

THE SHINING-FACE CIRCLE.

The circle was formed a week before, but the name had not been decided on. Several were proposed and rejected, so Miss Merton had dismissed the girls, telling them to think about the name and no doubt it would come to them. "It will flash upon you, precisely what you want, at the right moment," she said. "But, girls, the name should give some indication of the work we are to do, and we have not fully decided what that shall be. The one will perhaps suggest the other."

So they had thought and talked of it for a week, and when they came together again most of them were as undecided as before, until Esther Luke, the minister's daughter, came into the room with the joyful exclamation, "I have it! I told papa what we had done; that we had formed a Circle of King's Daughters."

"I'm glad to hear that," said he. "What a bright time we shall have in this neighborhood now, with ten bright daughters of the King flitting in and out; the daughters of the King have always shining faces. No more discontent, nor envy, nor impatience, nor pride, in these regions; no more scowling brows, nor pouting lips, nor downcast eyes; no more east winds, nor drizzling mists and fogs. All sunshine!"

"Dear me, papa," I said, "you take my breath away; do you think because we have formed a circle we are perfect? I am sure we are not all that we ought to be."

"But," said he, "the King's daughter is all glorious within, and if this be true the glory must shine out; it can't all be hidden." So I thought, Miss Merton, as I came along, we might be the 'Shining-Face Circle,' and try all the time to be good-natured and pleasant."

"I like the idea," said Miss Merton. "Girls, how does it strike you?"

"It reminds me of a lecture I heard not long ago, upon the culture of the face," said Essie Howard, the eldest of the group. "The speaker said we had little idea how much influence we exerted with the face, nor how much we revealed of our character by it. 'The face talks,' he said, 'and it is always doing a good or an evil work.'"

"My mother is always talking to me about my face," said Gertrude Fisher; "she says it is a perfect tell-tale."

"Mr. Woodward said," continued Esther,

"we had only to look around the breakfast table any morning, and without a word being spoken we could tell the state of mind of every member of the family. The father had perhaps read bad news in the paper; mother had found something amiss with the breakfast; Harry is full of fun and Alice is full of snarls. Mary pouts because her dress doesn't fit well, and there is Sereua, as sweet as her name, from her morning devotions."

"Then go into society, and you know who are the earnest workers, who the giddy-pleasure-seekers, who the haughty, the vain, the self-satisfied. The face tells you all more truly than the tongue, for the tongue doesn't always speak the truth."

"I am pleased to hear you taking up this thought," said Miss Merton. "It is really an important one."

"But isn't it strange?" questioned Kittie Saunders. "Why can't we control our faces?"

"So intimate is mind with matters that the mind moves the muscles of our face before we are aware," resumed Essie. "Curious indeed is this face-dial"—and at once every girl was scanning the face of her neighbor. "So many and delicate are the muscles of the face," she continued, "that every feeling is instantly telegraphed. There are muscles which pull the corners of the mouth up with the electric touch of pleasure—a little, and the face is lighted with a smile; a good deal, and you have the merry laugh."

"The muscles which sorrow holds draw the corners of the mouth down, and the expression is sad; those that contract and wrinkle the eyebrows are handled by discontent. 'His countenance fell,' we say; or 'The child is down in the mouth to-day,' when disappointment or vexation is playing on the wires behind the face. There is a proud muscle which pushes up the under lip, and a contemptuous one that slightly elevates the nose. How marked it is! It seems as if every feeling had its tiny cord, with which to pull this or that feature, and depict every variety of expression on the face."

"As if some little imp were behind it, playing on the muscles as on a typewriter," said Katie.

"Or on a piano," said Hepzibah.

"But there is a still more important phase of the matter," said Essie; "for when any of these muscles are repeatedly used, the face becomes so wonted to their notions