

The Home Circle.

TIRED MOTHERS.

A little elbow leans upon your knee,
Your tired knee that has so much to bear;
A child's dark eyes are looking lovingly
From underneath a thatch of tangled hair,
Perhaps you do not heed the velvet touch
Of warm, moist fingers, folding yours so
tight;—
You do not prize the blessing overmuch,
You are almost too tired to pray to-night.

But it is blessedness! A year ago!
I did not see it as I do to-day—
We are so dull and thankless, and too slow
To catch the sunshine till it slips away;
And now it seems surpassing strange to me,
That, while I wore the badge of mother-
hood,
I did not kiss him more oft and tenderly,
The little child that brought me only good.

And if, some night when you sit down to rest,
You miss this elbow from your tired knee,
This restless, curly head from off your breast,
This lisping tongue that chatters constantly;
If from your own the dimpled hands had
slipped.

And ne'er would nestle in your palm again;
If the white feet into their grave had tripped,
I could not blame you for your heart-ache
then!

I wonder so that mothers ever fret,
At little children clinging to their gown;
Or that the footprints, when the day is wet,
Are over black enough to make them frown.
If I could find a little muddy boot,
Or a jacket, on my chamber floor;
If I could kiss a rosy, restless foot,
And hear its patter in my room once more;

If I could mend a broken cart to-day,
To-morrow make a kite to reach the sky—
There is no woman in God's world could say
She was more blissfully content than I,
But ah! the dainty pillow next my own
Is never rumpled by a shining head;
My singing birdling from its nest is flown;
The little boy I used to kiss is dead!

MAKING EACH OTHER MISERABLE.

As if there were not troubles enough in this
world that come upon men without human
design, people set themselves to diminish
happiness and to increase misery. Phenolo-
gists tell us that there is in man an organ and
faculty of destructiveness—that, when un-
regulated, it inspires cruelty; that it is the
root of that horrible pleasure which the old
Romans had, and their modern descendants
still have, in murderous gladiatorial shows,
bull-fights, contests of wild beasts, etc.

But there runs through modern civilized
society a vein of the same quality. People
that would faint to see a gush of blood, and
who think themselves Christians, have a lively
enjoyment in witnessing pain, and cultivate
the art of inflicting it. The mention of a few
of the methods employed will make good my
remarks.

The delight with which many report bad
news; the eagerness with which they report
to people evil sayings, which cannot but lacer-
ate the feelings, show a morbid love of suffer-
ing. This is not the trait of villainous natures.
It is not anomalous, because it is so widely
extended as to seem natural.

Some people scatter pain producing elements
thoughtlessly, and the surprised and sorry
when they witness the suffering produced.
Others do it for momentary pleasure, without
meaning any serious results. But now and
then we find persons who love to torment a
victim. They enjoy another's sufferings. It
is their happiness to see some one made miser-
able by their lancet-like tongue. They will
smile, and talk in low, sweet tones, and shoot
out quivering sentences, poison-tipped, and
cast a look sideways to see if they strike,
and at every sign of pain their face grows
bright.

In part, this is a latent ambition. People
thus assert their power over others. It raises
one in his own estimation to perceive that he
can control the moods of another. But there
is a still more common exhibition of the love
of suffering. It is seen in the ignoble, but
universal art of "teasing."

We see it in its most unregulated form
among children, who nip and pinch each other,
make faces, twitch each other's clothes, run
off with toys, point with insulting fingers,
and in a hundred ingenious ways strive to
make each other miserable. As they grow
up, it often happens that young people carry
on a campaign of teasing, each one vying with
another which shall be the sharpest.

It does not cease with youth. Grown folks,
good-natured, kind-hearted, well-meaning, and
full of benevolence, often show this perverse
spirit in the midst of all their kindness. By
sharp speech, by veiled sarcasm, by exciting
curiosity which they will not gratify, by nar-
rating pretended facts, by sinister compli-
ments, by rallying one when circumstances
forbid a reply, by equivocal praise, by blunt
telling of some truth that had better been left
unsaid, and by hundreds of ingenious ways
which time would fail to tell, people inflict
pain upon each other.

Those who, in the main, are striving to make
friends happy, will have one black thread in
the web of white. Those who really love each

other have a strange fondness for stirring each
other up.

There is an innocent and caven pleasure-
producing method of rallying, which, is deftly
and gracefully done, heightens the enjoyment
of society. One may tounge a discord if it
lapses into a true cord. Sometimes when we
have good news to tell, we are bewitched with
a desire to open the matter as if it were a
great trouble that we were about to break.
There is a gentle bantering, an innocent ar-
row-shooting, which flatters and charms. But
life is full of the other sort. If Darwin is
right in thinking that men ascended from
monads by gradual evolution, then it is very
certain that some men came up by the way
of the mosquito, the flea and the biting fly
and that their ancestral traits still linger in
the blood.

RETROSPECTION.

In the evening of life, especially, what a
hallowed pleasure it is to turn back the leaves
of time, and find in our book of life, pages, if
only scattered here and there, upon which no
spot or blemish appears to mar the retrospec-
tive joy that a well-spent life affords. How
true that we live twice, when we can reflect
with pleasure on the days that are gone.
Thrice blessed is he who is philosopher
enough in early life, to build his character
with a view to its pleasant contemplation in
later years. What an unspeakable pleasure
must it be, after years of wanderings, vicissi-
tudes, struggles, temptations, and sore trials,
to give the memory a recreation day and let
it bound with the impulsiveness of youth,
back to its childhood home, and the pleasant
reminiscences of early life. The cares and
trials of life are for the time obliterated; the
world becomes again a never-ending Paradise,
such as the glorious and buoyant expectations
of youth only can paint it. In a moment the
pleasures of years rush upon us with such a
flood of joy as to sweep away for the time
being every remembrance of the cloudy part
of the past, leaving only the sweet, glorious,
sunny side of it, making earth seem indeed a
very Heaven.

Pleasant reminiscences are to the advanced
in life, what health and happy imaginations
are to youth. They keep them fresh and
green until they embark upon that other shore
of life immortal.

I CAN, AND I WILL.

These two little words have a significance
that none other in the language have. How
they help a man to stride right over almost
insurmountable obstacles. When success seems
hopeless, *I can*, and *I will*, serve as grappling-
irons to hitch right on to the opposing obstacle
and roll it out of the way; and then they lay
hold of the man himself, and pull him clear
of doubts and fears, and make him feel that
he is a man, and that he can accomplish any-
thing within the pale of possibility. When-
ever he begins to waver and despond, or all
looks thick darkness, *I can*, and *I will*, dispel
the gloom in a moment, and the sweet sun-
shine of hope beams out with such effulgence
that he feels that he has strength and courage
to surmount all obstacles that lay in his path
to success.

If young men, and young women, too,
would only repeat these two little words over
and over when they feel their courage begin
to waver in any worthy undertaking, they
would find in them a sovereign tonic that
would strengthen and build them up into noble
and successful men and women.

We are too apt to look on the dark side
of life; too apt to be disheartened over life's
slightest cares, perplexities and trials,—and
then, it is so easy for us to allow "I can't,
and there is no use trying" to creep in before
we think of the glorious words, "I can, and I
will," that many a one who might have occu-
pied a high round, has remained away down,
down on the ladder of fame.

It is natural for us to be disheartened and
fail to carry out our high aspirations and
noble resolves when life's cares and trials
weigh heavily, but we should draw consolation
from the fact that anything worth pos-
sessing is worth gigantic and constant efforts,
and that if success rolled in upon us like light
and air, the whole world would have it, too,
and it would not be success, but common to
all, and no man would be greater than another.
'Tis, then, the almost insurmountable ob-
stacles that are thickly strewn in every path
to success, that afford opportunities for men
to be great or little. *I can*, and *will* are the
levers that will pry every obstacle out of a
man's way unless lack of ambition and energy
make him too weak to handle them.

A SINGULAR COUPLE.

The circumstance more than anything else,
obtained, in the dingy old town of Heqam,
England, a lasting place in my memory, was
our taking lodgings with an extraordinary
pair—an old man and woman, husband and
wife—who lived by themselves, without child
or servant, subsisting on their letting of their
parlor and two bed rooms. They were tall,
thin and erect, each seventy years of age.
When we knocked at the door for admittance
they answered together. If we rang the bell
the husband and wife invariably appeared side
by side; all our requests and demands were
received by both, and executed with the ut-
most exactness.

The first night, arriving late by the coach
from Newcastle, and merely requiring a good
fire and tea, we were puzzled to understand
the meaning of the double attendance; and I
remember my brother rather irreverently won-
dered if we were always to be "waited upon
by these Siamese twins."

On ringing the bell to retire for the night,
both appeared as usual—the wife carrying the
bed-room candlestick, the husband standing
at the door. I gave her some directions about
breakfast the following morning when her
husband from the door quickly answered for
her.

"Depend upon it, she is dumb," whispered
my brother.

But this was not the case, though she rarely
made use of the faculty of speech.

They both attended me into my bed-room,
when the old lady, seeing me look with sur-
prise towards her husband, said:

"There's no offence meant, ma'am, by my
husband coming with me into the chamber;
he's stone blind."

"Poor man!" I exclaimed; "but why, then,
does he not sit still? Why does he accompany
you everywhere?"

"It's no use, ma'am, your speaking to my
old woman," said the husband, "she can't hear
you; she's quite deaf."

I was astonished. Here was a compensa-
tion! Could a couple be better matched? Man
and wife were indeed one flesh, for he
saw with her eyes, and she heard with his
ears! It was beautiful to me, ever after, to
watch the old man and woman in their in-
separableness. Their sympathy with each
other was as swift as electricity, and made
their deprivations as naught.

I have often thought of that old man and
woman, and can but hope that as in life they
were inseparable and indispensable to each
other, so in death they may not be divided;
or that either may be spared the terrible ca-
lamity of being left alone in the world.

COMFORT.

"Ah!" said a John Bull to a Frenchman,
"you have no such word as 'comfort' in your
language."

"I am glad of it," replied the Gaul, "you
Englishmen are slaves to your comforts, in
order that you may master them."

There is some truth in this reproach. Per-
petually toiling for money, with the professed
object of being enabled to live comfortably,
we sacrifice every comfort in the acquisition
of a fortune, in order that when we have ob-
tained it, we may have an additional discom-
fort from our anxiety to preserve, or increase
it. Thus do we "lose by seeking what we
seek to find." On the other hand, we may
find a comfort where we never looked for it;
as, for instance, in a great affliction, the very
magnitude of which renders us insensible to
all smaller ones. Comfort, in our national ac-
ception of the word, has been stated to con-
sist in those little luxuries and conveniences,
the want of which makes us miserable, while
their possession do not make us happy.

HOUSEHOLD DUTIES.

Whatever position in society a young lady
occupies, she needs a practical knowledge of
household duties. She may be placed in such
circumstances that it will not be necessary for
her to perform domestic labor; but on this
account she needs no less knowledge than if
she was obliged to preside personally over the
cooking stove and pantry. Indeed, we have
often thought that it is more difficult to direct
others, and requires more experience, than to
do the same work with our own hands. Girls
should early be taught the art of cooking well,
and indulged in the disposition which they
often display, even as children, to experiment
in bread or pastry baking. It is often but a
troublesome help that they afford, still it is a
great advantage to them. Some mothers give
their daughters the care of housekeeping, each
a week by turns. It seems to us a good ar-
rangement, and a most useful part of their
education. Domestic labor is by no means in-
compatible with the highest degree of refine-
ment and mental culture. Many of the most
elegant and accomplished women we have
known, have looked well to their household
duties, and have honored themselves and their
households by so doing. Economy, taste,
skill in cooking, and neatness in the kitchen,
have a great deal to do in making life happy
and prosperous. The charm of good house-
keeping is in the order, economy, and taste
displayed in attention to little things, and
these little things have a wonderful influence.
A dirty kitchen and bad cooking have driven
many a man from home to seek comfort and
happiness somewhere else. None of our ex-
cellent girls are fit to be married until they
are thoroughly educated in the deep and pro-
found mysteries of the kitchen.

THAT PATENT ROOF.

Somehow or other Reeside never succeeded
with these things. That patent roof of his
was a sad failure. The shingles leaked, and
so he covered them with concrete to the depth
of three or four inches. In winter time it was
elegant; but when the hot weather came the
stuff softened, and the neighbors used to stop
and look at the thousands of long black strings
of tar which dripped from the eaves to the
ground. And early in the summer Reeside

and his wife began to be annoyed by the ani-
mated discussion of the cats in the neighbor-
hood. The more he "shooed" them and
flung his boots at them, the more fierce and
awful were their yells. Night after night it
continued to grow more terrific, and day after
day Mrs. Reeside observed that the mysteri-
ous enterprising continued steadily through
the daylight.

At last, one moonlight night, the uproar
became so outrageous that Reeside arose from
his bed and determined to ascertain precisely
the cause of the disturbance. It appeared to
him that the noise came from the top of the
house. He went up to the garret and put his
head out of the trap-door. There he found
one hundred and ninety-six cats stuck fast
knee-deep to the concrete. Some of them had
been there eleven days: and when they per-
ceived Reeside, the whole one hundred and
ninety-six doubled up their spines, ruffled
their back hair, brandished their tails, and
gave one wild, unearthly screech, which
shocked Reeside's nerves so much that he
dropped the trap-door and fell down the lad-
der upon the head of Mrs. Reeside, who, coura-
geous and devoted woman that she was, was
standing below dressed in a thing with a frill
on it, and armed with a palm-leaf fan and a
bed-slat, resolutely determined that nothing
should harm Horatio while she was by.

GETTING EVEN WITH A TRUCKMAN.

The following is an extract taken from a
New Orleans letter to the *Sun*:—"The truck-
men here are just as bad about running over
or splashing mud on you as they are in New
York. There is only one body of men in the
world that can beat 'em at it, and that is the
longest cavalry men that cross Fulton Ferry
shore morning. One of these fellows because
he is on the top of a horse, puts on more airs
than a French roof. I saw a truckman catch
it once. I was with Bill Smith, and Bill was
all dressed up, going to see his beloved, who
had hair the color of sunlight. Bill and I
were crossing Broadway. It was awful juicy
walking, and a truckman drove his horse right
on to us, splashing Bill all over mud in spots
as big as butter plates. The truckman roared
with laughter and yelled out, "How do you
like it?" Bill said nothing, and the man drove
on. Bill let him get about a block, when he
ran up behind and grabbed two hands full of
the most perfectly formed mud I ever saw, he
jumped up on to the truck, and throwing his
arms around the truckman's neck, he quietly
laid a dab of mud as large as a pie in each
eye; then scrapping what was left down the
back of his neck, he whispered in his ear,
"How do you like it?" When the truckman
recovered his sight he couldn't find Bill, but
he drove around the corner, and for half an
hour he used some very expressive language.
There wasn't a word in it as refined as the
word peppermint.

THE DOMINION OF THE SAVAGE.

BY CHARLES MORRIS.

When we consider man in his primitive
condition, armed only with sticks and stones,
exposed half naked to every assault of nature,
warring with the fiercest animals, depending
for subsistence on his power of overcoming
beasts too ferocious or too agile to be easily
conquered, it becomes a mystery by what
means he has been enabled to maintain him-
self against such fearful odds, and to remain
master of regions infested by these powerful
foes.

There is no more striking evidence of the
power of mind over brute instinct than is
evinced in this domination of the savage races
of mankind. Yet we are apt to consider the
matter from a wrong point of view, taking
civilized man as our example, and imagining
how helpless he would be if exposed unarmed
to such conditions.

It is surprising what muscular power, what
endurance, what bodily agility and dexterity
in the use of primitive weapons are acquired
by savages, hardened by their life in the open
air, and by their constant encounters with
wild beasts and hostile men. No animal is
too large or too fierce for them to attack; nei-
ther strength nor speed scares the brute
tribes against the rude weapons, strong arms
and agile feet of these human foes.

A few facts gleaned from the customs of
existing savages will serve to illustrate these
points, and to place in a strong light the vigor
and dexterity with which the wild man of the
plains and the woods meets and overcomes the
perilous necessities of his condition.

There are some creatures in the brute crea-
tion from which we would imagine that man
would shrink, and use all his powers to es-
cape from their dangerous vicinity. Yet we
have instances of savage tribes boldly attack-
ing the strongest of these, and coming
off victor in the seemingly unequal contest.

Thus the Esquimaux, aided only by their
faithful dogs, their only arms being harpoons
pointed with fish-bones or, in rare cases, with
iron, encounter the formidable polar bear, and
overcome this fierce denizen of the realm of
ice.

With fearlessness the Rocky Mountain In-
dian attacks the most dangerous of the bear
tribe—the ferocious grizzly—and then proud-
ly displays around his neck its captured
claws, as evidence of his valor and success in
the unequal contest. In another continent
we behold the South African savage entering
into battle with the fiercest of animals—the

lion, the rhinoceros and other strong and agile
beasts—and coming off victorious.

Adding the powers which he holds in com-
mon with the brute races the artifice and per-
severance springing from his superior mental
endowments, man has thus everywhere gained
a superiority over the other tenants of the
forest and the desert, and reigns supreme
lord of animated nature.

The simple bow and arrow, the lance and
javelin, the club, the stone hatchet and other
primitive instruments of offence, are the wea-
pons of these tribes, in whose use they have
acquired such skill as makes them no mean
competitors of the European, despite the great
superiority of his arms. The Caffre has shown
this in his wars with the English. Equipped
with his simple club-like weapons, he seems
insensible of danger, and has proved himself
in bush-fighting—a fair match for the best
English troops.

The peculiar missile of the Caffres, called the
asaagay, is held between the thumb and the
forefinger, its point in front. The weapon, on
being thrown by great force by a rapid move-
ment of the arm, is given a vibratory motion
by striking the shaft against the wrist at the
instant of leaving the hand; and still vibrat-
ing in its passage through the air, it seldom
fails in striking the object aimed at.

Another weapon used by them—the knob-
kerris—is a stick of an inch in diameter and
four feet long, ending in a large round knob.
In using it they lay hold of the shaft of the
weapon—measure the distance with the eye,
and throw the stick so that the inner end of
the circling missile shall strike the ground a
few feet from the point aimed at, and the
knob falls in the rebound directly upon the
victim.

The expertness acquired by savages in the
use of their weapons is indeed, if we may cred-
it the accounts of travellers, truly wonderful.
There is something astonishing in the force
with which our Western Indian sends his ar-
row. At a surprising distance he will trans-
fix a horse, or even a buffalo, with this simple
instrument. The Australian natives, who
rank among the lowest of human beings, dis-
play a like remarkable skill in the employ-
ment of their weapons.

Some natives of Cape York, in Australia,
who were brought to England in 1853, were
able, without taking deliberate aim, to invari-
ably strike with their javelins, at the distance
of twenty paces, a small object fastened to a
stick. Captain Cay relates that they are gener-
ally secure of killing a bird at that [dis-
tance, and Strawbridge informs us that the
natives of Victoria dive, spear in hand, into
the river Murray, and never return without
having transfixed a fish.

There are tribes of Patagonians who live
almost solely on fish, which they sometimes
take with the hand by diving, sometimes from
the shore with wooden spears. The South
Sea Islanders surpass even these in dexterity.
They are so at home in water that descending
among the coral reefs, they thrust the fore-
finger into the eye of any fish they have
marked for prey, and thus bring it to land.

Other tribes are as expert as those we have
mentioned in their use of missiles. A stone
in the hand of a native of Tierra del Fuego is
a perilous weapon of offence, so skilful is he
in throwing. The Hottentot shows an equal
skill in the use of his rakum stick, an instru-
ment with which he despatches the feeblest
species of animals at a distance of forty or
fifty yards.

The boomerang of the Australians is another
missile exceedingly effective in the hands of a
savage, though dangerous only to himself in the
hands of an European thrower. It is simply
a curved stick, cut in a peculiar fashion, and
moving in a strange and baffling manner. The
savage stands with his back to the object
aimed at, and hurls the stick as if to strike
the ground in front. Instead of doing so,
however, it rises, with a whirling motion, ver-
tically in the air. Having attained a consid-
erable height, it commences to retrograde,
finally passing over the head of the thrower
and striking the object behind him. The pecu-
liar properties of this missile were known to
the ancient Egyptians, but we have no evi-
dence of their discovery by any other nation.

There are other instruments, however,
equally odd in their principle and effective in
the hands of their users. We may mention
the bolas, employed by the Patagonians
against the puma or American lion. It is a
simple strap, loaded at each end with a stone,
and is thrown so as to twine itself round the
neck of the animal. Trottled by this tight
thong, he is easily dispatched. The Esqui-
maux avail themselves of a similar missile,
used in the capture of birds. A yet more
adroit use of the thong is that of the half-bar-
barous Gauchos of South America, whose skill
in the use of the lasso gives them the mastery
over countless herds of wild cattle.

When thus we see the North American Indi-
an conquering the huge buffalo with his simple
weapons, see the polar bear attacked by a
single Esquimaux armed only with his lance,
see boys of twelve or fourteen years among
the Siberian savages attacking and killing
bears with spears five feet long, and the
South African native mastering the most feroc-
ious animals with like primitive means, we
must cease to wonder at man's domain over
the beasts of the fields, and attain a striking
conception of the remarkable superiority of
human reason to the mental powers of the
brute.