

The Family Circle.

TIED OF LIFE.

O, there are moments when I long to go, When this life's burdens seem too great to bear; My feet are weary of this hard, rough way, And disappointment meets me everywhere.

For the Little Folks.

FAMILIAR TALKS WITH THE CHILDREN, X.

BY REV. EDWARD PATSON HAMMOND.

KATIE KNOCKING AT THE DOOR OF HEAVEN.

Here is a beautiful story for you, my dear little reader. I know it will interest you.

One day last spring it was repeated at a children's meeting in one of the large churches in New York. They were delighted to hear it, and I know you will be glad to read about this dear little Katie.

The warm sun of a summer's day poured through the windows of the village-school, and small curly-heads drooped like delicate flowers in the languid air.

Her little eyes had forgotten to look over the hard words in the well-worn spelling-book. Yes, in the heated air little Katie had fallen asleep.

She threw herself upon the wet ground, and sobbed aloud. "Katie," said Belle, half frightened at this outburst, "let us go home now, and come again to-morrow and try."

She rose without another sob or fresh tear even upon her wet cheek; but the griefed expression of the sweet, childish mouth was pitiful to behold.

At Katie's door stood her anxious mother, peering through the shadows for her darling. The child sprang to those loving arms, and sobbed aloud—"Oh, mother, mother, I have been knocking at the door of heaven, and Charley would not let me in!"

Poor little Katie! It almost makes me weep to think of her. How anxious she was to see her darling Charley in heaven! But she did have a good guide.

Jesus says, in John xiv. 6: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Yes, Jesus is the way to heaven; and if Katie wishes to see her little brother among the shining angels, she must first come to Jesus.

He loves to take little children by the hand and lead them to heaven. He is the child's guide to heaven. He will be your guide to heaven if you will go to Him and put your little hand in His, and trust Him and follow Him. He knows just where heaven is. He will never disappoint those who keep by His side.

His words in that same sweet xiv. chapter of John are: "Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also."

I love to think that there will be a great many little shining ones in heaven. If you should die to-day, do you think you would go there? Not unless you have come to Jesus and got a new heart. Unless you are a little Christian, you would not be happy if you should go to heaven.

The Bible says: "Prepare to meet thy God." Are you prepared? Jesus has died a dreadful death on the cross for you. He suffered for your sins, and he is able to make you fit for heaven, and will take you there if you will believe in Him with all your heart. Perhaps your little brother, or sister, or some friend has gone up to live in heaven, and you want to meet them some day. Do you feel sad? When Katie wept to think of

"There!" responded little Belle, pointing to the little rising ground and the iron door of the village vault. "Oh," faltered Katie, with disappointment, "is that heaven? Oh, Belle! it is like a great grave!" and the little lips quivered sadly.

"Why," said Belle, "that is where they took your little brother—the very place—and you said he had gone to heaven; besides," continued she, brightening, "when we get through the little dark door, it may be all bright and beautiful on the other side."

"Perhaps it is," said Katie, more hopefully. But now the raindrops began to fall very fast, and the thunder storm burst upon the little travelers. The west seemed gleaming like an ocean of flame.

Still the little children, with clasped hands and pale lips, pressed on, and the angels, who, "do always behold the face of our Father," watched over them, and they walked secretly in the heavenly company.

At last the busy pattering feet reached the gloomy entrance, and Katie's sweet, hopeful lips were pressed close to the cold door.

"Knock," cried Belle; and with all her strength Katie did knock, and a hollow echo was still the reply, while the dead form within heeded not the call from fresh, young, hopeful lips; and the little brother, with closed eyes and pale, clasped hands, heard not the sweet cry.

"Charley, dear Charley, it is your own dear sister Katie; won't you open the door?" "He does not hear you, Katie, it thunders so," said Belle; "let us wait a little while," and they waited.

Soon there was a lull in the storm, and again Katie, strong in faith, knocked at the dreary door, and her loving cry, "Charley, dear Charley," echoed sadly back.

"Do you hear anything?" asked Belle, with parted lips; "is he coming?" "No," replied Katie; "I thought I once heard his little feet, but it was only the rain."

"Perhaps he is playing with the angels a great way off, in a beautiful garden." "Oh!" sobbed Katie, "I hope he will not love that little angel more than me."

"Knock once more—only once," whispered Belle. With wavering faith again the little soft hand plied for admission, and the tremulous voice cried piteously—

"Charley, darling, dear, sweet little brother, please open the door to your own poor Katie. Don't love the little angels better than me. Oh, Charley! Charley!"

She threw herself upon the wet ground, and sobbed aloud. "Katie," said Belle, half frightened at this outburst, "let us go home now, and come again to-morrow and try."

She rose without another sob or fresh tear even upon her wet cheek; but the griefed expression of the sweet, childish mouth was pitiful to behold. Back again over the dreary way went Katie and Belle. Little shoes wet, little dresses dripping, little heads bent down like dew laden flowers, little hearts very heavy.

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her brother far away, whom she wanted to see so much, little Belle was full of tenderness for her. But Jesus loves you a great deal more than little Belle loved Katie. Can't you hear his gentle loving words, "COME UNTO ME." "I AM THE WAY."

Oh, then, go to Him now and offer this prayer: Dear loving Jesus, I want to go to heaven and meet my dear friends there. Please to show me the way. I am lost—I can't find the way alone. And Oh, I am such a wicked sinner! I am not fit for heaven now. Please to give me a new heart so that I can love and trust and follow Thee all the way to heaven. Amen.

HEARING THE SERMON.

"Mother," said a little boy, one Sabbath, "mayn't I stay at home? There's no use for me to go to church, I can't understand one word the minister preaches about, I do not want to go."

"Not one word?" asked his mother. "No, not one word," he said in that positive tone little boys are apt to have. His mother thought he had better go; but he twisted his limbs and pouted his lips, and said he didn't want to go. I dare say you have seen little boys do so.

"If puss went to church, I should not expect to see her understand a word. If Rover went, I should not expect him to understand, or the cow, or the pig; but I should have expected better things of a boy. I wish you to try again. See if you cannot, at least, understand one word the minister says. After that we will see." Mother looked very sober as she spoke, and the little boy did not quite like to be put on the same shelf with cats and pigs.

After a little more talk, the church bells rang, and he went off with the honest wish in his heart to listen to the sermon and learn what a little boy could.

His father was out of town and his mother sick at home; so he and his two older sisters, with a man, occupied the "pew." Henry liked the singing, for he could find the hymn in the hymn-book; and keep his eye on the place. He could bow his head when the minister prayed, and liked to hear "Our Father who art in heaven."

When the sermon came, he fixed his eyes on the minister's face, and his mind on the minister's words, trying to find something he could understand. Nobody was more attentive than Henry.

When he got home, "Mother," he said "I did get one word out of the minister's sermon. I got 'God.' He said God ever so many times, and I kept thinking God, God, God all the way home. I said to myself, God made the sky; God made the trees; God made the rain; God made the little ants; he made the busy bees. God made me—my hands to handle with, and my eyes to see with, and my mind to learn with. But God didn't make my new jacket with those bright buttons, did he? You made it, mother."

"God created the lamb's wool for the weavers and spinners to make cloth of," said his mother; "and down in the dark earth he created the substance of brass for the button-makers to use."

"Then without God it would not be," said the little boy. "What a big, good God he is!" "Yes," said his mother, "and how we should desire to know him more and to please him constantly in every thing we do!"

"I think as much," cried little Henry, as if a bright new thought had struck him. It was bright and new to him, because he had worked it out all himself, and his little mind kept on the subject, for he asked his mother questions growing out of it four or five days after.

Now, was it not better for that little boy to go to church, than to stay at home? Aside from the duty and privilege of taking our little children with us to the house of God, some parents think there is not much use for them to go, because they cannot understand. I am sure there are few so small but a precious little seed-thought, even no bigger than one word, may be in their tender souls for the shoots and blossoms of early piety.—Child's Paper.

HOW A DRUNKARD WAS CURED. I was once a hopeless drunkard, a poor lost man. My friends made every effort to save me, but it was no use. I resolved again and again, with many tears, to break off from the cruel bondage, but I couldn't. I took the most solemn vows that I would reform; but Satan was too strong for me, I could not stand to them a moment.

In despair I went to the Fishing Banks. There I felt drawn towards a poor young fisherman, whose face was very pleasing. I liked to look at it; and he kindly showed me how to fish. At last, out of gratitude for the little favors he showed to me, a perfect stranger, I pulled out my flask of liquor and offered him a drink.

"No," he said, "I never taste intoxicating drink, and I ask the Lord Jesus to help me never to touch it." I looked at him with surprise. "Are you a Christian?" I asked. "Yes, I hope so," he said. "And does Jesus keep you from drinking intoxicating

drink?" I asked. "He does, and I never wish to touch it." That answer set me thinking. It showed me a new power, one that I had never tried. I went home that night, and said to myself as I went, "How do I know but Christ would keep me from drinking if I asked him?"

As soon as I got to my room, I knelt down and told the Lord Jesus what a poor miserable wretch I was—how I had fought against my appetite, and had always been overcome. I told him, if he would take away my love of drink, I would give myself up to him for ever, and ever love and serve him. And I tell you that Jesus took me at my word. He did take away my love of strong drink then and there; so that from that sacred hour of casting myself on his help, I have not tasted a drop of liquor, nor desired to taste it. The old thirst for it is gone. When I gave myself to Jesus, I received him as a power in my soul against every enemy of my salvation, and he saves me in his infinite grace.

THE HOUR OF NORTHERN VICTORY. [The general drift of this poem, by Fanny Kemble, meets the approval. By the disclosure from the intimation that all necessary punishment for the crime of treason has been administered already.]

Roll not a drum, sound not a clarion note Of haughty triumph to the silent sky; Hush'd be the shout of joy in every throat, And veil'd the flash of pride in every eye.

Not with *Te Deums*, loud and high Hosannas, Great we the awful victory we have won, But with our arms reversed and lower'd banners. We stand—our work is done!

Thy work is done, God, terrible and just, Who hast set upon our hearts and hands this task, And kneeling, with our foreheads in the dust, We venture peace to ask.

Bleeding and writhing underneath our sword, Prostrate our brethren lie, Thy fallen foe, Struck down by Thee through us, avenging. Let us—

By Thy dread hand laid low. For our own guilt have we been doomed to smite These our own kindred, Thy great laws defying; These, our own flesh and blood, who now unite In one thing only with us—bravely dying.

Dying how bravely, yet how bitterly! Not for the better side, but for the worse, Blindly and madly striving against Thee, For the bad cause where Thou hast set Thy curse.

At whose defeat we may not raise our voice, Save in the deep thanksgiving of our prayers, "Lord! we have fought the fight!" But to rejoice Is ours no more than theirs.

Call back Thy dreadful ministers of wrath, Who have led on our hosts to this great day; Let our feet halt now in the avenger's path, And bid our weapons stay.

Upon our land, Freedom's inheritance, Turn Thou once more the splendor of Thy face— Where nations serving Thee to light advance, Give us again our place.

Not our bewildering past prosperity, Not all thy former ill-requited grace, But this one boon—Oh! grant us still to be The home of hope to the whole human race. —London Spectator.

THE SOLDIER'S PLEA. "How am I to know that you are, as you claim, a returned soldier?" asked a gentleman of one seeking relief.

"By my wounds," was the prompt reply. He pointed not to his military dress—impostors wore the same. He told not of battle scenes, but he pointed to his wounds as the proof of good service, as almost an order on demand for the help he needed.

What significance in three words! How are you to know that Christ, the mighty God, loves you and will save you? Jesus points to his pierced hands and feet, to his bleeding head and open side. He has not merely pitied you, he has suffered for you. Can any read from his hands the reward of his agony unto death, the free salvation he offers to "whosoever will?" Have you stood in doubt of his love? He points to no uncertain proof: "By my wounds." Is not that enough?

What depth of meaning in this reply; authority for your trust, reproach for your lingering fear, tenderness for your weakness, love beyond measure!

By what can you prove your love and faithfulness to such a Saviour? Not they who merely bear his name and boast of their "many wonderful works," have the unchangeable test which Christ himself gave: "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Looking with prophetic eye into "the last days," Paul could emphatically exclaim, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." It may come in the form of death, of reproach, but in some form it will surely come if you are faithful. Lift your eyes and see the faithful around you still "partakers of Christ's sufferings." Not yet is the warfare ended.

Take then the word of cheer: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him."

What wounds have I, not self-inflicted, not rashly provoked, but gained in the wise and earnest discharge of duty? What does my religion cost me? —American Messenger.

THE BIRTHDAY GIFT.

It was little Sarah's birthday; and when she awoke bright and early, and came down stairs, she found a beautiful canary in a pretty cage awaiting her, as a present from her mother. So expensive a gift cost Mrs. Ellis some self-denial, but she thought it would make her little girl happy, and do her good to have such a bright, gentle little pet to love and take care of.

Sarah was as delighted as her mother expected, and could hardly find words to express her thanks and joy. But her smiling face, as she fed her bird, and called it all pet names, and then, as if too full of joy to be still a moment, left it to kiss and thank her kind mother once more, was pleasure enough for Mrs. Ellis.

When the child's raptures were over, her mother told her how much she longed to see her growing up a good child, loving God, and trying to please him, and that she hoped this birthday would be the beginning of a new and happy life of devotion to his service. The little girl listened attentively, and promised to try to be good, and felt that it would be very easy and pleasant to do right when she was so happy.

The day passed joyfully away till towards evening, when a sad event occurred. Sarah went out into the garden to gather some flowers, and left the cage standing on a little table by the window, and the bird was singing his good-night song. Just then pussy looked into the room, and seeing the canary, jumped up on the table. The door of the cage was safely shut, so that she could not reach the bird; but in jumping she knocked the cage off the table. The shock killed the dear little birdie; and when, hearing the noise, Sarah ran in, its singing was hushed for ever.

The poor little girl forgot all her good resolutions in her grief and anger, and would have killed poor pussy, if her mother had not come in and taken her away. She would not be pacified, and said many naughty things to her kind mother, who tried to comfort her; till at last, seeing that soothing was of no use, she had to be sent away to her own room.

So ended the mother's effort to do her child good as she thought, and as she sat alone listening to the angry sobs in the other room, she felt sad and discouraged. She had prayed most earnestly that her little girl might begin the new year of her life aright, and had tried to make her good and happy.

But this was not the end. In the stillness of her own room, when the first burst of passion died away, poor little Sarah thought with shame and terror of her naughtiness. She was frightened to remember how angry she had felt even at her mother, who had been so kind to her.

"And I meant to be so good to-day, and please God in every thing. What shall I do; what shall I do?" This feeling of utter powerlessness to make the heart right is often the beginning of the new life. So it was with Sarah. God was teaching her the lesson, so hard to learn, that her heart was sinful, and that without his help she could not please him. And in that silent evening hour, while her mother was mourning over the apparent failure of her hopes and prayers, they were more than answered, and with the humble cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," Sarah entered the narrow path which leads to happiness and heaven.

The bird's short life was over; but it had done its work very differently from the mother's hopes that morning, but more speedily and surely. God often thus answers our prayers when they seem furthest from accomplishment, for "His ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts." —American Messenger.

THE TWO HOMES. Two houses stood within sight of one another; but they were so different that you might think it strange to hear them spoken of together. One is a large, beautiful house, with marble pillars, round which twine rare vines. Statues and vases of flowers adorn the grounds, mingled with dark evergreens; and winding paths stretch far away through a beautiful park. Within, all is splendor and luxury; and the one little child who gladdens the house is clothed in costly garments.

There, just outside the edge of these grounds, stands the other house—a small, low cottage. There is no garden around it, no shading trees, no lovely flowers, nothing to attract the eye except its great neatness. Within, bare walls, and only clothing and food enough to sustain life, and that earned by hard labor. But here, too, is a baby, only the more loved and rejoiced in that the mother must deny herself to make even the plain dresses it wears.

So different can life be within the circuit of a few rods! In one day, a messenger came to both houses, a messenger from the Great King, who cares not for the distinctions of rich and poor; and he was commissioned to take the babies from their mother's arms, and carry them to a better home.

So in hall and cottage there was weeping, and in each, the darling of the household lay pale and still in its little coffin.

In the finest linen one little child was dressed, and rare flowers filled the small rosewood coffin. A long train of carriages followed it to the grave, where a marble monument was raised over the little form.

In the other home, with much effort and sacrifice, a plain coffin, a white dress, and a few sweet lilies were given as a last offering of affection to their darling, and a small band of friends followed the little coffin, on foot, to the quiet graveyard, where no stone will ever mark the spot.

But here the contrast ends. The babies are now in one home, the exceeding glory of which is such that the difference of their earthly homes sinks to nothing in comparison.

They are both clothed in the glorious garment of Christ's righteousness, and together sing before His throne, "Glory, glory, glory be to God on high."

Weeping mother, when you think of all you meant to do for your baby, of all the riches he was heir to, remember that your child has entered on a richer inheritance, has a more glorious home, and far better teachers than your love could give him. And so be comforted by the thought of his infinite gain.

And you, poor mother, when you feel that the light of your humble home has gone out, and the one joy of your dreary life is lost, remember the blessed change for your darling. The want and labor which crush your heart can never reach him; he will never be tired or hungry. And when a few more years of toil shall be passed, you may rest from your labors, and have your darling back again.

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." —British Workman.

FREEDMEN S. S. SCHOLARS. A correspondent of the Christian Intelligencer, writing from the Freedmen's Village, on the Arlington estate, says:—

The Sabbath-school last Sabbath was full of interest. The day was bitter cold and blustering, but two hundred and forty-two of the scholars were present. I doubt whether any schools in your city were as well attended. The singing was most inspiring. They bring out the choruses of our popular Sunday-school melodies with a power seldom surpassed. They love to study the Bible, and never tire of listening to the wonderful narratives and histories it contains. Many have committed large portions to memory. One bright little fellow, five years old, recited to me, without a mistake, the first sixteen verses of the fifth chapter of Matthew. He also gave me an account of the Deluge, describing, graphically, the ark, which, he said, was as big as the chapel, and with a door in the top "to keep the rain from swashing in."

They are often very vivid and picturesque in their descriptions. One of them, telling the Superintendent the story of David, "who was a boy that minded his father's sheep," said that Goliath "was a mighty strong man with an iron cap and brass pantaloons, and wanted to fight David. He had a big sword and spear; but David had a slung-shot, and he picked up five little rocks and put them into his haversack, and went out to fight Goliath. The big man was so mad, he cursed and swore awfully, and David took his slung-shot and chucked him in the head with a rock, and then chopped his head off; but if the Lord hadn't helped him, he could never have done it." He evidently had the ideas, if his version was not the received one.

THE TRUE REASON. A young merchant, who had failed in business, having spent in four years a legacy of ten thousand dollars, in addition to any profits realized, was met by a thrifty young mechanic who had formerly been on terms of intimacy with him. During the conversation which ensued, the merchant said to him, "How is it, Harry, that you have been able to live and save money on the small sum which you received for your services, while I found it impossible to live in my business with a good round ten thousand dollars to back me?" "Oh," said the mechanic, "that is easily understood. I have lived with reference mostly for the comforts and tastes of myself and family, while you lived mostly with reference to opinions and tastes of others. It costs more to please the eye than to keep the back warm and the stomach full."

LIFTED HIGHER. A girl thirteen years old was dying. Lifting her eyes towards the ceiling, she said softly, "Lift me higher! Lift me higher!" Her parents raised her up with pillows, but she faintly said, "No, not that! but there!" again looking earnestly towards heaven, whither her happy soul flew a few moments later. On her gravestone these words are now carved: "Jane B., aged thirteen, LIFTED HIGHER."