# The Family Circle.

[For the American Presbyterian.]

## THE BURDENED HEART.

"'Tis night! in gloom and doubt
I watch the drear, cold rain;
The stars have quite gone out;
None careth for my pain."
"Take up thy load, poor heart,
A darker night I knew,
For thee, a crown to gain."

"The night wears on: and yet
This burden presseth sore.
Long years the sun hath set;
Will the day dawn no more?"
"Take up thy load, poor heart,
To save thy soul from death,
A heavier cross I bore."

"The way is steep and rough,
My trembling limbs ask rest;
Speak Lord—say 'tis enough;
O, fold me to Thy breast."
"Take up thy load, poor heart,
For thee dark Calv'ry's Mount
My weary feet have prest."

"But Hope and Joy are dead;
Thy face I cannot see;
For Faith has well nigh fled;
O! *turn not* from my plea."
"Take up thy load, dear heart;
In love, in love 'tis sent,
Then bear it, child, *for Me*."

C. A. L.

## THE ROBBIN IN THE COTTAGE;

### OR GOD FEEDETH THEM

Through all that trouble the Boltons had never once recourse to the parish officer for relief. They might quite justly have applied for it, but they did not. Sam said to Mary, "Let us wait, and see if we can do without. We have been helped so far; may be God will help us through without."

One day when the purse was quite empty, and the cupboard very nearly so, Sam opened the Bible, and read aloud that verse which says, "Bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure." "That is a promise, Mary," he said, "a promise our Father in heaven has made, and, depend upon it, He will keep his word."

It was morning, after the elder children had gone to school, or Sam could not have seen to read; for when the cupboard is empty of bread, it is sure to be empty of candles. Mary had nothing to cook that morning, and she had nothing to mend. She had made up the smallest possible fire, and then she sat down with a sad heart to consult with her husband as to what they must do next. It was then that Sam, feeling they had got very near either to the begging or the starving point, opened his Bible, and read that verse with his wife.

"We have often prayed, Mary," he said. "We have often said, 'Give us this day our daily bread;' but I do believe this is the first time we ever asked for it because we knew we had none, and should have none for the children when they come home, unless God sent it to us."

Mary raised her eyes, and looked at her husband, but said nothing. Perhaps that was because it was as Sam said, the first time she had fully realized her entire dependence on God's providence. Mary was naturally more careful and anxious than Sam. She had more difficulty in learning to trust God than Sam had. The house-door was shut, for it was a bitterly cold day in January; but the sun sent a bright stream of light across the cottage floor, and just as Sam had finished reading, a little robin dropped down on the floor, and looked at them with its large, trustful eye. It was accustomed to find crumbs on the sink where Mary washed up the dishes; but finding nothing there that morning, it sat on the edge of a tub for a moment, and then, perceiving the back door to be open, it darted through, as robins do, in their sudden and unexpected manner, and stood on its slight legs looking up in Sam's face. The children had let some crumbs fall at breakfast, and a few of these had escaped Mary's broom and settled themselves between the flags. The robin made a sudden dart, and snatched up one of them, then paused a moment before he swallowed it, and then he stood and looked at Sam again. Another and another crumb was detected by the robin on the floor that had seemed guiltless of one to Mary and Sam. At last the robin, after a long gaze at Mary, suddenly appeared on the edge of the cradle, where little Tom lay sound asleep. Warmed, filled, and comforted, the little bird instantly poured forth its clear, winter song. The loud notes disturbed the sleeping child, and he opened his eyes and smiled.

"'Obbin sing sweet song; 'obbin sing for Tom," said the little one. Baby that he was, Tom knew quite well that he must be still if he wanted the robin to pay them a visit; so he did not stretch out his hand to catch it, though it was so close to him. He only pointed with his tiny finger, and smiled.

At last Sam said, "It has found bread where we thought there was none."

Mary said, gently, "Neither store-house or barn, and yet God feedeth them. I never thought I was filling a store-house for it when I swept the floor this morning. Lord increase our faith."

And Sam and Mary knelt down side by side, and prayed.

It was the 26th of January, the day before the tenth anniversary of their wedding-day. Sam had overlooked that fact; Mary had not. She had been thinking how differently she had looked forward to the 27th of January ten years ago from what she did that day. All was hope then. She remembered how she had gone with her mother and Lucy to put the last touch to the cottage that day. How they had put the chairs and the table in their places, and set up the plates and jugs on the dresser; how Lucy had laid a cold fire, all ready to be lit next day; and how her mother had put a loaf and butter and a large pie in the cupboard; and now everything about her looked cracked and worn, and the cupboard was absolutely empty. Poor Mary! The only thing that remained the same was her love for Sam—their love for each other. If Poverty had come in at the door, love had not flown out of the window in their case. "For better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, cherish, and obey." Quick as thought Mary's heart ran through her wedding vow, and she felt that poverty only bound them closer together to each other; and when she looked at her husband and her child—the one so deeply solemnized, the other smiling with innocent infantine delight—she called to mind how close joy and sorrow often are to each other, and how often God is preparing the one, while we are over-shadowed by the other; so she rose from her chair snatched her little boy from the cradle, and tossed him up in his father's face till he too smiled.

Then Mary said, "Now, Sam, what shall we do? We have prayed to God; still I don't quite see my way. You cannot work; we must do something, you know. Shall I go to Mr. Lister's, or shall I speak to Miss Dysart? We must think of the children."

"I think," said Sam, "you shall go to the parsonage and ask Mr. Vernon's advice. They will trust us at the baker's yet, I dare say. Oh! this getting into debt; it does go against my grain."

Poor Sam! indeed it did. So Mary took her shawl and bonnet down from the peg, and was just going to put them on, when she gave a little shriek of joy, "If it is not Mrs. Grice!" and surely enough the door opened, and in walked that good old woman.

Mary felt so glad to see the face of a friend at that moment, that she fairly threw her arms round Mrs. Grice's neck, and burst into tears.

"I am so glad to see you," she said; "so very glad. I never was so glad to see any one in my life. O, Mrs. Grice, we have been in such trouble."

"So I heard, my dear, and that is what has brought me. How now, Sam," she added, turning round to the fire; what's this I hear about your knee?"

"It has been a bad job, a terrible bad job for us. It was a kick from a horse—a young foal. He struck out when Lister was leading him, and a'most broke my knee-pan. A terrible job it has been."

"And you have been off work?"

"These five weeks," said Sam: "and I am not able to do a turn yet."

"Who has looked to you?" inquired Mrs. Grice.

"O, people have been very kind," said Mary—"very; but it takes a deal to maintain eight of us. The bread alone comes to a deal of money when there are so many."

"True," said Mrs. Grice; "and what seems very much to give, does not seem very much to get—answering the needs I mean. Mr. Pardshaw was dining at Mr. Dysart's yesterday, and he heard by chance of your trouble. It was a Mr. Vernon who told him; and he said he was afraid you were very hard up. So says my missus to me, 'Grice,' says she, 'you shall go over and see Mary;' and she put her hand into her pocket like a lady, and sent you this."

After fumbling about in her own pocket, Mrs. Grice produced an old leather purse, out of which she took something very small, folded in paper, and sealed like a doctor's fee. Mary's heart beat with surprise and thankfulness. She hastily broke the seal, and exclaimed:

"O, Sam, how kind of her; how very good of her! We shall get on now. God was filling a store-house for us while I swept the floor this morning, and we did not know it."

"'Obbin sang a song for Tom," said the child. The robin's song being recalled to his mind by his mother's mention of sweeping the floor, and the crumbs. Little Tom bent forward as he said that. He intended the information for Mrs. Grice.

"Sit down, dear Mrs. Grice," said Mary, "I only wish I could make you more comfortable," and Mary pulled a chair close up to the fire. She gave a faint poke to the fire. Poor thing, she did not dare really to stir it, because she had so few coals left, and they were so dear.

"Mary, honey," said Mrs. Grice, "will you go to the gate, and bring in my baket. I came by rail to the station, and I got a lad to carry it so far for me."

"Your cap-basket? O, yes, I will fetch it."

But the basket contained something considerably more substantial than Mrs. Grice's cap, as the little girls found to their delight, when they came home from school at noon.

That was a day to be remembered for its good dinner; and the spirits of the whole family rose upon it.

Things had passed the worst with the Boltons and then, after Sam's knee began to mend, they got to their usual average.—*Sam Bolton's Cottage.*

## THE UNWILLING VOYAGERS.

Some boys went, one Saturday afternoon, to play on the beach. The beach is a strip of land by the side of the great ocean. The was a boat moored in the sand not far off. "It is James King's boat," said the biggest boy; "let us jump in and have a row." "Let us, let us," cried the rest, all but Charley, who said, "No, no; we've no business with the boat without asking." "Pooh!" cried the big boy, "what a scarecrow you are; you like to spoil all our fun." Ben—that was the big boy's name—jumped in, and the rest followed; for boys, you know, don't often stop to think.

Charley said all he could against it, which made Ben angry, and he called Charley a coward. "O, it's only a make-believe row," said Ned, rocking the boat in the water, "for we can't push her off." Two of the boys pretty soon got out and went home. The smallest boy, Johnny Craig, wanted to follow, but Ben would not let him. "Sit still Johnny," said Ben. "I don't want to stay," cried Johnny, and he called Charley to come and hoist him out. Charley waded down to the boat. "Get out, Charley," cried Ben angrily; "you shan't interfere with my passengers." Johnny held out his hands to Charley, and Charley jumped into the boat for him. Once in, Ben took the notion not to let him get out. "Hold him, boys, hold him," he cried, while he tried to push off the sand. Presently the boat floated. "Get off now, Charley, if you can," cried Ben in triumph.

In the confusion on board, one of the oars fell into the water and drifted away. Ben tried his hand with the other, but not knowing how to manage a boat with one oar, he only turned it round and round, while the wind and the tide were swiftly carrying her further and further from the shore.

"Well, I can't manage her," said Ben, now pretty well sobered. "We shall likely be carried out to sea." "O, Ben!" cried Charley.

The boys shouted; but there was nobody on the shore to hear them. They saw a fishing-boat, and hailed her. She took no notice of them. One tied his jacket to the oar, and hoisted it as a signal of distress; but there was nobody to descry it. Night came on, and they were out alone on the wide, wide sea. Poor little Johnny cried piteously to go home to his mother; and did they not all think of mother and father and home? Charley put his arm round the little boy, and tried to comfort him. The moon rose—and so did the wind. The waves splashed and dashed into the boat, and the boys had to take their caps and bale it out to keep from sinking. At last the wind lulled. I cannot tell you how tired and cold and wet and hungry and troubled they were out on the wide, wide sea, with nobody but God to look after them.

"Ar'nt you frightened, Charley?" asked Ben, coming and sitting down beside him. "Yes—no," answered Charley; "I am not frightened when I think God will take care of us. He is as much on the water as on the shore." "But he seems so far off," said Ben, "and I am so bad." Charley tried to speak comforting words to Ben. I wish I could stop to tell you all he said. He was a Christian boy, and tried to lead Ben to God. Poor Ben, I should not like to have been in his place; should you? O, it was a long, lonely, dreadful night. When morning came, there was nothing to be seen but sky and water; and they lost, of course, all knowledge where they were.

It was Sunday morning. "They'll be thinking of us in Sabbath-school," said little Johnny. "May-be they are singing now. Can't *we* sing something?" asked Johnny. The boys gladly fell in with the plan; and some Sabbath-school hymns were sung until Johnny fell fast asleep. "Boys," said Ben, looking round, and the boys saw a softer look than his face ever wore before—"boys," he said, "I want to say something. It is all I who have done this, my wilful wickedness, and I want to ask you to forgive me, if you can; for—" his voice faltered, and he held out his hand to Tom, the boy next to him. "Will you forgive and shake hands with me, Tom?" he asked. The boys all shook hands with him, and tears came into Charley's eyes as he gave him his warm grasp. Charley then repeated some verses. "And, Charley," said Ben, "can't you pray God to help us in our great trouble and danger?" Charley knelt down and prayed, ending with the Lord's prayer, in which they all joined. Was not this better than blaming each other, or quarrelling and swearing?

Ben of late had been a wild, fast boy. He was a motherless boy, and I am sorry to say, he was trying to break loose from the kind care of a good father; but Ben could think it all over in this time of danger. It seemed as if every naughty thing he ever did came into his mind; and God sent his Spirit down to soften his heart and make him sorry, and to turn him to the Son of God, who can wash our sins away. As he sat looking over the wild waste of waters, nothing was said, and pretty soon one boy after another fell asleep. Ben tried to keep awake. "I must keep a good look-out," said he. But the poor fellow, overcome by fatigue and anxiety, at last sank down in the boat, and went to sleep with the rest. Poor little boat-load, what *will* become of them?

As soon as James King missed his boat—and the report spread that some boys went off with it—and the lost oar was picked up, all the village was alive with anxiety and fear. Soon a dozen boats went out in search for them. You can fancy the sorrow of fathers and mothers as night came on and wore away, and the Sunday sun arose without getting any tidings of them. On Sabbath afternoon some fishermen spied a little boat far out at sea, which seemed to have nobody in her. They made for her, and it proved to be the lost boat, with all the five boys fast asleep in the bottom of her. God be praised. She was towed home, and never was there greater joy in all the village.—*Child's Paper.*

## STRANGE FEMALE CUSTOM.

The following is a curious account of the habits and customs of some of the tribes in the interior of Africa, as we find it in the new volume of travels by David and Charles Livingstone, just issued by Harpers. Speaking of the women in Morambala, the narrative says:

These damsels looked with considerable disgust on the "men in bags,' as the trowsered whites were called. Even the less fastidious matrons quieted their children by threatening to fetch the white men to bite them. In their eyes, Dr. Livingstone, busy with the wet and dry bulb thermometers, was an object of pity, "playing with toys like a little boy;" but when they beheld the travelers spreading butter, "raw butter," on their bread, their disgust was beyond expression. They only use butter, after melting it, to anoint their heads and bodies.

The most wonderful of ornaments, if such it may be called, is the pelele or upper lip ring of the women. The middle of the upper lip for the ring is pierced close to the septum of the nose and a small pin inserted to prevent the puncture closing up. After it has healed the pin is taken out and a larger one is pressed into its place, and so on successively for weeks, and months, and years. The process of increasing the size of the lip goes on till its capacity becomes so great that a ring of two inches in diameter can be introduced with ease.

All the highland women wear the pelele, and it is common on the upper and lower Shire. The poorer classes make them of hollow or of solid bamboo, but the wealthier of ivory or tin. The tin pelele is often made in form of a small dish. The ivory one is not unlike a napkin-ring. No women ever appears in public without the pelele, except in times of mourning for the dead. It is frightfully ugly to see the upper lip projecting two inches beyond the tip of the nose. When an old wearer of a hollow bamboo ring smiles, by the action of the muscles of the cheeks the ring and the lip outside of it are dragged back and thrown above the eyebrows. The nose is seen through the middle of the ring, and the exposed teeth show how carefully they have been chipped to look like those of a cat or crocodile.

The pelele of an old lady, Chikanda Kadze, a chieftainess, about twenty miles north of Morambala, hung down below her chin, with, of course, a piece of the upper lip around its border. The labial letters can not be properly pronounced, but the under lip has to do its best for them against the upper teeth and gum. Tell them it makes them ugly; they had better throw it away; they reply, "Kodi! Really! it is the fashion!" How this hideous fashion originated is an enigma. Can thick lips ever have been thought beautiful, and this mode of artificial enlargement resorted to in consequence?

The constant twiddling of the pelele with the tongue by the younger women suggested the irreverent idea that it might have been invented to give safe employment to that little member. "Why do the women wear these things?" we inquired of the old chief, Chinsune. Evidently surprised at such a stupid question, he replied. "For beauty to be sure! Men have beards and whiskers; women have none; and what kind of a creature would a woman be without whiskers and without a pelele? She would have a mouth like a man, and no beard; ha! ha! ha!" Afterward, on the Rovuma, we found men wearing the pelele as well as women.

## LOVE AND OBEDIENCE.

In the manifestation of our love to Christ, by our obedience, the whole circle of the divine percepts must be embraced. Our obedience must not be eclectic—we must not choose some commands and reject others; for when it becomes such it is nugatory. "For he that keepeth the whole law, and yet offendeth in one point is guilty of all." Neither is it the right manifestation of love when one part of the record of our Master's will is preferred and exalted by us above another. Professor Hitchcock has justly remarked that if a Christian over-estimates the importance of some particular doctrines or duties, it injures the symmetry of his religious character, producing as much deviation from perfect transparency as color does in the crystal.—*The Revival.*

## WANTED—A MINISTER.

We have been without a pastor
Some eighteen months or more;
And though candidates are plenty—
We've had at least a score,
All of them "tip-top" preachers,
Or so their letters ran—
We're just as far as ever
From settling on the man.

The first who came among us
By no means was the worst,
But then we didn't think of him
Because he was the first;
It being quite the custom
To sacrifice a few
Before the Church in earnest
Determines what to do.

There was a smart young fellow
With serious, earnest way,
Who but for one great blunder
Had surely won the day;
Who left so good impression,
On Monday one or two
Went round among the people
To see if he would do.

The pious, godly portion
Had not a fault to find;
His clear and searching preaching
They thought the very kind;
And all went smooth and pleasant
Until they heard the views
Of some influential sinners
Who rent the highest pews.

On these his pungent dealing
Made but a sorry hit;
The coat of Gospel teaching
Was quite too tight a fit.
Of course his fate was settled;
Attend ye parsons all!
And preach to please the sinners
If you would get a call.

Next came a spruce young dandy;
He wore his hair too long;
Another's coat was shabby,
And his voice not overstrong;
And one New Haven student
Was worse than all of those,
We couldn't heed the sermon
For thinking of his nose.

Then, wearying of candidates,
We looked the country through,
'Mid doctors and professors,
To find one that would do;
And after much discussion
On who should bear the ark,
With tolerable agreement
We fixed on Dr. Park.

Here, then, we thought it settled,
But were amazed to find
Our flattering invitation
Respectfully declined.
We turned to Dr. Hopkins
To help us in the lurch,
Who strangely thought the college
Had claims above our Church.

Next we dispatched committees
By twos and threes, to urge
The labors for a Sabbath
Of the Rev. Shallow Splurge.
He came—a marked sensation,
So wonderful his style,
Followed the creaking of his boots
As he passed up the aisle.

His tones were so affecting,
His gestures so divine,
A lady fainted in the hymn
Before the second line;
And on that day he gave us,
In accents clear and loud,
The greatest prayer e'er addressed
To an enlightened crowd.

He preached a double sermon,
And gave us angel's food
On such a lovely topic—
"The joys of solitude."
All full of sweet descriptions
Of flowers and pearly streams,
Of warbling birds, and moonlit groves,
And golden sunset beams.

Of faith and true repentence
He nothing had to say;
He rounded all the corners,
And smoothed the rugged way;
Managed with great adroitness
To entertain and please,
And leave the sinner's conscience
Completely at its ease.

Six hundred is the salary
We gave in former days;
We thought it very liberal,
And found it hard to raise;
But when we took the paper
We had no need to urge
To raise a cool two thousand
For the Rev. Shallow Splurge.

In vain were all the efforts—
We had no chance at all—
We found ten city Churches
Had given him a call;
And he, in prayerful waiting,
Was keeping them all in tow;
But where they paid the highest
It was whispered he would go.

And now, good Christian brothers,
We ask your earnest prayers
That God would send a shepherd
To guide our Church affairs,
With this clear understanding—
A man to meet our views
Must preach to please the sinners,
And fill the vacant pews.

—*Lutheran.*

## THE NOVEL READER WARNED.

Grace Hallett sat in Miss Mason's room one Wednesday afternoon, busy with her crochet-work, and chatting with her Sunday-school teacher. Miss Mason encouraged her scholars to talk freely of everything that interested them. She wished them to feel perfectly familiar with her, so that they would not be afraid to speak when the theme was that of their soul's welfare. Moreover, she knew this was the true way for her to understand their characters, and to find out what instruction they needed. So, though time was precious to her, she never grudged the hours when her scholars sought her company. This afternoon, Grace was full of a new book she was reading. "It's well," said she, "that mother took a fancy to it, or I never should have seen it. She's just like the dog in the manger: she won't read novels herself, nor let me."

"O, Grace! don't speak so of your mother," said Miss Mason.

"Well, its the truth," returned Grace. "I think it's very narrow-minded."

"Even if it were the truth," replied Miss Mason, "nothing should induce you to speak so; you have no right to."

"Why, isn't it right to speak the truth?" asked Grace.

"No, indeed, not when love and gratitude and reverence to your parents call upon you to be silent. 'Honor thy father and thy mother' is one of God's holy commandments. You dishonor them by disrespectful comments upon their conduct: you are too young to be a fit a judge of it, especially if it is against your wishes. You cannot understand or know all their reasons. As to reading stories, you say yourself that your mother allowed you to read one this week."

"Yes; but she makes it a rule to read a story herself before she lets me see it. She says, she knows then whether it is good for me, and that it keeps me from reading too many."

"Now, Grace, how sensible and kind of your good mother! What a capital plan! Many stories are like too much candy: they spoil your appetite for good, nourishing food. Does not the Bible seem dull after an exciting story? and are not history and geography tame and flat?"

"O, dear, yes! I should like to read stories all the time," answered Grace.

"And our great Enemy would like to have you, no doubt. Much novel-reading makes one as dead to Christ's beauty, and to the happiness of a loving and useful life, as Satan himself could wish. Even where the tendency of the book is religious, an habitual novel-reader skips the religion to get at the story. Much novel-reading is like intemperance, as I've often thought. I once knew a young man whose mind was as drunk with novels as poor old Saunders is with rum."

"What became of him?" asked Grace.

"Why, he made himself a stupid, shiftless being—a mere wreck. When he went to college, he was a fine scholar; but he fell into this habit of novel-reading, and neglected his studies. He would sit up all night to finish an exciting story, and would, of course feel dull next day; then he would begin another novel to rouse himself; and, in this way, he lost all relish for other books. He sunk into a kind of lethargy when he was not under the stimulus of fiction, and kept returning to it exactly as a drunkard does to his liquor. Of course, he never applied himself to anything useful, and he seemed absolutely dead to relgious truth. His feelings had been so often excited by thrilling fictions, that he had none left for realities."

"O, well! I never should carry it so far," said Grace.

"Perhaps not, dear; yet you said that you would like to read stories all the time. Isn't it well that you are not left to yourself, but have a wise, mother, who knows the danger, and saves you from temptation? You have to do with real things Grace; with true things; with God and eternity; with our dear Saviour; and with all the real interests and joys of life. We want you to have a keen relish for the best and sweetest pleasures. When you are older, if you are a good Christian—as we are longing for you to be—you will have a delight in the Bible, and in beautiful things, and in good people, a thousand times more satisfying than any imaginary scenes. Then you will be able to judge for yourself what is good for you, and to deny yourself what is not. Till then, dear, Grace, I want you to trust your mother, and be thankful for her care."—*Christian Banner.*

## YOUR NAME IN THE BIBLE.

The Dutch farmers in Africa have held the black natives in great contempt, the same as the Southern planters once despised their slaves. As one of these farmers was riding out one day, he saw one of these blacks sitting by the roadside, reading. Checking his horse, he jeeringly asked, "What book have you got there?"

"The Bible," replied the Hottentot.

"The Bible! Why, that book was never intended for you."

"Indeed it was," replied the black confidenty; "for I see my name here."

"Your name! Where?" said the farmer, getting off his horse: "show it me."

"There!" said the poor fellow, putting finger on the word *sinners*, (1 Tim. i. 16,) "there! 'sinners,' that's my name. I am a sinner; so that means me."

The farmer was silenced; and, mounting his horse, he galloped away. So the children may claim the Bible for theirs, since they are not only sinners, but their other name, "children," "little children," is in the Bible a great many times.

## THE OLDEST REPUBLIC ON EARTH.

The *American Quarterly Review* contains a letter from George W. Irving, Esq., giving a sketch of his visit to San Marino, a small republic in Italy, between the Apennines, the Po, and the Adriatic. The territory of this State is only forty miles in circumference, and its population about seven thousand. The republic was founded more than fourteen hundred years ago, on moral principles, industry, and equity, and has preserved its liberty and independence amid all the wars and discords which have raged around it. Bonaparte respected it, and sent an embassy to express his sentiments of friendship and fraternity. It is governed by a captain regent, chosen every six months by the representatives of the people (sixty-six in number), who are chosen every six months by the people. The taxes are light, the farm-houses are neat, the fields well cultivated, and on all sides are seen comfort and plenty, the happy effect of morality, simplicity, and frugality.

To be loved by Christ, and to love Him, is the highest felicity of the human soul.