

The Family Circle.

MY STRING OF PEARLS.

BY ETHEL ESTERSON.

I had a string of lovely pearls; Two noble boys, two was, fair girls; Strung on the rainbow-ribbon-hope; A clasp beneath each tiny throat— A golden clasp—strong, pure, and fine— Wrought from the gold of love divine: A love eternal as the song Upon our Saviour's natal morn, Sung by the angels, clear and sweet, While kneeling at Jehovah's feet; And o'er the earth the blessed refrain Fell soft and sweet as April rain. Alas! my rainbow-ribbon, hope, Was frail as fair; too soon it broke— And half my pearls, despite my tears, Slipped off. The agony of years Seemed crowded into those few hours, When first I saw my beauteous pearls. Lie crushed! O God! those hours of pain! O! may their like ne'er come again! So sudden fell my first sweet pearl— My little, loving, hisping girl— I could not bear to see her death; Not even when I saw her breath. Was gone—her heart was still— I did not say, "Father, thy will, Not mine, be done." Nay, do not chide, For the kind angel by my side Said it, and gently sealed my lips, While o'er me passed death's first eclipse. Again that same kind angel hand My string of lovely pearls unbound, And took my laughing boy away For "Lexia's" sake. What could I say? I bowed and strove to kiss the rod— The angel said, "Thy will, O God!" These shadows, like the ocean spray, Damp all the beams of sunny May— Or, like the breath of the Simoon, Waft echoes only from the tomb. But through the mist bright forms are seen, Sweet voices mingle with each dream; And still each day I count my pearls— One—two—three—four—two boys, two girls.

BELL'S SHOE BOX.

A STORY IN MONOSYLLABES.

Kate Hall used to come, once in a while, to the home of Bell March, to spend a day or two. Kate was grown up, and Bell was but a child of ten years. They took long walks in the fields, and lanes, and woods, and had nice, long talks of birds, and trees, and buds. And Bell learned a great deal from Miss Kate when she did not know it; for the child had thought—and it may be, my love, you think so too—that all we learn we must get out of books. Ah, it is not so at all. I think Bell learned more in her walks and talks with her grown-up friend, than she did in a whole year at school. Miss Kate taught her of the things she saw in the house and out in the fields; and how to be a good child, too—neat in her ways, prompt to mind, when she was called, to be soft and sweet in voice and word, to be wise and kind. And she had such a nice way when she taught the child, that Bell could not help but learn. I will just tell you of one thing. One day they had gone up stairs to put on their boots and hats for a long tramp up Blue Hill, to get some pine cones with which they were to make frames. Now, when Miss Kate was all dressed, she went to Bell's door to see if she had gone down, and she gave a quick, low "O, dear me!" as she looked in and saw Bell's shoes here and there all round the floor. "One was by the side of the bed, one by the chair, and two or three more by the press door. "This will not do at all," said she, and at once she went to the stairs and called: "Bell! Bell! come here, my dear, I want you." "All right," said Bell, "I'll come. Just wait a bit, will you?" and soon her bright, red curls danced up the stairs to see what Kate could want. "Look here, Bell! Is that the way you treat your shoes?" said her friend. "I should not think it right to use mine so; I am sure I think too much of mine for that." Bell laughed. "Shoes don't care! they can't feel or think," she said. "But the room—I should not dare to leave my room in such a plight," said Miss Kate. "I should feel it would take me for some one else, who would take good care of it." "You are so droll," cried Bell; "rooms can't run off, I am sure." "But your ma, Bell, what will she think if she comes in and sees the place in such a case?" "O, she will think I am but a child, and will go and call Sue to set it to rights! Why, Kate, I am sure it is no new sight to ma." "But your own dear self, Bell; do you know what will come of it if you leave your things in such a way all the time?" "Why, no. What harm will come of it?" "I will tell you. When you are grown up and have a house of your own, you will not be neat; for if you do not learn now, while you are a child, to be neat and nice in your ways, you will not learn when you are grown up." "Dear me!" said Bell, "what shall I do?" "Go and take care of your shoes, my love, the first thing. Put each pair in its place." "They won't stay hung up, Kate, and I can't make them. See, I have nails on this door to hang them on, but just as soon as I shut the door it shakes them down. There, now, do you see? there they come right straight down on the floor!" "You must have a box for them, as I do," said Kate. "But would a box look nice in a room? I should not think it would." "Mine does. If you saw it you

would not think it was a box for shoes; you would take it to be a nice seat." "I guess I will have one, then. Where can I get it?" asked Bell. "We can make it. Come, let us do it right off, and not go to the woods. You know what we read last night: 'Do not put off till next hour what you can do this.' Now, that box the books came in last week will be just the thing, I am sure." So they went down to the yard to look for the box, but they found that Sue had split it up for fire wood. "That is too bad," said Miss Kate. "Sue should not have split up such a nice box to burn. She should have put it by for some good use. But let us look, I guess we can find one yet." So they went to the shed, and there they found just what they wished. It was a box that had been used for soap. With a few nails, and a strip of coarse, strong cloth, Kate made a hinge for the lid. She laid a bunch of hay on the lid, and nailed a piece of the same strong cloth tight down round the edge. Then they went to the piece-bag—Bell's ma said they might—and there they found some nice green chintz, which had been left from a quilt. She cut a piece for the lid, which she nailed down as she did the first. She used wee bits of nails, and drove them through a piece of green tape all around, and then turned the tape down so as to hide the nails. And then she made a flounce for the sides. When this was done, Bell cried out: "O, what a nice bench to sit on! I will put it by the side of my bed, and sit on it when I put on my shoes." "So you can," said Miss Kate, "but it is not done yet." She threw back the lid. "Count your shoes, Bell," she said. "One, two, three, four, five pairs, Kate." "Well, then, I shall make six nice, snug cells in the box, and you can have one for each pair, and then a place for the next new pair. Do you see? But I must have some strips of this board to do it." "I know where to get some," said Bell, "just what you want. They are out in the shed in a cask." So she ran out, and in a short time came back with the strips in her hand. "Just the thing! just the thing!" cried Miss Kate; "now I can fix it first-rate. See here! I will put this long strip right down through the box—so; then I will cut two short strips, and place them here, and there, on this side. Do you see? In this way I make three cells on this half. And now I will take two more short strips, which I will place here, and there, on that side, and we have three more cells on that half—six in all. Now for the shoes, Bell." The shoes were brought, and each pair put in its place, and from that hour you may be sure there was not a stray shoe to be seen in Bell's room. Her ma was glad at the change, and more than once thanked Miss Kate that she had taught Bell this good plan. And Bell thanked her, too, for this, and for all the good things she learned from her friend. "I don't know how I shall pay you for all the good things you have done me," she said one day. "I know," said Kate. "Kiss me, and love me." "That I will, my dear, good, sweet, kind friend," cried the child.—Little Corporal.

CHARMS.

Even in these late ages the horse shoe is not unfrequently seen nailed over the door of the cabin or cottage, to "charm" away misfortune, or to "keep off" disease. There are intelligent men who have carried a buckeye in their "unmentionable" pockets for years to "keep off" piles! Children can be found at school, any day, with little bags of brimstone attached to their necks by a string, to "keep off" some particular malady. There are many young gentlemen and ladies who have half a dozen "charms" attached to their watch chains, it being a remnant of the ancient superstition. We give a pitying smile at the mention of these absurdities, for we know them to be unavailing. But there are "charms" against human ills which are powerful to save from physical, mental, and moral calamity! Bearing about in one's heart the sweet memories of a mother's care, and affection, and fidelity, often has a resistless power, for many a year after that dear mother has found a resting place in heaven, to restrain the wayward and unsettled from rushing into the ways of wicked and abandoned men. John Randolph, of Abanoke, used to repeat in his later days, and always with quivering lips, that while he was quite a young man, in Paris, he was repeatedly on the point of plunging recklessly into the French infidelity which was so prevalent during the terrible "revolution" of the time; but was as often restrained by the remembrance of that far-distant time, when yet in his infancy, his mother used to have him bend his knees before her, and with his little hands in hers, taught him in sweet but tremulous tones to say nightly, "Our Father, who art," etc. A Scotch mother, when her son, a lad of sixteen, was just about leaving for America, and she had no hope that she should meet him again, said to

him: "Promise me, my son, that you will always respect the Sabbath day." "I will," said he. His first employer in New York dismissed him because he refused to work on Sunday. But he soon found other employment, and is now a very rich man, an exemplary Christian, and an influential citizen. Tens of thousands are there in this wide land who, by the "charm" of the temperance pledge, have gone out into the world, singly and alone, to battle with its snares, and temptations, and sin; they have been surrounded at every step by the great tempter, with the allurements of passion and pride; of sensual gratifications and of corrupting associations; but keeping their eye steadily fixed on the beautiful "pledge" to "touch not, taste not" the accursed thing, they have bravely come off conquerors, and to-day stand in their might the pillars of society. Young gentlemen and young ladies, too, make it your ambition to bear about you "always" the "charm" of the "pledge" of reverence for the Sabbath day, the holy memories of a sainted mother's religious teachings, and you will pass safely to a ripe old age of happiness and health.—Hall's Journal of Health.

LUTHER.

Luther, when studying always had his dog lying at his feet, a dog he had brought from Wartburg, and of which he was very fond. An ivory crucifix stood at the table before him. He worked at his desk for days together, without going out; but when fatigued, and the ideas began to stagnate, he took his guitar with him to the porch, and there "executed some musical fantasy, (for he was a skillful musician,) when the ideas would flow upon him as fresh as flowers after a summer's rain. Music was his invariable solace at such times. Indeed Luther did not hesitate to say, that after theology, music was the first of arts. "Music," said he, "is the art of the prophets; it is the only other art which, like theology, can calm the agitation of the soul, and put the devil to flight." Next to music, if not before it, Luther loved children and flowers. That great gnarled man had a heart as tender as a woman's.

THE LIGHTHOUSE.

A lighthouse looks like a tall pillar rising out of the sea, or built upon some high bluff. The top is a large lantern, where a bright light is kept burning all night, which is seen far out at sea; and it says to all ships and sailors sailing by, "Take care, take care!" One is built on a ledge of rocks; its warning light says—"Give a wide berth to these sunken rocks." Another says, "Steer clear of this dangerous reef." Another, "Keep clear of this dangerous head-land. If you come here, you are lost."

There are a great many lighthouses on the coast; how does a sailor know which is which? He sees a light gleaming through the darkness and the storm, but where is it? Does it warn him off Cape Cod, or Cohasset Rocks, or Boom Island? He has a chart in the ship, and that tells. A chart is a map of the coast, with all its rocks, and sand-banks, and light-houses put down, and everything that a sailor ought to know in order to steer his ship safely across the ocean. These are some of the helps which sailors have to keep them from being cast away and lost at sea; and if they faithfully consult them, and keep a good look-out, they are likely to ride out the storm and come safely into port.

Now, you, my children, are out at sea. You are beginning a long voyage. You have each a little ship to steer. The sea is the great sea of life, and your ship is the little body which God has put your soul in, that by His help you may bring it by and by to him in safety and peace. God has given you a chart. It is the Bible. That tells you where you are, and how to go. All along are light-houses, saying, "Take care, take care. All along are dangerous places." They all have names.

Here is one. What is it? Swearing. What does the light say? "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Keep clear of that. Inside there is another. What is it? Lying. What does the light say? "Put away lying. Speak every one truth with his neighbor. Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord." Keep clear of that. Another. What is it? Anger. What does it say? "Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry. Be angry, and sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Keep a good look-out here. There is another. What is it? Intemperance. How many have been lost on this dangerous rock! In the pleasantest weather there is often most danger. What course does your chart tell you to take here? "Touch not, taste not, handle not." Do that, and you are safe.

Here is another. What is it? Pride. Let not your little ship ride on this dangerous swell; for what does the chart tell us? "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." You see, my children, how many rocks, and ledges, and whirlpools, and dangers there are for you to avoid. I have told you about a few.

You need not be afraid. Only keep a good look-out, and steer your little vessel by the chart which God has given you. Consult it often; become familiar with its instructions. Be sure that you are in the right channel—on the clear, open sea of truth. Watch the first appearance of danger. Go not too near a dangerous shore, or there may not be room to tack ship, and you are cast away before you know it. Read what your chart says—"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it; pass not by it; turn from it, and pass away."—Life Boat.

HASTE NOT! REST NOT!

FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE.

Without haste! without rest! Bind the motto to thy breast; Bear it with thee as a spell; Storm and sunshine guide it well! Heed not flowers that round thee bloom, Bear it onward to the tomb!

Haste not! let not thoughtless deed, Mar for aye the spirit's speed; Ponder well and know the right, Onward then with all thy might; Haste not! years can ne'er atone, For one reckless action done.

Rest not! life is sweeping by, Go and dare before you die; Something mighty and sublime Leave behind to conquer time! Glorious 'tis to live for aye, When these forms have pass'd away.

Haste not! rest not! calmly wait! Meekly bear the storm of fate! Duty be thy polar guide— Do the right whatever be the side! Haste not! rest not! conflicts past, God shall crown thy work at last.

GOD'S LITTLE GIRL.

"Papa, dear papa," exclaimed little May Davis, as bounding into the library, she threw her arms around her father's neck. "I am so very, very glad that I am your little girl! For to-day I walked home from school with Fannie Vale, to see her little kitten—and Mr. Vale was so cross to Fannie; he scolded her for being late, when indeed she could not help it, and said it was a shame for a girl ten years old to play with a cat. I know I am very often naughty, papa; but I should be ten times worse if Mr. Vale was my father. O! I am so very glad that I am your little girl!"

"How did your friend Fannie behave?" asked Mr. Davis, as he kissed his earnest little one. "Did she answer back angrily?" "No, indeed," said May, "Fannie behaved beautifully—a thousand times better than I would have done. She told her father that she was very sorry to be so late, and then, putting down the pretty little kitten, asked if there was not something he would like her to do for him. Do you see how she can be so good, papa?" "Yes, my darling," replied Mr. Davis; "for I know whose little girl Fannie is, and I only wish my little daughter was a child of the same Father."

"Indeed, I wouldn't like to have Fannie's father for mine," said May, "and I don't see why you would wish such a thing either."

"About a year ago, Fannie gave her heart to Jesus, and now she is God's little girl; that is what I mean," replied Mr. Davis.

"God's little girl!" repeated May; "and does He keep her from being oftener naughty? and is that why she is always happy?"

"Yes, darling; that is it," said Mr. Davis.

"Then, papa," whispered May, hiding her face on his shoulder, "I wish—I wish that I was God's little girl too."

"He would love to have you for His child," replied the father, "and will make you His now, if my little daughter will only ask Him."

"But I don't know how," May answered, looking up sadly; "and besides, I am not half good enough to be God's little girl."

"Jesus says, 'Suffer little children to come unto me,'" replied her father. "He does not say, 'Suffer good little children to come,' but all children, no matter how naughty, if they only wish to be good. He will take my little daughter's sinful heart away and make her holy, if she will only ask him."

"But is Fannie really God's little girl?" asked May. "She loves to laugh and play just like other children, and always seems so merry! Now I thought that, when little girls became so very religious, they looked grave and did not care to play as I do."

"Does May remember the day, last summer, when she was lost in the wood?" asked her father.

"Yes, indeed," replied the child; "I never can forget that day, nor how I cried till you came and found me."

"Did my little daughter enjoy the beautiful flowers, and the birds that sang so sweetly in the trees, better than wandering all alone, or when I found her, and we walked home together, hand in hand?" asked Mr. Davis.

"O! after you found me, papa," exclaimed May; "for then I felt so safe, so happy, that the flowers and birds seemed a thousand times more beautiful than ever before."

"Just so it is with Fannie," said Mr. Davis. "Once she was lost and wandering far away from the path which leads to heaven; but now she has an Almighty Father ever near, to guide her steps toward that bright home prepared for her in heaven. Would you expect such a little girl to be always grave and joyless?"

"No indeed," replied May, "I would expect her to be just as she is—very, very happy. And, papa, I mean to ask God, before I go to sleep, if He won't please make me His little girl 'for Jesus' sake.'"

Tears of joy filled that father's eyes as he looked upon his little one; but fearing that she might mistake them for tears of sadness, he said cheerfully, "God will bless my precious one, and keep her close to Him—through life and death, if she will henceforth love and obey Him."

"Yes, dear papa," said the child earnestly; "I will give my heart to Jesus, and ask Him to help me to be good." And then, with a bright smile she added, "It will make me very happy to know that I am His little girl."

Does my little reader intend to wander through the world all alone? "No, indeed," may be your answer; "papa and mamma are with me, and they love me ever so much." But they cannot live always, darling, nor could they take their little one, if she were dying, and carry her to that happy home in heaven. No one but Jesus can do this, and He is waiting now—waiting to call you His child. Will you not go to-day and ask Him to make you His little girl, and then strive like May to love and obey Him? This will make you very happy, if you live, and, if you die, Jesus will bear you safely through the dark valley, and carry you in His bosom, a little folded lamb in heaven.—Christian Times.

ROCKS.

A lad was taking his first trip by water, and, as most boys do, rambled up and down the vessel, watching all about him with eager curiosity. By and by he stood beside the helmsman. Here and there over the water were scattered floating sticks of painted timber, and now he noticed that the vessel turned aside here and there to avoid them.

"Why do you turn out for those little sticks?" said the boy. "I would ride right over them."

The gruff old helmsman gave him only a glance from under his shaggy brows, and one word which seemed wrenched from the depths of his chest—one word, but it spoke a volume, "Rocks."

The boy could see no danger. The water looked as fair about the buoys as in any other place. He thought in his childish wisdom that the old helmsman was over-particular; so he answered again, "I wouldn't turn out, I would go straight ahead." The old man did not reply, except by a glance which the boy has never forgotten even in his manhood. It seemed to say, "Poor foolish child, how little you know of rocks!"

That boy has long been a faithful pastor, and he often tells the lambs of his flock about the hidden rocks in their course, rocks that have wrecked a great many bright hopes and precious souls.

The dancing-school is one of these rocks. It may look very innocent and pleasant, but there are fatal reefs there that may sink your soul in everlasting despair. Don't sip a little wine. Don't go in the society of boys who now and then utter an oath. You must turn out when you come to these rocks. There are buoys enough to warn you, good counsellors to tell you of your danger, and do not neglect their caution. When an old helmsman says to you, "Rocks," be sure there is danger ahead.

Your Bible is your only sure chart. Here you will find the buoys and lighthouses all marked down, telling you where the rocks are, hid.—Am. Messenger.

BEAUTIFUL FIGURE.

Two painters were employed to fresco the walls of a magnificent cathedral; both stood on a rude scaffold constructed for the purpose, some eighty feet from the floor.

One of them was so intent upon his work that he became wholly absorbed, and in admiration stood off from the picture, gazing at it with delight. Forgetting where he was, he moved backward slowly, surveying critically the work of his pencil, until he had neared the end of the plank upon which he stood.

At this critical moment, his companion turned suddenly, and, almost frozen with horror, beheld his imminent peril; another instant, and the enthusiast would be precipitated upon the pavement beneath; if he spoke to him, it was certain death—if he held his peace, death was equally sure. Suddenly he regained his presence of mind, and seizing a wet brush, flung it against the wall, splattering the beautiful picture with unsightly blotches of coloring. The painter flew forward, and turned upon his friend with fierce imprecations; but startled at his ghastly face, he listened to the recital of danger, looked suddenly over the dread space below, and with tears of gratitude blessed the hand that saved him.

So, said a preacher, we sometimes get absorbed in looking upon the pictures of this world, and in contemplating them, step backward, unconscious of our peril; when the Almighty dashes out the beautiful images, and we spring forward to lament their destruction—into the outstretched arms of mercy, and are saved.

A PET LION.

A gentleman visiting a house in Algeria, says:—"In a few minutes the door opened, and a lion entered the room, the man only leading him by the tuft of his mane. He was a magnificent animal, two years old, full grown, all but his mane, which, although but a foot long, made nevertheless a respectable appearance. He did not seem to care about our being strangers, but walked about the room like a large dog, permitted us to take liberties with him, such as patting him, shaking a paw, and making him exhibit his teeth and claws. He showed, however, a marked predilection in favor of old acquaintances, and lying down before them, turned on his back to be scratched. After a scratch or two, he began to yawn, and was fairly settling himself for a nap, when a cigar was puffed in his face, a proceeding he evidently did not approve of. Rising in a hurry, curling his lips, and wrinkling his nose, he exposed to view a splendid set of teeth, a sure sign he was not pleased. A hearty sneeze seemed to restore him to good temper; and bearing no malice, he returned a friendly pat, bestowed on him by Capt. Martenot, who had been the aggressor, by rubbing his head caressingly against his knees.—Kennedy's Algeria and Tunis.

ORDER AND REGULARITY AT MEALS.

It is most important in the physical nurture of children that their meals should be at regular hours, and with no long intervals. But there is no worse practice than that which is too prevalent, especially among the poor, of giving children small portions of food between meals, or whenever they choose to ask, or, after much asking, to get rid of their impatience. It has a bad moral effect, encouraging them to give way to every impulse of appetite, and to think much and often of eating; and so renders them gluttonous. And it has a bad physical effect, inducing in the stomach a habit of perpetual craving, or keeping it in a state of perpetual repletion. Again, not only regularity of meal-times, but comfort and good order at meals, will conduce in a great degree to the due and satisfactory enjoyment, and hence good digestion, of food. Hurry, confusion, general talking and clamor, chiding and quarreling, too often witnessed at the dinner-table of a disorderly family, must injuriously interfere with the processes of mastication and deglutition, and consequently, with that of digestion. Indeed, such is the close connection of our mental and corporeal faculties, that these circumstances do, of themselves, immediately tend to impede digestion. It is a well-known fact that fear, anger, vexation, anxiety, felt at the time of eating, prevent the proper decoction of food by the stomach; and so, to a certain extent, must all other perturbations of the mind. The observance of this rule is, of course, as necessary for adults as children; but since the passions of children are more easily excited, and less regarded, and their stomachs more delicate, for the most part, than those of their elders, they are the chief sufferers by its neglect.

CHILD'S PRAYER IN DANGER.

Little Tiny got lost in the woods, and feared she should die. A rabbit had run to her in fright, and she held him fast in her arms. When the stars came out she thought of God, and wondered why she had forgotten him. Then she knelt down and prayed thus: "O, dear God! I'm all alone in the great woods, and nobody don't come after me; and I thank you for giving me the little rabbit—he's real warm. But I don't want to die here all alone in the dark; if I do, won't you take me to heaven? But I'd a great deal rather go home to mamma and papa. Please to let 'em find me, and take care of me till they come, for Christ's sake. Amen." "That isn't saying 'Our Father,' nor 'Now I lay me,' thought Tiny; "but I guess it is just as good. I shouldn't wonder if he sent a great white angel, with wings, right straight down to take care of me." She fell asleep, but was soon found by her friends.

BRANDY MEDICINE.

A reformed man over in Hudson county, N. J., after abstaining some years, was told by the doctor that he must put a little brandy in his water; so he obtained a bottle of "real good brandy," and took a little—next day a little—next day a little more, when it suddenly struck him that the old hankering was getting pretty strong and clamorous. "Here," said he, "addressing the bottle, 'look here, you are an old acquaintance—you are the same that once mastered me and made me a slave and a sot, a fool and a pauper. Now you don't come to over me again. I'm decent now; I'm respectable now; I've got a nice little property and a happy family; you don't get them away from me again. You've got to go, doctor or no doctor, cholera or no cholera; there be off!' And away went the bottle out of the window, and was dashed to pieces. We say to all in like circumstances go and do likewise.—Temperance Banner.