

The Family Circle.

"IT'S VERA WELL."

It's vera weel, throughout the day,
When ta'en up wi' wark or play.
To think a man can live alway
Wi'oot a wifey.

It's vera weel when claes are new,
To think they'll always last so,
And look as well as they do noo,
Wi'oot a wifey.

But when the holes begin to show,
The stitches rip, the buttons go,
What in the warl's a man to do
Wi'oot a wifey.

It's vera weel when skies are clear,
When's friends are true and lassies dear,
To think ye'll gang through life, nae fear,
Wi'oot a wifey.

But clouds will come the skies athwart,
Lassies will marry, frien's maun part;
What then can cheer your saddened heart?
A dear, wee wifey.

It's vera weel when young and hale,
But when you're auld, and crazed, and frail,
And your blithe spirits gin to fail,
You'll want a wifey.

But mayhap then the lassie dear,
Will treat your offers wi' a sneer;
Because you're cranky, gray and sere,
Ye'll get nae wifey.

Then haste ye, haste, ye silly loon;
Kise up and seek about the toon,
And get heaven's greatest earthly boon,
A wee bit wifey.

BAB'S SUNDAY MORNING.

BY ANNA PIERPONT MITTER.

It was Sunday morning, and Bab and I were spending it at home. Usually we went to church, accompanied by Bab's papa, for Bab was an inveterate church-goer. No one could be more eager than she for church time. There was such a pleasing excitement in getting into all her good clothes, in making sure her "five centses" were tucked into her glove, ready for the "k'lection," in the happy walk to church, with one dimpled hand nestling in papa's, and her little fat legs taking two steps and a skip for every one of his long strides.

Once there, how delighted to walk up the aisle, glancing shyly under her wide hat brim at many a friendly face! Delightful, too, to help hunt the place in the hymn-book, and then join in the singing with might and main, if not exactly with the spirit and the understanding. Then came the engrossing task of slipping an envelope out of the strap in front of her, and printing, with infinite seriousness and baby patience,

ELIZABETH LaRe.

What a pleasure it was to tuck the "five centses" into the envelope and seal it up, and how great was the ever-recurring fear that the elder would forget to hand the collection plate into our particular pew. The feat of dropping her contribution when the plate was exactly opposite to her always sent a deep flush to her pink cheeks, and the little smile of delight at accomplishing her task often brought an answering gleam from the elder's eyes as he passed on.

The rest of the service, I grieve to say, was not nearly so interesting to Bab. She had an inward conviction that the sermon was an entirely unnecessary part of the service, and could never understand why her faintest whisperings were so rigorously repressed. Yes, there was no doubt that the sermon was a trial to Bab. But the opening service was so delightful it much overbalanced the rest. To stay at

home on a bright Sunday mornin', just because mamma had a very bad cold, and because papa "really was afraid to try her alone," was a very great strain on her baby temper.

I had told nurse Kate to bring Bab into my room, and then go to church herself. So we two were left alone, I with my favorite church paper, and Bab with a pile of picture books large enough to keep her busy all morning, as I fondly imagined. But this I soon discovered was one of the many mistakes I make in judging Bab's capacity, for I was just half through my first article when a deep sigh from Bab claimed my attention.

"I wish," she said, looking me full in the face, to render the remark more emphatic and reprehensible, "I wish I was a heafen."

"A heathen!" I echoed. "Why, what for, Sunshine?"

She did not look like sunshine that moment, either, in spite of her fluffy golden hair and dimples. There was a determined little expression in her rosy face that foreboded a thunder shower; but I had found a pet name judiciously used was very soothing sometimes to baby moods, and so I tried it. This time Bab was beyond such blandishments.

"Cause if I was," she explained, crossly, "I could play with my dollies when I has to stay home on Sundays."

"My poor little lamb," I cried, gathering my ungrammatical would-be heathen into my arms, "those poor folks don't have any church like ours nor any Sunday, either."

"Well, I don't like Sunday. Oos can't play."

"Oh, dear," I answered, "but there are so many things you can do. Let's study the Sunday school lesson."

"No," objects my little rebel. "I don't want to study my Bible book. Ze lessons 'bout Cain gettin' mad wif Abel, 'cause no fire came. Huh!" she went on indignantly, "why didn't he strike a match an' light his own sacrifice? I doesn't want to hear dat Bible. I knows all ze Bible now."

Overwhelmed by the extent of Bab's Biblical knowledge, I made a mental note to indulge in theological explanations at some future date, when Bab is in a more receptive mood. Then I ask, weakly:

"Well, what do you want to do?"

"I want to string beads," she declared. "If I dust was a Caffic cook like Mamie I could play with beads on Sunday."

"Oh, you don't have to be a Catholic cook," I replied, cheerfully.

"Mamma has a whole lot of Sunday beads to play with. I'll go and get them."

As I hurried into my dressing-room for the beads, I wondered whether, if my Paritan great-grandmother could see me, she would consider her pilgrimage in vain, but I banished the thought and returned with the beads, a strong silk thread and a needle.

"Now, Bab, let's make a Sunday string of beads! You know ever so many Bible verses, and for every one we will put a bead on this string, big beads for big verses, gold ones for those you like best, and wee ones for the baby verses, or those with little children in them."

"Oh, mamma, won't that be lovely!" cried my little enthusiast.

Then a discussion ensued as to the very longest verse she knew, and, before we could decide, all of Bab's verses were

gone over. We finally chose, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Then, as we bent over the beads, hunting the very largest one, her wistful blue eyes were raised to mine:

"Mamma, do you think ze dear Lord would let me be His bracelet, always close on His dear arm?"

"Perhaps you may be, Bab," I answered softly; and then followed another question, shyly this time and a little hesitatingly:

"Mamma, when yous teached me dat verse I finked why would ze dear Lord spare us if He loved us? Yous oftep say yous couldn't spare me."

Carefully and lovingly I told her the two meanings of the word "spare," explaining how the dear Father spares us. The little sigh of satisfaction which came proved how much her baby mind had puzzled over that verse. I wondered to myself why she had not asked the question before, and thought how strange it was these little ones, who lie in our arms and rest on our hearts day and night, so seldom let us know their own secret thoughts. How carefully and sympathetically we must deal with them if we would win their confidences. How many a mother who has never known the real child who has grown up at her knees!

Meantime Bab was intent on her string.

"Let's put my baby verse on next," she said; and a gold bead was selected, while Bab reverently repeated, "God is love."

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," followed, and for this we decided on a crystal bead. It's pure, I told her, like clear water, or Bab's heart when it is good and no naughty deeds have muddled it. Six green glass beads, all alike, were put on for the shepherd psalm to remind us of its green pastures, and she confided to me softly:

"Dolly"—I was always Dolly when Bab loved me more than usual, when she was giving me some sweet confidence—"I fink dat's ze dearest one of all. It's dot ze dear Lord so in it. When I'm playing lammie I always fink of zat verse."

After that we went very slowly "Suffer the little children" was added, and that long verse which it cost Bab so many efforts to learn: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." How well I remember the comment she made when I taught it to her and explained, "Dissolved, dearest, is like a spoonful of sugar; if you put it in a glass of water you know how soon it goes away." "Oh, no, mamma," she had interrupted, eagerly, "it's not gone. Yous dust can't see it. If yous taste ze water it's dust as sweet. I suppose ze dear Lord dust changes us as easy as sugar. We's dere, only yous can't see us."

She remembered one or two more verses, and then our string was done. I held it up in the sunlight and we admired it, and wished we knew more verses to put on. We decided to learn over so many more during the week and lay the string away to show papa when he returned. I called Bab's attention to her picture-books, and plunged eagerly into my own paper. In a minute my reading was interrupted by that plaintive little ques-

tion, so dreaded by tired mothers, but which will be asked as long as the world stands.

"Mamma, what shall I do next?"

"Oh, most anything," I answered, recklessly, and the reply came triumphantly:

"Den I'll paint a whole lot of fairies."

"Very well," I said. "So am I going to paint, but I mean to paint Bible pictures."

"Den I'll paint zem, too," cried Bab, falling headlong into my trap, just as I knew she would.

"Oh, mamma, let's begin at ze inference and paint all ze way froo."

"Certainly," I agreed politely, though I felt a little bewildered. I'd often heard of drawing an inference, but never before of painting one. Meantime Bab had hunted up her paint-box and her own little Bible. She opened the book at the first chapter of Genesis, when I found that "inference" in Bab's vocabulary corresponded to "entrance" in mine and we began to paint. I took a piece of paper and ruled seven spaces for the seven days of creation. Then Bab carefully copied my page, her kindergarten training enabling the little fingers to do almost as good work as mine.

Next I divided my first day, and painted it half black and half yellow, explaining to Bab the black represented "in the beginning the earth was without form and void," and the yellow, "God created light and divided it from the darkness."

For the second day we filled up our space with a large blue circle, a black line drawn across showing the dividing of the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above.

The third space had a circle with a continent on it. Trees, apples and pumpkins were grouped in the corners to show their creation. In the fourth space went the sun, moon and stars in vivid greens, blues and yellows; and in the fifth we tried to make fowls and great whales. We did not succeed in this very well, but we both learned the little sentence, "And God saw that it was good, and God blessed them," and we stopped a little while to talk about how all animals were made by the dear Lord, and because they have His blessing we must be gentle and loving to them.

A wonderful Adam and Eve were set in the sixth space, whom we clothed with flowers to represent perfect happiness. The seventh space was left empty. I explained it represented perfect rest, and concluded my little lecture with the remark:

"So, Bab, you see the world was made in six days."

"Oh, no, mamma," she replied, quickly, "you mean six of ze dear Lord's days. Ze preacher say that. He say a day wil ze Lord is a thousand years, and Katie say that's a dressin' long time."

"Certainly, Bab," I answered, making a mental note that not all of Dr. Leaghty's sermons had flown over Bab's head. I wondered how many other portions had taken lodgement in the rational atoms of her brain, waiting there like bright angels ready to meet and defeat the dark doubt and questions that are surely hidden down the pathway of life for my innocent little traveler.

But a footstep in the hall below dissipated all Bab's theological enquiries, and with a yell of delight Bab rushed into her papa's arms and the Sunday morning was over.—Interior.