

day should wake up—but after all there seemed little hope of this. There was his old fear of Jake, and, at bottom, no doubt, some nerve of tenderness for the relative, so ripe in villainy—there were all the old habits and associations of his life, and there too was the grudge against Ben Maxwell.

It seemed altogether probable that Dick Burgess would follow meekly his cousin's beck to the end.

That night, however, the boy could not sleep. He lay awake on his straw pallet in a corner of the gypsy-camp, and his thoughts came and went in a confused troublesome fashion. The talk that afternoon with Jake came up terribly distinct in the darkness and stillness, except when the latter was broken by the heavy sound of snorers in the next room; the old blackened cabin, half fallen to ruin, containing but four rooms for its large brood.

Dick tumbled from one side to the other, and tried to go to sleep, and wondered if he was going to be sick, and all the while the face of the little girl who had bound up his foot that day when the cruel wheel had grazed it, was coming up to the boy; he felt the soft, cool touch of the dainty fingers about his ankle; he saw the young head with its shower of glossy hair, and the sweet face, with the shocked pity in the dark eyes, and heard the girlish voice as it said so eagerly, "I can do something to help you. I'm sure I can."

In and out of all Jake's talk as Dick remembered it, the face kept floating and shining, the words kept winding, and it seemed as though, sometimes they hurt the boy like a sudden pain. He thought, too, of the terror and the harm that was coming to that face—the sweetest and kindest he had ever seen in his life. He wished he could tell Jake; but that wish was dismissed in a moment—the big fellow would only laugh at and bully him.

The boy sat up in bed at last, and worked at his big toe, just as his fingers had worked among the spires of grass that afternoon while Jake was talking. He saw the moonlight shining in at the small cabin-window, and still his thoughts worked and worked, and it seems to me there were good spirits watching eagerly what the end should be, in the corner of that lonely cabin.

At last, because he could not bear the stillness, the boy rolled

out on the floor, slipped on his ragged jacket, and went out. The moon was up now in her solemn beauty, and so were the stars, and they looked down on the troubled face of the boy, as he looked up at them.

"I wish I could do something," he kept muttering to himself, as he wandered about in the night. "I don't know what though, hang it all! I don't want any trouble to come to that girl. I don't I say. If it was only the boy, I wouldn't care—no sir'ee. But the girl—I wish I could do something about her."

The boy wandered in and out among the shadows of the trees—in and out of the moonlight, until there was a little cold streak of dawn in the east.

When he came back to the cabin, cold and tired, and flung himself down in the corner, Dick Burgess had made up his mind.

"See here now."

Janet Keith was just about to spring into the carriage when she heard an eager voice close at her ear, and turning she confronted the boy, ragged and begrimed, who had given her the faded bouquet two or three nights before.

She had not a minute to spare, she was expecting to meet some friends at the depot, and it was almost time for the train; but she did pause a breath to ask kindly, "What is it?"

The boy seemed greatly agitated. He drew his face down close to hers. His eyes faintly glittered with some strange excitement. "I came to tell you," he said, in a thick, rapid way, "not to go down to-day or to-morrow and play croquet by the lane, as you always do. Jest keep away from there."

"What for?" inquired Janet, too much amazed to ask anything further.

"Cos! I can't tell you!" looking all about him in a scared way. "Nobody must know I've been here only you; keep clear of the place. It will be good for you."

"Train will be in, Miss Janet," shouted the driver, who imagined some beggar was keeping his young mistress, with a miserable lie of his own.

Janet sprang into the carriage, calling back her thanks to the boy, and yet not knowing what to think of it all, and half inclined to believe he had gone mad.

As the carriage swept off Dick turned and walked rapidly away, throwing scared glances around him, as though he was afraid he would be seen.

At the side-gate, however, he came suddenly upon Ben Maxwell, who was passing out in hot haste to join some companions for a "lark" on the beach.

Ben recognized the boy who had ridden Sorrel so audaciously, but since the little scene at the depot, and Janet's glory on top, his feeling toward Dick had undergone a great change.

There was a lovable, generous side to Ben with all his faults. He stopped a moment, despite his haste, and gave the boy a good-natured rap on the shoulders. "You won the race, didn't you?" he said. "Next time you want a trot on my horse, don't take it in that way, but come and ask me square, and you shall have it. Can't stop to say more now," and he rushed away.

Dick stood still a moment at the gate, like one thunderstruck; then he hurried off to the woods again, looking back every little while in a scared way, as though he feared to see somebody behind him, and so he did—the big burly figure of his cousin Jake.

The boy reached the woods at last. He trembled like a leaf when he sank down in the damp shade. He was pale through his tan. "I'm glad I did it—I'm glad!" he kept muttering to himself. "I hope it'll save the boy, too, I do. How kind he was just now—so different from what I thought. If Jake knew, he'd think I'd turned traitor; I ain't done that though. I give the girl warning, and I'm glad of it."

Suddenly he burst into tears. The excitement had overstrained his nerves. He buried his face in the wet grass, and cried, and some hardness and bitterness wept out of the heart of Dick Burgess at that time never got back there again.

(To be continued.)

HOME READING.—One of the most pleasant and noblest duties of the head of the family is to furnish its members with good reading. Let good reading go into a home, and the very atmosphere of that home gradually but surely changes. The boys begin to grow ambitious, to talk about men, places, books, the past and the future. The girls begin to feel a new life opening before them in knowledge, duty, and love. They see new fields of usefulness and pleasure; and so the family changes, and out from its number will grow intelligent men and women, to fill honorable places and be useful members of society. Let the torch of intelligence be lit in every household. Let the old and young vie with each other in introducing new and useful topics of investigation, and in cherishing a love of reading, study, and improvement.

## TALKS WITH WOMEN.

### LETTERS TO MY DAUGHTER.

BY JENNY JUNE.

#### "FRIENDSHIPS."



HERE is no subject upon which we think and feel, upon which more or less folly has been written. Times without number, it has been asserted that women are false in friendship, that women are incapable of friendship, when there are not only historical facts, but plenty within the range of every individual experience to prove the contrary. Such sweeping generalizations are the result of ignorance of philosophical principles, and of judgment based upon experiences, which perhaps should never have been classed as friendships at all.

Friendship is a word of deep meaning; only a few, either men or women, are capable of understanding or fulfilling its obligations. It is the highest expression of social life, yet it springs from that desire for companionship, which is equally found in the lowest of human creatures.

As a sentiment, it ranks next to love, and partakes somewhat of its nature; the difference being that it is destitute of passion, and depends more upon harmony of tastes and pursuits, equality, and reciprocity.

Friendships can only exist where there is culture of the heart, as well as the mind; affection, devotion may; or any one of the single, instinctive feelings which are common to the savage as well as the civilized man; but friendship is a more complicated sentiment—it involves, to those who know it, duties and life-long obligations, and it promises also life-long pleasures and rewards.

Next to discovering the falsity of one you love, there is no experience more painful than learning the lesson of treachery in one whom you believed to be your friend.

A broad line of distinction must be drawn, however, between the effusive sympathies of early life, the acquaintanceships formed by proximity, by social routine, by the ties of school, church, business, or relationship, and that stronger, deeper, truer, higher, nobler bond, which exists with or without any

or all of these, and, which alone is worthy of the name of friendship. No girl ever reached fifteen without having suffered several heartbreaks over the presumed falsity of one or more cherished "friends." For months they walk together, talk together, indulge in mutual confidences, stay all night at each others' houses, tease their respective mammas to let them wear the same kind of clothes, and perhaps make some little sister at home, or "other" friend, excessively jealous by this display of devotion. But all at once it stops, one has "been and told of something the other one has said." It is of no consequence whether the "other one" did say it or not, mischief is the result, and the betrayed party cherishes a lively sense of indignation at the breach of confidence, or the falsehood, whichever it is.

Many more such friendships die out, apparently, from the removal or change of circumstances of one or other of the parties; but this is not the true reason—real friendship, like real love survives changes; these little gushings die, because there is not enough of truth and vitality in them to keep them alive.

Friendship cannot be found in a day, nor a week, nor a month, nor a year; although it may take healthful root within either of these periods of time. It requires certain qualities in both parties, without which it cannot exist at all. The first of these is truth, an absolute sense of reliance on the sincerity and good faith of the person whom you honor with trust. No other quality will make up for the absence of this one, and its presence almost fills the place of all others. In other words, persons not good, or desirable in themselves, may experience a real friendship for each other, and be true to the obligations it enjoins, simply by the possession of that strong element in their character, of fidelity to trust, and appreciation of personal honor, while others of more general acceptability, but weak and insincere, are incapable of friendship, because incapable of truth. Friendship like love demands forbearance; but it does not ask impossibilities—it can exist between persons who possess faults, or opposite personal peculiarities, which are often the same thing; but it cannot exist without mutual trust and confidence. To avoid disappointments therefore, it is best to be long in choosing a friend, and not award confidence

until you are pretty sure it will not be abused; but if it should be, it is a simple duty to accept the position as the consequences of a mistake, and retrieve yourself as far as possible by withdrawing your trust.

Friendship does not require in such a case that you should apologize for, or condone the offence. Falsity is indubitable evidence of incapacity for true friendship, and while we may, and indeed, are often compelled to accept deceitful and treacherous persons as acquaintances, and sharers in the common routine of business or pleasure, it is due to ourselves and the faithful working out of our own ideas, not to admit them to our hearts or our confidence.

Another necessary element in a true friendship is equality; the moment the feeling of obligation on either side makes itself felt, that moment there may be tenderness, affection, sympathy, devotion, but there is not friendship. The selfishly ambitious, both men and women, will often simulate friendship to gain parasites, but they always end by using them; sacrificing them if need be, to their personal desires and aims.

Friendship requires strength, courage, and independence, in addition to integrity towards each other on both sides—deceit is born of dependence, and if there is any truth in the assertion so often made that women are more deceitful than men, it is because they have always occupied a dependent position and can hardly help the growth of such qualities as belong to the subjective condition.

Friendship, as I have said, is not a plant of sudden growth, and it pays for cultivation. When we are so fortunate as to find the indispensable qualities, hold fast to their possessor, for they are rare, and our modern life affords little encouragement to them. You can endure pride, assist poverty, wait the loving re-action of a quick temper, and teach ignorance when it arises from want of opportunity, sure of a rich compensation and reward, but you cannot change the nature of a selfish, ambitious, untruthful man or woman, nor can you afford to allow them to make a tool of you, or place you in false positions, therefore it is best to limit intercourse with these to necessity, and not demand of them that close communion and subtle sympathy which belongs to higher natures, and is the peculiar attribute of friendship.

Early intimacies rarely result in

lasting friendships, partly because of inevitable changes, and separations which prevent their growth, and partly because age and experience are necessary to form a just estimate of character. They have a charming interest of their own, however, and often a strength for which few give them credit. Mr. Alger in his admirable work—the "Friendships of Women," relates the story of two girls of sixteen, who, having formed an intimacy at school, were ordered by the father of one of them to relinquish it. Rather than do this they took laudanum, and died in each other's arms. It is quite possible that if they had lived, the development of character on both sides, as much as the changing circumstances of life, would have drifted them away from each other, but of the truth and strength of their early attachment, they certainly gave the most convincing proof. The memories of early intimacies broken off before they reached maturity, are often inexpressibly sweet. They are akin to the tender recollection of a dead child, whose charm is unbroken by the fact of what it might have become on reaching manhood or womanhood.

The early intimacies and attachments of very young girls are not unfrequently formed with and for women much older than themselves; but these can hardly be called friendships, for they lack the element of equality, and may be only tolerated by one, while they are, for the time, the life of the other. Such attachments take the place of "first love" experiences for the opposite sex, and are only possible to the intelligent and imaginative, for they generally proceed in the first place from admiration of unusual talent, and in the second from belief in supposed high qualities. That they do not exist is no barrier to faith in them, because this arises more from the overflowing affection of natures which must expend themselves, than the merits of those they expend themselves upon. It has always been a question, and is still, whether friendship pure and simple, is possible between men and women. Illustrious examples, it is asserted, have not yet satisfactorily answered that inquiry; for to one of friendship there are ten of dangerous platonic love.

That friendship is possible, and will some time be common between men and women, to the great benefit of both sexes, there should not be a doubt; but there is as little

doubt that it is at present both a difficult and a dangerous experiment. The men, married or single, who talk of it to young girls are especially to be avoided, for they are rarely sincere, and they know they are endangering the reputation and future happiness of those whose womanhood their manhood is bound to protect.

There are two classes of selfish men who are dangerous to young women. The first of these are men who never intend to marry, because they are afraid it would compel them to give up their own little luxuries and indulgences, but who like to cultivate sentimental intimacies with women, married or single, and thus feed their vanity at their expense, without endangering their own independence.

The second class are married men, destitute of honor and integrity; incapable of comprehending what they have done in assuming social responsibilities, who indulge their propensities at the expense of domestic happiness, and dignify idle or wicked flirtation with the name of friendship or congeniality of soul. Such men are doubly reprehensible, for they not only do evil intentionally, but they are the obstacles to good—they stand in the way of the strong, pure, and useful friendships which might—and do exist between men and women, to the advantage of both.

It is not enough, in this world, where each one of us depends so much upon the other, to be satisfied with a consciousness of the innocence of our own intentions; we must see to it that we do nothing to interfere with the claims, or mar the happiness of others. When a man has married a woman he has deliberately chosen her out of all the world to be his life companion, nearer and dearer than any friend; and he ought always to treat her in such a manner as to make it apparent that, though not the only woman, she is the first in the world to him. It is a degradation to both husband and wife, and an insult to womanhood which girls should resent, when men try to humiliate one who has the highest claim upon them by showering attentions and gallantries upon themselves.

There have been touching instances of friendship, on the part of women singled out by men as the especial objects of their devotion, for their neglected wives; witness that of Madame Récamier for Madame Chateaubriand; and rarer still, there have been examples of wives who have befriended with truth

and constancy the women for whom they were deserted.

But these are instances of self-abnegation rather than friendship. Between friends there must be equality and reciprocity. A friend is for life, and almost more than love, for it is less subject to fluctuations, the sweetener of life. Wait for it, and when you have found it, cultivate it: forbear something for it, give something to it, hold fast upon it, a true, and unselfish friendship is so precious a gift, that the richest cannot afford to lose it.

Self-culture inspired by friendship, and which expresses itself in conversation and letter-writing, is expressly adapted to the nature of women, and it is one of the worst signs of the times that these gracious and consoling arts are falling into disuse. There are women as choice as Bettina, Rahel Leoni, Récamier, and Elizabeth Barrett; but they are overwhelmed with strife of the age, with, to quote once more from the work that all women ought to read, the "Friendships of Women"—"its complication of interests, its doubts, its weariness, its frittering multiplicity of indulgences, cares, and obligations. If ever the cry of the horse-leech shall cease to be the painful language of the heart, it will be when the longings of the heart, no longer baffled by the vacancies, or the irritating rivalries of a rapid and jealous society, all human beings developed enough to need, and noble enough to deserve, shall also be fortunate enough to possess, true friends with whom they may commune in unity of spirit, and mirrored doubleness of life."

## CHRISTMAS IN THE NORTH.



NORWAY is the home of some very pretty and interesting Christmas customs. They will, for the most part, be also found in Sweden and Denmark, as they are of Scandinavian origin. The old Norse Christmas was known as Jul (pronounced Yule), derived from one of the epithets (Jolner) of the Scandinavian deity Odin; and so they obtained Jul from Jolner as the Romans got Saturnalia from Saturn. Yule fell late in the year, and when our hallowed festival

came to be celebrated in northern lands, the one merged into the other. On the introduction of Christianity into Norway, the Christmas festivities were regarded as heathenish. The yule feasts were not only prohibited, but those who gave them were punished with death or mutilation by order of King Olaf the Saint. How changed are the times! Long before the advent of Yule nowadays, great preparations are made for the due observance of the fête. The yule-cake (bakkelse) is made; the venison is hung, the pigs and fattened calves are killed, the small game is collected, and a good supply of fish laid in. Large quantities of wood are brought from the forests, and the logs are piled up by the fireside, all in readiness. As the day approaches, the invitations are sent out, and the final touches are given to the arrangements at the house, bright fresh leaves being spread over the floors of the principal rooms. On the morn of the appointed day, the invited are spirited away in light and elegant sledges to the happy abode, whilst the church bells ring out the sweet music of peace and good-will to mankind. Most of the Norwegians attend the early service at the parish church, and it is on this occasion that they carry offerings to their minister. Having thus recognized the festival as members of the Christian Church, they return to their homes to honor it after the manner of their forefathers. Their tables are heavily laden, and there is much eating and drinking, the repast opening with the standard dish of fish. Afterwards the Christmas songs of the country are sung, stories are told, and the fairy lore of the country, proverbially rich, is largely drawn upon for the amusement of the little folks—not always exclusively. They tell how the Trolls make their appearance on Yule night, and invite the young men to feast with them in their sylphid homes amongst the hills. Norway, too, has the Christmas-tree; the poorest peasant in the country, as well as the richest proprietor, does not fail to light up the toy-bearing fir-tree for the gratification of his children. Card-playing is another of their Yuletide amusements. The favorite dances are a kind of valse and an exciting gallopade. They dance to the fiddle, and the fiddler is invariably a cobbler.

We have yet to notice the prettiest of the Norse Yule customs—that of giving the fowls of the air

a feast on Christmas Day. For the sparrows and other small birds sheaves of wheat, oats, or barley are stuck upon long poles and put out on gables of houses, barn-doors, out-buildings, gateways, and other places where the feathered tribe love to congregate. They are said to know when Christmas is drawing nigh, for you may now observe hundreds of birds flocking round the snow-covered houses, while at other times they are scarcely visible.

The Christmas of Sweden is very similar to the Christmas of Norway. The custom of dining the smaller birds is also popular amongst the Swedes; so attached, indeed, are the people to it that the man who forgets the fowls of the air at this season is sure to lose his character for benevolence. It is, besides, the practice to give the cattle a double feed on Christmas Eve. "Eat well, my good beasts, and thrive," say the farm-laborers, "for this is Jul-afton." The church bell announces the birth of the day almost as soon as the eve has passed away; and at a very early hour people may be seen by hundreds in the streets of the towns, lighted on their way by lanterns. They are going to church. It is an extraordinary sight, and what makes it more so is the vast number of children seen in the throng. They are being taken to the Jul-Otta—the Christmas day-break (song)—there being a tradition amongst the Swedes that if the children attend this early service they will very easily learn to read. This is followed by the "race home." It forms part of the rustic creed, that the breadwinner who arrives first at his house from the Jul-Otta will be the first to get in his next harvest, or, if a bachelor, the first to obtain a wife. The rest of Christmas Day is spent by the Swedes in a quiet and pious manner. St. Stephen's (Dec. 26) is given up to family visiting; it is a more open holiday, differing from Christmas Eve, inasmuch as people go out and about; and differing from Christmas Day, inasmuch as there is a considerable amount of sledging, eating and drinking, and making merry. Between this time and New Year's Day, the young people divert themselves by "getting married"—à la Suède, of course; and those already "sacrificed," or those who don't care about going to the altar, solace themselves in a round of other pleasures.

Ask any Dane which he regards as the great national holiday of

his country, and he will unhesitatingly inform you that it is Christmas Day. Being a sober-minded individual, the Dane, like most of his Northern kindred, spends his Yule by the fireside, and binds a little more closely together his domestic relationship. The eating of grod and the singing of hymns around the Christmas-tree belong to the Eve; church-going, alms giving, card-playing, story-telling form the lighter amusements of Christmas Day; dinner, the heavier. The *pièce de résistance* is the plum-pudding, to which the fair children and blue-eyed maidens of Denmark do ample justice. At the conclusion of the dinner, emphasis is given to an interesting ceremony. The children say to the head of the table, "Thank you for my dinner," and the company, on rising, ladies and gentlemen alike, shake hands all round, saying, at the same time, "Good may it do you!" Then follow the drawing-room entertainments, the finale being a Danish Christmas song in which everybody present takes part.

The characteristics of the Russian social Christmas, which we have only space to notice briefly, are these. In the country districts a good stock of salted meats, sausages, and kirsch is laid in during the six weeks which precede Christmas (O. S.), and at an early date it is arranged amongst friends and relatives at whose house the festival shall be celebrated. In due time the hostess goes round and invites the company in an old-fashioned but complimentary set speech, followed the next day by the nurse, who invites the young ladies. Subsequently the host himself asks the guests, generally by deputy, "to witness the sports of the fair maidens, to break with them a bit of bread, taste a grain of salt, and partake of the roasted goose." At the time named the guests arrive in sledges, the young ladies and gentlemen first. All is bustle now in the house and neighborhood. One of the first proceedings is the introduction of the young people, for this is the "mating season," over which the hostess presides. So soon as the elder visitors have been received, a lady is chosen to conduct the ceremonies. We need scarcely add that this lady is sure to be the fairest of the matrons. Then are served the refreshments, which comprise many things besides sausages, salted meats, and kirsch; indeed, delicacies of the rarest kinds, and liquors of the choicest "brands"