

## The Home Circle.

## ALONE AMONG THE SHADOWS.

BY FRANCIS S. SMITH.

I'm alone among the shadows,  
And I'm waiting for the light  
To chase away the visions  
Of the dreary, weary night.  
Like a sightless child deserted,  
My uncertain way I grope—  
I'm alone among the shadows,  
But my soul is full of hope.

I'm alone among the shadows,  
But my doubts and fears are past,  
For I feel the sweet assurance  
That the light will come at last.  
A ray from Ilohu's bright beacon  
Comes through the gloom to me—  
I'm alone among the shadows,  
But my heart is light and free.

I'm alone among the shadows,  
But I hear a sweet voice say,  
"You would not prize the daylight  
If it were always day."  
And so I'll strive in earnest  
To keep from error free,  
And He who strengtheneth the weak  
Will surely comfort me.

## THE PATTERN OF LITTLE FEET.

Up with the sun in the morning,  
Away to the garden he lies,  
To see if the sleeping blossoms  
Have begun to open their eyes;  
Running a race with the wind,  
With a step as light and fleet,  
Under my window I hear  
The patter of little feet.

Now to the brook he wanders,  
In swift and noiseless flight,  
Splashing the sparkling ripples  
Like a fairy water sprite.  
No sand under fabled river  
Has a gleam like his golden hair;  
No pebbly sea shell is fairer  
Than his slender ankles bare.

Nor the rosiest stem of coral  
That blushes in ocean's fold,  
Is sweeter as the flash that follows  
Our darling's airy tread.  
From a broad window my neighbor  
Looks down on our little cot,  
And watches the "poor man's blessing"—  
I cannot envy his lot.

He has pictures, books, and music,  
Bright fountains and noble trees,  
Flowers that blossom in roses,  
Birds from beyond the seas;  
But never does childish laughter  
His homeward footsteps greet;  
His stately halls ne'er echo  
To the tread of innocent feet.

This child is our "speaking picture,"  
A birdling that chatters and sings,  
Sometimes a sleeping cherub—  
(Our other one has wings.)  
His heart is a charmed casket,  
Full of all that's cunning and sweet,  
And no harp-string holds such music  
As follows his tinkling feet.

When the glory of sunset opens  
The highway by angels trod,  
And seems to unbar the city  
Whose builder and maker is God,  
Close to the crystal portal  
I see by the gates of pearl  
The eyes of our other angel—  
A twin-born little girl.

And I ask to be taught and directed  
To guide his footsteps aright;  
So to live that I be counted worthy  
To walk in sandals of light;  
And hear, amid songs of welcome,  
From messengers trusty and fleet,  
On the stary floor of heaven,  
The patter of little feet.

## NOTHING TO DO.

Men or women with no business, nothing to do, are absolute pests to society. They are thieves, stealing that which is not theirs; beggars, eating that which they have not earned; drones, wasting the fruits of others' industry; leeches, sucking the blood of others; evildoers, setting an example of idleness and dishonest living; vampires, eating out the life of the community.

Many of our most interesting youth waste a great portion of their early life in fruitless endeavors at nothing. They have no trade, no profession, no object before them, nothing to do; and yet have a great desire to do something worthy of themselves. They try this and that, and the other; offer themselves to do anything and everything, and yet know how to do nothing. Educate themselves they cannot, for they know not what they should do for. They waste their time, energies, and little earnings in endless changes and wanderings. They have not the stimulus of a fixed object to fasten their attention and awaken their energies; not a known prize to win. They wish for good things, but have no way to attain them; desire to be useful, but little means for being so. They lay plans, invent schemes, form theories, build castles, but never stop to execute and realize them. Poor creatures! All that ails them is the want of an object—a single object. They look at a hundred, and see nothing. If they should look steadily at one, they would see it distinctly. They grasp at random at a hundred things, and catch nothing. It is like shooting among a scattered flock of pigeons—the chances are doubtful. This will never do—no, never. Success, respectability and happiness are found in a permanent business. An early choice of some business, devotion to it, and preparation for it, should be made by every youth.

## WHAT COOLNESS DID.

It was during the terrible cholera year, 1849, in Russia. Five hundred fell victims

daily. The peasants were in despair. The report was started, and it spread like wildfire, that they were poisoned by the physicians. A furious mob, armed with those axes in the use of which the Russians are so dexterous, rushed to the market-place. No man knew where their fury would fall. The tumult might end in an insurrection. The tidings were brought to Nicholas, who had only partially recovered from an attack of the fearful pestilence. He flung himself into a droshky, and dashed to the market. Mounting the steps of a church, his tall form towered above the surrounding masses which heaved and tossed with excitement. His clear and sonorous voice rang through the vast square.

"How is this? You are not the children of sacred Russia. Would you revolt against Heaven? Would you imitate the revolutionists of other nations? Brothers, be yourselves again. It is God who smites us. Instead of murmuring against his blow, acknowledge his power. Down upon your knees, and implore him to remove the scourge from our country."

As he spoke, he bowed his stately head in prayer; and the crowd, as one man, fell upon their knees. The Czar had conquered.

## THE LENGTH OF DAYS.

The days of summer grow longer as we go northward, and the days of winter shorter. At Hamburg, the longest day has seventeen hours, and the shortest seven. At Stockholm, the longest has eighteen and a half hours, and the shortest five and a half. At St. Petersburg, the longest has nineteen, and the shortest five hours. At Finland, the longest has twenty-one hours and a half, and the shortest two and a half. At Wandorbus, in Norway, the day lasts from the 21st of May to the 2nd of July, the sun not getting below the horizon for the whole time, but skimming along very close to it in the north. At Spitzbergen, the longest day lasts three months and a half.

## PERSPIRATION.

The amount of liquid matter which passes through the microscopical tubes of the skin in twenty-four hours, in an adult person of sound health, is about sixteen fluid ounces, or one pint. One ounce of the sixteen is solid matter, made up of organic or inorganic substances, which, if allowed to remain in the system for a brief space of time, would cause death. The rest is water. Besides the water and solid matter, a large amount of carbonic acid—a gaseous body—passes through the tubes; so we cannot fail to see the importance of keeping them in perfect working order, removing obstructions by frequent applications of water, or by some other means. Suppose we obstruct the functions of the skin perfectly by varnishing a person completely with a compound impervious to moisture; how long will he live? Not over six hours. The experiment was once tried on a child in Florence. Pope Leo X., on the occasion of his accession to the papal chair, wished to have a living figure to represent the Golden Age, and so he gilded a poor child all over with varnish and gold leaf. The child died in a few hours. If the fur of a rabbit, or the skin of a pig be covered with a solution of india-rubber in naphtha, the animal ceases to breathe in two hours.

## A GIGANTIC FAMILY.

Perhaps we may make no excuse for departing from the custom of not noticing exhibitions when we call the attention of our readers to the most remarkable development of adipose tissue which has, probably, ever been observed in Europe, at least within one family. It is interesting, as testing the laws of heredity, to observe the peculiarities of the O'Neal family, of which a careful examination by a writer in the *Medico-Chirurgical Review* leads him to vouch for the accuracy of the extraordinary measurements we give. They are natives of Ireland, Queen's county, forty-seven miles from the city of Dublin. They are born of respectable parents, hard-working farmers. The father stood six feet, and weighed twenty-seven stone. The mother is forty-five years of age, stands five feet two inches in height, measures round her arm twenty-six inches, across her shoulders three feet, round her waist five feet six inches, and weighs the enormous weight of twenty-one stone. Her eldest son is twenty-five years of age, stands six feet two inches, weighs eighteen stone five pounds, and at the present time he is a Life Guard. All the sons and daughters were of large dimensions. Miss Ann O'Neal, the eldest daughter, is twenty years of age; she stands five feet six inches in height, and measures round her arm twenty-seven inches, across the shoulders one yard and a half, round her waist eight feet, and has the enormous weight of thirty-nine stone. Her youngest sister is eighteen years of age, stands five feet two inches in height, measures round her arm twenty-five inches, across her shoulders three feet, round her waist six feet, and weighs twenty-three stone. The eldest daughter is, as may well be imagined, on account of her obesity, scarcely able to walk. She appears to be uneasy on her legs, and is compelled to lean up against the wall for support. The vaccination marks on her arms having increased with age and development of adipose tissue, are as large as ordinary saucers. As there is no padding or artificial method employed to enhance the enormous weight of the specimens, the

disproportion which strikes the observer between the gigantic bodies and the relatively small though absolutely large crania is almost startling. The hands are coarse and large-boned. In Ann O'Neal (affectionately and absurdly named "Lily" by her smaller relatives) the malar bones are enormous, and the mouth is much underhung, by the forward projection of the lower jaw. Although the mother shows signs of excessive alcoholic consumption, there is no disease noticeable or complained of; and the subjects do not appear to suffer from any other affection than the inconvenience of having to support so much fat. —*Medical Record.*

## EVIL SPEAKING.

The following anecdote is related of the late excellent J. J. Gurney, by one who, as a child, was often one of his family circle:

"One night—I remember it well—I received a severe lesson on the sin of evil speaking. Severely I thought it then, and my heart rose in childish anger against him who gave it; but I had not lived long enough in this world to know how much mischief a child's thoughtless talk may do, and how often it happens that talkers run off the straight line of truth. S. did not stand very high in my esteem, and I was about to speak further of her failings of temper. In a few moments my eye caught a look of such calm and steady displeasure that I stopped short. There was no mistaking the meaning of that dark, speaking eye. It brought the color to my face, and confusion and shame to my heart. I was silent for a few moments, when Joseph John Gurney asked, very gravely:

"Dost thou know any good thing to tell us of her?"

"I did not answer; and the question was more seriously asked,

"Think; is there nothing good thou canst tell us of her?"

"Oh yes, I know some good things; but—"  
"Would it not have been better, then, to relate those good things than to have told us that which would lower her in our esteem? Since there is good to relate, would it not be kinder to be silent on the evil. 'Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity,' thou knowest."

## WHO IS A GENTLEMAN?

An exchange copies the following correct and comprehensive answer to the above question, and urges every child as well as grown person to commit it to memory, to be recited as often as practicable:

A gentleman is not merely a person acquainted with certain forms and etiquette of life, easy and self-possessed in society, able to speak and act and move in the world without awkwardness, and free from habits which are vulgar and in bad taste. A gentleman is something beyond this; that which lies at the root of all his pleasing is the same spirit which lies at the root of every Christian virtue. It is the thoughtful desire of doing in every instance to others as he would that others should do unto him. He is constantly thinking, not indeed, how he may give pleasure to others for the mere sense of pleasing, but how he can show respect to others—how he may avoid hurting their feelings. When he is in society, he scrupulously ascertains the position and relations of every one with whom he comes in contact, that he may give to each his due honor, his proper position. He studies how he may avoid touching in conversation upon any subject which may needlessly hurt their feelings—how he may abstain from any illusions which may call up a disagreeable or offensive association. A gentleman never alludes to, nor even appears conscious of, any person's defect, bodily deformity, inferiority of talent, of rank, or of the reputation of the person in whose society he is placed. He never assumes any superiority to himself, never ridicules, never sneers, never boasts, never makes a display of his own power or rank, or advantages—such as is implied in ridicule, or sarcasm, or abuse—as he never indulges in habits, or tricks, or inclinations which may be offensive to others.

## DIDN'T GIVE IT UP.

One of our citizens is blessed, or otherwise, with a very stubborn wife. In his case he finds that when a woman will she will, you may depend on't, and when she won't she won't and that's an end on't. This peculiarity of disposition in his wife is no secret among his associates, and one of them meeting him the other day, asked:

"Well—do you know why you are like a donkey?"

"Like a donkey!" echoed W—, opening his eyes wide. "No, I don't."

"Do you give it up?"

"I do."

"Because your better half is stubbornness itself."

"That's not bad. Ha! ha! I'll give that to my wife when I go home."

"Mrs. W—," he asked, as he sat down to supper, "do you know why I am like a donkey?"

He waited a moment, expecting his wife to give it up, but she didn't; she looked at him somewhat commiseratingly as she answered:

"I suppose it's because you were born so."

W— has abjured the habit of putting conundrums to his wife. —*Lawrence American.*

## A STRIKING PICTURE.

The editor of the *Corpus Christi (Texas) Advertiser*, in parting with his paper, gives his ideas of what he knows about the business, as follows:—

If it contains too much political matter, people won't have it; if the type is too large, it don't contain enough reading matter; if the type is too small, they can't read it; if we publish telegraph reports, folks say they are nothing but lies; if we omit them, they say we have no enterprise, or suppress them for political effect; if we insert a few jokes, folks say we are nothing but a rattle head; if we omit jokes, we are a fossil; if we publish original selections, folks say we are lazy for not giving them what they have not read in some other paper; if we give a man complimentary notices, we are censured for being partial; if we do not, all hands say that we are a great hog; if we insert an article that pleases the ladies, men become jealous; if we do not cater to their wishes, the paper is not fit to be in their houses; if we attend church, they denounce us as deceitful and desperately wicked; if we speak well of any act, folks say we dare not do otherwise; if we censure, they call us a traitor; if we remain in our office and attend to our business, folks say we are too proud to mingle with our fellows; if we do not pay all bills promptly, folks say we are not to be trusted; if we do pay promptly, they say we stole the money.

We have been through the mill. We have toiled by our midnight lamp while others were asleep.

Worn out by toil, trouble, affliction, anxiety, and with the consciousness of declining health, we seek respite. We stand aside, turn over our lance to others, and will endeavor to avail ourselves of that physical restoration of which we stand so much in need. Farewell.

## NEVER BE HAUGHTY.

A humming-bird met a butterfly, and, being pleased with the beauty of its person and glory of its wings, made an offer of perpetual friendship. "I cannot think of it," was the reply, "as you once spurned me, and called me a drawing doll." "Impossible!" exclaimed the humming-bird. "I always entertained the highest respect for such beautiful creatures as you." "Perhaps you do now," said the other; "but when you insulted me I was a caterpillar. So let me give you a piece of advice: never insult the humble, as they may, some day, become your superiors."

## "ALL RIGHTEE."

Those who have ever come in contact with the "heathen chimes," or spent any time over the pages of Bret Harte, will enjoy the following story clipped from the *Vailejo Independent*, which that paper significantly entitles "all rightee."

A laughable incident occurred one evening, recently, on the up train to Sacramento. There were two seats in the car turned so as to face each other. One was occupied by a lady and the other by a Chinaman. Evidently the lady did not relish the presence of the Chinaman, and set her wits to work to oust him out. She succeeded about as follows:

Motioning the Chinaman to rise, she explained to him that she wanted to take the cushions and their frames, and place them lengthwise across from seat to seat. John said "all rightee," and got out in the aisle while she placed the seats as above described, and then proceeded to lie down on the bed thus improvised, with her head resting on her valise.

She supposed that the Chinaman would at once take the hint that the lady wanted to take a little rest, in the space usually occupied by four persons. But John hadn't heard of the woman's rights movement, and at once proceeded to crawl in and stretch himself by her side, with his head on a little bundle of his own. The Chinese are an imitative race, and like to do as others do, you know.

The lady, as soon as she discovered that she had a bedfellow, got up a little wildly, and started for the next car, to the infinite amusement of the passengers, who had been watching the little scene with some interest. John took no notice of the fun he created, but went to sleep with the whole bed to himself.

## Sawdust and Chips.

Bill Shank says courtship is bliss, but matrimony is blister.

"It is a sin to steal a pin," and a man in Philadelphia has been arrested for that very offence. The pin has a diamond attached to it.

The wife of a roofer being asked if she was not afraid to have her husband exposed to such danger, trustfully replied: "Oh! he's insured."

A little boy was sent to a shop for some eggs. Before reaching home he dropped them. In answer to his mother, who asked, "Did you break any?" he replied, "No, I didn't break any, but the shells came off from some of them."

"You are the dullest boy I ever saw," crossly exclaimed a bald-headed old uncle to his nephew. "Well, uncle," replied the youth, with a glance at the old gentleman's bald head, "you can't expect me to understand things as quickly as you do, because

you don't have the trouble of 'getting 'em through your hair.'"

EXACTLY SO.—Our friend Charley: Have you read Darwin's book, *Miss Gibbons*?—Miss G.: Oh, yes.—Charley: And—ah—what do you think of it?—Miss G. (who may have been asked the same question before): I think it a very exhaustive treatise upon the indeterminate modifications in which the sensibilities of human nature are involved! (Charley is rather sorry he spoke.)

A Boston journal is responsible for the following on the marriage of Thomas Hawk to Miss S. J. Dove:—

"It isn't often that you see  
So queer a kind of love.  
Oh, what a savage he must be  
To Tommy Hawk a dove!"

One of the most touching instances of gratitude is alleged to have occurred in the country the other day. A little boy, the child of a wealthy mother, tumbled into the river. He was rescued by a working-man and restored to his broken-hearted parent. The woman gave the man a penny postage stamp, and said she would be glad to have him come up to her house and sit out in the entry and hear her play the piano. He went away with tears in his eyes. He said he wasn't used to such overwhelming kindness.

A romantic young lady fell into the river, the other day, and was near drowning; but succor being fortunately at hand, she was drawn out senseless, and carried home. On coming to, she declared to her family that she must marry him who had saved her. "Impossible," said her papa. "What is he already married?" "Certainly not." "Wasn't it that interesting young man who lives here in our neighborhood?" "Dear me, no—it was a Newfoundland dog!"

CRACK AND RING.—Two Aberdonians, turning the corner of a street rather sharply, came into collision. The shock was severe to one of them. He pulled off his hat, and laying his hand on his forehead, said, "Sic a blow! my head's a-ringing again." "Nao wonder," said his fellow-town man, your head was eye boss (empty); that makes it ring. My head disna' ring a bit." "How could it ring," said the other, "seeing it is crackit? Crackit vessels never ring."

A JUDICIAL EXPERIMENT.—Doherty, the late Chief Justice of Ireland, used to tell a good story of his posting days. He was going circuit in a postchaise, and at a dangerous part, where the road skirted a descent, one of the horses, who had been behaving wildly all the way, began kicking furiously. Much alarmed, Doherty called out, "This is outrageous! I don't think that horse has ever been in harness before."—"Bedad, your lordship's right; he was only taken out of the field this morning." "And do you mean to tell me that you have put an unbroken horse to my carriage?" "Sorra a sight of the leather he has ever seen till to-day, and if he brings your lordship safe to the fut of the hill, the master says he'll buy him."

THE BACHELOR JURY.—A gentleman, who is rather given to story-telling, relates the following:—"When I was a young man I spent several years in the south, residing for a while at Port Gibson on the Mississippi river. A great deal of litigation was going on there about that time, and it was not always an easy matter to obtain a jury. One day I was summoned to act in that capacity, and repaired to court to get excused. On my name being called I informed his honor the judge that I was not a freeholder, and therefore not qualified to serve. 'I am stopping for the time being at this place.' 'You board at the hotel, I presume?' 'I take my meals, but have rooms in another part of the town where I lodge.' 'So you keep bachelor's hall?' 'Yes, sir.' 'How long have you lived in that manner?' 'About six months.' 'I think you are qualified,' gravely remarked the judge, 'for I have never known a man to keep bachelor's hall the length of time you name who had not dirt enough in his room to make him a freeholder. The Court does not excuse you.'"

A traveller in Ireland, in the midst of a severe storm of wind and rain, found a dilapidated cabin by the wayside, and entered. Through numerous cracks and fissures in wall and roof the flood poured in trickling streams; only one spot of the littered floor was dry, and that was in the corner where an old coverlet was suspended roofwise, and underneath which sat the owner of the cabin playing upon a fiddle. He ceased his music as the stranger entered, and offered him a seat by his side beneath the coverlet. "You seem to be musical under difficulties," remarked the traveller, after he had gained the shelter. "Faith, 'an I fiddle to keep away the blues," answered Paddy. "Is this cabin yours?" "An' it is, bad scan to it!" "Why don't you patch up the walls and roof, and stop this fearful leaking?" "Och, bedad! would ye have a man go out in a storm? The remedy 'ud be worse than the disease." "But," urged the traveller, "why don't you patch it during pleasant weather?"—"Why, bless your soul," exclaimed the host, "in pleasant weather it don't lake!"

Education does not profess to give the gifts of God, by creating abilities in man, but merely to draw such out as are inherent within him, so that he may be enabled to apply them to his comfort and happiness in life. Schools are arenas for mental training—places for mental gymnastics—where, by systematic effort and exercise, the feeble man may become strong.