

The Family Circle

DON'T MAKE WRINKLES DEEPER

Is father's eyesight growing dim,
His form a little lower?
Is mother's hair a little gray,
Her step a little slower?
Is life's hill growing hard to climb?
Make not their pathway steeper;
Smooth out the furrows on their brows,
Oh, do not make them deeper.

There's nothing makes a face so young
As joy, youth's fairest token;
And nothing makes a face grow old
Like hearts that have been broken.
Take heed lest deeds of thine should make
Thy mother be a weeper;
Stamp peace upon a father's brow,
Don't make the wrinkles deeper.

In doubtful pathways do not go,
Be tempted not to wander;
Grieve not the hearts that love you so,
But make their love grow fonder.
Much have thy parents borne for thee,
Be now their tender keeper,
And let them lean upon thy love,
Don't make the wrinkles deeper.

Be lavish with the kindly deeds,
Be patient, true, and tender;
And make the path that ageward leads,
Aglow with earthly splendor.
Some day, the dear ones, stricken low,
Must yield to Death, the reaper;
And you will then be glad to know
You made no wrinkles deeper.

A STORY WITHOUT END

There was a certain king who, like many Eastern kings, was very fond of hearing stories told. To this amusement he gave up all his time, and yet he was never satisfied. All the exertions of his courtiers were in vain. The more he heard, the more he wanted to hear. At last he made a proclamation that if any man would tell him a story that should last forever, he would give him a fortune and make him his heir. But if any one should pretend that he had such a story, and should fail—that is, if the story did come to an end—he was to have his head cut off.

For so rich a prize numerous candidates appeared, and dreadfully long stories many of them told. Some lasted a week, some a month, some six months. Poor fellows, they all spun them out as long as they possibly could, you may be sure; but all in vain; sooner or later they all came to an end; and, one after another, the unlucky story-tellers lost their heads.

At last came a man who said that he had a story which would last for ever, if his Majesty would be pleased to give him a trial. He was warned of his danger. They told him how many others had tried, and lost their heads. But he said he was not afraid, and so he was brought before the king. He was a man of a very composed and deliberate manner of speaking; and, after all requisite stipulations for a time for his eating, drinking, and sleeping, he thus began his story:

'O King! there was once a powerful monarch who was also a great tyrant. And, desiring to increase his riches, he seized upon all the corn and grain in his kingdom, and put it into an immense granary, which he built on purpose, as high as a mountain. This he did for several years, till the granary was quite full up to the top. He then stopped up doors and windows, and closed it up fast on all sides.

'But the bricklayers had, by accident, left a very small hole near the top of the granary, and a flight of locusts came and tried to get at the corn; but the hole was so small that only one locust could pass through it at a time. So one locust went in, and carried off one grain of corn; and then another locust went in, and carried off another grain of corn; and then another locust went in, and carried off another grain of corn; and then another locust went in, and carried off another grain of corn; and then another locust went in, and carried off another grain of corn; and then another locust went in, and carried off another grain of corn; and then another locust

went in, and carried off another grain of corn; and then another locust went in, and carried off another grain of corn—'

He had gone on thus from morning to night (except while he was engaged at his meals) for about a month, when the king, though a very patient king, began to be tired of the locusts, and interrupted the story with:

'Well, well! we have had enough of the locusts; we will suppose that they have helped themselves to all the corn they wanted. Tell us what happened afterward.'

To which the story-teller answered, very deliberately:

'If it please your Majesty, it is impossible to tell you what happened afterward, before I have told you what happened first.'

And then he went on again:

'And then another locust went in, and carried off another grain of corn; and then another locust went in, and carried off another grain of corn; and then another locust went in, and carried off another grain of corn—'

The king listened with unconquerable patience six months more—though he cut short the time of the story-telling—when he again interrupted his companion:

'O friend, I am weary of your locusts! How soon do you think they will have done?'

To which the story-teller made answer:

'O King! who can tell? At the time to which my story has come, the locusts have cleared away a small space—it may be a cubit, each way round the inside of the hole; and the air is still dark with locusts on all sides. But have patience, and no doubt we shall come to the end of them in time.'

Thus encouraged, the king listened on for another full year, the story-teller still going on as before:

'And then another locust went in, and carried off another grain of corn; and then another locust went in, and carried off another grain of corn; and then another locust went in, and carried off another grain of corn—'

At last the poor king could bear it no longer, and cried out:

'O man, that is enough! Take my kingdom; take anything, everything; only let us hear no more of your abominable locusts!'

And so the story-teller received a fortune, and was declared heir to the throne; and nobody ever expressed a wish to hear the rest of his story; for he said it was impossible to come to the other part of it till he had done with the locusts.

HOPE

The great orator, the great painter, the great poet, the great statesman—all are children of Hope. It was Hope that hung the lantern upon the ship of Columbus; it was Hope that brought Milton tidings of Paradise; it was Hope that waved the torch before Bacon as he descended into the dark laboratory of Nature; it was Hope that supported the steps of Newton when he wandered into the dim solitude of the unknown worlds; it was Hope that scattered the Persian chivalry before the eloquence of Demosthenes; it was Hope that sprinkled the purple hues of summer over the canvas of Titian, and breathed the solemn repose of heaven over the divine heads of Raphael. But Hope has yet a holier signification. Christian happiness is folded up in the bosom of Hope. In the home of the good man, indeed, that angel is never absent; in the darkness of winter, and in the bloom of spring, it is alike present to cheer, to comfort, and to exhort.

GOOD ADVICE

A boy was leaving home for the first term of college. 'There are just two things I want you to remember,' said the father at parting. 'First of all, do not be afraid to be yourself; your best self, and to stand up for your sacred convictions, no matter what the standard of your fellows may be. Be a digit, and not a cipher. Then don't hold yourself too cheap. Be chary about every man that beckons to you. Do not give yourself to the first company that bids for your society. Reserve your friendship for those who are really worthy of it. You are in the serious business of making a life; do not lightly undertake experiments.'

WONDERFULLY MADE INDEED

His doctors said he had an iron constitution.
His friends declared that he had nerves of steel.
His uncle thought he had a wooden head.
The girls all said he had a heart of stone.
His enemies declared that there was more brass in him than anything else.