

The Family Circle

DON'T MAKE THE WRINKLES DEEPER.

Is father's eyesight growing dim,

His form a little lower?

Is mother's hair a little gray,

Her step a little slower?

Is life a hill growing hard to climb?

Make not their pathway steeper;

Smooth out the furrows on their brows,

Oh, do not make them deeper.

There's nothing makes a face so young

As joy, youth's fairest token;

And nothing makes a face grow old

Like hearts that have been broken.

Take heed lest deeds of thine should make

Thy mother be a weeper;

Stamp peace upon a father's brow,

Don't make the wrinkles deeper.

In doubtful pathways do not go.

Be tempted not to wander,

Grieve not the hearts that love you so,

But make their love grow fonder.

Much have thy parents borne for thee,

Be now their tender keeper;

And let them lean upon thy love,

Don't make the wrinkles deeper.

Be lavish with the kindly deeds,

Be patient, true, and tender;

And make the path that ageward leads,

Aglow with earthly splendor.

Some day, the dear ones, stricken low,

Must yield to Death, the reaper;

And you will then be glad to know

You made no wrinkles deeper.

THE RIGHT TIME TO WRITE

It was ten o'clock, and Irene, who had been reading all the evening, looked up from her book in surprise as she heard carriage wheels on the driveway. A moment more and there was a soft, familiar tap! tap! tap! at the door.

'It's Nan!' she cried, and running into the hall, joyously admitted her sister.

'How perfectly lovely! How did you happen to come? Have you a holiday?'

The tall, pale girl, wearily dropping her suit case, did not answer these questions, but asked another:

'How's mother?'

'Oh, she's all right.'

'And father, is he any worse?'

'Why, no, I think his rheumatism is really better. They're both in bed. Why, what's the matter, Nan, dear?' asked Irene, in astonishment, as her sister sank into a chair and began to cry.

'Is there anything wrong at the office? You haven't lost your position, have you?'

'No, oh, no!' sobbed Nancy. 'It's only that I've been so worried and unhappy all day, and it's such a relief to find everything all right. I'll be all right myself in a minute.'

Irene, still mystified, said nothing, but busied herself by gently removing Nancy's hat and pulling off her gloves, while Nancy slowly grew calm.

'Was mother very sick yesterday?' she asked, at last.

'Why, no; she just had one of her old headaches.'

'Was father in a very serious condition?'

'Well, hardly. He was gardening a good part of the afternoon.'

'Then, Irene, why did you write me that he was "failing fast," and that mother was "awfully ill"?' I got the letter this morning, and I've been so nervous about them all day that I could scarcely work, and just before closing time at the office I made up my mind that I simply must come home, even if I could stay only a few hours, for I have to go back on the earliest train to-morrow. Of course, at this time of night I had to take a cab from the station and the trip from the station will cost me nearly five dollars, and you know we can't

well afford to throw that amount away. I don't see how you could send me such an alarming letter.'

'O, Nannie, I'm so sorry! I didn't realise how my blueness would affect you. I was discouraged for a little while yesterday, when mother was in bed with the headache and father complained that his rheumatism prevented his digging and hoeing the way he used to. I felt lonesome, too, because my best girl friend has gone away to study music, so I scribbled a wail to you. Mother got up quite well for tea, and some of the boys and girls happened in in the evening, and we had such a jolly time I got entirely over my blue mood.'

'I wish you had waited until then to write. Please select your cheerful moments for writing to me. It's hard enough to have to live away from home without being worried unnecessarily.' Tears again welled up in tired Nancy's eyes, and Irene, throwing her arm round her, said:

'O, Nannie, how thoughtless and selfish I've been!'

IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO BE DISLIKED

Don't meddle. In every community is found a meddlesome person who is responsible for two-thirds of the misunderstandings that make life such a problem.

Don't complain. What's the use? The chronic complainer travels a long road and pays heavy toll in the way of lost opportunities and pleasures.

Don't rehearse your ailments, physical or otherwise. People have to listen to you not because they are interested, but because they are trying to be polite.

The world is full of pains, heartbreaks—no one has a monopoly of them.

There is a certain grim sort of comfort to be derived from telling how one has lain awake all night keeping company with an aching back. But it only gains for one the reputation of being a bore.

Don't try to boss. It is one of the surest and most direct routes to unloveliness, yet many women travel there to their own undoing.

Learn to mind your own business. It is each individual's prerogative, upon reaching years of discretion, to shape his own affairs.

Wise is the woman who recognises this, and grants as well as exacts this privilege. She it is who numbers her friends by the score whose domestic life is serenest.

PROOF LACKING

'I should think Jane MacIntyre would leave school. None of the girls will have anything to do with her.'

'Why not?' asked Georgine's father. The remark had not been intended for his ears, but since he had heard it, there was no way out of answering the question.

'She took some money out of Laura Wiltie's pocket. It was a fifty-cent piece.'

'Who saw her take it?'

'Nobody. But she must have done it. She is the only girl in the school who is poor enough so that she'd ever think of stealing what didn't belong to her. And, besides, she was in the cloak room after the bell rang.'

Georgine's father shook his head. 'I'm afraid you wouldn't do to serve on a jury, my dear. It takes too little to convince you. A girl is poor, and so she would steal. She is alone in a room with money which can't be found, and so she has stolen. There is an old principle of law which has given satisfaction after being tested a great many centuries, and that is to treat an accused man as innocent till he is proven guilty. It would be worth your while to remember this.'

Georgine came home the next evening with something of interest to tell.

'What do you think, papa? Laura found that fifty-cent piece in the lining of her coat. It had slipped through a hole she didn't know was there. And the girls who treated Jane horrid are so ashamed that they don't know what to do. Next time I won't believe anybody guilty till it's proved.'

OVERHEARD BY JOHNNY IN THE PARLOR

'This is a hard family to live with!' pouted the Piano. Miss Susie pounds me every day for an hour or two!'

'Well, at least you don't have to work!' exclaimed the Clock. 'My hands are never idle; they keep them moving every minute and second.'

'Talk about work!' cried the Table; 'why, almost everything is put on me.'