



The Family Circle.

KINDNESS.

A little word in kindness spoken,
A motion or a tear,
Has often healed a heart that's broken,
And made a friend sincere.

A word—a look—has crushed to earth
Full many a budding flower,
Which, had a smile but owned its birth,
Would bless life's darkest hour.

Then deem it not an idle thing
A pleasant word to speak;
The face you wear, the thoughts you bring,
A heart may heal or break.

—Whittier.

NOT ALL GOLD THAT GLITTERS.

"Mrs. Maple has just passed, and so beautifully dressed!"

The speaker was Emma Workman, who, with her mother, was sitting busily at work, finishing an order that she had promised to take home that night.

"Doesn't she dress beautifully?" continued Emma, "I am sure her husband must be quite rich."

"What makes you think so, my dear?"

"Why, look how they live, mother; they have a good deal of company—friends to supper very often; and Maggie Warden told me yesterday, that Mrs. Maple is going to give a party on her birthday!"

"Certainly, to do all that, her husband ought to have a very good income; but, as he is only a junior clerk, I should not have supposed his salary would have allowed of such extravagance."

"Oh, mother, it is not extravagant to entertain our friends; 'tis very pleasant to do so!"

A soft smile played round Emma's mouth as she thought of the pretty little home that she was shortly going to; and where she would always make her friends so welcome.

"Very pleasant, Emma," answered Mrs. Workman with a smile of sympathy; "but, remember, my dear, no prudent wife will entertain her friends at the expense of her home comforts."

"How do you mean, mother? That does not sound hospitable."

"Be hospitable by all means, my dear; make your friends welcome to the best your means can provide, but do not run into expenses that you cannot afford. Your friends visit you for the pleasure of your company, and not for what they can get to eat and drink!" added Mrs. Workman, pleasantly.

The conversation was interrupted by a knock at the door, and Mrs. Maple herself stepped in.

Mrs. Maple had on some particularly fine clothes that day; and, as the friend on whom she had just called was out, she thought she would give "those poor Workmans," as she termed them, a view of her grandeur.

Waving about her feathered head, in a manner which she considered highly impressive and dignified, she talked of the preparations she was making for her birthday party; and set them forth in such glowing terms that one would have thought her husband was at the head of his firm, instead of only a junior clerk making his way in the world.

"How pleasant to be able to do like Mrs. Maple!" said Emma, after the visitor's departure.

"Ah! if her husband can really afford it." The birthday party took place, and Frank and Agnes Maple entertained their friends in their pretty cottage home, in a manner that was agreeable to them both.

But was the pleasure equal to the expense?

This was a question that Frank often put to himself, as, week after week, Agnes came to him with the same tale that she could not make her allowances for housekeeping do.

This after a time put Frank out of temper; and unkind words passed between the young couple.

As Frank could not supply extra money, Agnes had to get into debt; so that when her husband received his month's salary a part of it had to go in paying what he termed "these unnecessary bills."

"If money goes one way it can't another," said Frank, ill-temperedly, as he put the remainder of his salary, which was little enough, safely away in his pocket.

The spring was far advanced; and the Whitsun-holidays were rapidly approaching.

The country was looking its brightest and best; and the balmy air and fragrant scents caused the cottagers to throw open their doors to enjoy the full sweetness of the season.

In the snug porch of one of these cottage homes stood an old man; who, after enjoying the air for a few moments, turned an enquiring glance inside the room, as he asked,

"Have you written the letter, mother?"

"Yes, and sent it to the post an hour ago."

"And you told them how we longed to see them?"

"Yes, and how disappointed we should be if they did not come."

"Don't talk of their not coming, my dear wife! The disappointment of not seeing my little Agnes's face would be more than her old father could bear!"

"Well, dear, you know it costs money."

"Yes—yes! but Frank can afford it if they have been careful; and, I dare say, Agnes has been laying by a little store."

Then Agnes's parents talked of the pleasure they should feel in having their only daughter and her husband with them once more; and the coming Whitsun-holidays promised to be a very happy time for the loving old couple.

Agnes received her dear mother's letter with delight; and, with a radiant face, she hastened to lay it before her husband on his arrival home. Frank read it through.

"Our going is quite out of the question, Agnes."

"Nonsense, Frank! when you will have nearly four days' holiday!"

"True—I have plenty of time, but not the money."

"Not the money! Why, you will receive your salary the day before we should go."

"Yes; and part of that salary must get us out of debt—just the sum that would pay for our journey must go to Jones for the stout, and other things that we have had there!"

Agnes saw that all argument would be useless; and she felt too bitterly disappointed to speak. Vainly she regretted her efforts to appear as well off as people whose incomes were twice that of her husbands. If she could only recall the money that she had spent so lavishly!

The next day, with a heavy heart, Agnes prepared to answer her mother's letter. Tears were in her eyes as she wrote the words which she knew would cause much keen disappointment in that country cottage home.

Agnes had not been long at her task before it was interrupted by the arrival of Mrs. Workman, who brought a book she had promised to lend to her.

When Agnes was in her usual spirits she cared very little for this neighbor's company; but, on this morning, in her trouble, she felt pleased to see Mrs. Workman's homely face; and a word of sympathy, on the young wife's tearful looks, brought forth the story of the disappointment.

"I would do much to go! If I had only known about it sooner, I would have gone without my merino dress."

"Would you really?" interrupted Mrs. Workman.

"That I would! I would ask the shopman to take it back now—for it is not made up, but I know he would refuse to do so, as it was cut off a length."

"Would the cost of the dress pay for both your journeys to and fro?"

"Very nearly so."

"It would go a great way toward it?"

"Yes, but it is of no good thinking of it now—I ought not to have been so extravagant."

Mrs. Workman's tones were very kind as she said,

"Could you let me see your new dress?"

"Oh, with pleasure!" answered Agnes, "it is a great beauty."

"So it is!" Mrs. Workman felt it in a scientific manner; and placing the smooth folds against

her cheek to feel the softness of them she said,

"But you would not like to part with it?"

"Indeed, I would if I had the chance?"

Then with quivering lips, Agnes added, "I would sooner see my dear father and mother these Whitsun-holidays, than myself in any new dress."

Mrs. Workman's motherly heart warmed toward the young wife, and with a kind smile she said—

"Well, you shall see your parents these holidays if I can help you to do so."

"How can you help me?" asked Agnes in surprised tones.

"Well, my Emma is going to be married early in July; and as I am going to make her a present of one very good dress, I may as well buy this of you."

"Oh, Mrs. Workman, how kind!" interrupted Agnes.

"And I will give you the same as you gave for it," continued her visitor.

Agnes was too pleased to say much; but her smiling face told Mrs. Workman, better than any words, how pleased she was with her offer.

The exchange was soon made; and by the end of the day Agnes and Frank had sent off a very different letter to the one that had been originally begun.

As Mrs. Workman walked home with her purchase, she was more than ever convinced that all is not gold that glitters.

And Agnes, as she prepared her own and her husband's things for their happy Whitsun-visit, resolved, for the future, to have more true comfort around her, and a great deal less outside show.—*British Workman.*

A NEIGHBORLY HEART.

In the days of the great King Agathos many wonderful things took place. Many that were poor became rich; many that were rude became gentle; and towns and villages that were almost deserted and in ruins were rebuilt and filled with happy crowds.

Just on the outskirts of this great king's kingdom, in a hollow among lofty hills, lay one of those ruined villages. Everything in it had a broken-down and decaying look. The houses were old, and mean and bare; grass grew upon the streets; and the inhabitants were ignorant, and sad, and poor.

One morning in early spring, a stranger entered this village. It was noticed that he walked from one end of the main street to the other, looking to this side and to that at the houses; but more eagerly still into the faces of the people who were passing by.

The laborers began to come out from their homes to go into the fields; the stranger examined every face as it passed. A little while after the young women came out to the wells for water; the stranger went up to these and questioned them one by one. By-and-by he turned aside to a blind old man, who sat at his door to enjoy the heat of the morning sun; he put many questions to him. But neither the old man nor the young women could give him the information he wished.

A look of distress and disappointment came into his face. The villagers saw him turning away into a back street that had long since been deserted. Then they noticed that he sat down on the stones of an old wall, with his face toward a roofless cottage, which had neither window, nor fireplace, nor door.

This was the cottage in which the stranger was born, and in which he had spent his early years. As he sat gazing on its ruins, the old forms he had known so well in his boyhood seemed to come back again. He saw his father working among the flower-beds in the garden, and his mother now knitting and now cooking beside the kitchen fire.

The very laughter of his brother and sisters as he had so often heard it long ago seemed to come back again and fill his ears like a song. And there came back also the memory of a day when that laughter was stilled; and along with that the form of a beautiful sister, who on that day was carried out to her grave. Tears began to trickle down his cheeks.

And then, one of the strange things I mentioned at the outset happened. Behind the cottage rose up the great sides of the hills among which the village was nestled. Far up the huts of shepherds could be seen like little dots scattered here and there; and on the green pastures, flocks of sheep. As the stranger was gazing across the roofless and broken walls of his early home, his ear caught little snatches of a song which some

one was singing among the hills behind. Then he beheld the singer—a little girl—stepping down as if she were coming from the shepherd's huts. Her feet were bare, but she stepped downward as if she had wings. Her yellow hair was blown out behind her with the wind. She was coming directly to the stranger, and almost before he knew she was at his side, and singing the song he had heard—

"Friend and brother wouldst thou find?
Hearts of love around thee bind?
Be thyself a heart of home;
To gentle hearts, hearts gentle come."

Then she stopped singing, and, fixing her eyes earnestly on him, she said, "You are in pain, my brother?" And although she was but a little child, and one he did not remember to have seen before, the stranger could not help opening his heart to her.

"I have come from the most distant shores of our king's country to find my brother and sisters, and they are not here. When I left this village I was poor. I am rich now, and would share my riches with them, if I could find them."

While the stranger was speaking, the little girl seemed to grow more and more beautiful. Her eyes shone like bits of blue of the sky, and sent her glance into his very soul. As the morning sunlight fell on her hair, it seemed like a crown of gold round her head.

And then, as she stood before him there, in her exceeding beauty, it flashed upon him that somewhere or other, in other years, he must have seen that face. And then, in a moment more, he knew that this was the very face of the dear sister who had died.

And then she said, "Come with me, brother; your brother and sisters are found."

She took him by the hand and led him back into the main street of the village, and said, "Do you see that blind old man whom you questioned? That is your father."

"But my father is dead these many years."

Without stopping to answer him the beautiful child went on, "Do you see those young women you spoke of coming from the wells with water? They are your sisters."

"But my sisters must be old and gray-headed now."

And once more, without replying to him, the child said, "Do you see those laborers in the field, whose faces you looked into so eagerly? They are your brothers."

"But I had only one brother."

While he was saying this the children began to go past to school.

"And there," exclaimed his young companion, pointing to them, "are your children."

The stranger was perplexed. Everything about him seemed to swim in the morning light. The children, the young women, the laborers, and the blind old man appeared as if they were drawn up into the light. And into the same light the beautiful form of his child sister also passed, smiling toward her brother with a tender grace, and singing her gentle song. And then everything disappeared.

When he came to himself he was still sitting on the stones of the broken wall. The roofless cottage was on the other side of the way, but the little girl was gone. And from where he sat he could see neither children nor grown-up people of the village.

He was never quite certain about what had taken place. Sometimes he fancied he had fallen asleep and had dreamed a happy dream. Sometimes it seemed as if he had seen a vision, and as if the beautiful child stepping down the hill-side with her song and her words of teaching had been real. But nobody else had seen her; and the shepherds in the huts did not know of such a child.

But whether what he saw and heard was real, or only a dream, it was the turning-point of life to this rich stranger.

The song of the fair-haired child took possession of his heart, and by means of it God changed his heart, and made it gentle and neighborly; and the light of the neighborly heart came into his eyes, and he saw in the ruined village a new world and new duties there for himself. Long afterward he used to tell that he saw that day what John had seen in the Isle of Patmos—"a new heaven and a new earth."

He knelt beside the ruined cottage and lifted up his heart to God, and said, "O my Father, let the heart that was in thy Son Jesus be also in me! All that I have is Thine; from Thee it came, to Thee it shall return. Help me to fulfil Thy will."

He rose up a new man. He said to himself, "I will abide in this village, and build