

# The Family Circle

## THE NUNS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

(Apropos of the Canonisation of St. John Eudes.)

And the silent hush of the cloister,  
Where Vesper anthems swell,  
In deeds of love and kindness  
A band of virgins dwell.  
In robes of creamy whiteness,  
Pure as the forms they enfold,  
Shedding a lustre around them  
More fair than the brightest gold.

### The Sisters of the Good Shepherd

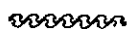
Here follow the Master's call,  
Cheering the weak and lowly,  
And breathing peace to all;  
Praying the weak and tempted  
To shun the path of sin—  
Their doors are ever open  
To let the wanderer in.

In hearts all torn and bleeding  
They pour the balm of love,  
Whispering words of comfort,  
As angels whisper above.  
Like a cluster of sweet-scented flowers  
They wear their young lives away,  
Laying down for their Master,  
In charity's mission each day.

Till wasted, wan, and exhausted,  
They sink to rise no more;  
A whispered prayer, a sigh of love,  
Then death, and all is o'er.  
So ends their earthly mission,  
Sealed with their Master's kiss,  
Only to wake in Heaven  
To everlasting bliss.

They pass through death's dark portals,  
Without a shadow of fear,  
Whilst from the lips of Jesus  
These blessed words they hear:  
"Well done, My Spouse, My Sister,  
The crown is prepared for thee,  
For what thou hast done for these little ones  
That thou hast done for Me."

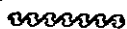
—The Pilot (Boston).



## LOVE OF THE POOR.

Our Lord appears before us in the persons of the poor. Charity to them is a great sign of predestination. It is almost impossible, the holy Fathers assure us, for anyone who is charitable to the poor for Christ's sake to perish.

"But where, sayest thou, can I find Christ on earth? Where can I find Him, that I may give to Him? Give alms on earth, and thou hast fed Christ in heaven."—St. Augustine.



## A MATTER OF THINKING.

In a story that appeared recently in a magazine a character is made to say: "The toughest test of a man's pluck that I know is the hard, monotonous grind of standing up to every-day duties and responsibilities. For there is no excitement in that, no glory—but just grit."

Everybody cannot stand right in the glare of the limelight. There are dusky corners

appointed for a good majority of people. And in these dusky corners the most sporting thing to do, as well as the most courageous, is to play up as conscientiously as if corners and dusk were non-existent.

"God pity all the brave who go  
The common way, and wear  
No ribboned medals on their breasts  
No laurels on their hair."

It has often enough been said by the philosophers of life in words more or less varied but always containing the same familiar old truths, that no matter what work we do, or where we do it, in the home or outside the home, we will find it to have its monotones, its tiresomeness of routine, its crushing dullness.

Sometimes the work may seem to hold nothing but dullness, breaking the spirit in long weary years, and the active-minded may well and excusably question with impatience what there is in it for him or for her, what development, what gain? Yet, from only a purely ethical point of view, if the tired, depressed worker is strong enough to endure it, there is in a dull job, a dull existence, the greatest opportunity in the world to demonstrate backbone. It is a great trial, and a great manifestation of the strength of the spirit.

## Being Strong.

One of our modern poets has given us the same thought in a pleasant fragment of verse:

I will be strong:  
Burdens are muscle-makers; tests make powers,  
And weariness well-won brings happy balm.  
'Tis fretful coward weakness saps our strength and kills.

I will be strong."

A very wise woman, full of common-sense and the mature wisdom which is the fruit of a trained intellect facing the problems of life squarely and sanely, has written words on this subject which are worth pondering on with quiet reflection. She very sensibly remarks that the dull jobs of the world have to be done by someone, so "shoulder the share that comes your way, and don't shirk it.

If it is small work, and unworthy of your powers, learn to do the same thing in a big way. One has not conquered a job until it can be done without impatience and without resentment. You are not fit for a better job until you have won from this one the best gifts it has for you—perseverance, patience, good humor, and heroic persistence."

It is all mostly a matter of thinking. Life depends on the way we take it. The ideal in practice is to take plain day just as it comes, and by our generous acceptance of all its dull and trivial details, transmute it with a radiance and a charm such as color adds to pictures, and fragrance to flowers.

## The Finest Art.

It was a man, so I learn, but it should have been a woman, who said that the finest

of all arts is to improve the quality of the day. It is men as a rule who scorn the trivial trials of life. For them are the wings of initiation, enthusiasm, a broad scope of activity, a satisfactory sphere of influence, a wide area for talent and power, a gratifying netting-in of solid results of personal work done on large free lines of individual liberty. But women have to be content with the aprons of humble service, the aprons donned for life-long homely duties which have no glamor, no halo of splendid lustre.

They would, perhaps, prefer wings to lift them to glorious heights, but, for them, aprons are allotted, not high-soaring wings; for them, and for the general average of ordinary folk, be they men or women, in the beaten tracks of life, an ordered Destiny has settled aprons, not wings. But—

"The best men doing their best  
Know peradventure least of what they do:  
Men usefulest in the world are simply used;  
The nail that holds the wood must pierce it first,  
And He alone who wields the hammer sees  
The work advanced by the earliest blow.  
Take heart."

Nothing is too little that is ordered by God our Father; nothing too little in which to see His hand; nothing is too little when done for Him; nothing, which touches our souls, too little to accept from Him. Everyone should live and work as if no one but himself could do the special work which lies to his hand. Has not someone said this, hinting at the general charity which should underlie our lives—

"Do the work that's nearest  
Though it's dull the while,  
Helping, when you meet them  
Lame dogs over stiles."

It is not by change of circumstances, but by fitting our spirits to the circumstances in which God has placed us, in bringing ourselves docilely to the line of God's leading that we truly find our souls, and finding them, we realise the Divine Love that settles every detail of our lives.

We learn to sacrifice our dreams of wings, and smilingly don the aprons of loving service, ready to spend ourselves in the dullness of a dull job for the sake of Him who asks it from us.—Catholic Herald of India.



## PRAYER FOR A LITTLE HOME.

I pray not for  
Great riches, nor  
For vast estates and castle-halls;  
Give me to hear the bare footfalls  
Of children o'er  
An oaken floor  
New-rinsed with sunshine, or bespread  
With but the tiny coverlet  
And pillow for the baby's head;  
And, pray Thou, may  
The door stand open, and the day  
Send ever in a gentle breeze.

—JAMES W. RILEY.

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