

THE HOME CIRCLE.

LOOKING FORWARD.

BY NEWELL LOVEJOY.

Some time in the earthly hereafter,
An angel will whisper to me
And say with a face full of pity,
"Thy loved one is passing from thee."

The new year—aye, and sooner—
May find me in life alone;
In my bosom the blossom of sorrow,
On my lips a grief-laden moan.

I am nerving myself for the hour
When God's message shall sound in my ear;
I am praying for strength from my Maker
To pass through the trial severe.

But alas, when the Heavenly Sower
Shall utter the words that bring woe,
Be it sooner or later, I shall be
Unready to hear them. I know.

Ah! 'twill prove to have been no fancy,
The throbbings that then stir my heart;
The sobbings—the terrible sobbings—
That ever of grief are a part.

But as by her couch I sit holding
The hand growing icy the while;
My eyes resting on the dear feature,
Lit up with so saintly a smile;

I shall know, after all, through the darkness
That leads to the beautiful day,
That never shall end, since immortal,
My mother is wending her way!
Ann Arbor, Mich., Nov. 1875.

DON'T FRET.

"There is no rest but calm."—It would be as impossible for an invalid to forecast the perfect happiness of heaven, as to try to imagine the more than oriental luxury of atmosphere that encompasses a perfectly sound and healthy body. Atmosphere in which it revels with a sort of ecstasy similar to that which succeeds the Turkish Bath.

Healthy people never "fret," only physical infirmity is testy or given to chronic fault-finding. A fretful disposition seldom gets above trifles, and it thrives and grows like a noxious weed under cultivation.

The most disagreeable people are the "constitutional grumblers." They are everywhere like stumbling blocks, and fret at anything, everything, and indeed nothing. We feel oppressed shut up in the same room with them and ache to get away, and do get away as far as possible without manifesting downright incivility.

There are few who care to hear about the ailments and misfortunes of others, those topics are never entertaining. Fretting brands the imbecile. In view of the fact that we really make ourselves what we are in great measure, if unhappy temperaments must vent their spleen and misanthropy, in the name of reason, let their pestilent humors be indulged in privacy, so as to transmit as little unnecessary misery to others as possible.

If fretting could by any possibility accomplish any good something might be said in justification; but as the only thing it does accomplish is mental degeneracy, the sooner the habit is abandoned the better for the moral and intellectual well-being of its victims.

It can be helped—must be helped if we expect to get on the highway that leads to better things hereafter. There are no "grumblers" in heaven. Fretting is a habit that multiplies upon itself in greater ratio than any other vice in the moral calendar.

Remembering the short-sightedness and insufficiency of human nature, it is something of a wonder that so many indulge in complaints to-day that by to-morrow are thought fit subjects for rejoicing.

We grumble more at what bye-and-bye seems to us to have been for the best, and whether it seems so or not, most likely will be remembered a year hence, if at all, with a twinge of vexation that we should have been so deeply stirred by a matter so small.

Fretful people are made so by little things; and it is a curious problem in the human economy that those who permit themselves to be harassed almost to the verge of insanity by some temporary grievance or petty perplexity, when merciless disaster does come down like an avalanche upon their heads, stand up bravely, men that they are, like old Atlas beneath the world, and view the wreck of fortune, hope, and home, without a tremor. Manhood or womanhood is too noble, too godlike, to vex itself over trivialities, like impatient children.

Trials will come, as matter and mind are hinged, and if men wince under the rod they have to remember that fire cleanses from dross and tests the gold. Complaining won't help it any.

"Grin and bear it" is a sturdy old motto and as excellent as it is homely. The fact is, trials and vexations of this life are a wonderful spur to action. Obstacles that must be surmounted are morally certain to be the means of calling to the surface the very best there is in men; and with the heart and soul in the work there is little time or disposition to "fret"—little time to brood over a shadow.

Don't fret! Disease asks nothing better to feed upon, while a quiet mind and genial temper are its worst enemies. Judicious exercise and hearty occupation will do wonders towards reconciling us to the decrees of Providence or the inequalities of fortune, however harsh at first blush they may seem. Let me prescribe for my friend, the "constitutional grumbler" over yonder in the corner:

Go honestly and earnestly to work my friend! quit the use of tobacco, and stimulants, and immoderate meals! Forget yourself part of the time, and be sure to open your heart to the sunbeams of heaven that are always shining.

Tear away that dreary curtain that so long has hung like a curse over your moral vision, and let in a glimpse of the glow and gladness that fills this great good earth of ours to overflowing!—and my word for it, you will catch some of the truth and beauty there is abroad in the glorious universe that God looked upon and called "good."
—*Elysia Wildwood in Dirigo Rural.*

REMEMBERED TOO LATE.

"Johnson, the officer says you were drunk, and that you haven't drawn a sober breath for a week. How is that, Johnson?"

"Yer honor," said Johnson, as he dropped one arm over the rail, and leaned back heavily on the policeman who supported him by the shoulder, "yer honor, it's true, I've been drunk for a week, as you say, an' I haven't got a word to say to defend myself. I've been in this 'ere court, I guess, a hundred times before, an' every time I've asked yer honor to let me off light. But this time I don't have no fear. You can send me up for ten days or ten years; it's all one now."

As he spoke he brushed away a tear with his hat, and when he paused he coughed, a dry racking cough, and drew his tattered coat closer about his throat.

"When I went up before," he continued, "I always counted the days an' the hours till I'd come off. This time I'll count the blocks to the Potter's Field, I'm almost gone, Judge."

He paused again, and looked down upon his almost shoeless feet.

"When I was a little country boy my mother used to say to me:

"'Charley, if you want to be a man never touch liquor; an' I'd answer, 'No, mother, I never will.' If I'd kept that promise you an' me wouldn't have been so well acquainted, Judge. If I could only be a boy again for half a day; if I could go into the old school-house just once more and see the boys and girls, as I used to see them in the old days, I could lie right down here and die happy. But it's too late. Send me up, Judge. Make it for ten days or make it for life. It don't make no difference. One way would be as short as the other. All I ask now is to die alone; I've been in crowded tenements for years. If I can be alone for a little while before I go I'll die contented."

The shoulder of the muddy coat fell from the policeman's hand, and the used up man fell in a heap to the floor. He was carried to the little room behind the rail. His temples were bathed and his wrists were chafed. But it was no use. Though his heart still beat he was fast going to join his schoolmates who have crossed the flood. The shutters were bowed—the door was closed. He might die contented, for he was left alone.

BANKING IN A BURIED CITY.—The Italian paper *Perseveranza* contains some remarks about the three hundred writing-tablets of a Pompeian banker at Pompeii. It says that in nearly all of the little books, containing three tablets each, the four inner-sides are covered with wax on which a fine, small writing is to be seen. They contain agree-

ments about loans, on which a certain rate of interest is to be paid. First, the debtor acknowledges to having received the money (the sum being expressed in words), and promises to pay it at a certain date, with a surplus of interest; secondly, they contain the date, the names of the duumviri, the town authorities, and the two consuls. The names of the witnesses are written under this, and a seal is fastened to the two tablets, on which the contract is written, with a cord. Sometimes the creditor wrote a short extract of the contract on the margin. The banker's name is L. Caius Lucundus. His life-size bronze bust, which is one of the most interesting at Pompeii, has also been recovered.

WOMAN IN SOCIETY.

The great French Emperor Napoleon, while in a conversation with some of his courtiers on the subject of the nation, its soldiers, their patriotism, etc., was asked what France most needed, and his emphatic reply was "mothers." In all countries where woman is held as the equal of man, her influence is wonderful for good or for evil as she may choose to use it. How important, then, that she should be actuated by the right motives and should be found in the society of the young to help shape their characters for usefulness. The society of woman is not only refining, but it is agreeable, and any society composed largely of women needs no other, and could find no greater element of cohesion. Many of our readers remember the old Washingtonian temperance society, which rose and spread rapidly for awhile, but then dwindled down to a handful. The Sons of Temperance then came on to the stage of action. They adopted closed doors, or secrecy, but there was an element of strength and cohesion yet lacking, and when the Good Templars organized with woman as a co-laborer, the Sons of Temperance had to admit her as a visiting member to hold their membership.

Take woman out of the church to-day, and who can safely say how long it would survive the blow? Pious men would of course not forsake their religion, but they would enjoy it at home with their families rather than at a public place of worship, without them, and their influence would be lost to the world. Only a few days since we heard a gentleman remark "Woman holds the keys sure, if she only knew it." The history of the past is full of instances of men being led to destruction, or saved as brands from the burning fire by the influence of woman. A certain man once said, "Let me write the songs of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws." He might have said, guarantee the virtue of the women of the nation and give them their proper position in society, and I will warrant the nation's safety. What nation or society can ignore their influence? The success of the Patrons of Husbandry was secured as soon as woman was admitted within its gates. What is most needed now, is to give her work there and encourage her to do the work. Make her feel at home, then bring in the younger members of the community under her influence, and the farmer's future is bright and his destiny safe.—*Journal of Agriculture and Farmer.*

ROUGH JOKE ON A LOVER.

The *Reading Eagle* says that on Tuesday a young man from Springfield, Chester county, Pa., visited that city to buy a number of Christmas presents for a young lady to whom he is engaged. A number of young men knew of the trip to Reading, and as it was dark when he neared the house of his intended, the party waited for him along the road, and when he was thinking over the effects the presents would produce he was suddenly met in the road by four masked men, who caught him and tied him with a rope, and took the presents from him. He begged for his life, but they still continued to tie him, hand and foot, and they threw him down and made him state when the wedding was to take place, and what he had bought, and how he had paid attention to the lady. To all these questions he answered promptly and then would beg them not to kill him. To close the sport, they tied his hands securely behind his back, turning his coat inside out first, then tying the presents on his back, they started him for the house of his intended, and threatened that if he did not go in they would assault him again. He went in, but what the result of the interview was, is not known.

"COMING THRO' THE RYE."

Every one has heard the pretty Scotch ballad bearing the above title, which was for many years a favorite with singers in the parlor and the concert-room. And nearly every one has the idea—very naturally taken from the lines—

If a laddie meet a lassie,
Comin' thro' the rye;

and—

A' the lads they smile on me
When comin' thro' the rye—

that the lads and lasses of the song were accustomed to travel through the fields of standing rye, as over a common highway. This popular misconception is corrected by Dr. Bombaugh, in a foot-note printed in the "Literature of Kissing." He there states that near Ayr, Scotland, there is a small, shallow stream called the Rye, which, having neither bridge nor ferry, was forded by the rustics on their way to and from the market. It used to be the custom of the country, when a lad met a lass midway in the Rye, to steal a kiss from her; and it is that custom which is commemorated in the ballad. This explanation is confirmed by the stanza:

Jenny is a' wat, prim bodie;
Jenny's seldom dry;
She drags it a' her petticoate
Comin' thro' the rye.

GOLDEN SHEAVES.

When quiet in a darkened room
A form lies cold and chill,
To whom the solemn voice of Death
Has whispered, "Peace, be still!"
They who survive will linger near,
And ask with anxious mind,
How much of gold the dead man had,
"What has he left behind?"

The angel who with glistening wings
Is hovering round the bed,
And bending with inquiring look
Above the silent dead,
Demands, "What was the life he led?"
And scans the record o'er,
"What treasure has he now in heaven,
What good deeds sent before?"

—Make men intelligent, and they become inventive,

—The fixed purpose sways and bends all circumstances to its use, as the wind bends the reeds and rushes beneath it.

—If we are sufficiently watchful over our own conduct, we shall have no time to find fault with the conduct of others.

—As nothing truly valuable can be attained without industry, so there can be no persevering industry without a deep sense of the value of time

—Say nothing respecting yourself, either good, bad, or indifferent—nothing good, for that is vanity; nothing bad, for that is affectation; nothing indifferent, for that is silly.

—Glory, like a shadow, fleeth him who pursueth it; but it followeth at the heels of him who would fly from it. If thou contest it without merit, thou shall never attain unto it. If thou deservest it, though thou hide thyself it will never forsake thee.

—True Friendship. By friendship you mean the greatest love, the greatest usefulness, and the most open communication, and the noblest sufferings, and the severest truth, and the heartiest counsel, and the greatest union of minds of which brave men and women are capable.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

—It is not great battles alone that build the world's history, nor great poems alone that make the generations grow. There is a still, small rain from heaven that has more to do with the blessedness of nature, and of human nature, than the mightiest earthquake or the loveliest rainbow.

—Family religion is of unspeakable importance. Its effect will greatly depend on the sincerity of the head of the family, and on his mode of conducting the worship of his household. If his children and servants do not see his prayer exemplified in his temper and manners, they will be disgusted with religion.

—A man who acquires a habit of giving way to depression is on the road to ruin. When trouble comes upon him, instead of rousing his energies to combat it, he weakens, and his faculties grow dull, and his judgment obscured, and he sinks in the slough of despair.