

The Home Circle.

(Written for the Ontario Workman.)

MELANCHOLY MUSINGS.

BY R. H. F.

I am sad to-day, old memories throng
Around my aching head;
And thoughts of other brighter days,
Bid quiet dreams depart.

I am thinking of the wasted years,
That crowd my life's brief track;
The smiles and tears, the hopes and fears,
The joys that come not back.

I'm thinking of the loving hearts
So cold and pulseless now;
And of the chilling gloom that haunts
O'er friendships altered brow.

I'm thinking of the broken faith,
The vanished hope and trust;
Of fond affection's hallowed shrines
Now crumbled into dust.

Of firm resolves and noble aim,
Of purpose fixed and high,
To win and wear the immortal name,
That was not born to die.

But now 'tis past, around my way,
The lengthened shadows fall;
And time's swift gliding shuttle weaves
For me a sable pall.

But 'tis not all—full many a deed,
Those feeble hands have wrought;
Hearts may have faltered or grown strong,
Beneath my outspoken thought.

Perchance I've aided on the way
Some fainting, fallen one;
Or taught some bleeding soul to say,
"Thy will, not mine, be done."

Perhaps my careless, idle words
Have made some heart to ache;
Or caused its secret hidden chords
With anguish tone to waken.

A loving word, a kind reproof,
A warning fitly given,
May pierce through error's blinding veil,
And win a soul to Heaven.

Then be our watchwords "Love and Faith,"
Through all these fleeting years—
That when life's harvest-time shall come,
We may not reap in tears.

PHILOSOPHY OF GENTLENESS.

Some boys once wished to get a boat across a stream. There was a girl on the side of the stream with the boat, but she did not dare to attempt to paddle the boat over. So the boys tied a stone to the end of a kite-string, and then making a coil of the twine on the shore, they threw the twine across the water, and the girl, picking it up, fastened the end of the twine to the bows of the boat, while the boys had the other end on their side of the water. The boys were quite small, and had not much sense, and one of them said:

"Now, we must all take hold, and when I give the word we must all pull together. It is not a strong string, and so we must all pull the quicker and harder to make it move such a big boat."

So they all took hold of the string as it lay loose on the shore, and set off upon a run. Of course as soon as the slack was taken in, they were brought up suddenly, and the twine was snapped in two. That is to say, there was not time enough allowed for the boat to pass through all the rates of motion from perfect rest to the rate at which the boys were running—which series of transition was absolutely necessary—and consequently the line gave way. Pretty soon, however, an older boy named William, came by, and saw what the difficulty was. He paused a moment on the bank, and heard what the boys had to say. He did not tell them they were a parcel of little dunces, and ought to know better. That would have been twitching their minds as they had been twitching the boat. So he said simply:

"Perhaps you pulled too suddenly. Let us try again."

So he recovered the end of the twine, and fastening another stone to it, threw it over. The girl drew in the broken part of the line on her side, and tied the ends together. Then William called the smallest boy in the company to come and pull upon the string, charging him, however, to pull very gently until he felt the boat beginning to move, and then to walk slowly onward. As the boat advanced, of course, through the different rates of speed which it was necessary that it should acquire in succession, the small boy pulling steadily with the same force, could of course walk on faster and faster, until at length the boat was brought safely over.

Thus a little boy alone could do more than half a dozen, all bigger than he together.

A BUDDHIST LEGEND.

In the village of Servat'i there lived a young wife named Keesah, who at the age of fourteen gave birth to a son; and she loved him with all the love and joy of the possessor of a newly-found treasure, for his face was like a golden cloud, his eyes fair and tender as a blue lotus, and his smile bright and beaming like a morning light upon the dewy flowers. And when the boy was able to walk, and could

run about the house, there came a day when he suddenly fell sick and died. And Keesah, not understanding what had happened to her fair lotus boy, clasped him to her bosom, and went about the village from house to house, praying and weeping, and beseeching the good people to give her some medicine to cure her baby. But the villagers and neighbors, on seeing her, said:

"Is the girl mad, that she still bears about on her breast the dead body of her child?"

At last a holy man, pitying the girl's sorrow, said to himself: "Alas! this Keesah does not understand the law of death; I will try to comfort her." And he answered her, and said, "My good girl, I cannot myself give you any medicine to cure your boy, but I know a holy and wise physician who can."

"Oh!" said the young mother, "do tell me who he is, that I may go at once to him."

And the holy man replied, "He is called the Buddha; he alone can cure thy child."

Then Keesah, on hearing this, was comforted, and set out to find Buddha, still clasping to her heart the lifeless body of her child. And when she found him she bowed down before him and said:

"Oh, my lord and master? do you know of any medicine that will cure my baby?"

And the Buddha replied and said: "Yes, I know of one, but you must get it for me."

And she asked: "What medicine do you want? Tell me, that I may hasten in search of it."

And the Buddha said: "I want only a few grains of mustard seed. Leave here the boy, and you go and bring them to me."

The girl refused to part with her baby, but promised to get the seed for him. And she was about to set out when the pitiful Buddha, calling her, said:

"My sister, the mustard seed that I require must be taken from a house where no child, parent, husband, wife, relative, or slave has ever died."

The young mother replied, "Very good, my lord," and went her way, taking her boy with her, and setting him astride on her hip, with his lifeless head resting on her bosom. Thus she went from house to house, from place to place, begging for some grains of mustard seed. The people said to her: "Here are the seeds, take them, and go thy way." But she first asked:

"In this, my friend's house, has there ever died a child, a husband, a parent, or a slave?" And they one and all replied: "Lady, what is this that thou hast said? Knowest thou not that the living are few, but that the dead are many? There is no such house as thou seekest."

Then she went to other houses and begged the grains of mustard seed, which they gladly gave her, but to her questionings one said, "I have lost a son;" another, "I have lost a slave;" and every one and all of them made some such reply. At last not being able to discover a single house free from the dead, whence she could obtain the mustard seed, and feeling utterly faint and weary, she sat herself down upon a stone, with her baby in her lap, and thinking sadly, said to herself, "Alas! this is a heavy task I have undertaken. I am not the only one who has lost her baby. Everywhere children are dying, loved ones are dying, and everywhere they tell me that the dead are more numerous than the living. Shall I, then, think only of my sorrows?"

Thinking thus she suddenly summoned courage to put away her sorrow for her dead baby, and she carried him to the forest and laid him down to rest under a tree; and having covered him over with tender leaves, and taking her last look of his loved face, she betook herself once more to the Buddha and bowed before him.

And he said to her: "Sister, hast thou found the mustard seed?"

"I have not, my lord," she replied, "for the people in the village tell me there is no house in which some one has not died; for the living are few, but the dead are many."

"And where is your baby?"

"I have laid him under a tree in the forest, my lord," said Keesah, gently.

Then said Buddha to her: "You have found the grains of the mustard seed; you thought that you alone had lost a son, but now you have learned that the law of death and of suffering is among all living creatures, and that here there is no permanence."

On hearing this Keesah was comforted, and established in the path of virtue, and was thenceforth called Keesah Godams, the disciple of Buddha.—Mrs. Anna H. Leonovsens.

CHOICE LANGUAGE.

In the present era, when vulgar slang bids fair to supersede legitimate forms of expression, we sigh for purity of language. Bad language is like a distorted photograph, showing only an unsymmetrical shadow of the object; and when we look at it we can scarcely realize that it is intended as an image. Sometimes it is so badly distorted that its very producer would not recognize it as his own. In the English there are plenty of words for the expression of thoughts in true, bright colors; and, as a rule, the simplest words are most effective. Many celebrated English and American orators are remarkable for their simplicity of language, though able, upon occasion, to summon a vast array of words. *Appropos* of this subject, it is interesting to know that the number of English words not yet obsolete, but found in good authors, or in

approved usage by correct speakers, including nomenclature of science and the arts, does not probably fall short of one hundred thousand. A large portion of these words, however, do not enter into the living speech, the common language of daily and hourly thought. Few writers or speakers use as many as ten thousand words, ordinary persons of fair intelligence not above three or four thousand. If a scholar were to be required to name, without examination, the authors whose English vocabulary was the largest, he would probably specify the all-embracing Shakespeare and the all-knowing Milton; and yet, in all the works of the great dramatist, there occur not more than fifteen thousand words; in the poems of Milton not above eight thousand. The Old Testament uses but five thousand six hundred and forty-two words. The whole number of Egyptian hieroglyphic symbols do not exceed eight hundred, and the entire Italian operative vocabulary is said to be scarcely more extensive. It is certain that the English vocabulary has words enough to render it independent of foreign languages, and that we need not resort to slang to find forcible terms of expression.

AN INCIDENT.

Romance in real life is by no means rare, and a story is told of a pair of lovers which owes its chief interest to the fact that it is strictly true. Years ago, a beautiful young Boston girl was sent to the Vermont hills, to arrest, if possible, the indications of approaching consumption. She recovered her health, and meantime inflicted a careless wound upon the heart of an intelligent and well-educated young farmer's son. Unlike Lady Vere de Vere, she did not scorn his timid affection, but returned it heartily, referring him to her father. That traditionally unromantic personage wouldn't hear of it, having, as is customary in such cases, selected a more suitable partner for his child. The young man retired, went West, and made a large fortune, and the young woman married the man prescribed by her father. She went to live in France; her husband died in two years, and her parents also dying, she remained abroad. The memory of her first romance faded with her as with its object, who, though unmarried, was too busy in making money for tender thoughts. Last year his business took him to Europe, and one night found him on a little steamer plying between Marseilles and Leghorn. A storm came up, and a lady, who had risen from her seat on deck to go below, was thrown overboard by a sudden lurch of the vessel. The sometime farmer jumped after her, and, though in the dark the steamer drifted away from them, she clutched a providential plank and floated until morning, when they were picked up by another vessel. During that night, in the cold and the darkness, they discovered in each other the loved and lost of earlier years. The old feeling came back in that fearful hour, and on their arrival at Malta they were married. End of the poetry. The rest is prose.

OUTSIDE APPEARANCES.

We may deplore the extravagance of the day in regard to dress as much as we please, but the fact still remains that strangers are judged by strangers according to their habiliments. "We receive an unknown person according to his dress," said a famous French courtier, apologizing to the shabbily dressed painter, Girard, for his cold reception of the unobtrusive, yet gifted artist, "but we take leave of him according to his merit." Ben Jonson expressed the same idea in one of his plays; while a great historian says, "Dress is characteristic of manners, and manners are the mirror of ideas." We owe it to ourselves, then, to be as well attired as possible, being particularly careful, however, to avoid all singularity in costume. It is frequently the case that the best dressed lady in a room is the one whose attire attracts least notice—probably because she avoids all startling effects and vivid hues. To have an individuality of one's own quite independent of one's toilet is certainly always desirable, unless one is willing to be a walking advertisement of the latest styles in dry goods. Bright, flashy colors should never be worn upon the promenade. A dark dress may be relieved of sombreness by a bright flower in the hat or a light necktie, but the prevailing tone of a true lady's costume is always quiet. In this season black has been a popular color for dresses. A black dress, tastefully made and trimmed, is never out of place for all ordinary occasions. And those ladies whose wardrobes are limited should take care to have always on hand one or two serviceable dresses of black silk, moiré or alpaca. Perfect neatness in costume, combined with well blended colors, impress beholders far more favorably than a slovenly admixture of inharmonious hues, no matter how costly the material.

A gentleman with long fair whiskers, and dressed in the height of fashion, entered a hosiery shop, and requested the shopwoman, who happened to be alone, to show him some colored shirts. Every variety was brought out, which he made his choice, and requested that a parcel might be made up for him. This being done, "What an idiot I am!" he said, "I have not seen how the shirts look when on. Would you oblige me, mademoiselle, by putting one on over your dress?" The shop-

woman having complied with his request, "Be so good," he continued, "as to button the collar and the wristbands, that I may get a thoroughly good idea of the effect. And now," he added, taking up his parcel, "allow me to wish you a very good morning!" and in an instant he was outside the door, and had disappeared, the unhappy girl, perfectly stupefied, not daring to follow him into the street on account of her singular costume. Her employer, on returning half an hour later, found her, with the fatal garment still on, crying on the counter.

A GOOD STORY.

The New York Times tells a capital story of "Wire-walking with a purpose."

"It appears that a gentleman of San Francisco, much interested in mining property, lately visited Chinese Camp, Tuolumne County, to inspect a new quartz ledge. He was struck by its promise; and when one of the owners of a neighboring claim told him that in a day or two they were to try an extension on the 'Atlas,' the original mine, and that his name should be put down, if he wished, as one of the speculators, he eagerly assented. Next day he returned to San Francisco, and quickly had assays made of samples of ore from the 'Atlas' mine. These proved extremely rich, and increased his satisfaction about the extension. But time wore on, and he heard nothing from Chinese Camp, and began to fear that his new acquaintance there meant to 'shake' him. On consulting with friends, he was advised to send a capable man to the spot to represent his interests, and to settle independently in the promising region, if expedient. The person selected was a Mr. Ward, who was not unwilling to refresh himself by a vacation from his professional labor as an Olympian acrobat, and to accept the offer of being one of the 'locators,' and having his expenses paid, with other gratifications, in consideration of visiting Chinese Camp. On arriving, he soon found that it would be needful to act with great promptness in the matter, if at all, and that he must immediately 'locate' the claim. In fact, he and other adverse parties found themselves together the very next morning, pushing for the banks of a stream which must be crossed to get to the ground of the proposed location. The others knew Ward's object, and were resolved to 'head him off.' On getting close to the river, however, it was found that all the adventurers were 'headed off' together. In short, there had been heavy rains, and, in consequence, a freshet had swept away the only bridge by which, for miles, it was possible to cross the stream. Here was a dilemma, indeed. The river was a roaring torrent, and simply impassable. But across, running from side to side, was a wire rope which had formerly been used to support the iron pipe that conveyed water to one of the mines. Some men are born lucky, and here was the proof of the fortunate star of the speculator represented by the 'Olympian acrobat.' It appears that none of the men about him had seen Ward 'do the Zampil,' as he styles the feat known as Zampillar-ostation, and hence what he now did came upon them as an absolute surprise. The ironical man of the party, after all hands had taken in the situation, enquired if Ward was 'agin' to make that there location?" The unlauded Olympian calmly replied that he was, and to the universal amazement set forth, hand over hand, on the slender wire, the length of which was so great that what he undertook seemed totally impossible. A roar of derision followed the gymnast's departure; but presently fears for the safety of a fellow-creature thus perilously suspended over the raging waters bogot a better feeling. If he fell, he must almost certainly perish. The river was tearing along at a tremendous rate, and what with the width and velocity of the current, the strongest swimmer would have no chance with it. Some of the miners ran down the banks, far below the wire, hoping to find boards or ropes to thrust into the stream and increase Ward's chance of saving himself when he should fall. He had now arrived at near the middle, and suddenly he paused, hanging fifty feet above the water. The blood of the spectators chilled with horror. It was evident that the man was exhausted, and must drop into the river. He hung straighter and straighter, and at last one arm dropped nervelessly by his side. There was a groan of sympathy, and all eyes strained at the coming catastrophe. Suddenly the 'Olympian acrobat,' with a yell of 'Houp, la!' sprang to the top of the wire and stood there calmly on one leg. Had his Satanic Majesty unexpectedly presented himself to the gaping miners they could not have been more astonished. Immediately after, Ward executed a hornpipe on the wire, hung off by one foot, then by his chin, and cut divers and other astounding capers, each more incredible than the other. 'Jerusalem!' at last burst from one honest miner of wider show-shop experience than his fellows—"Dirn my skin if it ain't that ere circus actor I see down to 'Frisco." Ward went on his way to 'locate' rejoicing. Of course the returns of the new ledge were of speculative richness, and of course all the California papers ring with the fame of the agile gentleman who 'does the Zampil.' Such is the advantage in auriferous countries of being an 'Olympian acrobat.' It is the happy fate of California to outstrip all other regions, and certainly Blodwin, in all his glory, never in its practical results at

least, got 'on to a string' to such good purpose as this."

HOW TO GET ALONG.

Don't stop to tell stories in business hours. If you have a place of business, be found there when wanted.

No man can get rich by sitting around the stores and saloons.

Never fool in business matters.

Have order, system, regularity, and also promptness.

Do not meddle with business you know nothing of.

Do not kick every one in your path.

More miles can be made in a day by going steadily than by stopping.

Pay as you go.

A man of honor respects his word as he does his bond.

Help others when you can, but never give what you cannot afford to, simply because it is fashionable.

Learn to say No. No necessity of snapping it out dog-fashion, but say it firmly and respectfully.

Use your own brains rather than those of others.

Learn to think and act for yourself.

Keep ahead rather than behind the times.

Young men, cut this out, and if there be any folly in the argument, let us know.

Grains of Gold.

Dignity consists not in possessing honors but in deserving them.

The tears of our misery often prevent our eyes from seeing the mercy close at hand.

The poorest education that teaches self-control is better than the best that neglects it.

Establish a temperate zone of thought and policy round the globe, and the social world will be safe.

To express contempt for personal defects is not only a sign of ill-breeding, but of a poor understanding.

A horse is not valued for his harness, but his qualities; so men are to be esteemed for virtue, not wealth.

The more talents and good qualities we possess, the more humble we ought to be, because we have the less merit in doing right.

There is but one greater absurdity than that of a man aiming to know himself, which is, for him to think he knows himself.

Look your misfortunes in the face and reflect that it is better to be accused of a vice, being innocent, than acquitted of it, being guilty.

Write your name with kindness, love, and mercy on the hearts of the people you come in contact with year by year, and you will never be forgotten.

A moralist says: "Profanity never did any man the least good. No man is richer, or happier, or wiser for it. It commends no one to society; it is disgusting to the refined, and abominable to the good."

The man who is only honest when honesty is the best policy is not in reality an honest man. Honesty is not swerving policy, but stable principle. An honest man is honest from his inmost soul, nor deigns to stoop to aught that is mean, though great results hang on the petty fraud.

There are two kinds of gaiety. The one arises from want of heart, being touched by no pity, sympathizing with no pain, even of its own causing; it shines and glitters like a frost-bound river in the gleaming sun. The other springs from excess of heart—that is, a heart overflowing with kindness towards all men and all things, and suffering under no superadded grief: it is light from the happiness which it causes—from the happiness which it sees. This may be compared to the placid river, sparkling and shining under the sun of Summer, and running on to give fertility and increase to all within, and even to many beyond its reach.

When a boy is in haste to go somewhere on his own account is not exactly the time to send him elsewhere on your account. But a fond Danbury mother thought different. She wanted her boy to carry some things down stairs, when he thought he ought to be out of doors tickling the carman's horse. But he took the things. He put a mirror under one arm and a clock under the other. Then he took a chair in each hand, and hung a pail of dishes around his neck, and filled his pockets with tumblers, and started for the stairs. Just as he got to the top to commence the descent, the mirror slipped, and in an endeavor to recover it, he lost his balance and went shooting down to the next floor, accompanied by all those articles, and making an earthquake at every bound. Coming up the stairs at the same time was the carman. He saw the danger, and had sufficient presence of mind to shout, "Hey, you! go back!" But the boy did not hear him, apparently, for he kept right on and by the carman, leaving that unfortunate man to follow on his head. The cries and crash brought the rest of the family to the rescue, and the disconsolate youth was saturated with arnica and tears, contrary to the advice of the carman, who suggested that he be driven into the earth with a mallet.

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