

Family Reading.

A Literary Curiosity.

A REMARKABLE POEM TO WHICH THIRTY-EIGHT POETS CONTRIBUTE A LINE EACH.

The following very remarkable little poem is a contribution to the San Francisco Times from the pen of Mr. H. A. Deming. The reader will see that each line is a quotation from some one of the standard authors of England and America. This is the result of years of laborious search among the voluminous writings of thirty-eight leading poets of the past and present:

Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour? —Young. Life's a short summer, man's a flower. —Dr. Johnson. By turns we catch the vital breath and die. —Pope. The cradle and the tomb, alas! so nigh. —Prior. To be is better far than not to be. —Sewell. Though all men's lives may seem a tragedy. —Spencer. But life cares speak when mighty griefs are dumb. —Daniel. The bottom is but shallow whence they come. —Sir Walter Scott. Your fate is but the common fate of all. —Longfellow. Unmingled joys here no man can befall. —Southwell. Nature to each allots its proper sphere. —Congreve. Fortune makes folly her particular care. —Churchill. Custom does often reason overrule. —Rochester. And throws a cruel sunshine on a fool. —Armstrong. Live well, how long or short, permit to heaven. —Milton. They who forgive most shall be most forgiven. —Bailey. Sin may be clasped so close we cannot see its face. —Trench. Vile intercourse where virtue has no place. —Somerville. Then keep each passion down, however dear. —Thompson. Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear. —Byron. Her sensual snares let faithless pleasure lay. —Smollett. With craft and skill to ruin and betray. —Crabbe. Soar not too high to fall, but stoop to rise. —Massinger. We masters grow of all that we despise. —Cowley. Oh, then, renounce that impious self-esteem. —Beattie. Riches have wings and grandeur is a dream. —Cowper. Think not ambition wise because 'tis brave. —Sir Walter Devenant. The paths of glory lead but to the grave. —Gray. What is ambition? 'Tis a glorious cheat. —Wills. Only destructive to the brave and great. —Addison. What's all the gaudy glitter of a crown? —Dryden. The way of bliss lies not on beds of down. —Francis Charles. How long we live not years but actions tell. —Watkins. That man lives twice who lives the first life well. —Herrick. Make, then, while yet you may, your God your friend. —William Mason. Whom Christians worship, yet not comprehend. —Pill. The trust that's given guard, and to yourself be just. —Dana. For live we how we can, die we must. —Shakespeare.

Wayside Weeds.

I have a childlike love of flowers: The very wayside weeds, The clover's purple perfumed globes, The thistle's feathery seeds, All, all delight me: not a field, Far as mine eyes can see, But satisfaction strange can yield, Strange pleasure bring to me. The very grasses in their pride, Their plumed pride of June, Waving their crests from side to side, Beneath the golden noon; While in and out their columned stems Are thousand wild-flowers found, And daisies, silver star-like gems, Enamel thick the ground. You call these paths mere common ways: Thank God that it is so, That round our path we give Him praise Such beauty rare should grow. But most we'll thank Him for the eye That thus His teaching reads, And learns Him even to desecrate In little wayside weeds. 'Tis a merchandise that is sold but can never be bought.

New Select Serial.

KATHLEEN.

THE STORY OF A HOME.

BY AGNES GIBERNE.

CHAPTER VIII.

LADY CATHERINE.

Dr. Ritchie's wife was an earl's daughter—none the better or the worse for that, he was wont to say, with the merry look which his eyes could wear at times, when professional cares did not too heavily weigh upon him. Some thought she was the better for it. Few knew or cared that her father, though an earl, had been a spendthrift old gentleman of weak moral nature, who had left his only son a large portion of dire embarrassments, and his only daughter a large portion of disappointed expectations. She had accepted her portion philosophically, and her husband had done the same.

There was a charm about Lady Catherine Ritchie, apparent to most people, though many found her slightly awe-inspiring. Not that she was in the least degree stiff, or disposed to give herself dignified airs. She could, no doubt, sweep it into a room so kinder splendid, like the Kentucky lady, but she rarely troubled herself to do anything of the kind, and her manners were ordinarily marked by an almost excessive simplicity. Mrs. Joliffe's graceful bearing had the ease of a perfect lady, yet remnants of the shyness belonging often to a reserved nature clung about her still, and her ease might almost have been termed constraint, when viewed beside the absolute freedom and unconsciousness of Lady Catherine. There was not the smallest danger that the latter ever could or would do an unladylike thing, and the very idea of such a peril never occurred to herself. She was capable, however of doing an odd thing in a ladylike way, facing the world with smiling unconcern as she did it; and 'what might be thought' was the last question which troubled her in connection with her own actions.

One morning, early in the Christmas holidays, Lady Catherine stood in her breakfast-room—which was also her private boudoir, called by herself her workshop, and called by Dr. Ritchie her "consulting-room,"—making a long piece of holly wreathing. She was well at home in the occupation—as well at home as she could have been in cutting out flannel garments for the poor,—and more so she could not be. Also she gave the same amount of pains to the one that she would have given to the other. Lady Catherine never did anything by halves. A string was stretched across the room, and she stood before it in her easy fashion, with an air of quiet capability—a dark-haired woman of forty, slightly disposed to stoutness, with fresh complexion, and two brown eyes, each in a clear-cut setting. A fair little girl of ten, the eldest of the seven small Ritchies, handed sprigs of holly and yew alternately.

'Hard at work!' said Dr. Ritchie, coming in for a word, before starting on his morning round. 'It is not exhausting toil, my dear,' said Lady Catherine, smiling at him. 'May, run away for some more string. Miss Baring wheedled me into a promise to undertake so many yards for the infant-school treat.' 'You are not going out this morning?' 'Yes I am,' she said, immediately deciding to do so. 'What do you want done?' 'I think it would be good for Kathleen, if you could look in at Rocklands,' said Lady Catherine. 'Kathleen is growing very thin.' The strain upon her is too great. I always feared it.' 'You were there yesterday, were you not? I forgot to ask you in the evening, we were so busy,—how is Mrs. Joliffe?' 'No marked change. She has certainly gained a little strength the last few weeks. Kathleen's care of her could hardly be surpassed.' 'Does not Mrs. Joliffe see the change in Kathleen?' 'She has remarked on her paleness, but she is not aware that Kathleen knows the truth about her. Kathleen

seems to dread the least allusion to it now. She is studiously cheerful in her mother's presence. I sometimes wonder how long she will be able to keep it up.

'Illness makes people a little blind occasionally—mercifully, perhaps. You are not going there to-day, I suppose. But you would like me to see Kathleen?' 'If you can manage it. Miss Brey is another of her cares.'

'I don't like that girl,' pronounced Lady Catherine decisively. 'She has a thoroughly ill-tempered look. Does she still refuse to be attended to?'

'So Kathleen says. I have not seen her lately.'

I shall advise Kathleen to leave her alone till she feels the need,' said Lady Catherine. 'I have a great idea of letting people be miserable in their own way. Does Mr. Joliffe intend to give her a home permanently?'

'He is drifting into it. She has no other home.'

The Doctor took his departure, pausing in the doorway to stoop down and kiss little May. 'Please, mother,' she said, holding out a ball of string. 'Miss Jackson wants to see you.'

'Bring her here, May. I must go on with my work.'

Miss Jackson entered, smiling and nodding exuberantly. 'Now that is pretty!' she said. 'It's just the kind of work that I like. And you do it nicely too, neither too heavy nor too thin. What a clever person you are, Lady Catherine! Miss Baring asked me to undertake some of the same, and I should have been delighted, but Mrs. Montgomerie dreaded the mess, so of course I couldn't.'

'One cannot get through life without occasional mess,' said Lady Catherine. 'I never need last long. Pray sit down and excuse my being busy.'

'That's just what I say,' responded Miss Jackson. 'No matter how untidy one's occupations, provided one clears up afterwards. Don't let me hinder you for a moment in your work. It is quite a pleasure to look at your hands. I am only come to bring a message from Mrs. Montgomerie. She begged me to see the Doctor, but of course he is busy, and I thought you would do as well.'

Lady Catherine smiled thanks for the thoughtfulness.

'He has changed his day for coming lately. It used to be Wednesday, and now it is Friday, and the alteration makes her nervous. Don't think it absurd, Lady Catherine. Old ladies will have their fancies. Wednesday morning she regularly expects him, finds it a mistake, and frets. So I thought we might venture to speak.'

'I will mention it,' said Lady Catherine. 'May, you can run away for a few minutes. How is Mrs. Montgomerie?'

'Oh—just so-so. She might be well, but she worries herself ill.'

Worries herself about Mrs. Joliffe? 'It is that just now. If it wasn't that, it would be something else, Lady Catherine. Mrs. Montgomerie is one of those people who can't get along without a pet worry to occupy their thoughts. But this is something real, for once. She seems to have suddenly woke up to the fact that Mrs. Joliffe is failing. I saw it a year ago. Poor dear thing! The sweetest woman I ever knew is Mrs. Joliffe. But she isn't long for this world. What does your husband think about her?'

Lady Catherine took a bit of holly from the table, and ignored the question. 'Ah, it is hardly fair to ask you,' said Miss Jackson. 'Not but what you might trust me. And, after all I know, well enough. I know a dying person when I see one. Poor Miss Joliffe! That is another fret of Mrs. Montgomerie's. She is dearly fond of the child, and Miss Joliffe certainly has looked white and thin lately,—quite unlike her old self. She doesn't seem to have her usual spirits either. Mrs. Montgomerie is always talking about it. If one says anything to Miss Joliffe, she smiles and says it is all right, but there is something melancholy in her smile. I don't like her look altogether—I really don't, Lady Catherine. Couldn't you persuade your husband to take her in hand somehow? One daren't speak to Mr. Joliffe, for he would only be off straight to tell his wife all about it. As for Miss Brey she thinks of nothing in life but herself. I wish Mr. Kenison

Montgomerie were at home for a time,—not that he would do much good perhaps, but Miss Joliffe might find him some support. However, it is the thought of these two that troubles Mrs. Montgomerie. She is of an immensely affectionate disposition, and now her eyes are open she is at it night and day. I'm not sure that it isn't better for her than always fretting about her own ailments,—still it may go too far.'

'How about the sermon-reading?' asked Lady Catherine, accustomed to these outpourings.

'Oh it goes on just the same. I tried to make her take up that pretty little story you lent me the other day. No, she wouldn't—not she—she couldn't, think of wasting her time over anything so frivolous. I suppose there is no waste of time in sitting crying over possible evils which may never come to pass.'

'But, Mrs. Montgomerie,' says I, 'it was Lady Catherine lent me the book; you don't call Lady Catherine frivolous, do you?' and she answered, as sharp as a needle, 'Lady Catherine is a most estimable person except in that. Oh, she won't budge an inch. I suppose it's firmness, but I'm not sure of the spot where firmness passes into obstinacy.'

'I won't because I've said I won't,' looks weak—to my small intellect.'

'Don't you think it is matter of principle with Mrs. Montgomerie?'

'Principle gone crazy,' said Miss Jackson, with rare brevity.

'I am not sure that that is an impossible state of things,' said Lady Catherine, unable to help laughing.

'I'm quite sure the other way. Oh yes, it is principle of course, after a fashion. Most people have a principle of self-pleasing, at any rate, if they haven't any other. I don't want to be hard, Lady Catherine, though really people's principles are desperately inconsistent, a sort of hodge-podge of 'oughts' and 'likes.' But about Mrs. Montgomerie—the other day I thought I would try to do her a little good. She had been worrying for three hours, fancying this, and dreading that, and expecting the other, till I really did wish she would have a good fit of screaming hysterics, and have done with it. So I found for her a most charming sermon by—I'm sure I forget who,—on trustfulness and cheerfulness and anxiety, and all that sort of thing,' said Miss Jackson vaguely. 'And she read it through quite properly, and then made some most nice little remarks about the duty of trusting God in trouble, and not fretting over His dispensations, and so on. I really thought she was quite impressed, and I haven't a grain of doubt that if she had tumbled down the next minute and broken her leg, or if the house had been burnt to a cinder an hour later, she would have thought it exactly the sort of dispensation she mustn't grumble at, and would have borne it like a heroine, for one day at any rate. But I suppose every-day fidgetty worries are not to be counted as 'dispensations.' I know it wasn't half-an-hour after her pretty little remarks, before she was fretting just as hard as ever again about Mrs. and Miss Joliffe, and the weather, and her nerves.'

'A good many people keep their religious principles and religious comforts for guinea affairs, and don't bring them into shilling and sixpenny affairs,' said Lady Catherine.

'That's splendid,' said Miss Jackson. 'I never thought of that before. Why don't ideas strike every one alike, I wonder? How about the coppers, Lady Catherine?'

'I would include the half-pence and farthings. But most people put them into a sort of outside margin. Quite too small a thing to pray about, and therefore of course too small to use in God's service.'

'I'll tell Mrs. Montgomerie. But she won't understand. She'll think you mean genuine coppers, and giving money in charity.'

'I think Mrs. Montgomerie's depression is partly matter of temperament.'

'Oh yes,—I believe that! It is family character. Mrs. Montgomerie has it, and Mrs. Joliffe has a touch of the same, only with more self-command, and Mr. Kenison Montgomerie has as much as any one, though it shows differently. Then I don't know that Mr. Joliffe is much better. Oh, it is natural temperament, no doubt,—but didn't Mr. Corrie tell us last Sunday evening that we had to overcome our natural temperaments?'

'I was not there.'

'Oh well, he did. He said a man might be a liar by natural temperament, but the excuse would not serve; or a man might be a thief by natural temperament, but he would be none the less punished for stealing. That young man has rather a stern way of looking upon things, but one can't help liking him. By-the-by, Lady Catherine, do you think Miss Joliffe has any idea of her mother's state of health?'

If the question took Lady Catherine by surprise, she did not show it. 'I can hardly imagine any girl of twenty to be so unobservant as not to see a change,' she replied.

'True; but Miss Joliffe is unobservant. At least I have always counted her so—something like her father. I do believe Mr. Joliffe wouldn't see if his wife were dying before his eyes, unless somebody pulled his coat and made him look. He would worry her now out of her wits about every finger-ache, if Miss Joliffe wasn't on the look-out, and didn't stop him half-way. I must say that for her,—and it is seeing her so careful that makes me wonder if she suspects.'

'Don't say anything to her, Miss Jackson,' was Lady Catherine's reply.

'Not I! Oh no, I never meddle. I am discretion itself, though you may not think it. That plan about Cleve seems doing famously. I believe it was Dr. Ritchie's suggestion, wasn't it? Cleve is growing wonderful fond of Mr. Corrie.'

Lady Catherine said, 'Indeed?'

'Oh yes, every one says so. Pretty boy that he is! I never can believe the tales that Mr. Harding told of him. He is the sweetest nature, never out of temper, and so passionately fond of his mother. I suppose he may be a little weak: those sweet obliging natures sometimes are. But I don't believe he could do wilfully what would grieve her. Of course things looked a little black, and Mr. Joliffe believed it all. However it is a capital plan his studying with Mr. Corrie. They say Cleve takes him for long rambles, and the boy is mad upon curiosities, always bringing home bits of stones and horrid animals. I believe he has quite broken with those Hopkins boys. If he ever really had anything to do with them. Oh, he will go on all right now.'

Lady Catherine was not quite so sure. Being an universal confidante, she knew that Mr. Corrie had some anxiety about this gentle and attractive lad, who endeared himself to all with whom he was thrown in contact. It was very hard to look at those ingenuous blue eyes, and at the fair pretty face, and to believe that aught of deliberate duplicity lay beneath, yet Mr. Corrie had his doubts. He was seeking by every means in his power to win closer and closer influence over the boy, hoping in time to detach him entirely from evil influences. No other pupils had as yet offered themselves, and he was in no hurry. Mr. Joliffe had been willing to offer a sum which should make it worth his while to continue with Cleve alone, and love for the boy developed rapidly. He was a very watchful preceptor, acting no less as friend than as teacher, but necessarily he could not overlook Cleve more than partially. He had parish work, and the boy had always been accustomed to liberty. The Joliffes were entirely satisfied. Mr. Corrie was not. As yet, however, he had not divulged his nameless sense of uneasiness to anyone but Lady Catherine. He already knew her intimately.

'The children went home and told their story to their parents, who seemed much pleased and astonished. Soon a loud knock was heard; and on opening the door the little family were surprised to see men bringing in baskets of richly-cooked food in variety and abundance.'

'They had an ample feast that evening. Thus God answered the children's prayers.'

Soon after, while Wolfgang was playing a sonata which he had composed, the stranger entered, and stood astonished at the wonderful melody. The father recognized in his guest Francis I., Emperor of Austria, who had been residing in the vicinity.

Not long after the family were invited by the Emperor to Vienna, where Wolfgang astonished the royal family by his wonderful powers. From that time the father and his children gave concerts in many cities of Germany and France. At the age of fifteen Wolfgang was acknowledged by all eminent composers as a master.

These are some incidents in the life of the most eminent musical genius the world has ever known.

He was good as well as great. The simple trust in God which he had learned in childhood never forsook him. In a letter to his father he says:

'I never lose sight of my God. I acknowledge his power and dread his wrath; but at the same time I love to admire his goodness and mercy to his creatures. He will never abandon his servant. By the fulfilment of his will, mine is satisfied. I shall always make it my duty to follow punctually the counsels and commands you may have the goodness to give me.'

—Well-Spring.

The Duty of Dressing Well.

Do not disdain dress and the little niceties of the toilet; you may be a very clever woman—perhaps even intellectual; but for all that you cannot afford to be careless in these matters. No woman with any sense of self-respect should allow herself to sink into a dowdy; but whatever be her trials, vexations and disappointments, she should dress as well as her position will allow. Do not imagine that we are advocating extravagance; on the contrary, simplicity is our motto, which, if united to good taste, will be found more effective in the eyes of husband, father, brother or lover, than the most costly attire which the milliner's art can invent. A simple bow in the hair may look quite as coquettish and fascinating as a diamond sash; and a cotton dress, if fresh and prettily made, may be as becoming as silk; indeed, we have often seen a cotton eclipse a silk. We mention this to illustrate the fact that riches are little compared to taste, and that every woman may dress well if she chooses—that, in fact, it is her duty to herself and those around her to dress as well as her position will allow. Those who accuse us who write of the fashions, and you who read, of frivolity and triviality, forget that it is just as easy to dress well as it is to dress badly, and that to dress out of fashion requires as much expenditure of thought and care as to dress in it.—Ex.

Little Mozart and his Prayer.

Many years ago, in the town of Salzburg, Austria, two little children lived in a cot covered with vines, near a pleasant river. They both loved music; and when only six years old Frederika could play well on the harpsichord. But from her little brother, such strains of melody would resound through the humble cottage as were never before heard from so young a child. Their father was a teacher of music, and his own children were his best pupils.

There came times so hard that these children had scarcely enough to eat; but they loved each other, and were happy in the simple enjoyments that fell to their lot.

One day they said: 'Let us take a walk to the woods; it is so pleasant. How sweetly the birds sing! And the sound of the river as it flows is like music.' So they went.

As they were sitting in the shadow of the trees the boy said thoughtfully, 'Sister, what a beautiful place this would be to pray.'

Frederika asked wonderingly, 'What should we pray for?'

'Why, for papa and mamma,' replied her brother, 'You see how sad they look. Mamma hardly ever smiles now,

and I know it must be because she has not always bread enough for us. Let us pray to God to help us.'

'Yes,' said Frederika, 'we will.' So these two sweet children knelt down and prayed, asking the Heavenly Father to bless their parents and make them a help to them.

'But how can we help?' asked Frederika.

'Why, don't you know?' replied Wolfgang. 'My soul is full of music; and by-and-by I shall play before great people, and they will give me plenty of money. And I'll give it to papa and mamma, and we'll live in a fine house and be happy.'

At this a loud laugh astonished the boy, who did not know any one was near them. Turning, he saw a fine gentleman, who had just come from the woods.

The stranger made inquiries, which Frederika answered, telling him: 'Wolfgang means to be a great musician. He thinks he can earn money, so that we will not be poor any more.'

'He may do that, when he has learned to play well enough,' replied the stranger.

Frederika answered: 'He is only six years old, and not only plays beautifully, but can compose pieces.'

'That cannot be,' replied the gentleman.

'Come to see us,' said the little boy, 'and I will play for you.'

'I will go this evening,' answered the stranger.

Then, as he turned to go, the boy took hold of his coat and said: 'Do you think God will send us some dinner? We have asked him to.'

'I think he will,' was the reply.

The children went home and told their story to their parents, who seemed much pleased and astonished. Soon a loud knock was heard; and on opening the door the little family were surprised to see men bringing in baskets of richly-cooked food in variety and abundance.'

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Hot w. PLANTS.—T any one trorative fo proceeds to sometime in pots ma by means he mainta substances absorbed portion. T and cease younger s yellow, or tive of the cases the plant into with good with the experience proved the simpler tr watering ca at a temp Fah, havi soil of the done with Water is freely from ment, the