

Family Reading.

Do your Best.

BY SYDNEY DAYRE.

I'm only an insignificant broom
Good to sweep an untidy room
And then to be hidden away.
It's very trying I cannot be
Something dainty or sweet to see
Where the light and the sunbeams stay.

I'd like to be the dear little chair
That holds the bonny wee baby, there;
Or, rather, if I were able
To have my wish, I would proudly stand
With bric-a-brac, cards, and flowers, a grand
Magnificent marble table.

Or there is the looking-glass, you know,
Which everybody admires so;
You can always see the smile
With which they peep as they pass it by.
How aristocratic to hang so high
And be looked at all the while!

And there is a splendid thing to hold
The books with covers of red and gold;
Exceedingly dignified;
Or that old sofa where children crowd
And shout and frolic and laugh aloud
At play on its cushions wide.

But what is the use of wishing to be
Anything else but just plain me?
I'd better be trying to do
My best, I think, for a homely broom,
And see to it that I sweep my room
As well as I can. Don't you?

Nor ever grumble, though only made
To live and work in the quiet shade;
For any with eyes may see
That if we each of us do no more
Than keep in order a single floor
A very clean world 'twill be.
—The Independent.

New Select Serial.

KATHLEEN.

THE STORY OF A HOME.

BY AGNES GIBBERNE.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

JOURNAL CONTINUED.

Rocklands, Feb. 22.

'I made up my mind that I would not write a single word more in my journal till I had been at least a week in my new home. It has been rather hard to keep the resolve once or twice. Journalising comes as a sort of relief to me, like talking of one's troubles to a friend.

'I had made the resolve, and I kept it. But the week is over now, and I am free to have a little talk with my old friend.

'There is nobody else to whom I can tell my little troubles. I would not write them on any account to my dear child. And it does not do with my dear husband. I soon found that. He is easily worried, and he likes me to take everything off his hands, and to manage all for him. That is not quite easy just yet.

'It is now a week since we came home—not that I feel it home yet. I have such a strange feeling of being where I have no right to be, and of doing things which I have no right to do. I think it is the look in the children's faces which gives me this feeling.

'I always thought the moment of arrival would be the worst of all, and I longed to have it over. When the moment came, my husband seemed nervous and flustered, and I felt calm. If one has to go through with a thing, it is always best not to give way to flurry of feeling.

'My husband had written word beforehand that the servants were to be in the hall to welcome me. I think he thought it would do me honour. As we drew near the door, he said he wished he had not given the order—anything of a family scene was so uncomfortable. But the order had been obeyed, and in the hall they were—respectful, but one and all grave as judges. Hardwicke came forward, solemnly civil. Albert said something in a hurry to them all about 'your new mistress', and then pulled me on towards the drawing-room.

The four girls were there, waiting. Joan came forward first to meet me, and her manner was affectionate, but I saw in a moment a change. She did not show any real pleasure at seeing me. Kathleen looked ill, and had her very quietest and gentlest manner. She gave me just one kiss, and said 'How do you do?' and then she told the children that they were to kiss

Mrs. Jolliffe, Justinia and Olave were exactly like two little puppets moved by wires. They kept watching Kathleen, and copying everything she did.

'I noticed that when my husband put his arms round Kathleen, and called her 'his sweet Leena' in his affectionate way, she turned whiter still, and her lips quivered, as if she were in danger of a break down. But she only went to a corner near the fire, where her face was shaded, while my husband made me take a seat; and then we talked a little about weather and traveling. And I wondered if we should always have this weight upon us—like a nightmare—and whether the evening would ever come to an end.

'Albert seemed restless and fidgety. I thought. He went outside and spoke to Hardwicke, and presently he proposed to take me upstairs and show me our bed room and his dressing-room. Everything had been beautifully prepared—nothing neglected. My husband seemed vexed at the way the furniture had been changed about, and said he liked the old arrangement better. But I guessed Kathleen's reason, and begged him to leave it so at least for the present.

'Then we went downstairs to dinner. I said to Kathleen, 'Will you please me by keeping your own seat for a few days?' She looked up in my face with those sad blue eyes of hers, and said:

'Oh no, thank you, papa would not like it.' And I saw he expected me to go to the head of the table. So I sat there through course after course, with my husband opposite in a sort of nervous flutter, expecting me to make conversation and keep things smooth; and Joan on one side, silent, as she always is at meal times; and Kathleen on the other, as white as wax, eating nothing, and saying almost nothing—only, when she did speak, always graceful and quiet.

'I don't think I can write any more about that first evening. The very remembrance of it is full of pain. It isn't far enough off yet.

'In the morning I seemed to wake up to the fact that *here I was*, in my new position, with new duties, new claims, and new trials. And the position had to be filled, and the claims to be seen after, and the duties to be done, and the trials to be borne. One duty was clear. I could see my dear husband's shrinking from uncomplaisableness, and I made up my mind to spare him in every possible way.

'After breakfast Kathleen brought me the household keys, and asked if she should show me where things were kept. I was tempted to ask her to wait a few days, but it seemed wisest not, so we went all over the house together. She was as calm and gentle as the night before, but not the least affectionate.

'I did not stay long in the school-room. Miss Thorpe's manner said plainly enough that she counted me to have no business there. And the cook in the kitchen was much the same; but that mattered less.

'We finished off by coming to the morning-room. It is a pretty little cosy place, and I know now that Kathleen always used to spend her mornings there with her mother. She flushed up and said, 'Mrs. Jolliffe, I have been asking my father if this room may belong to myself. He is quite willing, if you do not object.'

'I think it is a very nice plan,' I said; and I added, 'Anything that can make you happy will please me Kathleen.'

'She turned her head half away, and said, 'We very seldom have breakfast here, only once in a while, if the weather is very hot. I do not think it will be wanted.'

'I shall never want it,' I said; and so the matter was settled. I did not quite see at the moment all that it meant; not that I could have answered differently if I had seen. But it means that Kathleen will spend all her leisure time there with her little sisters, and that I shall not be admitted.

'I do not write this bitterly or in vexation. I hope that time will do much. But it is so at present.

'March 22.
'Just a month since I came to Rocklands. A month! It seems more like a year.

'I am not unhappy. Oh no, I could not be, with so dear and kind a husband.

He depends greatly upon me for interest and companionship, and my delight is to give him all I can. He is, indeed, seldom content to have me an hour out of his sight, unless Kathleen is with him to take my place. Even that would not always content him.

'Yes, I am happy in him, and happy still also, thank God, with the higher happiness which nothing can take from me.

'But I don't say I am satisfied with things as they are, for things are not natural. I see it more and more as weeks go on.

'There are no struggles, almost no oppositions. I think Justinia would fight, but Kathleen has her little sisters completely in hand, and a look from her subdues Justinia in a moment. If I said I wish a thing done, Justinia used at first to say pertly, 'Does papa order it, Mrs. Jolliffe?' Kathleen found this out, and immediately checked her. She told Justinia quietly that I was to be obeyed.

'But the life I am living here is a life apart, except as far as has to do with my dear husband. The three girls spend all spare time in their little sitting-room together, and, strange to say, Joan also is much with them, and seems to prefer that to being with me.

I used to wish to see those two girls draw nearer together. Now that my wish has come to pass, do I *wish* it?

Kathleen's influence somehow reaches over Joan in a way that it used not to do.

Miss Thorpe rarely leaves her school-room, and when she does she is frigid. I cannot as yet get hold of her at all.

Kathleen is still, as at first, gently and calmly courteous to me. Not a wish of mine is ever opposed, except my heart's wish to be allowed to win her love. She holds aloof, and her little sisters hold aloof with her, and Joan too does the same. When I was Mary Dodson, I did not think so much of poor, dear Joan's affection, but I would be thankful enough for it now.

'Will this grow worse? I dread the thought, yet how to bring about a different state of things I do not know. If I speak to my husband, he says, 'Have patience, my dear, and it will all come right in time.' But will it?

'I know that I am not quite natural with the girls, any more than they are with me. There is a feeling of being tied. Sometimes it seems to me as if Mary Jolliffe were scarcely the same person that Mary Dodson was. Am I out of my element here?

'I don't think the Jolliffes' friends take to me, as a rule. I suppose their recollection of Kathleen's mother comes in the way; yet I do not think many knew her intimately.

'Once or twice lately, when I have been out on an evening with Albert, he has seemed afterwards not quite pleased, and has begged me to alter some little matter in the way of manner or voice or ways. I did not know till lately how very particular he is as to ladies' appearance, and as to points of etiquette. I am making it my earnest endeavour to learn and to do exactly what he likes in even the smallest particulars. But it is not quite easy at my age to unlearn old habits, and to learn new ones. I forget often, and then I see a worried look on his face. This sort of attention to myself keeps me from feeling at ease and he tells me I am not so lively and amusing as I used to be. I do not mean that my dear husband exactly complains, but these little remarks drop from him.

'He often objects to my style of dress yet he cannot tell me what is wrong, or what he would like. Kathleen has, I see, a remarkably quiet lady-like taste and I must try to learn from watching others. I have never been used to give much thought to the matter, except just to be neat and clean. Now it becomes a duty.

'However, I do not wish to make too much of these matters. One must expect some small pin-pricks in life.

'It was a good while before I saw the Ritchies, though Kathleen is always going there. Lady Catherine and I exchanged calls, and missed one another, and then there was an invitation to dinner on an evening when we were engaged. I think I was glad.

'But we have met at last. The Doctor was polite and kind, but certainly constrained. I could see that he was pitying Kathleen all the time. He

has such a good and pleasant face that I cannot help liking and trusting him. But I don't think Dr Ritchie likes me.

'I cannot quite make out Lady Catherine. She was not constrained, and I should not think anything would ever make her so. She was not stiff or even cold, but she seemed to be quietly studying me. I should like to see her again.

'Viola is in no hurry to come. I am very, very thirsty for my child, but I think she dreads her new home.

'Sometimes I wonder whether Miss Thorpe and Hardwicke are doing harm in the house. I do not think Miss Thorpe is wise in her management of children, but at present I can say nothing. She allows no interference on my part. Hardwicke is civil, but opposes me on every possible occasion. I foresee a need for certain changes by-and-by, as regarding the other servants. There has been a complete liberty-reign under poor Kathleen, and the waste that goes on is enormous. But I must wait awhile. My one aim just at present is to have no struggles. Is this cowardice?

'Oh, the need for wisdom and patience! And are they not promised?

April 14.

Still the same. Kathleen quiet and gentle and cold; her sisters copying her; and Joan more and more taken up with Kathleen, for whom she seems to have taken a sudden and violent affection. What an odd girl she is!

'I stand still apart from them, with my own occupations and interests separate from theirs.

'In the morning my husband generally goes out with Kathleen for an hour or two, either walking or driving. I encouraged this at first in pity for her, and it has become quite a habit. My husband is very much a man of habit.

'But we three never go out together. If I propose to go, Kathleen stays at home. I have tried it once, and only once.

'In the afternoon my husband and I are out together, and I rarely hear what Kathleen does. I think she is often so tired with her morning's walk that she has to lie down and be idle. She is looking sadly delicate, but she will not allow that she is ill.

'In the evening we are commonly all together in the drawing-room. But Kathleen and her sisters and Joan are busy apart from me. Sometimes they draw my husband into their circle, and I am still outside.

'My one aim is to endure patiently, and to show no anger. That would make matters worse.

April 15.

'When writing yesterday I did not quite know how lonely I was feeling, until there came a letter from my Viola, saying that her grandmother had invited her for a long six months' visit to Normandy, and begging me to let her go. She says that she hates the thought of coming here, that she knows she shall be miserable, and that she does not think she can bear it.

'Have I parted my child from myself for ever by this step? Does 'six months' mean always? How little I knew! But that is the comfort—I did not know, and God knew, and my wish all along was to do His will.

'I shall not refuse. My mother-in-law is very fond of Viola, and the child will be happy there. I think, perhaps, she would not be quite happy here at present. She is proud, and her pride would be jarred. I must crush down my longing to see her again. No—I will not have her here even for one night—as things are now. She would not lose the first impression, and by-and-by all may be different. I do so pray for it—I do so watch, for fear I should give the least real cause for offence.

'I would like to go and see Viola, but my husband seems as if he could not spare me. Well—better so. I should not like it, perhaps, if he could. I told him her wish, and I think he is relieved. Certainly I don't fancy she and Kathleen would suit one another. Kathleen thinks so much of refinement—and my Viola's high spirits are apt to be just a little hoydenish. Perhaps I ought to have checked her more.

'But I think her gaiety and fun would do me good. Anything rather than all this cold politeness. Sometimes I feel as if my heart were slowly freezing. It would, but for Albert.

'April 20.
'All is settled, and Viola goes abroad. I shall not see her again, I suppose, for six months.

'Nobody knows of my heart-ache except my God.

'Albert says it is a very nice arrangement. And the girls show no more interest than if she were a New Zealander.

'But, oh, I must not feel resentment. I must not give way to it.

April 30.

'The days go round like clockwork. I am busy and ought to be happy. Yes and I am happy—only there is always the weight of those four girls holding coldly aloof, refusing to give or have love. Joan has completely changed, and now positively repels me, being often very short and curt in her way of speaking, while she seems to lavish love upon Kathleen. If Kathleen hears her speak to me unpleasantly, she represses Joan directly by look or manner. I think she counts it her duty to uphold the position of her father's wife. But if she only knew how much worse her own manner is than any mere show of temper—only I suppose she does not.

'To-day I had quite a long talk with Lady Catherine Ritchie. She came in early, when Kathleen was out with Albert, and found me alone in the dining-room. I always spend the greater part of my mornings there, generally alone. She sat down for a chat, and I am afraid I was stiff at first, I seem to have grown into a sort of feeling lately that all Mrs. Jolliffe's friends are against me.

'But I found that lady Catherine was not. There is a wonderful sort of charm about her. She has manners as graceful and gracious as Kathleen's, but without any chill in them.

'She asked me a little about the children, and how they were, and how they spent their days. She asked me about my Viola too; and when I said she was gone to Normandy for six months, Lady Catherine said, 'Poor thing; that is hard upon you. Don't you miss her very much? And when I tried to speak, I could not for a minute. And she said in such a kind way—'Never mind—never mind—it will be better by-and-by. I said, 'It is all right, I know—and she said, 'Yes, but the first few months must be rather trying.

'That seemed to draw us together, and I found myself speaking to her more easily than I have spoken to anybody in Rockston. I was careful, knowing her to be so intimate with Kathleen—still I could not but trust her.

'We talked a good deal about Kathleen's delicate looks. She said her husband was not satisfied about her. And we spoke too about Miss Thorpe. I found that Lady Catherine does not like her much more than I do. She remarked that the children's mother had never meant to keep her very much longer, and she had advised me to make a change. I said I did not think I could. She said, 'The matter is in your hands—but of course one cannot act hastily in such a case.' I could not help thinking of the storm that would be raised. Yet it might be my duty. She is doing Justinia harm.

'I am glad to have had this talk with Lady Catherine. It has been a comfort. I think she at least looks upon me kindly.

Beneath a church belonging to some Franciscan monks at Laturon, about fifteen miles north-west of Jerusalem, an ancient baptistry has been discovered. It is in the form of a cross with curved ends. It is about five feet deep and ten feet long, admirably adapted for immersion.

Dr. Wilson once gave the following counsel to a class of students:—'Young gentlemen, study Hebrew roots, pore over Greek verbs, read Latin, and, if you have time and desire, translate ancient hieroglyphics, but I charge you, when you go into the pulpit to preach the Gospel, to use the plain Anglo-Saxon.'

I tell you there is a sacred connection between honesty and faith; honesty is faith applied to worldly things, and faith is honesty quickened by the Spirit to the use of heavenly things.—Edward Irving.

Bouth's Department.

Original and Selected.
Bible Enigma.

No. 252.

Find the name of a tree whose fruit was represented on the border of the High Priest's official robe, by answering the following and taking the initials:—

1. A branch of what tree was anciently a symbol of victory?
2. On what tree was a rebellious prince hanged?
3. A fruit-tree, in a grove of which David had a sign divinely given him, hinting at what time he should attack his enemy.

4. A precious wood mentioned only once in Scripture.

5. A fruit, the principal product of Palestine.

6. A fruit among the gifts that Abigail presented to David.

7. One of the fruits which Joseph's brethren brought to him when they sought his favor.

8. A noxious weed that grows in waste places, more especially in the garden of the sluggard.

9. A fruit that suggested to Solomon a beautiful simile in regard to reasonable advice wisely and courteously given.

10. A wild shrub, or tree, one of the noxious things produced by the earth under the curse.

11. A place noted for the abundance and superior quality of the grapes it produced.

CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

No. 148.

What word of six syllables has a vowel and a consonant in each.

No. 149.

Form a half square of the following

1. A confusion.
2. Haughty.
3. A turning out.
4. Not at home.
5. The sign of the year of our Lord.
6. The beginning of a race.

No. 150.

Find five words of five letters each, the initials spell a man's name, and the initials the name of another:

1. A prophet mentioned in the New Testament.
2. A metal fastening.
3. The aloe or century plant.
4. An animal used for food.
5. A blazing light.
6. A father or mother's brother.
7. A young man.

No. 151.

1. Change give to lend in five words.
2. Change dawn to noon in four words.
3. Change snow to rain in seven words.

No. 152.

Find answers to these seven Bible Questions:

1. Six women once took a journey which resulted in a wedding. Who was the bride and groom?
2. What ancient king employed dromedaries as mail-carriers?
3. Who, when bereft of his best earthly friend, did not weep in compliance with the command of God?
4. Which is the longest word in the Bible?
5. Which is the middle verse in the Bible?
6. Which is the longest verse in the Bible?
7. Which is the shortest verse in the Bible?

Find answers to the above—write them down—and see how they agree with the answers to be given next week.

Answer to Bible Enigma.

No. 251.

B ethel,
E mmatus,
T homas,
H erod,
L ois,
E unice,
H or,
E lis,
M oes.

BETHLEHEM.

ANSWERS TO CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

No. 144.

Some Bible Birds.

Dove. Gen. viii. 8-11.
Sparrow. Psa. cii. 7.
Swallow. Smith's Bible Dictionary.
Peacocks. 1 Kings x. 22.
Ostrich. Job xxxix. 13-15.
Cock. Mark xiv. 66-72.
Hen. Matt. xxiii. 37.

No. 145.

1. Sand, said, slid, slit, slat, slay, clay
2. Poor, moor, moon, morn, more, mire, mice, rice, rich.
3. Came, cane, wane, want, went.

No. 146.

How is this?
Every lady in this land
Has twenty nails, on each hand
Five, and twenty on hands and feet,
All this is true without deceit.

No. 147.

Sham-rock.
Character is higher than intellect. A great soul will be strong to live as to think.

Vanity keeps persons in favor with themselves who are out of favor with all others.