

Eye Family Circle.

THE CHILD OF THE LIGHT-HOUSE.

BY ANNE CASWELL.

The light-house keeper said to his child, "I must go to the mainland, dear; can you stay alone till afternoon?"

"Quite early I hope to be here," she tossed back her hair with a girlish grace.

"With Kit and Fido I'll have a good play when I've seen your boat glide by; then I'll gather shells and seaweed bright."

"God keep you, daughter!" the father said as he drew her close to his side.

"But what if a ship should pass to-night?" Then Billie anxiously said, "But can I—yes—I must strike the light!"

"The mist is thick—the bell must be rung!" Through the girlish arm was slight, the woman's heart to the effort sprung;

The morning breaks, and the storm is past! The keeper sets sail for home—his heart throbs deep, as his boat flies fast.

No shame to his manhood that tears fall fast, as he bends o'er the little bed; and wild kisses bedew the tiny hands.

IT WAS THE LITTLE SHOES THAT DID IT.

The writer once lived opposite a beer-shop called the "Fox and Geese," and with pained attention often watched the doings and heard the sayings of the customers.

Just then a tall man, very thinly clad, came out of the taproom, passed the bar, and saw the child stretching out her feet for her father to see.

Bill pulled his hat down over his eyes with one hand, clutched his old jacket tighter over his chest, and answered the words with a sort of grunt.

Bill's eyes were fixed on the child, and she goes close to him, feebly but yet coaxingly.

He took the child from her tired arm; the little creature gave a short, quick cry of fright, and as he lifted it, I saw its little feet were bare.

He drew them swiftly under his poor frock, but not before the father saw them. I wish his hat had been off, so that I might have seen his face as those two little, blue, chilled feet met his eyes.

From that night I was glad that I saw him no more among the frequenters of the "Fox and Geese."

He and his wife and child, for weal or woe, had dropped out of my ken, and almost out of my mind.

Some months after, there was a meeting at the temperance hall of the district, and many working men were present and gave their testimony to the good effects of sobriety; now and then they told little bits about their history—about the reasons that led them to give up the public-house.

The young man, thus urged, rose at the first word, and looked for a moment very confused. All he could say was, "The little shoes, they did it."

With a thick voice, as if his heart was in his throat, he kept repeating this. There was a stare of perplexity on every face, and at length some thoughtless young people began to titter.

Then Tommy was satisfied, and soon fell asleep. From that hour his father gave up his infidelity, and became a Christian. Here you see how useful to him were those gathered fragments of Bible knowledge which he had stowed away in his memory.

Now, my dear young friends, remember about these two kinds of fragments you are to gather. Begin at once to gather up the fragments of time, and the fragments of knowledge.

THE PRAYING BOY.

There was a gentleman in New York who was an infidel. He never went to church. He had no Bible in the house. He did not believe that Jesus was a Divine being, or that he died to save sinners.

His parents, though they were not Christians, taught him to say his prayers at night, and often he would ask them questions about God and the "happy land," which they had found it very hard to answer.

One evening, the little fellow was laying on the bed, partly undressed; his father and mother were seated by the fire. Tommy, as he was called, had not been a good boy that day.

His mother had been telling his father what he had done, and how she had to punish him for it.

"I don't want it, father—I don't want it there," said he.

"What is it, my child? what is it?" he asked.

"Why, father, I don't want the angels to write down in God's book all the bad things I have done to-day. I don't want it there. I wish it would be wiped out."

"Don't cry, my dear child," he said, "you can have it all wiped out in a minute, if you want."

"How, father, how?" asked Tommy, eagerly.

"Why, get down on your knees, and ask God for Christ's sake to wipe it out, and he will do it."

He did not have to speak twice. In an instant Tommy jumped out of bed, and knelt down by the bedside.

He put up his little hands, and was just about beginning, when he looked up and said, "O, father, won't you come and help me?"

This was a hard thing to ask. His father had never really prayed in his life. But he saw the great distress of his child, and how could he refuse?

So the proud infidel man got down on his knees by the side of his dear boy, and asked God to wipe away his sins. Then they got up, and Tommy went into bed again.

What a question was this to ask an infidel! But he felt that he must give up his infidelity, as he answered, "Why, yes; the Bible says, if you ask God from your heart for Christ's sake to do it, and if you are really sorry for what you have done, it shall be blotted all out."

A sweet smile passed over the face of the child as he lay his little head upon the pillow. But presently he sat up again in bed and said, "Father, what did the angel wipe it out with?—with a sponge?"

This was another question which almost staggered his father. He had been in the habit of saying that it was not necessary for Christ to shed His blood that men might be pardoned.

Then Tommy was satisfied, and soon fell asleep. From that hour his father gave up his infidelity, and became a Christian.

HOW JESUS COMES.

One evening the children in Falk's Reformatory at Weimer sat down to supper. When one of the boys had said the pious grace, "Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, and bless what Thou hast provided," a little fellow looked up and said:—

"Do tell me why the Lord Jesus never comes? We ask Him every day to sit with us, and He never comes."

"Dear child, only believe, and you may be sure He will come, for He does not despise our invitation."

"I shall set Him a seat," said the little fellow; and just then there was a knock at the door.

"Jesus could not come, and so He sent this poor man in His place—is that it?"

"Yes, dear child, that is just it. Every piece of bread and every drink of water that we give to the poor, or the sick, or the prisoner, for Jesus' sake, we give to Him."

The children sang a hymn of the love of God to their guest before they parted for the night, and neither he nor they were likely to forget the simple Bible comment.—Praying and Working.

A BOY STRUCK BLIND FOR BLASPHEMY.

The vengeance of the Almighty was visited on a boy named Richards, on Sunday week, says an English paper, in the most awful and sudden manner.

"Well, of course she takes care of me," said Bob, reluctantly. "But why can't she be different?"

"Just because you are not different, my boy. When you will think for yourself, she won't have to think for you. You would be in hot water every day of your life, if it wasn't for her."

Here was a disappointment for poor Bob. Even Uncle Ned was not pleased, after all. It seemed he had always got to be talked to, and corrected. He did not like his uncle so well as before, and felt rather sulky.

When the sun was getting low, they had caught enough of the pretty little "shiners" to make a nice breakfast; and putting up their fishing-tackle, they set out for home.

They will have taken hold on the life eternal, or have slid down into the abyss, in either case never to return.

GETHEMSEANE.

This hymn of Bishop Kingo, translated by Rev. J. Jeffrey, with the noble melody to which it is linked, is a popular favorite in Denmark.

Over Kedron Jesus treadeth To his passion for us all; Ever human eye weeping, Tears of blood for Him fell;

David once, with heart afflicted, Crossed the Kedron's narrow strand, Clouds of gloom and grief about him, When an exile from his land;

See how, anguish-struck, He falleth Prostrate and with struggling breath, Three times on his God he calleth, Praying that the bitter death

See now, in that hour of darkness, Battling with the evil power, Agonies untold assail him,

But, O flowers so sadly watered By this pure and precious dew, In some blessed hour your blossoms

When as flowers themselves I wither, When the life streams through my pulses Dull and even, and pass,

WHY BOB'S MOTHER SAID "DON'T."

"Dear me!" said Bob Wild, as he sat fishing by the Big Brook, one lovely August afternoon.

It was seldom Bob stopped playing and racing about long enough to think of anything else, so that Uncle Ned was rather surprised at this speech.

He was happy, too, to have his uncle near by, for Uncle Ned was his oracle. He went to college, and knew everything, as Bob supposed.

He could shoot a bird on the wing, and could catch quantities of fish. He was not old and tired out either; he liked to fly a kite for Bob, and would play blind man's buff in the evening.

"Why, Bob," asked this delightful Uncle Ned, "who is not always pleasant?"

"Well," said Bob, "I'm having a good time now, but it isn't so at home. I wish mother wouldn't always be talking to me, and stopping everything I do."

"O, Bob! I did not know you were such an ungrateful little fellow," answered Uncle Ned, though he spoke with a kindly laugh.

"What do you suppose is the reason that your mother takes the trouble to say 'don't' so much? Isn't it because you're such a heedless little chap that you would spoil everything and kill yourself, if she was not kind enough to keep watch of you?"

"Well, of course she takes care of me," said Bob, reluctantly. "But why can't she be different?"

"Just because you are not different, my boy. When you will think for yourself, she won't have to think for you. You would be in hot water every day of your life, if it wasn't for her."

Here was a disappointment for poor Bob. Even Uncle Ned was not pleased, after all. It seemed he had always got to be talked to, and corrected. He did not like his uncle so well as before, and felt rather sulky.

When the sun was getting low, they had caught enough of the pretty little "shiners" to make a nice breakfast; and putting up their fishing-tackle, they set out for home.

They will have taken hold on the life eternal, or have slid down into the abyss, in either case never to return.

Before his uncle had fairly turned round, the careless boy had jumped down the bank, and was leaping from stone to stone, across the bed of the brook.

Capt. Wild was after him in a moment, greatly alarmed because he made no outcry. He lifted him up, and bore him quickly back to the bank, but Bob was quite senseless.

His uncle was used to accidents and dangers, and did everything to restore him. By God's blessing he succeeded. The poor little fellow's forehead had struck upon a stone, but the blow was, providentially, just one side of that spot upon the temple where it would have been death.

It was growing dark as they came in sight of home, and Bob saw his mother looking out of the window, as if watching for their return.

"Well, Bob, my man," said Uncle Ned, kindly, "after all, mother would not have been so far wrong not to let you go fishing alone, would she?"

"I might have died in the water," said Bob, brushing away the tears. "I have been a bad boy, and mother is good, and so are you, Uncle Ned."

"We'll talk about that to-morrow," replied his uncle. "You are too tired now; but you must thank God to-night, Bob, that He has saved your life, and that he gave you a faithful mother."

FOREVER.

It is related of a late eminent servant of God, who resided in the north of Scotland, that in his youth he was often employed in tending a flock of sheep.

The pasture to which he led them, from day to day, was in a field pleasantly situated near a river. Once, as he lay on the bank of the stream admiring the ceaseless flow of the waters, he suddenly recollected having heard somewhere in a sermon "that a river was like eternity."

He felt now, as he had never before, the force of the illustration. Still gazing on the constant torrent, he said to himself: "When I die, I must go either to heaven or hell. If I go to heaven, my happiness will be like this river—always, always flowing; and if I go to hell, my misery shall be like this river—always, always flowing."

The thought clung to his mind, as hour after hour the stream flowed calmly by. It was the crisis of his life. No loud call from heaven, no alarming providence, no pathetic appeal stirred his soul; nothing but the still, small voice from the bosom of the tranquil river.

At length he returned home, but he could not shake off the impression. The Holy Spirit awoke him to the consciousness of his immortality, and constrained him to ponder whether that immortality should be an endless river of pleasure at God's right hand, or a ceaseless scream of anguish from the lake of fire.

Day after day he returned with his flock to the pasture, but every fresh glance at the river recalled to his mind that one towering thought—ETERNITY!

At last he could endure it no longer. He fled for refuge to the Saviour, received the sense of forgiveness through a believing apprehension of His cross, and thenceforward found the thought of future endless existence a source of comfort rather than alarm.

Subsequently, he was called to the ministry of the Gospel, and became a distinguished blessing to the Church. The circumstances which, under Divine guidance, originated his career, gave the tone to all its subsequent course. He habitually dwelt, not upon the seen and the temporal, but upon the unseen and eternal.

The contrast of sentimentality and spirituality upon this momentous theme cannot be better expressed than by quoting one of Tennyson's earlier minor poems, entitled "A Farewell." The poet writes:—

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea— Thy tribute-wave deliver; No more by thee my steps shall be Forever and forever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea, A rivulet, then a river; Nowhere by thee my steps shall be Forever and forever.

But here will sigh this alder-tree, And here thine aspen shiver; And here by thee will hum the bee Forever and forever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee, A thousand moons will quiver; But not by thee my steps shall be Forever and forever.

No one can fail to feel the exquisite charm of these verses—the tender, pathetic contrast between the constancy of nature and the fugitive, vanishing existence of nature's lord. But here the reflection ends. The poet tells us where his steps shall not be forever and forever, but he fails to say or hint where they shall be. After the last sun has quivered on the flowing stream—nay, long after the river itself has disappeared—those steps will be somewhere, and that forever and forever. They will have taken hold on the life eternal, or have slid down into the abyss, in either case never to return.

Ah! forever and forever is a thought which contains something more than poetry for a responsible being.—Visitor.

THE BLARNEY STONE.

Who has not heard of the Blarney Stone? Irish blarney is quite as familiar a term as Irish wit. Yet there are not many who know where and what is the Blarney Stone, that gives to the Irish who kiss it the persuasive power of the tongue, the all-prevailing flattery, that is said to distinguish them as a race.

Five miles from the City of Cork stands the Dojnon Keep and the ruins of the ancient Blarney Castle, where, in olden time, dwelt the McCarthys, Barons of Blarney. It was built in the fifteenth century, and the majestic strength and proportions of the work show that in its day, before our modern means of war were in use, it must have been a mighty affair.

In the midst of the wall on the north side, and supported by two timbers, several feet below the highest outlook of the castle, was a stone, which could not be reached unless you were held by the heels and so let down till you could touch it with your lips.

This stone fell from its place a long time ago, and now another is pointed out on another side of the castle, to be reached in the same way. I confess that I assisted in thus suspending two or three young Americans from Philadelphia, who were ambitious of adding to their other accomplishments this Irish endowment; and a lady of the party, who had no need of it, was content to reach it with her hand, and take the charm on her lips from the ends of her fingers.

And that none may be unable to kiss it, with true Irish liberality, a third stone is provided, warranted to be the original one that fell from its place, and this is placed on the ground, at the door of the castle; and you have only to stoop and touch it with your lips, and the virtue is precisely the same as that imparted by the one which is one hundred and twenty feet in the air.

Whence this silly tradition arose, nobody knows. Father Prout's Reliques gives the best account of its miraculous power:—

"There is a stone there, That whoever kisses, O! he never misses To grow eloquent.

"'Tis he may clamber To a lady's chamber, Or become a member Of Parliament.

"A clever spouter, He'll sure turn out, br An out and outer To be let alone!

"Don't hope to hinder him, Or to bewilder him, Sure he's a pilgrim From the Blarney Stone."

Around the old castle are the lawns, yet beautiful, though the ancient dwellers here are gone, and the halls are deserted and in wretched ruin.

A smart old Irish woman, who had apparently lived on Blarney stones, keeps the key of the rickety door, and shows the ruins, of which the glory has departed forever. The enchanted lake, close by, is said to have the family silver in the bottom of it, and the oldest son, from generation to generation, receives the secret of its hiding-place from his father, and when the castle is restored to the McCarthys, he will fish it out.

The "Groves of Blarney" are still flourishing, growing from year to year, for they are God's works; while towers and palaces and temples, made with hands, perish with those who made them.—S. J. Prime in N. Y. Observer.

THE MEASURELESS LOVE.

I can measure parental love—how broad, how long, and strong, and deep it is; it is a sea—a deep sea which mothers can only fathom.

But the love displayed on yonder hill and bloody cross, where God's own Son is perishing for us, nor man nor angel has a line to measure. The circumference of the earth, the altitude of the sun, the distance of the planets—these have been determined; but the height, depth, breadth and length of the love of God passeth knowledge.

Such is the Father against whom all of us have sinned a thousand times. Walk the shore where the ocean sleeps in the summer calm, or, lashed into fury by the winter's tempest, is thundering on her sands; and when you have numbered the drops of her waves, the sand on her sounding beach, you have numbered God's mercies and your sins.

Well, therefore, may we go to Him with the contrition of the prodigal in our ears and his confession on our lips—"Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight." The Spirit of God helping us thus to go to God, be assured that the father, who seeing his son afar off ran to meet him, fell on his neck and kissed him, was but an image of Him who, not sparing His own Son, but giving Him up to death that we might live, invites and now awaits your coming.—Dr. Guthrie.

LABOR IS GENIUS.—When a lady once asked Turner, the celebrated English painter, what his secret was, he replied: "I have no secret, madam, but hard work. This is a secret that many never learned, and don't succeed because they don't learn it. Labor is the genius that changes the world from ugliness to beauty, and the great course to a great blessing."