

The Family Circle.

ABIDE WITH US: FOR IT IS TOWARD EVENING.

BY REV. H. S. POWERS.

The tender light is fading where
We pause and linger still,
And, through the dim and saddened air,
We feel the evening chill.

Long hast thou journeyed with us, Lord,
Ere we thy face did know;
Oh! still thy fellowship afford,
While dark the shadows grow.

For passed is many a beauteous field,
Beside our morning road;
And many a fount to us is sealed
That once so freshly flowed.

The splendor of the noontide lies
On dewy paths that ours;
The dews that lave yon fragrant skies
Will not revive our flowers.

It is not now as in the glow
Of life's impassioned heat,
When to the heart there seemed to flow
All that of earth was sweet.

Something has faded—something died—
Without us and within;
We, more than ever, need a guide,
Blinded and weak with sin.

The weight is heavy that we bear,
Our strength more feeble grows;
Weary with toil, and pain, and care,
We long for sweet repose.

Stay with us gracious Saviour, stay,
While friends and hopes depart;
Fainting, on thee we wish to lay
The burden of our heart.

Abide with us, dear Lord; remain
Our Life, our Truth, our Way;
So shall our loss be turned to gain—
Night dawn to endless day.

—Boening Post.

A SCENE IN AUSTRALIA.

In the Wimmera district, in Australia, lives a carpenter named Duff. On the 12th of August, three of his children were sent by their mother into the woods to cut broom. It was not the first time they had gone on the same errand, and they had always returned safely; but this time they missed their way and were "lost in the bush." When some hours had passed away, the father commenced a search on horseback, but though assistance was rendered to him by the neighbors, he could not find them. On Saturday all available force was mustered, and the bush searched far and near, by horsemen and footmen, but no trace appeared. Efforts were made continuously from Sabbath to Thursday, but without success. The father now determined to get the assistance of the natives, as they are noted for being able to track the path anything has taken in travelling. They were directed to a trail which had already been followed by some of the party, and they declared themselves confident that they had found the right path. Afterwards the party came upon another trail, which the blacks declared to be newer than the other; and after following it for 300 yards, they said the children had slept there the night before, pointing out a little clump of saplings, in which was found, on examination, some broom strewed about, and a little pillow of broom, on which their weary heads had rested. The spot was well sheltered from the wind and rain, and was capable of protecting the children from the severe weather of the previous night. The statement of the blacks gave new courage to the father and the party; the former for the first time in several days began to hope he might find his children living. The track seemed plainer as they proceeded; shortly the blacks pointed out a spot where they said one of the children had stopped to lift the younger one, and further on they pointed where the child had been set down again, after being carried a considerable distance; again they pointed out a place where one of the elder children had stopped to carry the little one, but this time they said the elder one had been unable to rise with the burden, and the three tracks were followed as before. The day was now wearing away, and it was suggested to the father that he should ride on in the direction the track was taking, in order to find it ahead, if possible, and so save time; this was done, and quadrantly the track was found three-quarters of a mile ahead. The party continued following the track until an hour before sundown, when the father again rode ahead of the party, and having got on to some rising ground, saw something white a little distance away; he went towards it, and found the three children sleeping in a little clump of trees. They were lying together, the girl having taken off her frock to cover the three. It is probable the little ones would never have travelled from this last resting-place, unless discovered on this night. The two eldest were almost unable to speak. The eldest boy was the first to awake, he uttered one word, "Father," and staggered towards him; the youngest boy sat up and cried, "Father, why didn't you come before?" He had to assist the girl to get up; she seemed utterly powerless, and could not speak. The youngest child was the strongest of the three. It is most probable that the other two would not have been able to continue their journey the following day, even if they had lived through the night. The trackers, not having expected to find the children alive, were unprepared with food; the only eatables with the party were a piece of bread and some ginger root, which were given to the famished children. The

little boy's trousers had been taken off, and when asked the reason for this, the children said they had got torn by travelling, and the girl tied them up in a handkerchief. They had taken off their socks when they slept out the first night, and the wild cats had carried them off; and afterwards they had slept with their shoes on. Some days after they had been lost—it is supposed the fourth day—they came to a hill, which they thought was near their own home, and they again gathered some broom to take with them; but after carrying it for some time, and finding they were deceived, they threw it away. There does not appear to be the slightest grounds for supposing that the children tasted any food during the time they were lost, nor that they tasted water more than once. The blacks pointed out a place where the children travelled in the dark; on being asked why they said so, they pointed out where the children had stumbled and fallen over logs and brushwood in their way. The children were taken every possible care of after being found. Seldom has a tale been told which relates so much patient suffering as those little children underwent. Seldom has brotherly or sisterly affection been so beautifully illustrated. The girl had regularly taken off her frock to cover the younger one when he complained of the bitter cold, which must have been severely felt in consequence of their famished condition.

In this surely we have an instance of heroic conduct on the part of these elder children caring so nobly for the little one whose life must have been lost had he not been warmly wrapped up in his sister's frock.—*Juv. Miss. Herald.*

WHAT "UNCLE SAYS."

We wish our young friends, especially boys, would read the following many times over, and never forget the wisdom that it contains.

My uncle is a woodman; he is now getting to be an old man. Some people say he is cross, but I do not think so. Trouble and thought may give his face a thoughtful look sometimes; but I know he has a kind heart. Of one thing I am certain—he has got a wise head. Meet him whenever I may, he has always got something to say. If you would like to hear some of his sayings, I will write down some of them for you.

One day I saw him with an axe in his hand, standing by a branch he had just cut from an old oak tree, when he began—

If you set a thistle seed, there will spring up, not one or two, but twenty or thirty; and it will be just the same if you set one sin. One sin, he says, has been known to bring forth a hundred more. The farmer ought to take care that no thistle seeds are sown on his land; and you ought to take care that no sins are sown in your heart.

Uncle says a boy seldom looks forward, unless it is to a holiday; when he is well, he seldom dreams of being sick; when he has money, he thinks it will last him for weeks; and when the sun shines, he almost expects it to shine forever; but he says we should be ready to endure patiently, as well as enjoy gratefully. "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Job ii. 10.

Uncle says that, if a traveller once leaves the turnpike road in a part of the country that he does not know, he may wander about in lanes the whole of the day, and when night comes, get stuck in a bog at last; and that, if I venture to wander away from the path of duty, I may lose myself in the cross-roads of error and vice all my days, and at last fall into the pit of destruction.

Uncle says he had rather read the Bible and never look at any other book, than read every other book in the world, and never look at the Bible; for this reason: other books are the books of men, but the Bible is the book of God; and as man's knowledge is but ignorance, when compared with God's knowledge, so the wisdom of all the books of men is but folly, when compared with the wisdom of the book of God.

POETRY IN SERMONS.

"Where did you find that beautiful poetry you quoted in your discourse yesterday morning?"

Such was the inquiry of a gay young lady who was a half-attendant on Sabbath services, and whom I regarded as a very inattentive hearer.

I replied, "You may remember I gave two poetic quotations. To which do you refer?"

"Only one interested me. O, that was exquisite! Where did you get such a gem? Either I have never seen it, or else your rendering of it made it seem entirely new. I fancy it must have been taken from some recent production that has not come under my eye."

"As you heard it with so much pleasure, perhaps you can repeat some of it."

"Two lines, I recollect, were something like these:

"Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart, untravelled, fondly turns to thee."

"O, that was from Oliver Goldsmith, published in 1765."

"Is it possible? Then I must have seen it. What is the title of the poem?"

"The Traveller; or, A Prospect of Society."

"I can hardly believe it. I thought I had read all the good poetry. How could I have missed that passage? It was perfectly splendid! After you had repeated it I could think of nothing else. The impression lasted through the day."

"In those ten lines I fear there was not much Gospel."

"O, sir, it was all Gospel; it was so beautiful! Nothing so impresses me in your sermons as good classic poetry. You may be sure that it does much to make you popular with the better class of your hearers. You know this is an age of high æsthetic culture, and if a minister would attract and hold young people, he must meet the demands of refined taste. There is the Rev. Dr. — who is a great reader, and gives, in his morning sermon, the finest passages from the best authors, French, German, and English. The most accomplished young ladies go to hear him for the improvement of their style."

A discussion ensued which, on neither side, was very profitable. After she had retired, as unbefittingly, probably, by my conversation as she had been by my sermon, I had leisure for reflection. She had spoken words that made me think. She had not intended to leave wounds; but barbed points were fastened deep out of her sight. I had captivated her ear by a few lines of Christless poetry! She "could think of nothing else!" "The impression lasted through the day!" She was so delighted with the passage that she must come early on Monday to compliment my taste and encourage me to a repetition of the process! And that was the way I had dealt with an immortal soul hastening with me to the final judgment! I had enough to think of that day, and that week. I felt no compunction for quoting poetry; but a review of the particular quotation, and a knowledge of its effect upon a young mind, put me upon a train of reflections that humbled me before God and created an epoch in my ministry. I had a duty to do to that young parishioner, and was enabled to perform it in a way which the Holy Spirit honored with His blessing. The next Monday morning she was at my house, an inquirer for the way of eternal life. Never since has she made account of "æsthetic culture," or complimented her pastor for his "exquisite taste" in citations from godless poets; or taught him how to be popular with frivolous-minded young ladies. She became a Christian, labored zealously for her Lord, grew rapidly in grace, and was faithful unto death.—*Watchman and Reflector.*

A SECOND ROBINSON CRUSOE.

General Scott, in his interesting autobiography, gives an account of a Robinson Crusoe, a Mr. Pain, who lived a solitary life for many years on the Island of Cape Breton. He says:

Mr. Pain sailed from Boston in a smack for the banks of Newfoundland and other fishing grounds, in 1774, before the outbreak of the Revolution. Having made up the cargo in the Gut of Canso, Pain begged his companions to let him remain till the return of the party the following season. They assisted in building him a hut, and left him with a good supply of personal and bed-clothes, some axes and other tools, a gun, with ammunition, fishing-tackle, and such other stores as could be spared, together with a Bible, "Paradise Lost," and the "Pilgrim's Progress." Prayers were said at parting, and the smack sailed for home.

This was the last that our adventurer saw of "the human face divine" for nine or ten years. The Revolutionary war supervened. There was no more fishing and curing of fish by Americans on those shores—the Gut of Canso not being navigated at that period except by vessels driven into it by stress of weather. There was no road and no trail across the mountains to any settlement whatever.

For the first year, and, indeed, till his supplies began to fail him, Mr. Pain, then young, did not lament his condition. But when the second and third seasons came, and again and again there was no return of his friends, it seemed evident that they had abandoned him; his spirits drooped, and he was in danger of being lost in despair.

But man is the most flexible and pliable of all animals. According to his own account, Mr. Pain began soon to relish food without salt; the deer and flocks were abundant, furnishing him with both food and raiment, and which he contrived to entrap after his powder and shot were exhausted. So too, in respect to worn out hooks and lines; these were replaced by bones and strips of skin, so that there was no want of the "finny prey." By the fifth year he began to like the new life as well as at first. His books were more than a solace to him, and the autobiographer can testify that he could accurately recite, from memory, entire chapters of the Bible, and many of the books of "Paradise Lost."

Finally, when, at the end of the war, his old master in a smack came in search of him or his remains, he had become so attached to this new mode of existence that he refused to return to his native soil. A good supply of necessaries were again left with him. His little property at home was in-

vested in cattle, with materials for a small house, some furniture, etc., all of which were sent out to him, with an old sister, a farm laborer and a lad—a relative. Before 1812 some new connections and laborers had joined him, and he had become a thrifty farmer.

DRIVING HOME THE COWS.

Out of the clover and blue-eyed grass
He turned them into the river lane;
One after another he let them pass,
Then fastened the meadow bars again.

Under the willows, and over the hill,
He patiently followed their sober pace;
The merry whistle for once was still,
And something shadowed the sunny face.

Only a boy! and his father had said
He never could let his youngest go;
Two already were lying dead
Under the feet of the trampling foe.

But after the evening work was done,
And the frogs were loud in the meadow-swamp,
Over his shoulder he slung his gun
And stealthily followed the foot-path damp.

Across the clover, and through the wheat,
With resolute heart and purpose grim,
Though cold was the dew on his hurrying feet,
And the blind bat's flitting startled him.

Thrice since then had the lane been white,
And the orchards sweet with apple-bloom;
And now, when the crows came back at night,
The feeble father drove them home.

For news had come to the lonely farm
That three were lying where two had lain;
And the old man's tremulous, palsied arm,
Could never lean on a son's again.

The summer day grew cool and late,
He went for the cows when the work was done;
But down the lane, as he opened the gate,
He saw them coming, one by one:

Brindle, Ebony, Speckle, and Bess,
Shaking their horns in the evening wind;
Cropping the butter-cups out of the grass—
But who was it following close behind?

Loosely swung in the idle air
The empty sleeve of army blue;
And worn and pale, from the crisping hair,
Looked out a face that the father knew.

For Southern prisons will sometimes yawn,
And yield their dead unto life again;
And the day that comes with a cloudy dawn,
In golden glory at last may wane.

The great tears sprang to their meeting eyes;
For the heart must speak when the lips are dumb;
And under the silent evening skies
Together they followed the cattle home.

—Harper's Monthly.

A LOST CHILD!

A few evenings ago, the quiet village of — was suddenly thrown into a state of excitement and anxiety by the ringing of bells, just as the families were retiring to rest. What can it mean? Has Richmond been captured? Has Savannah fallen? Is it a fire? No, the cry is heard, "A child lost! a child lost!" It was a little boy of three or four years. The night was cold. Snow had fallen, and it was freezing sharply. The child had been gone for several hours.

Search had already been made in every direction whither it was thought he might have wandered. But no tidings came to relieve the anxiety of the now agonized parents. What shall they do? The child will certainly perish, if not speedily found. It was finally agreed that an alarm should be rung, with a view to a general search by the whole village. The population was quickly on the move. Every heart was touched with sympathy for the imperiled child. "It was then proposed to examine carefully all wells and cisterns to which it might have found access. The discovery is now made! Alas, it had fallen into a neighbor's cistern incautiously left open for a little time only during the afternoon, and then closed without suspecting what had happened. The agony of suspense was now over, but the agony of bereavement remained, which time and grace only can cure.

Every parent, who may chance to read these lines, and many, who are not parents, will feel an involuntary throb of sympathy for this afflicted family. And yet how many of them have children and friends who are lost in a far more dreadful sense than was this little unfortunate? The writer could not help thinking, while all the village was on the alert to find this little wanderer, how many older boys, in the same town, were at that very moment exposed to infinitely greater dangers, but for whom no one seemed to have any special solicitude. Could we but realize that every child is, by nature, a child of wrath, and therefore lost to God, and heaven, until renewed by the grace of the Holy Spirit, we would surely feel a much deeper solicitude for them.

Have you, dear reader, an unconverted child? one whose heart is unrenewed by the grace of God? Then remember, I entreat you, that this child is lost. It is a wanderer from God and the way of heaven. If you knew it was in imminent danger of a temporal death from any cause, you could not rest a moment till every possible effort had been made to avert such danger. Why, then, not the same, and a far greater anxiety, about its spiritual interests? What signifies the death of the body to that of the soul? As heaven is higher, and holier and happier than earth; and as eternity is more enduring than the present transitory life, so is the peril of all who are out of Christ, more alarming than any mere physical or temporal evil. Would that all who have the care of children could realize this, and act as though they believed it.

The mother who should allow her little one to fall in the flames or into

the water, and thus perish through her neglect, could never forgive herself such remissness in duty. This sad and bitter reflection would haunt her till her dying day. But who can imagine the anguish that must pierce the heart of every parent who, by a similar neglect, has permitted a beloved child to fall into the fire that is never quenched!—into that pit where soul and body will be lost forever! Know, then, that every unconverted child is thus exposed. And if you are not travelling in birth for them, till Christ be formed within them the hope of glory, you are assuredly treasuring up all this anguish for yourself. What, therefore, thine hand findeth to do for them, let it be done quickly. To time, with rapid wing, is bearing us all, parents and children, pastors and people, to the confines of that endless night in which no man can work.—*Cincinnati Presbyterian.*

ALWAYS TELL THE TRUTH.

The ground-work of all manly character is veracity; or the habit of truthfulness. That virtue lies at the foundation of everything said. How common it is to hear parents say, "I have faith in my child so long as he speaks the truth. He may have many faults, but I know that he will not deceive. I build on that confidence." They are right. It is a lawful and just ground to build upon. So long as the truth remains in a child, there is something to depend on; but when truth is gone, all is lost, unless the child is speedily won back again to veracity. Children, did you ever tell a lie? If so, you are in imminent danger. Return at once, little reader, and enter the stronghold of truth, and from it may you never depart again.—*Selected.*

For the Little Folks.

FAMILIAR TALKS WITH THE CHILDREN.

BY REV. EDWARD PAYSON HAMMOND.

I never saw a little child but loved the singing birds, and so my readers will like to hear about a Robin Redbreast.

One spring, about twelve years ago, the birds left their winter quarters away down at the Gulf of Mexico, and over mountains, rivers, forests, and cities they flew away for their New England homes. Redbreast came singing with the rest, and no doubt expected to have a gay time among the mountains and by the sea side. Perhaps he felt a little as some of you have felt when you thought of going to the White Mountains or to Long Branch.

This little fellow finally reached his new home in Connecticut. I think he had before spent one summer there, among the laughing brooks and green hills. His parents were with him then. But this time he came with some friends. He thought he was old enough to take care of himself. Perhaps, like some naughty boys he disobeyed in going away without his mother's consent. All went well for a week or two. He thought he should have a splendid time. He had plenty to eat every day, and he was as merry as he could be. The trees rocked him to sleep at night. And the children heard him singing in the morning before they were out of bed.

When little Willie came to breakfast, one morning, his first words were, "Ah! papa, I heard a robin singing this morning, and I want to run out and see him!" But one morning when Willie awoke he heard no songs from the birdies. He thought at first either he had opened his eyes too soon or that the robins had all overslept themselves. But when he looked out of the window, and saw the feathery snow falling so still, and covering up all the new green tips of grass, he knew the reason the birds did not, as usual, wake him up.

When he came down that morning he looked sad, and his first words were, "Ah! father, I am afraid my little Robin Redbreast is frozen to death. I have not heard him sing once this morning."

"Oh no," said his father, "he has a warm overcoat, and he is out in the garden in some warm nook. I think he will live through it."

Not a bird was to be seen that day, for it kept snowing very hard, and the next day it snowed, and the cold went deep, and when Willie's father came home at night he made little Willie feel very sad, by telling him that he had seen a great many birds that day that could not get any thing to eat, and they were frozen to death.

Little Willie could scarcely sleep that night for fear his little birdie was among the dead. But in the morning he looked out the window and saw in the garden little Robin Redbreast. He was all shivering with cold. He looked half starved and frozen.

Little Willie was glad he was not dead, and away he bounded, saying, "Mother! mother! here's my little robin, half-starved! may I call him in and feed him with some crumbs?" And without stopping for her to answer, away he went to the pantry. He got a handful of crumbs, and ran to the door, out he went on to the step-stone. The snow was almost over his head and he thought he would not go any farther, so there he stood and

called to the poor hungry robin to come and get his breakfast. But the foolish bird did not stir. "Come," said Willie, "come here and I will give you all you can eat! Come, and I will get a little basket of warm wool and make you a nice bed by the fire, and when the snow melts I will let you fly away, so that you can wake me up in the morning again!" But there the poor bird stood shivering still. He did not seem to care a fig for all Willie said. He could not bear to see his wee Redbreast freeze to death when there was a warm house and plenty to eat so near by, and so seeing his words did no good, away he plunged into the deep snow saying, "I will catch you and make you come and when you are fed and warm you will thank me for it." But the snow was so deep he could not run. He could hardly waddle through; though the foolish bird was stiff with cold, he hobbled away a little faster than Willie could go. The little boy was tired out and could go no farther, so he went back to the house and told his mother that his poor robin would surely freeze to death for the snow was so deep he could not find any seeds to eat.

In a few hours Willie went out again, and sure enough his pet bird was frozen and was dead. I can almost hear you say, "Ah! what a foolish bird? Why didn't he come straight to Willie and let him feed him and put him in a warm place till the cold snow went off?" I say so too. This was not a wise bird.

I will remember that deep snow storm that came in April. I then saw a great many birds dying that would not come and get something to eat; and though the snow was so deep that I took a long sleigh ride, I did not enjoy it much, for all along our way we saw the poor birds freezing and dying. Don't you think I would have been glad to have given up my sleigh ride and fed all the birds in my neighborhood, if they would only have come to me? How happy it would have made me to have got great loaves of bread and given them all they would eat.

But I want to tell you something that has made more glad than this would have done.

I have seen flocks of little children who have been taught by God that they were hungering for the Bread of life—that they needed to have their souls fed and their hearts were cold and dead. And the loving Jesus, who died on the cross to save little children has seemed to stand in the midst of them and call them to his outstretched arms. I have seen many of these little ones going to Jesus, and he has taken them and fed and clothed them; and some day, when all is ready he will let them fly away to heaven—and then they will dwell forever where there are no cold storms, but "where is all is peace and joy and love."

If Robin Redbreast of whom you have heard, had known enough to have come to Willie's warm house and been fed, what do you think he would have wished to do, if he could have talked? Would he not have gone out and found all his wee friends and asked them to come to his new Master and let him take care of them? I know he would have done so.

Now these little children who have come to Jesus feel anxious to tell all their little friends the way to be happy here and happy in heaven when they die. I have seen them going around among their little friends who were weeping for their sins, and telling them how ready Jesus was to take them and give them new hearts, and fit them for heaven. And some of their hearts have been so full of joy they could not keep it all to themselves, and so they have written letters to their friends and told them how Jesus has taken them to himself.

You said a little while ago, "Robin Redbreast was a foolish little bird." But sometimes children are far more unwise in not coming to Jesus. He knows their danger and wants to save them. He loves them far more than Willie loved his pet bird. Yes, he loves you very dearly, reader, and wants you to come to him. If Willie had died in trying to save that Robin, you would have said he loved his bird very much.

But it says in Luke xix. 10: "The Son of man is come to seek and to save the lost." Not only this, but he died a dreadful death on the cross that he might save lost children. Yes, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities." Will you not then, my dear little friend, go to him and ask him to forgive you that you have not loved him?

On your knees try and offer this little

PRAYER.

Dear Jesus, I thank thee That Thou hast come into this wicked world to save sinners. I thank Thee that Thou hast died on the cross to save little children like me. Thou hast been seeking me, but I have not listened to thy tender voice. O, forgive me that I have been such a wicked child. Please to take away my naughty heart and give me a new heart. Help me, O God, to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ that I may be saved.

I give myself to Thee, dear Jesus: 'tis all I can do. I am lost, but Thou hast come to "seek and to save the lost." Save me, O Lord, for Jesus' sake. Amen.