



The Family Circle.

PUT HEART IN IT, DEAR.

Is the lesson so hard? are the problems so deep?
Is the old hill of learning so thorny and steep
That the frown on your forehead is coming
again.

A frown, Willie darling, that gives mother pain?
Let me whisper a charm, Willie boy, in your ear:
To conquer hard lessons put heart in them, dear.

You hate the piano, this weary strum, tum,
Though you're ever so happy outdoors with a
drum.

But practising daily, and taking such care
That each little note is struck fully and fair
Makes you cross and discouraged. My Willie,
come here,

Let me give you my secret: put heart in it, dear.

The temper which trips you and gives you a fall
When you mean to be gentle and loving to all,
That sends naughty words to the gate of the
lips,

And shadows your face with an ugly eclipse—
Ask Jesus to help you, and, Willie, don't fear,
You will win in the conflict: put heart in it, dear.

A thing done by half, child, is always half-done;
A shame to be seen under God's faithful sun,
That sets us its beautiful pattern of work,
Without loiter or hurry or stopping to shirk,
While sunshine reminds you, so brave and so
clear,

Whatever your task be, put heart in it, dear.

If you weed in the garden or go for the mail,
Feed Ponto or Brindle, let none see you fail
In any small duty, but loyal and true,
Let father and mother depend upon you,
And this is my counsel, worth stopping to hear,
Worth treasuring, Willie: put heart in it, dear.

Put heart in the work, and put heart in the play:
Step on like a soldier, though rough be the way;
Laugh gayly at trials, and never retreat;
If your case be a right one, disclaim a defeat.
Pray always, and then, marching forth full of
cheer,

In strife or in labor, put heart in it, dear.
—Congregationalist.

THE LAWYER'S STORY.

BY EGBERT L. BANGS.

Fred was such a genial, social fellow, no wonder that a rather questionable crowd of hail-fellows was always at his heels. His immense influence made him a favorite with the local politicians, who courted and flattered and quite spoiled him, finally inducing him to go into politics on his own account. And then it was worse than ever.

Instead of sticking to his office and working up his practice, he spent the most of his time with "the boys." I sometimes suggested that no business man could ever have a particle of confidence in him so long as he kept such company; for who wants to hunt up legal advice in saloons or club-rooms? or how many clients can a man retain if he is never in his office to attend to them?

His invariable reply to these remonstrances was: "Just wait until the campaign is through. I must hold on to the boys until after the election. I don't like them any better than you do, but in politics every man is a unit; reputable or disreputable his vote counts one. No, no! I can't afford to stand clear of the boys just yet."

Well, I waited through two campaigns; but I was poor, just starting, my only capital was my reputation, and I felt I couldn't afford to be in partnership with a street-corner politician any longer—such a man doesn't build up a practice very rapidly. So I withdrew, and came out here to stand alone.

I saw Fred's mother before I left. We had a long talk. She felt badly to have me go, but not any worse than I did, for I thought a great deal of Fred. He was one of those men who somehow manage to get hold of your very heart. But as anxious as Mrs. Hammond was, we had no scene. She spoke of his shadowed reputation and his neglect of business as calmly as though her heart wasn't half broken. And I don't think it was. You see there are women, and women. Some rely on nothing higher than their own weak selves; trouble drives them into tears and despair. Others there are whose minds are stayed upon a sure foundation; calamities never quite crush them, for they, "endure as seeing Him who is invisible." Just such a grand, strong woman as that was Mrs. Hammond.

"While I am very sorry that you are leaving," she said, "for with you all restraint seems to be taken away from Fred; yet I am not in utter despair. I feel sure that some safeguard will be provided for him. Though,

"It may not be my way,
It may not be thy way,
Yet in some way or other
The Lord will provide."

And in whatever way he does provide for my boy's salvation, I'm sure it will be done quite as effectually as if you and I could have managed it."

Well, I was glad her faith comforted her, if it didn't me. And so I left, expecting nothing else than that Fred would go to the dogs as fast as he could.

I didn't get back to A— for the next four years. The first thing I did was to hunt up Fred. I found him in the same place—but such a change! It was as different from our old office as anything you could imagine. I hardly knew it. Changed for the worse, you say? No, sir; that was the queer part of it. You should have seen his law library! I could scarcely believe my own eyes; had half a notion to regard them as unreliable witnesses. Of course I cross-questioned pretty closely, for I was bound to get at the facts of the case. At last he said:

"I don't wonder you are surprised, though you'll be more so when you find out how it all came about. It seems like a childish affair, and yet it was mighty to me. You see that desk over there?" and he pointed to a substantial, walnut article, handsomely finished.

"Yes," I said; "It caught my eye as soon as I came in, and made me think I had mistaken the place; for I supposed you were too poor to indulge in such an elegant piece of office furniture."

"It has a history, I can assure you," Fred continued. "It used to belong to Hargrove. Someway, Benson got hold of this and several other articles, to satisfy an old debt at his place. He expected to be able to dispose of them at private sale, and managed everything but this desk. It proved to be an elephant on his hands. No one wanted the huge thing. It stood there in his saloon for three or four years. Finally he offered it to me at five dollars. I closed on that bargain at once, brought it up here and had it thoroughly cleaned. I was jubilant over my bargain. The next morning, when I unlocked the office, the air was fairly thick. The whole room seemed like a strong, foul-smelling, old clay pipe. I rushed to the windows and threw them up to get a breath of fresh air. All day I shivered between a roaring fire and open windows, yet if I dared to close them I was fairly sick with the vile odor. The next day was no better. I couldn't imagine where it all came from. Finally I got my nose near that desk and discovered the source. A four years' contact with the fumes of tobacco and liquor in Benson's place had literally saturated the solid wood. Well, I couldn't have my office smelling like a fourth-rate saloon, so I stood the thing out in the hall for a couple of months until the weather was warm enough to keep the window open, and after a whole summer of steady ventilation I couldn't notice it. But the odor hasn't entirely departed yet. Of course it isn't strong enough to affect the atmosphere any, but still if you come in close contact with it you detect a faint, sickening smell. I had no idea that any fumes could be ground so into the very grain and fibre of wood. Then I saw why this magnificent piece of furniture had been such a dead weight on Benson's hands. His second-rate customers had no use for it; and his first-class patrons didn't care to have their offices or dwellings smelling like a rum-hole. I thought about it a good deal; I couldn't help but think, for it was right before my eyes every day. It seemed to say: 'Wait until you've stood around saloons as long as I have, and nobody will tolerate you. You may have the making of a fine lawyer, you may contain the best of material—so did I.'

"You see it just went on in that strain until I got half desperate. Sometimes I thought I'd cut it up for kindling wood. At last I made up my mind I couldn't be a pot-house politician and a respectable lawyer at the same time. Just then I was nominated for prosecuting attorney. Three months before, I would have jumped at the chance; now I was half sick over it, for that handsome old desk and its vile odor haunted me.

"When I heard my name announced in

the convention, I just dragged myself out of my chair, weak as a baby—for I felt it was either lose the election or lose myself—and I said: 'Gentlemen, I thank you; but before I accept, I want you to thoroughly understand that I don't propose conducting this canvass on the old plan. If you choose to elect me, you will elect me for the good, honest work you expect me to do, and not for the amount of beer or whiskey I can pour down your throats. I should like my ability and industry to command your support and votes, but not my liquor bills. I propose leaving them out of this campaign.'

"I thought that finished it, but it didn't. You should have heard them cheer. Nearly everybody was ready to congratulate me. Dozens of men from the other party came to me, saying I was just the man they had been looking for. I was amazed. I found principle was at a premium even in politics. And as for 'the boys,' they just stood by me like brothers. I never dreamed how much respect a dissipated man has for one who honestly endeavors to keep himself straight. I carried the election without any trouble, and ever since then I've been a man and a lawyer, not a tool of rum-sellers and politicians."

You can imagine how Fred's story impressed me. "Isn't this glorious news for your mother!" I asked.

"Oh, bless you! she knows nothing about it. I never mentioned this desk business to anyone but you. There's scores of things a man doesn't care to tell his mother, especially if she's as good a mother as mine."

"But she surely knows how much better you're doing?" I urged.

"I don't believe she does, for she never dreamed how near I came to destruction."

"Fred, old boy, there's one thing you never dreamed of, and that is how your mother's prayers and your mother's faith and your mother's God have saved your erring feet even though they had strayed so very near destruction; they have brought about a train of circumstances which you regard as accidents, when you ought to call them providences."

"Nonsense, man! don't get to preaching. That isn't a lawyer's business. Besides, your argument is illogical. God don't send messengers of grace out of such a place as that old desk came from. Saloons don't preach sermons."

"Yes, they do, when He wills it. His messengers can reach the heart through any channel. His ways are past finding out."

"It may not be my way,
It may not be thy way,
But yet in his own way—"

You know the song, Fred?"

"Well, I should think I do. I hear my mother sing it every day."

Fred is a saved man now; not merely so far as business is concerned, but his feet are planted upon the solid rock of God's great love, and he is indeed safe.—*Church and Home.*

MRS. DICKERMAN'S WAY.

BY MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON.

In the soft, rosy flush of the twilight, Mrs. Perkins ran in for a little call upon her neighbor, Mrs. Dickerman.

"I am glad to see you," said that gentlemanly lady. "Please sit here in this low rocker. I am just going through our daily Bible lesson with our children; and we were talking about those precious words, 'If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye may ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you.' Deacon Brown was talking about them at the prayer-meeting last evening. You missed a great treat not being there with your children."

"I had to iron," replied Mrs. Perkins, glancing down at the fluted ruffles of her white cambric apron, in striking contrast to the plain, dark print of her neighbor.

"Pardon me, but do you not devote a good deal of time and strength to that ironing? You always look so tired that I cannot help thinking of it when I see your children's spotless and crisp ruffles and frills."

"I am tired," said Mrs. Perkins, "I am always tired, but the children must be kept clean, and the house must be kept clean. 'Cleanliness is next to godliness,' you know, it says so in the Bible."

"Does it? are you sure?" asked Mrs. Dickerman, looking surprised and puzzled, glancing around at the large sitting-room that certainly was in some disorder, for the children lived in it and were happy in their individual ways. And then looking at the healthy, bright-eyed, fair-faced children

themselves, and noting that traces of bread and molasses were visible about their rosy mouths, and that the pinafores were not models of freshness, her brow cleared, and she said: "I must seem to be a very inefficient housewife to all you notable women in this community, but I look at things in a somewhat different way. I am thankful for all the comforts by which I am surrounded, but I cannot live for a house, or for a flower-garden, or for fresh ruffles. God has sent me the children and I must see that the tabernacle of their bodies is kept healthy and wholesome, and that the precious souls that dwell therein are kept fresh and clean from guile. I must look after the garden of their hearts, that no evil seed is sown, and no weeds grow there. I must cultivate their dispositions, helping them to live in the light, allowing no shadow to fall upon them from yesterday, and no cloud to shut out the radiance of to-morrow, and I must store the treasure-house of their minds with useful knowledge. And so, if my plain, material house here is not at all times an example of neatness, I hope to fit the dear children so that they may in a measure be prepared, when they come into their great inheritance—a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Do you ever think, my friend, that the people about here care too much for some matters, and too little for other matters?"

"Yes, I do," said Mrs. Perkins, resting her head wearily against the back of her chair, "but the fact is they haven't time to think about these matters." And as she went away she pondered over the earnest, kindly words of her gentle neighbor, with a half regret that there were not more mothers like her. The words remained in her heart.

She repeated them to her friends and neighbors, but they bore no fruit, for the ruling spirit that obtained in that locality was for each one of the good housewives and housekeepers to excel her neighbor in material substance and appearance. As time went on and young Mrs. Dickerman developed individuality enough, or rather, had daily grace given her to keep the even tenor of her way, and her children grew to be the best behaved children, the best scholars in the Sunday and secular schools, and the most constant in their attendance, her neighbors had for her an increased respect.

The generality of the children in the neighborhood ran wild, so to speak. The parents and guardians of these little ones owned the houses in which they were domiciled, and they were determined to keep them as tidy and clean as the strong and prevailing spirit of rivalry in that direction would impel them. The great, commodious, airy farmhouses in that lovely country village were paragons of neatness outside and inside. Bright, spic-span rag carpets and rugs covered the floors. Crocheted tidies adorned the chairs, and patchwork and knitted counterpanes smoothly overspread the high, fluffy beds. In fact, the houses were too good to live in.

But Mrs. Dickerman's domicile was open and free. It was the only one on the wide, shady street, in which the sun, summer and winter, was always made welcome. The children romped in the broad hall and in the big "parlor." There were great fires in the open fireplaces in the winter time, but there were no carpets to soil, no delicate and elaborate curtains to smoke. Books and all sorts of good reading abounded. Tasteful and suggestive engravings and water colors hung upon the walls. The love of music was fostered and gratified, botanizing held its stated hours, and pet birds and animals were among the delights of the little ones. What a workshop these children made of the house! As they grew older they kept themselves tidy, although their clothing was always of the plainest kind. The mother, with whom I was well acquainted, has gone home to her heavenly inheritance, but her beautiful memory remains, like a sweet perfume, in the lives of her children, and in the hearts of their old playmates, in which her gentle deeds and sweet words of cheer took root.

Those children of hers! What more need I say of them than that they are all cheerful, hearty, working Christians?

And what of Mrs. Perkins and those other notable women of that neighborhood? We all know too many such, alas! The world is full of them, and of their children, who are leading selfish, superficial lives, idlers in the Lord's vineyard, helping on nothing and nobody worthy, doing nothing to carry on the great work that the Lord Jesus left to be done.—*Christian at Work.*