

V. A. M. S. Family Circle.

THE THREE SONS.

BY REV. J. MAULTREE.

I have a son, a second son, a simple child of three;
I'll not declare how bright and fair his little features be,
How silver sweet those tones of his when he prattles on my knee;
I do not think his light blue eye is like his brother's keen,
Nor his brow so full of childish thought as his has been;
But his little heart's a fountain pure of kind and tender feeling,
And his every look's a gleam of light, rich depths of love revealing.
When he walks with me, the country folk, who pass us in the street,
Will shout for joy, and bless my boy, he looks so mild and sweet.
A play-fellow is he to all, and yet with cheerful tone
Will sing his little song of love, when left to sport alone.
His presence is like sunshine sent, to gladden home and hearth,
To comfort us in all our griefs, and sweeten all our mirth.
Should he grow up to riper years, God grant his heart may prove
As sweet a home for heavenly grace, as now for earthly love;
And if beside his grave, the tears our aching eyes must dim,
God comfort us in all the love that we shall lose in him.

I have a son, a third sweet son, his age I cannot tell,
For they reckon not by years and months where he is gone to dwell.
To us, for fourteen anxious months, his infant smiles were given,
And then he bade farewell to earth, and went to live in heaven.
I cannot tell what form his is, what looks he wears,
Nor guess how bright a glory crowns his shining seraph brow;
The thoughts that fill his sinless soul, the bliss which he doth feel,
Are numbered with the secret things which God will not reveal.
ut I know (for God hath told me) that he is now at rest,
Where other blessed infants be, on their Saviour's love breast;
I know his spirit feels no more this weary load of flesh,
But his sleep is blessed with endless dreams of joy forever fresh.
I know the angels fold him close beneath their glittering wings,
And soothe him with a song that breathes of heaven's divinest things.
I know that we shall meet our babe, (his mother dear and I),
Where God for aye shall wipe away all tears from every eye.
Whate'er befalls his brethren twain, his bliss can never cease.
Their lot may here be grief and fear, but his is certain peace.
It may be that the tempter's wiles their souls from bliss may sever,
But, if our own poor faith fail not, he must be ours forever.
When we think of what our darling is, and what we still must be;
When we muse on that world's perfect bliss, and this world's misery;
When we groan beneath this load of sin, and feel this grief and pain,
O! we'd rather lose our other two than have him here again.

THE GOLDEN RULE.

It was a chilly, foggy evening in autumn. Edith sat by the window, looking out into the gray gloom, in a state of mind something like that of the weather, disconsolate and depressed, she could not tell why. She was not alone in the room; her father was there, and a group of brothers and sisters. "No one takes any notice of me, or cares if I feel sad," she thought. "Now, when one feels gloomy, it is so pleasant to have somebody come and cheer one up." Conscience whispered, "Do you know what is the matter with you? You are a little tired, and idle, and cross." She did not listen much to the voice. Suddenly there darted into her mind the words which she had taught little Lulu that morning. "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." She did not care to listen to these words either; but they would not be dismissed; they seemed to say themselves over and over again in her memory, more times than little Lulu had repeated them in her anxiety to say them correctly at school, till at last she began to see what they meant. "I wonder," she said to herself, "if I really must do for somebody else everything that I want somebody else to do for me." She turned from the window, and went and stood by her father's chair. "Father," she said, "you must have had a wet and disagreeable walk home. Don't you want your slippers?" "Why, yes, I be-

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A LETTER TO THE CHILDREN.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS:—If you will all come up here, I will show you two gardens just over the way. They are very interesting gardens—interesting because they convey such useful lessons. They are real gardens; but I shall not tell you the real names of the owners, and you must guess what is meant by the names.
Mr. Workwell Thrifty owns one of the gardens. It is a great pleasure to look in upon his garden. Every thing is growing so nicely, and withal in such perfect order. Not a weed is to be seen. On one side is a row of evergreens; on another, a row of maples; on the other two sides are currant bushes. Within, all sorts of vegetables are growing in abundance, to supply the wants of Mr. Thrifty's large family.
Mr. Get-up-late Shiftless lives next door, and owns the other garden. It is just as good land as Mr. Thrifty's garden is, but the weeds have choked down all the onions, beans, carrots, squashes, potatoes, etc., and I am quite sure there are not enough of them to pay for the gathering. The fences, too, are all down. There are no nice trees about the garden, no currant bushes; and, altogether, the garden is a very unprofitable affair.

Mr. Shiftless has complained a great deal about the weather. It has been too hot, or too cold, or too dry. The cut-worms, he thinks, devoured considerable of the stuff. But none of his talk would do. People would not believe it. There was Mr. Thrifty's garden on one side, and his on the other side. What could make the difference? What do you think could make the difference, my dear friends? Ah! I guess you have got the right answer. It was laziness that made the garden so bad. We won't call it by any other name; that is good enough. Mr. Shiftless did not enrich his land; did not stir well the soil; did not keep the weeds down. Mr. Thrifty did all these things, and succeeded. Often while Mr. Shiftless was snoring in bed in the late morning, or spending the precious hours with drunken companions at the tavern, Mr. Thrifty and the boys would be hoeing lustily at the weeds—cutting them all down.
Now, dear children, you know what I have told you this for. As I hinted once before, you will come at the meaning before I get at the explanation. You know that your minds may be compared to gardens, where weeds will grow and choke the good seed if they are not early cut down. If you early cut down the weeds that start to grow in the garden of your minds, the good seed will produce ripe, beautiful fruit. Have you any bad habits? Cut them down now; let them not have a place in the garden. Is there a worm of sin gnawing into the fruit that you are trying to raise? Kill it at once, and let no more of those pests come near.
In short, endeavor by strict watching and earnest prayer to cultivate good habits. You can not afford to be idle, for if you stop trying to be good and do good, you will be very apt to engage in something mischievous. Keep down all the bad weeds, my little ones.—Rel. Telescope.

ABOUT LILIES.

A friend who has just gone far up into Vermont sends back word that the ponds all along the road are "starred with lilies" forming a milky way the whole distance. The same white water-lilies are the native queen of the New England summer, afloat in their palaces of ivory and gold, and exacting homage from every passer. Barefoot boys along the road do not covet them with more intensity than the merchant-princes in railway cars, whose over-tasked thoughts are refreshed with the glimpse of their purity. They are to be found in the sequestered country places where water runs and debouches into ponds and ponds and shallows are made regal with their presence. It is nothing to see middle-aged men suddenly become enthusiasts in their quests, scaling stone walls, trampling through miry reaches of meadow, and wading knee-deep to pull them up by their leathery stems from the mud, with ash or alder poles cleft at the smaller end. They are very beautiful when coiled up in shallow glass dishes on the country parlor tables, but their true beauty is disclosed as they sit on the water with their white garments of royalty about them, opening their bright eyes with the morning sun and shutting up the gates to their golden hearts with the fading day. There is no flower of summer,—no, nor of winter either,—more simply elegant, divinely fragrant, and regally superb, than a "great white water-lily." It symbolizes whatever is pure and beautiful in human life and character,—whatever is rich and golden in the human heart. The lotus of Eastern streams never could be the flower to us that the pond-lily of New England is, fringing our inland ways of travel with its matchless floating stars, and leading the thoughts along the cool and pleasant recesses where the mornings are full of freshness and the nights come down in peace.—Boston Post.

AN ARTLESS ARGUMENT.

Naimbanha, a black prince, arrived in England, from the neighborhood of Sierra Leone, in 1791. The gentleman to whose care he was entrusted took great pains to convince him that the Bible is the Word of God, and he received it as such with great reverence and simplicity. When he was asked what it was that satisfied him on this subject, he replied: "When I found all good men minding the Bible, and calling it the Word of God, and all bad men disregarding it, I then was sure that the Bible must be what good men call it, the Word of God."

THE NATION'S DEAD.

BY REV. DR. MARCH IN HIS THANKSGIVING SERMON.

Four hundred thousand men,
The brave—the good—the true,
In tangled wood, in mountain glen,
On battle plain, in prison pen,
Lied dead for me and you!
Four hundred thousand of the brave
Have made our ransomed soil their grave,
For me and you!
Good friends, for me and you!
In many a fevered swamp,
By many a black by-gone,
In many a cold and frozen camp,
The weary sentinel ceased his tramp,
And died for me and you!
From Western plain to ocean tide
Arestretched the graves of those who died
For me and you!
Good friend, for me and you!
On many a bloody plain
Their ready swords they drew,
And poured their life-blood, like the rain,
A home—a heritage to gain,
To gain for me and you!
Our brothers mustered by our side,
They marched, and fought, and bravely died,
For me and you!
Good friends, for me and you!
Up many a fortress wall
They charged—those boys in blue—
Mid surging smoke, and volley'd ball
The bravest were the first to fall!
To fall for me and you!
These noble men—the nation's pride—
Four hundred thousand men have died,
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In treason's prison-hold
The martyr spirits grew
To stare like the saints of old,
While amid agonies untold,
They starved for me and you!
The good, the patient, and the tried,
Four hundred thousand men have died,
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A debt we never can pay
To them is justly due,
And to the nation's latest day
Our children's children still shall say,
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TRADES CARRIED ON BY BIRDS, BEASTS, AND INSECTS.

"Please to tell me something to amuse me, uncle, will you?"
"Well, if I am to talk to amuse you, it must be about something entertaining. Suppose I tell you of the trades which are carried on by the lower creatures?"
"Trades! Why how can they carry on any trade? Do you mean to say that beasts, and birds, and such like carry on trades?"
"You shall hear. The fox is a dealer in poultry, and a wholesale dealer, too; as the farmers and the farmers' wives know to their cost."
"That is true, certainly."
"Not satisfied with chickens and ducklings, he must needs push on his trade among the full-grown cocks and hens; and many a good fat goose is conveyed to his storehouse in the woods."
"A wily trader in his way is Reynard, both by night and day."
"And what other creature carries on a trade besides the fox?"
"The otter and the heron are fishermen, though they neither make use of a line nor a net. It is not very often that we catch sight of the otter, for he carries on his trade, for the most part, under the water; but the heron is frequently seen standing with his long, thin legs in the shallow part of the river, suddenly plunging his lengthy bill below the surface, and bringing up a fish. You cannot deny that the heron and otter are fishermen."

"No, that I cannot; but never should I have thought of it, if you had not told me."
"Ants are day-laborers, and are very industrious, too, in their calling; they always seem in earnest at their work. Catch them asleep in the daytime, if you can. They set us an example of industry."
"Ants freely work, without disguise: Their ways consider, and be wise."
"Go on, uncle; I am not half so tired as I was."
"You seem all attention, certainly, Henry. The swallow is a fly-catcher; and the number that he catches in a day would quite astonish you. Often have you seen him skimming along the surface of the brook and the pond."
"Yes, that I have; and swallows are as busy as ants, I think."
"The beaver is a wood-cutter, a builder, and a mason; and he is a good workman at all these trades. He cuts down the small trees with his teeth; and after he has built his house, he plasters it skillfully with his tail."
"Well done, beaver! He seems to outdo all the rest."
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"How many curious things there are in the world that I never thought of!"
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"I am afraid that you are coming to the end."
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FOR THE LITTLE FOLKS.

FAMILIAR TALKS—2D SERIES.—IX.

BY REV. EDWARD PATSON HAMMOND.

THREE HAPPY CHILDREN.

Among a pile of letters on my table, from children and young converts, I have just found three, which I am going to put together and let you read them. You can't help but enjoy them. My heart has been filled with gladness at the reading of them. I never tire of reading such letters.
There is no sight in the world so beautiful to me as a company of children who have truly given themselves up to the blessed Saviour, and who, for His sake, have had new, singing, happy hearts given to them.
I think there must have been a great many happy children on earth when Jesus was here in the flesh. I think there is but one place in the Bible where Jesus is said to have "rejoiced"; that is in Luke x. 21: "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Jesus seems to have rejoiced that very little children, as young as three years, could understand the way of salvation.
Dr. H. C. Fish, of Newark, was greatly struck in hearing the children in Rochester all over the city singing "I love Jesus," and such little hymns of praise. The reason was, hundreds there had just found Jesus and were happy.
I wonder if the children of Jerusalem did not sometimes go about the streets singing such hymns? When "the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God with a loud voice, saying Blessed is the King that cometh in the name of the Lord," I think there must have been some children among the number. And that may have been the reason why the wicked Pharisees said to our Saviour, "Rebuke thy disciples." But I am glad He would not do it. He loved to see them so happy, and so "He answered and said unto them, I tell you that if these should hold their peace the very

stones would cry out." Also, while on this triumphal procession to Jerusalem, I think there must have been some little ones who "took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet Him, crying Hosanna! Blessed is the King that cometh in the name of the Lord."

There are some people, now-a-days, a little like those Pharisees. They seem troubled when they hear little children with joyful hearts "Sing the praise of Jesus' name."
I, too, sometimes have been a little troubled when I have seen a number of children manifesting a great deal of joy in large children's meetings; not but that I love to see them happy, but because I have feared that some good men who had just come in to the meeting to look on, might mistake such great joy for levity. We are commanded to "rejoice in the Lord always," but we should take care to avoid "the appearance" of trifling lightness.
I wonder if my little reader knows what it is to be happy in the love of Jesus? Estelle, who lives on the shores of Lake Michigan, whose letter you will now read, says:

I NEVER KNEW WHAT HAPPINESS WAS TILL I FOUND JESUS.

I am so very happy. I have found Jesus and learned to trust in Him. I used to think I was happy, but I have found that I never knew what happiness was, until I found Jesus as my friend. I have attended most of all of your meetings, and at first was not very much interested in what was said. I stayed to the inquiry-meetings, and some one would come and talk and pray with me, and I would feel sorry at the time; but when they would leave me I would try and forget what they had said, and go on as before. But the time came when I saw and felt how very sinful I had been, and that I must become a Christian. It makes me shudder to think how I had rejected that blessed Jesus who died for me. It was three weeks ago that I went to the meeting, and a gentleman came and talked with me, and I felt I must give up, I must love Jesus. I tried to pray, and very soon I seemed to see light, and I felt so happy, and so different from what I did when I first came into the room. I went home very happy, and that night told my mother, and she was very happy. She told me I had taken a step which I would never regret, and which would make me happy all my life. Sometimes I felt perhaps I have not found Jesus, after all, perhaps I was only indulging a false hope. One day a gentleman speaking in the meeting said, among his remarks to young converts, "Satan will tempt you oftentimes, and tell you that you are not a Christian—you are only deceiving yourself. And," said he, "if you are not careful, you will believe him, and not look to Jesus." Ah! I thought I, that is just what I have been doing. I have been listening to the voice of Satan. I fully resolved to trust in Jesus from that time, and I have been happy ever since. Yesterday it seemed to me that I had everybody about Jesus. For the last week I had been praying for my brother, who did not love Jesus, and last night I asked you to pray for him, and was going across the church, when I met a lady friend, who said to me, "Do you know anything about your brother?" Yes, said I; there he is sitting. "Well, but," said she, "don't you know the good news about him?" I asked what it was. And she says, "He thinks he has found Jesus, and he is henceforth determined to be a Christian." O, those words! how happy they made me. I felt that surely I should trust, for Jesus had answered my prayers and made me happy. I said my prayers, that I may continue to be happy and love Jesus more and more. Pray for my brother also. From your loving friend, ESTELLE.

I FEEL VERY HAPPY.

I have been to most all your meetings. At first I did not feel much interest in them; but finally, after you had been talking about the love of Jesus to sinners, and asked those who thought they had found the dear Jesus to raise their hands, I was not one of them. This was on the 14th of April. When the inquiry-meeting began, a young Christian began to tell me about the love of Jesus. I saw what a great sinner I had been in rejecting the dear Jesus so long. And after she had talked to me awhile, she knelt down and prayed for me; and after she had prayed for me, I prayed for myself, and then it seemed as though I felt happier; and when I got home I prayed to Him again. And now I think that He has given me a new heart, and now I can sing "I love Jesus, yes I do." Now I love Christians, and I love the Bible, and I love to pray to the dear Jesus, and I love to sing about Him. Now I feel very happy and have done, since I have had a new heart, and I have loved to work for Him, and I hope that everybody will love Him. I am thirteen years old, but I love close. Yours, truly, ALICE.

I FEEL HAPPIER THAN I EVER DID BEFORE.

I think I have found the dear Jesus, and He is very precious to my soul. I think I feel happier than I ever did before. I love to pray more, and read my Bible more. I am very glad that I have a friend, so when I am in trouble I can go and tell all to Him. I feel just as if I would like to keep singing and praying all the time.
From your little friend, twelve years old.
Do you, my little friend, know what it is to be really happy? Do you love to pray and to read your Bible? If not, do not rest till you go and ask God to take away that naughty heart, that makes you so often unhappy and miserable. He will do it for you for Jesus' sake. Will you not, then, offer this

PRAYER?

Heavenly Father, show me, by thy Spirit, what an unhappy sinner I am. Show me how Jesus left his happy home, and led a life of sorrow, and suffered a dreadful death, that I might have my sins all forgiven, and be made happy here, happy when I die, and happy through eternity. This I ask, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

AMBITION often plays the wrestler's trick of raising a man up merely to fling him down.

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