

The Family Circle

WISDOM IN RHYME

Why is all this toil for triumphs of an hour?
—Young.
Life's a short summer—man is but a flower.
—Dr. Johnson.
By turns we catch the fatal breath and die;
—Pope.
The cradle and the tomb, alas, how nigh!
—Prior.
To be is better far than not to be.
—Sewell.
Though all man's life may seem a tragedy;
—Spencer.
But light cares speak when mighty griefs are dumb.
—Daniel.
The bottom is but shallow whence they come.
—Raleigh.
Thy fate is the common fate of all.
—Longfellow.
Unmingled joys no man befall.
—Southwell.
Nature to each allots his proper sphere,
—Cosgrove.
Fortune makes folly her peculiar care.
—Churchill.
Custom does not reason overrule.
—Rochester.
And throw a cruel sunshine on a fool.
—Armstrong.
Live well; how long or short permit to heaven,
—Milton.
They who forgive most shall be most forgiven.
—Bailey.

HOW TO MEET TROUBLE

Answering a knock at the door one afternoon I found a neighbor with a very woe-begone face (says 'Teresa' in the *North West Review*). 'Let me in quick, I'm going to cry. I was afraid I'd meet a rig on the road and disgrace myself for ever.'

'Why, what's the matter' said I. 'No, don't sit in that chair, you never could cry comfortably in it, and take off your cap, a fur cap is a pretty hot thing to cry in.'

'Now don't you try to make me laugh, I'll never forgive you if you do.'

'Certainly not, I'm going to cry, too, of course, when I know what it's all about. What is it?'

'Oh, most everything. I'm nearly worked to death, for one thing, and the children are so dreadfully aggravating, and that hired girl is no sort of use at all. Only in the morning I got the cream all ready in the churn, and put the top on without fastening it down for I hadn't put the color in yet, and I went to the pantry for the color, and just as I got back into the kitchen there was Selma with her hand on the churn handle, and before I could stop here she'd turned it and off came the lid and out came the cream slop all over the kitchen that had only been scrubbed the day before.'

'Well, I said, sympathisingly, 'that certainly was too bad; is that what you want to cry about? Wait till I get a handkerchief.'

'Don't be ridiculous,' she retorted. 'You may be sure I gave Selma a good talking to, and she's been sulky all day. I suppose she will take herself off now, and I can't get another girl.'

'Suppose you had tried laughing instead of scolding,' said I.

'The idea! as if anybody could laugh at such carelessness; besides, she deserved a scolding.'

'Are you sure of that? She did not think of looking to see if the lid was fastened down, but then you should have left it off while you went for the color.'

'Yes, and have the baby come and grab hold of the churn to look inside and tip it all over himself. Besides, what difference would it have made if I had laughed? Selma would have thought it didn't matter.'

'I don't think so, she would probably have felt sorry for the mischief she had caused, and been more careful in future. Anyway, scolding does very little good.'

'I really don't think I could have laughed, or any one else either.'

'I don't know,' said I, 'I knew a woman once who absolutely never lost her temper no matter what happened. She always tried to see the funny side of everything and always succeeded, but that did not make her husband and children careless. One day she had made a cake, a three tier layer cake, and it was a beauty. She had just finished icing it and having to look at something in the oven that was in danger of burning, she put the cake down on a chair and threw a cloth over it. The next moment in came her husband, a two hundred pound man, and without a moment's warning down he sat on that cake. Did she cry or scream or scold? Not a bit of it, she simply told him what he had done and then sat down on the floor and

laughed until he was so scared he thought she had hysterics. Of course the cake was a sight but the children insisted on eating it, which made her laugh more than ever.'

'To think of putting a cake on a chair!' exclaimed my visitor.

Well, you see the table was full and she had to look in the oven, it was only a moment that did the mischief. But it would not have mended matters, or the cake either if she had stormed and scolded. After all the cake was for the children, and they said it was good, so there was not much harm done.'

'Perhaps not, but that is a different matter from losing ten or twelve pounds of butter, to say nothing of a floor covered with grease that will take weeks to scrub off, I don't feel much like laughing I can tell you.'

'It will be a little hard at first to acquire the laughing habit,' I assured her, 'but believe me, when once you have it you won't give it up on any account. Did you ever hear of St. Teresa? Well, whenever she encountered a difficulty or a trouble or a setback, she laughed. One can always find something or other to laugh at if one tries, where the minor troubles of life are concerned at least. The worst of us women is that we have so little sense of humor. I don't know what is the reason, unless it may be that we are too prone to take a gloomy and angry view of everything that goes wrong. The philosophy of the old southern mammy I read about the other day is applicable to most troubles: 'Nebber you min' honey, 'twill be all de same a hundred y'ars frum now.'''

A GOOD DINNER STORY

Tact is a talent, a natural gift. To know precisely what to do in an awkward circumstance is to be tactful like madame's butler. The lady had invited twelve guests to dinner, but shortly before it was served she discovered that one of the silver shells in which the escalloped oysters were to be served had been misplaced and could not be found.

'Never mind,' she said to her butler. 'When you offer me oysters, I will decline them.'

Thereupon the dinner began, and when the shells of oysters were passed the hostess had forgotten the arrangement and took one of them from the plate. The servant was equal to the occasion.

'Does madame forget the doctor's advice about oysters?' he asked.

The lady took the hint, replaced the shell upon the plate, and so no guest lacked one.

A VALUABLE CURIO

A Scottish woman who was spending her holidays in London entered a bric-a-brac shop in search of something odd to take home to Scotland with her. After she had inspected several articles, but had found none to suit her, she noticed a quaint figure, the head and shoulders of which appeared above the counter.

'What is that Japanese idol over there worth?' she inquired of the salesman.

The salesman's reply was given in a subdued tone: 'About half a million, Madam. That's the proprietor.'

WORKING BACKWARD

A Japanese house is built quite differently from an English one. The roof, which with us is the last important part of the outward structure to be completed, is with the Japanese the first thing to be finished. All the tools used by the carpenters and joiners have a reversed action. The Japanese carpenter does not push a plane away from him, but pulls it toward him.

The gimlets are threaded in the opposite way to ours; the saws are made so as to cut on the upward pull, and not on the downward thrust; screws have their threads reversed, and keyholes are always made upside down and keys turned from backward. In the house, if the clock is an old one, it will have stationary hands, with the face revolving backward and the hours marked 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, and so on, reckoning onward from noon.

CHANTICLEER TO THE RESCUE

Every schoolboy knows the tradition, famous in Roman history, of the geese which saved the Capitol by quacking an alarm when the Gauls approached in the night. Modern history furnishes an interesting parallel.

One of the famous victories of England on the sea was the battle off Cape St. Vincent, Portugal, in 1797, when a British fleet nearly destroyed a Spanish fleet of almost double its numbers.

For a long time the struggle was doubtful, and one of the British ships, the *Marlborough*, was so severely crippled that her captain was thinking of surrender to save further waste of life.

The ship's mast had gone by the board, the chief officer was mortally wounded, and so many of his subordinates were disabled that the discipline of the crew began to give way. They grew sullen under the terrible fire, which they could not return with effect.