

The Family Circle.

THE PLACE OF SLEEP.

"Bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt."
Not where the restless wind and wave
Perpetual warfare keep,
Where winter's storms unfettered rave,
Would I be laid to sleep.
Though not a hurricane can break
That most profound repose,
Fain would I that last slumber take,
Far from those dreaded foes.

And not where childhood, rough and rude,
Profanes the solemn place,
Filling the holy solitude
With loud halloo and chase;
Or idle gossips gather round,
The clasp of the day,
Not there should my long home be found;
Leave me not there, I pray.

No! where those sleepers helpless lie,
The relics still so dear,
Should be a calm serenity,
Remote from gloom or fear.
The voice of grief, the song of praise,
Alone should echo there;
God's word the drooping spirit raise,
While He draws near to pray.

Rest for a while, ye blessed dead,
In Jesus sweetly sleep;
Love visiteth your lowly bed,
Both to rejoice and weep.
Absent from sight, how near in soul
Your presence still may be,
United in one glorious whole,
Still of one family!

OUR BABY'S GRAVE.

A RECOLLECTION OF CHILDHOOD.

One bright sunny day in the month of June, a little baby was born in our house. It had scarcely opened its eyes, nurse told us, ere it closed them again in death; and now it was lying stretched out in its miniature grave-clothes upon the top of the chest of drawers in the spare bedroom. A great mystery to us was that dead baby. How did it look? Could we see it? What would be done with it? In whispers the questions were asked of our old nurse, with scared faces and quivering lips.

"God has ta'en your wee baby sister home to heaven, my bairns," said nurse, solemnly; "it is a little angel already, I've nae doot."
"Is that 'cause she had no naughty heart like ours?" said the youngest of us.

"Na, my bairn, though the bonny lamb had nae sense to ken gude from bad, yet as sure as the flakes o' down from your big thistle in the yard, when they root themselves in the ground, will grow up nothing better than common thistles, sae sure may we be that the seed o' Adam's sin was in that wee heart; and that if our Saviour hadna shed his precious blood to wash away sin, even your little sister wouldna have been fit to go where the angels are."

"O, nurse, then are you not sure baby is happy now?"

"Ay, dearie, I am sure the newborn babe, that ne'er said nay to the kind Saviour, canna be cast out; and ye may be sure she's safe in his arms, when ye mind your Sunday text, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' Only mind this, my bairns, — ye are aulder, and ye ken what's right and what's wrong; ye ken when Jesus cries, 'Come unto me,' whether ye like best to turn and hear his loving voice, and try to show your love by doing his bidding; or whether ye think ye'll no heed religion till ye're bigger, and just gang your ain gate, and do your ain ways, as if He was nothing to you. Ye maun be washed by the Holy Spirit in that blood, afore ye can join the holy company in the happy land."

We were all too much solemnized to speak for a time, except the little one, who, smiling through her tears, said in her artless way, "I love Jesus; Jesus loves me, too; I not frightened to come to Him, and Him will help me to be good!"

While our kind old nurse fondled the little prattler, my thoughts went back to the subject so near all our hearts—our little unknown sister—and I mentioned the question—

"But baby's body, nurse—what is going to be done with its little body? Shall we see it?"

"O, yes; it's like enough ye'll see it afore it's put into its wee coffin that's coming to-morrow night."

This was the first time the actual presence of death had ever been felt by us children, and it affected us more or less, and in different ways.

For my own part I had a perfect horror at the thought of viewing that dead baby, perhaps because I had overheard one of the servants saying it was "my very image;" but though trembling with fear, at the same time I felt I could not rest till I had seen it.

Over and over again would I creep to the door of the bedroom where it lay, when no one saw me, trying to get a peep of it when the door should be opened; but just when my desire was about to be fulfilled, I would run away, only to return again when the door was shut.

In looking back to those early days, I can remember being a very sensitive child, easily excited. The stories that pleased the children, such as *Blue Beard*, and the *Forty Thieves*, or better still, a ghost story, sent a thrill of horror through me; and for nights after I would scream out with terror, awakening nurse, who always declared that she would never let me hear those stories again. Or, if an invitation came for a child's party, or an excursion in the country, the knowledge of it was kept from me till the very day it took place,

lest I should lie awake at nights thinking of it, or fever the whole household by day, through my excitement.

The little coffin was brought the next day and placed in the drawing-room; and a message came from our father, that if any of us would like to see the baby, we were to come down. Nurse knew well I had not slept all that night; and I saw by the determined drawing in her lips when I prepared to follow the other children, that she had made up her mind to prevent me. It was no use trying to persuade her that I would be better when once I had seen it—that my teeth only chattered because I was cold.

"That's a very likely thing to be on a June day!" said nurse, shaking her head; "na, na, I ken ye better; ye're ane o' the kind that will never do to look upon death, or ye become less tender, and so I'll no let you."

Feeling secretly thankful to nurse for preventing me, yet wishing all the time to go—being pulled, as it were, two ways—I sat down and cried, refusing to be comforted, though I could not have told any one why I wept.

The next day the baby was to be buried, and though I could not see its face, as the coffin was screwed down, I determined to see where they laid it. I slipped out unperceived by nurse, and hid myself a little way from the house, with the intention of following the little funeral, come what might.

We had been told to keep in the nursery, as girls were never seen at funerals in Scotland; and I knew I should be punished for disobeying, if found out. How I trembled when I saw them coming! A man, with a long cloak nearly touching the ground, walked first; and I saw that he carried the baby under it, followed by my father and a few friends. I stole out of my hiding-place and went after them. After a long walk they entered the cemetery; and I, fearing that my father might see me, kept outside.

I discovered in a field, not far distant, a high embankment that had been thrown up for the making of a railing, but had never as yet been used for that purpose. I scrambled up there, if perchance I might see from that height where they laid it. I was not disappointed as I thought; there they all were, gathered in a group, talking to the gardener. I had been some time in getting to the bank, and I knew they must have buried it; but its grave was there where they were standing, I did not doubt, and I was quite satisfied to think I could come and visit it by and by. I hastened home unperceived by any one, even managing to escape the vigilant eye of our old nurse.

Some weeks passed, and our house was as cheerful as ever; but the little baby was not as yet forgotten—nothing pleased the children better than to gather on the quiet Sunday afternoon round our mother's knee, to talk about that little nameless sister in heaven. But for my part I used to keep aloof from the circle, though eagerly listening to their prattle, for I could not realize to myself that the baby was anywhere but lying in that little grave in the lonely cemetery.

It was some time before I dared to reveal the secret of my disobedience, but my anxiety to see the grave at last overcame my fear of punishment; and my sisters, when they heard the story, contrived to coax our old nurse to take us there. Arrived at the gate of the cemetery, I bounded off before my sisters to the spot where I had seen our father standing. Yes, there it was, a little grave, with the grass grown quite thick upon it already, and round it a tiny border of earth filled with sweet flowers growing in little patches.

"This canna be it, Miss Mary," said nurse, coming up, just as I had seated myself on the turf-border near it.

"Not our baby's grave, nurse? I know it is; did I not see papa standing here with my own eyes?" I answered, my face flushing with indignation.

"I dinna doot that, Miss Mary; but the grass has grown on that grave for many a day, or I'm much mista'en; besides, ye couldna be sure o' the exact spot, ye ken, frae that distance, it may be farther along the walk."

We searched the whole walk from beginning to end, and not another small grave could be found; so every one was satisfied that I must be right. As for the grass and the flowers being there, we agreed that the gardener must like the little graves best, and so take greater care of them than the large ones.

It became a favorite walk to visit that little grave, even nurse got to like it; and though our mother could never be persuaded to go with us, yet she seemed pleased at our going, and would carefully press in the large family Bible, the one little sprig we ventured to pull.

And so time passed on, and the little baby had been dead a year, when some cousins came from London to visit us. We were allowed to go long walks with them, to show them the various sights in and around our native city. We took them everywhere we could think of; while our mother laughingly declared we had left not a single corner unexplored.

"Yes, mother, there's one place left still, the baby's grave," I whispered.

"O, your cousins will not care to see that, my dear," said our mother.

But they did care. When it was explained to them, those good-natured English girls entered into our feeling so kindly, and declared nothing would please them more than to go there.

At the cemetery gate I was allowed to pass in first; for somehow every one seemed to consider that little grave as my exclusive property. Arrived at the well-known spot, what was my astonishment, when I saw a lady dressed in mourning, busily engaged with a trowel freshening up the earth round the flowers. She had a little basket standing by her side with a rose-tree in full bloom, ready to be put in the hole she had made for it at the top.

What could it all mean? Who was the strange lady, that she should venture to touch our baby's grave?—a spot so sacred in our eyes, that, with the exception of that one little sprig for our mother, every blade of grass was carefully preserved. The hot angry tears rose to my eyes as I laid my hand on her shoulder; for though generally frightened for strangers, I felt no fear now.

"Why do you plant flowers on our baby's grave?" I said. But as I asked the question, nurse's doubts, when we had first discovered it, rose to my recollection, and I almost felt sure what the answer would be.

The lady raised herself and turned round to look at me. O! what a sweet face! it was—that large mild blue eyes gazed into mine—and the voice so gentle, as she answered, "My child, what do you mean? Your baby's grave! No, dear, it is my baby's grave."

I was struck with consternation, even though I had felt half-prepared to hear the truth. If this be true, where was our baby? Could it be possible, that all those months we had been visiting a strange baby's grave, and our little one lying neglected, and if so, where? My sisters and cousins seemed almost as perplexed as myself.

I could not tell the lady when she asked me to explain the story to her; I could not help repeating over and over again, while the tears rolled down my cheeks, "Where is our little baby if not here? O! where is our little baby?"

The story, however, such as it was, was told by one of my older cousins; and when the lady had heard it, she took me by the hand and said, "We will go to the gatekeeper, my dear children, and ask him all about it; I dare say he will be able to tell us."

The gatekeeper, when the matter was explained to him, and our father's name given, turned up a large book, and said he would soon solve the mystery if he could come with him. In solemn silence he marched on before us, away to the other end of the cemetery, up the steps above the vaults, to the highest part of the grounds, where the trees seemed scarce and newly planted; where few graves seemed to be as yet, and fewer flowers. Then striding across the grass, bidding us follow—though against the rules—he pointed to a small hillock, and abruptly left us. And this was our baby's grave. O, how different from the little one below! Not a single flower bloomed here, nor had a tree been planted, only a tuft of pink-eyed daisies half hidden away among the thin, ivy grass!

"I will never come back here any more," I said, as I turned to go away. The cemetery had lost its charm for me now, it was so difficult to think it possible that our baby-sister could be laying anywhere else than in that sunny border so full of flowers.

"O! yes, my child, you will come again," the lady said to me; "you will look now and then at the little Robert's grave as you pass, will you not? For I am sure, had you ever seen my boy, you would have loved him, he was so good."

"Was he quite a baby, ma'am?" asked one of my cousins.

"I will tell you about him, dears, if you will sit down by me. I should like you not to lose your interest in the little grave, although it is that of a child you never saw."

The short simple story was to this effect:—Little Robert was five years old, when he died, her only child, a bright, golden-haired, blue-eyed boy. How dearly his mother must have loved him! how the tears filled her eyes as she told us how good and patient he had been during his last illness!

"And young though he was, my children," said the lady, "he knew that Christ had died for him, that heaven was to be his future home; and on the night when he died, when he saw his father standing at the foot of his little crib weeping, he looked up, and told him not to cry, for his little Robert was going to heaven. He was what people call an old-fashioned child, perhaps pretty, from being the only one, and associating so much with grown-up people; and," continued the lady, "I, his mother, who had taught him that Jesus loved him, and that it was from God all good gifts and all trials came, rebelled in my heart against Him, and would not bend in submission to His will. Why should my boy be taken—my only child—while parents living close to me, who had many children, had all theirs spared to them? I thought, my heart would have broken, and my eyes seemed to have turned into balls of fire in my head, drying up

the tears; but I restrained my grief, and sought to say, "Thy will be done,"—when I saw my darling lying so patiently through his dreadful suffering, always giving the same answer, when I asked him how he felt, "Me better, mamma, me better!" trying in his childish way to comfort me. A few minutes before he died he clasped his little hands together, and said his prayers, finishing with the little simple prayer I had taught him:—

"This night when I lie down to sleep,
I pray the Lord, my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.
For Christ's sake. Amen."

Afterward he asked me to lie down beside him, and clasping his arms round my neck, he kissed me, and his last words were, "I going to sleep, mamma. Good-night, my sweet mamma!" And before the light of another day dawned, my little Robert was in heaven.

This was the history of the real inmate of that little grave. How much she missed him! for he had been her only companion sometimes, when his father, a sea captain, was away with his ship; and though he had been dead more than a year, she seemed to miss him more and more.

It calmed and soothed me to hear the story. There was something so gentle and resigned about her, that unconsciously I slipped my hand into hers and promised to go back again. I could never love the little grave as I had done before; but I would look kindly at it when I passed. And our own little baby, who had no history—who even had no name—was in heaven, too; it might be, perhaps, for those very reasons the angels had a special charge over her. But for many a day I was very sad when I thought of that little neglected grave; and many years passed, and changes came, and more graves were round it, before I visited it again.—*Christian Treasury, Edinburgh.*

THE TRUE STANDARD OF DRESS.

We are always excessive when we sacrifice the higher beauty to obtain the lower one. A woman who will sacrifice domestic affection, conscience, self-respect, honor, to love of dress, we all agree loves dress too much. She loses the true and high beauty of womanhood for the lower beauty of gems and flowers and colors. A girl who sacrifices to dress all her time, all her strength, all her money, to the neglect of the cultivation of her mind and heart, and to the neglect of the claims of others on her helpfulness, is sacrificing the higher to the lower beauty. Her fault is not the love of beauty, but loving the wrong and inferior kind.

In fine, girls, you must try yourselves by this standard. You love dress too much, when you care more for your outward adornings than for your inward dispositions, when it afflicts you more to have your dress torn than to have lost your temper—when you are more troubled by an ill-fitting gown than by a neglected duty—when you are less concerned at having made an unjust comment, or spread a scandalous report, than having worn a *passee* bonnet—when you are less concerned at the thought of being found at the last great feast without the wedding garment, than at being found at the party to-night in the fashion of last year. No Christian woman, as I view it, ought to allow it to take up all of three very important things, viz: all her time, all her strength, all her money. Whoever does this, lives not the Christian, but the Pagan life—worships not at the Christian altar of our Lord Jesus, but at the shrine of the lower Venus of Corinth and Rome.—*Mrs. Stowe.*

BEAUTIFUL ILLUSTRATION.

If a child had been born and spent all his life in the Mammoth Cave, how impossible would it be for him to comprehend the upper world! Parents might tell him of its life, its light, its beauty, and its sounds of joy; they might heap up the sands into mounds, and try to show him by stalactites how grass, flowers and trees grow out of the ground; till at length, with laborious thinking, the child would fancy he had gained a true idea of the unknown land.

And yet, though he longed to behold it, when it came that he was to go forth, it would be with regret for the familiar crystals and rock-hewn rooms, and the quiet that reigned therein. But when he came up, some May morning, with ten thousand birds singing in the trees, and the heavens bright and blue and full of sunlight, and the wind blowing softly through the young leaves, all aglitter with dew, and the landscape stretching away green and beautiful to the horizon, with what rapture would he gaze about him, and see how poor were all the fancys and interpretations which were made within the cave of the things which grew and lived without; and how he would wonder that he could ever have regretted to leave the silence and dreary darkness of his old abode!

So, when we emerge from this cave of earth into that land where spring growths are, and where is eternal summer, how shall we wonder that we could have clung so fondly to this dark and barren life!

REST.

I am waiting by the river,
And my heart has waited long;
Now I think I hear the chorus
Of the angel's welcome song.
O, I see the dawn is breaking
On the hill-tops of the blest,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary be at rest."

Far away beyond the shadows
Of this weary vale of tears,
There the tide of bliss is sweeping
Through the bright and changless years.
O, I long to be with Jesus,
In the mansions of the blest,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary be at rest."

They are launching on the river,
From the calm and quiet shore,
And they soon will bear my spirit
Where the weary sigh no more;
For the tide is swiftly flowing,
And I long to greet the blest,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary be at rest."—*Bonar.*

"I WILL WAIT TILL AFTER HARVEST."

I heard these words carelessly spoken, yet they rested with a sad weight on my heart, and echoed and re-echoed drearily for many days. One spoke who had advanced to manhood—that period of life when maturity is rapidly going forward, and the unmistakable signs of virtue or vice mark the chosen path.

Such an one, urged by a friend to go to church and regard the Word of God once more, made answer kindly, yet carelessly, "I will wait till after harvest." And now the harvest is past, the summer ending, and the soul of such an one may not be saved.

'Tis sad to see those who might be way-marks in society, honored by men and looked upon with approbation by God, yielding to vice against their better judgment; giving to Satan's service the talent, the time, the energy and ability of manhood; laying up no treasures in heaven; and establishing no permanent hope for the future which might make life charming, death cheerful, and heaven glorious. Waiting till after harvest ere they flee to Christ when wasted life and feeble body warn them Death is near—waiting until vicious habits and associates demoralize the heart and soul and take the energy God will claim at the last when the harvest of the world shall come. Waiting until after harvest—the summer-time of life passed in folly, the summer sun shining, not on the maturing fruit of manhood, but on the wasted wilds of life; and though the rich autumn-time comes with full garners, yet the heart is found wanting of the rich fruit of love and perfection God gives those who seek Him early.

How many are living blanks, as it were—the world absorbing all their thoughts; Time, though the tomb-builder, to them ever an unfeeling savor, wherein they shall sow and reap and have space for repentance. Waiting till after harvest! How many bright, beautiful and blessed dreams have faded as the harvest waned; how many hopes of better days and deeds have fled with life's autumn-time; how many tears have been shed over wasted treasures, lost forever; how many visions of brightness have died as the harvest-time closed and the summer ended, leaving the soul desolate and alone, standing garbless in the face of Death.

Why not, then, accept love and mercy now, so kindly offered, and begin at once a pure and peaceful life, hastening to redeem the wasted moments, losing sight of the world awhile, looking inward and above—resolving to do noble deeds, live noble lives, and make the world the better for it.—*Mrs. H. M. Lincoln.*

SELLING A BIRTHRIGHT.

"Father," said Charlie one day, "Mr. Reed is going to take the whole school to Union Hill on the Fourth, and we are to have a dinner, and a grand good time. We are to choose a captain out of the first class, and to-morrow is election-day."

"For whom are you going to vote?"
"Morton, the tallest fellow in school; and the best boy, too, I think. But George has gone over to the opposition."

"How's that, George, my boy? Who is your candidate? Let us hear the other side."

"Chester," said George. "I don't see why he won't make as good a captain as Morton."

"He is not so good a scholar," said Charlie; "besides, he swears sometimes, and then, he is buying up votes, and I think that is mean."

George flushed up a little, but made no reply.

"George," said his father, "I want you to tell me whether Chester has given you anything to influence your vote."

George hung his head, and was very slow to reply; but there was no escape from his father's question, and at last he answered, "I broke my new bat yesterday, playing base-ball, and he gave me his, if I would promise to vote for him."

"And did you promise?"
"Yes, father."

"You were wrong, my boy. Your vote is your birthright. Not very long ago, when we read how Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, you thought him very little of a man. And now you have sold yours for a second-hand bat! You have sold yourself, your influence, as far as it goes, to elect a boy who by taking

unfair means to secure this honor for himself, shows himself unfit for it, and shows also that he has reason to be lieve that a majority of the school think some one else more worthy. Now, as you look over the whole affair, do you not think it is dishonorable to both of you?"

"Yes," answered George; "but I did not think it was so much a matter."

"Why, if you can be bought over with a bat when you are a boy, you may be bought over with an office, or with money, when you are a man. I want my sons to be above taking a bribe, or selling the rights of their manhood."

"What ought I to do, father?"

"Take the bat back to Chester, and tell him how the matter appears to you on further consideration. If he has any honor in him, he will release you from your promise; if he has not, he can hold you to it, and you must keep your word, and I am sorry for you. And take care not to be caught in such a false position again."

George wished the old bat at the bottom of the sea a dozen times, as he carried it back with shame to Chester. He was laughed at, reproached, and held to his promise as he expected to be; and acquired such a contempt for his candidate's selfish want of principle that he was glad when he found himself on the losing side next day, and joined heartily in the cheer which the winners gave for Morton.—*Independent.*

PROMPT OBEDIENCE.

A little boy, whose name was Freddy, had gone with his papa and mamma by the train, to spend a day at the sea-side. On their return, the train passed along the edge of some high cliffs, which overlooked a beautiful bay. Far below could be seen children at play on the beach, and the water was here and there dotted with the white sails of yachts and pleasure-boats. You may fancy that little Freddy liked to see this. He jumped off the seat and leaned against the door, to get a better view.

"Freddy," said his mamma, "don't lean against the door."

Freddy did not wait to ask why not, but immediately re-seated himself, although in that position he could not see so well. He had scarcely been seated a minute when the door flew open. The shaking of the train had caused the fastening to move, I suppose. With sudden instinct his mamma threw her arms around the boy, while his papa carefully closed and fastened the door. The little fellow looked rather alarmed when he saw what he had escaped, and his mamma said, "Now, Freddy, you know how often I have made you obey me quickly against your will. Happily, this time you did so; otherwise you would, in all probability, have lost your life."

We trust that little Freddy will never forget this lesson, and that it may be of service to some of our little friends who do not always do what they are told at once, but wait to ask the reason why.

SIMPLE FAITH.

A missionary in Africa asked a little boy if he was a sinner. The boy said, "Yes, we are all sinners." The missionary then asked him who could save him from his sins. He replied, "Jesus Christ."

"What has Jesus Christ done to save sinners?"

"He has died on the cross."

"Do you believe Jesus Christ will save you?"

"Yes."

"Why do you believe it?"

"I feel it; do you think He would send His servants, the missionaries, from such a far country to tell us about salvation, and, after all, cast out a sinner?"

"Not so, indeed, for He has said, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.'"

OTHER PEOPLE'S TROUBLES EASY TO BEAR.

"You must really exercise patience," said an old rat to a brother that had been caught in a trap. "No doubt it is painful; but squeaking will do you no good whatever, and it is very distressing to us to hear."

"You are mighty compassionate," said the prisoner, trying to ease his leg.

"O, I assure you I feel beyond all description for you," said the old rat; "I can enter into your sufferings most fully; but, you see, notwithstanding that I grieve so acutely, I can command myself and behave with moderation."

"Very fine," replied the captive; "I could do the same if I were sitting at my ease looking at you in this trap; but I doubt exceedingly if your philosophy would hold out if you were here instead of there."

ADVERSITY exasperates fools, dejects cowards, draws out the faculties of the wise and industrious, and puts the modest to the necessity of trying their skill, awes the opulent, and makes the idle industrious.

THERE is something in sickness that breaks down the pride of manhood, softens the heart, and brings it back to the feelings of infancy.