

The Family Circle.

[COMMUNICATED.]

A RHYME FOR THE CHILDREN.

BY M. E. M.

THE BEST THAT I CAN.

"I cannot do much," said a little star, "To make the dark world bright!

"What is the use," said a fleecy cloud, "Of these few drops that I hold!

A child went merrily forth to play, But a thought, like a silver thread,

She knew no more than the glancing star, Nor the cloud with its chalice full!

So she helped a younger child along, When the road was rough to the feet,

Our best! Ah! children the best of us, Must hide our faces away,

IN THE HOSPITAL.

The old town-clock struck twelve on Good Friday, which is the Friday before Easter-Sunday, when the children sprang out hastily from the doors of all the school-rooms, and fairly filled the streets and market-places.

That afternoon Frau Willers and little Helen started for their regular weekly visit to the hospital. Though that kind woman was not obliged to go there, yet she felt it a duty to attend to the suffering, and to relieve their wants as far as she was able.

The clock in the old Gothic church on the other side of the square struck four in the afternoon, and while Helen was reading the newspaper to one of the soldiers, she heard another one, lying in a cot some distance off, say:

"Oh! I have been dreaming, and thought that I was away off home, where my dear parents used to live; where I used to go to school, and where I was so delighted to sail my little boat and turn my mill in the brook."

Poor man! he was not destined to have many more dreams on earth, as his wound was so severe that it was impossible for him to recover.

The newspaper which Helen read contained a long account of the battle in which all the soldiers who lay there had been wounded, the result of which battle was a great victory for the army in which they were. When she finished reading, she sang a song, commencing:

"I know not when I'll die, But all my sins I now lament"

She sang the whole song through, and it was one of the most beautiful she had learned from her mother.

By and by, Frau Willers and Helen finished their long visit of kindness to the wounded soldiers, and then left the hospital. A soldier, lying in a far corner of the hospital, asked the old nurse having charge of the room who the lady and her daughter were, for the song which he heard the little girl sing was one that was very familiar to him when he was a child.

"The lady's name is Frau Willers, and she is the daughter of a rich architect. She has had the misfortune to lose her husband, who was drowned, while on a voyage to America, five years ago. After the death of her father, her brother forged a will, and got the entire estate of the wealthy architect into his own possession. Frau Willers implored the dishonest man to give her at least enough property to educate her daughter; but all her entreaties were of no avail. He was cruel enough to keep all for himself.

This brother had an only son, whom he loved as only a parent can love a child. The unkind father wished to place all this property in his son's possession, and so not permit his only sister and her little girl ever to have a share in it."

When the old lady finished her story, she found that the soldier to whom she was telling it had fallen asleep, but another wounded soldier, lying near him, was very much interested in the account, and did not lose a word, though he was one of the most severely wounded in the whole hospital, and the surgeon had declared that he could not live longer than a day or two.

The next morning the old lady came early, and went immediately to the cot where the poor soldier lay. He looked a little brighter and fresher than the day before, but was still unable to carry on any conversation. The only words which the old lady could understand him to say, were: "The song of yesterday!" Just then it flashed upon that old nurse's mind that this very soldier was the son of the brother of Frau Willers; and yet she knew that, notwithstanding the love which his father had for him, he could live but a short time longer.

As soon as Frau Willers and Helen came into the hospital that afternoon, they were led immediately to the poor sinking soldier, among whose last words were these, which he spoke to Helen: "Oh! sing again the song which my mother taught me, and which you sang yesterday."

The poor soldier's father, who lived a long distance from there, barely had time to reach the hospital before his son died, who in a few days was followed to his grave.

As soon as the father heard that his own sister was living there, and that her daughter Helen had sung the beautiful song which had been a favorite in the family for many generations, he exclaimed:

"Oh! how hard-hearted I have been! How hard-hearted I have been! The very ones whom I have treated most unkindly have performed the last offices of affection for my beloved son!"

As the young soldier was borne to the grave, Frau Willers and her daughter wept bitter tears of sorrow, for it was a relative that they were following to his last resting-place. On returning, the brother of Frau Willers went with her to her home, and what he said there will now be no surprise to you:

"I have been led in this wonderful way, to review my own conduct, and to see my unkindness toward you in its clear light. I have now no relative left to whom I can leave my property, with the exception of you, my sister, and you, little Helen. So you must go away with me, and my house shall be your future home. It is nothing more than my duty to you as my only relatives. But it is doubly my duty when I remember that you have providentially been the ones to comfort my dear son in his last hours—to point him to the Saviour, and to fulfil his last wish on earth."

Frau Willers consented to the arrangement, and she and her daughter soon became the occupants of one of the most beautiful houses in all the Grand Duchy of Baden. Yet neither ceased to love the suffering.

Helen could look back upon pleasant Good Fridays, but to no Friday in all her life as upon that one when she sang to the poor sufferer in the hospital:

"I know not when I'll die, But all my sins I now lament."

LIFE LENGTHENED.

- 1. Cultivate an equable temper; many a man has fallen dead in a fit of passion. 2. Eat regularly, not over thrice a day, and nothing between meals. 3. Go to bed at regular hours. Get up as soon as you wake of yourself, and do not sleep in day-time, at least not longer than ten minutes before noon. 4. Work always by the day, and not by the job. 5. Stop working before you are very much tired,—before you are "fagged out." 6. Cultivate a generous and an accommodating temper. 7. Never cross a bridge before you come to it; this will save half the troubles of life. 8. Never eat when you are not hungry, nor drink when you are not thirsty. 9. Let your appetite always come uninvited. 10. Cool off in a place greatly warmer than the one in which you have been exercising; this simple rule would prevent incalculable sickness and save millions of lives every year. 11. Never resist a call of nature for a single moment. 12. Never allow yourself to be chilled "through and through;" it is this which destroys so many every year, in a few days' sickness, from pneumonia, called by some lung fever or inflammation of the lungs. 13. Whoever drinks no liquids at meals will add years of pleasurable existence to his life. Of cold or warm drinks, the former are most pernicious; drinking at meals induces persons to eat more than they otherwise would, as any one can verify by experiment, and it is excess in eating which devastates the land with sickness, suffering and death. 14. After fifty years of age, if not a day laborer, and sedentary persons after forty, should eat but twice a day, in the morning and about four in the afternoon; persons can soon accustom themselves to a seven

hour interval between eating, thus giving the stomach rest; for every organ without adequate rest will "give out" prematurely. 15. Begin early to live under the benign influences of the Christian religion, for it "has the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come."—Hall's Journal of Health.

A WOMAN'S EXPERIENCE ON VESUVIUS.

An adventurous lady who has ascended Vesuvius, and braved the dangers of an approach to the crater, writes the following sketch of her experience to the Philadelphia Bulletin: "A half an hour of fatiguing journey over a desert more dreary and terrible than imagination can possibly picture, with Pompeii, Herculaneum, Torre del Greco, and dozens of buried and ruined cities and villages painfully oppressing our sense of the supremacy of man's ingenuity over natural accident, and inspiring a dread of the awful fiery monster we were so recklessly approaching, and not in the least modified by the fact that seventy-five thousand souls were actually clinging to their old homes on the mountainside, down which rivers of fire rolled and surged, upheaved and turned in great blocks of crimson paste, as if the cauldron of hell were boiling over, and seeking victims beyond its limits.

"Now we dismounted; our skirts were tied close-around us to prevent their being torn off by the sharp edges of hard lava, and with a guide to drag us by the hand, everyone of the party being furnished with a stout stick, we started toward the lakes and streams of liquid fire. At every step the heat became more intense. We were passing over lava that had rolled down only twelve hours before. We dared not pause an instant, or our feet were burned; if we stepped one inch aside from the spot pointed by the guide's staff, we must plunge our feet into fiery paste; sometimes the crust under our feet cracked; we sprang from it, and sulphurous flames issued from the crevices. At last, I found my strength exhausted; my guide, perceiving it, cried out, 'Courage Madame; avancez plus loin!' 'Not a step,' I answered, and all scenes appeared to recede, when a glass of bright wine flashed between my eyes and the light, and 'Drink! it is the wine of Vesuvius!'"

"We were so near the flowing lava that our faces were all crimson with the heat; but we dared to remain while coins were thrown into it, and then fished out with the metal sticking to them; eggs were roasted, and on the place where we stood, holes were made, only one inch deep, through which papers were lighted for the gentlemen's cigars.

"Soon we returned to our ponies, began the descent, and will never forget that awfully grand scene! A black mountain, sighing, groaning, breathing out fire and smoke. Ruined cities, new villages, illuminated by its flames. The snowy mountains, rearing their white peaks to the clouds that caught the golden glow of Vesuvius, and broke into silvery light as the full moon rose triumphant, when the volcano sunk into gloomy, smoky darkness. Naples, beautiful white crescent city, lying at our feet; the bay, gleaming with the thousand lights that lay like a radiant coronet on the dancing waves; the deep blue belt of the Mediterranean stretching out an illimitable line, beyond, and I, awe-struck, weary, and subdued, pondering on the Majesty that 'rides on the clouds, and holds the seas in the hollow of His hand!'—Evening Bulletin.

GRANDFATHER'S PET.

This is the room where she slept, Only a year ago— Quiet and carefully swept, Blinds and curtains like snow.

Here is the little white rose of a room, With the fragrance fled away.

Nelly, grandfather's pet, With her wise little face,— I seem to hear her yet Singing about the place; But the crowds roll on, and the streets are drear, And the world seems hard with a bitter doom, And Nelly is singing elsewhere, and here Is the little white rose of a room.

Why, if she stood just there, As she used to do, With her long, light yellow hair, And her eyes of blue,— If she stood, I say, at the edge of the bed, And ran to my side with a living touch, Though I know she is quiet, and buried, and dead, I should not wonder much;

For she was so young, you know,— Only seven years old; And she loved me, loved me so, Though I was gray and old; And her face was so wise and so sweet to see, And it still looked living when she lay dead, And she used to plead for mother and me By the side of that very bed!

I wonder, now, it she Knows I am standing here Feeling, wherever she be, We hold the place so dear? It cannot be that she sleeps too sound, Still in her little night-gown dress, To hear my heavy footsteps round— In the room where she used to rest.

I have felt hard fortune's stings, And battled in doubt and strife, And never thought much of things Beyond this human life; But I cannot think that my darling died Like great strong men, with their prayers untrue— Nay! rather she sits at God's own side, And sings as she used to do.

Chambers' Journal.

GEN. GRANT'S brother Orville, like himself, is very reticent. Last week, he was in Galena, Ill., when a friend drew from his pocket a splendid knife, and presented it to Mr. Grant, making a speech, which, for the sport of the thing, he spun out to consider-

able length. Mr. Grant responded as follows: "Colonel, this is just what I wanted. thank you."

NECESSARY RULES OF SLEEP.

There is no fact more clearly established in the physiology of man, than this, that the brain expends its energies and itself during the hours of wakefulness, and that these are recuperated during sleep. If the recuperation does not equal the expenditure, the brain withers—this is insanity. Thus it is that, in early English history, persons who were condemned to death by being prevented from sleeping, always died raving maniacs; thus it is also, that those who are starved to death become insane. The brain is not nourished, and they cannot sleep. The practical inferences are three:—1st. Those who think most, who do most brain-work, require most sleep. 2d. That time "saved" from necessary sleep is infallibly destructive to mind, body, and estate. Give yourself, your children, your servants—give all that are under you, the fullest amount of sleep they will take, by compelling them to go to bed at some regular hour, and to rise in the morning the moment they awake; and within a fortnight, nature, with almost the regularity of the rising sun, will unloose the bonds of sleep the moment enough repose has been secured for the wants of the system. This is the only safe and sufficient rule. And as to the question, how much sleep any one requires? each must be a rule for himself. Great nature will never fail to write it out to the observer under the regulations just given.

WHAT MUST YOU DO?

Reader, do you feel the slightest drawing toward God, the smallest concern about your immortal soul? Does your conscience tell you this day that you are not yet forgiven, and have not yet felt the Spirit's power, and do you want to know what to do? Listen, and I will tell you.

You must go at once to the Lord Jesus Christ in prayer, and beseech him to have mercy upon you, and send you the Spirit. You must go direct to that open fountain of living waters, the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall receive the Holy Ghost. (John vii. 39.) Begin at once to pray to Jesus for the Holy Spirit. Think not that you are shut up and cut off from hope. The Holy Ghost is promised to them that ask him. Give the Lord no rest till he comes down and makes you a new heart. Cry mightily unto the Lord; say unto him, "Bless me, even me also; quicken me, and make me alive."

I dare not, for my part, send anxious souls to any one but Christ. I cannot hold with those who tell me to pray for the Holy Spirit in the first place, in order that they may go to Christ. In the second place, I see no warrant of Scripture for saying so. Only see that if men feel they are needy, perishing sinners, they ought to apply first and foremost, straight and direct, to Jesus Christ. I see that he himself says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." (John vii. 37.) I know it is his special office to baptize with the Holy Ghost, and that "in him all fulness dwells." I dare not pretend to be more systematic than the Bible. I believe that Christ is the meeting-place between God and the soul, and my first advice must always be, Go to Jesus, and tell your wants to him.

Reader, remember this. I have told you what to do. You are to go to Christ if you want to be saved.—J. C. Ryle.

FLOWERS IN THE PULPIT.

I have seen a judge take his seat, both in banco and at nisi prius, with a bunch of flowers before him; but never, till last Sunday, do I remember seeing a bouquet in the pulpit. A bright spring morning, and the recollection of many a pleasant and useful sermon delivered by Mr. Lynch, tempted me to walk some miles to the little unpretending iron chapel in Morrington-road, where he ministers. And I was well repaid by a characteristic sermon, at once genial and thoughtful, hearty and suggestive. Though delivered extemporaneously, it was evidently the result of deep thought. But the introduction was as spontaneous as it was novel. A little bunch of spring flowers had been given him just before he went into the pulpit, and with these in his hand he commenced his sermon. His text was 1 John i. 7, "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

"A friend," he said, "has brought me to church this morning a country offering—snow-drops and violets, creatures of the light: scentless purity, touched with green: sweet color, and sweeter fragrance. We feel the spring before we see it, some of us, indoors, and others yet happier out of doors have felt the spring these last few days; and the heart feels an entry within itself of the purifying Word, the Word of Light. The heart itself shall be a garden abounding in creatures of light. In the first purity of the heart there is, as it were, an aspect of coldness, a blanched, infragant whiteness; but presently there is color and fragrance too. Our first offering to God from the darkness is, as it were, a mere blanched, infragant white; but our next offering—and so soon that the two may be spoken of even as coming together—is the violet, of fair color and sweetest smell; often hidden in the green, but having powers in its life which will not let it be hidden, so that the sweetness carries us on to the sunny, southern bank, and we find it, and take it, and hold it up joyously in our hand, or keep it in our bosom, or put it on our work-table, or rest it upon a book, even upon a Bible, as the old Scotch lady said with a touch of super-

stition, which is often wiser than science. — Nothing should lie upon a Bible but a flower.' Can we put a fragrant flower upon our Bible? Can we offer unto God a heart that feels the coming spring, very wishful that it should come? Can we offer unto God as a product of that heart a desire to be pure, with a hope that He will blanch away the darkness of the old corruption? that He will give unto us thoughts and acts in which there is beauty, and which may have a savor even of Heaven?"—Christian World.

CONVERSION OF CHILDREN EXPECTED.

It cannot be God's purpose that for fourteen or sixteen years, children should grow up unregenerate—children of the devil, and then by a violent revolution, a conversion, great change of heart and life, become his children. If they have grown up in sin, we cannot be too thankful for the grace that converts them. But why should they grow up in sin? Is it not God's injunction that we "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?" And if we obey, shall we not, as a rule, realize the great promise of their pious manhood? As a rule, we say—for exceptions there will be, as there are to every law; no culture will always ensure goodness,—the tenderest father may mourn his reckless and heartless prodigal; the holiest home may be forsaken for the far country of riotous living; but the exception does not abrogate the law; piety will be the general issue of a pious and wise education. Children trained for God will be found God's children; children nurtured for heaven will be found in heaven.

May not our want of faith in this issue be one great reason why we so frequently fail to realize it? Do we not almost take for granted an unspiritual childhood? Is not our commonest idea of a child's piety connected with a conversion in advanced youth? And where this is the expectation it will almost necessarily color our feeling, give a hesitating character to our efforts, and dash our prayer with latent unbelief. Oh if we fully expected that our children would be consecrated from the womb, and trained them and prayed for them in the strong, glowing enthusiastic faith of such an expectation, how much more of heart, and vigor, and joy, there would be in our training, and how much oftener we should see its blessed result!

Assuredly nothing can be more unscriptural, more unbelieving, more godless, than morbid fears, and almost expectation, that the children whom God gives as his "heritage" will be the children of the devil,—sinful and reprobate, that they will break the heart of the mother that bore them, and "bring down their father's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave." This is the spirit of fear, and not of faith.—Rev. Henry Allon.

ADVANTAGE OF PIOUS PARENTAGE.

David makes it his boast and plea, "O Lord, truly I am thy servant and the son of thine handmaid." "Give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid." It is surely something to be, as it were, born God's child; to stand in the succession of spiritual blessings. Surely the children of the godly have, humanly speaking, vast advantages over others. Is there not a stronger presumption and guarantee that they too will be God's? Surely God must regard them with special favor. Surely they are the better for the prayers offered over their cradle,—that bless their unconscious life, that follow their dawning responsibility, that accompany every step and teaching of their course. Monica prays, and though for a while her prayers seem disregarded by God and neutralized by her son, yet at length the influences of maternal piety prevail, and her Augustine is given to her faith. "The promise is to us and to our children." We transmit our name, our physical constitution, our property,—may we not transmit also our holy spirit and habit of life—our love to God and goodness? And then all that is hereditary is ministered to by the myriad subtle influences of a parent's love and authority. There is no pastor like a pious mother, to whom her child confesses every fault, and by whom its every feeling is nurtured. There is no preacher like a pious father, whose words of wisdom and example of holiness are an ever-present ministry. Parents regard your child as the heir of God's blessings given to you, as a partaker with you of the Divine covenant, as a beneficiary of the Divine promises. Let your home be its first church. Let the church be its second home.—Rev. Henry Allon.

FAITH WORKING BY LOVE.

All true and lively faith begets love; and thus, that heavenly light is the vehicle of heat. And as, by this means, true faith has a tendency to the practice of obedience, so all true obedience depends upon faith, and flows from it. All knowledge of mysteries is vain and of no value, unless it have an influence upon the affections, and thereby, upon the whole conduct of life. The luminaries of heaven are placed on high; but they are so placed, that they may shine, and perform their periods, for the benefit of this earth.—Leighton.

A CLERGYMAN, while sitting in the gallery of the Connecticut legislature, when that body was putting through divorce cases, wrote the following impromptu:

"For cutting all connections faded Connect-I-cut is fairly named; I twain connect in one, but you Cut those whom I connect in two. Each legislator seems to say, 'What you connect-I-cut away.'"