

The Family Circle

THE AUTUMN POET ANSWERED

'The sky is changed.' It must be, yes.
'And sere leaves fall.' They can't do less.
'The ripened corn is stacked.' Of course.
'And fruit to market gone.' Perforce.
'The scented hay is mown.' It is.
'And days grow short.' We've noticed this.
'The bracing air is keen.' Oh, true!
'And sportsmen take the field.' They do.
'Sweet singing birds are mute.' Agreed.
'And chestnuts rain.' Oh, yes; indeed!
'Majestic autumn broods.' That's so.
Now tell us something we don't know!

THE POWER OF DISCIPLINE

Frederick the Great of Prussia was at his palace at Potsdam, when some of his orders by their excessive severity caused great discontent among the Prussian troops; so the soldiers then in garrison resolved to avail themselves of that ease and facility with which Frederick could at all times be approached by them; and thus a deputation of Grenadiers of Ogilvie marched deliberately from their barracks across the great square which lies before the palace and halted at the porch.

An officer in waiting—afterwards the great Field-Marshal Keith, who was killed in battle by the Austrians at Hochkirchen—acquainted the King of their arrival, adding: 'Shall I order them back to barracks, sire, or place them under arrest?'

'Do neither; they have come to see me, and see me they shall. Good soldiers have nothing to fear from me, and the regiment of Ogilvie is one of the finest in Prussia. I shall try on them the power of discipline!'

Frederick hastily put on his shabby old uniform, his long jack-boots, which had never known blacking, his orders of knighthood, his cocked hat, sword and sash.

'Sire,' urged Keith, 'will there not be an inconvenience in all this?'

'To whom?'

'To you, sire.'

'How, comrade Keith—how?'

'Discussion will lead to other deputations, and every order your Majesty may issue will be dissected and cavilled at in turn in every guard-room and beer-shop in Prussia.'

'No matter, comrade; march the rascals in; I'll trust to the power of discipline.'

In they came accordingly, twenty tall and swinging fellows, all after Frederick's own heart, but the appearance of the King, dressed as if for parade, awed them into total silence. 'Achtung!'—(attention!) cried he, drawing his sword, 'to the right face—front! To the left face—front!' These commands the deputation, who were formed in line, obeyed in perfect silence, wondering what was to follow a reception so unexpected; and then Frederick cried suddenly, 'To the right about face, to your barracks, quick march!' Then, as he never gave the word 'halt,' they felt compelled to march on, and the old King and Marshal Keith laughed heartily as the baffled deputation disappeared within the barrack-yard, where their expectant comrades gathered round them to hear the report of how Frederick had received the complaint.

'We have never opened our lips,' said the oldest grenadier, with a very heavy, crestfallen expression.

'Der Teufel! did not you see the King?' cried they.

'We have just left him—'

'Blockheads! and why did you not follow your instructions?'

'It was impossible.'

'Impossible!—and why so?'

'Because when we saw old Father Frederick in his fighting-coat and dirty boots and heard his voice of command, our hearts failed us, and the power of discipline proved too great.'

UNPLEASANT TRUTHS

One of the most disagreeable of all persons to live with is the woman, who thinks it her duty to tell unpleasant truths.

Tell your friends all the nice things you hear about them, but withhold the unpleasant things.

Never give advice unless you are asked to, and even then don't be insulted if it is not followed.

To receive and pay a compliment prettily and graciously is quite an art.

When a person pays you a compliment show your pleasure frankly. And when you pay a compliment do so in an unaffected, sincere manner.

THE IRISHMAN'S DOG

The Irishman wanted to sell the dog, but the prospective buyer was suspicious, and finally decided not to buy. The man then told him why he was so anxious to sell. 'You see,' he said, 'I bought the dog and trained him myself. I got him so he'd bark all the time if a person stepped inside the gate, and I thought I was safe from burglars. Then my wife wanted me to train him to carry bundles, and I did. If I put a packet in his mouth, the dog would keep it there till some one took it away. Well, one night I woke up and heard some one in the next room. I got up and grabbed my gun. They were there—three of the scoundrels and the dog.'

'Didn't he bark?' interrupted the man.

'Sorry a bark; he was too busy.'

'Busy? What doing?'

'Carrying a lantern for the burglars.'

THE FATHER IN THE HOME

President Roosevelt (says the 'Sacred Heart Review') in a letter to a Syracuse woman, who had asked for suggestions for a convention of mothers to be held next autumn, says: 'For one of your topics how would it do to speak of the place of the Father in the home? Now and then people forget that exactly as the mother must help the breadwinner by being a good housewife, so the father in his turn, if he is worth his salt, must in every way back up the mother in helping to bring up the children. After all, the prime duties are elemental, and no amount of cultivation, no amount of business force and sagacity will make the average man a good citizen unless that average man is a good husband and father and unless he is a successful breadwinner, is tender and considerate with his wife, and both loving and wise (for to be loving and weak and foolish is utterly ruinous) in dealing with the children.'

KNEW WHERE IT WAS

A lady left her home for the annual visit to her mother. Before her departure she told her husband that if he wanted anything he could not easily find he was to write to her for directions. 'Don't turn the house upside down, as you generally do,' she said. 'I will answer at once, and tell you just where it is.'

Soon after his wife's departure a neighbor came in to borrow a pattern of a dress. The husband wrote, as he had been requested to do. This was the answer by return:—

'You will find it hanging on the wall by the garret stairs, or—in the box on top of the sewing-machine in Ellen's room—the green box, or the red one, I forget which. Perhaps, though, it is on the top shelf in the cupboard in our room—left-hand side, if I remember correctly, but look on the other side too. If not there it is in the bottom drawer of the bureau in the hall. That is where I keep my patterns, and don't untie all the bundles. It is among them somewhere. Perhaps it is in the second drawer. It is somewhere upstairs, any way, so don't rummage downstairs. P.S.—Now I come to think of it, I may have lent it to my sister Ann!'

'TELL IT TO THE MARINES'

'Ah, tell that to the marines!' is a quotation often used when an improbable story is told; but very few who employ the expression know its origin (says the 'Ave Maria').

Charles II. of England was one day strolling in his garden with Mr. Pepys, secretary to the Admiralty, who was anxious to entertain his Majesty.

'I had speech yestere'en,' said Mr. Pepys, 'with the captain of the "Defiance," who has just come from the Indies, and he told me the most wonderful thing I ever heard in my life.'

'And what was this extraordinary thing?' asked the King.

'Why your Majesty,' answered the amiable Mr. Pepys, 'he told me he had seen fish flying in the air!'