

The Family Circle.

THE CLEAR VISION.

I did but dream. I never knew What charms our sternest season wore.

Did ever such a morning break As that my eastern windows see?

O Earth! with gladness overfraught No added charm thy face hath found;

Fair seem these winter days, and soon Shall blow the warm winds of spring,

Break forth, my lips, in praise, and own The wiser love severely kind;

As thou hast made thy world without, Make thou more fair my world within;

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 comfort to the heart-broken.

The bright, brave boys came to us on the 9th of July, 1863, while cannon were sounding over the fall of Vicksburg.

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.

"Jesus loves me; He has died The knees of heaven to open wide."

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?"

To-day the nursery is deserted. His little mate, "Theo," is slowly passing through the same disorder, but with good hope of recovery; the kite and the playing lie about the floor; and to me this poor, "disenchanted earth" has lost half its lustre.

I fervently hope that none of my readers will chide me for pouring out through a public journal the sacred griefs of a smitten heart.

And it is but 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, however bitter, that shall make any of us ministers of the word more consecrated to our glorious work of preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified!

IRVING AND THE THIEVING BOYS.

MR. IRVING was full of the milk of human kindness, but even he couldn't submit composedly to the robbery of his orchards.

When he first moved into this region he was much annoyed by thefts which some bold boys perpetrated upon his fruit. He determined to stop their visitations by a method peculiar to himself.

"Boy, those 'ere 'ere very 'ot apples. I know of a tree on which there 'ere far better ones."

"Where is it?" asked the wary marauder.

"Over yonder," pointing to the cottage.

"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.

Fear made them hug closely to the covert, which they imagined only concealed them from the dreaded proprietor, Mr. Irving.

"Boys," said Mr. Irving, "this is the tree I 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 permission."

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 IOEBERGS.

Bayard Taylor once said, in a lecture, that in some part of Northern Europe he attended religious service where it was so cold that the words, as spoken by the minister, fell in crystallized snow flakes upon the heads of the people.

"The spring songsters are here, and everywhere fill the air with their sweet music. Fifteen minutes' walk brings one from any part of the city into the open fields.

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DOMESTIC LIFE.

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There are persons who, after cushioning their heads in the palm of their hands, will close their eyes, and profess to hear a sermon better than when they see the minister. It always seemed to me that, in such cases, the eyes were afflicted with a sort of chronic Sunday weakness, which over-heated churches greatly aggravated.

same frosted element, which so choke up and obstruct the course of vision, that the picture presented is that of a minister in a fog.

Notwithstanding the disagreeableness of cold churches, I have always received good in attending. Some of the finest church-choirs in Berlin, Dresden, Potsdam, and Halle, consist chiefly of boys.

For the past six months these little singers have formed their circle beneath my window every Friday morning, often before it was light, and treated me to their sweet music. But I doubt if one of them knows I am in the city; yet my rooms being opposite one of the teacher's rooms, for whom they sing, I enjoy it also.

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sible to all but a few women, and their success is dearly bought.—R. W. Emerson.

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.

A young lady, not a professing Christian, going down the stairs from the lecture room, overheard a conversation between the wife of one of the leading members in that church, and a friend. She said to her friend: "Are you going to the Opera House to-morrow evening?"

"There was to be some sort of performance at the Opera House which had attracted the attention of that gay, lifeless professor. Her worldly thoughts, like the fool's eye, were wandering during the hour of solemn prayer."

"If I was to profess religion, I would not play the hypocrite like that woman!" Sinner as she was, she saw the palpable inconsistency. How far the example may have a hurtful, deadly influence, upon that immortal soul, eternity alone will reveal.

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A WORD OR TWO TO A MOTHER.

We are by no means surprised at your anxiety on behalf of the spiritual interests of your children in these truly solemn and most deceptive days. If the Holy Ghost says, by the prophet Daniel, concerning our times, "and some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white," it is no wonder that you 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 would suggest to you, in reference to your beloved children, to bring everything, in so much as in you lies, to the standard of truth. Let "to the word, and to the testimony" be your constant watchword.

"All the world has admired the offering of Abraham, what may not come to pass since God has offered his own Son?"—Luther.

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.

"Abide by this, swerve not from this. Let nothing induce you to quit this stronghold 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 future.

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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. They 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 was—they gave their last minister three hundred and fifty dollars; but if the Doctor would send them such a man as they had described, they would raise another fifty dollars, making it four hundred dollars.

HOW RAMSAY PAID HIS RENT. It is sometimes worth money, but then it is quite essential to have a good-natured customer to deal with. When Allen Ramsay, a well-known Scotch poet began life, he was so poor that he could not meet his first half-year's rent. After it became due he met his landlord and explained his circumstances, and expressed his distress at his failure to meet his obligations. The jolly landlord was quite kind to 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," said the creditor, "you'll give me a rhyming answer to four questions in as many minutes, I'll quit you the rent altogether." Allen said he would try. The questions were: "What does God love? What does the devil love? What does the world love? What do I 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 oil him flow; And you'd love me could I pay you what I owe!" The rent is paid, said the farmer, giving his ingenious tenant a hearty slap on the shoulders.

HEEDLESSNESS. 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, As 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 come into the bosom of God.

"All the world has admired the offering of Abraham, what may not come to pass since God has offered his own Son?"—Luther.