

The Family Circle

JUST LIKE A GIRL

'What a beautiful garden it's going to be!'
Said Faith, as she planted her pansy bed;
'With morning-glories to cover that tree,
And dozens of roses, yellow and red.'

'And may be,' she added, the earnest thought
Illuming the face that was sweet and fair,
'We can make little nosegays of every sort,
For the hotel ladies to buy and to wear.'

'That is just like a girl!' said indolent Joe,
As he spilled his sister's begonia seeds;
'But the worms will ruin the roses, I know;
And the garden will be overrun with weeds.'

'When the tenderest seeds decay or bake,
And the others are all by the Leghorns scratched,
You will find you have made a silly mistake
In counting your chickens before they are hatched.'

'What dire prediction!' said Faith, with a laugh;
'Don't prophesy further, I beg, I beg!
For I'd rather count my chickens by half,
Than to kill them all off while yet in the egg.'

— 'Catholic Standard.'

A YOUNG INVENTOR

The majority of our readers have at one time or another noticed with what ease and absence of jars an express train pulls up at, say, the Dunedin railway station. This facility for stopping a train so readily is due to the use of the Westinghouse brake, which has come into almost general use on trains within recent years. This brake was the invention of quite a young man, and many persons before it was put to a practical test thought the inventor was a visionary when he claimed to be able to stop a train by air.

Nobody seemed inclined to let Westinghouse try his plan on a real train, but they did not object to his working model of it in a shop where he could do no harm or involve anybody else in expense.

He knew his scheme would work, but he could not make any one else believe it. So he continued to sell his invention for replacing derailed cars on the tracks and to talk about his brake to any railroad man who was willing to listen.

'Well, have you ever stopped a train with this air thing of yours?' they would ask.

No, he couldn't say that he had done so. Nobody would let him try it, even on a goods train.

One day he arrived in Pittsburg, selling his other invention and talking about his brake notion to a man connected with a railroad out there.

'That's a great idea of yours,' said the man; 'we will try it on our line.'

So the officials of this railroad permitted Westinghouse to put his new brake on one of their trains. He had to agree to indemnify the road for any damage that might be caused to the train as the result of his trials.

The train was equipped. On the designated day the confident inventor and a group of sceptical railroad men boarded the train on which the first air brakes were fixed.

Off went the train on its initial trip. The engineer put on full speed, and just as he had rounded a curve he saw ahead, at a grade crossing, and in the middle of the track, a loaded wagon, a man and a boy and a balky horse. The engineer moved his little lever, and the first train that was ever stopped by air pulled up at a standstill several feet short of the obstruction.

Thus, on its first trial, the Westinghouse air brake saved life and prevented damage to property. Thenceforward talking was unnecessary; all that had to be done was to make brakes. The inventor thought of that clause securing compensation to the railroad for any damage he might do to the train, and he laughed.

His fortune dated from that day. He was then only twenty-two.

LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTER

A home is what a mother makes it (says the London 'Catholic Weekly'). A daughter is, in nine cases out of every ten, the reflection of her mother. The training of the girl of fifteen is shown in the woman of fifty. A son may, by contact with a rough world, sometimes outlive his early home influences; a daughter rarely does. A mother's word, a domestic proverb, told at eventide by the quiet fireside, has been recalled by many a woman years after it was uttered. 'I thank God that my mother told me what other women have been taught by the world,' is a beautiful tribute to the influence of a mother. The world has a sharp way of teaching its truths to a girl. Is it not far better, then, that her mother should tell her with that sweet and sympathetic grace and gentleness which only a mother knows? Let the world build upon your foundation, but do you lay the ground story. Any builder will tell you that the whole strength of a house depends upon its foundation. The flowers most beautiful to the eye and sweetest to the smell grow in good soil. The world's noblest women have sprung from good homes.

AN EARLY ANCESTOR

Mark Twain published his biography some years ago. Here is a sketch from it of one of his ancestors:—

'Some years later we have the illustrious John Morgan Twain. He came over to this country with Columbus in 1492, as a passenger. He appears to have been of a crusty, uncomfortable disposition. He complained of the food all the way over, and was always threatening to go ashore unless there was a change. He wanted fresh fish. Hardly a day passed over his head that he did not go idling about the ship with his nose in the air, sneering about the commander, and saying he did not believe Columbus knew where he was going to or had ever been there before. The memorable cry of "Land, ho!" thrilled every heart in the ship but his. He gazed awhile through a piece of smoked glass at the pencilled line lying on the distant water, and then said: "Land be hanged—it's a raft!" When this questionable passenger came on board the ship he brought nothing with him but an old newspaper containing a handkerchief marked "B. G.," one cotton sock marked "L. W. C.," and one woollen one marked "D. F.," and yet during the voyage he worried more about his "trunk," and gave himself more airs about it, than all the rest of the passengers put together. Ultimately he was thrown overboard, and he sank without a bubble. Later it transpired that he stole the anchor and sold it to the Indians.'

THE CURIOSITY OF A LITTLE BOY

Little things and little people are often responsible for great results, and maybe you do not know that the discovery of that important instrument, the telescope, may be traced to the curiosity of a little boy, and this is how it came about:

The little boy was the son of an optician who lived in Holland. He and his sisters loved to play about their father's work bench, and often they amused themselves by looking at the sea through the little smooth concave glasses which their father used in his work.

Now, one day it happened that the boy, while playing with two of these glasses, chanced to hold them before his eyes in such a way that the face of the cathedral clock seemed very near.

This surprised him greatly, for the clock was so far away that he could scarcely see the hands with his naked eyes.

For a while he stared at the clock and then at the glasses, each of which he tried in turn, but the clock was as far away as ever, and so it remained, turn them as he would, until by chance again he held both up together, when, lo! as if by magic, the church stood beside him.

'Oh, I know, I know!' he cried aloud. It's the two together.' Then in great joy he ran to his father and told him of his remarkable discovery.

His father tried the glasses in his turn and found that the boy had spoken the truth when he said he could bring the great church clock nearer.

So this was the way people learned that putting a concave and a convex glass together in just the right position would make distant objects seem near. Without this knowledge we should never have had the telescope, and without the telescope we should have known little of the sun, moon or stars.