

The Family Circle

GRANDMOTHER'S LESSON.

The supper is over, the hearth is swept,
And in the wood fire's glow
The children cluster to hear a tale
Of that time so long ago.

"Life is a stocking," grandma says,
And yours is just begun;
But I am knitting the toe of mine,
And my work is almost done.

"With merry hearts we begin to knit,
And the ribbing is almost play;
Some are gay colored, and some are white,
And some are ashen grey.

"But most are made of many a hue,
With many a stitch set wrong,
And many a row be sadly ripped
Ere the whole be fair and strong.

"There are long plain spaces without a break
That in youth are hard to bear,
And many a weary tear is dropped
As we fashion the heel with care.

"But the saddest, happiest time is that
We court, and yet would shun,
When our Heavenly Father breaks the thread,
And says that our work is done."

The children come to say "Good-night,"
With tears in their bright young eyes,
While in grandma's lap with broken thread,
The finished stocking lies.
—Ellen Agnes Jewett.

A CHRISTIAN HOME.

If you have a home, a Christian home, where love is, thank God for it. Thank Him every day you live and every time you see the hopelessness of the multitude of men and women in the world. Few, indeed, are the causes for thankfulness that are greater than a real home. If God has given you that, He has given you one of His best gifts. Your praise to Him for it should be coupled with the sort of loving, helpful, and considerate life that makes a home a happier place for all its members.

CHARITY OF SPEECH.

Charity of speech is as divine a thing as charity of action. To judge man's motives, believe things as they seem to be until they are proved otherwise, to temper judgment with mercy—surely this is quite as good as to build up churches, establish asylums, and found colleges.

Unkind words do as much harm as unkind deeds. Many a heart has been wounded beyond cure, many a reputation has been stabbed to death by a few little words. There is charity which consists in withholding words, in keeping back harsh judgment, in abstaining from speech if to speak is to condemn. Such charity hears the tale of slander, but does not repeat it; listens in silence but forbears comment; then locks the unpleasant secret up in the very depths of the heart. Silence can still rumor; it is speech that keeps a story alive and lends it vigor.

HOW SCANDAL SPREADS.

Scoring the gossip, *The Casket* gives these familiar illustrations of how scandal spreads:—

"I hear" or "They say" becomes by the time it has passed over a few lips a full-fledged indictment, garnished and trimmed with imaginary circumstances. A story that began 'I wonder' or 'perhaps' takes the shape of 'Everybody says,' or 'It is the common re-

port,' or 'It is understood.' The first gossip says, 'I wonder now,' the second says, 'I heard,' the third says, 'It is reported,' the fourth says, 'People are saying,' the fifth asks with surprise, 'Didn't you hear? Oh, yes, everyone says so,' the sixth says, 'It is so.' Long before the victim of the charge has a chance to deny it, if he ever gets such a chance, the thing is settled. Some one ventures to suggest that perhaps there is no truth in it and mildly asks for some proof. He is laughed at. It is hinted to him that he is soft, credulous, easily deceived. A dozen reasons are produced, founded on nothing, why the charge is probably true. One objects that nothing was ever said against this person. The others pounce on him: 'That is always the way; the sly ones are the worst. But I always had my doubts about that person,' etc., etc., etc. Do you not recognise the procedure? Of course you do. It is as familiar as breakfast, dinner, or supper, almost as common as the wearing of boots."

MARCH.

When winds of March come roaring up the glen,
I close my eyes and visit home again,—
An Irish home with hearth of smoking peat,
A common home that song and love made sweet.
I see the chapel with its cool stone floor,
The wind-blown lads and lasses at the door.
Oh, never are my dreams so dear as when
The winds of March come roaring up the glen!

I love the month of rousing, gladsome cheer,—
The month in which to shake our shackles clear;
The month so like the Irish friends of old,
In song and laughter gay, in battle bold.
Old Erin's glens are far across the sea,
But there a mother tells her beads for me;
And I can feel my soul stir in its clay,
As I march through the wind on Shamrogue Day.
—Rosamond Livingstone McNaught.

THE OLD MAN'S JOKE.

A physician, passing by a stonemason's shop, called out:

"Good morning, Mr. Jones. Hard at it, I see. I suppose you finish them as far as 'In memory of,' and then you wait to see who wants a monument next?"

"Well, yes," replied the old man, "unless I hear somebody's ill and you're attending them, then I keep right on."

A LESSON IN GRAMMAR.

Grace's uncle met her on the street one spring day and asked her whether she was going out with a picnic party from her school.

"No," replied the eight-year-old niece. "I ain't going."

"My dear," said the uncle, "you must not say 'I ain't going.' You must say 'I am not going.'" And he proceeded to give her a little lesson in grammar. "You are not going. He is not going. We are not going. You are not going. They are not going. Now, can you say all that?"

"Sure I can," responded Grace, heartily. "There ain't nobody going."

PAT SUPERLATIVE.

An Englishman once remarked in company that he had just been taken for the Prince of Wales on account of his resemblance to that personage (now George V.).

"Oh," said a Scotchman present, "I was once taken for the Duke of Argyll."

"I have been taken for a greater man than either of you," broke in Pat.

"Who?" they asked.

"Well," said he, "the other day, as I was walking down Sackville Street, I met a friend whom I had not seen for many years, and the moment he saw me he shouted out, 'Oh, holy Moses, is it you?'"

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