

The Family Circle

HOME

Wherever smoke wreaths
Heavenward curl—
Cave of a hermit,
Hovel of churl—
Mansion of merchant, princely dome—
Out of the dreariness,
Into its cheeriness,
Come we in weariness
Home.

I, too, have wandered
Through the far lands,
Home there was their home,
Open their hands;
Yet, though all brothers, born of the foam,
Far o'er appalling sea,
Ever entrhralling me,
Blood still was calling me
Home!

Men speak of jewels
Earth holds abroad;
What can compare with
One bit of sod,
Full of the love-gold sunk in the loam,
Where lies my holy dead,
There, where my-mother shed
Tears o'er my sleeping head—
Home.

Home, where I first knew
Day was alight,
Where I would fain be
Ere the Long Night,
That they might write this in some old tome:
This earth the womb was—
This earth the bloom was—
This earth the tomb was—
Home!

THE FAIRY'S GIFT

'Too bad that tooth isn't out,' said Aunt Lizzie.

She was seated in a small old-fashioned rocking-chair that sort of surrounded her, and which was called by the children the 'nut chair.'

The ceiling of the room was so low that a grown-up person could touch it with their finger tips.

There was a large open fireplace on one side of the room with a wide, red brick hearth. Here on fall and winter evenings apples were roasted and nuts cracked in the firelight.

Aunt Lizzie used always to sit with the children on the floor and tell stories, but those about the time she was a little girl pleased them best.

Aunt Lizzie had never married, but she understood children, and had a way of making them do things when other people sometimes failed.

Betty was just coming from the most fascinating cupboard which was built into the wall beside the fireplace. It reached from the floor to the ceiling, and was divided in the middle.

The upper part was where Aunt Lizzie kept her sewing and work basket. Candy and peanuts were always on hand for the many children who stopped on their way home from school.

Down below it was Betty's doll house, and was furnished with beds, chairs, and tables that had once belonged to Aunt Lizzie.

Betty crossed the room and seated herself in a tiny chair. She was six years old. Apparently her doll needed a great deal of attention, for she never answered her auntie's remark.

Betty's mamma had been to Aunt Lizzie a few hours before with a worried look on her face, and had said, 'O, Lizzie, I don't know what I shall do. That tooth is so loose I am afraid to have her go to bed for fear she may swallow it, and she won't let me touch it.'

'Leave her with me a little while, and I will see what I can do,' answered Aunt Lizzie.

There was silence in the room. Aunt Lizzie sewed, placing her threads on the deep window sill, and watched Betty as she stood on the sofa holding her dolly up to examine a highly-colored picture of a barn-yard scene.

A plough horse coming from the fields, driven by a small boy with very blue trousers, was receiving a hearty welcome from hens, chickens, ducks, kittens, and a noisy dog. A bare-footed boy was pumping water into a trough for some extremely red cows.

Betty loved to look at this picture, and many years before Betty's mother had liked to look at it, too. Aunt Lizzie said it had been bought for Betty's grandmother when she was a little girl.

After every animal had been pointed out, the dolly was put to sleep on an old-fashioned pillow with a wreath of flowers embroidered on it.

'How I do wish that tooth was out!'

'Why, auntie, I don't! It will hurt me.'

'Just for a minute; anyone could stand a little pain for the fairy's gift.'

'Fairy gift! O, auntie, what do you mean?'

Betty's eyes sparkled and her cheeks grew pink, for she loved fairies.

'Let me look at your tooth. I won't touch it, and I will tell you of what happened to me when I was a little girl.'

'I had a tooth just as loose as yours. I was crying, for I didn't want it out. Uncle Henry, who was just home from college, told me if I would put my hands behind my back he would put a thread around it, and if I would let him give one pull it would come out. Then before I went to bed I must put my tooth on a flatiron under the kitchen stove, and the fairies would come in the night and take it away and leave a five-cent piece.'

'Did you let him pull it out, auntie, and did you find the money?' cried Betty, breathlessly.

'Certainly I did.'

'Do you suppose the fairies would do that now? It's a long time since you were a little girl.'

'I don't think there is the least doubt about it. I will ask your mamma to let me undress you, and we will put the tooth on the iron together. Perhaps she *might* let you sleep in my room, and we could go down early in the morning before anyone was up and see if the fairies had left the money.'

'Goody-goody! I will run and ask mamma, and if she says "yes," I will let you put the thread on right off.'

Away flew Betty, and in a few minutes was back crying eagerly:

'Put it on quick, auntie, I am going to stand so still; for mamma wants me to be her brave little girl.'

A short time later Betty stood with the tiny tooth in her hand.

'Why, auntie, it didn't hurt one bit, and now I can hardly wait for bedtime to come.'

Very early next morning two white-robed figures stole softly down the quaint old stairway that led into the kitchen, and there on the flatiron under the stove they found the fairy's gift.

KINDNESS

If we would but reflect what effect one kind word or act produces; how it casts a ray of cheering sunshine into a despairing heart; how it lifts the soul fallen into the depths of gloom; how magically it transforms a tear into a smile, how many unkind words we would suppress. There is nothing so sweet, nothing that brings a truer sense of satisfaction than to help those in distress or gloom. We are all children of our loving Father who loved us so much that He even died for us; should we not love each other and treat each others as brothers of one divinely governed family? Kindness is the angel of God, who tries to counteract the angel of despair and temptation, Satan's demon. Smile and make others smile.

CAUSE AND EFFECT

In the report of a charity organisation the following paragraph appeared: 'Notwithstanding the large amount paid by the society for medical attendance and medicine, very few deaths occurred during the year.' Which calls to mind the story of the two men we were passing an eye hospital famous for its skilful operations. 'Jack,' exclaimed one of them, impressively, 'in there they'll take your eyes out and put them on the table in front of you and let you look at them.'