The Family Circle.

THE CLEAR VISION.

I did but dream. I never knew What charms our sternest season wore. Was never yet the sky so blue, Was never earth so white before. Till now I never saw the glow Of sunset on you hills of snow, And never learned the bough's designs Of beauty in its leafless lines.

Did ever such a morning break As that my eastern windows see? Did ever such a moonlight take Weird photographs of shrub and tree? Rang ever bells so wild and fleet The music of the winter street? Was ever yet a sound by half So merry as yon school-boy's laugh?

O Earth! with gladness overfraught No added charm thy face hath found; Within my heart the change is wrought, My footsteps make enchanted ground. From couch of pain and curtained room Forth to thy light and air I come, To find in all that meets my eyes ... The freshness of a glad surprise.

Fair seem these winter days, and soon Shall blow the warm west winds of spring, To set the unbound rills in tune, And hither urge the bluebird's wing. The vale shall laugh in flowers, the woods Grow misty green with leafing buds, And violets and windflowers sway Against the throbbing heart of May.

Break forth, my lips, in praise, and own The wiser love severely kind; Since, richer for its chastening grown, I see, whereas I once was blind The world, O Father! hath not wronged With loss the life by thee prolonged; But still, with every added year, More beautiful thy works appear!

As thou hast made thy world without, Make then more fair my world within; Shine through its lingering clouds of doubt; Rebuke its haunting shapes of sin; Fill, brief or long, my granted span Of life with love to thee and man; Strike when thou wilt the hour of rest, But let my last days be my best! Atlantic Monthly for May.

A FLOWER ON A LITTLE GRAVE.

BY REV. THEO. L. CUYLER. I have often written in these columns on "the lessons of disappointment," and "God's bitter cups," and on Jesus as a comforter to the heart-broken. But the brief announcement in the obituary department of the late Independent must have told my readers already what a "bitter cup" our Heavenly Father was pressing to the lips of myself and the sharer of my griefs. We are all prone to magnify our sorrows; but I am sure that the hundreds who now recall the exquisitely beautiful face of our twin boy Georgie, as he was led with his little mate through the streets of Brooklyn, and through the park at Saratoga last summer, will say that the doss of such a treasure is a sorrow too deep for words to gauge.

The bright, brave boys came to us on the 9th of July, 1863, while cannon were sounding over the fall of Vicksburgh. For a time we playfully called them "our two Vics - Vicksburgh and Victory. For five years these faces have filled this house with sunshine. They had both been consecrated larger and the more beautiful of the twain under our culture as long as seemed good to his holy and unerring wisdom. Georgie grew sweeter, and gentler, and more winsome every hour during the last winter; and sometimes, when he came home from the infant class on Sunday, and laid his golden curls on my shoulder, and repeated his hymns in so tender a voice, I sfelt a secret tremble at the thought that so much treasure was entrusted to so frail an "earthen

On the Sabbath morning early (April 19th) the dreaded scarlet fever (most mysterious of all permitted scourges of the fire-side) smote his lovely form with a violence past all skill to arrest. He began to repeat his cradle-hymn, "Now I lay me down to sleep," and then murmured over those other favorite lines:

"Jesus loves me; He has died The gates of heaven to open wide. He will wash away my sin And let His little child come in."

When he had finished this most perfect of modern child-hymns, he looked up to his mother and his faithful German nurse, and whispered, "Does Jesus love me? What will Jesus say to me when he sees me?" A little later in the day he kissed his hand to me, and faintly said, "Bye-bye!" The agonizing spasms soon came on; and at sunset my glorious boy lay cold and silent on his pillow! Our Sabbath evening was his

bright and endless Sabbath morn! To-day the nursery is deserted. His little mate""Theo." is slewly passing through the same disorder, but with good hope of recovery; the kite and the plaything lie about the floor; and to me this poor, "disenchanted earth" has lost half its lustre. Henceforth my visits to the house of the bereaved must be made as though my departed boy was leading me by the hand. Henceforth I can truly "weep with those who weep;' for I have been admitted to the sacred circle of the sorrowing. Henceforth heaven is nearer and inexpressibly dearer. Henceforth the adorable JESUS is not only my Saviour, but the guardian of my beautiful

cherub-boy. I tervently hope that none of my readers will chide me for pouring out through a public journal the sacred griefs of a smitten heart. But I have received from so many readers of THE INDEPENDENT tender messages of condolence that I can only respond to them with these words of gratitude.
And it is out right that I should tell them
that the everlasting Gospel, the presence of the divine Jesus, the all-sufficient grace of God, the "anchor sure and steadfast," which I have so often commended to them are now to my smitten soul indefinitely and inexpressi-

bly precious. Welcome be the baptism, how- same frosted element, which so choke up and sible to all but a few women, and their sucisters of the word more consecrated to our presented is that of a minister in a fog. glorious work of preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified!

IRVING AND THE THIEVING BOYS.

MR. laving was full of the milk of hucomposedly to the robbery of his orchards. singing master manages to get so much and The following incident will show how he such a variety of music out of such unmustopped it:

instructions how to act, he, from the opposite side, came upon the boys unexpectedly, but having recently settled in the neighborhood, they were not familiar with his appearance, and kept pocketing the apples sends forth the anthem of praise. These with the utmost nonchalance. He singled out the lad who apparently assumed the post of leader, and thus addressed him:
"Boy, those are very poor apples. I

know of a tree on which there are far better ones."

"Where is it?" asked the wary marau-

"Over yonder," pointing to the cottage.
"We're afraid of the old gentleman."
"He is not there now. You will be perfectly safe; but make no noise lest we be

overheard." In a few moments the party were on the march for the new foraging-ground, Mr. Irving leading. They advanced in single file, and sought the shelter afforded by the east side of a prickly hedge. Ere long the voice

of the gardener was heard near them. "Be quiet," said the leader," or we shall be discovered. Keep near the hedge, every

one of you.' Fearmade them hug closely to the covert which they imagined only concealed them from the dreaded proprietor. The thorns pricked them sorely; but the greater danger which was imminent made them indifferent to the pain inflicted by the thorns.

Soon they approached the desired apple tree, and as they gathered round it, saw the gardener approaching from a direction garding none—evidently, from their ancient which made escape impossible.

"Boys," said Mr. Irving, "this is the tree spoke of, and I am the owner-Mr. Irving. Do not be afraid," he continued; "I shall not punish you; the prickly hedge has done that sufficiently already. I only ask that when you want to eat my fruit, you will come to me and ask for it. I do not like to have my property taken without my permision.

The ringleader in this affair gave the writer, in after years, the details of it himself, and added that the rebuke was so thorough he never robbed Mr. Irving's or any other apple orchard again.

ATTENDING CHURCH IN ICEBERGS.

the heads of the people. The only advan- hand atchurch singing nursery. It is worth tage I then saw, in preaching under such circumstances, was, that the people could carry the frozen words heme and study where fill them at their leisure yet after all, concluded it was a little of Mr. Taylor's poetry used to express a very cold fact. I have since concluded that what he then said confirmed the concluded the confirmed the concluded the concluded the confirmed the concluded the confirmed the concluded the confirmed the concluded the confirmed tained more truth than poetry. All through it rises gently, gracefully, as though borne Northern Europe one finds lofty stone piles on the inspiration onits own song till near-churches, moss-grown and ivy-covered, by lost in the deep blue above. There, as if which have stood for three and four hun-pasted to the sky, with wings and tail dred years: No architecture is so massive and imposing as this church architecture. Church of Rome. They were, therefore, built; not so much for the comfort and aclits head forward and drops like a stone to commodation of hearers, as, by their structure and appurtenances, to impress the mind with the awe of religious art. Owing, therefore, to the unnecessary space enclosed beneath their high roofs, it is quite difficult, if its beauty is inferior, unless "handsome is not impossible—at least with Dutch porce-that handsome does." Our bobolink sings lain stoves—to heat them. You, good people at home, with furnace-heated churches, little brown lark; but he flies not so high, cushioned seats, carpeted floors, and often robed sleighs to convey your muffled bodies to and from God's house, can but faintly conceive the luxury of being clad in two overcoats and a huge shawl, walking through sloppy, muddy, snowy streets, to some huge dome, where the condensed frost of the confined atmosphere greets you with its cold grasp; sitting on a hard, wooden bench. with your feet resting on icc-charged bricks, listening to good singing, nasal reading, and dows, through which the élite deign to look beside their comfortable stoves.

close their eyes, and profess to hear a sermon better than when they see the minis chronic Sunday weakness, which over heat of every clime in each house. They are Lord, ed churches greatly aggravated. For my part, I have always felt that the minister's the rich are confectioners' shops, where we face was a kind of soul-reflector; and as light, fire, earnestness, hope, and faith, or the poor are imitations of these, to the exthe opposites, were traceable in his counte-nance, so were the people impressed. For keeping is not beautiful; it cheers and

ever bitter, that shall make any of us min- obstruct the course of vision, that the picture | cess is dearly bought.-R. W. Emerson.

Notwithstanding the disagreeableness of cold churches, I have always received good in attending. Some of the finest churchchoirs in Berlin, Dresden, Potsdam, and Halle, consist chiefly of boys. One thing is a little peculiar-I have not yet seen a lady man kindness, but even he couldn't submit in a church choir. The mystery is, how the sical-looking heads; yet he does, and it is When he first moved into this region he not all sound simply, but harmony of the was much annoyed by thefts which some sweetest kind-thrilling, rapturous music. bold boys perpetrated upon his fruit. He And what is more marvellous, these boys' determined to stop their visitations by a voices imitate the most cultivated tones of method peculiar to himself. Learning from the female voice, giving all parts in sweetthe gardener that they were on the premi- est unison. I have seen choirs of from forty ses, after placing him in a certain spot, with to one hundred boys, behind them a huge organ, and when the singing service is introduced, one is nearly lifted from his feet, as that hundred-voiced, youthful choir, acboys sing with a will-sing lustily-throw back their heads, open their mouths, expand their lungs, and pour forth such volumes of sweet sound that one never would have dreamed resided there. But the Germans "Are you going to the Opera House to-morrow are ready singers, natural singers, love evening?" There was to be some sort of Scripturally and experimentally to be true. are always engaged in it. The children all sing, are taught it early so early, that one almost concludes they are born singing. The fool's eye, were wandering during the hour first street singing I encountered was at Rudolsdorff. It forcibly reminded me of young Luther singing for bread in the streets of Magdeburg and Eisenach. But, as respects street-singing, Halle eclipses all other cities I have vet seen!

For the past six months these little singers have formed their circle beneath my religion, I would not play the hyprocrite like window every Friday morning, often before it was light, and treated me to their sweet the palpable inconsistency. How far the music. But I doubt if one of them knows I example may have a hurtful, deadly inam in the city; yet my rooms being opposite one of the teacher's rooms, for whom they sing, I enjoy it also. Everybody in Germany, of a public or professional character, from the king to a street-expressman, wears some distinguishing regalia; so these little fellows have theirs, which consists of a tall black silk hat, varying in height, shape, and appearance, the gifts of some friendly-dis-posed patrons. Their ears prevent the hats from entirely resting upon their shoulders; and though they give their bearers rather a comic appearance, the music which comes out from under them is sweet, clear, and thrilling. Since hearing these boy-choirs in church we are losing a valuable element of power in sour churches. We have thousands of boys in all our churches, and yet their singing power is often dormant. In our Sundayschools, the girls are often the best singers. Boys are often afraid or ashamed to sing. Here the reverse is true. Why could not the twenty or one hundred boys, who are to be found in nearly all our societies, be formed into a singing class for church music, as a substitute for adult choirs, which are too Bayard Taylor once said, in a lecture, frequently generators of strife and discords? that in some part of Northern Europe he Give them a judicious leader, infuse into attended religious service where it was so them an enthusiasm for singing, and you cold that the words, as spoken by the min-ister, fell in crystallized show flakes upon work benefit the boys, but have always on

> The spring songsters are here, and every where fill the air with their sweet music.

pasted to the sky, with wings and tail aspread, and transparent as a spider's web, and imposing as this church architecture. Before the Lutheran Reformation many of these old domes were the property of the Church of Rome. They were therefore as it gradually descends, it suddenly throws the earth. Not till then is its song ended. This is the lark. No bird has as yet pleased me as has the lark. Its song would entitle it to be called the bird of Paradise, though a richer note, and is much prettier than the and his song is only a tenth as long.—The Methodist.

DOMESTIC LIFE.

I am afraid that our domestic life will not bear looking into. I fear, that our houses will not be found to have unity, and to express the best thought. The household, the calling, the friendship of the citizen are not homogeneous. His house ought to show us an hour's sermon; while the only occular his honest opinion of what his well-being evidence of fire are two wax candles faintly consists in when he rests among his kin-burning upon the ornamented altar. "But dred, and forgets all affectation, all compliwhat are they among so many?" Most of ance, and even all exertion of will. He the churches, however, contain rows of brings home thither whatever commodities pleasure. Take off all the roofs from street There are persons who, after cushioning to street, and we shall seldom find the temtheir heads in the palm of their hands, will ple of any higher god than prudence. The progress of domestic living has been in cleanliness, in ventilation, in health, in deter. It always seemed to me that, in such corum, in countless means and arts of comcases, the eyes were afflicted with a sort of fort, in the concentration of all the utilities arranged for low benefits. The houses of

PLAYING THE HYPOCRITE.

A solemn, interesting prayer-meeting was recently held in one of our city churches. The pastor was greatly in the spirit. He had told them of his own experience, his hungering and thirsting after righteousness, his earnest desire to get nearer the Lord. He had affectionately besought his people to rise higher. He had invited the members to gather with him around the altar and newly consecrate themselves to Jesus. Holy One was manifested. Now, would it not be naturally supposed, that all witnessing that scene, and realizing the influences of such an hour, would retire with religious thought and feeling-members of the church at least? Could there be any trifler in such an assembly? And yet there was, and a professor of Christ's religion too! A young lady, not a professing Christian,

going down the stairs from the lecture wife of one of the leading members in that church, and a friend. She said to her friend: performance at the Opera House which had attracted the attention of that gay, lifeless professor. Her worldly thoughts, like the of solemn prayer. The Opera House was more prominently in view than The Throne Poor deluded woman! Alas! how many there are like her, who have a name to live while they are dead! The young lady who overheard the inquiry, subsequently remarked to her friend: "If I was to profess that woman!" Sinner as she was, she saw fluence, upon that immortal soul, eternity alone will reveal. She may be hindered for life, aye for eternity. She may lose her soul -and her deep, eternal damnation be chargeable to that thoughtless professor. "Playing the hyprocrit," designedly or undesignedly, in a dangerous business. That trifling one did not, we charitably believe, design to "play the hyprocrite." She had not of set purpose entered upon the work of proving that Jesus Christ was an impostor, and His religion a fable. No! probably step by step she had glided into that realm of coldness and death, in which the close of that memorable prayer meeting found her. Go home with her, and ask her how much she studies God's Word dailyhow often she visits the closet-how frequently she converses with her husband and children about personal religion? Get answers to these questions, and others of a kindred character, and you will understand why she asked: "Are you going to the Opera House to morrow evening?" Closetgoing and opera-going are antagonistic. We say she did not design "to play the hyprocrite," and yet she was doing it as effectually as if she had sworn to do so. How circumspectly should professing Chrislips be guarded, and sacred vigils kept over mist said: "I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. I will keen The Doctor sat down, and wrote them a sin not with my tongue. my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me." Surely this is a resolution worthy of universal adoption.

The thought that so many professors are undesignedly "playing the hyprocrite," is fearful. Every one is exerting a potent influence in some circle, either for life or death. And who can contemplate the loss of one soul, through our individual fault, without inward horror? The feeding of the undying worm upon human vitals—the action of the quenchless flame upon immortal soul—the ceaseless torments of eternal perdition realised by a conscious, immortal customer to deal with. being are awful! And Ol to be instrumental in plunging one soul into such unand in the wise use of Christian privileges, a soul-life which will forbid such earnal utit has a heavenly seasoning, a life-savor, ministering grace unto the hearer. And, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness!"—

Methodist Home Journal.

What do I love?"

Ramsay wrote:

"God loves man who

A WORD OR TWO TO A MOTHER.

We are by no means surprised at your anxiety on behalf of the spiritual interests his ingenious tenant a hearty slap on the of your children in these truly solemn and most deceptive days. If the Holy Ghost says, by the prophet Daniel, concerning our boxes, a la théatre, provided with glass win- and ornaments have for years allured his times, "and some of them of understanding pursuit, and his character must be seen in shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to out upon the minister and us poor, common them. But what idea predominates in our make them white," it is no wonder that you people, while they rest in their easy-chairs, houses? Thrift first, then convenience and or any right minded parent tremble for your children, growing up as they are, and about to go forth into a world beset on every hand by snares and entrapments We see but one refuge, beloved, and that is what has been called the weapon of "all prayer." Truly those times have fallen upon us which were foreshown by the

We would suggest to you, in reference to your beloved children, to bring everything in so much as in you lies, to the standard of trnth. Let "to the word and to the testimony" be your constant watchword. Pray much for wisdom and strength. Apthis reason I always want to see the minister's eyes. But here it is accompanied with child; neither the host nor the guest; it difficulties; for from his mouth flows a flood of frosted breath; from my nostrils and the house kept to the end of display is imposted breath; from my nostrils and the house kept to the end of display is imposted breath; and the house kept to the end of display is imposted breath; from my nostrils and the house kept to the end of display is imposted breath; from my nostrils and the house kept to the end of display is imposted breath; from my nostrils and the house kept to the end of display is imposted breath; from my nostrils and the house kept to the end of display is imposted by the mercy-seat.

Mark, the dealings of God, in His providence, are commonly the handmaid of grace. Let your elder children, especially, at least to a certain extent, be aware of your cares and anxieties, in order that they, as well as yourself, may watch for and see the interposing hand of your great and gracious Deliverer. And in regard to the Ritualism, and the Rationalism, and the many delusive, captivating, and destructive isms of the day, let your watchword be, "Willit stand, my children, the test of a sick-bed, and all the solemn realities of a dying hour?" Abide by this, swerve not from this. Let nothing induce you to quit this stronghold It was a solemn hour. The presence of the in exhorting and remonstrating with your loved ones. You can with the utmost truth testify that this is one of the rich and distinguishing features of a true Scriptural faith, that it enables its possessor to enjoy a holy familiarity with God, and a blessed confidence in Him whom it has believed, where the most devoted Romanist (and the mere Ritualist is only a dishonest copyist of such) is tossed about upon the waves of a miserable uncertainty as to his eternal furoom, overheard a conversation between the ture. A tenet of Romanism is, that "assurances of salvation" is awful presumption. Now you, beloved, have been taught better. The advocacy of these old-fashioned verities may cost you much in a way of sneer and rebuke and a vainly-imagined new and better way; but never mind. God will honor His own truth, afford you a peculiar peace and satisfaction in the vindication of it; and (if not before) will at least on a death-bed, cause you to experience all the joy, all the comfort, all the unspeakable blessedness of him who, as a crowning mercy to his previous knowledge of and looking for the Christ of God, exclaimed, "Now, Lord, lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation;" and, although you may not live to see it, a mother's prayers and a mother's example shall be answered in her loved ones being brought to His feet who hath graciously declared, that, "His righteousness shall be unto children's children." What a blessed promise! Beloved, be this your plea of faith and our plea of faith day by day.—Dr. Doudney.

SENDING TO HEAVEN FOR A MINISTER.

The people of one of the out-parishes of Virginia wrote to Dr. Rice, who was then at the head of the Theological Seminary in Prince Edward, for a minister. They said they wanted a man of first-rate talents, for they had run down considerably, and needed building up. They wanted one who could write well, for some of the young people were very nice about the matter. wanted one who could visit a great deal, for their former minister had neglected that, and they wanted to bring that up. They wanted a man of very gentlemanly deportment, for some thought a great deal of that. And so they went on describing a perfect minister. The last thing they mentioned wasthey gave their last minister three hundred tians walk! How should the words of the and fifty dollars; but if the Doctor would send them such a man as they had described, even the thoughts of the heart. The Psal- they would raise another fitty dollars, mak-

reply, telling them that they had better forthwith make out a call for old Dr. Dwight, in heaven; for he did not know any one in this world who answered this description. And as Dr. Dwight had been living so long on spiritual food, he might not need so much for the body, and possibly he might be able to live on four hundred dollars a year.

HOW RAMSAY PAID HIS RENT.

Wit is sometimes worth money, but then it is quite essential to have a good-natured

When Allen Ramsay, a well-known Scotch poet began life, he was so poor that he could mitigated darkness—such deep agony and not meet his first half-year's rent. After it remorse—such damnation—who can estimate became due he met his landlord and exthe guilt? Beware, then, professors, of plained his circumstances, and expressed words spoken on entering or retiring from his distress at his failure to meet his obligathe sanctuary, in the hearing of the uncon- tions. The jolly landlord was quite kind to verted. Above all, cultivate in the closet, him, and said that, as he was a lad of some genius, he would give him a chance to cancel his debt without paying a shilling. "If," terances—and give to the speech, on all said the creditor, "you'll give me a rhymoccasions, such excellency, as will show that ing answer to four questions in as many minutes, I'll quit you the rent altogether." Allen said he would try. The questions forget not, each day, to breathe the prayer: were: "What does God love? What does "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, the devil love? What does the world love?

Ramsay wrote: "God loves man when he refrains from sin; The devil loves man when he persists therein; The world loves man when riches on him flow; And you'd love me could I pay you what I owe!" "The rent is paid," said the farmer, giving

HEEDLESSNESS.

shoulders.

Alas! I have walked through life, Too heedless where I trod: Nay, helping to trample my fellow-worm, And fill the burial sod : Forgetting that even the sparrow falls Not unmarked of God.

The wounds I might have healed! The human sorrow and smart! And yet it never was in my soul To play so ill a part:
But evil is wrought by want of thought, A's well as want of heart.

As the rivers cannot rest till they pour themselves into the bosom of the sea, so neither can renewed souls find rest, till they