

The Family Circle

THE SCHOOL BELLS.

Ting-a-ling ! say the school-bells
All over the land ;
And the children come trooping,
A merry band ;
'The road to learning is long,' they say,
'And we'll take up our march this very day.'

Ting-a-ling ! ting-a-ling-ling !
The teachers all wait ;
So you must not be absent,
Nor must you be late.
'For the road to learning is long,' they say,
'So take up your march this very day.'

Ting-a-ling ! In the schoolroom
All voices are still ;
And the children are working
With eager good will :
'If the road to learning is long,' they say,
'We'll take up our march this very day.'

A BOY WHO CAMPED OUT.

My first experience in camping out was the most exciting I ever had, though a big boy, I suppose, would have called it both tame and funny. But I was only ten years old then, and my brother Proctor, who was really the hero of the adventure, was only eight. There was only one other boy with us, Freddie Childs, our next-door neighbor, and he was the oldest of all, for he was going on for twelve.

We camped on father's lawn, in a tent made of three sheets. It was a very warm still night in summer, and mother had made us a nice bed on the ground with a rubber blanket and an old mattress and some comforters, sheets, and pillows. Father had put up the tent, and it was just as tight and comfortable as a real tent in the woods. If we hadn't known that we were in it, we ought to have slept just as soundly as in our own beds upstairs. But we didn't, somehow, and that was the funny and exciting part of it.

We ate our supper on an old box in the tent at half-past six o'clock, and then we played Indians until eight, when mother came out and helped Proctor to undress and get to bed. She lit a candle for us ; and after she had gone in, Freddie and I undressed, blew out the candle, and crawled under the blankets. By and by I asked, 'Freddie, are you asleep ?'

'No,' said he, in a kind of faint voice.

'Are you sleepy ?'

'No.'

'Do you suppose anything would touch us here in the night if we should go to sleep ?' I asked.

'I dunno,' answered Freddie. He lay still for a minute, and then said, 'What I'm afraid of is catching cold. I guess I'd better go home and get some of those little homoeopathic pills of ma's to take if I feel a cold comin' on in the night.'

Freddie crawled out, lit the candle, and put on his clothes.

'Come back soon, Freddie,' said Proctor.

Freddie pushed back the flap of the tent. 'Uh-uh !' he said, and then he was gone. We heard him walking kind of fast until he climbed the fence ; then he ran like anything through the grass. I guess he didn't know how well we could hear with our ears so close to the ground.

We watched and waited for him to come back, but he didn't come. It seemed kind of scary for just two to be out there all alone in the night. But, somehow, Proctor didn't seem to mind it as much as I did. By and by there came an awful yell from somewhere out in the dark. I knew it was cats, and yet, somehow, I couldn't quite believe it. It might have been a panther escaped from a circus, or a lynx, or something of that sort.

'Proctor !' I whispered.

'Yes,' answered Proctor.

'I believe I'm catching cold, too ; aren't you ?'

'No ; I'm warm as toast.'

'Now, look here, you little foolish,' I cried. 'I know it ain't safe for us to lie here so close to the ground all night. If we don't catch cold, we'll get the rheumatism, sure as the world. I'm going back to the house.'

'Fraid cat !' said my little brother.

I suppose I was really too nervous and frightened to get angry at him. I only got up and hurried

into my clothes, coughing and trying to sneeze all the time, though it was so hot and close in the tent that the sweat ran off the end of my nose. When I thought I had enough clothes on, I grabbed the rest as fast as I could, and blew out the candle. 'There, Smarty,' cried I, as I was bolting out of the tent, 'you can stay here all alone, and see how you like it !'

Mother and father were reading in the parlor when I sneaked into the house, and said that I was afraid I was going to catch cold out there. They both laughed until they cried. 'Where's little Proctor ?' asked mother, when she could get her breath.

'He's out there,' said I in a sulk.

'And Freddie Childs ?' asked father.

'Gone home. Backed out 'fore I did.'

'What ! Proctor out there all alone ?' cried mother, jumping up.

'Yes'm. He felt so smart he wouldn't come in.'

Mother lit a lamp and went out to the tent. The air was so still it did not even toss the flame of the lamp. I watched from the window, and saw her come back without Proctor.

'He won't come !' she said, with a kind of shining eyes.

'Good for him !' cried father. 'He's got some grit.'

'But what are we going to do about it ?' asked mother.

'Do ? I'll go out and camp with him myself !' exclaimed father.

And that was the way Proctor happened to stay. I've often wondered whether he would all alone. But it taught me a lesson in self-control, not to give way to every foolish notion that enters one's head, without stopping to reason it out. 'That's what makes the habit of cowardice.—Exchange.

TRUE CULTURE.

To be gracious without being patronising on the one hand or too gushing on the other, all this requires cultivation and is not attained in a day. That illusive attribute known as charm is still more difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. Is it not inborn and not to be acquired, striving ever so hard ? Certain it is that this charm is the most to be desired of all the good gifts the fairy god-mothers have to bestow. Beauty may fade and riches may fly away and health and youth be swallowed up by the years as they pass, but that charm will ever remain, more potent, more soul satisfying, than beauty and riches and even youth itself. How often does not one see this exemplified in society by the popularity of some woman who apparently possesses little or nothing to justify such success, and who nevertheless is courted and admired and of whom everyone says, 'Isn't she charming ?' You agree that she is, and wonder why. Other women you know, better looking, younger, better dressed perhaps—though the really charming woman is never badly dressed—and yet they lack just something which attracts you in the other woman. What is it ? You ask yourself, and you come to the conclusion it is something which, for want of a better name, you call 'charm.'

ASSUMED IGNORANCE.

One day when Artemus Ward was travelling a man approached him in the train, sat down, and said :

'Did you hear the last thing on Horace Greeley ?'

'Greeley ? Greeley ?' said Artemus ; 'Horace Greeley ? Who is he ?'

The man was quiet about five minutes. Pretty soon he said :

'George Francis Train is kicking up a good deal of a row over in England. Do you think they will put him in a bastille ?'

'Train ? Train ? George Francis Train ?' said Artemus, solemnly. 'I never heard of him.'

This ignorance kept the man quiet about fifteen minutes. Then he said :

'What do you think about General Grant's chances for the Presidency ? Do you think they'll run him ?'

'Grant ? Grant ? Hang it, man !' said Ward, 'you appear to know more strangers than any man I ever saw.'

The man was furious. He walked off, but at last came and said :

'You confounded ignoramus, did you ever hear of Adam ?'

Artemus looked up and said : 'Adam ? What was his other name ?'