

The Family Circle

MOTHER DEAR IS GROWING OLD

When I note the gathering wrinkles,
And the hair so silvery white;
Note the steps each year grow slower
That were once so quick and light;
Note the eyes a wee bit dimmer,
And the carriage not so bold;
Then I whisper, oh, so faintly,
'Mother, dear, is growing old.'

Surely I must be mistaken,
Note her nimble fingers fly;
In and out her needles darting;
Surely I've no need to sigh.
Hear her laugh so free and hearty—
Makes you think of songs you've sung
Full of trills and trills and high notes—
Dear old Mother's growing young.

Young or old it makes no difference,
For we love her just the same,
Mother—Mother—dear old Mother,
Surely ne'er was sweeter name!
As the days pass by so quickly
May each one be brighter still
May your heart grow ever younger
As your life with love we fill.

FLORENCE CAREY'S TALENT

'Dr. Ingels told my mother he thought I had very decided ability,' remarked Gladys, complacently. 'I have been studying with him for three years now, and he says he thinks I have great talent. He is a perfectly wonderful teacher. Oh, I do love music!'

'Yes, music's nice,' said Irene, with a rather superior smile, 'but I would much rather be a reader. People enjoy a good recitation so much more than they do music. Didn't you notice at the concert on Friday night how the reader was encored three times as much as anyone else?'

'I can't play and I can't speak,' said Thelma. 'But I can draw and I'm going to be an artist some day. That isn't so showy as some things, but it is real art, and no mistake, and it suits me.'

'Well, I think I have a talent for studying,' said Madeline. 'I'm going to be a professor and have a Ph.D. after my name. That's artistic enough for me.'

Florence Carey slipped ahead of the girls with:

'Oh, you lucky girls, to be so talented. Isn't it lovely? What would you do if you were like me—couldn't do one little thing? Why, I haven't even a talent for washing dishes.'

'You're a dear, sweet girl,' said Madeline, 'and I like you best of all, if you haven't any talent.'

'Oh, girls,' cried Thelma, suddenly, 'did you notice Angie Gray in geometry to-day? I am sure she was cheating. I saw her look in her book.'

'Why, Thelma!' denied Irene. 'Angie wouldn't do any such thing. She's a special friend of mine and she's not that kind.'

'Well, I saw her myself,' said Thelma.

'She never did any such thing,' muttered Irene.

'I saw her looking in her book, too,' said Florence Carey. 'But I don't think she was cheating. I think she just opened it thoughtlessly—she shut it in a hurry. Wasn't her story in English fine yesterday? She does write the nicest stories.'

Again war was averted.

At the gate the five friends parted, and as Florence Carey walked slowly up the pathway she thought back over the conversation.

'Mother,' she asked suddenly, 'which is the finest art—music, reading, drawing, or school-teaching?'

Her mother laughed. 'Goodness, Florence, such a big question! Any art is just as big as the artist makes it!'

'As big as what?' asked Florence, doubtfully.

'As big as the artist makes it. The artist is the measure—not the art.'

'Then it all depends on the person, doesn't it?'

'Yes, all.'

'Mother, don't you wish I had a talent for something?'

'Why?'

'Oh, because. Nearly all the girls are geniuses but me. My! listen to those children! What is the matter with them?'

Some mooted point in the game had caused dissension, but when it was referred to Florence she settled it promptly. Then for nearly an hour she played in the yard with 'the youngsters,' going in at last, flushed and breathless.

'Florence, dear, will you rid out my work-basket?' asked her aunt, as she stopped at the door to speak to her. 'The silks are all tangled.'

As Florence set to work, she thought again of the subject of geniuses.

'You are a genius, aren't you, auntie?' she asked.

'A genius?'

'Yes; if I could embroider and make lace as beautifully as you do I would say I was a star among artists. As it is, I can only smooth out the tangles in your silks so you can be a genius.'

'Well, that isn't such a bad job, either, Florence. You really do seem to have the knack of smoothing out other things besides silk. Didn't I just hear you smoothing out the difficulties among the children?'

'Oh, that comes natural to me!' laughed Florence. 'It's easy for me to settle scraps. The girls call me the "Great Pacifier".'

'Then, Florence, dear, your forte is right. Be a "Great Pacifier." You could not find a more worthwhile art. Cultivate it. Develop it. You say it comes natural for you to smooth things out. That's just what genius is—nature. If you are by nature a born pacifier—a smoother-out of troubles—you are a lucky, lucky girl. Music and art cannot compare with it.'

Florence looked at her aunt.

'How can I cultivate it?' she asked very practically.

'Keep your eyes open for chances to use it, and make the most of every chance.'

Florence closed her eyes. 'It's a very little thing,' she said to herself. 'It will never set the world on fire, that's sure. But after all, I suppose it's better than nothing. It must be worth cultivating. Anyhow, it's the best I've got.' Then, after a long silence, she sat up and opened her eyes with an air of great surprise. 'Why, auntie,' she said, aloud, in an astonished voice, 'maybe that's why the girls like me better than the others.'

And Florence Carey never said 'It is a very little thing.' She had found her talent, and she knew full well that it was worth cultivating and that the world needed it.

NOT AT THIS END

A stout old gentleman was having trouble with the telephone. He could hear nothing but a confused jumble of sounds, and finally he became so exasperated that he shouted into the transmitter:—

'Who's the idiot at the end of this line?'

'He's not at this end,' answered a cool, feminine voice.

A CORRECTION

The teacher had written on the blackboard the sentence, 'The toast was drank in silence,' and turned to her class for them to discover the mistake.

Little Bennie Sheridan waved his hand frantically, and, going to the board, scrawled the correction: 'The toast was eaten in silence.'

WHAT HE TOOK

An old darkey was taken ill and called in a physician of his own race. After a time as there were

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