I had a very sharp little bill, too, and such cunning little feathers all over me. That was all I made out distinctly, though I nearly broke my neck and quite lost my balance trying to see what was on the top of my head. I didn't find out—never have seen it, in fact, but I know there's something there.

I had five little brothers and sisters, and such a nice warm mother! I do wish you were acquainted with my mother. I am sure you would say you had never seen such a cosey little mother as she is. Two of my brothers were black, and one was white. I had a little yellow sister, and a speckled one, and I am sure I don't know what color I was, but my mother called me "Top-knot." How we used to run around in the nice dirt and under the leaves and bushes! And didn't our mother scratch for us! How she would find worms and bugs and the little seeds for us! When she called "Come quick, come quick!" how we would all scamper! Jet was a greedy little fellow, and got more than his share; but our mother was an industrious old hen, and none of us went hungry. Every night she cuddled us under her dear,

warm wings, and she wasn't at all afraid. But it was only a fence-corner where we slept, and one night a rat, or something dreadful, I don't know what, came and most frightened us into spasms. He actually did carry off my little brother Jet, though my poor mother lost every one of her tail-feathers in her defence. I just wish that old rat or something had all his tail feathers pulled out. But Jet was a most awful greedy chicken! Mother said we must sleep in a barn after that. I am now a very fine chicken—can scratch for myself pretty well, and in many ways make myself useful to the family; but I shall never forget that dreadful night.—*Rural New Yorker.*

MICROSCOPIC WRITING.

In relation to those who have chosen to exert themselves in the way of microscopic writing, the fact that the "Iliad" of Homer has been written in so small a compass as to be wholly enclosed in a nutshell has been often referred to as one of those things which would require to be seen ere it could be believed. However doubtful such a feat may appear, it is certain that one Huet, who at first thought it impossible, demonstrated by experiment that it could be done. A piece of vellum ten inches in length and eight feet wide, would hold 250 lines, each line containing thirty verses, and thus filling both sides of the vellum, 15,000, the whole number of verses in the "Iliad," could be written upon it, and this piece of vellum, folded compactly, would easily go into the shell of a walnut. J. M. Schreiber, professor of stenography in the Vienna University, has also written the "Iliad" in the space of a nutshell. The work is on exhibition at the Exposition. It is nothing unusual to find, now-a-days, writing of a still more minute character than this, seeing that the ten commandments have been written in a compass small enough to be covered by a sixpence. There is a portrait of Queen Anne in the British Museum, on which appear a number of minute lines and scratches, which, when examined through a microscope, are shown to be the entire contents of a small folio book which the librarian has in his possession. A similar effort in the way of microscopic calligraphy was some years ago discovered in London by a gentleman who had bought at a sale a pen-and-ink portrait of Alexander Pope, surrounded by a design in scroll work. Examining it through a glass, in order, if possible, to discover the artist's name, he was astonished to find that the fine lines in the surrounding scroll was nothing less than the life of the poet, so minutely transcribed as only to be legible by the aid of a magnifier. This was an evident imitation of a similar effort in the way of portraiture which was at one time in a library at Oxford, where a head of Charles I. was drawn in minute characters, so fine as to resemble the lines of an engraving but which, when closely examined, were found to be the Book of Psalms, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer. One other instance of this kind has been recorded of a portrait of Cardinal Richelieu, which appears on the title page of a French work; the cardinal's head is surrounded by a glory of forty rays, each ray containing the name of a French academician.

SCENE IN A SMOKING CAR.

An amusing incident occurred recently in the smoking car of a C. C. and I. C. Railroad train between Shelby and this city, says the *Cleveland Times*. A woman with a poodle dog entered the car just prior to the departure of the train from the former point, and after depositing her dog on one seat, turned over the back of another one, so that each seat faced the other. Together she and her canine companion thus monopolized two entire seats. Appearances seemed to indicate that the car was one exclusively for the convenience of those addicted to the use of the "weed," but of this fact she was soon apprised by the conductor, who advised her to obtain a seat in another car, informing her at the same time that the accommodations in the way of seats in the other coaches were superior to those where she was then. However, she insisted on remaining, urging that her presence would deter the occupants of the car from smoking, and she would consequently experience no discomfort from tobacco fumes. Long before the train reached this city, however, a gentleman sitting directly in front of her produced his case, and, taking therefrom a cigar, began puffing away at it in a manner which seemed peculiarly calculated to aggravate the woman back of him. In an instant's strategic movement, she wrested the obnoxious cigar from his mouth, and threw it out of the window, exclaiming, "If there is anything I do hate, it is tobacco smoke." The passengers who had witnessed the affair were convulsed with laughter, but the offended smoker suppressed whatever emotions may have been struggling for expression in words or action, and maintained throughout the same importunate gravity, which characterized him from the first. Calmly rising from his seat, he opened the window nearest him, fastening it up, and reaching over the seat back, took that woman's poodle dog and threw him out of the window as far beyond as possible, at the same time saying, "If there is anything I do hate, it's a poodle dog!"

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