

THE HOME CIRCLE

The Drudge.*

Repose upon her soulless face,
Dig the grave and leave her;
But breathe a prayer that, in his grace,
He who so loved this toiling grace
To endless rest receive her.

Oh, can it be the gates ajar
Wait not her humble quest,
Whose life was but a patient war
Against the death that stalked from far
With neither haste nor rest;

To whom were sun and moon and cloud,
The streamlet's pebbly coil,
The transient, May-bound, feathered crowd,
The storm's frank fury, thunder-browed,
But witness of her toil;

Whose weary feet knew not the bliss
Of dance by jocund reed;
Who never dallied at a kiss?
If heaven refuses her, life is
A tragedy indeed!

—John Charles McNeill (The Century Magazine.)

CHOOSING A WIFE.

A Man Can't Pick His Mother, but He Can Pick His Son's Mother.

I suppose I'm fanning the air when I ask you to be guided by my judgment in this matter, because while a young fellow will consult his father about buying a horse he's cocksure of himself when it comes to picking a wife. Marriages may be made in heaven, but most engagements are made in the back parlor, with the gas so low that a fellow doesn't really get a square look at what he's taking. While a man doesn't see much of a girl's family when he's courting he's apt to see a good deal of it when he's housekeeping, and while he doesn't marry his wife's father, there's nothing in the marriage vow to prevent the old man from borrowing money from him, and you can bet if he's old Job Dashkam he'll do it. A man can't pick his own mother, but he can pick his son's mother, and when he chooses a father-in-law who plays the bucket-shops he needn't be surprised if his own son plays the races.

Never marry a poor girl who's been raised like a rich one. She's simply traded the virtues of the poor for the vices of the rich without going long on their good points. To marry for money or to marry without money is a crime. There's no real objection to marrying a woman with a fortune, but there is to marrying a fortune with a woman.

While you are at it, there's nothing like picking out a good looking wife, because even the handsomest woman looks homely sometimes, and so you get a little variety. But a homely one can only look worse than usual. Beauty is only skin deep, but that's deep enough to satisfy any reasonable man. (I want to say right here that to get any sense out of a proverb I usually find that I have to turn it wrong side out.) Then, too, if a fellow's bound to marry a fool (and a lot of men have to if they're going to hitch up into a well matched team), there's nothing like picking a good looking one.

I believe in short engagements and long marriages. I don't see any sense in a fellow's sitting around on the mourner's bench with the sinners after he's really got religion. The time to size up the other side's strength is before the engagement.

Some fellows propose to a girl before they know whether her front and her back hair match and then holler that they're stuck when they find that she's got a cork leg and a glass eye as well.—From "Letters from a Self-Made Merchant to His Son," by George Horace Lorimer. By permission of Small, Maynard & Co., Publishers, Boston.

*This is No. 19 of a series of North Carolina Poems selected especially for The Progressive Farmer by the Editor.

Quit Whining and Go to Work.

For the benefit of those who are addicted to the useless and disagreeable habit of whining, the following is copied from Medical Talk:

There isn't anything in the world more disagreeable than a whining person.

He whines if it is hot. He whines if it is cold. He whines at this, he whines at that, he whines at everything. Whine, whine, whine.

It is just a habit he has fallen into. There is nothing the matter with him. It is just a bad habit.

The whiner is generally an idle person or a lazy one. What he needs is to be set to work—at real hard work, mental or physical. Some work that will interest him and engage his whole attention and he will not have time to whine.

We know two women. One of them does her own housework and takes care of her horse besides. She is happy and singing all the day long. The keyboard of her life sounds no whining note. It is a pleasure to be with her, a good, wholesome tonic to watch her.

The other woman is so situated that she does not have to work. Nothing to do but to amuse herself. She has no zest in life, no interest in anything. She is a bunch of selfishness and whines at everything. Whining has become such a habit with her that her most casual remark is tinged with a whine. She is miserable herself and makes everybody else in her presence miserable. She is a weakling, a parasite, a drag, a heavy weight on somebody all the time.

Get the whine out of your voice, or it will stop the development and growth of your body. It will narrow and shrink your mind. It will drive away your friends; it will make you unpopular.

Quit your whining; brace up; go to work; be something; stand for something; fill your place in the universe. Instead of whining around, exciting only pity and contempt, face about and make something of yourself. Reach up to the stature of a strong, ennobling manhood, to the beauty and strength of a superb womanhood.

There is nothing the matter with you. Just quit your whining and go to work.

He Gave Up.

A ducky in Alabama was once brought into court on account of a comparatively petty offense.

When the clerk of the court began the reading of the charge, which began with the usual form, "The State of Alabama against Ezekiel Jenkins," the culprit evinced signs of amazement and terror.

When the query was put to him, "Have you anything to say, etc., and do you plead guilty or not guilty?" the unfortunate negro stammered: "It ain't no use, Yo' Honah! I ain't guilty; but ef de whole State ob Alabamah am ag'in one po' niggah, Ise gwine gibe up right now!"

Girls Cannot be Too Careful.

"Girls, be careful! Maidenly modesty, good taste and prudence seem to be at a discount with many of our budding young maidens."

The above extract was read not with pleasure, but pain! Alas! We fear it is true. This is a fast age and many of our girls and young ladies seem to have no restraining power at home or at school, and often on the streets there is not shown that modesty, good breeding, good taste and prudence that must always mark the cultured, refined and pure woman. We would not for anything curb the elasticity of youth, but girls should be directed to be quiet on the streets or in public, not boisterous, not rude, not forward, but act always with dignity and modesty.

It is a well known fact that the fast girl never has that respect shown her by men that the cultured, modest, refined lady commands. A boy can go on the streets or in public and be boisterous and romp, use slang, and nothing is said of it. Let a girl do the same thing, no matter how pure

she may be, many tongues are set to wagging, unkind, cruel things said which would cause any sensitive woman to blush with shame. Girls, you cannot be too circumspect in your own pure selves. Do nothing, say nothing that can give a chance for gossip. A good name is more to be desired than gold or precious stones.—Henderson Gold Leaf.

The Fashions for Spring.

Coats and skirts are now being made of the same material, but they are no longer fashioned upon lines of almost geometric severity. The newest material for these, and one that is rapidly coming forward, is crepe de Chine. The spring coat may be made in any one of three distinct shapes; one is the short sack coat, loose and straight, which was seen last season; another is a modified Russian blouse, somewhat suggestive of the kimono; a third style is a plain, loose coat with a cape.

From present indications, two noteworthy features of the new gowns are like to prevail. The more important is the ever-increasing vogue of the short skirt. The other is the frequent use of drapery across the front of the waist.

Too much importance cannot be given to the soft, sheer fabrics that lend themselves so readily to the graceful flowing lines of the season's modes. The voiles and veilings are, perhaps, in highest favor. Bordered materials in soft silk and cotton mixtures, sheer cottons and linen canvas are among the popular novelties. A glint of gold is introduced in everything. Gold braids, buttons, frogs, cords and pendants are some of the forms of this military decoration. Laces that are fine and flimsy are the choice of the moment. The colored cotton embroideries are among the novelties. There are lingerie frills and ruchings without number for the sleeves and neck of the fashionable gown, and buttons are conspicuous.—From the Delineator for April.

Wanted Exercise.

The late Gen. Alexander McDowell McCook used to tell this story:

"Some raw troops were drawn up for their first battle. They were on marshy ground, under fire, and ankle-deep in slush. One of the soldiers was noticed to be trembling excessively, and his fear might communicate itself to his comrades. An officer approached him.

"Here, what are you trembling for?" demanded the officer. "Stop it, or you will demoralize the company. You are in no more danger than any one else. Don't be afraid."

"I-I-I am no-t-t a-a-fraid," chattered the soldier. "I-I-I had the ague last year, and—and standing still in this m-m-mud so long has b-brought it on aga-again. W-w-wouldn't-t-t it be a g-g-good idea to r-r-run a little and get warmed up?"—Selected.

The Dignity and Manliness of Labor Should be Impressed on the Young.

"The man who is ashamed to do honest work," said Rev. Dr. J. C. Rowe, "has something wrong with his head. He needs to be taken all down and put together again. No one needs to be ashamed of having walked between the plow handles. If there is any one occupation of man that God directly instituted, it is that of farming."

Now that is what the public schools ought to teach the children—the dignity and manliness of honest, intelligent work, however hard, however humble. Teach them that education is for the purpose of making us better and more capable workers, not to help us escape work.—Monroe Enquirer.

But is it given to us sometimes, even in our everyday life, to witness the saving influence of a noble nature, the divine efficacy of results that may lie in a self-subduing act of fellowship.—George Eliot.