

# The Family Circle

## MAGIC

There's magic in a laugh, boys,  
It will send the clouds away,  
And bring the sunshine flying  
On the very darkest day.

There's magic in your voice, boys,  
When it rings with merry cheer;  
A happy heart will ever  
Bring you friends both true and dear.

There's magic in your eye, boys,  
If with a smile you say,  
'I thank you kindly,' or again,  
'I hope you're well to-day.'

There's magic in your hand, boys,  
If love but makes it strong  
To reach and help someone that's down,  
And keep him from the wrong.

—Exchange.

## COUSIN MARY'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

'Isn't Cousin Mary just lovely!' remarked Ethel to her mother, as they cleared away the supper dishes.

'Yes, your Cousin Mary is a very accomplished girl.'

'Accomplished! Why, how is that?' She says she can't sing or play or paint or recite. What does she do? She's just charming, but I didn't know that she had any accomplishments.'

'I'm sure I don't know what they are, but ever since Mary was just a young girl, people have always said, "What an accomplished girl!"'

'She didn't go to college, did she, mother?'

'No, her father died the year she graduated from the high school. The children were small then, and they hadn't much money, so Mary gave up her college course and took that position in the bank. She's been there ever since. I thought at the time that she was probably disappointed to give it up, but I never heard her mention it.'

'It's strange about her accomplishments,' persisted Ethel. 'I wonder what they are.'

'Well,' answered her mother, 'she must have some, because I heard it continually last summer when I visited sister at Belden. The pastor, the professor's wife, all the neighbors, and even the president of the bank remarked to me at different times, "What an accomplished girl!"'

'I shall find out what they are,' broke in Ethel, decidedly. 'We're going out to Uncle Nathan's to-morrow, and I'm going to solve this mystery about Cousin Mary's accomplishments.'

Accordingly the next morning the two girls started to walk to their uncle's, where they were to spend the day. Just as they were leaving town a farmer with a milk waggon overtook them.

'Have a ride, won't ye?' he called out good-naturedly.

'Oh, let's not be seen in such a horrid-looking rig!' whispered Ethel to her cousin. 'Tell him we're not going far.'

But Mary didn't hear. She was clamboring up into the seat next to the farmer. 'It's so kind of you to ask us,' she was saying, 'and it's ever so much more easy and jolly to let these big horses carry us than for us to walk. What a splendid team you have! What do you call them?'

Thus encouraged, the farmer impulsively told all about the merits of his wonderful team. 'An' here we air, right to your uncle's front door, an' I ain't got more 'n half through tellin' ye 'bout them horses. Never see how they did travel this mornin'. Say '—he was watching Mary as she petted the big black horses—'say,' he repeated, taking her hand to bid her good-bye. 'I had a little gal of my own once. She died when she was only three years old, but I somehow can't help thinkin' that if she'd a' lived she'd been just such a gal as you be, cheerful an' kind an' willin'-to talk to such old codgers as I be.' And before Mary could reply, he had climbed into the waggon and was far down the road.

'Didn't you get my telephone message this morning?' began Aunt Susan, after she had welcomed the girls.

'Why, no.'

'That's a perfect shame! You see, we found out last night that the threshers had to come to-day. I thought it would just spoil our visit to have so many around us, so I telephoned to you to wait till to-morrow.'

'Well, you've got us and the threshers, too, Aunt Susan, laughed Cousin Mary. 'But we can help, and—'

'Oh, there isn't so much to do. I have a good woman to help me, and I guess I'll set the table in the kitchen for the men. Then we can be by ourselves in the dining-room.'

'Oh, I tell you what would be fun to do!' cried Mary excitedly. 'Let's all eat together and let us trim up the table as if it was a harvest festival. It will give the men something to think about. Can we?'

'Of course you can, if you girls want to bother with it. It will be less work for me to have everybody eat at one time. There's the dining-room; fix it up to suit yourselves.'

When dinner time came and the hungry men were ushered into a dining-room all ablaze with the autumn glory of leaves and flowers, they were almost too surprised to eat. 'It's a new-fangled city notion little Mary's brought out with her,' explained Uncle Nathan, with a sly wink at his favorite niece. But the men enjoyed the novelty of it, and, as they went back to their work, more than one commented on the beauty of the trees at the autumn season.

'I wish—it was Mrs. Sheldon, the woman who helped Aunt Susan with the work—' Nellie could see it. Maybe she'd take an interest in gatherin' leaves and such.'

'Who is Nellie?' Both girls were asking the question.

'She's my girl, and she ain't well. It's a spinal trouble, and the doctors all say the best thing to do is to keep her lookin' on the bright side of things and get her interested in somethin'. But there ain't many bright things to look at when you're sick, and—'

'How far does she live from here?' eagerly inquired Mary. 'Oh, just down to the next house.'

'Let us go down and tell her to come up. Couldn't I, Aunt Susan?'

'Oh, you couldn't get her. She can't walk,' replied Mrs. Sheldon bitterly. 'She has to go in a wheel-chair.'

'I tell you what to do,' Aunt Susan said to Mrs. Sheldon, with an air of awakened interest. 'You run down yourself and bring Nellie up for the afternoon. I don't see why I didn't think of it before. The girls can help me to clear away the dishes while you are gone.'

In an astonishingly short time Mrs. Sheldon returned with Nellie, whose face flushed with pleasure as she looked at the pretty room.

'So you are a busy girl,' commented Mary, as Nellie took some light work from a little box and began sewing. 'What is it you are doing?'

'Oh, that's her embroidery,' answered her mother, with a little touch of pride. 'Nellie does beautiful embroidery, if I do say it.'

'Well, I should say she did do beautiful work!' and Mary stooped to examine it more closely. 'Ever try to sell any of it?'

'I didn't know that anyone would buy such stuff.'

'It's so beautifully done. Let me take some of your work with me next week, when I return to the city, and see if I can't find a sale for it. I almost know I can.'

Then before Nellie realised what she was doing she had told Mary the darling wish of her life—to earn money to help support herself and mother. 'I wouldn't mind always staying at home if I could only do something to help,' she murmured softly.

'Yes, and just think of the pleasure you will bring into other lives with your beautiful embroidery,' gently added Mary.

Thus the afternoon quickly passed. Night soon came and they were once more back in town. Ethel bounded lightly up the steps and into her mother's room. 'Cousin Mary has gone across the street to call on old Mrs. Dill,' she said with a happy little laugh; 'and I don't doubt that she'll get some sort of pleasure out of listening to that old woman's chatter of lamentations; for that is what one always gets at Mrs. Dill's.'

'I've found out about those accomplishments, mother. You'll laugh when I tell you. It's just love and interest and helpfulness, those little virtues, and yet they seem to have made a genius of Cousin Mary. At least we all think she's a genius, don't we?'

'Just think of the happiness she's brought to other people to-day!' she continued. 'That old farmer we rode out with; those tired, hungry men who ate their dinner in our pretty dining-room; Mrs. Sheldon and Nellie. Oh, yes, and I nearly forgot Aunt Susan and her hens. Why, mother, she certainly listened for an hour and a half to hen talk. Think of it! And she helped Aunt Susan feed the chickens and gather the eggs,