

The Family Circle

GOOD MORNING

Good morning, Brother Sunshine;
 Good morning, Sister Song.
 I beg your humble pardon
 If you've waited very long.
 I thought I heard you rapping,
 To shut you out were sin.
 My heart is standing open;
 Won't you
 walk
 right
 in?

Good morning, Brother Gladness;
 Good morning, Sister Smile.
 They told me you were coming,
 So I waited on a while.
 I'm lonesome here without you;
 A weary while it's been,
 My heart is standing open;
 Won't you
 walk
 right
 in?

Good morning, Brother Kindness;
 Good morning, Sister Cheer,
 I heard you were out calling,
 So I waited for you here.
 Some way I keep forgetting
 I have to toil and spin,
 When you are my companions;
 Won't you
 walk
 right
 in?

THE CANARY THAT WAS CROSS

Phyllis had a wonderful canary. It was a yellow canary, but that was not what made it wonderful. It was like some children in that the most wonderful thing about it was its temper. It was a wonder for getting cross, and if its water was not all right, and if its seed was not just so, it moved its foolish head quickly and behaved ridiculously. 'Tantrums' is, I think, the only word that rightly described its behaviour.

One day Phyllis closed the door of its cage and forgot to fasten it. It was rather fortunate that just then pussy was paying a morning call elsewhere, for as soon as Phyllis had left the room the canary butted against the door of the cage and forced it open. Next it flew around a little in descending circles, and at last it perched on the sideboard. At the back of the sideboard was a mirror; and to his amazement the canary saw what he thought was another canary staring him straight in the face. This amazed him, and he looked away for a minute. When he looked back again there, of course, he saw his image gazing at him again.

He blinked hard, and then he spoke. 'Foolish and obstreperous birdling,' he said, 'do not stare like that! You are so ugly and so yellow that you make me quite bilious. Avaunt, vile bird! Also, shoo! Get away!'

The canary looked hard and shifted one leg, and to his utter disgust the bird in the glass, instead of moving away, simply imitated him. 'That,' he screamed out loud, 'is impudence! You are no bird! You are not even a painted sparrow! You are just rudeness with some stolen feathers glued on all round! Pah and pooh! And fly away!'

He stopped speaking; and in the hope the other bird would answer him, he began to think hard of nasty things he could say when he himself spoke next. But the bird in the glass said nothing, and so the canary got very angry indeed. 'Speak,' he commanded, swelling himself out, 'or upon my word I shall become quite cross. Don't move your head just the same way as I do. If you don't go away I'll come to you and peck you into little pieces. Stop imitating me.'

But the bird in the glass did not stop, and the real bird got so furiously angry that he did not even notice that Phyllis had come into the room and was watching. She stared hard to see him run back a little and then rush forward and peck at his own image as hard as he could. 'There,' he said, in a language Phyllis did not understand, 'take that, and that! And there is another for always trying to peck back the same way as I do! Oh,

I am so angry!' And his round eyes flamed, and he danced and pecked, and was altogether a sorry sight.

At last he gave one hard lunge crash against the glass, and his beak began to bleed. This increased his fury, and he pecked harder than ever, and just before Phyllis put out her hand to take him up he fell down, quite exhausted, looking sideways at his image in the mirror, and muttering and seeming crosser than ever.

Phyllis took him up tenderly, and Oh, how he throbbed in her hands, and how his heart did beat! She kissed him, dirty mouth and all, and then she washed him all over in lukewarm water and talked to him gently. And the last thing she said to him was this:

'Why, Dicky, didn't you know that when children and birds are angry and behave spitefully to other people they always make a mistake; and what is more, if they only knew, all spitefulness really hurts them more than it hurts the people with whom they are angry. There, you foolish old birdie! Go back into your cage, and let us try and be good together.'

THE ABSURDITY OF FRETTING

There is one absurdity which is everywhere underestimated, and too much overlooked in valuation of character. It is the absurdity of fretting. It is common as air, as speech—so common that, unless it rises above its usual monotone, we do not even observe it. Watch any ordinary coming together of people, and see how many minutes it will be before somebody frets—that is, makes more or less complaining statements of something or other, which probably every one in the room, or in the train, or at the street corner, it may be, knew before, and probably nobody can help. Why say anything about it? It is cold, it is hot, it is dry, somebody has broken an appointment, ill-cooked a meal; stupidity or bad faith somewhere has resulted in discomfort.

A LIFE-SAVING STATION

A train was just starting to leave a suburban station (says the New York Tribune), when an elderly man rushed across the platform and jumped on one of the slowly moving cars. The rear-end brakeman, who was standing by, reached up just as the man got aboard, grabbed his coat-tails, and pulled him off. 'There,' he said sternly, 'I have saved your life! Don't ever try to board a train that way again.'

'Thank you,' said the old man calmly. 'Thank you for your thoughtful kindness. It is three hours till the next train, isn't it?'

'Three hours and a quarter,' said the brakeman, 'but it is better to wait that length of time than to be killed.'

The long train, meanwhile, had been slowly gliding by, slowly gathering speed. Finally the last car appeared. This was the brakeman's car, the one for which he had been waiting, and with the easy grace born of long practice, he started to step majestically on it.

But the old gentleman seized him by the coat, and with a strong jerk pulled him back, and held him until it was too late.

'One good turn deserves another,' said the old gentleman, with a smile. 'You saved my life, I have saved yours. Now we are quits.'

FOUND A BETTER PLACE

Mark Twain says: Once when I was going out to visit some friends I told George, my negro servant, to lock the house and put the key under a certain stone near the steps. He agreed to do so. It was late at night when I returned. I went to the stone under which the key was supposed to have been hidden. It was gone. I hunted around for about fifteen minutes, but still no key. Finally I went to George's house—he roomed outside—and rapped vigorously upon the door. A black head, which I had no difficulty in recognising as George's, popped out of an upstairs window.

'Where did you put that key, you young rascal?' I roared.

'Oh, massa,' answered George, 'I found a better place for it.'

ITS ORIGIN

One of the young architects who delivers a lecture on modern architecture in the series of free public school lectures had just shown his audience the beauties of the Cologne Cathedral the other night, when he thought of an experience he once had on a similar occasion. 'It was at the conclusion of my lecture,' he told his audience, 'that a woman came to me, explained that she too was a student of architecture and thanked me for enlightening