

Family Circle.

THOU KNOWEST.

"Thou knowest," Lord, the weariness and sorrow Of the sad heart that comes to Thee for rest, Care of to-day and burdens of to-morrow.

"Thou knowest" all the past, how long and blindly On the dark mountains the lost wanderer stray'd.

"Thou knowest" all the present, each temptation, Each toilsome duty, each foreboding fear;

"Thou knowest" all the future gleams of gladness, By stormy clouds too quickly overcast,

"Thou knowest," not alone as God all-knowing; As man, our mortal weakness Thou hast proved.

Therefore I come, Thy gentle call obeying, And lay my sins and sorrows at Thy feet,

LADIES' NATIONAL COVENANT.

We desire to call the earnest attention of our readers to the following excellent address made by Miss M. L. Eastman, at the organization of the "Ladies' National Convention" of Delaware county, Pa.

Not many weeks since a large number of ladies from different parts of the Union met in the city of Washington, and formed an Association to which they gave the name of "The Ladies' National Covenant," and pledged themselves to buy no imported articles of apparel for three years or the war.

Our imports so far exceed our exports that a large balance is against us, which must be paid in gold. The intention is not to stop all importation, but so far check it that the imports and exports may balance each other, and thereby prevent sending the gold out of the country.

Exporting so much gold keeps up the high price of it, and the demand still continuing to increase, it will become so scarce and high that our Government will not be able to get it to pay the interest on its Bonds.

It is gratifying to find that the women of America are making this noble effort to arrest the fearful extravagance now prevailing. To Reformed Presbyterians, the name adopted is one which suggests the glorious past, when our ancestors united in a solemn pledge to sustain civil and religious liberty.

Miss M. L. Eastman's Address.

Never before in the history of our country were incongruous scenes and elements so strangely and confusedly mixed. I remember when a child, I was shocked to know on reading an account of the plague in London during the reign of Charles the Second, that this fearful visitation wrought no change for the better, on the wicked monarch or his Court, but seemed rather to increase the frenzied rage of their excesses; and that the same spirit, descending from the Court, extended to the middle and lower classes;—and the city, with the curse upon it, sounding day and night with the rattle of the dead-cart and the hoarse cry of "bring out your dead," was also the scene of ribald mirth and shameful speculations in shrouds and coffins. Is not the same spirit in ours, ascendant now? A civil war, the worst demon of strife, is ravaging this beautiful land with the awful carnage of its noblest sons, and yet the daughters do not put on sackcloth. By no means. They were never before bedecked so gorgeously. Oriental magnificence must to-day yield to the gay and costly garments which enshrine America's fair daughters. The dying groans of the

patriot are borne on the same wave with the sound of music and the dance. The noise of treading columns, the strains of martial music, the booming of cannon, the bursting of shells, the snap and roll of musketry, the clash and clang of all warlike sounds mingle into one with the beat of muffled drum at the soldier's funeral. The sobs and wailings of the bereaved rise from the desolate hearthstone and mix with and fall in jarring cadence with the voice of revelry and of mirth. The gaily bedizened female flashing in jewels and flaunting in costly foreign fabrics, almost mocks as she passes by, the grief-stricken sister, whom this war has clad in the habiliments of woe. The sin is over the land. It lurks in high as well as low places. Shoddy, and Shoddy's wife and daughters stand in this no more implicated than the cultivated and refined. The nation is surely going on to madness. Fashion and extravagance are running a wild race, and nearly all the daughters of the land are equal with them in the course, furies in a wild infatuation for the glare and glitter of foreign elegancies. In 1861 we imported to the amount of \$350,775,895, but we more than balanced this amount with our exports, and \$16,548,531 in bullion were sent back to us. In 1862 the balance of trade was against us to the amount of \$20,471,904, and in 1863 it had increased to \$54,600,962. This year so far as I can ascertain, the excess is greatly increased, and a fearful balance will stand against us at the close of this fiscal year. Now it is proper that we awake to this truth, and look whither we are dashing, and if possible, save ourselves before the whole nation is ruined. Since the 1st of January, in New York alone, for dress goods, wines, and cigars, we have paid over \$100,000,000. This does not include nearly all the importations, but is merely an estimate of those particular articles in the port of New York, which is indeed the largest but not the only receptacle for foreign articles in the country.

\$100,000,000, expended for finery and luxuries in five months! Think of it! Enough to pay the whole interest of our national debt, and all wasted in finery and folly by the men and women of a land sweating and groaning under the crushing heel of Mars! Does God forgive a nation's sin, while that nation, although smitten, bends not? Do the pride and vanity, the profligacy and extravagance of this land, ascend gratefully to Heaven? Is that fit incense to offer omnipotence? God's promises of national blessings were to his own people—not to the proud daughter of Babylon or of Tyre, and let us beware lest we fall in that class upon whom maledictions are pronounced. And shall we sit with cold indifference, when we are able to remedy this evil? I say, and not unadvisedly, that the women of this nation can save it from bankruptcy, and oh, what a glorious record if we do it! It can be done too, without much personal sacrifice except of vanity. We are not asked to give up comforts; we are only asked to wear American instead of Foreign fabrics, for a few years in order that the ruinous effects of an excess of importations over our exports, may be remedied. We all know the effects of this draining of gold from the country. Not a family in the land but feels the exorbitant prices to which all necessities have risen, and any person of ordinary foresight, must know, that we have not reached the height of our difficulties, for if this exportation of gold goes on, serious calamity is certainly threatened to the whole system of national finance; and the plain question before us is, Are we willing to deny some few luxuries of dress, to aid in saving the nation, thus saving ourselves? A feeble voice suggests that the very revenue of the country will be lessened if the importations decrease—that the specie, which is obtained from the customs, enables the Government to pay the interest on its bonds in gold, or its equivalent. The Government, it is true, has to pay annually somewhere in the vicinity of \$100,000,000 interest. Last year it drew from the customs \$69,000,000, and from internal taxes about \$39,000,000, but owing to the depreciation of currency, the amount drawn from internal taxes, was less than \$30,000,000 in value. Here is \$10,000,000 direct loss to the Government at once. Next year it is estimated that more than \$125,000,000 will accrue to the Government from the new tax bill, which, with a depreciated currency, will fall short of \$75,000,000. But the Government has a very large family to provide for, which during the last year, has cost about \$700,000,000. Now mark. If the national currency were as good as gold, as it ought to be, and as it would be, if the balance of European trade were not against us, \$350,000,000 would purchase as much as \$700,000,000, and the Government expenses would be reduced in that ratio. In short it would be a clear annual gain to the Government of \$350,000,000. Now by what rule of finance can it be profitable to spend \$350,000,000 for \$69,000,000? These facts need no comment, and I will not intrude upon the time and patience of an intelligent clear-minded audience, in attempting to prove the truth of an axiom. You can plainly see that the revenues of the nation are not to be injured by this movement, but on the contrary, will gain an immense advantage. It matters very little whether the Government receives one dollar from customs, provided the people are taxed in other ways to meet its demands, and who is so devoid of common sense and patriotism, that he would not sooner pay one dollar to our

great and glorious Government, than ten, fifty, or one hundred dollars to speculators, as we are all doing now? Therefore I declare, that it is for the interest of the Government, as well as the individual, to stop as quickly and as promptly as possible, the importation from foreign countries of articles whose places we can supply by our own skill and industry, or, which we can do without. This will still leave a sufficient trade with foreign powers to secure a sale for all we wish to export, and save in the nation the gold, which is the basis for a circulating paper currency. We shall all be benefitted by this, and the financial safety and honor of the nation be secured. But an inaudible whisper is passing over the land, and this the Importers have whispered, and the timid and feeble minded faintly echoed, that Foreign Powers may make war upon us, if we do not buy their goods. Angels and ministers of grace defend us! Are we paying tribute? Can it be possible, that we, whose forefathers laid down their lives to break the thralldom of taxation, are paying half a million a day to foreign powers that they may keep their armies from us? Are we, poor abjects, with the true nobility of our mothers all crushed out, with cringing, servile smile, offering bags of gold to friendly "neutral powers" over the water, and with "bated breath" begging them not to make war upon us? Shades of our grandmothers, come to our rescue! Shelter with your noble wings your trembling, degenerate descendants, who are to-day selling the freedom for which you paid so dearly. Ladies of Delaware county, can we bear this aspersion? No. Let us to-day rise in our might and send it over the Keystone State, and let it be echoed from Oregon to the Atlantic, and from thence over the waters, to be re-echoed in the columns of the London Times, that there are in America women of true nobility, who dare say to France and to England "Millions for defence, but not one cent for tribute."

WIDOW SIMPSON'S SPOONS.

In the Parish of Bathgate, in Linlithgowshire, Scotland, lived a widow woman by the name of Simpson.

In her family resided, in the capacity of help, one Nancy Campbell, a girl about nineteen, who was suspected of having taken a fancy to Robin, the widow's son, who reciprocated the sentiment. Nothing, however, would soften the heart of the widow as regards a match, till at last the following event occurred, and caused her to give way. About the hay-making time a distant and comparatively rich relation was expected to call and take tea that evening on his way from Linlithgow. It was not often that the superior relative honored her house with a visit, and Mrs. Simpson, determined that nothing should be wanting to his entertainment, brought out the treasured spoons early in the forenoon, with many injunctions to Nancy touching the care she should take in brightening them up. While this operation was being conducted in the kitchen, in the midst of those uncertain days which vary the Northern June, a sudden darkening of the sky announced the approach of heavy rain. The hay was dry and ready for housing. Robin and two farm-men were busy gathering it in; but the great drops began to fall while a considerable portion yet remained in the field, and, with the instinct of crop preservation, forth rushed the widow, followed by Nancy, leaving the spoons half scoured on the kitchen table. In her rapid exit, the girl had forgotten to latch the door. The vessel and the kite were the only depositors known about the moorland farm; but while they were all occupied in the hay-field, who should come that way but Geordy Wilson!

Well, the kitchen door was open, and Geordy stepped in. He banged the settle with his staff, he coughed, he hemmed, he saluted the cat, which sat purring on the window-seat, and at length discovered there was nobody within. Neither meal nor penny was to be expected that day; the rain was growing heavier, some of the hay must be wet, and Mrs. Simpson would return in bad humor. But two objects powerfully arrested Geordy's attention; one was the broth-pot boiling on the fire, and the other the silver spoons scattered on the table. Bending over the former, Geordy took a considerable sniff, gave the ingredients a stir with a pot-stick, and muttered "very thin." His proceeding with the latter must remain unmentioned; but, half an hour after, when he was safely ensconced in a farmhouse, a mile off, the family were driven within doors by the increasing storm; they found everything as it had been left—the broth on the fire, the cat on the window-seat, the whitening and flannel on the table; but not a spoon was there.

"Where's the spoons?" cried Mrs. Simpson to the entire family, who stood by the fire drying their wet garments. Nobody could tell. Nancy had left them on the table when she ran to the hay. No one had been in the house, they were certain, but nothing was disturbed. The drawer was pulled out, and the empty stocking exhibited. Every shelf, every corner was searched, but to no purpose; the spoons had disappeared, and the state of the farmhouse may be imagined. The widow ran through it like one distracted, questioning, scolding, and searching. Robin, Nancy, and the farm-men were dispatched in different directions, as soon

as the rain abated, to advertise the neighbors, under the supposition that some strolling beggar or gipsy might have carried off the treasure, and would attempt to dispose of it in the parish. Nobody thought of Geordy Wilson; he had not been espied from the hay-field. Lost the spoons were, beyond a doubt, and the widow bade fair to lose her senses. The rich relation came at the appointed time, and had such a tea that he avowed never again to trust himself in the house of his entertainer. But the search went on; rabbits' holes were looked into for the missing silver, and active boys were bribed to turn out magpies' nests. Wells and barns in the neighborhood were explored. The criers of the three nearest parishes were employed to proclaim the loss; it was regularly advertised at kirkgate and market-place; and Mrs. Simpson began to talk of getting a search-warrant for the beggar's meal-pouch. Bathgate was alarmed through all its borders concerning the spoons; but when almost a month wore away, and nothing could be heard of them, the widow's suspicions turned from beggars, barns, and magpies, to light on poor Nancy. She had been scouring the spoons, and left the house last; silver could not leave the table without hands. It was true that Nancy had borne an unquestionable character; but such spoons were not to be met with every day, and Mrs. Simpson was determined to have them back in her stocking. After sundry hints of increasing breadth to Robin, who could not help thinking his mother was losing her judgment, she one day plumped the charge to the utter astonishment and dismay of the poor girl, whose anxiety in the search had been inferior only to her own. Though poor and an orphan, Nancy had some honest pride; she immediately turned out the contents of her kist (box), unstrung her pocket in Mrs. Simpson's presence, and ran, with tears in her eyes, to tell the minister.

As was then common to the country parishes of Scotland, difficulties and disputes which might have employed the writers and puzzled the magistrates, were referred to his arbitration, and thus law-suits and scandal prevented. The minister had heard, as who in Bathgate had not? of Mrs. Simpson's loss. Like the rest of the parish, he thought it rather strange; but Nancy Campbell was one of the most serious and exemplary girls of his congregation—he could not believe that the charge preferred against her was true; yet the peculiarities of the case demanded investigation. With some difficulty the minister persuaded Nancy to return to her mistress, bearing a message to the effect that he and two of his elders, who happened to reside in the neighborhood, would come over the following evening, hear what could be said on both sides, and, if possible, clear up the mystery. The widow was well pleased at the minister and his elders coming to inquire after the spoons. She put on her best mutch (that is to say, cap), prepared her best speeches, and enlisted some of the most serious and reliable of her neighbors to assist in the investigation.

Early in the evening of the following day—when the summer sun was waning low and the field work was over—they were all assembled in the clean scoured kitchen, the minister, elders and neighbors, soberly listening to Mrs. Simpson's testimony touching her lost silver, Nancy, Robin, and the farm-men sitting by till their turn came, when the door which had been left half open to admit the breeze—for the evening was sultry—was quietly pushed aside, and in slid Geordy Wilson, with his usual accompaniments of staff and wallet.

"There's nae room for ye here, Geordy," said the widow, "we're on weighty business."

"Weel, mem," said Geordy, turning to depart, "it's of nae consequence. I only came to speak about your spoons."

"Hae you heard o' them?" cried Mrs. Simpson, bouncing from her seat.

"I couldna miss bein' blessed wi' the precious gift o' hearin', and what's better, I saw them," said Geordy.

"Saw them, Geordy? What are they? and here's a whole shillin' for ye," and Mrs. Simpson's purse, or rather an old glove used for that purpose, was instantly produced.

"Weel," said Geordy, "I slipped in ae day, and seen' the siller unguarded, I thought some ill-guided body might covet it, and just laid it by, I may say, among the leaves o' that Bible, thinkin' you would be sure to see the spoons when you went to read."

Before Geordy had finished his revelation, Nancy Campbell had brought down the proudly-displayed, but never opened Bible, and interspersed between its leaves lay the dozen of long-sought spoons.

The minister of Bathgate could scarcely command his gravity while admonishing Geordy on the trouble and vexation his trick had caused. The assembled neighbors laughed outright when the daft man, pocketing the widow's shilling, which he had clutched in the early part of his discourse, assured them all that he knew Mrs. Simpson read her Bible so often as the spoons would be certain to turn up. Geordy got many a basin of broth and many a luncheon of bread and cheese on account of that transaction, with which he amused all the fairsides of the parish. Mrs. Simpson was struck dumb even from scolding. The discovery put an end to her ostentatious profession, and, it may be hoped, turned her attention more to practice.

Has the story no moral for you, dear reader?—*Leisure Hours.*

THE NOVEL READER.

All the day long Marcia sat in the corner of the family room reading a novel. So absorbed was she, it was hard to lay it down to take her meals even. Her mother was obliged to speak more than once, if she wished her assistance in anything; and if at last she succeeded, by an exercise of authority, in making her do what she was at first requested to, she went to the work with a sullen, tragic air, as if she was the fancied heroine of her story, enduring all manner of persecutions and fanciful distresses.

Aunt Annie, who was but a visitor in the house, took note of all this but wisely said that it was useless to comment until the heroine was fairly brought out of all her tribulations, and desirably settled in life; thus Marcia might be willing to hear something beside her story. It was ended at last, and with a dissatisfied air the young lady put it aside, and came down to every-day life again. Never did the stocking-basket, with its overflowing contents, look so distasteful to her—after her just taking her departure from such enchanting scenes, fragrant with orange buds, and fluttering with gossamer robes and bridal veils.

"Do you feel that your time has been profitably spent to-day?" asked practical Aunt Annie, "and does novel reading make you any happier, Marcia?"

"I am sure it makes me a great deal happier while I am reading it, Aunt Annie, and there are a great many lovely sentiments in this book, and real religious truth is inculcated at times. I think it is a real good book; and you would think so too if you would read it, I feel sure."

"What would you think of a miller, Marcia, who would look over, handful by handful, of a bushel of chaff for the few grains of wheat which might possibly be scattered among it, when there were great golden granaries at his hand which were quite free to him? Where there is such a world of real, elevating, excellent literature, which will help to refine you, to fit you for a high intellectual position, and fit your soul for eternity, what a waste it seems to spend your hours over what unfits you for all this—over reading which weakens your mind, which, if long continued, will make you but a silly sentimentalist, instead of a woman of culture and sound judgment, whose opinions are received with respect and confidence.

"Above all, my dear girl, such reading hardens the heart. The more we weep over imaginary sorrows, the less we shall sympathize with real ones. It deadens the soul too. The habitual novel reader cannot be also a Bible reader—cannot be a prayerful Christian. Is this enjoyment worth the loss of the soul, Marcia?"—*Christian Treasury.*

KEEP THE BIRTHDAY.

A Western exchange makes the following excellent suggestions, which must meet the approbation of all youthful readers. We trust they will also be received with favor by the old folks:

Keep the birthdays religiously. They belong exclusively to, and are treasured among the sweetest memories of home. Do not let any thing prevent some token, be it ever so small, so that it be remembered. For one day they are heroes. The special pudding or cake is made for them; a new jacket or trousers, with pockets, or the first pair of boots are donned; and big brothers and sisters sink into insignificance beside little Charlie, who is "six to-day," and is "going to be a man." Mothers who have half a dozen little ones to care for are apt to neglect birthdays; they come too often, sometimes when they are nervous; but if they only knew how much such souvenirs are cherished by their wee Susy or Harry, years afterwards, when away from the hearthstone, and they have none to remind them that they have added one year to the perhaps weary round of life, or to wish them, in old-fashioned phrase, "many happy returns to their birthday," they would never permit any cause to step between them and a mother's privilege.

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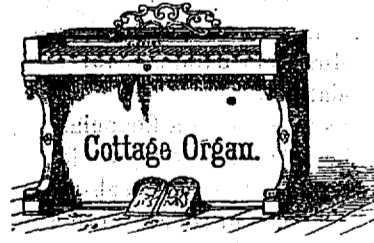
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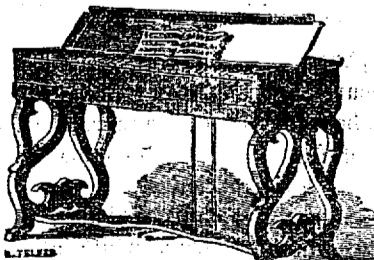
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