

## Family Circle.

## Growing Old.

At six—I well remember then—  
I fancied all folks old at ten.  
But when I'd turned my first decade,  
Fifteen appeared more truly staid.  
But when the fifteenth round I'd run,  
I thought none old till twenty-one.  
Then, oddly, when I'd reached that age,  
I held that thirty made folks sage.  
But when my thirtieth year was told,  
I said: "At two-score men grow old!"  
Yet two-score came and found me thrifty,  
And so I drew the line at fifty.  
But when I reached that age, I swore  
None could be old until three-score.  
And here I am at sixty now,  
And young as when at six, I trow!  
'Tis true, these rogues about my knee  
Say "Grandpa" when they speak to me.  
But, bless your soul, I'm young as when  
I thought all people old at ten!  
Perhaps a little wiser grown—  
Perhaps some old illusions flown:  
But wondering still, while years have  
rolled,  
When it is that a man grows old?  
—Vandyke Brown.

## Deal Gently With Mother.

Deal gently with Mother, O Time as you  
pass  
With your scythe so remorseless, and  
fast changing glass,  
Smooth softly the hair that was raven in  
hue,  
For the white threads therein were all  
penciled by you.  
Deal gently with her, since in earnest  
or play,  
You've stolen the years of her youth-  
hood away;  
May her days be serene as a sweet sum-  
mer eve,  
And nothing be present to vex or to  
grieve.  
You've chiseled deep lines on that  
motherly face,  
From her step so elastic you've taken  
the grace,  
Her form you have broken with labor  
and years,  
And bathed very often her eyelids with  
tears.  
Deal kindly with Mother, O Time while  
you may,  
And take her not soon from our circle  
away;  
Break not this strong link in our family  
chain,  
But may she with us many years yet re-  
main.  
Crown her brow with sweet peace as  
you've wreathed it with years,  
Fill the eyelids with joy you have  
moistened with tears;  
Lift the burdens of care that have  
weighed down her breast,  
And give to her henceforth a Sabbath  
of rest.  
Down life's western slope lead our dear  
Mother's feet;  
May the sunset be calm, all resplendent,  
and sweet;  
May angels swing open the portals of  
day,  
That shall give us in heaven a Mother  
always.  
—REV. J. MILTON AKERS, in *Minn. Re-  
view*.

## The Paradise of Babies.

That is what they call Japan.  
Men go about the streets and blow  
soap-bubbles for them, with pipes  
that have no bowls as ours have.

The young Japs have tops, stilts,  
pop-guns, blow-guns, magic lan-  
terns, kaleidoscopes, wax figures,  
terra cotta animals, flying fish and  
dragons, masks, puzzles and games;  
butterflies and beetles that flutter  
about; turtles that move their legs  
and pop out their heads; birds that  
fly about, and peck the fingers and  
whistle; pasteboard targets that,  
when hit, burst open and let a  
winged figure fly out; and, most  
wonderful of all, perhaps—little  
balls looking like elderpith, which,  
thrown into bowls of warm water,  
slowly expand into the shape of a  
boat, or a fisherman, a tree, flower,  
crab, or bird.

The girls of Japan have dolls,  
furniture and dishes, and, of course,  
dolls. They have dolls that walk and  
dance; dolls that put on a mask  
when a string is pulled; dolls dress-  
ed to represent nobles, ladies, min-  
strels, mythological and historical  
personages. Dolls are handed down  
for generations, and in some families  
there are hundreds of them. They  
never seem to get broken or worn  
out as yours do; and, in fact, they  
can hardly be the dear playmates  
that yours are. They are kept as a  
sort of show; and, though the lit-  
tle owners play with them, they do  
not dress and undress them and  
take them to bed as you do. A  
good deal of the time they are  
rolled up in silk paper and packed  
away in a trunk. On the great  
festival day of the Japanese girls—  
the Feast of Dolls, of which no  
doubt you have heard—there is a  
great show of dolls and toys, and it  
is the event of the year for the  
queer little black-eyed maidens.  
The Feast of Flags is the boys' great  
day, and they have banners, flags,  
figures of warriors and great men,  
swords and other toys suitable for  
boys.—*St. Nicholas*.

## A Mother's Last Present.

In the county of Kent lived a  
clergyman and his lady, who took  
a very active part in the Sabbath-  
school connected with his church.  
They had in the school a boy, the  
only son of a widow, who was no-  
toriously wicked, despising all the  
earnest prayers and admonitions of  
the clergyman, who, out of pity for  
his poor widowed mother, kept him  
in the school eighteen months; at

length he found it absolutely neces-  
sary to dismiss the lad as a warning  
to others. He soon after enlisted  
in a regiment that was ordered to  
America.

Some time after, the poor widow  
called upon the clergyman to beg a  
Bible of the smallest size. Sur-  
prised at such a request from an in-  
dividual who was evidently on the  
verge of eternity, and who he knew  
had one or two Bibles of large  
print, which she had long used to a  
good purpose, he inquired what she  
wanted it for.

She answered, "A regiment is  
going out to America, and I want  
to send it to my poor boy, and oh,  
sir, who knows what it may do?"

A pious soldier conveyed the  
Bible to the widow's son, whom he  
found the ringleader of vice in the  
regiment in which he had enlisted.  
After the soldier had made himself  
known, he said, "James, your  
mother has sent you her last pres-  
ent."

"Ah," he replied, in a careless  
manner, "is she gone at last? I  
hope she has sent me some cash."

The pious soldier told him he be-  
lieved she was dead; "But," he ad-  
ded, "she has sent you something  
of more value than gold or silver"  
(presenting to him the Bible), "and,  
James, it was her dying request  
that you would read one verse at  
least of this Book every day; and  
can you refuse her dying charge?"

"Well," said James, it is not  
much to ask (opening the Bible);  
so here goes."

He opened the Bible at the  
words, "Come unto Me, all ye that  
labor, and are heavy laden, and I  
will give you rest."

"Well," said he, "that is very  
odd. I have opened at the only  
verse in the Bible I could ever learn  
by heart; when I was in Sunday-  
school, I never could, for the life of  
me, learn another. It is very  
strange. But who is this *Me* men-  
tioned in the verse?"

The pious soldier explained it to  
him; spoke to him of Jesus, and of  
the invitations of the Gospel.  
They walked to the house of the  
chaplain, where they had further  
conversation. From that hour the  
widow's son became a changed man,  
and was as noted for his exemplary  
conduct as he had before been for  
his wickedness.

Some time after this conversation  
his regiment engaged with the ene-  
my. At the close of the engage-  
ment, the pious soldier, in walking  
through the field of blood, beheld  
under a large spreading oak the

dead body of James, his head re-  
clining on the Bible, which was  
open at the passage, "Come unto  
Me, all ye that labor and are heavy  
laden, and I will give you rest."  
He had gone to his eternal rest.

There were not less than fifty pa-  
ges stained with the blood of poor  
James.

The Word of the Lord is quick  
and powerful. The only verse this  
poor man ever committed to memo-  
ry was the means under God of  
bringing the widow's son out of  
darkness into marvelous light; and  
he is now, we trust, uniting in the  
song of the redeemed in Heaven.—

## Friendly Greetings.

## The Sense of Honor in Boys.

There is great confusion in boy's  
notions of honor. You should not  
go to the teacher with tales of your  
school-mates, but when questioned  
by those in authority over you  
parents, guardians or teachers, it is  
your duty to tell who did a  
mischief or broke a rule, no matter  
what results to yourself, or how  
unpopular you become. Boys have  
a false honor which hides mean  
and skulking actions in each other,  
which ought to be ridiculed out of  
them. The most cowardly injuries  
and injustice among boys go un-  
checked, and the weaker are abused  
and bullied in a way every decent  
boy should resent, because this false  
notion of comradeship leads them to  
lie, prevaricate, or keep silence to  
screen the guilty. Teachers and  
friends ought to put down this  
ignorant, petty "sense of honor," for  
something more intelligent and  
upright. When you know of a  
wrong, and keep silence about it  
when asked, you become a partner  
in the wrong, and responsible for its  
original meanness. It is a pity that  
boys and grown people do not car-  
ry the same strictness of principle  
they show in screening bullies and  
frauds into points of genuine honor  
and courage.—*Wide Awake*.

A little girl, four years old, was  
accused by her mother of having  
lost her memory; the child looked  
bewildered for a moment, and then  
light seemed to dawn upon her, for  
she exclaimed: "I dess I know  
what memory is. It's the ting I  
fordet wiv."

—Recently a Frenchman and his  
wife traveled on a two-seated tri-  
cycle from Lyons to Nice, Genoa,  
Rome and Naples, and home again,  
a distance of 2,300 miles, making  
some fifty or sixty miles a day.