

**The Home Circle.**

**THE MOTHER'S DREAM.**

She lay on her pillow, and sobbed aloud,  
As she thought of her infant child;  
In her saddened heart fond memories crowd,  
Of the silvery tones of his laugh so loud,  
That had many an hour beguiled.

But alas! his little heart is still,  
And her boy is away from her now;  
And the joy in her eyes the hot tears fill,  
She strives to yield to her Father's will,  
And in meek submission to bow.

And now she has turned on her couch of rest,  
And in silence is seen to weep,  
Till the last tear-drop from her eyelid is pressed  
And 'mid her long lashes has found a nest,  
And her eyes are closed in sleep.

But they open again in a dream of the night,  
And she feels as if walled away  
By an angel guide, all robed in light,  
Where the glory shed on her dazzled sight  
Seemed the dawn of eternal day.

And while she was gazing, in calm delight,  
On the heavenly scenes around,  
An infant band glided past in her sight,  
Their angelic forms were in robes of white,  
As if bathed in a glory profound.

The holiest music was wafted along,  
And sweet incense floated by,  
For their infant voice were swelling strong,  
As they joined their Hosannas in heavenly song  
And they waved their torches on high.

With a mother's anxious look she gazed,  
To see if her boy was there;  
But not 'mid the voices in anthems raised,  
Nor amid the torches of incense that blazed,  
Could she see her boy so fair.

And now the procession is nearly done,  
When another look she cast,  
And then with a joyful heart she has run,  
With a mother's fond clasp has embraced her son,  
For he came—the very last.

But she started back, and a sigh she raised  
As she looked on her angel boy,  
For his torch was dark, while the others  
blazed—  
No heavenly songs, while the others praised,  
Did his infant lips employ.

With a troubled voice, she asked him why?  
And she listened with anxious ears;  
He calmly looked up, with a calm reply,  
"How can I sing, or my torch burn high,  
When 'tis wet with a mother's tears?"

She awoke, and now she felt all resigned,  
The dream had been sent by God;  
And she fervently thanked him that love so  
kind  
Had assuaged her grief, and had freed her mind  
From sorrow's unbearable load.

**SELF CONTROL.**

We can all preach upon self-control—can lecture by the hour upon its being an essential virtue, without which none can attain to grace of manner or expression—but when we come down to the level of facts,—  
"Where is ours?"

Now this is a pregnant question to which few mortals possess the requisite knowledge to "make reply." For the most of us are but slaves to circumstances which in some instances become too strong for us, and our boasted self-control takes to itself wings, and leaves us to the mercy of our anger, scorn, etc.

Socrates seemed to possess this attribute in an astonishing degree—and yet we doubt not that there were seasons in his daily life when Kantippe could have told us that he was not invulnerable, and that she knew his weaknesses, even if he were not aware of them.

There are times and seasons which come to all of us, when our will is not completely fashioned to our hands; and the restless passions of the mind hold us in sway—seasons when all of us do and say things which are unbecoming, unseemly, and which lower and debase us in the opinion of others, and also of ourselves. We believe, however, that self-control is a virtue which will become ours if we cultivate it properly; if we strive right manfully for its possession; fight a bitter warfare against irritability, nervousness, jealousy, hatred, and all unkindness of heart and soul.

It has been said that self-control is a physical impossibility to some persons, especially when they have not been educated to it. The first clause of the statement we emphatically deny—but the latter we fully affirm; and as we have stated above—it must be cultivated properly. One exercise of it will not bring us victory—but we must pile them mountain high before we can reach the highest which will bring repose—which will enable us to say to the raging waves of passion, "thus far canst thou come, and no farther."

It is most vexatious to be tormented without any reason by those who profess to love us—to be neglected by those who owe us attention, or to be imposed upon by those who have received many benefits at our hands. And some one may ask—well, why not let the irritation have its way for a few moments? why not fret and fume, and scold and snap, and then let your mind settle down to repose?

Ah! friend, give way to the irritability of the moment, scold and snap, and where will you stop? You will say things you do not feel; unkind words which would cut keener than a knife; perhaps you will trample rough-shod upon the hearts of your children, your husband or wife, or your friends or servants, those whom you have sworn to cherish—to whom you owe the most sacred duties—whose example you should be. They may forgive and forget it all, or thoughts of it may rankle in their breasts while their hearts continue to beat.

And have you obtained peace of mind? Are you contented with yourself? No, indeed, you are bitterly ashamed of it, and if you are a sensible, right-minded person you will beg the pardon of those upon whom you have poured out the vials of your wrath. You have not obtained the composure which you might expect from easing your mind, but have exhibited an irritable, excitable, ugly temper, have made a childish show of yourself, and you are not excusable for so doing by either physical suffering or nervous irritability.

Self-control is within the reach of you and me. All of us can obtain it by prayerful watchfulness over the "little foxes that devour the grapes," and ruin the fair prospect of fragment and delicious fruit. Little sins, little derelictions from duty, a little giving way to pass on will surely lead to great results. We must be faithful to ourselves; faithful in our watch and ward over tongue, eyes, and hands, for

"When headstrong passion gets the reins of reason,  
The force of nature, like too strong a gale,  
For want of ballast, oversets the vessel."

And we are at the mercy of any one who chooses to put us in a rage, while even the brain may give way, and reason totter on its throne if we do not strive for the mastery of the sins which so easily beset us.

Let us therefore strive with prayer to One who was tempted as we are, who knows our sorrows and has borne our griefs, and is ever ready to guard, guide and aid us in every right endeavor to win an immortal, never-fading crown.

**HOME LOVE.**

Some men may sneer at family affection if the sentiment be paramount to all earthly considerations—if business losses or gains are forgotten in seasons of family affliction or rejoicing. But men like these are not among earth's noblest sons—they are simply money-making automatons, whose places can be filled an hour after they have vacated them; men who live only in the middle of their kinsmen—not in their hearts. The great lever by which the world is moved should be called love; it is the basis of all true excellence—of all exalted thoughts. When a family of children are taught from childhood to be kind and loving one to another, and see the daily exhibition of like kindness and love between the parents, and from the parents to them, there we see strong manhood and noble womanhood. Affection does not beget weakness, nor is it effeminate for a brother to be tenderly attached to his sisters. That boy will make the noblest and bravest man. Under the protection of men who cherish mother and sisters with tender care, women are always safe. That young man who was accustomed to kiss his sweet, innocent, loving sister night and morning as they met, shows its influence upon him, and he will never forget it; and when he shall take some one to his heart for a wife, she shall reap the golden fruit thereof. The young man who was in the habit of giving his arm to his sister as they walked to and from the church, will never leave his wife to find her way as best she can. The young man who has been taught to see that his sister had a seat before he sought his, will never mortify a neglected wife in the presence of strangers. And that man who always handed to his sister his chair at the table, will never have cause to blush as he sees some gentleman extend to his wife the courtesy she knows is due from him.

**A LEAF FROM LIFE.**

BY MARIAN.

Daylight had nearly faded, one winter afternoon, and night was fast closing down over our great city. As I sat by my window, and looked into the gathering gloom, thoughts, faster than I could pen them, came crowding through my brain. Memory carried me back to other days, when, with heart free from sorrow or care, I loved to anticipate this twilight hour, and wished for its approach. But I was not then alone; a fond mother sat by my side, and into her listening ear I would pour my complaints and troubles, always receiving in return her kind sympathy and advice. Happy days, gone, never to return.

I would willingly have left those sad recollections, and turned my thoughts in other channels; but no; relentless memory was not yet satisfied. She brought before my mind's eye another and later picture. It was again night—a dark, gloomy night—and, in a dimly-lighted room, by a low couch, with strained eye and bated breath I sat, watching and longing for one more look, one parting word, from my darling, dying mother. At last she moved; the pale lips unclosed; a murmured blessing on me, her only child, a last fond look, and all was over. And I—O cruel fate! to sever the last tie that bound me to earth, and leave me,

broken-hearted, to wander on alone. In imagination I lived over again those days of lonely misery that followed, and again that feeling of utter despair crept over me.

Just at that moment the bell rang, and I was obliged to cast away my troubles for the time, and answer its summons.

"No father, no mother, no friend!"  
"No, madam, my father and mother are both dead, and in all this wide world I have not one friend. My poor mother was buried yesterday, and to-day, because I could not pay the rent, I was turned into the street, and what few things we had were taken to help to cancel the debt."

Such was the answer I received to my question of surprise, as, upon opening the door, I beheld a young woman of apparently my own age, her dress indicated the most absolute poverty; but her face was one of those which, once seen, you can never forget. I cannot describe it—I can only say it was beautiful. It was sad, yet wore such a look of resigned submission, that, in gazing at it, I forgot my own sorrow in pity for hers.

"Come in," I said. "I am thoughtless to keep you standing out here in the cold, when we can so much better talk inside. Besides, you must be tired and hungry."

She obeyed with a look of gratitude that went to my heart, and, weak from exposure and want of proper nourishment, sank down by my warm fire, completely exhausted. Nothing more was said until we had partaken of our evening meal, when, feeling much refreshed, she expressed herself as willing to give me more of her history, which I was very anxious to learn. I need not repeat it here; it was the old story of a once happy home made wretched by an intemperate father, with poverty, suffering and death the result.

When she had finished, I sat as one in a dream; a new train of thought was awakened in my breast; and, long after her weary eyes were closed in slumber for the night, did I lay awake and think. What was I doing what had I done, since deprived of my dear parent, but sit and murmur at my Heavenly Father's will. Surrounded by the comforts of a home, and sympathizing friends, I had forgotten to be thankful for the many blessings I still enjoyed—forgot everything I should have remembered—and I nursed my own sorrow in selfish abandonment. Here was a young woman, no older than myself, meeting with the same parental loss, yet, in every other respect, how different her lot from mine! No pleasant home to cheer her loneliness, friendless and alone. What wonder that my eyes were opened to my own wretched ingratitude? Ah, reader, penitential tears flowed that night; prayers were offered that have been answered; resolutions formed that I trust have been kept.

Years have passed by. That young woman is now happily married, and living not far from my home. I see her very often, but I never look into her sweet face without remembering that night; and bless the Providence that sent her, an angel of light, to my door.

**A BEAUTIFUL ANSWER.**

A French infidel, who was, as is usually the case with infidels, a man of some learning, was crossing a desert in Africa, the Great Sahara, in company with an Arab guide. He noticed with a sneer that at certain times the guide, whatever obstacles might arise, put them all aside, and, kneeling on the burning sands, called on his God. Day after day passed, and still the Arab never failed to do this; till at last, one evening, as he arose from his knees, the would-be philosopher asked him, with a contemptuous smile, "How do you know there is a God?" The guide fixed his eyes upon the scoffer for a moment in wonder, and then said, solemnly, "How do I know that a man, and not a camel, passed my hut last night in the darkness? Was it not by the print of his feet? Even so," said he, pointing to the sun, whose last rays were flashing over the lonely desert, "that footprint is not of man."

**BOY LOST.**

Here is a beautiful, tender thought, amplified with all the feeling of genuine originality, indeed, so pure and effortless that we feel it a duty to send it broadcast for the culture of the mind—

"He had black eyes, with long lashes, red cheeks, and hair almost black and curly. He wore a crimson plaid jacket, with full trousers buttoned on; had a habit of whistling, and liked to ask questions; was accompanied by a small, black dog. It is a long while now since he disappeared. I have a very pleasant house, and much company. My guests say,—

"Ah! it is pleasant to be here. Everything has such an orderly, put-away look—nothing about under foot, no dirt."

"But my eyes are aching for the sight of whistlings and cut paper on the floor; of tumbling-down card houses; of wooden sheep and cattle; of pop-guns, bows and arrows, whips, tops, go-carts, blocks of trumpery. I want to see boats a-rigging, and kites a-making. I want to see crumbs on the carpet, and paste split on the kitchen table. I want to see the chair and tables turned the wrong way about. I want to see candy-making and cori-popping, and to find jack-knives and fish-hooks among my muslins. Yet these things used to fret me once. They say,—

"How quiet you are here. Ah! one here may settle his brains and be at peace."

"But my ears are aching for the pattering of little feet, for a hearty shout, a shrill whistle, a gay tra-la-la, for the crack of little whips, for the noise of drums, fifes and tin trumpets. Yet these things made me nervous once."

"A manly figure stands before me now. He is taller than I, has thick whiskers, wears a frock coat, a bosomed shirt and cravat. He has just come from college. He brings Latin and Greek in his countenance, and busts of the old philosophers for the sitting-room. He calls me mother, but I am rather unwilling to own him. He avers that he is my boy, and says that he can prove it. He brings his little boat to show the red stripe on the sail, (it was the end of the piece) and the name on the stern, Lucy Lowe, a little girl of our neighbor, who, because of her long curls and pretty round face was the chosen favorite of my boy. The curls were long since cut off, and she has grown a tall, handsome girl. How his face reddens as he shows me the name on the boat! Oh, I see it all as plain as if it were written in a book! My little boy is lost, and my big boy will soon be. Oh! I wish he were a little, tired boy, in a long white night-gown, lying in his crib, holding his hand in mine, pushing the curls back from his forehead, watching his eyelids droop and listening to his deep breathing. If I only had my little boy again, how patient I would be! How much I would bear, and how little I would fret and scold. I can never have him back again. But there are still mothers who have not yet lost their little boys. I wonder if they know that they are living their very best days—that now is the time to really enjoy their children? I think if I had been more to my little boy, I might now be more to my grown-up one."

**A SCENE FROM LIFE.**

A young man entered the bar-room of a village tavern and called for a drink.

"No," said the landlord. "You have had to much already. You have had the delirium tremens once, and I cannot sell you any more."

He stepped aside to make room for a couple of young men who had just entered, and the landlord waited upon them very politely. The other stood by sullen, and when they had finished he walked up to the landlord and said,—

"Six years ago at their age, I stood where those young men now are. I was a man with fair prospect. Now, at the age of twenty-eight, I am a wreck, body and mind. You led me to drink. In this room I formed the habit that has been my ruin. Now sell me a few more glasses, and your work will be done! I will be done! I will soon be out of the way; there is no hope for me. But they can be saved; they may be men again. Do not sell it to them. Sell it to me and let me die, and the world will be rid of me; but for Heaven's sake don't sell any more to them."

The landlord listened, pale and trembling. Setting down his decanter, he exclaimed,—

"God helping me, that is the last drop I will ever sell to any one!"

He kept his word.

**TITTLE-TATTLE.**

The disposition to pry into the privacy of domestic life is, unfortunately, very common, and is always dishonorable. The appetite for such knowledge is to be regarded as morbid, and the indulgence of it disgraceful. A family have a sacred right to privacy. In guarding the delicate relations of the household, secrecy becomes a virtue.

If by chance the private affairs are laid open to a stranger, honor would require him to turn from them, and if a knowledge of them were forced upon him, they should be locked in a sacred silence. A double obligation of silence and secrecy rests upon one who is a guest in a family. The turpitude of a betrayal of family history by a visitor is far greater than theft could be. It is a thing so scandalous that it should degrade a person and put him out of society. To betray the secrets of the household is not only an odious immorality, but it is a sin and a shame to be on good terms with those who are known to commit such outrages. They put themselves out of the pale of decent society. They should be treated as moral outlaws.

These hungry-eyed wretches, who sit in the unsuspecting circle of parents and children, treasuring their words, spying their weaknesses, misinterpreting the innocent liberties of the household, and then run from house to house with their shameless news, are worse than poisoners of wells, or burners of houses. They poison the faith of man in man. Make no terms with such people. Tale bearers have no rights. They are common enemies of good men. Hunt, harry, and hound them out of society. They are the worst of pests save one, and that is the listener of the tale-bearer. There could be no tattling if there was no one to hear. It takes an ear and a tongue to make scandal. Greedy listening is as dishonorable as nimble tattling. The ear is the open market where the tongue sets its ill-gotten wares. Some there are that will not repeat again what they hear, but they are willing to listen to it. They will not trade in contraband goods, but they will buy enough of the smugler for family use. These respectable listeners are the patrons of tattlers. It is the ready market that keeps tale-bearing brisk.

It is a shame to listen ill of your neighbor. Christian benevolence demands that you do not love ill news. A clear heart and a true honor rejoice in kindly things. It should be a pain and sorrow to know of anything that degrades your neighbor in your eyes, even if he is your enemy; and how much more if he is your friend?

The scriptures say:—"Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people." "A tale-bearer revealeth secrets; but he that is of faithful (honorable) spirit concealeth the matter." "The words of the tale-bearer, are as words that go down into the innermost parts of the belly." The Hebrews thought that the affections had their seat in the bowels; and by the phrase, "go down into the innermost parts of the belly," they signify how sharp and exasperating to the deepest feelings of our nature are the cruel offices of a common tattler. "Where no wood is the fire goeth out; so where there is no tale-bearer the strife ceaseth." As if he had said that so much of the strife of society arises from tattling that, if that were cured, there would hardly be any cause of quarrel left. Commend us to that religion which makes a man humane with his tongue, and honorable with his ear.

**WITH YOUR MIGHT.**

You cannot pay too careful attention to business if you want to succeed, that is. It is the result of practical, everyday experience that steady attention to matters of detail lies at the root of human progress, and that diligence, above all, it is the mother of good luck. Accuracy, also, is of much importance, and an invariable mark of good training in a man—accuracy in observation, accuracy in transaction of affairs. What is done in business must be well done, for it is better to accomplish a small amount of work than to half do ten times as much. Yet in business affairs, it is the manner in which even small matters are transacted that often decides men for or against you. With virtue, capacity, and good conduct in other respects, the person who is habitually inaccurate cannot be trusted; his work has to be gone over again, and he thus causes endless annoyance, vexation and trouble.

**DRESS PLAINLY.**

Some one has given the following reasons why people should dress plainly on Sunday. These reasons are as valid any other day in the week:—

It would lessen the burden of many who now find it hard to maintain their place in society.

It would lessen the force of temptations which often lead men to barter honesty and honor for display.

If there was less strife in dress at church, people in moderate circumstances would be more inclined to attend.

Universal moderation in dress at church, would improve the worship by the removal of many wandering thoughts.

It would enable all classes of people to attend church in unfavorable weather.

It would lessen on the part of the rich the temptation to vanity.

It would lessen on the part of the poor the temptation to be envious and malicious.

It would save valuable time on the Sabbath.

It would relieve our means from a serious pressure, and thus enable us to do more for good enterprises.

**IF YOU PLEASE.**

Boys, do you ever think how much real courtesy will do for you? Some of the greatest men were ever cautious in this respect. When the Duke of Wellington was sick, the last he took was a little tea. On his servant's handing it to him in a saucer, and asking if he would have it, the Duke replied,—

"Yes, if you please."

These were his last words. How much kindness and courtesy are expressed by them? He who had commanded great armies, and was long accustomed to the tone of authority did not overlook the small courtesies of life. Ah, how many boys do? What a rude tone of command they often use to their little brothers and sisters, and sometimes to their mothers. They order so. That is ill-bred, and shows, to say the least, a want of thought. In all your home talk remember "If you please." To all that wait upon or serve you, believe that "if you please" will make you better served than all the words in the whole dictionary. Do not forget three little words—"If you please."

**SUNSHINE.**

"Sunshine is beautiful and joy-inspiring always. All things animate and inanimate take on a new life in its presence. Not a flower but gratefully recognizes it, not a song-bird but carols the sweeter under its touch. How the rivulets flash and the broad waters shimmer to its glance, while the valley atmosphere is goldenly a-haze, and the grand old woods and mountains are all aflame with its kisses. Earth, that under the cloud and the night shade, seemed like one stricken with a mighty sorrow, now trends her round of space like a new-crowned queen. Who amid the gushing sunshine can think of aught but life, health, joy, music, beauty and splendor?"