

The Family Circle.

SPRING.

Cry Holiday! holiday! let us be gay,
And share in the rapture of heaven and earth;
For see! what a sunshiny joy they display,
To welcome the Spring on the day of her birth;
While the elements, gladly outpouring their voice,
Nature's psalm proclaim, and in chorus rejoice!

Low carols each fill as it leaps in its bed:
The wind brings us music and balm from the South,
And the earth in delight calls an echo to spread
The tidings of joy with her many-tongued mouth;
O'er earth and o'er shore, o'er mountain and plain,
Far, far does she trumpet the jubilee strain.

Hark! hark to the cuckoo! its magical call
Awakens the flowerets that slept in the dells;
The snow-drop, the primrose, the hyacinth, all,
Attune at this summons their silvery bells.
Hush! ting-a-ring-ting! Don't you hear how they sing!
They are pealing a fairy-like welcome to Spring.

The love-thrilling hedge-birds are wild with delight;
Like arrows low whistling the swallows fit by;
The rapturous lark, as he soars out of sight,
Sends us sun-lighted melody down from the sky.
In the air that they quaff, all the feathery throng
Taste the spirit of Spring that outbursts in a song.

To me do the same vernal whisperings breathe
In all that I scent, that I hear, that I meet.
Without and within me, above and beneath,
Every sense is imbued with a prophecy sweet
Of the pomp and the pleasantness earth shall assume
When adorned, like a bride, in her flowery bloom.

In this transport of nature each feeling takes part;
I am thrilling with gratitude, reverence, joy;
Anew spring of joy seems to gush from my heart;
And the man's metamorphosed again to a boy.
O! let me run wild as in earlier years;
If my joy be suppressed I shall burst into tears.

HORACE SMITH.

A WIFE'S VICTORY.

BY REV. DR. TYNG.

Many years since a gay and fashionable pair lived near me and attended my ministry. The wife was beautiful, social, and admired. The husband was rich and worldly, and delighted in the admiration, which, in society, his wife received. They lived a reckless, gay and worldly life. Except in the worship of an occasional Sunday morning, they knew nothing of religion, and cared for nothing they heard even then.

But in the wonders of grace this gay and fashionable woman was converted, and in the most open and decided manner renounced her life of folly, and cast her lot among the followers of the Lord. Her sudden change of life and purpose intensely enraged her unconverted husband, who had no sympathy with her, and could not understand her. He tried in every possible manner to overthrow her plans, and drive her from her choice. He forbade her union with the church in any personal act. He watched at the entrance of the church-yard to prevent her entrance by force. So far was this hostility carried, that, at last she found access to the church for her appointed baptism only through the window in the rear. Thus, matters went on for weeks, every day bringing some new tidings of his violence and her sufferings. How much their domestic affairs were known to others, I never knew. The people and the generation have since passed away. There young children are now mature, and several of them parents themselves.

Some weeks of this new history had passed, when late, one evening, after I had retired to my chamber for the night, my door-bell was violently pulled, and the messenger said Mrs. — desired to see me at once. I dressed myself and went, anticipating some new scene of violence. The streets were solitary and still. As I ascended the steps, the door was quietly opened to me, and I was directed to the parlor, where to my surprise, I found the two sitting together on the sofa, with no other person present. The man looked up to me in an agony of tears, as in astonishment. I sat down by his side and asked an explanation.

"Oh, sir," he cried, "can I be saved; can I be saved?"

"Yes, surely," I answered; "but you amaze me—what has led you to this?"

"This angel," he replied with eagerness. "You know how I hated her religion. But you do not know how I hated you. I thought you the blackest of human beings. You had broken up my happiness; you had destroyed my peace; you had separated my family; you alienated my wife from me. I laid it all to you. I was intensely enraged with you. I have several times watched for you at night with the intention of killing you. But it is all over now. I am thankful to see you. But this angel wife—I have cursed her; I have persecuted her in every way; I have beaten her; I have pulled her down by her hair; and she has received it all in silence and meekness. She has never said one unkind word in reply; but she has prayed for me, and loved me. And I can stand it no longer. I am miserable, because I am so guilty. I have rebelled so horribly. I have been loved and treated so affectionately.—Can I be saved?"

The wife sat silently and heard the whole, and then gently said:

"My dear husband seemed so distressed to-night, that I took the liberty to send for you."

How fresh and vivid is that whole scene before me as I write, and all its incidents and details, which I will not describe.

With what delight did I preach the Saviour's love to this lost one, thus aroused by that love to see his own voluntary and aggravated guilt.

We passed more than an hour thus together, and closed our conversation with earnest prayer. Blessed, indeed, was the result! The strong man armed had found a stronger than he, who had taken from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and spoiled his goods. He was subdued by love, con-

verted by Divine Power. He, too, came unto the Saviour's flock, and on the side of Jesus.

How changed the mad one became, "sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind." He witnessed among us for years a good confession, he was honored and beloved in the church;—a pattern of gentleness and fidelity at home and abroad. After some years of earnest Christian life on earth, his course was finished and his rest obtained. I have since hardly passed the house in which they lived without recalling to my mind this whole remarkable scene—that powerful display of grace—that voluntary wanderer, and the wonderful love and mercy which in so much rebellion he received. He assumed all the responsibility of the guilty wandering upon himself. He learned to give all the glory of his recovery to that amazing grace, which had plucked him as a brand from the burning, and loved him when he was dead in sins.

POWER OF A GENTLE REBUKE.

There is a power in Christian words, spoken in gentleness and love, that rarely fails to impress itself, even on wicked or reckless men. If Christians had more courage and fidelity in speaking them, good results would be oftener witnessed. An exchange tells an incident for whose truth it vouches:

A number of passengers were discussing the exciting questions of the day on board a steamboat on one of our Western rivers. Oaths were frequently heard; and one man in particular, in almost every sentence used the name of his Maker in a most irreverent manner.

Away from this excited party, but within hearing distance, sat a young lady with her husband and friends. The profanity was noticed by them, and they seemed shocked by its boldness. They could talk, but the timid, shrinking lady could act. "I can bear it no longer," she said, as she left her seat and glided into the circle of the now loud and angry disputants. Placing her hand on the arm of the one who had shocked her by his oaths, and trembling with emotion, she begged him not to take the name of God in vain; to think how soon he might be called to meet Him in eternity. She said a few more words, and, frightened at her boldness, she burst into tears and left them.

The next day before the boat reached its destination, the man came to this lady, took her by the hand, thanked her earnestly for her reproof, and said, "I will not forget your kind words; I will try and be a different man, and live for the eternity awaiting me." A few months after, the lady was called from earth. The influence of that open and decided rebuke will only be known when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed.

Many of us can shudder, and deplore the open wickedness about us, but how many of us have the decision of Christian character to enable us to reprove sin in the right spirit when the opportunity is given us?

WHAT SEVENTY BOYS BECAME.

Many people begin the education of their children with an exhibition of toys, marvelous tales, silly romances, and wind up with the circus and theatre. The degrading influences and sorrowful consequence of this mode of education will be best illustrated by stating a few facts that have passed under my own observation. So far as my memory goes, about thirty boys educated in this way—i. e., in contempt of all useful knowledge and occupation, spent their days in reading novels, the lives and confessions of pirates and murderers, &c., and their nights in the streets, dram-shops, gambling saloons, circus and theatre: at the age of forty-five, one had been hung for murder, one for robbing the mail, and three as pirates; five died in the penitentiary, and seven lived and died as useless vagabonds about the streets; three were useful mechanics, and the fate of the remainder is unknown.

Of about forty educated with me by a really moral and scientific teacher, under the old foggy Puritanic system of restraint, as it is now called by young America, at the age of fifty-five, one was a member of Congress, one judge of the Supreme Court, two judges of the Circuit Court, three physicians, five lawyers, fourteen were dead, and the remainder farmers and mechanics, and, so far as known, not one of them ever was called before the bar of his country on a criminal charge, and they all had comfortable homes except two or three, and every one was passably respectable.—Dr. Louton.

THE FOX, THE GOAT, AND THE CARROTS.

A fox and a goat were walking together on the main road. After having advanced a few yards, they saw a bag lying at the side of the hedge.

"Wonder what there may be in that bag," said the goat.

"I'll see," said the fox; and putting his mouth to the string with which the bag was tied, he bit it through in a moment. Then seizing the bottom of the bag with his teeth, he shook it, and the most splendid carrots rolled out.

"Those are for me," said the fox, "for I have opened the bag."

"You sha'n't touch them," answered the goat, "else I'll batter you with my horns till your ribs crack."

The fox looked at the large horns of the goat, and showed his teeth. The goat seeing the fox's teeth, thought within himself, "I don't like those sharp fellows." And the fox thought, "I don't believe my ribs would stand those horns."

So they kept standing over the carrots, and looked at each other, but neither had the courage to touch the spoil.

After a pause the fox said:

"What's the use of our standing here? Let us see which of us is the stronger. Yonder are two heaps of stones. Take you

one of them and I'll take the other; he who first throws down his heap shall have the carrots."

"Very well," said the goat. So they went each to his heap.

The goat placed himself on his hind legs, and knocked with his horn till the ground rebounded, but the heap kept immovable.

"You don't hit hard enough," said the fox. "Take a run at it."

The goat went a few steps back, and ran at the heap as violently as he could. Crack! crack! and both his horns fell to the ground.

When the fox saw this he commenced dancing on his hind legs.

"Ah, my dear fellow," cried he, "the carrots are now for me."

"Not yet," said the goat. "You haven't thrown down your heap, and if you touch the carrots before then, I'll fight you with the stumps that are left on my head."

The fox looked at the goat's stumps, and thought, "One of them is very sharp; he might rip up my sides."

"Very well," he said, "I'll throw down my heap; it's a trifle to me."

The fox began digging round with his forefeet till there was a large hole in the ground. The heap tottered and fell; but, halloo! it fell on the fox, and broke his left hind leg.

"Jump at the carrots," said the goat, maliciously. "I now leave them to you."

"I can't," sighed the fox; "my leg pains me too much. You may take them."

"Very well," said the goat, and ran toward the bag. But, O dear, there was neither bag nor carrots, for during their quarrel a peasant had passed by and picked up both.

"Alas!" cried the goat, "What fools we are! Had we divided the treasure in peace, I should have saved my horns, your leg, and each of us would have had enough of carrots."—De Liefde.

SONG OF NATURE.

The harp at Nature's advent strung
Has never ceased to play;
The song the stars of morning sung,
Has never died away.

And prayer is made, and praise is given,
By all things near and far;
The ocean looks up to heaven,
And mirrors every star.

Its waves are kneeling on the strand;
As kneels the human knee,
Their white locks bowing to the sand,
The priesthood of the sea!

They pour their glittering treasures forth,
Their gifts of pearl they bring,
And all the Hesperian hills of earth
Take up the song they sing.

The green earth sends her incense up
From many a mountain shrine;
From folded leaf and dewy cup
She pours her sacred wine.

The mists above the morning rills
Rise while as wings of prayer;
The altar curtains of the hills
Are sunset's purple air.

The winds with hymns of praise are loud,
Or low with sobs of pain.
The thunder-organ of the cloud,
The dropping tears of rain.

With drooping head and branches crossed,
The twilight forest grieves,
Or speaks with tongues of Pentecost
From all its sunlit leaves.

The blue sky is the temple's arch,
Its transept earth and air,
The music of its starry march,
The chorus of a prayer.

So Nature keeps the reverent frame
With which her years began,
And all her signs and voices shame
The prayerless heart of man.
—Whittier's "Tent on the Beach."

THE SHEPHERD BOY AND HIS DOG.

Ralph's mother, one Saturday evening was taken very ill. The cottage they lived in was far away from any path, among the mountains. The snow fell in large, heavy flakes, and Malcolm (that was the shepherd's name) took down his long pole, with the intention of setting out to the village to procure some medicine for his wife.

"Father," said little Ralph, "I know the sheep-path better than you, and with Slag who will walk before me, I am quite safe; let me go for the doctor, and do you stay and comfort my mother." Malcolm consented.

Ralph had been accustomed to the mountains from his early infancy; and Shag set out with his young master, wagging his tail, and making jumps and grimaces. They went safely on. Ralph arrived at the village, saw the doctor, received some medicine for his mother, and then commenced his return with a cheerful heart.

Shag went on before to ascertain that all was right. Suddenly, however, he stopped, and began snuffing and smelling about.—"Go on Shag," said Ralph. Shag would not stir. "Shag, go on, sir," repeated the boy; "we are nearly at the top of the glen." Shag appeared obstinate for the first time in his life; and at last Ralph advanced alone, heedless of the warning growl of his companion. He had proceeded but a few steps, when he fell over a precipice, which had been concealed by a snow-wreath.

Malcolm was waiting patiently for his son; but no son came. At last he heard the bark of his faithful dog Shag. "My son, my son!" cried both parents at the same moment. The cottage-door opened, and Shag entered without his master. "My brave boy has perished in the snow!" exclaimed the mother. At the same moment the father saw a small packet round the dog's neck, who was lying panting on the floor. "Our boy lives," said the shepherd; "here is the medicine tied with his handkerchief. He has

fallen into some of the pits, but he is safe; trust in God. I will go out, and Shag will conduct me safely to the rescue of my child." In an instant Shag was again on his feet, and testified the most unbounded joy, as they both issued from the cottage. You may imagine the misery the poor mother suffered while her husband was absent. She felt that both their lives depended on the sagacity of a poor dog, but she knew that God could guide the dumb creature's steps to the saving of both.

Shag went on straight and steadily for some yards, and then suddenly turned down a path which led to the bottom of the crag over which Ralph had fallen. At last Malcolm stood at the lower edge of the pit into which his son had fallen. He holloped; he strained his eyes; but could not see or hear anything. At last Malcolm succeeded in getting to the bottom, and Shag scrambled to a projecting ledge of rock which was nearly imbedded in snow, and commenced whining and scratching in a violent manner. Malcolm followed, and, after a long search, found what appeared to be the dead body of his son. He hastily tore off the jacket, which was soaked with blood and snow, and wrapping Ralph in his plaid, strapped him across his shoulders, and with much toil and difficulty re-ascended. Ralph was placed in a bed, and with great exertion roused from his dangerous sleep. He was much bruised and his ankle dislocated, but he had no other hurt; and when he recovered his senses, he fixed his eyes on his mother, and his first words were: "Thank God; but did you get the medicine, mother?" When he fell, Shag had descended after him; and the affectionate son used what little strength he had left, tied the medicine round the dog's neck, and directed him home with it.

THE DOOR OF HEAVEN.

It was a fearful time when the steamboat *Tyro* was lost. It was a long time ago and almost every one has forgotten it, except the few who had friends on it, and they are almost gone. The *Tyro* was a small boat, and the passengers were few and poor, so it has passed from the public mind. All the day the bright sun had shone down on the peaceful lake, and everything seemed safe and secure. The passengers had no thought of danger as the night was coming on.

A little boy kneeled down to say his evening prayers, and as he looked out and saw the western sky all aglow with the glory of the going day, he asked:

"Mamma, isn't that the door of heaven with bright curtains all around it?"

"Yes, my boy," said the mother, "heaven's doors are all around us."

"Well that is the one I want to go in at, because it is the prettiest." And the child prayed his prayer and went to sleep.

It was never known how, whether the pilot fell asleep at his post, or the lights went out, but when midnight came there was a crash, a shiver, and cries of terror. The steamer had come in collision with a schooner and was sinking.

The little boy awoke. He cried, "Mamma, where are you?" And his mother's arms held him fast, even while they sank together in the dark waters.

They came to the surface, and the mother caught something floating and held fast to it.

"Jamie! Jamie!" she said, "hold me very tight."

"Mamma, are we going to heaven? I don't like this way—I'm afraid."

"Never fear, child, God will meet you," and with all her strength the mother lifted the child upon the floating bale, then dropped it, and went home through the flood-gates below.

"Mamma, mamma, where are you?" cried Jamie, but there came no answer. No one noticed the child afloat, for every one sought to save his own life; and the day was born, ran its race, and was dying again, when Jamie floated on shore. The little fellow was hungry; but there again was the glorious gate of heaven, and Jamie thought it was wider open than it was the night before, and as soon as he could crawl off from the bale to the land, he began to run as fast as he could, straight toward the west.

Jamie's feet tottered. He was to weak to run, so he walked straight on a long, long way, until the west began to grow dim in his sight.

Jamie saw a man coming toward him, but he did not stop. The man noticed that the child's clothes were wet and that he had been in the water.

"Little boy, where are you going?" he asked.

"I can't stop now," said Jamie, "I'm afraid I shall be too late."

"Too late! where are you going that way? there is no house there," the man cried after him, for Jamie did not stop an instant.

"Yes, there is," said Jamie; "I am afraid the door will be shut."

"Whose house, boy?"

"Why, God's beautiful house, to be sure. Don't you know it? It is in heaven. See it grows dark," and Jamie made one more effort, and fell to the ground, fainting with hunger.

The man lifted him up in his arms, and Jamie lisped, "Mamma said God would come to meet me," and then he fell asleep. When he awoke he found himself in a strange place, with strangers about him.

"Come, my darling, you must eat some of this," said a soft voice, and the light of the candle was carefully shaded from Jamie's eyes.

Jamie's last thought was of heaven, and his first question was, "Did I get there? Did He meet me?"

And a little girl standing by the bed answered,

"Yes, little boy, father met you and brought you home."

"God's your father, too, is he?" asked

Jamie, not yet fully conscious of his present state; "then we'll go home together."

Jamie recovered and grew to manhood—grew to a good and glorious manhood, and to the time when his Redeemer called him home Jamie never forgot the western door for which he had striven. He never looked upon the gorgeous purple, golden, and crimson glory of the sunset without hearing again, in his mind, the words of his mother: "Yes, my boy, heaven's doors are all about us." And Jamie's wish was granted him. One night the shining light came through the curtains, and Jamie went home with the day, and Jesus met him—Jesus, who long years before had gone down to the dark flood-gates below to meet Jamie's mother—Jesus, who always watches and waits to hear the coming feet of those who seek the gates of Heaven.—*Tract Journal*.

DON'T ACT A LIE.

When I was quite young, I once acted a lie, and my heart is sad whenever I think of it. One day when my mother had company, she took a china sugar-bowl to the kitchen to fill it. I stood beside her while she was cutting up the large pieces. For a moment she left her work, I knew I ought not to do it, but I thought I would try to cut a little; but as I brought down the knife to strike, I hit the handle of the sugar-bowl, and down it fell; and in a moment I put the handle in its place and pushed it against the wall, so that it need not fall off. I had hardly done so when mother came back. Oh, if I had only told her the truth then; but something whispered, don't tell yet, wait a little.

Mother went on with her work; but soon a heavy blow jarred the bowl, and down fell the handle. If mother had looked into my face, she would not have said, "Why, can it be that such a jar should break the handle? But I see I was careless in setting it against the wall."

I was on the point of saying, "No mother, it was I that was careless; I did it;" but something said, don't tell at all now; it can't be helped; so I kept still and acted a lie. I did not say I did not do it; but by saying nothing, I made believe I did not, and I let my mother be deceived. I meant a lie, and it is the thought that we have in the heart that God looks at.

Not many months after that, my mother was taken sick. I was sent away from home to stay most of the time. When father came for me, and told me that she never would get well,—that she must soon die,—that lie came up before me, and I felt as though my heart would break. Now, I thought, I will tell her. But when I reached home, she was so sick and weak she could only see me for a few moments, and they hurried me away before I could tell her. She died that night. Oh, what bitter tears I shed as I looked upon that sweet, cold face, and remembered how I had deceived her.

Many years have passed since then; but when I go home and see that sugar-bowl still without a handle, my sin comes up before me. I never think of it but my heart is heavy. And when I see a child trying to deceive, even in sport, only "making believe," I always want to beg him never to deceive, never to make believe a lie.

TAKE CARE.

One day the Superintendent of a Sunday-School in Philadelphia, was going along near Third and Dock streets. He saw one of the large boys belonging to his school coming out of a drinking saloon. The boy's name was George Simpson. As the superintendent passed by, he raised his finger, and shaking his head, he said, in a kind, but serious way:

"Take care, George; take care!"

Some ten or twelve years passed away, and he had forgotten all about it, when one day a very genteel-looking man came up to him in the street, and bowing, said:

"I think, sir, this is Mr. P., who used to be the superintendent of such a Sunday-school?"

"That is my name, but I don't remember you."

"Don't you remember a boy named George Simpson, who used to belong to your school?"

"No, I can't recollect the name."

"Well, sir, don't you remember meeting him one day, coming out of a drinking place near Third and Dock streets, when you shook your finger at him and said, 'Take care, George!'"

"O yes, I remember that."

"Well, sir," said the young man, "I am George Simpson, and I want to thank you for what you did and said that day. It was a little thing, but it saved me from ruin. I was just beginning to go the drunkard's ways. But something in your words and manner made a great impression on me. I quit drinking. Not long after I joined the Church. Now I am living in the West, and am quite well off; but, my dear sir, I owe it all to you."

It is just with God to destroy that health with disease, which he sees we would cast away in sloth and idleness. Think with thyself, had such a soul as Timothy's or Gaius's, been blest with such a body as thine, so strong and vigorous, so apt and able for service, they would have honored God more in it in a day, than perhaps you do in a year. We are generally more solicitous to live long, than to live usefully and serviceably; and it may be, our health had been more precious in the eyes of God, if it had been less precious in our own eyes.