The Family Circle.

The Dying Wife.

BY MRS. EVANS, SISTER OF REV. T. H. STOCKTON.

Weep not, beloved, that I pass before thee
On the bright pathway to eternal rest;
That first my brow shall wear the crown of glory,
My song of praise be heard among the blest.

But oh! rejoice to think what days of gladness
Have lent their beauty to our earthly path:
That no harsh thought or word to waken sadness,
May shade with gloom the picture memory hath.

Think of thy happiness; so deep and tender,
That filled my heart while wandering by thy side;
Think how thy faintest smile had power to render
The darkest moment one of love and pride.

Think, for I know 'twill wake a pleasant feeling—
How ever kind thy words were wont to be:
How mild the glance, thy faithful heart revealing,
How soft the cadence of thy voice to me.

And now that this frail form in death grows colder,
A sweet, calm rapture fills the parting hour;
That thou art with me, though a sad beholder,
A witness of the dear Redeemer's power.

For oh, were not His heart my soul entwining,
How could I bear the pang of leaving thee?
Did not His presence gild life's day declining,
What midnight darkness round my path would be.

But now I die, and yet my soul rejoices,
Knowing that I shall surely love thee still;
Even from the melody of angel voices
That float around, and all my senses thrill.

For oh! if they in all their towering splendor,
Enfold their glorious plumes round mortal forms,
How shall the spirit of a saint surrender
The joy of whispering peace amid life's storms.

Ah yes, in danger ever hovering o'er thee,
My circling wings will shield thee night and day.
And when thy feet shall tread the path to glory,
My hand shall guide thee on the shining way.

There, never more shall scene like this distress us;
The Stream and Tree of Life we there shall see:
And side by side, shall hear Jehovah bless us,
And sing His love through all eternity.

ACTING A LIE.

Mrs. Hansom went away one afternoon, leaving her little daughter with the care of the baby, who had not been quite well for several days. She told Helen to sit by her little sister, and not leave her at all while she was gone, for if she should kick the clothes off, she might get cold and be worse, and if she should waken, and try to get up, she might fall from her crib and hurt her very much.

"You may sit by her very quietly," said Mrs. Hansom, "and study your multiplication table, the last half of the eights, and when you have learned that you may finish the handkerchief you were hemming for papa. It is only two days to Christmas, and you want to finish the handkerchief, so that Maggie can do it up nicely for you."

Helen promised she would do the best she could, and, taking her arithmetic, seated herself by little Abbie, feeling quite happy that mamma had placed so much confidence in her, and thinking she would take "such nice care of baby."

For a time she studied very busily, stopping only once or twice, just to tuck up the chubby little foot which peeped out from the warm blankets, and to kiss the fat, dimpled hand that hung so temptingly over the side of the crib.

Presently she heard the voice of her little playmate, Katie Bell, in the next room, and dropping her book, she crept noiselessly out, for fear her merry laugh and voice might waken the baby sleeper.

Katie was full of the surprises which she had planned for Christmas, and Helen was so interested to hear, that she forgot entirely her little charge, and followed Katie out to the gate, talking very busily, until the striking of the church clock reminded her of her mother's return, and with a trembling heart she ran in as fast as her feet could carry her.

As she entered the nursery, baby Abbie was lying on the floor, all tangled in her blankets. Helen ran to her, laid her carefully in the crib again, wiped the little red eyes, and sang and rocked her till she was fast asleep.

Then she took her arithmetic, but her mind was ill at ease, and she could not fix it upon her book. She did not know how long little Abbie had lain there, for she had cried herself to sleep, and the cheeks were still wet with tears when she took her up. And then she feared she was hurt, or had taken cold.

When Mrs. Hansom came in Helen was still sitting by the crib, and seeming to study very earnestly. Her mother smiled very sweetly and approvingly upon her.

"Has baby been good, Helen?"

"Yes, mamma," said the little girl. "She tried once, and I rocked her to sleep again."

"And how have you got along with your lesson?" said Mrs. Hansom.

Helen colored, as she answered, "It seems real hard, mamma, and I have not got it perfectly yet."

"Then you have not sewed any?"

"No, mamma."

"I am sorry, for I wanted very much you should finish both to-night, and I was detained so much longer than I expected, I thought you would have plenty of time, baby is so quiet. However it is of more consequence that she should be well taken care of, and I feel quite proud of my faithful little nurse."

Helen blushed still deeper as she felt how unworthy she was of her mother's words of praise, but she said nothing, and soon went out to play, as her mother told her she might, till tea-time. But she was not happy, for although she had not told a lie in so many words, she felt she had deceived her mother. She had *acted* a lie, and that was just as bad as to *tell* one.

Little Abbie slept uneasily, with her eyes half open, and tossed about in her crib. When Mrs. Hansom felt of her head it was very hot. She took her up, and, bathing the feverish head in cold water, discovered quite a bunch on one side of it. There was also a bruise upon the left arm. She knew it was not there when she put her to sleep, and sent immediately for Helen to come to her. As she looked up at the guilty face she knew something wrong had happened, of which Helen had not told her, but she called her to her side, and showing the bruises, said very quietly, "Helen, do you know how these came here?"

Helen was shocked, and surprised and frightened. She had not seen them before, but she could not *tell* a lie if she could act one, and hiding her face in her mother's lap, she burst into tears, and sobbed out the truth, saying,

"I did not mean to, mamma, I know I didn't; but I forgot."

Mrs. Hansom felt very much grieved. She had confided in her daughter, and had been deceived, and her heart felt very sorry.

"I only meant to be gone a minute, mamma, and baby was so fast asleep, I thought she would not waken till I got back."

"You did wrong to leave her at all, Helen, when I had charged you so particularly not to; but after you had disobeyed, you should have told me at once when I came in, that I might have attended to these bruises, for I fear Abbie is badly hurt;" and she stroked very lovingly the little head that was turning so restlessly from one side to the other.

"Do you think baby will really be sick for this, mamma?" asked Helen, in a distressed tone of voice, for she dearly loved her baby sister.

"I cannot tell," said Mrs. Hansom. "I hope not, but it might have proved something very serious, had I not discovered it in time."

Helen went to bed with a heavy heart, and as she knelt to say her prayers she asked more earnestly than ever before that she might be forgiven, and kept from doing so again; and then she asked God to make the little sick one well. Her first thoughts in the morning were of Abbie, and jumping out of bed, she went silently to her mether's room, where the night-lamp was burning very dimly.

Mrs. Hansom had not undressed through the night, and as Helen went in she sat bending over the little sleeper. Helen felt as if her heart would burst, as she asked how baby was. How she trembled, and feared to hear the answer, and how relieved did she feel when her mother told her Abbie was sleeping more quietly, and that the slight moisture on her forehead told that the danger which had threatened her little pet had passed away, though she was very weak, and would not be quite well for days to come.

How thankful did Helen feel to her kind Heavenly Father, and oh, how did the lesson sink into her heart, and make her pray every day that she might never, never again be left to act a lie!—*Tract Journal.*

Miscellaneous.

THE MISSISSIPPI FLEET.

The correspondent of the New York *Times* writing from St. Louis, gives a graphic description of the formidable preparations made by our government for an object of the highest importance—one which will be even more necessary if we become two nations than if we continue one—the opening of the Mississippi river. We give some extracts:

"Perhaps no expedition—not even that sent along the coast of the Southern States—has, during the present war, been projected, or is so pregnant with great results, as the one now preparing at St. Louis and Cairo for a descent of the Mississippi. A more formidable fleet never rode American waters; nor was there one ever started on this continent which had before it a work so gigantic, or one which, if successful, could produce results so immense—immense in good to the Union, in evil to the disloyal.

"At its last session in July it was determined by Congress, to authorize the construction of seven gunboats, and contracts for their building were invited. James B. Eads was the successful bidder, and on the 5th of August a contract was signed, in which he agreed to build them for $80,000 each. By the terms of the contract, the boats were to be finished in sixty days; in case they were not, there was provided a forfeit of $200 for each day they remained beyond this time.

"The contract also provided that the boats were to be 175 feet in length, 51 feet 6 inches beam, and when loaded to draw five feet. Each was to have two engines and five boilers, with five flues each—cylinders twenty-two inches, with six feet stroke; wheel of wrought iron, to be plaeed near the stern, like a ferryboat, so as to be as little exposed as possible. A small engine, to pump water in the boiler, was also to be provided. All the machinery was to be so placed as to be under water; the boats to have an average of 650 tons; to be flat-bottomed, and constructed of the heaviest and best oak timber; the sides covered with plate of the best charcoal iron, two and a half inches in thickness, and securely bolted together and to the woodwork within. The sides were to incline inward at an angle of about 45 degrees, so as to turn or "glance off" a missile, the bottom to have the same inclination toward the keel. Each boat was to carry fifteen guns—five 68 pound columbiads at each side, three rifled guns at the bow, and two at the stern. The guns and gunners were to be protected by the casemates rising seven feet from the deck, constructed of heavy timber, plated with iron.

"Contractor Eads immediately went to work with the greatest alacrity, employed all the sawmills possible, and put all the men at work that the nature of things would permit. Five of the boats were built at St. Louis, three at Mound city. Four more have since been added to the fleet that were brought here from the Ohio river.

"A large number of mortar boats and transports were also contracted for, and now are all completed. They are as follows:

Guaboats	12
Mortarboats	38
Tugs and steamboats	28

"The flagship Benton was built outside of the Congressional appropriation, having been built by the order of Maj. Gen. Fremont. The contractor, Mr. Eads, was almost given a *carte blanche* relative to her construction, and the result is that he has produced one of the finest and most formidable specimens of naval architecture afloat.

"So confident are some of the naval officers in the strength of the gunboats, that several of them have offered to take the Benton and lay her under the batteries of Columbus, confident that her immense strength will resist the heaviest metal in the possession of the Confederates. The plates upon the gunboats were submitted to severe tests, and evinced almost fabulous invincibility. Heavy rifled shots were fired at them at a distance of only 160 yards, and in every case they were either only slightly indented or else they shivered the shots into innumerable fragments, or turned them harmlessly aside.

"The mortarboats, 38 in number, are built of heavy timbers—the sides of boiler-iron, loop-holed for musketry, are so arranged that they can be used as bridges, and will each carry one of the heaviest mortars used in warfare. Small tugboats will be used to tow the mortarboats into position.

"There is also a pontoon train being built by —— Johnson, of New York city. It is of gutta percha, composed of inflated floats, and may be put in use, taken up, and transported in the smallest possible time, and with but little labor.

"The expedition was commenced by Commander John R. Rodgers. But it has, however, been mainly arranged and brought to its present state of efficiency by Flag Officer A. H. Foote, a distinguished officer of the naval serviee, and who has proved his efficiency and gallantry in every position in which he has been placed during a long course of active service. His daring attack and storming of the Chinese forts is a part of the history of the American navy; and lately as commander of the New York Navy Yard, he discharged his arduous duties to the entire satisfaction of the Government. His former brother officer, but now rebel antagonist, Capt. Hollins, in sending his regards to him lately from Columbus, under a flag of truce, was constrained to say that he was the 'right man in the right place!' Its destination is purely a matter of guesswork. But when it does come, there will be a day of terrible reckoning for the sons of rebellion, who now swagger and flaunt in treason-chained Memphis and Columbus. When fifty thousand bayonets climb the heights in their rear—when the tremendous storm from two score mortars and a dozen gunboats pours its floods of fire and iron hail into their midst—then, perhaps, will they be compelled to recognize the power which they have offended, and expiate in blood their attempt to disintegrate this once glorious Union. There is a storm gathering here, and at Cairo, which will soon burst over the strongholds of Secession. When its heavy thunders shake the foundations of their earth, and its sheeted lightnings carry death and destruction through their land, they will, perhaps, acknowledge that there 'is a God in Israel' that there is a Government left with power to crush out treason—that the strong-armed 'mudsills' of the North are a match for the swaggering, vaunting, 'chivalrous' hordes of this dastardly, uncalled for rebellion."

THE BEGINNINGS OF ESTRANGEMENTS.

No stream flows so smoothly but that somewhere on its surface a ripple appears, and no married life but has here and there moments of disagreement. Two human beings who have not yet become perfect, cannot be perpetually together without sometimes thinking differently and willing in opposition to one another. I know that there are here and there a husband and wife who are conscious of no such opposition, who can look over possibly years of uninterrupted communings and undivided purposes, and who might easily suppose that it is because they evermore are the same in thought and purpose. But, I take it, it is rather that impelled by a mutual affection and a keen-sighted wisdom, they have unconsciously learned to allow nothing for a moment to stand between their hearts. To accomplish this, a husband and wife must *guard against the beginning of estrangements.* The lasting alienations, the separations, the divorces do not spring at once out of some great violation of conjugal duty, but are the perfected fruit of little estrangements. A word or even a look sometimes, like a small break in a dyke, becomes a vast crevasse through which pours a flood of unhappiness. Nay, it may be a positive nothing, only a neglect which may be the foundation-stone of untold misery. It is noticed and felt, but pride forbids any explanation or any questioning. Each notices the other's coldness, but neither can come to the point of asking what is in the way. Meanwhile the peaceful consciousness of mutual agreement is broken up and each is unhappy, and, I may add, each conscious of wrong. In this state of mind, a new offence is easily given and more easily taken, and the breach goes on wider and wider. The process may go on till wife or husband, perhaps both, begin to seek in the society of others, what they have lost in their own, and, at last, embarked on a troubled and rapid stream, in some dark hour they are hurried into crime and are lost to each other forever.

"A something, light as air—a look,
A word unkind or wrongly taken—
Oh! love, that tempests never shook,
A breath, a touch like this has shaken,
And ruder winds will soon rush in
To spread the breach that words begin;
And eyes forget the gentle ray
They wore in courtship's smiling day;
And voices lose the tone that shed
A tenderness round all they said;
Till fast declining, one by one
The sweetnesses of love are gone,
And hearts, so lately mingled, seem
Like broken clouds—or like the stream
That smiling left the mountain's brow,
As though its waters ne'er could sever,
Yet ere it reached the plain below,
Breaks into floods and parts forever."

I may speak to some who understand me fully, and have known too many days of misery, not to appreciate what I say. If you are conscious, and as soon as you are conscious that there is anything of alienation or estrangement, lose not an hour before you seek a reunion of your hearts. If conscience tells you that you have been in the wrong, do not be too proud to acknowledge it; if you are sure that you have been unkindly or unjustly treated, do not stand on your dignity or sense of justice, but be the first to seek a reconciliation. Let the magnanimity of love move you. Do not wait till your husband or your wife approaches you, but do you hasten to do love's work. You will find perhaps another heart reaching out after yours in the dark, and it will not be long before you both are walking side by side, and hand in hand.—*Rev. W. Aikman.*

THE JEALOUSY OF A DOG.

Some time since, a gentleman living on the Hudson, had a fine Newfoundland dog, who was a great favorite with the family. While this dog was confined in the yard, a pet lamb was given to one of the children, which the former soon discovered to be sharing a great portion of those caresses which he had been in the habit of receiving. This circumstance produced so great an effect on the poor animal that he fretted, and became extremely unwell, and refused to eat. Thinking that exercise might be of use to him, he was let loose. No sooner was this done, than the dog watched his opportunity and seized the lamb in his mouth. He was seen conveying it down a lane about a quarter of a mile from his master's house, at the bottom of which the Hudson river flowed. On arriving at it, he held the lamb under water till it was drowned, and thus effectually got rid of his rival. On examining the lamb, it did not appear to have been bitten or otherwise injured; and it might also be supposed that the dog had chosen the easiest death in removing the object of his dislike.

Carbonate of lead (a poison) is, it is now asserted, efficacious in cases of consumption. Workers in lead, we are told, are never consumptive.

NAPOLEON'S IDEA OF MAKING WAR.

The following letter was written by Napoleon to Augereau, on the 21st February, 1814:

"What! Six hours after receiving the first troops from Spain you are not in the field! Six hours of rest is quite enough for them. I conquered at Fangis with the brigade of dragoons coming from Spain, who from Bayonne had not drawn rein. Do you say that the six battalions from Nimes want clothes and equipage, and are uninstructed? Augereau, what miserable excuses! I have destroyed 80,000 enemies with battalions of conscripts, scarcely clothed, and without cartridge boxes. The National Guards are pitiful. I have here 4000 from Angers and Bretagne, in round hats, without cartridge boxes, but with good weapons; and I have made them tell. There is no money, do you say? But where do you expect to get money, but from the pockets of the enemy? You have no teams? Seize them! You have no magazines? Tut, tut, this is too ridiculous. I order you to put yourself in the field twelve hours after you receive this letter. If you are still the Augereau of Castiglione, keep your command. If your sixty years are too much for you, relinquish it to the oldest of your general officers. The country is menaced and in danger. It can only be saved by daring and alacrity, and not by vain delays. You must have a nucleus of 6000 picked troops? I have not so many, yet I have destroyed three armies, captured 40,000 prisoners, taken 200 pieces of artillery, and thrice saved the capital. The enemy are in full flight upon Troyes! Be before them. Act no longer as of late. Resume the method and spirit of '93. When Frenchmen see your plume waving in the van, and you, first of all, exposed to the enemy's fire, you will do with them whatever you will."

CAST THY BURDEN UPON THE LORD.

Dr. Payson, when racked with pain, and near unto death, exclaimed: "Oh, what a blessed thing it is to lose one's will. Since I have lost my will I have found my happiness! There can be no such thing as disappointment to me, for I have no desire but that God's will may be accomplished."

John Newton, in his old age, when his sight had become so dim that he was unable to read, hearing the Scripture repeated: "By the grace of God I am what I am," paused for some moments, and then uttered this affecting soliloquy: "I am not what I ought to be. Ah! how imperfect and deficient! I am not what I wish to be. I abhor that which is evil, and I would cleave to that which is good. I am not what I hope to be. Soon, I shall put off, with mortality, all sin and imperfection. Though I am not what I ought to be, and what I hope to be, yet I can truly say I am not what I once was, a slave to sin and Satan; and I can heartily join with the apostle, and acknowledge, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.'"

"I was once called," says Mr. Jay "to attend the dying bed of a young female. In answer to my inquiries, she replied, 'I have little to relate as to my experience. I have been much tried and tempted; but this is my sheet-anchor: He hath said, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' I know I come to him, and I expect he will be as good as his word. Poor and unworthy as I am, he will not trifle with me nor deceive me. It would be beneath his greatness as well as goodness.'"

Scientific.

The London *Times* states that some further experiments with the Armstrong guns took place recently under the direction of the Ordnance Select Committee, when two 100 pounder guns of the ordinary service pattern fired a large number of consecutive rounds at the Woolwich butt. The rapidity of fire was nearly uniform throughout. One 100 pounder fired its last fifty rounds in 34½ minutes, and the other 100 pounder fired its last fifty rounds in 33½ minutes. This included every stoppage. The guns were not sponged for 70 and 80 rounds respectively, and remained clean to the end. There was no escape whatever of gas from the breech.

A Popular Author.—The sale of Hugh Miller's works has been much larger in this country than in Great Britain. The "Testimony of the Rocks" has reached a sale of 27,000 copies in England, and the same in America. Next comes the "Footprints of the Creator," in which the American sale has entirely outstripped the English, the former being upwards of 19,000, and the latter 16,000. The "Old Red Sandstone" has sold 16,000 here to 9000 in England; the "Schools and Schoolmasters," 16,000 here to 10,000 of the English; and the "First Impressions of England" 9000, against 6000 in Black's edition.

Tan Bark Explosive Powder.—M. Reynaud's new French powder called pyronime, consists of nitrate of soda, 72.5 parts by weight, spent tan bark, dry, 87.5; sulphur in powder, 50. The nitrate of soda is first dissolved in a small quantity of water. The spent tan bark in powder is then mixed in this and the sulphur in the same manner. It is now dried in a warm apartment, and is fit for use as a substitute for gunpowder. It contains all the explosive ingredients of common powder. The tan bark is a substitute for charcoal, and the nitrate of soda, for the nitrate of potash.

Novel Light Locomotive.—The Dunkirk, (N.Y.) *Herald* says: "We saw in the depot one day last week an engine which seemed to be a novelty even to railroad men. It was the coal-burner *Hackensack*, a miniature specimen of a locomotive and tender combined. It has but one driving wheel on a side, and is capable of running forty-five miles an hour, with a light train of course. It belongs to the New York and Erie Railroad, was built, we believe, by the engineer, Mr. Mumford, and is used by Superintendent Minot in going over the road in performance of his duties."—*Scientific Amer.*

Telegraph Targets.—F. N. Gisborn of London, has applied the electric telegraph to targets for shooting at long ranges. The target is so constructed and connected with electric telegraphic apparatus that when a bullet strikes it, a signal placed near the marksmen points out the part exactly that has been struck, and at the same time the hits are also registered on paper, by the apparatus.

The Telegraph on War Ships.—The London *Post* states that an iron-clad elevated room is built on the after deck of the Warrior, and fitted with telegraphic apparatus, communicating with the engine-room and all the apartments of the vessel. In this room the commander witnesses in comparative safety all that is going on, and sends his orders with lightning speed to any part of the ship.

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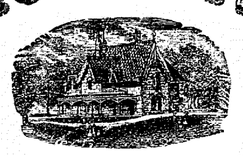
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