

The Family Circle.

TWO "SONGS OF SEVEN."

No one among modern writers has touched the depths of pathos in a widowhood and maternal bereavement, like Jean Ingelow. These two poems from her "Songs of Seven," are full of the heart-ache, but it is the healthy sorrow, with which it is good to sympathize.

SEVEN TIMES FIVE. WIDOWHOOD.

I sleep and rest, my heart makes moan Before I am well awake; "Let me bleed! O let me alone, Since I must not be blest!"

For children wake, though fathers sleep, With a stone at foot and at head; O sleepless God, forever keep, Keep both living and dead!

I lift mine eyes, and what to see But a world happy and fair; I have not wished it to mourn with me— Comfort is not there.

What anear but golden brooms, And a waste of ready hills; O what afar but the fine glooms On their rare blue hills!

I shall not die, but live forlorn— How bitter it is to part! O to meet thee, my love, once more!— O my heart, my heart!

No more to hear, no more to see! O that an echo might wake me; And wait one note of thy palm to me Ere my heart-strings break!

I should know it how faint soe'er, And with angel voices blest; O once to feel thy spirit anear, I could be content!

Or once between the gates of gold, While an angel entering trod, But once—these sitting to behold On the hills of God.

SEVEN TIMES SEVEN. LONGING FOR HOME.

A song of a boat: There was once a boat on a willow; Lightly she rocked to her port remote, And the foam was white in her wake like snow, And her frail mast bowed when the breeze would blow, And bent like a wand of a willow.

I shaded mine eyes one day when a boat Went courtesying over the billow, I marked her course till a dancing mote She faded out on the moonlit foam, And I stayed behind in the dear loved home; And my thoughts all day were about the boat, And my dreams upon the pillow.

I pray you hear my song of a boat, For it is but short: My boat, you shall find none fairer aloft, In river or port.

Long I looked out for the lad she bore, On the open, desolate sea; And I think he sailed to the heavenly shore, For he came not back to me— Ah me!

A song of a nest: There was once a nest in a hollow, Down in the mosses and knot-grass pressed, Soft and warm, and full to the brim; Vetches leaned over it purple and dim, With buttercup buds to follow.

I pray you hear my song of a nest, For it is not long: You shall never light in a summer quest The bushes among— Shall never light on a prouder sitter, A fairer nestful, nor ever know A softer sound than their tender twitter, That wind-like did come and go.

I had a nestful once of my own, Ah happy, happy I; Right dearly I loved them; but when they were grown They spread out their wings to fly— O, one after one they flew away, Far up to the heavenly blue, To the better country, the upper day, And—I wish I was going too.

I pray you, what is the nest to me, My empty nest? And what is the shore where I stood to see My boat sail down to the west? Can I call that home where I anchor yet, Though my good mate has sailed? Can I call that home where my nest was set, Now all its hope hath failed? Nay, but the port where my sailor went, And the land where my nestlings be: There is the home where my thoughts are sent, The only home for me— Ah me!

THE YOUNG BAVARIAN.

BY MISS S. WARNER, AUTHOR OF "DOLLARS AND CENTS."

[As there has been considerable delay in the publication of successive chapters of this story, we have thought best to reprint the principal part of it, after which we expect to go on regularly publishing a fresh portion every week.]

CHAPTER I.

Bavaria is a beautiful part of Germany. In some of its districts there are high Alpine peaks, and lakes and glaciers; in other there are wide moors of moss and lichen; and in others still are great forests, and meadow valleys that are fifty miles long. Many rivers water the country; and it is full of wonderful buildings and strange old towers. The climate is temperate and healthy; the soil very productive, and though some parts are too cold for much fruit, many others are warm enough for vineyards and almond trees to thrive and bear abundantly.

Near one of the old towers in Bavaria there stood, some years ago, a farmhouse. The farmhouses in our own land have always several rooms and many windows; and though the woodshed may be close at hand the barn is some distance off. But this house had only one room, with the deep thatched roof overhanging it on all sides. In this room all the family slept. Each bed was of feathers, and instead of quilted coverlets each had a feather coverlet too; so that it was a little like sleeping between two great pillows. The front door opened into this room, and the back door opened out of it—into the stable,—where the restless horses stamped impatiently all the night long, and the cows stood chewing the cud, front of the house was a gay flower

garden, and a vineyard, and a dancing brook below all. A great lime tree hung over the cottage and screened it from the sun.

Well, the old storks knew this cottage, and had built their nest year after year in the roof thatch; and there was great watching among the children in the spring, to see the first stork make his appearance. For every winter all the storks went south for their health, and to let their young ones see the world; spending the cold months in Algiers and Bagdad, and all such queer places; where to be sure it was hot enough. And though the country people in Bavaria did not, like the Greeks long ago, pay a reward to him who first announced the storks' return; nor proclaim the arrival by sound of trumpet, as their forefathers had done in the last century, yet they watched none the less eagerly for their feathered friends. And no wonder, for he who saw the first stork on the wing, might know that good luck was hastening towards him; but if the bird was sitting still, so had his fortune gone to sleep for the present. Then if the first stork arrived with soiled plumage, the following summer was sure to be wet and dirty; but woe unto him who heard the stork "clapping" without having seen it!—it was certain then that he himself would make a clatter among the cups and dishes, and "break much earthenware." So these simple people believed, and no one had ever taught them any better.

The children, on their part, never doubted for an instant that the storks brought every new little baby brother or sister that came into the house; but they showed their gratitude in a queer way, for they used to throw all manner of things at the birds as they sat on the house roof; pelting them with sticks and little stones, and lumps of dirt. Or, indeed, I should say trying to pelt them,—for the storks held too high a position to be reached by such young mischief-makers. Perhaps the farmer's wife thought that the intention made the deed,—for as soon as she saw the children beginning this kind of sport, she never failed to look out of the door and say—

"Children, if you do that, old father stork will fly away; and then the wicked sprites will come and set fire to the roof."

So she had been taught in her childhood, and now she tried to teach the same old superstition to her children. However, the sprites never came; and the young ones danced in the sunshine and grew fatter and stronger every day. As for the storks, they seemed enough like wicked things themselves sometimes, for they would fight! O, how they would fight! One day two of them had a duel which lasted one hour and a half, and only ended by their pushing each other into the well. There they splashed and struggled at a great rate, and each forgot what pleasure it would be to see the other drown, in the fear of drowning himself. And when at last the old farmer came and drew them out, they were quite cool and sober, and had as little to say as possible.

And so year after year passed by, until the old farmhouse echoed the voices of a whole handful of children, standing like a flight of steps, each one a little bit higher up in the world than the last; and the farmer and his wife thought they had not much to wish for in this world.

There came a time of trouble in all that region of country. The season had been unfavorable, the crops were scant and poor, and money was terribly scarce. Every one suffered, among the poorer people, and our old farmer with the rest. He could not wish that he had fewer of these laughing mouths to feed, but where should he find bread? And many a night after the young ones were sound asleep among the feathers, their father and mother sat considering with tears what to do.

At last it came to this: they could not stay and starve in Bavaria, therefore they must go away; and with very heavy hearts they resolved to set out to seek their fortune. The father had heard of a country far across the sea, where everybody was free and happy and had enough; and he thought if he were but there, it would be easy to earn bread for his children—so he and his wife said to each other, night after night, and at last made up their minds to leave Bavaria forever.

I cannot tell you what sorrow of heart it cost them,—how hard it was for the old farmer to sell the house where he and his father had lived so long,—but he did sell it, house, lime tree, storks' nests and all, and prepared for his journey. The feather beds and coverlets were packed in chests, and the children were scattered here and there among their friends; for the father and mother thought they would try the new land first themselves, before they brought out all their little ones. Only that they might not be quite childless and forlorn in a strange land, they would take John, the oldest child of all. So there were four to go, the farmer, his wife, his sister, and John; and after many weary and sorrowful days and weeks, they had fairly left their native land, and turned their faces towards America.

CHAPTER II.

The voyage was long. They could not afford, these poor people, to come in one of the comfortable swift steam-

ers; and so they took passage in a crowded emigrant ship, and even that required a greater part of their money. How long the voyage was they wearily must have thought of home—the vineyard and the lime tree and the storks. So far they had made no exchange of poverty for riches,—it seemed as if they were to begin life in the new world without anything to begin with, and all the homestead Bavarians could do was to study the promises of God. Each one of them was sure to bring wealth, as now they brought peace to those who believed; and day after day on the rolling ship, the old farmer and his wife quieted their hearts with thoughts of Him whose word is steadfast. Day after day they sat together and read the Bible, teaching little John to put his trust in the one great Friend they had in all the world.

And so the old craft bore them on, day after day and week after week, until at last from the lookout came the cry of "Land!" Then the distant faint blue line grew deeper and stronger as the vessel ploughed her way along, and then she came sailing up through the Narrows into the beautiful Bay of New York. She stopped at the Quarantine grounds and was boarded by the health officer; while the home-sick Bavarians looked sadly round about them at the new land to which they had come; and John gazed forward to where a soft hazy line of smoke hung over the great city. In a little while more the ship was at her journey's end.

It was midsummer, and a hot, smothering New York day. No cool shade of lime trees here,—no peaceful "clapping" of storks, no rosy faced children, at play in sweet gardens. The rich children were gone out of town to the distant green fields and fresh sea shore, the poor children were breathing in slow poison from the city streets. To the old German farmer and his wife the noise and dust and air of the city were almost intolerable; and oh, how alone they felt! Crowds hurrying by them, but not one familiar face; tongues calling and jabbering—but not a word that they could understand. Their peasant dress, too,—the old farmer's queer boots and pipe and cap, and his wife's colored petticoat and jacket and foreign-looking shoes—people looked and pointed at, and boys shouted and laughed. It seems to me, that as they made their way along, following some one who had undertaken to guide them, they could only have thought over and over in their hearts the words of one of their own native hymns; repeating and repeating in their beautiful native tongue—

"God liveth ever!"

They had need to remember that, at every step of the way which brought them to their miserable lodging. They had need to cry, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations!" Lonely, friendless, and poor, heaven seemed their home much more than earth.

Fellow-countrymen were soon found in plenty, yet not such as they needed. Some would not help, and others cheated them; and for a while the poor family lived on as best they might, in one of the wretched tenement houses. O, for a breath from the old lime tree! O, for a sight of one of the storks!—better to have died of starvation at home among friends, than have heart and life wither in a New York tenement house! And how should they keep the one darling they had brought with them from being poisoned in soul as well as in body? John must hear the bad words spoken all round him—would his tongue learn them? Would he presently begin to do the things he saw done?

Daily the old farmer prayed for his boy, daily he brought out his dear German Bible and instructed John in the way of peace and righteousness,—often they all sang together—

"God liveth ever!"

Wherefore, soul, despair thou never. Our God is good, in every place; His love is known, his help is found; His mighty arm and tender grace, Bring good from ill that e'en his found. Badder than we think, can he Turn to joy our agony.

Soul, remember, mid thy pains, God's love forever reigns.

Ah, how sweet the thought was! and how powerful! And when their hearts were well cheered with remembering the love and wisdom and power of God, then they were ready to sing those other words:

"Jesus, still lead on, Till our rest be won! And although the way be cheerless, We will follow, calm and fearless. Guide us by thy hand, To our Fatherland."

WHAT A TOAD DID FOR A SOLDIER.

A friend connected with the United States Sanitary Commission relates for the *American Agriculturist* the following incident, which he witnessed, that exhibits Mr. and Mrs. Toad, in a new character:—

"A number of wounded from the battle of Petersburg were lying in a hospital tent, among whom was a negro whose leg had been taken off. He was on a mattress on the ground, and the weather being hot, the dressed stump of his leg was exposed, and a swarm of flies were settling upon it. Presently a large toad hopped into the tent, and taking his station near the edge of the bed, began gobbling up the blue-bottles in double-quick. The moment one alighted within six inches of the spot, he would square himself for

the attack; his eye twinkling with excitement, and then, with a flash of his tongue and a smack of his mouth, the unlucky insect would disappear. The boy was asleep when this commenced, but soon awoke, and was at first frightened at the "ugly toad" so near him; but our friend bade him be quiet, and pointed out the service the creature was rendering, when the negro and all present voted him a member of the Commission, with many thanks, and his kindred were at once in high favor."

THE DARK VALLEY.

Sweet Lilly Gray has been confined to the house for many months. Her poor widowed mother has looked forward through all the long cold winter to the coming spring, as the time which was to bring back the bloom of health to her darling's cheek, and strength to her limbs. But, alas! although the sweet spring flowers are already filling the air with their fragrance, Lilly does but grow weaker with each succeeding day.

Still her mother will not give up hoping that her darling is to be spared to her for many years; but Lilly knows better.

One morning, as she sat propped up with pillows, her young friend, Kate Somer, came running in with a bouquet of beautiful, fragrant flowers, which she placed in a cup of water on a little stand by the bedside, saying:—

"See, Lilly, are they not lovely?" adding, with an affectionate kiss, "I hope you will soon be able to go out and gather flowers for yourself."

Lilly smiled, and said gently:—

"Sit down, dear Kate, I want to have a little talk."

"What about?" asked Kate, gaily; "shall I talk to you about my new dresses, and the journey I am going to take next month?"

"No," replied Lilly, "if you please, I had rather talk of the journey I am soon to take, and the dress I must have to wear."

"Why, where are you going?" asked Kate, in surprise.

"I am going down into a dark valley and across a deep river," said Lilly, gravely.

"What valley and what river?" asked Kate, still more puzzled.

"Dear Kate!" said Lilly, pressing her friend's hand, "do you not know that I am going die?"

"O, don't talk so! It's too dreadful! You mustn't die!" exclaimed Kate, bursting into tears.

"I want to go, Kate. I'm glad, O, so glad that I am going home to Jesus," said Lilly, earnestly, while a sweet smile stole over her face.

"Aren't you afraid?" whispered Kate.

"Oh, no," said Lilly, "I shall not go alone. Once, when I was a very little girl, I asked my teacher what she meant by asking that the Lord Jesus might go with us through the dark valley and shadow of death. 'I mean,' said she, 'to ask that he may go with us when we die. Dying is called, in the Bible, passing through the valley of the shadow of death. You know we must all die, and it would be very sad to go away alone; but none of our earthly friends can go with us. You would not like to go alone into that dark valley, Lilly, would you?' I said, 'O no, but could not some one go with me? Couldn't they lie down in the coffin with me, if they chose?' 'That would do you no good, dear,' said my teacher, 'for 'tis only the senseless body that lies there; dying, you know, is the soul going away out of the body; the soul is the part that thinks, and feels, and knows, and it is the part that wants some one to go with it. And, dear Lilly, none but Jesus could do that.' Their I asked her how I could get the Lord Jesus to go with me, and she said I must seek him, at once, for if I put it off I might never be able to find him; but if I would go at once and give myself to him, asking him to forgive my sins, and make me his child, he would do so; and he would be my friend always, and never leave me in life nor in death. And I did go to him, Kate, and I feel that he has forgiven all my sins and made me his own dear child. And now dying seems only like going home, and my dear Saviour will go all the way with me."

"How happy you look," said Kate, brushing away her tears; "but you spoke about a dress that you must have for your journey—what did you mean by that?"

"I meant the beautiful robe of Christ's righteousness, which he gives to each one of his children," said Lilly.

"It is the wedding garment, which all must wear who would partake of the marriage supper. You know, dear Kate, that we have all been doing wrong, all our lives; and though we try ever so hard to do right, sin is mixed up with everything that we can do or say, and so our very best deeds must be very hateful in the sight of a holy God, who sees all our thoughts and motives. But the dear Lord Jesus has kept God's law for us, and if we will just throw away all our own good works, and beg of Him to cover us with the robe of His righteousness, He will do so; and then we shall become pleasing in the sight of God. Dear Kate, ask him to give it to you, for you will want it when you are called to take that last journey."

"I will," said Kate, kissing her friend good-bye.

Dear little reader, will not you seek

to make the Lord Jesus your friend to-day? You will want him to go with you through the dark valley, and you will need the robe of righteousness to cover you when you come to appear before God.—S. S. Visitor.

DON'T TELL MOTHER.

"Don't tell mother!" I heard a bright-looking boy say, as he ran with nimble feet to join a crowd who were accompanying a returning fire-engine. The comments of the excited boys and men as they passed, and perhaps the strange desire for forbidden pleasures, which are inherent in our sinful natures, drew the boys away from home; but as he went, he remembered the prohibition, and uttered these words, "Don't tell mother!"

A good mother is a gift to thank God for ever. A mother's kiss, a mother's gentle word, a mother's gentle care, what have they not done for us all? Eliza Cook's beautiful lines, "To an Old Arm-chair," have thrilled through many hearts:—

"I love it, I love it, and who shall dare To chide me for loving that old arm-chair? 'Tis bound by a thousand cords to my heart; Not a tie will break, not a link will start. Would you learn the spell? A mother sat there, And a sacred thing is her old arm-chair."

When I hear young lips exclaiming, "Don't tell mother see this; hide it away;" "don't tell mother where I am going," I tremble for the safety of the speaker. The action which will not bear the kind scrutiny of a mother's love, will shrink into shame at the look of God. Little feet that begin life by going where mother does not approve, will not easily learn to walk in the narrow way of the Lord's commandments. "Don't tell mother!" has been the rallying-cry of Satan's best recruits for hundreds of years. Disregard of a mother's rule at home leads to a contempt of the laws of society. The boy who disobeys his mother will not be likely to make a useful and law-honoring citizen. "Don't tell mother!" is a sure step downward—the first step in those easy cars of habit, which glide so swiftly and so silently, with their freight of souls, towards the precipice of ruin.

The best and the safest way is always to tell mother. Who so forgiving as she? Who so faithful? Who so constant? Who so patient? Through nights of wearisome watching, through days of wearing anxiety, through sickness and through health, through better and through worse, a mother's love has been unfailing. It is a spring that never becomes dry. Confide, dear young readers, in your mother; do nothing which she has forbidden; consult her about your actions; treat her ever with reverential love. It has been the crowning glory of truly good and great men, that when hundreds and thousands bowed in admiration to their feet, they gave honor to their mothers. Mother-love has dared dangers from which the stout heart of the warrior has shrunk appalled. Happy they who early learn to appreciate its priceless worth.

A mother's prayer gave John Newton to Christianity; a mother's loving effort dedicated John Wesley to the cross. What mother's love has done for the work of evangelizing the world, what they have written in letters of light upon the page of history, what the pen of the recording angel has registered for them, in the open book above, is known only to God. Boys and girls, never go to a place where a "Don't tell mother!" is necessary to cover your footsteps. Sunday-school scholars, in your every-day life show the pure teaching of your Christian home, by obeying the mother who endears and blesses your whole life.—Merry's Museum.

A WELL-DERIVED MEMORIAL.

A correspondent of the *Watchman and Reflector*, Boston, writes:—"In Philadelphia we found a deep and melancholy interest, awakened by the death of two noble women, who, in the spirit of Florence Nightingale, have been giving themselves to nursing the sick and wounded soldiers in the hospitals. Mrs. Wm. Struthers and Miss Hetty A. Jones have for years devoted much of their time, their strength, and the funds themselves (or other friends through them) could furnish, to alleviate the sufferings of our brave defenders. The last mentioned, a daughter of the late Dr. H. G. Jones, of Philadelphia, not content with attendance on the suffering in the Philadelphia hospitals, went down to the front, and finding sad neglect and want of suitable help there, in a noble and martyr-like spirit left her home, and engaged personally in the efficient endeavor to introduce needed reforms and more adequate nursing in the hospitals at City Point. There she died in a tent, as noble an instance of patriotic heroism as that evinced by her brother, Col. J. Richter Jones, who a few months before fell in the arms of victory, at the head of a brigade which he had successfully led against the rebels in North Carolina. She was buried from the residence of her youngest brother, H. G. Jones, Esq., Roxborough, one of the late days of December. It was a spectacle to move any heart, to see a large concourse of the convalescent soldiers, whom she had conscientiously cared for and faithfully attended, gather round her coffin, some on crutches, and with streaming eyes and sorrowing hearts, bear her to the grave. Such women are an honor to their sex, to their country, to the world!"

"IN PRAYER IS STRENGTH."

In prayer is strength! Across the world's wide moor we wander far and long, Rude echoes only answer to our cheerless song. The winds blow cold, the dying light departs; We faint and falter, till our weary hearts Seek home at length.

In prayer is peace! Hope's fond and flattering tale proves but an airy dream. In vain we chase ambition's fiftful fire-fly gleam; We toil and struggle through the night of sorrow, Waiting and watching for a brighter morrow To bring success.

Prayer only gives Unto our tired souls the solace which we seek; We go to Him—He answers even ere we speak; On His strong arm we lean in calm repose; Peace, like a river, o'er the spirit flows— The dying lives.

COUNT THEM.

Count what? Why, count the mercies which have been quietly falling in your path through every period of your history. Down they come, every morning and every evening, as angel messengers from the Father of lights to tell you of your best friend in heaven. Have you lived these years, wasting mercies, treading them beneath your feet, and consuming them every day, and never yet realized from whence they came? If you have, Heaven pity you.

You have murmured under affliction; but who has heard you rejoice over blessings? Do you ask what are these mercies? Ask the sun-beam the rain-drop, the star, or the queen of night. What is life but a mercy? What is health, strength, friendship, social life, the gospel of Christ, divine worship? Had they the power of speech, each would say, "I am a mercy." Perhaps you never regarded them as such. If not, you have been a dull student of nature or revelation.

What is the propriety of stopping to play with a thorn-bush, when you may just as well pluck sweet flowers and eat pleasant fruits?

Yet we have seen enough of men to know that they have a morbid appetite for thorns. If they have lost a friend they will murmur at the loss, if God has given them a score of new ones. And, somehow, everything assumes a value when it is gone, which man would not acknowledge when he had it in his possession, unless, indeed, some one wished to purchase it.

Happy is he who looks at the bright side of life, providence, and of revelation; who avoids thorns, and thickets, and sloughs, until his Christian growth is such that, if he cannot improve them, he may pass among them without injury. Count mercies before you complain of affliction.—Relig. Telescope.

BE IMPORTUNATE.

I was sitting in my study, engaged in the preparation of a sermon for the coming Sabbath, and had determined to have the time exclusively to myself. There was about the house a little, mischievous, blue-eyed boy, who seemed an enemy to all quiet; for from early light till darkness came, two little hands found baby-work, and feet seemed never tired. Our Willie was a little one then; now he can read and has two little sisters. But memory has the baby Willie, with dimpled chin and tottering step, and never silent tongue. He could not talk then—only a few little words, but the chatter was continuous. I need describe no further; for many of you have or had just such a boy.

But I was going to say—I was sitting in my study, busily engaged, when—patter—patter—I heard a pair of little feet. I knew in what direction the "foes were turned, and I pressed my lips together and gave a nod, saying, mentally, "I'll not let him in. I thought when I sat down I would not, and I will not." Patter—patter—and somebody said "papa," just outside the door. I knew who it was, but he must not disturb me.

"Papa!"

I ran my fingers through my hair, and tried to study.

"Pa-pa!"

I heard the latch rattle, and I knew somebody was rising on tiptoe to reach it. I remembered a gold pen I once lost by Willie's hand—broken by sticking it in the table like a scratch awl. It did not take me as long to think as it does to write, or you to read it now.

"Papa, pa-pa!"

A thought flashed into my heart, not mind, and tears came into my eyes. Quickly I opened the door, and clasping the child to my bosom, I was willing to gratify his simple wants "for I was going to preach on importunate prayer—and there was an illustration. I took it as providential.

"Are we not God's 'little children'?" The kind Apostle John says as much—John iv. 4. Though grey hairs cover our heads, yet children are we, and we come again and again with our cares and wants. We seek, we knock, and we say, "Our Father!" He may not open until, like Willie, we patiently wait and often cry "Father." He hears, he smiles, and opens unto us. His strong arms are about us. His hand supports the tottering steps of his children.

Though we often do worse than mischievous children, they are forgiven. When we approach our Father,

"He bows his gracious ear, We never plead in vain; Yet we must wait till he appear, And pray, and pray again."

—Lutheran Observer.