



The Family Circle.

DUZHUPLEZE.

The strangest country between the seas
Was the curious kingdom of Duzhupleze,
And the greatest wonders in all this land
Were the crooked lanes on every hand;
For the walls leaned in and the gates leaned out,
And the pathways doubled and wound about.
They were weird and dazzling, first to last;
A wonderful charm was o'er them cast;
And men grew merry in heart and brain
Who went to walk in a crooked lane.

So they laughed and sang until they found
'Twas an evil spell their steps had bound;
Their tongues were thick when the hour grew late;
They cursed and quarrelled in fiercest hate;
While the pathways seemed to writhe and spin,
And the gates leaned out though the walls
leaned in;
But one by one, ere the break of day,
Through the treacherous gates they found their
way,
And weak and dizzy, and sick with pain,
They staggered home from the crooked lane.

Now every lane has an end in view,
And so had these, as all men knew;
But no one ever intends to go
To the end of such, as all men know.
They meant to walk just a little way,
But the spell grew on them day by day,
They were drawn to a path of pain and shame,
As the moth is drawn to the torturing flame,
Though they knew there were paupers, and men
insane,
And prisons and graves, at the end of the lane.

The queer old king of Duzhupleze
Beheld these things, but he loved his ease;
So he said, "The danger is plain as day;
Sure, none but fools will walk that way;
I'm hampered and harassed, early and late,
With the rule of the realm and the cares of state.
I'm sorry to see their pain, but still
These poor, blind fools must do as they will;
Their loss will be but the kingdom's gain,
If they chose to walk in a crooked lane."

But the crooked lanes spread far and near:
So the old king sent for his grand vizier,
And commanded him to devise and say
How this terrible curse should be done away.
Now the grand vizier was a moderate man,
And bound to favor the easiest plan,
And so he said, in the course of his talk,
"We can't prescribe how a man shall walk;
But if the evil has grown too great,
'Twere best to restrict and regulate,
And to fill your purse with easy gains,
By a heavy tax on the crooked lanes."

'Twas done as the grand vizier had said,
But the crooked lanes still grew and spread;
And those who walked in their fatal maze
Sought other and various crooked ways,
Till, under the blight of this awful curse,
The kingdom was going from bad to worse;
And the king was stricken with doubt and fear
When his generals and his grand vizier,
By their speech and action, made it plain
That they sometimes walked in a crooked lane.

Though the good old king of Duzhupleze
Was merry and kind, and loved his ease,
It was more than even he could bear
When at last, one day, the royal heir
Came staggering home with a maudlin shout,
And an idiot smile, as he reeled about.
The grand vizier was called in a trice,
But the king was not in need of advice,
"I'll give you a month, at most!" he said,
"Down with these lanes, or off with your head!
For I'll confiscate your worthless brains
If you fail to abolish these crooked lanes!"

How the thing was done I cannot say,
But the grand vizier made no delay;
He proved to the king and all the nation
That his brains were worthy of preservation:
For in place of every crooked lane
He planted a garden or field of grain;
While men who had clamored with all their
might
To do as they chose, now chose to do right;
And the happiest country between the seas
Was the glorious kingdom of Duzhupleze.
—Eudora S. Bumstead, in *Youth's Companion*.

A THREATENED NEMESIS.

BY MRS. HARRIET A. CHEEVER.

"I tell you, my friend, your premises are all at fault, and can't be justified on any basis of soundness or reason whatever. Break a part of God's law, and you fracture the whole structure; there is no middle wall of partition, no 'margin,' as you call it, no reserving to oneself any particular rights not admissible to all. Tamper with a dangerous temptation, and you invite a nemesis almost sure to recoil with un-

come swiftness on your own head. I'd give a great deal, Haversham, to see you take a firm, decided stand, and resolve, with the help of God, never to touch, taste, or handle the poison in any shape again.

The last sentence was spoken in a tender, appealing tone, not lost upon the lordly listener.

"Would a simple resolve go for so very much, Rector?"

"Yes; with you it would be as good as a vow any day. You see, I know you, my dear fellow, and believe in you, too, Roger Haversham, and it grieves me more than I can express that you refuse to place your name on the list presented by those ladies the other day, begging for your signature."

"But I don't believe in pledging myself to banish the wine cup or champagne glass from my table on every occasion mentionable. There are times when, as 'lord of the manor,' I must give my guests a choice as to the beverage to be used. I was brought right up with that idea of a host's courtesy, and limitations as to such things which I might think best to impose upon myself, I should hardly feel warranted in imposing upon my guests."

"You would not voluntarily set food before your friends, known to be vitiating or harmful."

"No, nor drink either. Taken in proper quantities, nothing I offer at my table would prove either vitiating or harmful. As danger consists only in excess either in eating or drinking, it depends on the wisdom or folly of him who eats or drinks as to whether he is harmed or not."

"Such is your belief?"

"Certainly."

"And you will teach your boy so, and allow him to choose such meat and drink as he may fancy?"

"No, sir; that is quite another thing, and presents an entirely different phase of the subject."

"Does it?"

"Why, certainly it does. I shall spread no feasts including luxuries of the kind just discussed while Milton is at home. That portion of the cellar which contains the few choice spirits I always keep on hand, will not be opened during his vacation—at least, not while he is around. Contrary to the teachings of my young days, I shall instruct my son that intoxicants of all kinds are to be avoided, utterly. Personal adherence to an ancient custom, held to be proper all one's life, is one thing, while it is quite another to perpetuate the custom by starting a young person along the same track. I prefer my child should never contract a habit which has never injured his father, but might possibly result in injury to him."

Two noble-looking men stood facing each other on the upper terrace of a lawn whose velvety carpet of green might have been cut in some gigantic loom, so faultlessly even was its smooth surface. Each looked with a friendly, fearless gaze into the face of the other, while they expressed their views with the candid, outspoken tone of conviction staunch friends often use in exchanging opinions.

Mr. Roger Haversham, perhaps a trifle the taller of the two, wore a dainty lounging jacket of white flannel, exactly matched by the one worn by his companion, the Right Rev. Arthur Puriston, rector of St. Paul's, and a truly godly man. The jaunty midsummer garments had arrived in company at Mr. Haversham's sumptuous home, for it was no strange thing for the wealthy man to duplicate an order in the interest of his beloved friend and pastor, the "Rector," as he usually called him.

Long before, after but two years of married life, Mr. Haversham's young wife had died, leaving her kind husband and their baby boy of but six months to care for and comfort each other as best they could. The father had felt no inclination to marry again, but as time rolled on, his affections centred on the bright, beautiful boy, the promise of whose early boyhood was being fulfilled in his youth, and the promise of whose youth the father fondly hoped would be realized in his fast-approaching manhood.

For a few years a tutor had been employed for the young Milton, then it had seemed best to Mr. Haversham to avail himself of the advantages offered at an excellent academy where boys were fitted for college at the same time they were under superior Christian influence. In this institution Milton Haversham had been gradually developing powers of more than or-

dinary promise, until now he was expecting to enter college after the summer vacation. During his school days the lad had made frequent visits at his father's beautiful suburban home, and so far his dotting parent felt pleased and thankful that his darling boy had been kept entirely free from the temptations of city life, and knew nothing of the allurements which so often tempt young men into forbidden paths.

On only one subject did the Rev. Mr. Puriston and his friend, Mr. Roger Haversham, essentially disagree, and the conversation recorded at the beginning of this story was only one of many on the vexed question which, every little while, was debated with the same warmth and decision on the part of the rector, only to be met with the calm but determined arguments of the other, in defence of his preconceived convictions of an opposite character.

On no occasion had Milton Haversham ever seen wine on his father's table. Had he at any time been told that a locked compartment in the cellar at home contained a variety of rare liquors, he would either have declared the statement to be untrue, or, if convinced that such was the case, would have confidently asserted that they were kept only for medicinal purposes. The subject of temperance was one rarely touched upon between the father and son. Not that the former exactly wished to avoid it, but he mentally argued that allusion to the subject might provoke unnecessary discussion. Once while walking together, they had come upon a man very much under the influence of liquor, lying by the roadside, and Milton had said disgustedly,—

"How can a man make such a brute of himself?"

And his father had replied promptly:—"It is only necessary, in order to avoid that, my dear boy, to resist firmly the first temptation which may assail one to use intoxicating drink."

But this was when Milton was very young, and he had probably forgotten it.

On no consideration would Mr. Haversham willingly have allowed his son to see strong drink used in his house as a beverage. Yet many and many a time, while the lad was away, at school, had decanters been filled, and from slender little glasses had flashed prisms of sparkling light, as guests gay and cultured had sipped the pungent flavors stored from old and choice vintages, until time had added both strength and sweetness to the subtle draught.

But of late there had been a strong temperance movement in the community, and certain Christian women had gone from house to house inviting the heads of families to pledge themselves to banish all intoxicants from their homes, and to do what they could to rid the place of their baneful influence. And it had not surprised, although it did disappoint, the rector, that Mr. Haversham had courteously but decidedly refused to accede to the wishes of his callers of the day.

It was the week of the "Fourth," and Mr. Haversham was in the full pride and glory of realized hopes. His son Milton had graduated with unwonted honors from the academy where for seven years his mind had been slowly ripening and preparing for maturer study, and his examination for college had also passed and been pronounced unusually satisfactory.

A short time previous to the young man's arrival home, it had been planned that a party of gentlemen should, on the afternoon of the Fourth, enjoy a sail down the harbor and a lunch on board Mr. Haversham's trim little yacht. The company was to be a select one, composed of a number of friends to whom Mr. Haversham felt indebted for repeated hospitalities. Ordinarily he would have felt that his only son must accompany him on the holiday expedition, but as it was, it was with a feeling of great relief that he learned that Milton wished to invite some friends who had been his companions at school, and who resided in the near city, to lunch with him on the same afternoon. He had gone so far as to intimate to them that should nothing occur to prevent, he should send for them to come and enjoy the cooling breezes sure to be found on piazza or lawn, in the summer house or mimic forest about his father's spacious grounds.

"You shall have the finest collation possible, my boy" said his father warmly; "and I shall hope to return in time to see your friends before they go."

(To be Continued.)

GOOD SLEEPERS.

During the long days of summer the Russian peasants live almost without sleep, except that which they snatch at odd moments—at meal-time especially. Naturally they acquire a facility in falling asleep anywhere, and Mr. Robert Bremner gives a rather entertaining sketch of their performances in that line, in his "Excursions in the interior of Russia." Some of our numerous sufferers from insomnia may well read it with envy. Poverty and hard manual labor have at least some compensations.

What struck us most in regard to these slumbering scenes was the suddenness with which the men fell into repose. Some people are said to be able to command sleep the moment they court its favors; and the Russian peasant would seem to have the same power, for he is asleep as soon as his tools are thrown down.

One moment of the vacant hour is given to a scanty meal (an onion and a piece of rye bread need but little carving) and all the rest is bestowed on what, next to drinking, seems to be their favorite dissipation.

The positions they choose for this purpose are often most surprising. Where a piece of pavement is under repair, in a crowded street, you may see them sleeping among the stones and mud, liable to be run over by the first wheel.

A droschky-man falls asleep standing by his horse's shoulder, and leaning his head on the poor animal, which never moves an ear for fear of disturbing him. In short, a Russian sleeps in every attitude, and on every kind of bed—sitting or standing—on the top of dung carts, or perched on a load of stones.

Sometimes the post which he takes up is still more dangerous. We have seen workmen stretched on the ridge of some roof which they had been repairing; and passing along the quays, you may see them at any time soundly asleep on the narrow parapet, where, if they turn but from the right side to the left, they have not an inch to save them from rolling into the deep river below.

They may even be seen fast asleep in the sun on the narrow edge of a loaded barge, near the strongest part of the stream; yet so sound is their repose that though you watch them till their short hour is out, you will not see them move limb or feature. Tell the peasant of his danger in thus exposing himself, remonstrate with him on his rashness, and he will not understand you. He does not know what fear is; his fatalism makes him careless of life.

A GOOD NOTION.

A believer was giving in a prayer-meeting his testimony as to God's grace and goodness, and said:—

"On my way here to-night I met a man who asked me where I was going; I said: 'I am going to prayer-meeting.' He said: 'There are a good many religions, and I think the most of them are delusions; as to the Christian religion, that is only a notion, that is a mere notion, the Christian religion.' I said to him, 'Stranger, you see that tavern over there?' 'Yes,' said he, 'I see it.' 'Do you see me?' 'Yes, of course, I see you.' 'Now the time was, as everybody in this town knows, that if I had a quarter of a dollar in my pocket, I could not pass that tavern without going in and getting a drink; all the people of Jefferson could not keep me out of that place; but God has changed my heart, and the Lord Jesus Christ has destroyed my thirst for strong drink; and there is my whole week's wages, and I have no temptation to go there, and, stranger, if this is a notion, I want to tell you it is a mighty powerful notion, too, a notion that has put clothes on my children's backs, and it is a notion that has put good food on our table, and it is a notion that has filled my mouth with thanksgiving to God. And, stranger, you had better go along with me, you might get religion too; lots of people are getting religion now.'—*Exchange*.

HOLINESS consists of two things, two endeavors—the endeavor to know God's will, and the endeavor to do it when we know it.

THERE ARE SOME who never seem to feel any spiritual wants, and who, if they have their food and shelter, property and friends, would probably never ask the question—Is there a God?—*Rev. Peter S. Menzies*.