

The Family Circle.

Coming Home.

By FRIGER CARY. O, brothers and sisters growing old, Do you all remember yet That home, in the shade of rustling trees, Where once our household met.

Do you know how we used to come from school, Through the summer's pleasant heat; With the yellow fane's golden dust, On our tired little feet?

And how sometimes in a fit of mood We loitered in the way; And stopped in the woods to gather flowers, And in the fields to play:

Till warned by the deepening shadow's fall, That told of the coming night, We climbed to the top of the long hill, And saw our home in sight?

And brothers and sisters, older now Than when whose life is o'er, Do you think of the mother's loving face That looked from the open door?

Alas! for the changing times of time; That home in the dust is low; And that loving smile was hid from us, In the darkness, long ago!

And we have come to life's last hill, From which our weary eyes Can almost look on that home that shines Eternal in the skies.

So brothers and sisters, as we go, Still let us move as one, Always together keeping step, Till the march of life is done;

For that mother who waited for us here, Wearing a smile so sweet, Now waits on the hills of Paradise For her children's coming feet!

CHARLETTA.

"If I could have your faith, Hawkins, gladly would I; but I was born a skeptic. I cannot help my doubts more than I can the results they lead to. I cannot look upon God and the future as you do; with my temperament, and the peculiar bias of my mind, it is utterly impossible."

So said John Harvey, as he walked with a friend under a dripping umbrella. The night was stormy and very dark, though the brilliancy of the shop lamp made a broad path of light along the wet sidewalk. John Harvey was a skeptic of thirty years' standing, and apparently hardened in his unbelief. Every body had given him up as unconquerable. Reasoning ever so fairly and calmly made no impression on the rocky soil of his heart. Theologians disliked the sight of his massive face, and humble Christians sighed as he passed them. A man with such capacities, they said, with such generous impulses, for everybody knew how kind he was, with an intellect so enriched, and powers of the keenest metal—and yet no God, no hope of the future—walking with the lamp at his feet, unlightened! Alas, it was sad, very sad.

But one friend had never given him up. When spoken to about him—"I will talk with him and pray for that man until I die," he said; "and I will have faith that he may get out of darkness into the marvelous light. And, oh, how wonderful that light will seem to him, shut up so long!"

And thus, whenever he met him, (John Harvey was always ready for a talk,) Mr. Hawkins pressed home the truth upon him. In answer, on that stormy night, he only said, "God can change a skeptic, John; he has more power over your heart than you have, and I mean to pray for you."

"Oh, I've no objection, none in the world; seeing I believe, you know. I'm ready for any modernism, but I tell you, I would take nothing short of a miracle to convince me. However, let's change the subject. I'm hungry, and it's too far to go up town to supper this stormy night. Where! how the wind blows! Here's a restaurant; let us stop here."

How warm and pleasant it looked in the long, brilliant, dining saloon. Clusters of gas jets streamed over the glitter and color of pictures and gorgeous carpets, and the rows of marble tables reflected back the lights as well as the great mirrors.

The two merchants had eaten, and were just on the point of rising, when a strain of soft music came through an open door—a child's sweet voice.

"Upon my word that is pretty," said John Harvey; "what marvelous purity in those tones!"

"Out of here, you little baggage," cried a hoarse voice, and one of the waiters pointed angrily to the door.

"Let her come in," said John Harvey, springing to his feet. "Curious to see her face—she was very small—John Harvey turned her to the furthest part of the great room, where there were but few gentlemen, and then motioned her to sing. The little one looked timidly up. Her cheek was of olive darkness, but a flush rested there; and out of the thinnest face, under the arch of broad temples, deepened by masses of the blackest hair, looked two eyes, whose softness and tender pleading would have touched the hardest heart.

"That little thing is sick, I think," said John Harvey, compassionately. "What do you sing, child?" he added.

"I sing you Italian or English," she said softly.

John Harvey had been looking at her shoes. "Why," he exclaimed, and his lip quivered, "her feet are wet to her ankles, absolutely; her shoes are full of holes."

By this time the child had begun to sing, pushing back her hood and folding before her her little thin fingers. Her voice was wonderful; and simple and common as were both air and words, the power and pathos of the tones drew together several of the habitués of the reading room. The little song commenced thus:

"There is a happy land, Far, far away, Never could the voice, the manner, of that child be forgotten. There almost seemed a halo round her head, and when she had finished her great speaking eyes turned toward John Harvey.

"Look here, child, where did you learn that?" he asked.

"In Sabbath School, sir," was the simple answer. "And you don't suppose there is a happy land?" he continued, heedless of the many eyes upon him.

"I know there is; I'm going to sing there," she said, so quietly, so decidedly, that men looked at each other.

"Going to sing there?" "Yes, sir; my mother said so. She used to sing to me until she was sick; then she said she wasn't going to sing any more on earth, but up in heaven."

"Well, and what then?" "And then she died, sir," said the child, tears brimming up and over on the dark cheek, now ominously flushed scarlet.

John Harvey was silent for a few moments. Presently he said:

"Well, if she died, my little girl, you may live, you know?" "Oh, no, sir! no, sir! [very quickly.] I'd rather go there, and be with mother. Sometimes I have a dreadful pain in my side, and cough as she did. There won't be any pain up there, sir; it's a beautiful world!"

"How do you know?" faltered on the lips of the skeptic.

"My mother told me so."

Words how impressive! manner how child-like, and yet how wise! John Harvey had had a pang. His chest labored for a moment—the sores that struggled for utterance could be heard even in their deeps—and still those large, soft, lustrous eyes, like magnets, impelled his glance towards them.

"Child, you must have a pair of shoes." John Harvey's voice was husky.

Simultaneously hands were thrust in pockets, purses pulled out, and the astonished child held in her little palm more money than she had ever seen before.

"Her father is a poor, consumptive organ grinder," whispered one. "I suppose he is too sick to be able to-night."

Along the sloppily street went the child, under the protection of John Harvey, but not with shoes that drank the water at every step. Warmth and comfort were hers now. Down in the deep, den-like lanes of the city walked the man, a little cold, child-hand in his, an open broken door, they climbed. At last another doorway opened, a wheezing voice called out of the dim arch, "Charletta!"

"O, father, father! see what I have brought you! Look at me, look at me!" and down went the hoarded silver, and yering her excessive joy, the child fell, crying and laughing together, into the man's arms.

Was he a man? A face dark and hollow, all overgrown with hair, black at night, and uncombed—a pair of wild eyes—a body bent nearly double—hands like claws.

"Did he give you all this Charletta?" "They all did, father; now you shall have soup and oranges."

"Thank you, sir. I'm sick, you see—all gone, sir—had to send the poor child out, and we'd starve, sir. Good bless you sir! I wish I was well enough to play you a tune; and he looked wistfully towards the corner where stood the old organ, bawled covered—their father's father."

"It's no matter," said John Harvey, with difficulty. "I'll come and see you some other time," and he groped his way down stairs.

One month after that the two men met again, as if by agreement, and walked slowly down town. Threading innumerable passages, they came to the gloomy building where lived Charletta's father.

No—no lived there; for as they passed a moment or two came two or three men bearing a pine coffin. In the coffin, the top nailed down, so that no mourner might open, provided there had been any such, slept the old organ grinder.

"It was very sudden, sir," said a woman, who recognized his benefactor. "Yesterday the little girl was took sick, and it seems as if he dropped right away. He died at six last night."

The two men went silently up stairs. The room was empty of everything save a bed, a chair, and a bureau provided by John Harvey. The child lay there, now white, but pale as marble, with a strange polish on her brow. Oh, how those dark eyes on the instant became eloquent, as John Harvey sat on the side of the bed!

"Well, my little one, so you are no better?" "Oh, no, sir! Father has gone up there, and I'm going."

"Do you know who he was?" "God Jesus," murmured the child, with a rare smile.

"Hawkins, this breaks me down," said John Harvey; and placed his handkerchief to his eyes.

"Don't cry, don't cry; I can't cry, I'm so glad," said the child, exultingly; and she looked up, as if heaven's light were already dawning on her.

"What are you glad for, my dear?" asked John Harvey's friend.

"To get away from here," she said deliberately. "I used to be cold in the long winters, for we didn't have fires sometimes; but mother used to hug me close, and sing about heaven. But I did have to go out, because she was sick, and people looked cross at me, and told me I was in the way; but some were kind to me. Mother told me never to mind, when I came home crying, and kissed me, and said if I was his, the Saviour would love me, and one of these days would give me a better home; and so I gave myself to him, for I wanted a better home. And, oh, I shall sing there, and be so happy! Christ sent a little angel in my dream, mother told me he would, and that angels would carry me up there. Oh, I feel so sleepy!"

With a little sigh she closed her eyes. "Harvey, are faith and hope nothing?" asked Mr. Hawkins, pointing to the death face, taking on such strange beauty as little breathless thus tully over it.

"That little child I would give all I am worth, was the broken response."

Let reason bow here, before simple, trusting faith.

There was no answer. Quietly they sat there in the deepening shadows. The hospital doctor came in, stood off a little way, and shook his head. It needed no close inspection to see what was going on. Presently the hands moved, the arms raised, the eyes opened—yet, glared though they were, they turned still upward.

"See! see!" she cried. "Oh, there is mother! and there are the angels! and they are all singing—all singing." Her voice faltered, her arms fell, but the celestial brightness lingered yet on her face. Feebly she turned to those who had ministered to her, feebly smiled—it was a mute return of thanks for all their kindness.

"There's no doubting the soul-triumph there," whispered Mr. Hawkins.

"It is wonderful," replied John Harvey, looking on both with awe and tenderness. "Is she gone?" He sprang from his chair as if he would detain her; but the chest and forehead were marble now, the eyes had lost the fire of life; she must have died as she lay looking at them.

"She was always a sweet little thing," said the nurse softly.

John Harvey stood as if spell-bound. There was a touch on his arm; he started and turned. "John," said his friend, with an impressive look, "Shall we pray?" For a minute there was no answer;—then came tears; the whole frame of the man shook as he said—it was almost a cry—"Yes, pray!" And from the side of the dead child went up agonizing pleadings to the throne of God. That prayer was answered—the miracle happened—the lion is a lamb—the doubter, a believer—the skeptic a Christian. Careless reader, may a little child lead you!

THE LORD WILL PROVIDE. A HOME MISSIONARY'S SACRIFICES.

When teaching an academy, twenty years ago, I was making from eight to ten hundred dollars a year, a minister and deacon came twelve miles and remained with me two days and three nights, trying to induce me to give up the academy and devote myself to preaching. I said to him, "I can hardly live on \$1,000 per annum, and how shall I live on \$400 or \$500?" They said: "Trust God." I finally yielded, and have trusted God ever since. Sometimes my faith has been tried. A year and a half ago, when you sent me unexpectedly \$25, which just paid a pressing demand, I saw Jesus' hand in it so plainly that I thought, then, that I would never fear nor distrust again. But oh, how feeble is flesh and blood! My son, who is at college studying for the ministry, was compelled, during the last term, to do chores for defraying a part of his expenses; and he said: "Father, why do I have to chore around for my board, when other boys do not?" Parental feeling flushed to the full. I confessed, I remembered the academy, where I made \$1,000 a year. Could I say: "Because you are the son of a Home missionary?"

Such questions from my son, and from three young daughters, relative to going to boarding school, brought me to think very seriously about leaving the field, and seeking an agency that would pay. I had spoken for a situation. But when my draft came, and when news of the box came, I again dismissed my fears and said, shall I distrust the Lord now, whom I have trusted for these twenty years?—Home Missionary.

Miscellaneous.

RELIGIOUS PROGRESS IN INDIA.

REV. R. G. WILDER, writing to the Evangelist, from Kolsoop, under date of March, 1852, gives some incidents showing how waters there vacillate between Christianity and idolatry.

Not long since a Christian officer vindicated the rights of some of our native Christians to the use of the press and tanks. It was a noteworthy instance of administering the law to the interest of Christianity, and is likely to prove a valuable precedent in coming years. These native Christians are of the same faith as Queen Victoria herself, and should be protected in such obvious natural rights. But who does not see that a different minded officer would base upon the same proclamation, an argument for the cause of the Hindus? Men of all creeds are to be protected in their civil and religious rights. The tenets of the Hindu's faith make the touch of these hated apostates' pollution. If, then, you allow them to get water from the public wells, you inflict a severe blow upon the feelings and rights of the Hindus—rights guaranteed to them by immemorial usage, and by this very proclamation, thus interpreted.

A few days since, a missionary in my presence, was conversing with a Government officer, who seemed to be not only friendly but quite religiously inclined, suggested to him, in a very friendly way, that he might do good by keeping by him a few Christian tracts and books in the vernacular, and occasionally giving one to the native people about him. The idea seemed to please him at first, but in a moment he seemed to bethink himself, and remarked, "Oh, but it would be contrary to the Queen's proclamation, and the strict orders of Government not to interfere with native prejudices—I should not dare to do it."

Another incident is a recent trial of two persons in the Calcutta criminal court, for uttering certain words against an idol-god. The words are not given, but were doubtless disrespectful to the idol. The Judge, Sir Mordaunt Wells, condemned both the prisoners accused of this offence—on two weeks and the other to six weeks' imprisonment. So it comes to pass, under our present administration, that a man may blaspheme and profane the name of the true God with impunity, but for speaking against a stone idol he is subject to fines and imprisonment.

A third incident. The hold of Hinduism upon the minds of its votaries has been relaxing for many years. For twenty years past it has been found impossible to get the poor natives to draw the heavy idol-carts at the great festivals without resorting to force. A recent case occurred in which a native official brought the Government police to aid in this disgusting work—a manifest violation of the principle of neutrality. The case has been presented to Government, and a notice has been taken of the Government "considering that the notice taken of the matter will doubtless have a good effect, and that no special orders from them are called for."

Thus through the power and prestige of the British Government are subsidized to support and perpetuate idolatry, it will not interdict

this practice. Well does the Friend of India remark on this case:

"Yet when Mr. Cust, Commissioner of Umritsur, attended the baptism of a Sepoy in a private capacity, he was called to account by the Government of India. But he is Christian, and religious neutrality means intolerance to Christianity. (A ban upon our own faith and support of idolatry.) In the present case the local government shows that they, as officials, helped to pull an idol-carter, and to compel others to do so, but 'no special orders are called for.' Gallio cared for none of these things."

It is generally known in America that Slavery exists in British India? It is known only as one of those evils for the removal of which Christian men are ever to pray and labor. "That slavery does exist, and to a large and serious extent, in Eastern Bengal, is now unquestionable."—Such is the utterance of a reliable authority, who goes on to say:

"We know that human beings are bought and sold, frequently by parents compelled by inconceivable pressure to barter their own flesh and blood for pelf, but often by professional kidnappers; and that children grown up in bondage are used for the production and growth of other human produce, and they and their posterity know no other mode of existence."

All honor to England, for what she has done to suppress slavery, but there is more work for her to do, close within her own doors.

NATIONAL DEVELOPEMENT.

Look at the tremendous demonstration that has been made of the military strength of the country, an overwhelming proof of the warlike character of the people. A nation which has given up arms, and was devoted to industry, and in a few months out an army greater than ever was brought into the field at any time before—an army of five or six hundred thousand men.

Did you have any conscription in Ohio? They have conscriptions in France. Did you have press-gangs in Ohio? They have in England. Did you whip any one to compel them to volunteer? They use the knout in Russia to fill the ranks. An army of five hundred thousand volunteers spring up, and an army of five hundred thousand still behind ready to do the same thing. And this army is doing the work it is designed to do. Now I do not speak evil of dignitaries, but I am conscientiously of the opinion that as the Duke of Wellington said about his army: "Whenever I get into a scrape, my soldiers help me out," so it is with our army. They are heroic, gallant and plucky—and of such gallant volunteers the world never before saw the like.

Carry the idea a little further, to the demonstration of the boundless capacity of the country to sustain an expensive war; a country rich beyond computation. Here we are, in the midst of expenses, of it may be, a thousand million dollars a year, and the public funds almost at par, the credit of the country fair, and the boundless capacity of this stony and mean nation, as it is sometimes called—a boundless readiness to give money and men. If there could be a collection of the immense amount of money contributed to the cause of benevolence, expended with this war, it would be enough to carry on a war in the usual way. People the most elevated and refined give themselves to the most menial services in behalf of the sick, wounded and dying. Was anything like it ever heard of in the history of the nations of the world? Men cry tax us; here is our money to alleviate the sufferings of the sick; and our best and loveliest women say, here are our services; take them and use them as you see fit. Is there any illustration in itself, glorious to Christianity and our country, and pointing to the end to which such a people must come, if they be wisely and bravely directed.—Dr. Breckinridge.

THE MARVELS OF A SEED.

HAVE you ever considered how wonderful a thing the seed of a plant is? It is the miracle of miracles. God said, "Let there be plants yielding seed," and it is further added, "after their kind." The great naturalist Cuvier, thought that the germs of all past, present and future generations of seeds were contained one within the other, as if packed in a succession of boxes. Other learned men have explained this mystery in a different way. But what signify all their explanations? Let them explain it as they will; the wonder remains the same, and we must look upon the reproduction of the seed as a continual miracle.

Is there upon earth a continual miracle, there is a palace, is there even a city, which contains so much that is wonderful, as is enclosed in a single little seed—one grain of corn, one little brown apple-seed; one small seed of a tree, picked up, perhaps, by a sparrow for her little ones, the smallest seed of a poppy, or a blue-bell, or even one of the seeds that are so small that they float about in the air invisible to our eyes? Ah! there is a world of marvel and brilliant beauty hidden in each of these minute seeds. Consider their immense number, their perfect separation of the different kinds, their power of life and resurrection, and their wonderful fruitfulness!

Consider first their number. About a hundred and fifty years ago, the celebrated Linnaeus, who has been called "the father of botany," reckoned about 8,000 different kinds of plants; and he then thought that the whole number existing could not much exceed 10,000. But a hundred years after him, M. de Candolle, a Geneva, described 40,000 kinds of plants, and he supposed it possible that the number might even amount to 100,000.

Well, let me ask you, have these 100,000 kinds of plants ever failed to bear the right seed? Have they ever deceived us? Has a seed of wheat ever yielded barley, or a seed of a poppy grown up into a sun-flower? or a sycamore-tree ever sprung from an acorn, or a beech-tree from a chestnut? A little bird may carry away the small seed of a sycamore in its beak to feed its nestlings, and the way may drop it on the ground. The tiny seed may spring up, and grow where it fell, unnoticed, and sixty years after it may become a magnificent tree, under which the flocks of the valleys, and their shepherds may rest in the shade.

Consider next the wonderful power of life and resurrection bestowed on the seeds of plants, so that they may be preserved from year to year, and even from century to century.

Let a child put a few seeds in a drawer and shut them up, and sixty years afterwards, when his hair is white and his step is tottering, let him take one of these seeds and sow it in the ground, and soon after he will see it spring up into new life, and become a young, fresh and beautiful plant.

M. Journant relates that in the year 1835, several old Celtic tombs were discovered near Bergoric. Under the head of each of the dead bodies there was found a small, square stone or brick with a hole in it, containing a few seeds, which had been placed there beside the dead by the heathen friends who had buried them, between 1500 or 1700 years before. These seeds were carefully sowed by those who found them; and what do you think was seen spring up from the dust of the dead?—beautiful sun-flowers, blue corn-flowers, and clover, bearing blossoms as bright and sweet as those which are woven into wreaths by the merry children now playing in our fields.

Some years ago a vase, hermetically sealed, was found in a mummy-pit in Egypt, by the English traveler, Wilkinson, who sent it to the British Museum. The librarian there having unfortunately broken it, discovered in it a few grains of wheat and one or two peas, old, wrinkled, and as hard as stone. The peas were planted carefully under glass on the 4th of June, 1844, and at the end of thirty days these old seeds were seen to spring up into new life. They had been buried probably about 8000 years ago, perhaps in the time of Moses, and had lain that long time, apparently dead, yet still living in the dust of the tomb.—Gaussen.

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