

The Family Circle.

THE OLD BASS-VIOL.

Have you never heard of good Father Train, Who schooled so soundly and preached so plain, And fought the devil with might and main?

Small bibe he got, nor yet always throve, For he gave his heart to the trade he drove, "He taught for a living, and preached for love."

Noble and bold were the words which rung In council and kirk from his godly tongue, And noble and bold were the psalmic song.

Long years hath the veteran's grave been made, But I prize the altar at which he prayed, And the old bass-viol whereon he played.

It is leaning now by my study door, And I love its sound as I did all the more, That it lightened the burdens a parson bore.

I love to think that far or near, Though sense be lost to the palsied ear, There's always a music the soul can hear.

I love to think that early and late, Though the tongue with melody never can mate, Some thrill of song in the soul may wait.

It is muffled away in the breast alone, A gift, mayhap, to the heart unknown, Till the joys of heaven unfold the tone.

But many, awake on earlier wings, Will answer music to all sweet things, And copy their joy on earthly strings.

And he is one. In his holiest time He proved the cheer of the viol's chime, And worshipped the Lord, in psalter rhyme.

So summer and winter came and went, While the songs and the fates grew kindly blent Of the man and his chosen instrument:

That when the soul of the saint arose, His track the soul of the viol chose, And the music-pulse in its bosom froze.

All stringless, beaten, and bent awry, Into a garret dark and high, They flung the poor, dumb prophet by.

There, long in the curves of its shattered shell, The spider folded her silken cell, And the death-watch tapped to his mate "All's well!"

And many a summer the earth-wasp came, With wings that quivered and flared like flame, And glued its nest to the ruined frame.

But for a chance he had slumbered yet, With the lull of the death-watches drowsy fret, And the fly-didge droned from the spider's net.

I heard where the lorn old wizard lay, And calling him forth from his nook one day, I won him back to his ancient play.

I blemished his faded form, and wrung His withered joints till the old grew young, And his joint-toned nerves I newly strung.

Then I healed him many a ghastly hole, And gave him the grace that time had stole, And tanelfully back came his aged soul.

By the window I sit when the day-beams wane, And he leans on my breast and sings his strain, Till I start at the voice of Father Train.

And I know that beyond the burial calm, The saint is leaning with harp and palm, And joining his old-time viol-psalm.

—Watchman and Reflector.

LETTER FROM MR. HAMMOND.

SOMEWHERE, Nov. 5, 1866.

MY DEAR CHILDREN:—It seems a long time since I have written you a letter. I have often wished that I could find the time to talk with you a little every week. Almost every day I have seen something which I think would interest you. You know the busy bee does not always stay in the hive, but is part of the time away, gathering honey for the little ones to feed upon during the long, cold winter. So I hope, when I come back to America, I shall bring with me some nice stories, that will do you more good than honey. At any rate, I am thinking of the children in America every day, and trying to gather up all the good things for them I can find.

If I should tell you what sort of a place I am in now, you don't think you would believe that I could find much honey in such a strange place as this. But bees find honey in thistles, and in other plants which are not pleasant to touch; and some thoughts have come to me within the walls where I am now shut up, which may interest you and do you good. If you were to look at the high walls all around us, and at the strong grating of our windows, and then at the guards that keep close watch over us all day and sleep at each of our doors on the ground at night, you would think that we were surely in prison. And then, if you should see how not one of the three hundred here are allowed to touch us, except those who came in the same ship with us, and how, when the missionaries Mr. Bliss and Mr. Jessup came to see us, they were not allowed to shake hands with us, but were kept a long way from us by a guard with a long stick, you would think it must be we all had the leprosy, such as those ten men had who, when they came to Jesus, "stood afar off, and lifted up their voices and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy upon us." (Luke xi. 12-13.) Let me tell you of the way we were treated when we landed in this harbor of Beyrout.

We had a good many friends in the city, and of course we wanted to go ashore at once, and commence our journey on horseback through Palestine. But the officers of the Turkish Government wanted to make a little money and would not let us do that. Pretty soon a boat came alongside, and some one called my name. Down the long ship-stairs I hurried to the side of the ship; but instead of handing the letter to me, they pushed off, as if I was some monster, ready to kill them, and they took a long board and laid a letter on it and handed it to me. This letter was from a gentleman whom I knew six years ago in Scotland, and who wanted to see me; but when I made a motion to the Turks in the boat that they should take me in their boat to the shore, they seemed

frightened at the thought. We then wrote a line on a card and threw it into the boat, for them to take on shore. If a bombshell had fallen among them, they could not have been more frightened. They all lifted up their hands and began to gesticulate, as if we had done something dreadful. Not one of them dared to touch the card. After talking a long time with great seriousness, they appointed one of their number to take a knife about a foot long and pierce it. This he did in a sort of way that looked as if he was killing some deadly viper. Then he laid it over the edge of the boat till a curious-looking basket was brought, and then our clean card was put into it, as a serpent that was ready to bite them all. We found out afterward that, because this card had been in our hands, it had to be "smoked" before it could be given to our friend.

We were then told that we could not go to the city of Beyrout, but that there was a place for us up a half a mile beyond the city, where we must stop a while. So we had to get into a boat, and then some men in another boat took hold of a long rope and towed our boat to the place where we now are. The men in the boat who had been pulling us toward our prison-house, seemed so much afraid to touch us, we wondered how they would dare to take their pay from us. But they contrived a way, which made us laugh most heartily. One of the men pulled off his clothes just as we drew near the shore, and taking an earthen dish in his hand, swam to the side of our boat and called for *Bakshish*. So we each dropped the money into his stone money-purse, and it was then sent off to be "smoked" before they dared to touch it. For they knew, if they took anything from us, that they would have to go into the same place where we were going. As soon as these men left us, a great Turk, who made us think of *Wirz*, of Andersonville, came and showed us our rooms, and appointed for each of us a *guardiano*, who was seriously told that he must not leave us, night or day. And so at night, while one lies down on the ground outside of our door to sleep, the other walks up and down, to see that we make no attempt to escape.

There are about three hundred here. We are not kept in our rooms, only at night. In the daytime we can go about the large grounds anywhere inside of the walls; and as we are on the seashore, we can bathe just when we like. We sent off to a hotel and got some good, clean furniture for our room, and every day we have the best of food brought to us. Some nice Christian people from America are with us, and all who visit Palestine must stop in this place for ten days. It would make you laugh to see us led about by our Turkish guards. When the missionaries came to see us, one of them was almost ready to shake hands with us; but our guard pointed to us with a look of horror, and cried, "Unclean! unclean!" Yes, if they had touched us, they would have had to have been put in here for ten days.

It makes no difference who comes to this port from certain places; they must be put for a while in this prison. There are two consuls in here now. Rev. Dr. Patton, of Chicago, has had to make it his home. Little children are here. A few nights ago, a man gave his guard about a hundred dollars to let him escape, and in the middle of the night away he fled to Mount Lebanon. If he is found, we are told that he will be shot.

I think by this time you must know what sort of a place we are in. Yes, it is quarantine. This place is called more often a *Lazaretto*. There was no cholera on board our ship, but the Turkish Government has made a law that all who come here from certain cities shall suffer ten days' quarantine; and as we came from Alexandria, in Egypt, we have had to be shut up here. We have had plenty of books and good company and good surf-bathing, and it has been a good rest for us; yet, after all, we have been impatient to get on our way to Damascus and Jerusalem, and to some of the many other places of which you read in the Bible.

In America, if there is cholera on board a ship from England, our officers keep it from coming into the harbor for a while; but other ships that have what they call "a clean bill of health," they let come directly in. And so we thought, as there was not one sick on our ship, we might have been permitted to come at once into Beyrout. But the law was against us, and so here we have been confined.

Now, my dear children, why do you think I have been so careful to tell about our quarantine prison? It has been that I might teach you an important lesson. We tried a long time, and spent a good deal of money, to get into Jerusalem without having to be put in quarantine. If we had not been careful, we should have been in two or three other *Lazarettos* before we reached this one. One of our party of five left us in Austria, because he was in such a hurry, and took a steamer at Trieste, and thus he thought he would get to Jerusalem a long time before us; but he was carried straight to Alexandria; and when we were having a fine time in Italy, he was tossing about on the Mediter-

anean or shut up in quarantine at Alexandria.

Now, heaven, you know, is sometimes called the "New Jerusalem." You all want to go there. But you can never get there till you are first made clean in the blood of "the Lamb that was slain." Though our guards often cried out "Unclean! unclean! don't touch the Americans!" when any one was ready to touch us, yet we knew that it was all imagination, and that we were a great deal cleaner than all our Turkish guards. None of us had the cholera, but each of us was in perfect health. But you, my dear child, however young you are, if you are not a Christian, you are unclean in the sight of God. Every sin you have ever committed has left a dark stain upon your soul. If you could find any way to get into heaven as you are now, all covered with the leprosy of sin, none of the angels would touch you. I think they would be more afraid of you than these Turks were of us. They would not let you stay there at all. God would tell them to take you off into some sort of a quarantine. Perhaps you would hear from the lips of the Great King those words in Matt xxii. 13: "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." These are dreadful words, and I hope and pray that you may never hear them spoken to you.

Whenever you are called to die, you want to go at once to heaven, don't you? "O, yes!" I hear you say. But are you sure that, if you were to die even now, you would go there? You have a disease worse than the cholera—you are sin-sick. Yes, you are a leprous sinner, and God will never let you into heaven till you are made white and clean. You may be more anxious to go to the beautiful New Jerusalem above than we were to get to the Jerusalem where Jesus was crucified; but you will never get there till your guilty sins are washed away.

We wanted very much to get to this Holy Land, where the Bible was written, and where the apostles and prophets lived and died, but we spent weeks and hundreds of dollars trying to get rid of the quarantines which were in our way; and though we did avoid some, yet we could not escape this one. Just so, a good many young people want to go, when they die, to the heavenly Canaan; but they think being a Christian here on earth is much like getting into quarantine—that the only object of becoming a Christian is just to get ready for heaven. But this is a great mistake.

We have to stay here eight days, and two days on board ship, to fill up the ten days' quarantine. Some of the children cry, and want to get out very much. But it will not take you as many days to come to Jesus, who died on the cross for you. He will take you the moment you come to Him. He loves to receive little children, and wash their sins all away, and make them fit for the New Jerusalem above. And once more, when you have become a Christian, you will find yourself far happier than you ever were before. You will only be sorry that you did not come sooner. You will, like that poor leper in Luke xvii. 15, feel like falling down before Jesus and "giving Him thanks."

If we should run out of this quarantine before they think us "clean" from all taint of cholera, they would shoot us; but our time is up to-morrow, and then we can take our horses and fly away to the side of Mount Lebanon, whose snowy top, 9000 feet high, we have spent hours in looking at from our prison-house. But if you will only trust in the Saviour, who loves you so much, you can at any time enter heaven, and there they will love to receive you. Now, if you want to know how to get through the quarantine that will fit you for a happier life here and hereafter, you will find two verses which will tell you. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John i. 9.) "BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED." (Acts xvi. 31.)

Your affectionate friend,
E. P. HAMMOND.

SATAN NEVER IDLE.

And now I would ask a strange question: Who is the most diligent bishop and prelate in all England, and passeth all the rest in doing his office? I can tell, for I know who it is. I know him well. But now methinks I see you listening and hearkening that I should name him. There is one that passeth all the other, and is the most diligent prelate and preacher in all England. And will ye know who it is? I will tell you. It is the devil; he is the most diligent preacher of all others. He is never out of his diocese; he is never from his cure; ye shall never find him unoccupied; he is ever in his parish; he keepeth residence at all times; ye shall never find him out of the way, call for him when you will. He is ever at home, the diligentest preacher in all the realm. He is ever at his plough. No lordling nor loitering may hinder him; he is ever applying his business; ye shall never find him idle, I warrant you. Where the devil is resident and hath his plough

going, there away with books and up with tapers; away with Bibles, and up with beads; away with the light of the Gospel, and up with the light of candles, yea, at noon-day. Where the devil is resident that he may prevail, up with all superstition and idolatry, censuring, painting of images, candles, palms, ashes, holy-water, and all service of men's inventing, as though man could invent a better way to honor God than God himself hath appointed. Down with Christ's cross, up with purgatory pick-purse—Popish purgatory I mean. Away with clothing the naked, the poor, and impotent; up with decking of images and gay garnishing of stocks and stones. Up with man's traditions and his laws; down with God's will and his most holy word. Down with the old honor due unto God; and up with the new god's honor.—*Bishop Latimer.*

HOW MANY POUNDS DOES BABY WEIGH?

"How many pounds does the baby weigh—Baby, who came but a month ago? How many pounds from the crowning curl To the rosy point of the restless toe?"

Grandfather ties the kerchief's knot, Tenderly guides the swinging weight, And carefully over his glasses peers, To read the record, "Only eight."

Softly the echo goes around; The father laughs at the tiny girl; The fair young mother sings the words, While the grandmother smooths the golden curl.

And stooping above the precious thing, Nestles a kiss within a prayer, Murmuring softly, "Little one, Grandfather did not weigh you fair."

Nobody weighed the baby's smile, Or the love that came with the helpless one; Nobody weighed the thread of care From which a woman's life is spun.

No index tells the mighty worth Of a little baby's quiet breath—A soft, unceasing metronome, Patient and faithful unto death.

Nobody weighed the baby's soul, For here on earth no weights there be That could avail; God only knows Its value in eternity.

Only eight pounds to hold a soul, That seeks no angel's silver wing, But shines in it this human thing, Within so fair and small a thing.

O, mother, laugh your merry note; Be gay and glad, but don't forget From baby's eyes looks out a soul That claims a home in Eden yet.

THE ENGINE-DRIVER.

"I believe engine-drivers, as a body, are the healthiest fellows alive; but they don't live long. The cause of that I believe to be the gold food and the shaking. By the cold food, I mean that an engine-driver never gets his meals comfortable. He's never at home to his dinner. When he starts away, the first thing in the morning, he takes a bit of cold meat and a piece of bread with him for his dinner; and generally he has to eat it in the shed, for he mustn't leave his engine. You can understand how the jolting and shaking knocks a man up, after a bit. The insurance companies won't take us at the ordinary rates. We're obliged to be Foresters, or Old Friends, or that sort of thing, where they ain't so particular. The wages of an engine-driver average about eight shillings a day; but if he's a good schemer with his coils—yes, I mean if he economizes his coils—he's allowed so much more. Some will make from five to ten shillings a week that way. I don't complain of the wages particular; but it's hard times with such us, to have to pay income tax. The company gives an account of all our wages, and we have to pay. It's a shame.

"Our domestic life—our life at home, you mean? Well, as to that, we don't see much of our families. I leave home at half-past seven in the morning, and don't get back again until half-past nine, or maybe later. The children are not up when I leave, and they've gone to bed again before I come home. This is about my day: Leave London at 8:45; drive for four hours and a half; cold snack on the engine-step; see to the engine; drive back again; clean the engine; report myself, and go home. Twelve hours' hard and anxious work, and no comfortable victuals. Yes, our wives are anxious about us; for we never know, when we go out, if we'll ever come back again. We ought to go home the minute we leave the station, and report ourselves to those that are thinking on us and depending on us; but I'm afraid we don't always. Perhaps we go first to the public-house. But the wives have a way of their own of finding out if we're all right. They inquire among each other. 'Have you seen my Jim?' one says. 'No,' says another; 'but Jack see him coming out of the station half an hour ago.' Then she knows that her Jim's all right, and know's where to find him if she wants him. It's a sad thing that many of us have to carry bad news to a wife's wife. None of us likes that job. I remember when Jack Davidge was killed, none of us could face his poor missus with the news. She had seven children, poor thing, and two of 'em, the youngest, was down with the fever. We got old Mrs. Berridge—Tom Berridge's mother—to break it to her. But she knew summat was the matter the minute the old woman went in, and afore she spoke a word, fell down like as if she was dead. She lay all night like that, and never heard from mortal lips until next morning, that her George was killed. But she knew it in her heart. It's a pitch-and-toss kind of life ours.

"And yet I never was nervous on an engine but once. I never think of my own life. You go in for staking that when you begin, and you get used to the risk. I never think of the passengers either. The thoughts of an engine-driver never go behind his engine. If he keeps his engine all right, the coaches behind him will be all right, as far as the driver is concerned. But once I did think of the passengers. My little boy, Bill, was among them that morning. He was a poor little cripple fellow that we all loved more nor the others, because he was a cripple, and so quiet and wise-like. He was going down to his aunt in the country, who was to take care of him for a while. We thought the country air would do him good. I did think there were lives behind me that morning; at least, I thought hard of one little life that was in my hands. There were twenty coaches on; my little Bill seemed to me to be in every one of 'em. My hand trembled as I turned on the steam. I felt my heart thumping as we drew close to the pointsman's box; as we neared the Junction, I was all in a cold sweat. At the end of the first fifty miles I was nearly eleven minutes behind time. 'What's the matter with you this morning?' my stoker said. 'Did you have a drop too much last night?' 'Don't speak to me, Fred,' I said, 'till we get to Peterborough; and keep a sharp look-out, there's a good fellow.' I never was so thankful in my life as when I shut off steam to enter the station at Peterborough. Little Bill's aunt was waiting for him, and I saw her lift him out of the carriage. I called out to her, to bring him to me, and I took him upon the engine and kissed him—all twenty times I should think—making him in such a mess with grease and coal-dust as you never saw.

"I was all right for the rest of the journey. And I do believe, sir, the passengers were safer after little Bill was gone. It would never do, you see, for engine-drivers to know much, or to feel too much."—*Dickens, in "Mugby Junction."*

OPEN YOUR MOUTH!

Come, young man. You on the back seat, in the far corner. You with the modest look and retiring expression of countenance. You who are quietly packed away behind your pillar. There is a bit of work for you. You have never done it, only because you thought it was for somebody else. You are quiet because nobody has set you at work.

There is a popular impression, and a popular blunder, that all the speech-making should be done by the Sumners, the Beechers, the Goughs, the Tyngs, the Spurgeons, the Wadsworths. And truly fitting and appropriate it is that these oratorical giants should proceed with the great business of their lives, so nobly and so faithfully performed. But all the world's speaking cannot be done by these great pulpit celebrities and statesmen. There is, verily, a surfeit of speech-making, such as it is, especially about these stirring times of election. Plenty of eloquent vituperation, plenty of partisan earnestness, plenty of spread-eagle oratory, plenty of axe-grinding utterances of the aspiring candidate, eager to serve his country—"salary no object." Plenty of able and eloquent thoughts in the pulpit; plenty of deep thought, first-class talent, burning eloquence, at the bar. But all that is not all that is now needed.

If the country is to be saved, to be reconstituted on a basis of holiness, purity, Christianity, the Christian young men of the country are to have a hand in the work; and the sooner they put hand, heart, pen, and speech to the work, the better.

Young man, if God has given you brains, heart and voice, speak out. There are great reforms to be carried on. The whole community needs awakening. Speak out, sir, and your speech will be welcome, wherever and on whatever particular branch of reform you choose to make yourself heard.

The land needs a thorough cold-water washing. Drunkenness runs riot everywhere; from the chair of the magistrate to the filthy cot of the degraded denizen of pest-infected alley. Get ready with your temperance speech. The day has not yet quite come, even though it be not far off, "when the might with the right and the truth shall be." Make yourself heard in behalf of the oppressed, so long as there is one man left who, by reason of superior intellect, strength, or wealth, in any way imposes on a single fellow-creature made in God's image. The Church of Christ mourns over coldness, parsimony, and lack of whole-souled consecration to the Lord's work. Speak up, sir, like a man, and rouse somebody to his duty. In prayer-meeting, in camp-meeting, in social gathering, in village lecture, in lyceum debate, in town-meeting, in the assembly, large or small, wherever the people will come, and under whatever honest pretence they can be collected, lift up your voice for that which is "honest, lovely, and of good report." Not in mere wordy harangue, in windy palaver, in grandiloquent spouting, nor yet in weary, drawing verbosity; not in the jabbering garrulity which is heard only when the speaker must be delivered of a speech. But in

words of true, sanctified earnestness opening your mouth because you have something useful to say, saying it with the genuine unstudied eloquence which comes right from the heart, and in all cases closing your mouth the moment you have done.

"Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." See that your heart is right and overflowing, and then speak away with all your might and leave the result with God.—*Our Young Men.*

WILLIE'S SIGNAL FOR JESUS.

The following touching incident is related by a lady in the East, in a letter to her brother, who is an esteemed minister in Illinois, and to whose kindness *The Little Corporal* is indebted for the use of it. It is copied word for word from her letter.

I heard such a beautiful story the other day, about a little child, that I must tell it to you. He was sick at St. Luke's Hospital, in New York, and the lady who told me the story was there.

One day this child, about seven years old, was brought into the children's ward; he had been picked up in the street, where he had fallen from some building. His little leg was broken in two places, his head cut dreadfully, and his backbone so broken that it came through the flesh. He laid about a week between life and death, a fearful sufferer; but at the end of that time he began to mend, so that in a few days more his physicians concluded he could recover, but that if he lived they would have to cut off the splinters from his backbone.

Well, they performed the operation, and the child lived and grew better. About a week afterward, the doctors found there would have to be another operation. So they told the nurse she must tell little Willie that the next morning they would do it. The nurse was a noble Christian woman, and she talked to the little fellow, sitting by his bedside. She said: "Willie, I have told you what the doctors think, and I want you to try and be a little man, and bear it as well as you can. It is hard for you, I know, and it is hard for me to see you suffer so much, and it makes my heart ache day after day to see all you dear little children suffer so, but it is God's will, my child," she said, "and he and his dear Son Jesus will help you through."

This was in the evening, and she left him till the morning, going from one little sufferer to another till her time was up. After she had gone, the little boy pulled the sheet up over his head, and began to cry as if his heart would break. In the bed next to him was a little girl, and as she saw and heard him cry, she said: "Willie, what makes you cry so? Don't you know that Jesus can help you? This is his ward, they say, and he loves us all very much; don't cry any more, but let's pray to Jesus to take your pain away."

He then said: "I have been praying, Susie, and I have been asking Christ to take me, for do you know they say that every night Jesus walks through our ward and takes one or two of us little children away with him—those that love and want to go with him, and I have been telling him how much I want to go with him, and that I can't bear to think of all the pain I will have to-morrow if he don't take me. And I will tell you, Susie, what I am going to do, for fear I should be asleep when Jesus comes. I am going to hold my hand up so, (and he held one hand by the wrist, just above the bed-clothes), so that when Jesus walks through our room to-night he will see my hand and know that I am the one that wants to go with him. I have told him I would, and he will look for me," and the children went to sleep. And early in the morning, when the nurse went to look at all the children, there she saw little Willie stiff and cold in death, with his hand just above the bed-clothes, held up by the other, as he had told Jesus he would find him.

A CHILD'S QUESTION.

A sweet little girl, named Sarah, had been to chapel, and went home full of what she had seen and heard. Sitting at the table with her family, she asked her father, who had been to chapel, but who was a very wicked man, whether he ever prayed. He did not like the question, and in a very angry manner replied, "Was it your mother or Aunt Sally who told you that, my little girl?"

"No, papa," said the little thing; "the preacher said, 'All good people pray, and those who don't pray are not going to the kingdom of heaven.' Pa, do you ever pray?"

This was more than her father could bear, and in a rough way he said, "Well, you and your mother and Aunt Sally may go your own way, and I will go mine."

"Pa," said the little girl, with sweet simplicity, "which way are you going?"

This question pierced his heart. It flashed upon him that he was in the way of death. He started from his chair and burst into tears. Within a few days he was a happy convert, and I believe he will appear in the kingdom of heaven as a star in his little daughter's crown of rejoicing.