

The Family Circle.

THE LORD IS RISEN!

BY REV. WILLIAM RANKIN DURTEE.

O Earth, cold Earth, to life arise, The birds are singing round thee, Old Winter in the distance flies, And on thy surface, broken, lies The icy band that bound thee; Spring forth, in blooming beauty dress, To show how God hath crowned thee.

O World! accursed in sin and shame, Let light dispel thy madness, New life shall renovate thy frame, While all thy dress shall sink in flame, Arouse thee from thy slumber; A Conqueror comes with Kingly crown To turn thy grief to gladness.

O Soul! unfettered at the cross, Yet in thy weakness lying, Arise! put off thy fears of loss, To thee, earth's battle-field across, A voice divine is crying: "Gird on my strength, thy life I hold, And take the songs for singing."

For lo! the portals of the tomb, Unsealed in mortal story, Where men have wept in hopeless gloom, As friends have bowed to meet their doom, Through all the ages hoary, Roll back for Manhood's highest heir, The Lord of life and glory.

He lives, He lives, no more to die, Death's fetters strong are riven; Ring out, O bells! the triumph high, In peals that tell to earth and sky, The joy of souls for ever free, The grave a Bethel has become, The very gate of heaven.

THE COVENANTER'S MARRIAGE DAY.

The marriage party were to meet in a little lonesome dell, well known to all the dwellers round St. Mary's Loch. A range of bright green hills goes southward from its shores, and between them and the high heathery mountains lies a shapless scene of cliffs, moss, and pasture, partaking both of the beauty and the grandeur between which it so wildly lies. All these cliffs are covered with native birch-trees, except a few of the loftiest, that shoot up their bare plants in many fantastic forms; that moss, full of what the shepherds call "hags," or hollows worn by the weather, or dug out for fuel, waves, when the wind goes by its high, rich-blossomed, and fragrant heath; and that pasturage, here and there in circular spots of emerald verdure, affords the sweetest sustenance to the sheep to be found among all that mountainous region. It was in one of these circles of beautiful herbage, called by the shepherds "The Queen Fairy's Parlor," that Mark Kerr and Christian Lindsay, who had been long betrothed, were now to be made man and wife. It was nearly surrounded by large masses, or ledges of loose rocks, piled to a considerable height upon each other by some strong convulsion, and all adorned with the budding and sweet breathing birches, while the circle was completed by one overshadowing cliff that sheltered it from the north blast, and on whose airy summit the young hawks were shrilly and wildly crying in their nest.

The bridegroom was sitting there with his bride and her bridesmaid; and by-and-by, one friend after another appeared below the natural arch that, all dropping with wild flowers, formed the only entrance into this lonely Tabernacle. At last they all stood up in a circle together—shepherds decently apparelled, shepherdesses all dressed in raiment bleached whiter than the snow in the waters of the mountain spring, and the gray-headed minister of God, who, driven from his kirk by bloodthirsty persecution, prayed and preached in the wilderness, baptized infants with the water of the running brook, and joined in wedlock the hands of such as ventured upon marriage in those dark and deadly times. Few words were uttered by the gracious old man; but these few were solemn and full of cheer, impressed upon the hearts of the wedded pair by the tremulous tones of a voice that was not long for this world, by the sanctity of his long white locks unmoved by a breath of air, and by the fatherly and apostolical motion of his uplifted hand, that seemed to conduct down upon them who stood in awe before him the blessing of that God who delighteth in an humble heart. The short ceremony was now closed, and Mark Kerr and Christian Lindsay were united till death should sunder them on earth to reunite them in heaven.

Greetings were interchanged, and smiles went round, with rosy blushes, and murmuring and whispering voices of irreproachable mirth. What though the days were dark and the oppressor strong? Here was a place unknown to his feet; and now was a time to let the clear sparkling fountain of nature's joy well up in all hearts. Sadness and sorrow overshadowed the land; but human life was not yet wholly a waste; and the sweet sunshine that now fell down through a screen of fleecy clouds upon the Queen Fairy's Parlor—was it not to enliven and rejoice all their souls? Was it not to make the fair bride fairer in her husband's eyes—her smile brighter, and the ringlets more yellow, as they hung over a forehead that wore its silken snood no longer, but in its changed covering gracefully showed that Christian Lindsay was now a wife?

But as the evening hours were advancing, the party kept dropping away one by one, or in pairs, just as it had gathered; and the Fairy Queen had her parlor all to herself, undisturbed, if she chose at night to hold a court beneath the lamp of the moon.

Where had the young married pair their bridal chamber? Mark Kerr had a shealing on the mountain side, from which was just visible one bay of St. Mary's Loch. The walls were built of turf, and the roof of heather; and surrounded as it was on all sides by large stones, wooded cliffs, knowes, and uneven eminences, it was almost as likely to escape notice as the nest of a bird, or the lair of a roe. Thither he took his bride. Her little bridesmaid had a small covert of her own, distant only a few rods, and the friends could see each other standing at the door of each shealing, through the intercepting foliage of the waving birches that hung down their thin and ineffectual veil till it swept the blooming heather.

On a small seat, framed of the roots of decayed trees, Mark Kerr was now sitting with his own sweet Christian, when he gently raised her head from his bosom, and told her to go into the shealing, for he saw people on the hill-side whose appearance, even at that distance, he did not like. Before a quarter of an hour had elapsed a party of soldiers were at hand. Mark knew that he had been observed for some time, and to attempt escape with his bride was impossible. So he rose up at their approach, and met them with a steady countenance, although there were both fear and sorrow in his heart. Christian had obeyed him and the shealing was silent.

"Is your name Mark Kerr?" "Yes, that is my name." "Were you at Yarrow Ford when a prisoner was rescued and a soldier murdered?" "I was, but did all I could to save that soldier's life." "You wolf, you mangled his throat with your own bloody fangs; but we have traced you to your den, and the ghost of Hugh Gemmel, who was as pleasant either with lad or lass as any boy that ever emptied a cup or had a fall upon heather, will shake hands with you by moonlight by-and-by. You may meet either in the church-yard, down by the Loch, where your canting Covenanters will bury you, or down at Yarrow Kirk, where Hugh was put to bed with the worms in his red coat, like a soldier as he was. By the Holy God of Israel—is not that a lump of your own slang?—this bayonet shall drink a stoup of your heart's blood."

Mark Kerr knew, in a moment, that there was no hope of life. He had confessed being present on the occasion charged against him; and a sentence of death, which an angel's intercession could not have got reversed, was glaring in the eyes of all the soldiers. Each man seemed to kindle in fiercer fury as he caught the fiery eyes around him. Their oaths and execrations exasperated them all into frenzy; and a wild and perturbed sense of justice, demanding expiation of their murdered comrade's blood, made them deaf and blind to every thing but the suggestions of their own irritated and inflamed hearts. A horrid sympathy possessed them all; and they were as implacable as a herd of wolves famished and in sight of their prey. There was no mercy in any one face there, else Mark Kerr would have appealed to that man, for his life was now sweet and precious, and it was a hard thing to die. "I knew his face. He is the very man that stabbed Hugh, when he was down, with his own bayonet. How do you like that sirrah?" and one of the soldiers thrust his long bayonet through Mark's shoulder, till the point was seen at his back, and then drew it out smeared with blood, and returned it to its sheath, with a grin of half-glutted vengeance. The wounded man, staggered at the blow, and sat down, nearly fainting, upon the seat where a few minutes before his bride had leaned her head upon his bosom. "But he uttered not a word, and kept his eyes fixed, not reproachfully, but somewhat sadly, and with a faint expression of hope, on the men who seemed determined to be his executioners. The pain, the sickness, the sudden blasting of all his hopes, almost unnamable his resolute heart; and Mark Kerr would have now done much to save his life, and something, perhaps, even at the expense of conscience and faith. But that weak mood was of short duration, and the good and brave man braced up his heart to receive the doom of death.

Meanwhile one of the soldiers had entered the shealing, and brought out Christian in his grasp. A loud shout of laughter and scornful exultation followed. "Ho, ho, my heath-cock, you have got your bonny hen. Catch a Covenanters without his comfort. Is your name Grace, my bonny bairn?" Christian looked around, and saw Mark sitting pale and speechless, with his breast covered with clotting blood. She made no outcry, for grief, and pity, and consternation struck her dumb. She could not move, for the soldier held her in his arms. But she looked into the ruffian's face with such an imploring countenance, that unconsciously he let her go, and then she went up tottering to poor Mark, and with her white bridal gown wiped off the gore from his breast, and kissed his clayey and quivering lips. She then ran to the spring that lay sparkling among its crevices, within a few yards of the shealing, and brought a handful of cold water, which she sprinkled tenderly over his face.

The human soul is a wild and terrible thing when inflamed with cruelty and revenge. The soldiers saw little more in all this than a subject for loathsome scurrility and ferocious merriment; and as Christian looked wildly around upon them, one asked, "Are you his sister—his cousin—or his drab?" "Oh! soldiers, soldiers, I am his wife—this blessed day was I married to him. If any of you are married men, think of your wives now at home—remember the day they were brides, and do not murder us quite—if, indeed, my Mark is not already murdered." "Come, come, Mrs. Sweetlips, no more whining—you shall not want a husband. I will marry you myself, and so, I dare say, will the sergeant there, and also the corporal. Now you have had indulgence enough, so stand back a bit; and do you, Master Paleface, come forward, and down upon your marrow-bones."

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BY HER SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHER.

"Clara Stone tries me more and more. With her bright, quick mind, she might be a great help in the class; but her careless air and flippant answers are enough to spoil all the other girls. Still, I pity the poor, foolish child so much, I think with such distress of her soul's danger, that I bear from her what I never should have supposed I could. Her assurance and self-complacency are so offensive that only the hope of doing her good could make me endure it."

BY HER PASTOR.

"That cruel Clara Stone—what mischief she does among these young people! I fear she sets herself deliberately about laughing away their serious thoughts, lest they should be Christians and leave her alone! How defiantly she repels every approach of the loving Saviour makes to her haughty heart! Warnings and sweet, inviting voices are alike disregarded. If any one bears patiently and kindly with her, for Christ's sake, she fancies herself irresistibly charming to them. Oh, the egregious folly of self-conceit!"

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LEAVE NO HEART UNWOOD.

O leave no heart unwood'd, unsought, Which life's oft-varying scenes have brought Within the power to aid; Think that with each thy Lord draws nigh To mark thy greeting. Know His eye Rests on each effort made.

With every wound thou stoop'st to bind, Or tear-drop stay,—thou too shalt find Thy views of Him expand. While grateful love thy path attends, The praying poor are richest friends; Who for his God, most lib'ly spends, By liberal things shall stand.

From the German.

THE SECOND MOTHER.

"What can be the matter with our swallow?" asked little Kate, with much concern; "he is flying about the nest like a crazy bird, crying as hard as he can cry. His mate is setting on her nest and doesn't pay the least attention to him. I am afraid he is sick, or something else is the matter. Will you please come out to the corner of the wood-shed, mother, and see if you can find out what the trouble is?"

Mother kindly consented, and laying down her work went out to the wood-house. The bird was certainly in great distress, and her heart was touched, as her little daughter's had been. This was their pet swallow, who came and built his nest the very spring little Katy was born, and he had faithfully returned to it every season since.

Mother asked Hannah to bring her the step-ladder, and mounting to the top, soon found out the cause of the disturbance. The poor little mate sat on her nest stone dead. She took her down, and little Katy shed many tears over the lifeless bird. The melancholy mate assumed the position of his companion, brooding over the eggs for an hour or two, but after that time seemed to consider his task much too troublesome for his fancy. His sorrows were quickly healed, and he flitted off briskly to try his fortune among his friends. His suit seemed successful, for before long he came back with a second mate, who assumed the duties of the lost one, and reared and cared for the brood just as if they had been her own. She showed a decided energy in their early instruction, and would not allow them to remain like lazy little lumps in the nest long after they were able to fly. No, indeed. One heavy, indolent fellow thought he would defy her authority. Perhaps somebody had hinted in his hearing that she was only his step-mother; but he found her arguments irresistible. She crowded him up to the edge of the nest, after repeatedly instructing him how to fly, both by her precept and example, and then gently pushed him overboard. Now it was fly or fall, so he was compelled to spread his lazy wings, and make an awkward attempt at it. She knew they would never get the start of insects they were to live on, so she arranged them all on a rail, and proceeded to give them their breakfast. It was no use for a greedy little bill to clamor for a nice morsel when it was not his turn. She fed them often, and in exact rotation, until they were able to take care of themselves, and were in all respects as exemplary as bird-mother could desire.—Presbyterian.

ANSWERING ADVERTISEMENTS.

A Boston storekeeper the other day stuck upon his door the laconic advertisement, "A boy wanted." The next morning, on opening the store, he found a little urchin in a basket, labeled "Here he is."

THE POWER OF A SINGLE WORD.

Some sixty years since, a boy overheard his mother say that she had dedicated him to the service of God as a missionary. That was a simple remark, accidentally, as it seemed, dropped into the ear of a happy but thoughtless boy. Had the reader heard it, would he have considered it the seed of a majestic tree? Let us trace its fruits.

When that boy, Samuel J. Mills, was his name—grown to young manhood, gave his heart to Christ, his mother's remark grew into a thought of power within him. Driven for shelter from a grove prayer-meeting one day by a thunder-storm, to the shelter of a haystack, with four other youths, he uttered his thoughts by proposing to send the gospel to Asia, and asserting, "We could do it if we would!" His holy enthusiasm was caught by the others, and the five young men founded a society "to effect, in the persons of its members, a mission to the heathen."

This was the beginning of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions!

Fifty years have passed since the memorable meeting beneath the haystack. Behold the fruits of that little assembly in the thirty-nine missions, with their two hundred and sixty-nine stations and out-stations; the one thousand and two hundred and fifty-eight missionaries sent out; the one hundred and forty-nine churches, with their fifty-five thousand communicants; formed; the three hundred and sixty-nine schools; the ten thousand Sabbath-school children, and the thousand million pages of gospel truth printed through the labors of that noble Board! To this grand fruitage has that mother's remark grown in sixty years.

"MORE HAY."

An old gentleman who was always bragging how folks used to work in his younger days, one day challenged his two sons to pitch on a load of hay as fast as he could load it. The challenge was accepted, the hay wagon driven round, and the trial commenced. For some time the old man held his own very creditably, calling out, "More hay! more hay!" Thicker and faster it came. The old man was nearly covered, still he kept crying, "More hay! more hay!" At length, struggling to keep on the top of the ill-arranged heap, it began first to roll, then to slide, and at last off it went from the wagon, and the old man with it. "What are you down here for?" cried the boys. "I came down after the hay!" answered the old man, stoutly.

Let him who thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall—in other words, it is better to look closely after our own foundation for faith than to be over anxious about other people's uprightness and moral status.

TRYING TO FIND JESUS.

When I wrote to you last I could not sing Jesus is mine, and I cannot yet, I am sorry to say. I attended the inquiry-meeting last Sunday, and three or four kind ladies came and talked to me, but I did not weep, but I felt as though I should if a little girl spoke to me. By and by a little girl came and talked to me, and asked me if I had found Jesus. I could not answer her for I began to weep. Oh, Mr. Hammond, I am so unhappy! I have tried to find Jesus, but I cannot find him. I will try and not give up trying. Please pray for me that I may soon be happy working for Jesus. From your loving little friend, ROSA.

If you, my dear little friend, feel now as the writer of this little letter which you have just read did, then here is a letter, which I hope will help you, from one who can say,

"I THINK I HAVE FOUND JESUS."

This Sabbath-school scholar, you see, had been trying for two years to find Jesus, but not in the right way. Seeking Jesus will never save you; but trusting Jesus will. This scholar sought Jesus a long time, you will see, but did not trust him. The moment you trust Jesus you are saved. The moment you will give yourself into his loving arms he will fold you to his bosom, and you will hear his gentle words, "I WILL NEVER LEAVE THEE NOR FORSAKE THEE." Heb. xiii. 5. My dear little friend, if you should weep all your life it would not make you any better. A good many think that if they weep a good while Jesus will be ready to receive them, and this is a great mistake. I have known some children come with simple faith to him who died to save us, without shedding a tear.

A few weeks ago I saw a Sabbath-school scholar in a meeting in Philadelphia, who told me that she had found the Saviour that evening; and yet she had not shed a tear. I have since seen her Sabbath-school teacher, and he told me that he had no doubt but that she did, that very evening, sweetly yield herself to God.

I most earnestly pray that as you read this letter you too may

"Cast your deadly doing down, Down at Jesus' feet."

I think I have found Jesus. I have been trying to become a Christian for the last two years. I felt the need of a Saviour; but did not know what to do. I had no one with whom to talk, so I would pray and read my Bible, but found no peace. When these meetings first commenced I did not think much about them; but when all my friends went, I thought I would too, and perhaps find the peace I was seeking. I went three or four times that was all, but did not stay to "inquiry-meeting." On Saturday night I would stay, but my companion would not stay for fear some one would speak to her; but I am glad she has since found the Saviour.

Monday I remained with my teacher, and she talked and prayed with me and asked me how I felt, and I told her I thought I had to cry and do something before Jesus would take me; but I found I must only "lay my deadly doing down," and come "just as I am." Tuesday I came here, but felt no better. When I went home I prayed, but it seemed as if Jesus was not here, and I could not hear him; but next morning he seemed to be right by me, and I felt happier. I stayed at home away from school, and I felt very sad that I had for so long gone astray. Yet I did nothing but sing all the morning. I think it was then I found Jesus, and now I mean to work for him, for I read in my Bible this morning that "faith without works would not last."

Please pray for me that I may not be deceived, and that my faith may last until death.

Below is another which may help you to see the way to come to Jesus. These little letters have often done more than any words of mine to show children and others the way to be saved.

I pray that as you, my young friend, read these words from one who says "I began to think that I was a sinner," you too may be able to say,

"THE LORD HEARS MY PRAYER."

When I first heard of the meetings I thought I would go. I went the first Sunday you were here, and could not get in. Then I asked some of my school mates if they would go on the Monday following, they said they would. And so on Monday, after school was out, we went. It was in Dr. Fish's Church, and we sat in the second seat from the door. I didn't hear much of what you said, only about the little tack hammer, and that interested me very much, and then when you asked the children why it wouldn't take the large nails up, they said they were sinners, and then I began to think that I was a sinner. You said you would close the first meeting by singing a hymn, and then there would be an inquiry-meeting. I did not stay to inquiry-meeting, for I was afraid to have any one speak to me about my soul. I went home, and that night I could not sleep, for I was thinking what a great sinner I was. After lying awake until pretty near midnight, thinking how wicked I was, I went to sleep. I thought I would go the next afternoon, and I went and stayed to inquiry-meeting, and pretty soon Dr. Parker came and spoke to me, and he asked me if I loved Jesus, and I told him I wanted to love him. I went home that night, and prayed that Jesus would take me just as I am. I went to all the meetings that week, and on Friday morning I got up and felt so happy I went all around the house singing, and I believed the Lord heard my prayers. I love to read the Bible now, and I love to pray. I used to love to read my Bible but not as I love to read it now. Please pray for me that I may love Jesus, and work for him more and more.

FOR THE LITTLE FOLKS.

FAMILIAR TALKS WITH THE CHILDREN. III.

BY REV. EDWARD PAYSON HAMMOND.

HOW TO FIND JESUS.

"I HAVE TRIED TO FIND JESUS, BUT I CANNOT." Here is a letter from a little girl not more than ten years old. I remember her very well. I shall never forget how she sat and sobbed as if her little heart would break. But I saw her a day or two after—as happy as a lark, and again about a year after, and she was clinging to Jesus still. During the children's meetings in the city where she lived, you might have seen her speaking and praying with her little friends, who felt just as she felt a few days before, when she could not sing "Jesus is mine."

She afterwards wrote me a sweet letter telling me that she had found Jesus, and was full of joy. I shall let you read her first letter just as she wrote it to me. Perhaps you have at times felt