

The Family Circle.

"WATCH MOTHER."

Mother, watch the little feet,
Climbing o'er the garden wall,
Bounding through the busy street,
Ranging cellar, shed and hall.
Never count the moments lost,
Never count the time it costs,
Guide them, mother, while you may,
In the safe and narrow way.

Mother, watch the little hand
Picking berries by the way,
Making houses in the sand,
Tossing up the fragrant hay.
Never dare the question ask—
"Why to me the weary task?"
The same little hands may prove
Messengers of Light and Love.

Mother, watch the little tongue,
Prattling eloquent and wild;
What is said and what is sung
By the joyous, happy child.
Catch the word while yet unspoken,
Stop the vow before 'tis broken,
This same tongue may yet proclaim
Blessings in a Saviour's name.

Mother, watch the little heart,
Beating soft and warm for you;
Wholesome lessons now impart;
Keep, oh keep that young heart true,
Extirpating every weed,
Sowing good and precious seed.
Harvest rich you then may see
Ripen for eternity.

THE DAISY'S LAST WINTER.

Somewhere in a garden of this earth which our dear Lord has planted with many flowers of grandness, grew a fresh, bright little daisy.

The first this little daisy knew, she found herself growing in green pastures and beside the still waters, where the heavenly Shepherd was leading his sheep. And very beautiful did life look to her as her bright little eyes, with their crimson lashes, opened and looked down into the deep crystal waters of the brook below, where every hour the sunshine made more sparkles, more rings of light, and more brilliant glances and changes of color than all the jewelers in the world could imitate. She knew intimately all the yellow birds, and meadow larks, and bobolinks, and black birds, that sang, piped, whistled or chattered among the bushes and trees in the pasture; and she was a prime favorite with them all. The fish that darted to and fro in the waters, seemed like so many living gems, and their silent motions, as they glided hither and thither, were full of beauty, and told plainly of happiness as if they could speak. Multitudes of beautiful flowers grew up in the water, or on the moist edges of the brook.

They did not all blossom at once, but had their graceful changes; but there was always a pleasant flutter of expectation among them, either a sending forth of leaves, or a nanking of buds, or a bursting out into blossoms; and when the blossoms passed away there was a thoughtful, careful maturing of seeds, all packed away so snugly in their little coffers and caskets of seed-pods, which were of every quaint and dainty shape that ever could be fancied for a lady's jewel-box. Overhead there grew a wide-spreading apple tree, which, in the month of June became a gigantic bouquet, holding up to the sun a million pink-tipped buds; and the little winds would come to play in its branches, and take the pink shells of the blossoms for their tiny air boats, in which they would go floating round among the flowers, or sail on voyages of discovery down the stream; and when the time of its blossom was gone, the beautiful tree, from year to year, had matured fruits of golden ripeness, which cheered the hearts of men.

Little Daisy's life was only one varied delight from day to day. She had an hundred playmates among the light-winged winds that came every hour to tell her what was going on all over the green pasture, and to bring her sweet perfumed messages from the violets and anemones of even the more distant regions.

There was not a ring of sunlight that danced in the golden net-work at the bottom of the brook, that did not bring a thrill of gladness to her; not a tiny fish glided in his crystal paths, or played and frolicked under the water-lily shadows, that was not a well known friend of hers, and whose pleasures she did not share. At night she held conferences with the dew drops that stepped about among the flowers in their bright pearl slippers, and washed their leaves and faces before they went to rest. Nice little nurses and dressing maids, these dew drops! and they kept tender guard all night over the flowers, watching and blinking wakefully to see that all was safe; but when the sun arose, each of them spread a pair of little rainbow wings and was gone.

To be sure there were some reverses in her lot. Sometimes a great surly, ill-looking cloud would appear in the sky, like a cross schoolmaster, and sweep up all the sunbeams, and call, in a gruff voice to the little winds, her play-fellows, to come away from their nonsensical, and then he would send a great strong wind down on them all with a frightful noise and roar, and sweep all the little flowers flat on the earth; and there would be a great rush and pattering of rain drops, and following of thunders, and sharp, forked lightnings would quiver through the air as if the green pastures certainly were to be torn to pieces; but in about half an hour it would be all over—the sunbeams would all dance out from their hiding places, just as good as if nothing had happened, and the little winds would come laughing back, and each little flower would lift itself up, and the wind

would help them to shake off the wet and plume themselves as jauntily as if nothing had gone amiss. Daisy had the greatest pride and joy in her own pink blossoms, of which there seemed to be an inexhaustible store; for as fast as one dropped its leaves, another was ready to open its eyes, and there were buds of every size, waiting still to come on, even down to little green cushions of buds that lay hidden away in the middle of the leaves, down close to the root.

"How favored I am!" said the Daisy; "I never stop blossoming. The anemones and the liverwort and the blood-root have their time, but then they stop and have only their leaves; while I go on blossoming perpetually; how nice it is to be made as I am!"

"But you must remember," said a great rough Burdock to her—"you must remember that your winter must come at last, when all this fine blossoming will have to be done with."

"What do you mean?" said Daisy, in a tone of pride, eyeing her rough neighbor with a glance of disgust. "You are a rough, ugly old thing, and that's why you are cross. Pretty people like me can afford to be good natured."

"Ah, well!" said Dame Burdock, "you'll see! It's a pretty thing if a young chit just out from seed this year, should be impertinent to me, who have seen twenty winters—yes, and been through them well, too."

"Tell me, Bobolink," said Daisy, "is there any truth in what this horrid Burdock has been saying? What does she mean by winter?"

"I don't know, not I!" replied Bobolink, as he turned a dozen somersets in the air, and then perched himself airily on a thistle-head, singing—

"I don't know, and I don't care;
It's mighty pleasant to fly up there,
And it's mighty pleasant to light down here,
And all I know is chip, chip, cheer!"

"Say, Humming bird, do you know anything about winter?"

"Winter! I never saw one," said Humming bird. "We have wings, and follow summer round the world, and where she is, there we go."

"Meadow-lark, Meadow-lark, have you ever heard of winter?" said Daisy.

Meadow-lark was sure he never remembered one. "What is winter?" he asked looking confused.

"Butterfly, Butterfly," said Daisy, "come, tell me, will there be winter, and what is winter?"

But Butterfly laughed, and danced up and down, and said:

"What is Daisy talking about? I never heard of winter. Winter! ha! ha! What is it?"

"Then it's only one of Burdock's spiteful sayings," said Daisy. "Just because she isn't pretty, and wants to spoil my pleasure, too. Say, dear, lovely tree that shades me so sweetly, is there such a thing as winter?"

And the tree said, with a sigh through its leaves:

"Yes, daughter, there will be winter; but fear not, for the Good Shepherd makes both summer and winter, and each is good in its time. Enjoy thy summer and fear not."

The months rolled by. The violets had long ago stopped blooming, their leaves were turning yellow, but they had beautiful seed caskets, full of rows of little pearls, which next year should come up in blue violets. The dog-toothed violet and eyebright had gone under the ground, so that no more was seen of them, and Daisy wondered whither they had gone. But she had new acquaintances far more brilliant, and she forgot the others. The brookside seemed all on fire with golden rod, and the bright yellow was relieved by the rich purple tints of the asters, while the blue fringed gentian held up its cups, that seemed as if they might have been cut out of the sky, and still Daisy had abundance of leaves and blossoms, and felt strong and well at the root. Then the apple tree cast down to the ground its fragrant burden of golden apples, and men came and carried them away.

By and by there came keen, cutting winds and driving storms of sleet and hail; and then at night it would be so cold! and one after another the leaves and flowers fell still and frozen, and grew black and turned to decay. The leaves loosened and fell from the apple tree, and sailed away by thousands down the brook; the butterflies lay dead with the flowers, but all the birds had gone singing away to the sunny South, following the summer into other lands.

"Tell me, dear tree," said Daisy, "is this winter that is coming?"

"It is winter, darling," said the tree, "but fear not. The Good Shepherd makes winter as well as summer."

"I still hold my blossoms," said Daisy; for Daisy was a hardy little thing.

But the frost came harder and harder every night, and first they froze her blossoms, and then they froze her leaves, and finally all were gone—there was nothing left but the poor little root, with the folded leaves of the future held in its bosom.

"Ah, dear tree!" said Daisy, "is not this dreadful?"

"Be patient, darling," said the tree. "I have seen many, many winters; but the Good Shepherd loses never a root, never a flower: they will all come again."

By and by came colder days and colder nights, and the brook froze to its little heart and stopped; and then there came bitter, driving storms, and snow lay wreathed over Daisy's head; but still from the bare branches of the apple tree came a voice of cheer. "Courage, darling, and patience! Not a

flower shall be lost; winter is only for a season."

"It is so dreary!" murmured Daisy, deep in her bosom.

"It will be short; the spring will come again," said the tree.

And at last the spring did come; and the snow melted and ran away down the brook, and the sun shone out warm, and fresh green leaves jumped and sprang out of every dry twig of the apple tree. And one bright rejoicing day, little Daisy opened her eyes, and lo! there were the eye-brights and the violets, and the anemones and the liverwort; only ever so many more of them than there were last year, because each little pearl of a seed had been nursed and moistened by the snows of winter, and come up as a little plant, to have its own flowers. The birds all came back and began building their nests, and everything was brighter and fairer than before; and Daisy felt strong at heart, because she had been through a winter, and learned not to fear it. She looked up into the apple tree. "Will there be more winters, dear tree?" she said.

"Darling, there will; but fear not. Enjoy the present hour and leave future winters to him who makes them. Thou hast come through these sad hours, because the Shepherd remembered thee. He loseth never a flower out of his pasture, but calleth them all by name; and the snow will never drive so cold, or the wind beat so hard, as to hurt one of his flowers. And look! of all the flowers of last year, what one is melted away in the snow, or forgotten in the number of green things? Every blade of grass is counted, and puts up its little head in the right time; so never fear, Daisy, for thou shalt blossom stronger and brighter for the winter."

"But why must there be winter?" asked Daisy.

"I never ask why," said the tree. "My business is to blossom and bear apples. Summer comes, and I am patient. But, darling, there is another garden, where thou and I shall be transplanted one day, where there shall be winter no more. There is coming a new earth; and not one flower or leaf of these green pastures shall be wanting there, but come as surely as last year's flowers came back this spring!"

So sang the sweet childish voice of Nellie Bradford, as she sat upon the doorstep of her pleasant country home. After she had finished the first verse, she seemed to be thinking over it very busily; and presently there settled over her usually merry face such a puzzled expression, that one was sure there must be some knotty question troubling her young mind.

Quickly springing from her low seat, the sound of her hurried footsteps fell upon the ear of her mother, who, in her low rocking chair, by the eastern window of the cool, tidy sitting-room, was busily engaged in sewing upon a little white and blue checked apron for Nellie's darling baby brother Frank. And this same baby brother was lying in his crib fast asleep, with his little chubby fingers tightly clasping the patch-work quilt, which Nellie's own deft fingers had fashioned so daintily for him, during the evenings of the long winter which had now passed away. But Nellie did not notice him as she passed to her mother's side, saying:

"Oh! mamma, I have just been singing 'Jesus bids us shine,' and wondering what it meant; and if I could not try too; for you remember, mamma, that I told papa just the other day, that I loved Jesus, and wished to do as he bid me."

"I've mother turned toward her child; and the eyes that looked into hers were full of eager questioning, so she could not hide her too noisy entrance, although baby Frank soon let them know, that he had heard it; for with a glad little laugh he raised himself up in the crib, and even peeped over the top to see what was going on."

Nellie catching a glimpse of his sparkling blue eyes, hurried to seat him upon the pillow, so he could not fall down. Then taking a small china dog from the mantle, she gave it to him for a plaything, saying, "There little brother, now you must be a good boy, and let mamma and I have our talk," and the little mischief winked hard at her, just as though he knew and understood all she was saying.

Nellie then drew a stool to her mother's feet, and sitting upon it, seemed to be waiting for a reply to her question.

Mother was just finishing Frankie's apron, so folding it neatly, she laid it on the window-sill; then taking one of Nellie's hands into both of hers, she began to tell her of Jesus, "The Light of the world." Nellie knew a great deal of the Saviour, and the many beautiful names by which he is called; but she had never before heard of him as "The Light of the World;" and as her mother explained to her how beautifully this name suited one, whose life was a bright and shining one; such as has never been equaled for brightness and glory, and told her that it was the Saviour's loving words and ways that helped to make his life so beautifully bright, and that we were to try to be like Jesus in all things; the meaning of the pretty verse was all plain to her.

She knew that Jesus meant, if she loved him she must strive to be like him; and that her life must be one by which others could see that she was really walking "In the light of God."

That afternoon Nellie went to the woods for wild flowers. After wandering about until she had filled her basket with wood violets, and almost hidden them beneath long feathery fern leaves, to protect them from the sun, she sat down on the great brown root of an oak tree to rest before she started for her home.

While sitting quite still, she heard a step behind her, and turning to look, saw little Kitty Foote with a great bundle of sticks on her back, trudging along as though she was very tired. Kitty had been crying too. Nellie knew this, for there were traces of tears on her face yet; and those brown eyes of Kitty's which had always sparkled so when they fell upon Nellie, were now cast down, and would not look up, until Nellie, going to her, laid her hand upon her shoulder, and asked in a voice full of pity, "Kitty, what is the matter?"

"Oh! Nellie," said Kitty, "mother's been real sick to-day, and I am afraid she is going to die; for she looks just as dear father did when he was ill."

"I am so sorry for you Kitty; wait a moment while I get my flowers, and then I will walk home with you and see her. Perhaps she is not so sick as you think her to be," said Nellie as she quickly ran for her basket. She then exchanged it for Kitty's bundle of sticks, for she had been working for her mother at home, and was really very tired; and Nellie was too kind-hearted to see her bear her burden alone. So Nellie helped her all the way home, and when there brought a cool fresh drink from the spring for Mrs. Foote, and after making a brisk fire with some of Kitty's sticks, prepared her such a nice supper, that when she had eaten nearly all the toast, she said she felt much better, and Kitty was so rejoiced to see her mother so well, that she told Nellie "she didn't believe her mother was going to die after all."

The truth was, little Kitty was all alone with her mother that day, and as she was suffering from a severe headache, and could not pay much attention to the child, Kitty had become very much frightened, and thought when she lay so quietly with her eyes closed, that she was really going to die.

But it was getting late, so Nellie gave Kitty, who was a great friend of hers, a good-night kiss, and started for home as fast as her little feet could carry her.

Her mother was standing in the doorway watching for her, as she came through the gate, and up the pleasant path. Nellie told her of the pleasant time she had had, and how she had helped Kitty Foote, and stopped on her way home to see her sick mother.

Mrs. Bradford, as she kissed the rosy flushed cheek of her child, whispered in her ear, "And so my darling has been trying to obey her Saviour to-day; and well has she succeeded. May you be enabled to shine more and more unto the perfect day."

When that bright day was gone, and Nelly knelt in the quiet moonlight, by her little bed, to say her evening prayer, she did not forget to ask Jesus to help her shine for him. And ever after, with gentle words and loving deeds, did she strive to make bright the life which God had given her.—*Ger. Ref. Messenger.*

A PITY TO HAVE AN EMPTY SEAT.

A few weeks ago a gentleman, was obliged to go to a distant depot at an hour when there was no conveyance thither. So although very weary, and not strong, he was obliged to set out on a walk of two or three miles. After he had gone a little way, he was overtaken by a gentleman and a little boy in a carriage. The fine horse was at once reined in, and his owner said with a smile, "I presume, sir, you are going but a short way; but this little fellow insists on my asking you to ride with us. I told him I had no doubt you were going to the first station; but he said, 'The gentleman is a stranger, father; it is very easy to ask him. It always seems to me such a pity to ride with an empty seat!'"

Now, that ride which cost the gentleman neither money, time, nor trouble, was a real blessing to a weary minister of Christ; and he told him so when he thanked him and the dear boy who prompted the kind civility.

"It is a way he has, and always had, sir," replied the father. "From his cradle, he could never enjoy what he could not share with others. If he has any new gift or pleasure, his first thought is for those less favored. It is a way he got from his mother."

It was truly a beautiful "way" that boy had; and it should be a lesson to all boys, and boys' mothers too, who hear of him. Remember this, you who have horses at your control to use for convenience or pleasure: "It is a pity to have an empty seat." Remember it, mothers, when training your boys for lives of usefulness. The little things of to-day will grow into great things of years to come. The boy who is selfish with his toys and his comforts will be so with his money and his sympathies when a man; for the heart grows harder, rather than softer, by the flight of time.

A carriage is not the only place where "it is a pity to have an empty seat." It is a pity to have one in the Church or the Sunday-school; and there will be a less number so, if all the boys had the spirit of the little fellow of whom we have written. Say with him, "It is easy to ask!" and then go

among the boys you know, and urge them to fill an empty seat. You can do more in this way than your minister or teacher can. Let every empty seat in the house of God and in the Sunday-school have a voice for you that shall send you out into the highways and hedges to compel less favored children to come in; and in so doing, you yourselves will receive a blessing. The noble boy who insisted on offering a ride to a stranger thereby made a new friend who will never forget him, and who may return the kindness a hundred fold in ways he little dreams of now; and better than this, he pleased God, who commands us to be careful to entertain strangers, and reminds us that many, in doing so, have entertained angels unaware.

THE DYING CHILD.

I knew a collier in Staffordshire who had one dear little girl, the last of four or five. This child was the light of his eyes; and as he came from the pit at night she used to meet him at the door of his cot to welcome him home. One day when he came in to dinner he missed his little darling, and going into the house with his heavier coal-pit clogs, his wife called him upstairs. The stillness of the place and her quiet voice made his heart sick, and a foreboding of evil came upon him. His wife told him they were going to lose their little lamb; she had a convulsive fit, and the doctor said she couldn't live. As the tears made furrows down his black face and he leaned over his darling, she said, "Daddy, sing."

"Here is no rest, is no rest."

"No, my child, I can't sing; I'm choking; I can't sing."

"O do, daddy, sing, 'Here is no rest.'"

The poor fellow tried to sing,
"Here o'er the earth as a stranger I roam,
Here is no rest, is no rest."

But his voice could make no way against his trouble. Then he tried again, for he wanted to please his sweet little girl.

"Were are afflictions and trials severe,
Here is no rest, is no rest;
Here I must part with the friends I hold dear,
Yet I am blest, I am blest."

Again his voice was choked with weeping; but the little one whispered, "Come, daddy, sing, 'Sweet is the promise,'" and the poor father goes on again.

"Sweet is the promise I read in thy word,
Blessed are they who have died in the Lord,
They have been called to receive their reward;
There, there is rest; there is rest."

"That's it, daddy," cried the child, "that's it;" and with her arms around the collier's neck, she died happy in the Lord.

CHRIST IN THE WAREHOUSE.

It is often the complaint of those who speak of great cities—"There is so much crime there." Others give it another form—"There are splendid churches and pastors, but I fear the religious life of the city is not of a very high order." No doubt there is crime there as well as elsewhere. No doubt there is a style of religious life in our cities as defective as that which is sometimes found elsewhere. But we have met with instances of singular probity, and instances of a singular piety. Of one of these I should like to tell you.

On one of the most busy streets down town there stands a large warehouse. Men are moving about with orderly rapidity. The proprietor is at the desk, overlooking purchases and sales; and his eye and manner of movement indicate energy of character. If in a cynical mood, you will look in and say, "What zeal to serve Mammon!" The clock will strike twelve in a moment. Let us enter. Give a hint that you would like to witness the somewhat singular custom of the place and hour. You will be welcome, although the custom is hardly dreamed of beyond the immediate parties. You go up stairs to a room as quiet as the locality admits, and are seated. A hymn is sung; a chapter is read, with a few remarks; a prayer is offered; and the company disperses to lunch or to business. It does not take long, but it gives evidence that, amid all the stir of that warehouse, it is not Mammon but God who is sought and served.

Of other results we cannot speak; but we heard, not long since, of one result, over which you cannot but rejoice. One of the persons employed was a man who had grown old in irreligion, and his friends had almost given him up as hopeless. But that noon-day recognition of God, in the upper room of the warehouse, had been to him a means of grace. It led him to reflection. As he "came to himself," he sought other means of grace; and now, with a light heart and a tongue which speaks praises, and not hard oaths, he bears witness to the loving kindness and tender mercy of God. To that one influence he attributes, under God, the salvation of his soul.

Will not the great day reveal many such instances of piety and fidelity where we look for them as little as here? Let us, then, gather a cheerful hope, and instead of brooding over dark aspects, think more of the almighty grace of God. If we are, indeed, faithful and truly the friends of Christ, we are not alone. There are men of kindred spirit in yonder factory, in that great ship, and in the busy haunts of commerce and exchange, as in Apostolic days there were some who "loved Christ even in Caesar's household."—*New York Observer.*

There cannot be a more acceptable service done to God, than for a man to set himself heartily and diligently to the conversion of souls; so many souls as a man instrumentally saves, so many diadems will God crown him withal in the great day.