

she cried. "How good of you to come so early! 'I'll go call brother Robert."

"I don't want to see your brother," said the old bachelor—"at least not yet. I came to ask—"

"I was sure you would," said Miss Osborne, breaking out into a laugh like a young girl's. "I told mother so this morning. I know what you came to ask."

"Are you quite certain you do," said the old bachelor, an odd smile spreading over his face, until it danced in his handsome dark eyes.

"Quite certain," said the old maid, seriously. "But we really don't need your help, Mr. Guernsey; for although we are far from rich, we have enough to share with this dear little one, sent to me, it seems—don't think me foolish—as a precious Christmas gift on the blessed Christmas day—the day Mary clasped her beautiful Boy to her heart in the stable of Bethlehem. See, isn't she pretty? And so plump! Take her in your arms. I am sure you, who are so kind to cats and dogs, must almost love this motherless little girl." And she laid the child in the arms of the man who had never held a baby before, and who looked down upon it with something very like tears glittering in his eyes.

"Yes, it is pretty, and plump, and everything you say. Rose—pardon me, Miss Osborne; but please take it back. I'm afraid of it. It's making fearful mouths at me, and I'm sure it's going to scream," said the old bachelor, after holding baby exactly two minutes, the tears, if they were tears, gone, and the smile back again. "Do take it, I beg, or I shall drop it."

The old maid held out her arms. He placed the child in them.

"And now you must go to bed, baby," she said, turning away; and then turning back to say, with another merry laugh, "You'd scarcely believe it, Mr. Guernsey, but Walf is jealous, and so is Puss and her daughter."

And there they were—Walf on one side of her, and the cat and her kitten on the other; all the objects of his detestation grouped together in one terrible tableau!

"One moment, Miss Osborne, before you go," he stammered. "I have come to ask—"

"Ask anything I can grant," said Miss Osborne, encouragingly, "and I will grant it, for you have been a kind neighbor—I hope I may say friend—and this is merry Christmas—"

"You be to my wife," interrupted Miles Guernsey, a wonderful look of love lighting up his face.

"The baby would have been dropped then if he hadn't caught it. But he did catch it, and the old maid too, in his strong, tender arms."

"I won't tell you what she said, but I will say that nowhere on earth was there a merrier Christmas party than that at Rose Cottage that Christmas night; and I will say, further, that the following summer a Mrs. Miles Guernsey helped to superintend the culture of the early cucumbers and pease in Miles Guernsey's miniature vegetable garden, and that a number of rose-bushes found their way across the daisy-spangled meadow and over the fence to the border of the neatly kept lawn, and on that same neatly kept lawn a wee baby girl tumbled about unprovoked, with Walf as a constant companion, and Mary Ann, the cat, as an occasional visitor. And I will still further say that the next Christmas there was a grandma in the house, and a grandson with his mother's light brown hair and his father's dark eyes, and the most abject slave to both little ones was Mike, the "widdy man."

THE END.

Be Employed.

Happiness is almost sure to result from the useful occupation of time. When persons are actively engaged in their several callings or professions, time thus usefully employed is conducting to respectability, honor, and wealth. The whole combined must be a never-failing source of self-satisfaction. Those who have no regular business or profession, are apt to resort to the expedient of beguiling their hours by some pursuit or amusement to supply the place of business. The idler in the country may devote himself to the sports of the field, making dogs and fast horses his principal companions, while the village or city idler will fill up his evening hours in frequenting theatres, card parties, balls, &c. These, however, are by no means the most eligible modes of employing time; nor are they productive of genuine self-satisfaction. Pursuits of a more tranquil nature, such as study, reading and music, should engage the minds of those possessing leisure; but even these dainties will taste better if seasoned with some hard work.

True Politeness is benevolence personified; it is the practice of kindness. There is virtue even in the form of politeness; it may be merely mechanical, still, like an air cushion, although there is nothing in it, it is very comfortable in use. Why not cultivate a pleasant mode of recognition for every one we meet on the street, however slight the acquaintance? It would many a time lighten the load of some sorrowing heart, or cause some new resolve to "try again" when on the very verge of no utter hopelessness, by the inspiration of the feeling "there's somebody at least cares a little for me." It elevates the lowly to have their superiors greet them courteously; it unwittingly to themselves, begets a resolution to act more worthy of such recognition; to earn it by a better behavior, a more tidy dress, a more dignified deportment.—W. W. Hall.

The Modern Novel.

A modern novel is condensed thus:

VOL. I.

A winning wife,
A sunny smile,
A feather;
A tiny talk,
A pleasant walk
Together.

VOL. II.

A little doubt,
A playful pout,
Capricious;
A merry miss,
A stolen kiss,
Delicious.

VOL. III.

You ask mamma,
Consult papa,
With pleasure;
And both repeat
This rash event,
At leisure.

Prize for One New Subscriber.

To any subscriber sending us one new name, we will send a beautiful lithograph of the celebrated painting by Thomas Faed, R.A., called "The Offer." A very handsome young woman, neatly attired, is leaning against a marble mantelpiece in a graceful attitude, reading a letter. The envelope and a few flowers which have been sent to her are lying at her feet. A fire is blazing in the grate, and a large mirror and writing materials are on the mantel. A door is standing open, showing her father busy in the shop adjoining. We can't half describe the beauties of the picture. It is 22 x 26, and is superior to any picture we have ever sent out, or that we have seen with any paper in Canada at such a price.

"THE OFFER" is fit for any gentleman's parlor or any farmer's home. It will please everyone that sees it, and on your wall will make your home cheerful and attractive. In tone and finish the picture is exquisite, and is well worth \$2 without the paper. We guarantee satisfaction to everyone that earns this picture. If you are not entirely satisfied with it we will give you 50c. for it if returned to this office within ten days. The selling price of this very handsome and pleasing picture was \$3. They have been reduced, and we have made such arrangements as to be able to fill our engagement.

For two subscribers we will send a handsome gilt-edged manual pocket diary for '77, bound in morocco.

Should any prefer choice seeds, plants, useful books or cash, they will receive a liberal reward for their trouble in obtaining subscribers at the rate of 25 cents for each new subscriber.

The following from a correspondent shows how the "The Offer" is appreciated:—

Enclosed find \$1 for another new subscriber. His name is —, P. O. Send another "Offer." The picture has pleased me and everyone that has seen it first-rate. I could get a lot of subscribers if you would give me the picture.

W. S., Woodstock.

[The picture is given only to old subscribers that send in one new name. All subscribers that want it and cannot get in a new one shall be supplied at the lowest possible price. We positively refuse to sell one to a new subscriber, as we have at great expense procured it for our subscribers. Agents wishing to use the picture to aid in canvassing may secure it with the paper at an additional cost.]

Any person sending in four new subscribers' names, accompanied with the \$4, will receive their paper free for 1877; if five new subscribers are sent in you may have the handsome picture "The Offer" and the paper for 1877.

Dancing.

I am much interested in dancing. I am not a dancer either, but would like to know why that amusement is condemned so severely, while others are liked which I don't believe in at all. That is, I think they, or some of them, are more hurtful than dancing. I do not think there is any harm in having a social dance at a friend's house or your own, where you know every one, and know you are in good company. Yet I don't believe in going to dances where you have to pay; for there every one can go, and the company is too mixed. I feel like dancing when I am lively and happy; would not dance any other time.

I would like to know what the readers of the *Advocate* think about the parties where they play kissing plays, tell stories, in fun of course, but they don't dance,—think it a sin! For my part I would give up the parties every time. And, besides, there some people that will not exert themselves enough to get exercise in any other way.—A SUBSCRIBER.

Happiness at Home.

It has been said by a philosopher that every cross word uttered or angry feeling experienced, leaves its unerring mark on the face. This can be verified by a close observation of the countenances of those around us whose tempers and habits are familiar to us, and its truth thus established. And if the lineaments of the face show traces of such things, how much more must the general moral and mental system be affected by them? Nothing is more susceptible of proof than the statement that one angry word brings on another, except the good old Biblical saying, that "a soft word turneth away wrath." Many people, really possessed of a sincere desire to do right in all things, allow themselves to fall into the habit of using ungentle and even unkind words to those around them when, if their attention were called to the fact in the right way, they would be astonished at themselves. They mean no harm, but they do harm, both to themselves and to their associates. More especially is this harm perceptible in the family circle, where the developing child is the proud imitator of all the acts of its elders, and particularly those which are pronounced and noticeable. Here is where the carelessly sown seeds of ungentleness are eventually ripened into a harvest of harshness and too often gathered in a crop of vice and crime. Too frequently are these sins of the parents visited upon the children, even of the third and fourth generation.

This all results from a lack of full appreciation of the meaning of "Happiness at Home." Happiness is made, not born. It may with reason be argued that it is an impossibility to be happy at home when one is crushed by the cares of life—by difficulties crowding on every side. But that brings us to the very point we are seeking and leads us to repeat, that happiness is made, not born. If a man firmly resolves to throw aside the vexing cares of business, or a woman the aggravations of domestic life, when the family is united, as most families are once in twenty-four hours, the thing is done. After the excitement of the day the nerves are naturally pretty "high strung," and an effort is required to prevent their disturbance upon the slightest provocation; but each effort renders its successor easier of accomplishment. Thus, a habit of gentleness, cheerfulness and kindness can be acquired, which nobody sees but to appreciate, admire and desire. The children acquire it in youth and are saved the subsequent efforts at self-control, while the neighbors are softened by contact with it, and the result is what we all should seek—"Happiness at Home."

Mind and Health.

The mental condition has far more influence upon the bodily health than is generally supposed. It is no doubt true that ailments of the body cause depressing and morbid conditions of the mind; but it is no less true that sorrowful and disagreeable emotions produce disease in persons who, uninfluenced by them, would be in sound health; or if disease is not produced the functions are disordered. Not even physicians always consider the importance of this fact. Agreeable emotions set in motion nervous currents, which stimulate blood, brain and every part of the system into healthful activity; while grief, disappointment of feeling, and brooding over present sorrows or past mistakes depress all the vital forces. To be physically well, one must, in general, be happy. The reverse is not always true; one may be happy and cheerful, and yet be a constant sufferer in body.]