



The Family Circle.

THE FIRST TANGLE.

Once in an Eastern palace wide
A little girl sat weaving:
So patiently her task she plied
The men and women at her side
Flocked round her, almost grieving.

"How is it, little one," they said,
"You always work so cheerily?
You never seem to break your thread
Or snarl or tangle it, instead
Of working smooth and clearly.

"Our weaving gets so worn and soiled,
Our silk so frayed and broken,
For all we've fretted, went and toiled,
We know the lovely pattern's spoiled
Before the King has spoken."

The little child looked in their eyes,
So full of care and trouble
And pity chased the sweet surprise
That filled her own, as sometimes flies
The rainbow in a bubble.

"I only go and tell the King,"
She said, abashed and meekly,
"You know he said in everything"—
"Why, so do we!" they cried, "we bring
Him all our troubles weekly!"

She turned her little head aside;
A moment let them wrangle;
"Ah, but," she softly then replied,
"I go and get the knot untied
At the first little tangle!"

O little children—weavers all!
Our broidery we spangle
With many a tear that need not fall,
If on our King we would but call
At the first little tangle.

—Congregationalist.

THE HOME GIRL.

JULIA S. LAWRENCE.

"Nellie! Nellie!" called Mr. Benson from his carriage.

Nellie Austin, walking up street with her friend, Mrs. Monroe, was too much interested in what that lady was saying to notice passers-by, and turned in surprise at hearing her own name spoken.

"Oh, is it really you, Uncle Fred?" she asked, going to the side of the carriage.

"It certainly is. I am ordered out for a drive this morning, and told your mother I'd pick you up on the way; so jump in, please, and accept my crutch as an apology for my lack of gallantry in not assisting you."

Nellie obeyed with alacrity, delighted, as all girls are, at the prospect of a ride.

"Where are you going?" she asked, as he tucked the afghan about her.

"Round by the Dells, unless you prefer some other route."

"No, that is just lovely. But would you mind driving home first? It won't take but a minute. Mother sent me on some errands this morning, and she may want these articles before we get back."

Without a word Mr. Benson turned his horse about. Had he spoken his thoughts, they would have been something like this: "That's just like her, thoughtful girl that she is."

Once again on the street, he gave his pony the reins and they sped rapidly along, soon leaving the noisy little manufacturing town far in the rear. Then he drove more leisurely, pausing often in some spot where Nature seemed more lavish of her beauties, or where a fine view of the distant mountains was obtainable.

It was a beautiful morning in May. The air was pure and exhilarating, the birds sang bewitchingly, and yet, in spite of Nellie's bravest efforts to the contrary, the cloud her uncle had noticed when he called her from the street, did not leave her face. He hoped she would give him her confidence in time, and waited. He had grown very fond of this fair young niece in the few weeks he had been an inmate of his sister's home, kept there by injuries received in a railway accident; while she, on her part, had found in him a sympathizing friend and counsellor.

They were rapidly nearing home, though, before she spoke.

"Uncle Fred," she said at length, with a scarcely perceptible sigh, "I am not envious one bit, but it must be nice to be able to do things—and—to do them."

"It certainly is. I am very glad to be able to ride out this fine morning, for instance."

"I don't mean those things. I mean—well—Mrs. Monroe told me this morning that Esther Milburn goes down and plays the organ for the Reform Club meetings every Sunday afternoon."

"That is nice; but is it more than her duty? Miss Milburn is a fine musician, I believe."

"Oh! you don't know what it means for her to do that," said Nellie warmly. "Before she was converted she wouldn't play for any but her most intimate friends; she used to say she was not a man with a hand-organ to play for every one who asked or who tossed her a penny. But since she was converted she has played several times in prayer-meeting when the organist was not there. She was obliged to offer her services the first time, though, as no one dared ask her. Besides, she always sings now, and that is such a help."

"And you wish you could sing and play too—or, rather, as well as Miss Milburn?"

"No, not exactly that, but I wish there was something I could do. Jennie Hall has taken a class in Sabbath-school—the worst class there is, one that no one ever wanted. I suppose"—this time the sigh was audible in spite of herself—"I suppose the Lord knows I've no talents, so he does not give me anything to do."

They had reached home by this time, and before Uncle Fred could answer, Nellie had sprung from the carriage and was assisting him with her strong young arms; and, handing him his crutch, she playfully ordered him to his room for a nap before dinner. "Talents!" thought Mr. Benson, as he settled himself for the needed rest. "There is a diversity of gifts, but the same spirit; and who shall dare rank one above another?"

The Austin family was a busy one; the father and mother were diligent people, and the children were early taught habits of industry and to have a care for each other. Nellie was the eldest of six children, and upon her shoulders there naturally fell more care than girls of her age are expected to carry; but she had such a bright, happy way of putting herself in the background where others' comfort or pleasure was concerned, that parents and children alike often demanded more of her than was really necessary.

The night after her ride with her uncle, Nellie had helped her mother with the usual evening cares, and had seated herself with a new book for an hour's pleasure, when a curious sound, something between a sigh and groan, came to her ears. Glancing across the table, she saw Howard scowling over book and slate.

"What is it?" she asked, going around to look over his shoulder.

"It's this horrid discount," giving his book a savage punch. "Professor doesn't want we should have any assistance outside the class, but how he expects a fellow to do all those examples when he doesn't understand them, is more than I know. I can't see why, if a note is worth a hundred dollars at one time, it isn't worth a hundred six months from that time, excepting the interest of course."

"That's it, exactly," said Nellie; and taking her father and a well-known business man by way of illustration, she drew an imaginary case of discount.

"Oh, I see! I see!" cried Howard. "Why couldn't Professor have explained it like that? I believe, I do believe, I can do all those fellows now. You are a brick, Nellie!" And he fell to work with a will.

Fully satisfied with this for thanks, she was returning to her easy-chair and book when her father called her from the opposite side of the room.

"Nellie, come here a minute, please! Won't you just look over these accounts for me? There is a mistake somewhere, and my head aches so I can't find it. Wells is sick again this week, you see, and I'm trying to do his work and my own too."

Nellie pulled the book toward her, and her father leaned back in his chair and closed his eyes with a sigh of relief. He was fond of boasting of Nellie's quickness

at figures, and felt perfectly confident that all would be made right now.

Ten, twenty and thirty minutes passed, and Uncle Fred from his sofa watched alternately the clock and the bright head bent over the long accounts.

"Here it is!" she said at length, "in almost the last entry. I'll correct it here, and that will make a difference in this column, and that will bring it all right. Now, Popsey, dear, let me put these troublesome books away for to-night, and you go over and visit with Uncle Fred; he is waiting patiently for some company."

Once more Nellie was free to read, but this time she found her mother established in her place with the mending-basket by her side. Nellie paused irresolutely, and gazed earnestly down into the very depths of the basket. She intensely disliked darning, yet she well knew her mother would sit up till all was done. But there was the book she wanted to read! "Love seeketh not its own." That had been her verse for the day, and it came back to her now like the echo of a song. It gave the needed impulse, and in less time than it takes to tell all this, she had procured needle, thimble and scissors, and had drawn a low chair to her mother's side.

"Oh, you needn't do this, Nellie!" remonstrated her mother. "I'll get through with it some time."

"Two can do it in less than some time, then," chirped Nellie, seizing the first article she could reach. "Dear! dear! how Chubby does wear out his stockings!" she continued, as her fingers protruded through a hole in the heel. "Look at that. It is more than a gap, it is a chasm." "Bridge it," interposed Howard laconically. He had finished his examples, and, feeling very happy over it, was anxious to make himself as agreeable as possible.

"So I will," returned Nellie. "It will need to be a rope-bridge, though."

"Or a draw-bridge," suggested Howard. "It better be an iron one to wear any time," said their mother.

And so they chatted gayly till both father and uncle were drawn into the circle, and in an incredibly short time the basket was emptied.

"It was too late to read now, and Nellie put away her book; not, however, without a little sigh of regret.

"Come in here a minute," called Uncle Fred, as, a little later, she passed his room on her way to her own.

Nellie pushed open the door that had purposely been left ajar. Uncle Fred sat by the window in the full moonlight. He held out his hand to her, and she nestled by his side.

"I mustn't keep you long, or you will lose your 'beauty sleep'; but how is it about the talents? Do you still mourn because you cannot play and sing, teach a Sabbath-school class, or do some wonderful thing?"

"I don't know," said Nellie slowly. "I wish there was something that I could do. I'd like to do some work for the Master."

"Is it nothing to help the tired father and mother, and to be teacher and very best friend to the little ones?"

"Oh! I love them so, I want to do that! Besides, that is so little."

"But does the Master ever reject the little services? Small sacrifices and small efforts in his name, are as acceptable as great ones, and often require more grace and courage. Still, I consider it no small thing to make sunshine in the home and to set an example of love and patience before the younger brothers and sisters. Blessings on those dear girls whom the Lord calls to active service in the public part of his vineyard; but no less, I say, blessings on the dear home girl who keeps the hearthstone bright!"

And so say we all.—*Zion's Herald.*

DR. ALFRED CARPENTER'S REASONS.

In answer to Dr. Mortimer Granville's letter in the London *Times*, Dr. Alfred Carpenter wrote to that journal giving the following six reasons for total abstinence.

"Without attempting to answer *seriatim* the extraordinary statements—arguments they are not—of Dr. Mortimer Granville, I wish to state the foundations on which my principles rest. It is said that a man is either a fool or a physician at forty, and I discovered before I reached that age that

my own constitution was far better without alcohol than with it. I then followed the line of abstinence in my advice to those whose constitutions resembled my own—namely, those with a strong gouty tendency. The results of such treatment could not be mistaken. The patients were restored to health, and in many cases to the happiness which accompanies it.

"Further inquiry into the treatment of all diseases among all classes of the community has satisfied me that those who wish to enjoy perfect health had better avoid the daily use of alcohol, and that there are very few forms of disease in which its use is really beneficial. Now and then, no doubt, it is a powerful medicine, but its very power makes it a fearfully dangerous weapon in the hands of people generally. It has a property which belongs only to itself and others of its class. No indication is afforded of the time when the individual taking it has had enough. It is a virulent poison, and as such should be placed in the list with arsenic, mercury, and other dangerous drugs.

"Secondly, it has been my privilege to be one of the Surrey County magistrates for more than twenty years, and for the first half of that time to act with my colleague, Sir Thomas Edridge, in doing most of the police work of this populous district. The awful scenes described in that court day after day in which life has been sacrificed, homes destroyed, and the peace of thousands of families completely wrecked by the use of liquor, impressed me with the feeling that it was my duty to cease to prescribe it under almost any circumstances whatever. The frequent story in the police court was that the doctor had ordered it.

"Thirdly, as a magistrate, I was *ex-officio* a member of the Board of Guardians, and I saw sufficient there to tell me that nine-tenths of the pauperism of the country was due directly or indirectly to drink.

"Fourthly, I visited some of the prisons and convict establishments in the country, and I found that nine-tenths of those who were sent to these places declared that they were there in consequence of having been addicted to drink. Moreover, I was assured by the medical officers of the prisons that in no instance had enforced abstinence produced injury to the health of any of those under their charge.

"Fifthly, I have been one of the committees of management of a large lunatic asylum, containing 1,200 patients, and one of the most distressing wards to visit is that in which scores of men are seen in whom brain disease has undoubtedly been produced by drinking habits.

"Dr. Mortimer Granville may shut his eyes to these facts, but he may be assured that there is a responsibility resting upon him and upon all those physicians who accustom themselves to recommend so dangerous a thing as a necessary article of food. They may refuse to recognize that they are in any way their brother's keeper, but there is nothing more distressing to a thoughtful medical man than to be accused on good grounds of having sent a patient on the road to destruction. It may indicate a certain kind of ability in a man to be able to drive a carriage close to the edge of a precipice, but the wise counsellor will advise him to keep away from it.

"Sixthly, I have made inquiries regarding the health of total abstainers as compared with that of moderate drinkers. If the physicians who have been recently advising the public to use alcohol as a daily beverage had studied the records published by our benefit societies, they would have found a result which entirely negatives the views they take. The statistics of these societies show conclusively that members in temperance organizations have less than half the illness of non-abstainers and scarcely half the number of deaths. I could multiply evidence of this kind almost *ad infinitum*, but I fear to intrude too much on your space. Surely I have said enough to justify my position as a total abstaining physician, though I do find that many of those who like a glass of wine are of opinion that I do not understand their case. Many prefer the indulgence of their appetites to that return to perfect health which would spare them the necessity of visiting the physician's consulting room at all."

THE DEVIL will not be afraid of your Bible if there is dust on it.