

Alabama Baptist

THE FAMILY CIRCLE.

Full of Grit.

"The stage has gone on, but there's a wider lives here than she's got a boy, and he'll drive her over. He's a nice little fellow, and Deacon Ball lets him have his team for a trifle, and we like to get him a job whenever we can."

It was a hot day in July. Away up among the hills that made the lower slopes of the Monadnock mountains, a friendly lay very ill. In order to reach his temporary home, one must take an early train for the nearest station, and trust to the lumbering old dusty coach that made a daily trip to K-n. The train was late, the stage, after waiting awhile, was gone. The landlady of the little white house appeared in his shirt sleeves, and leaning his elbow on the balcony rail, dropped down on the hot and thirsty traveler what comfort could be extracted from the opening sentences of his sketch.

"Would he not come in and take some dinner?" "Yes." "Would he send round for the deacon's team?" "Yes." "And the boy?" "Yes."

"And the dinner was eaten, and the 'Am' came round—an open buggy and an old white horse—and just as we were seated, the door of the little house over the way opened, and out rushed the 'wider's' boy."

In his mouth was the last morsel of his dinner; he had evidently learned how to 'eat and run.' His feet were clad in last winter's much worn boots whose wrinkled, yellowed leathers refused to stay modestly within the limits of his narrow faded trousers. As his legs flew forward, his arms flew backward in an ineffectual struggle to get himself inside of a jacket much too short in the sleeves.

"There he is," said the hostler: "that's Widow Beebe's boy. I told him I'd hold the deacon's horse while he went home to get a bite."

The horse did not look as if he needed to be held, but the hostler got his dinner and the boy approached in time to relieve my mind, as to whether he would conquer him and turn him wrong side out."

"F" was sun-browned and freckled, large-nosed and red-haired, a homely, plain, patched little Yankee boy, and as he rode along through the deep summer bloom and fragrance of the shaded road, winding up the long hills, in the glow of the afternoon sun, I learned such a lesson from that little fellow at my side, as I shall not soon forget. He did not look much like a preacher, as he sat stooping forward a little, whisking the flies from the deacon's horse, but his sermon was one which I wish might have been heard by all the boys in the land. He did not know that he was preaching, or he would have stopped, I think. As it was, I had to spur him on, now and then, by questions, to get him to tell me about himself.

"My father died, you see, and left mother the little brown house opposite the tavern. You saw it, didn't you, sir?—the one with the lilac bushes under the window? Father was sick a long time, and when he could not work, he had to make money on the house. Deacon Ball let him have it, a little at a time, and when father was gone, mother found the money owed was \$300. At first, she thought she would have to give up the house, but the deacon said: 'Let it wait awhile, and he turned to me and patted me on the head, and said: 'When Johnny gets big enough to earn something, I shall expect him to pay it for me.' So I went to school, and when I was only nine years old, he died. Now I am thirteen; I remember it, and remember how mother cried, and said: 'Yes, Deacon, Johnny's my only hope now.' I really felt as if I ought to begin at once, and yet I could not think of anything I could do."

"Well, what did you do?" I asked quickly, for I was afraid he would stop and I wanted to hear the rest.

"Well, at first, I did very funny things for a boy. Mother used to knit socks to sell, and she sewed the rags to make rag carpets, and I helped."

"How? What would you do?" "Well, the people who would like a carpet would make me get one to make it. So I went from house to house among the farmers, and took home their rags, old coats and everything they had, and out in the woodshed I ripped and cut them up. Then mother sewed them, and sometimes I sewed some, too, and rolled them into the owners, all ready to be woven into carpets."

"But did that pay you for your work?" "Oh, yes; we got so much a pound, and I used to feel quite like a merchant when I weighed them out myself with our steel yards. But that was only one way. We have two or three old apple trees out in the back yard by the way, and we dried the apples and sold them. Then some of the farmers, who had a good many apples, began to send them to us to dry, and we paid them so many pounds, all dried, and then we had all the rest to sell."

"But you surely could not do much in ways like this?" "No, not much; but something; and there was the knitting."

"Did you knit?" "Not at first, but after awhile mother began to have rheumatism in her hands, and the joints became swollen and the fingers twisted, and it hurt her to move them. Then I learned to knit. Before that, I always wound the yarn for her. I had to learn to sew a little, too, for mother did not like to see holes without patches."

"And he looked half smiling at the specimens on his knees."

"You did not mend those?" I asked.

"I did, and ironed them, too. I can wash and iron almost as well as mother could."

"But she does not let you do it."

"make out, I take it over to the teacher in the evening, and she is very kind—she tells me."

"Very kind? Who would not be kind to such a boy? I felt tears coming to my eyes as I saw a sudden vision of a son doing a girl's work, while his poor mother held the book in her twisted hands and tried to help him to learn."

"But all this does not earn money, Johnny. How can you hope to save, if you give all your time indoors?" "Oh, I don't do girl's work all day; no, indeed, I have worked out all her taxes on the road. It wasn't much, but I helped the men build a stone wall down by the river, and Deacon Ball let me do a great many days' work for him; and when I get a chance to take any one from the hotel to ride, he lets me have his team for almost nothing, and I pay to him whatever I make. And I work on the farm with the men in summer, and I have a cow of my own, and I sell milk at the tavern; and we have some hens, too, and we sell eggs. And in the fall I cut and pile wood in the sheds for people who haven't any boys—and there's a good many people about here who haven't any boys."

He added, thoughtfully, brushing a fly from the old white horse with the tip of his whip.

After this we fell into silence, and rode on through the sweet New England roads, with the Monadnock rising before us ever nearer and more majestic. It impressed me with a sense of its rugged strength—one of the hills, rock-rimmed and ancient as the sun; but I glanced from the mountain to the little red-headed morsel of humanity at my side, with a sort of recognition of their kinship. Somehow they seemed to belong together. I felt as if the same sturdy stuff was in them both. It was only a fancy, but I was confirmed the next day, for when I came back and up in the morning, I found the boy in the house, seeing my invalid friend, I went to call on deacon Ball. I found the deacon white-haired and kindly faced. He kept the village store and owned a pretty house, and was very "well-to-do."

Naturally, we talked of Johnny, and the deacon said to me, with tears in his watery blue eyes: "Why, bless your heart, you don't think I am going to take his money, do you? The only son of his mother, and she a widow, and all up in a double bow knot, with the rheumatics besides! True enough, I let the father have the money, and my wife says, 'sue me to me.' Well, deacon, my dear, we've neither chick nor child, and we shall be just as well off a hundred years hence if the wider never pays a cent; but 'cording to my calculation, it's better to let the boy take it. He is paying. Says she to me, 'Deacon, might as well try to keep a barrel of vinegar from working to keep that boy. It's the mother in him, and it's got to go.' We think a good deal of the wider, Maudy and me, I did before I ever saw Maudy; but for all that, we hold the mortgage, and Johnny wants to work it out. Maudy and me, we are going to let him work."

I turned away, for I was to sup at Johnny's house; but before I went I asked how much Johnny had paid. "Well, I don't know; Maudy knows. I pass it to her and she keeps the book. Drop in before you go to the train and I'll show it to you."

I dropped in, and the deacon showed me the account. It was the book of a savings bank of a neighboring town, and on it's pages were credits of little sums the boy had earned or paid; and I saw that he was saving the Widow Beebe's name. I grasped the deacon's hand. He was looking away over the house tops to where Monadnock was smiling to the good-night kisses of the sun.

"Good bye, sir, good bye!" he said, returning my squeeze with interest. "Much obliged, I'm sure, Maudy and me too; but don't you be worried about Johnny! When we see him, we know the real stuff it takes to make a man, and Johnny has got it; Johnny's like that mountain over there—chuck full of grit and lots of backbone."

A Girl in Blue.

BY PANSY.

This was just the way Helen looked when her cousin Carrie peeped in at her from the crack at the door that led to the dining-room. And this was much the way that Carrie talked to herself about it: "There she sits in her elegant new morning dress, looking like a queen in the world, and she does nothing but sit and stare at me with her hands pining potatoes, and onions, and I don't know what all for her dinner! A dress with a train and she's only sixteen! Only two years and a few months older than I am! How would I look in a train? I never expect to have such an elegant dress as she has on, and she's only sixteen! Tonight she will wear that lovely garment, trimmed in white lace. Think of me in my old blue flannel! It is every thing I have to wear. I don't see why there should be such a difference between cousins! I wish Helen had stayed in New York. Why she wanted to come to the country in the winter is more than I can understand. She isn't homesick a bit. I just believe I'll stay at home to-night. Alend, and my old one will look older than ever beside Helen's grand one."

"Carrie," called that young lady's mother, and Carrie went to the kitchen.

There she gave her hands to the potatoes, and her thoughts to the discouragements around her. At last she spoke some of them aloud: "Mother, I don't believe I'll go to-night, after all."

"Not go to Kate's Christmas party? Why, what has happened? Is the child sick?"

"No, no, I'm not sick; only discouraged. I don't want to go and wear that old blue dress, and that's the truth. I shall look different from the rest of the others, and seeing me with Helen will make everybody notice it more."

"My child, Helen's father is worth a million, and your father isn't worth a thousand dollars besides what it takes to support his family."

"I know it, ma'am; I'm not finding fault, only I don't want to go and be looked at, that's all."

The mother looked very sober, and something besides the steam that puffed out of the pudding dish, made her eyes moist. Carrie sat a large potato to save in two, and looked gloomy. Then the mother said, speaking low: "Won't you, dear, do me a favor, and people to-night, daughter? Good many depending on you to help with the charades and the music?"

"Can't you? Why daughter, even Christ pleased not himself."

After that, not another word was said. Carrie finished the potatoes and ran away. Where she went, or what she did, mother did not know; but when she came to set the table her face was pleasant to look at, she stopped on her way to the pantry to kiss her mother.

"I'm going, mother, and I'll have as nice a time as I can, and not grumble a bit."

She looked very pretty in her blue dress with its deep lace collar and bright ribbons in her hair. At least her mother thought so; though when Helen came down in all the glory of her garnet silk and gold bracelets there was certainly a difference.

"I wasn't a young people's party entirely, but a family Christmas gathering, to which all the city aunts and uncles and cousins had come; and there were some elegant dresses there, and Carrie, in her old blue one, did really feel a good deal alone. Yet she went cheerily through the evening, helping with the charades and the music, helping in a dozen quiet little ways that nobody knew about, and yet trying to keep out of notice as much as possible."

Cousin Helen played and sang, and did both very nicely, while Carrie only played accompaniments for others to sing.

Later in the evening there was a whispering between two of the city girls, and presently it became known that Mr. Ames, the son of Howard's college friend, was Uncle Howard's singer and would entertain the company if anybody could be found who would play for him.

"I wish he would sing 'The Storm King' for us," said Aunt Alice; "it is the most wonderful thing! I would like to have mother hear it. Helen couldn't you play it for him?"

"No, indeed; his music is all awful hard, and he is awfully particular; and that piece I don't know any way."

But Aunt Alice was determined that her mother should hear 'The Storm King.' She talked with Mr. Ames, and then she moved among the guests trying to find one who was willing to play the accompaniment. No one was found; but she was all afraid of the great singer, and the difficult looking music. At last the girl in the blue dress grew ashamed of herself.

"Aunt Alice, I will play it!" she said, coming out from her corner.

"You!" said Aunt Alice in surprise, for Carrie was one of the youngest of the cousins. "Do you know it?"

"No, ma'am, I don't know it; but I can play from the notes."

Then did Helen look at her young cousin in respectful astonishment. "Can you play pieces that you do not know?" she asked her.

"Why yes," said Carrie laughing. "I can if they are not very hard; I ought to, I have taken lessons steadily for three years."

"Well, but I have taken lessons for more than five years, and I can't do it!" I can play from the notes."

And Carrie played the accompaniment, which really was difficult, and played it so well that Mr. Ames, the great singer, told her he never had a player who pleased him better.

And don't you think she forgot all about her blue dress, until her attention was called to it in a very strange way?

"She not only plays remarkably well," said Mr. Ames to his wife, "but she is the best dressed young girl in the room."

"Yes," said Mrs. Ames, "I noticed that; all the rest of the young people are over-dressed. She must have a sensible mother."

The girl did not know that Carrie told her mother, and she heard it all. But really I think it did her good; just as honest compliments often do good. It made her realize that there were two sides to the question of fine dresses.

FARM AND HOUSEHOLD.

From the Country Gentleman.

Waste in Land. More than half of the land in occupation is waste. If I raise 80 bushels of corn per acre, and my neighbor raises but 40, although my neighbor may think he does well—which he does, and better than is commonly done—he requires double the amount of land to equal my yield. This is a loss of interest and taxes on half my neighbor's land, or virtually so much waste land. The difficulty is, his land is but half fed. It therefore can do but half the work. But, usually, land does much less than it can, and can be made to do more than in the other case. This shows what a waste there is. Really, over two-thirds of our land is idle, the interest, taxes and repairs lost, and this loss a constant drain. And yet this is not the worst; farmers, instead of disposing of some of their land, or working to its full capacity what they have, grasp after more, thus increasing the waste, and sometimes a half of the land in the country is more than I can understand. She isn't homesick a bit. I just believe I'll stay at home to-night. Alend, and my old one will look older than ever beside Helen's grand one."

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use manure enough to grow full crops, or such as will secure the most advantage; all things considered, which case there is always, he enough manure left in the soil to favor the next crop, which may not need additional fertility to grow it, depending upon what is grown, some crops requiring less manure, and to some extent of a changed character; but there should always be enough to tax the full capacity of the soil, so that the greatest profit, all things considered, may be realized. What is more than this is a waste, to some extent, of manure; what is less is a lack and implies waste in land.

What Physicians Say.

Dr. R. V. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y.: "Dear Sir—I have employed your 'Pleasant Purgative Pellets' in my practice for the last four years. I now use no other alternative or cathartic medicines in all chronic derangements of the stomach, liver, and bowels. I know of nothing that equals them."

J. A. MILLER, M. D., San Leandro, Cal.

Farmers' Homes.

No man has before him better opportunities for making his home pleasant and happy, in the best sense of the term, than the farmer. Perhaps he does not realize how few of the disadvantages of city life he has to contend against, because he is not familiar with them. But if he were, he would see what superior chances his lot in life affords to make those about him satisfied with the world.

The farmer's home should gather about it the beauty which is to be had so cheaply. He has only to reach out his hand and take it. It may be that because he has seen it all his life, he has become so familiar with it that he does not realize how much beauty there is in the surroundings. He sees it with unseeing eyes. But let him set about the building up of a home which shall be the one place on earth to him, and his effort to make that place all that it deserves to be, will lead him to study out the best of the beautiful about him—which are no secrets when once we try to comprehend them—and he will avail himself of the means at hand, and the home he builds will be like a magnet which attracts about itself all things in affinity with the true idea of home.

Let the house that shelters those who love be as beautiful as the means at hand will permit. We gain culture and refinement from things of beauty. They exercise a constant influence over us, though we may not know it. But home may be humble, and still not be lacking in beauty. The field and forest can be believed on, and made to pay tribute to it. A vine for the porch can be found in the corner of the fence. A shrub for the garden in the woods. All about are beautiful things to be had for the taking.

The farmer's home needs no costly furniture to make it pleasant and attractive; if the faces there reflect the beauty of happy hearts. To make happy hearts, there must be culture and growth of the mind. In every home that is what home ought to be, there will be found books and papers to suit the ages and the tastes of all members of it. Books that will elevate and increase the desire for knowledge, that will give the farmer and his family a better understanding of the world, and a better understanding of the farmer's life.

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Farmers' homes are growing more and more like the homes of those who have given more thought to what home ought to be, and God speed the good work!—Resford in Farmers' Review.

How Women Would Vote. Were women allowed to vote, every one in the land who has used Dr. Pierce's "Favorite Prescription" would vote it to be an unerring remedy for the diseases peculiar to her sex. By druggists.

One cow well fed and comfortably cared for will produce quite as much milk and butter as two that are allowed to run at large, lie on the wet ground, and be subject to the exposure of the weather.

That life is the highest which is a conscious voluntary sacrifice.—Geo. Eliot.

STUDYING HOUSEKEEPING.—One of the most desirable reforms in our American habits could be inaugurated if a thorough drill in the science of the wealthier classes, in all that belongs to house management, culinary art and economy, and hygiene. All classes would be participants in the good, for all seek to learn from those better off than themselves. In Austria, the proudest families are the most particular to have their daughters thoroughly taught by practical housekeeper-cooks, and in Germany and France the practice is universal, putting all classes on an equality in this respect. Sensible and prudent men in our cities, who can, while single, have good dishes and good attendance at their clubs or hotels, hesitate to marry; and so our young heroines are too apt to be obliged to put up with inferior husbands, because of their own lack of knowledge, and proper knowledge of what must be done to secure the conditions necessary for daily physical comfort—the first condition of happiness.

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COMPARATIVE WORTH OF BAKING POWDERS.

ROYAL (Absolutely Pure)..... 100
GRANTS (Alum Powder)..... 80
KEMPSON'S (Phosphate), when fresh..... 70
HARFORD'S, when fresh..... 60
HARFORD'S (Alum Powder)..... 50
AMAZON (Alum Powder)..... 40
CLEVELAND'S (Short weight, 3 lb. can)..... 30
PIONEER (San Francisco)..... 20
DR. PRICE'S..... 10
SNOW FLAKE (Graft's, St. Paul)..... 5
LEWIS..... 4
CONQUEST..... 3
HARFORD'S, when not fresh..... 2
C. H. ANDREWS & CO. (Contains alum)..... 1
BULK (Powder sold loose)..... 1
HARFORD'S, when not fresh..... 1

REPORTS OF GOVERNMENT CHEMISTS AS TO PURITY AND WHOLESOME-NESS OF THE ROYAL BAKING POWDER.

"I have tested a package of Royal Baking Powder, which I purchased in the open market, and it contained pure and wholesome ingredients. It is a crown of trust, and is of high quality, and does not contain either alum or phosphate, or other injurious substances."

"It is a scientific fact that the Royal Baking Powder is absolutely pure."

"I have examined a package of Royal Baking Powder, purchased by myself in the market. It is entirely free from alum, soda, or any other injurious substance."

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The Various Sources of Ammonia.

There is one phase of the nitrogen question in its relations to the economy of agriculture, which has not been adverted to by any of the writers who have discussed the subject. It is the varying value to the farmer of the nitrogen or ammonia, according to its source and combination. A unit of ammonia is generally reckoned by analytical chemists and dealers in fertilizers as of fixed value, whereas in fact it is contained in guano (I mean guano in its proper sense, not the waste of guano, such as fish manure, slaughter-house offal, or fish scrap. An experience of more than thirty years in the use of commercial fertilizers has taught me that there is a wide difference in this respect. I would rather pay \$50, or even more, per ton for super-phosphate containing 6 per cent of ammonia, than that received from Peruvian guano, than \$40. For an article the same in other respects, that had been ammoniated with meat or fish scrap, or even with sulphate of ammonia. I should qualify this by saying that the difference would be much greater with a crop like wheat, the tenure of which on the land extends over a space of eight or nine months, than with quick growing plants, such as tobacco, or certain garden vegetables. Dr. Sharp is, I know, aware of this difference, and he is right in advising farmers to cease spending their money as lavishly as they do upon tankage, woolen rags, leather scraps, fish offal, or anything which chemistry shows to contain nitrogenous matter. All these things lack staying qualities, according to my experience, and the price is too high—about double what it ought to be to give the farmer a margin of profit, taking into consideration his many risks and the low prices of staple products.

While recognizing the force of Dr. Sharp's reasoning, I will say that the tenor of my long experience has been in the main, more in accordance with the views expressed by Mr. Chamberlain, to the extent that fertilizers have with me generally proved more efficacious in proportion as they were more or less highly ammoniated (with the reservation mentioned above). My first experiment with phosphate entirely non-ammoniated was made three years ago, with Charleston rock finely ground and mixed with equal parts of unbleached wood ashes and drilled with wheat, about 200 pounds of acid phosphate per acre. The result disappointed me utterly. I am experimenting in the same line again, however; this time with acid phosphate and kainit in connection with field peas, and also without. It may be that the peas will supply sufficient nitrogen (if, indeed, it is needed), to supplement the phosphate of lime and the potash and other salts of the kainit. Supplemented by them it may make something like a complete fertilizer—a desideratum supplied by clover alone of the ameliorating crops in this section, where for some reason inexplicable to me, pea fallows do not benefit the land or the after crops as they do in the tide-water region. The trouble with clover is the difficulty of getting a "catch," even on lands amply rich enough to grow it; while the pea fallow, if fished out, and is as nearly never failing as plant can be.—Randolph Harrison.

Samuel Josephs, Selma, says: "Brown's Iron Bitters has entirely restored my health. I consider it a most valuable tonic medicine."

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