

The Home Circle.

Edited by Mrs. Harriet T. Clark.

AUNT NANCY'S MIND ON THE SUBJECT.

BY MARGARET E. SANDGREN.

And this is the new New Testament, And 'tis come in the sweet o' the year, When the fields are shining in cloth of gold, And the birds are singing so clear; And over into the grand old text, Reversent and thoughtful men, Through many a summer and winter past, Have been peering with book and pen, Till they've straightened the moods and tenes out, And dropped each obsolete phrase, And softened the strong, old-fashioned words To our daintier modern ways; Collated the ancient manuscripts, Particled, verb'd, and lined, And faithfully done their very best To improve the book divine.

I haven't a doubt they have meant it well But it is not clear to me That we needed the trouble it was to them, On either side of the sea. I can not help it, a thought that comes— You know I am old and plain— But it seems like touching the ark of God, And the touch to my heart is pain.

For ten years past, and for five times ten At the back of that, my dear, I've made and mended and toiled and saved, With my Bible ever near. Sometimes it was only a verse at morn That lifted me up from care, Like the springing wings of a sweet-voiced lark, Cleaving the golden air;

And sometimes of Sunday afternoons 'Twas a chapter rich and long, That came to my heart in its weary hour, With the lit of a triumph song. I studied the precious words, my dear, When a child at my mother's knee, And I tell you the Bible I've always had Is a good enough book for me.

I may be stubborn and out of date, But my hair is white as snow, And I love the things I learned to love In the beautiful long ago. I can not be changing at my time; 'Twould be losing a part of myself, You may lay the new New Testament Away on the upper shelf.

I cling to the one my good man reads In our fireside prayers at night; To the one my little children lisped Ere they faltered out of my sight. I shall gather my dear ones close again Where the many mansions be, And till then the Bible I've always had Is a good enough book for me.

JOHN'S WIFE.

Whatever possessed brother John to go up to the city and marry that little yellow-haired, blue-eyed bit of a school girl, when he could have just had his pick of girls nearer home, was something I never could understand. There was Lida Handcombe, just dead in love with him, as anybody could see, and the best breadmaker in the whole country, besides taking prizes at the State Fair for pickles and jellies, and ever so much better looking, too, than Myra. No yellow bangs over her eyes; she just combed her hair back over her face and did it up in a hard knot that staid. She sent John a birthday cake, and knit him a comforter, and everybody thought it would be a match, but John said he didn't like her eyes; they were handsome eyes to my idea, and look you through and through, they were that clear and bright; but did you ever know a man to take advice? "Marry that ferret," said John; "and never have any peace in my life; well I guess not!" and with that off he goes to town and telegraphs back, "expect me and my wife." Dear! such a shock as it gave me, and our Spring cleaning not done, and the minister coming to board with us while his wife went home on a visit—it was a trial, you may be sure!

And when she did come, it was more like having a wax doll in the way than anything else, with her big wondering eyes, and childish ways and silly questions, and hanging on John's arm, and leaning over John's chair, with two little insignificant feet in the ring at the back and her clothes! Such falls, just like a doll's rigging; and I just set my foot down that if she was to live with us she must conform to our ways. I hadn't been 40 years in this world for nothing. If she wanted to wear fine white laces and ruffled aprons, she had to wash and iron them herself. I wouldn't be her slave. And such silly questions as she asked, they just made me sick!

"Were there any dear little yellow chicks?" Dear little yellow chicks, indeed! they were dear enough before we raised them and got their heads out, and had them ready for market, and if that silly child didn't sit down and cry because they were killed; and she had named every one of them and watched them grow up. And she our John's wife! bah! Then she did the silliest thing of all; went and bought a book called "What I Know About Farming," and used to sit out under a tree, studying it by the hour, and one night when she went down to the bars to meet John, I heard her ask:

"John, why don't you get a washing machine and a wringer, and save your own flesh and blood! Look at the blisters on my hands!"

And the next thing it was the talk of the neighborhood that we Elliotts, who had set our faces against modern improvements, had given out before that little pale-faced thing, and not only got a wringer and washer in our kitchen, but several hundred dollars' worth of farm machinery at work. John said he could afford it, but I spoke my mind and told her what I thought of it after he went out to his work. She looked kind of frightened and pretended she was going to cry, and then she spoke up quick like and said:

"Sister Janet, it's a triumph of mind over matter. You can wash now and not be all tired out, and sick and nervous, and—and—then John can afford it!"

Perhaps if I had known that she had paid for it all, and it hadn't cost John a cent, I might have been more forgiving, but I just straightened up and said:

"Mrs. Elliott, you may go on and ruin your husband with your boarding-school ideas, but, as for me, I'll never touch the things. I can work, thank goodness, while I've got my health. I wasn't brought up in idleness."

She never took it to heart a bit; the next thing I knew she was at a little parlor organ she had, singing and playing as if that was all there was in life.

And that silly old minister—men never do have a bit of sense, but you expect more of a minister of the gospel—but he just sat and talked to her as if she was a companion for him, and they talked about the fields, and staid down where John was working, and all around 'em souls a perishing for want of the bread of life; such a sinful waste of time I never saw!

"Janet, do you love the hills?" she said to me one day when I was scouring the knives outside the door. She had offered to do them for me, but law, her white hands were not fit for anything so useful.

"Love the hills! Well, I'd like to know what there is to love about them. I guess if you climbed them a spell you wouldn't love 'em much."

"They're so high and grand," she said, looking up at them; "They seem so near the cool, far-off heaven! I love to climb to the top and drink in the sweet, fresh air; it does me good here—here."

She laid her hand on her heart, and stood looking off with a strange express on her face, and I thought maybe she was homesick and told her to go in and cut some carpet rags and sew 'em together, and would you believe it she up and refused.

"No!" she said, "I cannot cut any carpet rags. I hate them."

I never saw her so excited ever before. "A fine temper you have," was all the answer I made her, but I never felt so insulted in all my life.

For a week or two I didn't see much of her; she was either out with John, "sketching," as she called it, dabbling away with some bits of pasteboard with a lead pencil; or up in her room where I never went. She came down, singing away, with a large package in her hand, and soon John came up with the ponies, and they drove off to town together, laughing like two children. I hope none of the neighbors noticed them. Anyway, they never saw him conduct himself in that way with me.

When they came home she was all tired out, and they had a big roll of some stuff they dumped down in the entry.

"It's something for you, Janet," she said, laughing hysterical like. "Its carpet-rags."

I unrolled it, and there were 20 yards of bright ingrain carpet!

"Myra," said I, "this is wicked extravagance," for I knew her money was all laid out.

"But it isn't," she said, laughing; "I earned it myself by drawing and painting those bits of sketches. I sold them all and can sell all I can do. That was my way of cutting carpet rags."

"Well, I put the carpet down, and it did look pretty—though I didn't say so. It isn't my way to spoil anybody with flattery, and I saw John's wife was getting the upper hand too fast. The neighbors were beginning to notice her, and foolish old minister, when his wife came back, had been over there; and she led the singing in the church, and pretended she had got religion, and all the time she never scrubbed a floor, or washed a dish, or put her hand to the churn.

"John can afford to keep hired help," she said to me one day, "and I am not very strong and my mother died of consumption." Then she began to cry like a baby, and John came in and looked at me as if it was my doing.

I must say she could succeed in doing all sorts of useless things—raising flowers in every nook and corner, making pets of all animals, and painting, or playing on the organ. She was real ornamental, and I suppose some folks thought her pretty. John did for one. I don't know that she made me much work, either. She did her own washing, as long as John would let her, and kept her room neat enough, though it was mostly littered up with flowers and birds and her sketches, and at first she sung from morning till night, and she did have a real lovely voice. I'll allow that, but after a while she didn't sing and didn't talk much, and then John began taking her meals up to her. The first time I saw him getting a tray ready, I said:

"It's a good thing you were brought up to be handy, John, seeing you've got an invalid wife."

"He didn't say anything then, but a few days afterwards he came to me and said:

"Janet, get a girl as soon as you can, and let Aunt Betsy come over and stay with Myra, she is nervous and low-spirited, and needs company."

Well, I suppose you've guessed the upshot of it all; a little daughter was born to John and it seemed to me that a miracle was worked in the house. Perhaps I had never loved John's wife—she was so different from me—but when I heard that baby cry I felt thrilled to my very soul, and I just threw my work apron over my head and cried for the first time in years.

Myra didn't get strong, and the days went on and still she didn't get up, and I felt as if it was my duty to go and tell her that she couldn't favor herself that way, that she couldn't lie abed and let strangers take care of her child, and that she'd never get strong till she got out, but I made up my mind to speak in a gentler sort of a way.

I had been thinking it over and about concluded to let Myra live her own way and not try to make her over, especially since John seemed well satisfied with her, and I went up-stairs and opened the door softly and stepped inside. John was standing at the window looking out at the setting sun—it was all red and gold, and the room; he turned as I came in, and the tears were rolling down his cheeks. I never saw John cry before since he was a grown man.

"What is it?" I whispered, going up close to him.

He made a motion with the back of his

head towards the bed. I went over there. Aunt Betsy was in a rocker by the side of it reading the Bible. Myra was looking at the sun set, then at her baby's sleeping face. I'm not dull to see things, and I saw there what made my heart turn cold—it was the valley of the shadow of death!

That all happened years ago. There is a simple rustic cross up in the graveyard with "Myra" carved on it, and little Myra and I go up there every Sunday and carry flowers to decorate it, and the dear child sits in my lap and puts her blessed little arms about my neck and whispers: "Auntie, talk about my mamma in Heaven," and I tell how patient and gentle she was and how she sung and played, and how she shall do the very same thing some day—for I know now, that flowers are as necessary to God's creation as the wood and grain, and the least little thing that makes sunshine in the world is of great value in the dark places, and I feel sure, when I look up to the hills she loved, that Myra has reached fa-off Heaven before me. Perhaps, she will intercede for me there.

CHOICE RECIPES.

RENEWING FURNITURE.—No lady knows until she has tried it how much she may change the aspect of things about the house by using a little varnish. On a sunny day take the old chairs and tables out on the porch or by an open door, and after thoroughly dusting and wiping off with a damp cloth, apply a thin coat of varnish and so cover up scratches and marred spots of all kinds. It will dry in a very short time, and you will be surprised to see how much good you have done. A flannel cloth with a very little linseed oil is good to rub furniture with, but the greatest care must be exercised to prevent any oil being left on the wood to attract dust. It must be rubbed until you would not know, except by the improved appearance, that any oil had been used.

LIGHT POT PIE.—One pint of sour milk or buttermilk, one teaspoon of sour cream and one teaspoon of soda; add flour and mix hard, like bread, and let it stand one hour to rise. Never roll or cut it, but nip it off in pieces the size you wish. Boil 30 minutes, and you will always have it as light as a puff. Almost any kind of fresh meat will make pot pie, though chicken, beef and veal are preferable. Prepare the same as for baked chicken pie; drop one, thickness of the crust all around the top of the pot. Let the pot be uncovered the first 15 minutes, then cover it and boil 15 minutes longer. Be sure that it does not stop boiling from the time the crust is put in until you take it up; bring it to the table immediately.

PRUNE JELLY.—Put half a pound of prunes into a saucepan, with two ounces of white sugar, a piece of lemon, a little cinnamon, and sufficient water to cover them; stew until tender; take out the stones, pass the prunes through a sieve, crack the stones, and put back the kernels into the prune pulp. Steep half an ounce of gelatine in a little cold water; add this to the prunes with a glass of red wine; boil all together. Ornament a plain lined mould with almonds blanched and split; pour the jelly into the outer part, and leave it to get cold; when quite set, remove the lining, turn out the jelly, and fill up the center with half a pint of cream, whipped to a stiff froth.

Keeping Butter.

National Live-Stock Journal. There are two ways for butter makers to get over the troubles of the hot season. One system, adopted by some good dairymen, is, not to make any surplus butter at that season but to have their cows go dry the 1st of July, and come in again in September and October. In this case they produce butter only at the seasons that command the best price, and the cows go dry at the busiest season, giving the dairyman more time for his harvest. Less butter is consumed during the three warm months, and under the old system, more is made than any other three months. The second way is, to make only the very best quality of butter, even in the hot season, and preserve it for three months or more by excluding the air from it.

If butter is put up in the best condition, and kept from the contaminating contact of air, it will come out as rosy in color, and fine in flavor, in October or December, as when put up in July and August. There have been different ways devised for excluding the air; but perhaps the best way is to suspend the butter in strong brine. The butter is put into a muslin sack, and then suspended in a tub 3 inches larger all round than the sack of butter. Where butter is made in considerable quantity it is put up in sacks holding 100 lbs., and these are suspended in oak barrels large enough for all of 1½ inches of brine all round the sack. In some cases the oak barrels are made tight at both heads; the upper head has two cleats on the under side, 1½ inches thick; this is to keep the sack of butter under the brine, as it would otherwise rise to the top. The upper head is taken out, the sack put in, the head replaced, and the brine poured through a hole in the head, and when full of brine, this is plugged. This barrel, standing in a cool place, will keep the butter perfectly for many months. The butter is better when put up in granules, only having been washed in brine, but not salted or worked; and when taken out, it is then worked and salted, and will be found as fine as when fresh. The brine excludes the air, and all is preserved.

Vick's Plants, Seeds and Bulbs.

Vick sends out a quantity as usual; his seeds, plants and bulbs are always true to name and description. He has the lead of all in this respect—"Vick," in fact, is a household word. There are many plants and flowers that do not bloom the first year, and now is the time to get seeds to plant, so that by next Spring they will be ready to transplant for flowering, such as "Carnatus," "Perennial Phlox," "Holy Locks," and "Cantabury Bells." Also, now is the time to get bulbs as they are about out of bloom, and in the best time to transport across the continent. Tulips, crocus and most of the lilies are lying down, and are ready to take up. Send soon to Vick for his catalogue.

For The Children.

MAKING LIFE LOOK BRIGHTER

Say not "The world seemed dark and drear, But strive yourself to light it; Though ignorance rage, yet never fear, 'Tis manhood's work to fight it! Strike on, and rust will drop its scales, The earnest effort seldom fails, And purpose over doubt prevails, Thus making life look brighter.

Does virtue meet with small reward? That thought is worldly-minded; For vice herself is oft-aborred; By slaves whom she has blinded; Though now the clouds be dark and dense, When we shall walk by faith, not sense, Virtue will have true recompense, The while the clouds grow lighter.

Then call not life a "vale of tears," Our lives are what we make them; And we must weight by "deeds, not years," If we would not mistake them, Improve the years, and life is sweet; We sow good seeds to reap pure wealth; Good thoughts and deeds make life complete, And make the soul grow whiter.

OUR LETTER BOX

We find that we always have had so far this Summer more letters than we could print each week so that there is always a few left over for next time. It is a good rule in life to keep a little ahead in everything; not to spend the least cent; not to use the least bit of anything as we never know what emergency may occur that will find it convenient to have a little store set by. When we lived in the country, and it was not convenient to get supplies often, we would sometimes get short of things, but we never quite used up the sugar, tea etc., but kept a little in case of an unexpected call.

Two little friends write from Greenville, although we don't quite know where that place is, but we are glad to get a couple of good letters from them. We hope Ada takes good care of her canary. We can't help reminding our little friends that when any bird or animal is given to their care, that it is a duty to see that they are fed, cared for and made as happy as possible. To do this there must be regularity and system about this care, it is no way to feed at any time one happens to think of it, but some time must be fixed upon to look after them, and then this must be done every day at the same time, and it will not be forgotten. We never look at a bird cage but the eye first falls upon the cups to see if there is seed and water; too often we see both almost if not quite empty, with perhaps a little dish of dirty, green water in the bottom of it. The cage should be cleaned every day, or the bird will not do well. They must have a little green grass or chick-weed occasionally and some coarse sand to pick from. Care must be taken that the cage is not hung where the eyes of the greedy cat can frighten it every hour. A cat can so be taught to know better than look at the canary; birds have often been killed just by fright at the sight of a hawk or cat. If hung out doors it should have a thin gauze cloth tied over the cage, and then a hawk cannot get its claws in the wires. We are glad to know that our girls like to sew and piece quilts—it is so nice when a girl gets older to look at the pieces in the quilt when making up the bed, giving pleasant memories as the different blocks remind her of the ones who wore the dresses or who gave the scraps. We have some that we had forty years ago and we never tire of looking at them and thinking of those we used to know, some of whom have gone to rest long ago. Annie must not let another year pass again without writing to the Home Circle—she has improved we see and that is what we want to observe in every boys and girls letter. A marked improvement. Take care and make punctuations and see that capital letters are in the proper places, and above all spell correctly. We conclude that there is not care enough taken by teachers now to lay a good foundation in spelling, or reading. Parents should insist upon the children reading aloud twice a day and spelling the same, we have a good opportunity to know that these most important branches are neglected for higher branches of study. Annie helps her mother, which is better than all; she has not many pets she says—it seems to us if we could be a little girl again that we would want to live in the country just to have as many pets as possible. We would have a pet crow for one, they are intelligent and comical. Clyde tells of a trip to Mt. Zion where there were seven snow peaks to be seen. There are no boys and girls in the Eastern States who can tell of such a glorious view as that. It gives one noble thoughts and aspirations to look upon God's Universe, and we think it teaches, though silently, lessons of our own littleness with God's great power, to look upon nature in her majesty and loveliness. Clyde, with many others want to hear again from Katie S. We should think she would be flattered to have so many little friends, and we shall look for a letter very soon from her telling us what she is doing. Aunt Hetty wants a letter from her too and she will answer it and send her a book to remember her by. William says he can play the violin—he is the only boy who is told of having any musical talent; we are glad to hear of boys taking an interest in such accomplishments, for music has an elevating and refining influence. Every boy who understands it is master of any musical instrument will be apt to spend any leisure time in this way instead of loafing around with ignorant boys and men who get together to smoke, chew tobacco and tell vulgar stories. Minnie is a dear and loved name to us, and we think we should love anyone who had the name. This is one of the neatest and most carefully written letters we have had for some time; we would like all of our little folks to do the very best every time they write and we think they do, but the teachers are at fault in not requiring more practice in writing lessons. We are glad to know that some one has been benefited by our recipes. We have some-

times wondered if any one cared for them. We think it would be better if each little girl would let us print the full name. Waldo Hills is represented this week by Lizzie who answers questions put some time ago. We will add that Captain Gray received a large silver medal for his adventures, discoveries, and when he died his widow sent the medal to Oregon by Hon. J. Quinn Thornton, and which can be seen at any time in the Secretary of States room, at the State House, in Salem. We are reminded to say that any of the boys and girls would be interested in visiting another room there where many curiosities in the way of stuffed birds, snakes, eggs and butterflies, all under the care of Prof. O. B. Johnson, who would be glad to get anything curious or rare in the animal world. He is a Taxidermist, or one who prepares animals for exhibition. We sent him a pet canary which had died at the age of ten years, and the bird looks perfectly natural and is prized very highly. His terms are very reasonable if any one wishes to preserve a pet in this way.

GREENVILLE, Oregon, May 31, 1881.

Editor Home Circle:

I go to school; my teacher's name is Mr. Holmes; he is a good teacher. I have not many pets to write about this time; I only have a pet canary—its name is Nelly; it was given to me by a lady in Greenville. I have made a four patch quilt; it is very nice. I think Katy S. had better wake up, or the boys will get ahead of her, but I guess she is too busy plowing now to write. I see in the Little Folks' letter something about the Russian Empire, but all I can say about it is: I can tell where it is situated. It is situated in the northeastern part of Europe, and extends from the Baltic sea to the Pacific ocean and Behring Strait, and is the largest Empire in the world; this is about all I know about the Russian Empire. Our grain and vegetables look very nice out here, but the beans are all spoiled by the frost. There is quite a good crop of strawberries this year, and also of gooseberries and currants. I will bring my letters to a close with my best wishes to the FARMER. Yours truly, ADA BILLINGER.

GREENVILLE, Oregon, May 30, 1881.

Editor Home Circle:

It has been a year since I wrote to the Home Circle. I go to school; my school will be out in June. All the little folks tell what they do to help their mothers; I wash the dishes, sweep, make my bed, milk and iron. I'm sorry to say that I have not got any pets to write about but a cat—its name is Cassie. We have got a little colt—its name is Prince; and to little spotted kitten; they are very pretty, and to little calves their names are Daisy and Lillie. Our teacher's name is Mr. Holmes; I like him very much; I study reading, arithmetic, spelling and geography. We have about 100 little chickens and 90 old ones. I do not know much about the Russian Empire; it is the largest Empire in the world; it extends from the Baltic sea to the Pacific ocean and Behring Strait. Everything is growing nicely here at present as we have had a nice rain, and vegetables are looking fresh and green. You don't have a very full letter box; it seems like the little folks are getting careless about writing. I would like to hear from Annie Lamb again. I will close for this time. ANNIE B. BARRETT.

LOST VALLEY, Oregon, June 5, 1881.

Editor Home Circle:

On this lonely and dreary morning, I will try and add a line to the Home Circle. We had quite a refreshing shower of rain, which has lived up to the farmers, and is quite encouraging to the farmers who expect to reap a beautiful harvest. On the first day of May, myself and twenty-two other persons went to the top of Mt. Zion; had a very pleasant time. We could see seven snow mountains without the aid of any glass. Three Sisters and Mt. Hood and others, which I do not know the names of. After walking about most of the day pushing rocks down the side of the mountain; we sat our luncheon which we had taken with us, and then returned home after a day of enjoyment, which will never be forgotten. I am now going to school; we have a very interesting and industrious school; there are 40 scholars names on the roll. My teacher's name is Mr. B. F. Mulkey, a student of the Christian College. Katie S. has not written to the Home Circle department for some time. I would like to hear from all the young folks often, especially those from the far Eastern States. As ever, your friend, C. C. B.

LITTLE ROCK, W. T., June 11, 1881.

Editor Home Circle:

I am a girl thirteen years old, and I never wrote to a paper before. I am boarding away from home and going to school. They take the FARMER where I am staying and I like it very much. We have a school of fourteen scholars. My teacher is Miss Parsons; I like her very much. I study fifth reader, spelling, practical arithmetic, writing, and geography. I have to walk two miles and a half to school. I made a mat after one of Aunt Hetty's recipes and think it very pretty and I also saw some beautiful lace made from another recipe. I should like to hear from Katie S., as I have not seen a letter from her for several weeks. I should also like to hear from M. T. I hope she will have better success the next time she goes fishing. I wish she would sign her full name instead of her initials as I like to know who the letters are from. I will close wishing the FARMER long life and success. Your sincere friend, MINNIE J. ASHLEY.

LITTLE ROCK, W. T., June 11, 1881.

Editor Home Circle:

As I have seen so many letters from the little girls and boys, I will try and write some, too. I am going to school now; we have about fourteen pupils; my teacher is Miss Parsons, and I like her very much. I am a boy—17 years old, and I weigh 92 pounds. I can play on the violin. I study fifth reader, spelling, practical arithmetic, and writing. I have no pets to tell about. So I will close by wishing the FARMER great success. WILLIAM A. McALLISTER.

AINSVILLE, Oregon, June 11, 1881.

Editor Home Circle:

As I have not seen many letters from Waldo Hills, and not from the boys and girls from the neighborhood, I thought I would write one. There is school at present, but in about two weeks our school will be out. Everything is growing nicely here now as we have just had a nice rain. Vegetables are looking fresh and green. I quite agree with a young farmer when he asks why should we write about some foreign country, when we are so ignorant of our own. I will now answer his question: In 1792 Captain Gray, of Boston, was the first man that entered the Columbia river, and he gave the river the name of his ship. On his return, he gave a flattering report of the country. In the year 1804 Jefferson sent an exploring party under the command of Captain Lewis and Lieutenant Clarke, who followed the Missouri river to its source, and descended the Columbia river to the Pacific ocean. General Joe Lane was the first Governor of Oregon. LIZZIE C. HOWE.

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STATE FAIR. THE STATE FAIR COMMENCES WEDNESDAY, June 29, 1881, and closes Wednesday, July 6th. Grand celebration on grounds, Monday, July 4th. Booths rented at auction, Wednesday, June 23rd. By order of the Board. J. M. WAITE, Secretary.