

The Family Circle

GOOD COUNSEL

Little children, always be
Kind to everything you see.
Do not kick the table's legs,
Don't beat unoffending eggs.

Do not mischievously try
To poke things in a needle's eye,
Nor guilty be of such a fault
As to pinch the table salt.

Do not pull a teapot's nose.
Don't ask bread what time it rose.
Little pitchers' ears don't tweak,
Nor smack the apple's rosy cheek.

But, remember it is right
To all things to be polite.
Let the hay scales have their weigh;
Wish the calendar good-day.

Kiss the clock upon its face,
Return the armchair's fond embrace.
Greet the sieve in merry strain;
Ask the window how's its pane.

If you learn to show such traits
To your dumb inani-mates,
Toward your playmates then you'll find
You've an amiable mind.

A TOUCH OF NATURE

There was a slushy sound in the corridor which told that the scrub woman was at work, the splash of water from her pail, and now the gritty sound of the brush scraping back and forth over the marble. That sound added to Enid's sense of injury. She pulled out her handkerchief and held it to her eyes. It would not do for a tear to splash down on the letter so nearly finished.

It was all the fault of the inconsiderate junior partner. Mr. Bruell, the senior, was a white-haired, courteous old man, who never worked hard himself, and was anything but exacting with his employees.

Mr. Rusk, on the other hand, was a sort of human steam engine. He said himself that the secret of his success was that he knew how to make other people work. Enid thought that it was probably true.

Mr. Rusk had come into the office at four o'clock. 'Where's Miss Williams?' he asked tersely.

As a rule Miss Williams took Mr. Rusk's dictation, while Enid was specially allotted to Mr. Bruell's service. She had congratulated herself a good many times that the case was not reversed.

'She went home at noon. She had such a bad headache that Mr. Bruell excused her.'

Mr. Rusk offered no comment.

'You will have to come to the desk. I have some letters.'

Mr. Rusk dictated rapidly. Enid did not dare let her attention wander, but again and again she found herself wondering when Mr. Rusk was going to stop. Her pencil flew across the pages, which kept turning with such monotonous regularity. Why, she had work enough to keep her busy all the evening. But, of course, he could not expect her to get them out that night.

This hope was soon dissipated. When Mr. Rusk concluded, he said:

'Lay them on my desk for my signature when you finish. I'll be back some time in the evening to look them over.'

He went out of the room without once looking back at the girlish face, suddenly angry and dismayed.

Annoyance made the work slow. Enid knew Mr. Rusk too well to pass over a single slip. She threw

away half-finished slips and put in fresh ones. Six o'clock came and went. She was hungry. She was tired. She was unhappy.

'I wish,' choked Enid, believing for the moment that she really meant it, 'that I'd never been b-born!'

The typewriter had to stop for a moment, and Enid heard a sound in the hall, not the sound of water splashing over the sides of the pail, nor the scrubbing brush, patiently obliterating the traces of muddy feet. What Enid heard was something very different—the sound of sobbing.

Enid rose and flung the door wide open. The scrub woman was squatting in a grotesque fashion on the floor, and crying as if her heart would break.

'Oh!' exclaimed Enid, with a little gasp, 'what is the matter?'

And then she stopped and laid her hand on the bare, splashed arm that was perforce idle at the moment.

The story did not come for one asking. She moaned it out, little by little, a sordid tale, as unromantic as a scrubbing brush itself—a husband in the hospital, five children at home, a fear that one was learning bad ways from the neighbor's boys. And then, the feather-weight that had brought the infrequent tears. Mrs. Meyer had gone to the hospital that day to see her husband, and a blockade of the street cars had delayed her so that she did not arrive till after visiting hours were over.

'Ten cents an' my time wasted!' lamented Mrs. Meyer, drawing her arm across her eyes. 'An' John frettin' his heart out for the sight of me an' news of the children.'

That ten cents set Enid to thinking. She was a working girl herself, and she knew how extravagances in one direction must be atoned for by economy somewhere else.

'Had you your luncheon to-day?' she asked bluntly.

Mrs. Meyer's white face showed a flush.

'I'll have a bite when I go home. They say we eat moren't we ought anyhow.'

It was clear that, in her way, she was a philosopher.

'I've a sandwich left from my luncheon and a piece of gingerbread, too. Mother always puts up more than I can eat. You'll feel better for a bite of something right now.'

'Blessin's on you for your kind heart!' said Mrs. Meyer.

Enid went back to her machine laughing. Mrs. Meyer classed herself and the plutocrats all together as fortunate people who could keep their hands clean, and were sure of all they wanted to eat. And, after all, there was a good deal in her point of view which appealed to Enid as reasonable. In comparison with the woman who had given her a glimpse into the life of thousands in the big city, what good fortune her lot seemed! How lucky she was to be sitting typing Mr. Rusk's letters for fifteen dollars a week, instead of scrubbing floors for fifteen cents an hour.

She was just leaving when Mr. Rusk came in, and he looked at her in surprise.

'What, here yet?'

'I've just finished. The letters are on your desk, Mr. Rusk.'

'Didn't realise I was loading you up quite so heavy at that hour in the evening,' said the junior partner, rather apologetically. 'We'll make it right some afternoon this week. Good-night.'

Mrs. Meyer, revived by the sandwich, smiled as she passed. She would scrub her way down the stairs. Enid dropped the six storeys in the elevator, like a bird sinking earthward. She was tired and hungry, but curiously jubilant, enveloped by a sense of well-being, vaguely conscious of a blessing she did not deserve. For she was going home, and her mother would be watching for her and keeping her supper warm.

HOLDING A CANDLE

The phrase 'Holding a candle to you' is supposed to have originated in the custom, formerly observed