

The Family Circle

STRENUOUS ELOCUTIONIST.

Once there was a little boy, whose name was Robert Reese;
And every Friday afternoon he had to speak a piece.
So many poems thus he learned that soon he had a store
Of recitations in his head and still kept learning more.

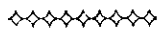
And now this is what happened: He was called upon one
week,
And totally forgot the piece he was about to speak!
His brain was cudgelled. Not a word remained within his
head!
And so he spoke at random, and this is what he said:

"My Beautiful, my Beautiful, who standest proudly by,
It was the schooner Hesperus—the breaking waves dashed
high.
Why is the Forum crowded? What means this stir in
Rome?
Under the spreading chestnut tree there is no place like
home!

"When freedom from her mountain high called 'Twinkle,
little star,'
Shoot if you must this gray old head, King Henry of
Navarre!
Roll on, thou deep and dark blue castled crag of Drachen-
fels;
My name is Norval, on the Grampian Hills, ring out wild
bells.

"If you are waking, call me early, to be or not to be,
The curfew must not ring to-night; O Woodman, spare
that tree!
Charge, Chester, Charge! On Stanley, on! and let who
will be clever,
The boy stood on the burning deck, but I go on forever!"

His elocution was superb, his voice and gestures fine
His schoolmates all applauded as he finished the last line.
"I see it doesn't matter," Robert thought, "what words
I say,
So long as I declaim with oratorical display!"



EARLY MARRIAGES LIKELY TO PROVE A BLESSING TO YOUNG MEN.

The sooner a young man meets the girl he respects and loves, and marries her, the better, generally speaking (says Father Martin J. Scott, S.J.) An early marriage well made is a great blessing to a young man. But never keep constant company with a girl whom you do not hope to marry. It is wrong for many reasons.

First of all, it is not fair to a good girl; and that is the only kind of girl you will associate with, I know. It gives her false hopes and keeps her from other prospects. Suppose someone should act thus with your sister! In the second place, company keeping is dangerous unless it is inspired by the reverence and true love which leads to marriage. Protracted company-keeping is the source of great evils. If, after honorable association with a girl for a reasonable time, you realise she will not make you a good life's companion, cease your attentions to her. Otherwise you raise expectations of marriage in her, and you incur, moreover, the danger of undue familiarity by your long-drawn-out company-keeping.

Look for something more than looks in the girl whom you hope to make your wife. Observe her traits, her disposition, and, above all, her normal and ordinary conduct. When you meet a girl who conforms to your character and whose love you may win, the sooner you marry her the better.

Marriage steadies a young man, gives him ambition, and removes him from the temptations which beset the path of the average youth. Unless you have family obligations which stand in the way of marriage or intend to embrace a life which requires celibacy, your normal career will be safeguarded by a good marriage.

OUR BLESSED MOTHER AND THE FLOWERS.

How many of our boys and girls when they look at the beautiful flowers think of Him who gave them to us? Many of the fairest blossoms show by their names that there was an age when the Giver of the flowers was remembered, but that was long before chrysanthemum shows (says an exchange).

The lily in all lands is associated with thoughts of Our Blessed Mother, whether it is the lovely Annunciation Lily, the fleur-de-lis or the sweet lilies of the valley, which in some lands are thought to be Our Lady's tears. A bunch of wild snowdrops seem prettier for the altar if they are called "Candlemas bells." Legends tell us that flowers sprang up along the Blessed Virgin's way through life, and is it any wonder?

The hazel tree, it is said, blossomed for Mary when she visited Elizabeth, and the daffodils formed a path for Gabriel when he came to the humble house of Nazareth. You all know the orchid which bears the name "Our Lady's Slipper," and how much more graceful is that name than its other, "moccasin flower."

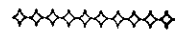
The primrose has a significant name among the Germans; they call it "Frauen Schlusel," "Our Lady's Key," because it opens the gate of spring.

In France the spearmint is "Our Lady's Mint," and the dainty blue speedwell is in England called "Mary's Rest." In Nazareth the little children call briony "Our Lady's Vine," and the holly tree is "Mary's Tree."

You are all familiar with the delicate maiden-hair ferns, but do you know they are often termed "Our Lady's Tresses"?

Across the sea, the strawberry and the cherry are dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. There is a plant known as "Our Lady's Bedstraw," and there is a species of primula which has been styled "Our Lady's Candlestick," while "Our Lady's Nightcap" is a common name for the morning glory.

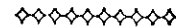
To give these names, full of lovely meaning, to the flowers, shows that Our Blessed Mother was close to the minds and hearts of the people in the early ages, and far from evincing too great familiarity, their simple faith filled their hearts with sweet and loving reverence.



THE FEW.

The easy roads are crowded,
And the level roads are jammed,
The pleasant little rivers
With the drifting folks are crammed,
But off yonder where it's rocky,
Where you get a better view,
You will find the ranks are thinning
And the travellers are few.
Where the going's smooth and pleasant
You will always find the throng,
For the many, more's the pity,
Seem to like to drift along.
But the steepes that call for courage,
And the task that's hard to do
In the end result in glory
For the never-wavering few.

—EDGAR A. GUEST.



NUTS TO CRACK.

Why does a miller wear a white hat?—To cover his head.

What is it that we value more than life, fear more than death, the rich man wants it, the poor man has it, the miser spends it, the spendthrift keeps it, and when we die we take it with us?—Nothing.

What is that which by losing an eye has nothing left but a nose?—Noise.

Why is it right for B to come before C?—Because he must Be before he can C.

Why is the letter T like Easter?—Because it's the last of Lent.

What seven letters did old Mother Hubbard use when she looked into the cupboard?—O, I, C, U, R, M, T.

What is the difference between a Dutch dude and a piece of stovepipe?—One is a silly Hollander and the other is a hollow cylinder.

When is a schoolmaster like a man with one eye?—When he has a vacancy for a pupil.