

# The Family Circle

## YOUR COMPANY.

A little song rings in my ear  
And haunts me all day long,  
And this—whichever way it runs—  
The keynote of my song:  
'Be careful of your company,'  
The little song runs ever—  
'The down once brushed from off the peach  
Returns again, ah, never.'

All boys have wondrous golden dreams,  
The future's filled with bliss.  
Dreams may come true, but don't forget  
It all depends on this:  
'Be careful of your company,  
'Tis youthful days that mould you,  
The chains you play with when a boy  
In manhood will enfold you.'

So, when you dream, as youth will dream,  
And form some wondrous plan,  
Remember this, dear, that the boy  
Is father to the man.  
Be careful of your company,  
Sin's chains are hard to sever;  
The down once brushed from off the peach  
Returns again, ah, never!

## JUST A DOG.

The first time Evelyn saw him was on the steamer, when she and her brother Charlie and mamma and papa were all going on a summer holiday. He sat on a box in a corner of the main deck, a cord tied around his neck, his tail drooping mournfully, and his eyes longingly glancing about for release. Evelyn patted his head while the purser told her the story of Dandy.

He was a tramp dog, and stole passage on the boat in the boldest way. But this was his last trip. A despoiled lunch basket, some hidden chicken bones, and Dandy's look of bland, disinterested content had told the whole shameful story. 'He shall never go again,' answered the purser.

Evelyn looked ruefully at the stubby yellow coat. 'If he were a prettier dog, I'd like him myself; but he is awfully homely. His nose is like a pug's, his ears like a water spaniel's, his coat like a collie's and terrier's mixed, and his tail like a setter's. He's a terribly mixed-up dog. But I like his eyes.'

So it was to his big, honest eyes that Dandy owed his nice new home; but once given the chance, he won the love of his little mistress for the whole 'mixed-up' dog. Together they romped the beach at Ottawa Park, dashing over the bluffs and through the glens on wonderful tramps of adventure; and at night in the little cottage a yellow figure lay on guard just at the foot of Evelyn's cot.

'You cannot take that dog home with you, dear,' was mamma's verdict. 'I won't have such a looking animal around the house.'

Dandy knew all about it, and he licked his faithful little mistress's face lovingly when her tears fell on his ugly head out in the woods. It was their last day together, and Evelyn meant to make the most of it by visiting all the old haunts. Over the hills they ran until all the cottages were passed. Over the ledge to the cliff was a narrow path, and down this Evelyn tripped until she saw the place where she wanted to rest. Then breathlessly she tugged, slipped, and floundered through the warm sand until it was reached. It was a fine-lookout point, a cave that some boys had dug in the hillside and then deserted.

'I wish you were a girl or I were a dog, Dandy,' said Evelyn wistfully, 'so we could be chums. I've seen ever so much uglier dogs than you, dearest; but mamma—'

There was a queer, sliding, crushing sound, and a

hail of pebbles and sand, a great heavy thud, and then darkness.

'Dandy,' gasped Evelyn as she rolled to the far edge of the cave away from the deluge, 'we're just corked in. O, dear, me!'

The tears tumbled in a riotous toboggan slide down the pink cheeks, and the brown curls were bent to the dust in sorrow. Dandy fully appreciated the danger of the situation, but he did not cry. He licked the bowed head, and he sniffed carefully on all sides, then went straight to business. Pretty soon all the spiders and ants heard Evelyn's sobs and a soft, quick scratch, scratch as Dandy's paws dug heavily at the sand. The sun lay like a great ruby on the water when a black nose poked itself out of the mass of sand that had loosened and fallen in an avalanche before the cave, the dirty paws followed, and the owner darted off headlong for Evelyn's cottage.

'Dandy's alone!' cried Mr. Chester when the staunch little dog bounded to the hammock and barked. 'Something wrong, I'm afraid, mother.'

Dandy tried to tell with his tail how true a guess it was; and before the ruby sun had dipped into the western waves he was guiding papa and brother Charlie to the cave. It was a tedious task digging with sticks, hands, anything at hand; but Dandy pawed and barked cheerfully, and the work went on until finally brother Charlie crawled through and handed out a frightened, dirty, tearful little girl to papa's arms.

'Dandy left me, papa,' she sobbed.

'Well, Dandy shall never leave you again,' said Mr. Chester, patting the dog's rough yellow head. 'He's a hero, and even I had to learn the lesson from a dog that a rough coat does not make a cur.'

Evelyn's eyes opened wide. 'Why, papa, how did you know where I was?'

'Dandy did it all,' said papa earnestly. But the hero never blushed; he merely wagged his tail.

## TWO DUNCES.

Robert was visiting at his Uncle John's in the city. He lived on a farm and knew very little about the city, but he wanted his cousin Fred to think he knew more than he really did. Like some other country boys, he had an idea that Fred would make sport of him if he should act as though city ways were not common, everyday things to him. This was very foolish, as Fred had no such thoughts. Indeed, he thought country ways were fine, and nothing gave him any more pleasure than a visit to a farm where there were trees, brooks, grass, wheat-fields, birds, chickens, horses, and other interesting things.

While Robert was in the city he held his head high, and would not have asked a question for anything. One morning he wanted to mail a letter back home. He knew the mail-box was on the corner of the street, but there was also the fire-alarm box. As the two boys were walking along, Robert was wondering just which was the mail-box. When they reached the corner, he walked up to one of the two, and reaching up as high as he could, tried to find an opening for his letter.

Fred turned to see what he was doing. 'What are you trying to do, anyway, Robert? Where is the fire? Want to start a fuss?' asked Fred. 'Better let that alone. There's a law against bothering with those fire alarms. What's that in your hand? Oh, a letter. Well, here is the letter-box,' he added, opening the lid with an easy motion.

'When you don't know, why don't you ask?' Fred was a little out of patience. Robert said nothing.

When Robert returned to his home, Fred went with him for a visit to the farm. But he was just like Robert—he wanted the country folks to think he knew all about the country. He, too, was afraid that Robert would laugh at him if he did not understand all the country ways.

One morning Robert was hitching his pony to the cart, and Fred took one side. He had never done such a thing before, but not for anything would he have said