

The Family Circle

THOSE WE LOVE BEST

They say the world is round, and yet
I often think it square;
So many little hurts we get
From corners here and there.
But one great truth in life I've found,
While journeying to the West,
The only folks who really wound
Are those we love the best.

The man you thoroughly despise
Can rouse your wrath, 'tis true;
Annoyance in your heart will rise
At things mere strangers do;
But those are only passing ills,
This rule all lives will prove:
The rankling wound which aches and thrills
Is dealt by hands we love.

The choicest garb, the sweetest grace
Are oft to strangers shown;
The careless mien, the frowning face
Are given to our own.
We flatter those we scarcely know;
We please the fleeting guest;
And deal full many a thoughtless blow
To those who love us best.

UNCLE JACK'S STORY

'Uncle Jack, please tell us a real wonder story!' cried Hal, throwing himself down on the steps beside his uncle.

'Just a little story about a bad boy,' lisped Lucy, snuggling up beside her brother.

Uncle Jack stretched himself a little lazily. 'Well, I don't believe I ever knew any bad boys, but I might tell you a bad story about a good boy.'

'Do.'

'Yes, do,' echoed Lucy.

Now Uncle Jack had told so many stories since breakfast that he had not many more ideas in his head, and so he felt a little like teasing the children. He began this way:

'Well, once there was a boy named Bommy Teggs. He lived—'

'Do you mean Tommy Beggs?' asked Hal, a little timidly.

'Why, yes, to be sure, I did get that wrong! Well, this boy Tommy started out one day to go to the village. He carried a ten-quart pail of milk in one hand and a hand-saw in the other. He went gaily along, whistling and throwing rocks at the fence posts—'

'Why, Uncle Jack, did he set his milk down every time?'

'Why, yes, yes, I think he must have done that. Well, he went along, looking off at the sea, that lay all behind him—'

'Wasn't it in front of him?' asked Lucy, eagerly.

'No, I think not; I said behind him. He kept one eye on the sea behind him and one at the long lane down which he was walking.'

'But—' began Hal; and then, not wishing to interrupt, he contented himself with trying to look back at the door and at the same time keep an eye on his uncle.

'As he went along down the street he saw something in a tree that caught his attention. It was a bird's nest. He shaded his eyes with the saw and saw the nest. "I must go up and look in that nest," he said. So he climbed up nimbly—'

'He set his milk down, didn't he?' asked Hal.

'Yes; but he kept his saw because he wanted to see.' Uncle Jack waited for the pair to laugh at this mild joke.

'He found that there were three eggs in the nest, and as he was rather a bad boy, he thought he would take them out, so he reached in the nest and took out the eggs, and began to come down the tree hand over hand.'

'But what did he do with the saw?' asked Lucy.

'And how could he hold the eggs and come down hand over hand?' asked Hal.

'That I don't know,' said Uncle Jack, seriously. 'It is strange that I cannot explain that to you. It must have been that he could see by means of the saw that he must hand over the eggs to his pocket. On thinking it over, I guess that was it.'

'Well, go on,' said the children.
'Well, he thought, he would like to give the eggs to his mother, so he set down the milk and the saw under the tree, and sat down beside them to watch that no one stole them while he was gone, and he ran back as quickly as he could down the lane—'

'But he was under the tree!' exclaimed Lucy, who was trying to help matters all she could. 'He could not run home while he was sitting there.'

Uncle Jack rose up on his elbows and looked at the children in astonishment. 'That is quite true,' he said thoughtfully. 'He could not have done it—and in that case it could not have happened, and thus—there is no story to tell, is there?' and Uncle Jack opened the magazine he was reading, as if that were quite the only way out of the difficulty. 'The children waited patiently.'

'But what about the bird's nest?' questioned Hal.

'Well, if the boy could not have done what I said, he could not have climbed the tree, and in that case there was no one to bring down the eggs, and so there could not have been any one to see the eggs in the tree, and thus we see that there was no one to see the eggs there, and so—well, it all seems to be very unlikely. In fact, I don't believe any of it, do you, now, on your honor?' Uncle Jack looked at them with smiling eyes.

'Let's play horse,' Lucy, said Hal.

'I'll be the horse,' said Lucy. 'Stories are silly.'

After this Uncle Jack, who was rather tired of stories, read his magazine comfortably.

IN THE WRONG PLACE

At a recent dinner Mark Twain made a most amusing little speech which was responded to as follows by a lawyer who was present. 'Doesn't it strike the company as a little unusual,' he inquired, 'that a professional humorist should be funny?' When the laugh that greeted this sally had subsided Mark Twain drawled out: 'Doesn't it strike the company as a little unusual that a lawyer should have his hands in his own pockets?'

IT DREW WELL

Walking along a road in Lanarkshire, two Americans on their holiday were passing one of those houses which in novels are called woodland cottages, but which are better known in the country as 'shanties.' The chimney of the house referred to was constructed of sticks and mortar, and possessed a spiral form, presenting a comical appearance. One of the tourists thus accosted a curly-haired youngster upon the fence: 'I say, my boy, does that chimney draw well?' 'Ah, gey weel,' was the reply. 'It draws the notice o' every fule that passes by!'

DEADLY MUSIC

At a performance of an amateur dramatic club an amusing incident occurred through the nervousness of one of the performers. It was the first performance of the amateur, and, in the course of the play, a very fine band of music was a leading feature, and on every side nothing but praise and flattery of the music was to be heard. In the third act the nervous young amateur, who was playing a minor part, was to rush on the stage, while the band was playing its sweetest, and cry: 'Stop the music; the king is dead!' The critical moment came, and the excited, highly strung amateur rushed in. 'Stop the music!' he cried. 'It has killed the king!'

JEFFERSON'S TEN RULES

Thomas Jefferson, who framed the Declaration of Independence and was the third President of the United States, also thought out these ten rules, which every one would do well to remember and practise:—

Never put off until to-morrow what you can do to-day.

Never trouble another for what you can do yourself.

Never spend money before you have earned it.

Never buy what you don't want because it is cheap.

Pride costs more than hunger, thirst, and cold.

We seldom repent having eaten too little.

Nothing is troublesome that we do willingly.

How much pain the evils have cost us that have never happened.

Take things away by the smooth handle.

When angry, count ten before you speak; if very angry, count a hundred.