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A FEW OF MY FAVORITE THINGS

by Inez Schneider Whitney

One of Mama's treasures that has passed on to me is an autograph album that she compiled when she was young. The pages, yellow with age, are filled with verses written by schoolmates, friends, and family. The earliest date is March 8, 1888, when Mama was nine years old. I have chosen some of the ones that I liked best in various categories.

Here, for instance, are three good ones on friendship:

May happiness be ever thine
May peace thy steps attend
Accept this tribute of respect
From one who is a friend.

When far away and friends are few
Remember me and I will you.

These few lines to you are tendered
By a friend sincere and true
Hoping but to be remembered
When I'm far away from you.

Next are some humorous ones:

the Women's Christian Temperance Union was conducting a nationwide crusade against drinking:

Remember me when you look here.
Remember me when you drink beer.

And of course there were bound to be some verses about love:

Some love one and some love two.
I love but one and that is you!

I dare not tell you how my heart
At every thought of you will start.

This last love verse is like a puzzle. Read down the first column, up the second, down the third, etc.

I thee read see that me
love is up shall I love
but that and you love you
one and down and you if

I was also pleased to find a number of religious selections:

Our life is like a river
Which sorrowful or free
Will end at last in
The ocean of Eternity.

A place for my name in your album
A place for my love in your heart
A place for us both in Heaven
Where true friends never part.

Remember me when this you see
When I am far away
That you and I may meet again
On that great Judgment Day.

Our lives are written through
With good or ill, with false or true.
And as the blessed angels turn
The pages of our years
God grant they read the good with smiles
And blot the bad with tears.

I especially liked an entry by Mama's uncle:

Do your duty and leave the rest to God.

I'll close these examples with an autograph in the form of a letter written by one of Mama's teachers:

District No. 3
St. Joseph's Township
Williams Co., Ohio

PARENTS

To my pupil, Estella Provines

When months have gone and years have flown
And you and I are aged and grown
Remember oft in thoughts most dear
The teacher of your younger years.

C. E. Bercaw
teacher, farmer

Mama said that most of the teachers in her one-room-school days were also farmers. The farmer-teacher drove a buggy from home and had only a short teaching day. Mama said that her schoolmates grew up to be law-abiding citizens as far as she knew. Although she came to Oklahoma when she was 23, she made several trips back to reunions where she saw many of her former classmates.

After reading through the autograph album, I decided that in those days young people had happy, well-adjusted lives. They seemed to be free of many of the temptations faced by young people today. ■

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