

The Family Circle.

PARENTAL LOVE.

A rich man, who had no children, proposed to his poor neighbor, who had seven, to take one of them; and promised, if the parents would consent to the proposal, that he would give them property enough to make themselves and their other six children comfortable for life.

"Which shall it be? Which shall it be?" I looked at John—John looked at me. (Dear patient John, who loves me yet as well as though my locks were jet.) And when I found that I must speak My voice seemed strangely low and weak; "Tell me again, what Robert said?" And then I listening bent my head. "This is his letter:

"I will give A house and land while you shall live, If in return, from out your seven, One child to me for aye is given." I looked at John's old garments worn, I thought of all that John had borne Of poverty, and work, and care, Which I, though willing, could not share; I thought of seven mouths to feed, Of seven little children's need; And then I said:

"Come, John," said I, "We'll choose among them as they lie Alone." So, walking hand in hand, Dear John and I surveyed our band. First to the cradle lightly stepped, Where Lillian, the baby, slept. A glory 'gainst the pillow white. Softly the father stooped to lay His rough hand down in loving way, When dream or whisper made her stir, And hushfully he said, "Not here—not here."

A nice warm supper was waiting for her, And warm clothes to make her dry and comfortable. The room never looked so pretty before, nor the flowers on the carpet so bright; but, best of all, she was safe at home, with her papa and mamma.

No scolding did they give their little daughter, but that night in Jessie's room, where no human eye could see them; the mother prayed that God would give her darling a thankful and obedient heart for Jesus' sake.—New York Observer.

"IT DOES ME NO GOOD." "It does me no good to attend church," I never feel any better for the service. I would not go, if it were not to please my mother," said Harry Jones.

"Do you never hear anything which affords you encouragement, or strengthens your good resolutions?"

"No, never. I have been to church ever since I was a child, and I am no better for it."

"I can scarcely imagine how any one can hear the sermons you listen to, and not feel better for so doing."

"The fact is, I never hear the sermons. I am always thinking of something else. I have some plan for Monday, some past pleasure to live over again of something which I am resolved to execute in the future."

Miss Brown looked grave. "I have shocked you, I know I should, but going to church is the most irksome business in my life."

"Perhaps if you would listen, attentively to the sermon, you would not find it so. Promise me that the next Sabbath you will attend and listen attentively, and will give me an account of the sermon afterwards."

Harry hesitated, but finally promised to do as his friend wished. The next Sabbath the text was, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." In the sermon the minister endeavored to show that there was need of personal exertion in order to be a faithful follower of Christ. He could not fit down idle with folded hands, and dream of being good, expecting to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease. We must rouse ourselves, and work with all our might; we must "strive to enter in at the strait gate," leaving our burden at Jesus' feet as we pass the narrow entrance, trusting in his grace alone to help us.

This sermon, Harry acknowledged to his friend, "was really worth hearing." Yet, said Miss Brown, "it was no better than usual, only you went to listen." You find it was not the fault of the preaching, but that of the hearing which failed to do you good. If we would be benefited, we must listen attentively, and prayerfully meditate upon what we have heard. If we do this, we shall seldom find cause for censure.

THEY WON'T TROUBLE YOU LONG.

Children grow up—nothing on earth grows so fast as children. It was but yesterday, and that lad was playing with tops, a buoyant boy. He is a man, and gone now? There is no more childhood for him or for us. Life has claimed him. When a beginning is made it is like raveling a stocking; stitch by stitch gives way till all is gone. The house has not a child in it—there is no more noise in the hall—boys rustling pell-mell; it is very orderly now. There are no more skates or sleds, bats, ball strings left scattered about. Things are neat enough now. There is no delay for sleepy folks; there is no longer any task before you lie down, of looking after anybody and tucking up the bed-clothes. There are no disputes to settle, nobody to get off to school, no complaint, no importunities for impossible things, no rips to mend, no fingers to tie up, no faces to be washed, or collars to be arranged! There was never such peace in the house! It would sound like music to have some feet to clatter down the front stairs! Oh, for some children's noise!

What used to be all this, that we were hearing their loud laugh, checking their noisy frolic, and reproving their slamming and banging the doors?

We wish our neighbors would only lend us an urchin or two to make a little noise in these premises. A home without children! It is like a lantern and no candle, a garden and no flowers, a brook and no water, gurgling and gushing through its channels.

We want to be tried, to be vexed, to be run over, to hear children's work with all its varieties. During the secular days this is enough marked. But it is the Sabbath

of an old tree, with the water coming higher and higher all the time; for the tide was coming in.

She thought she should be drowned! The little black specks upon the sand were no longer to be seen. The children had gone home.

"Papa! papa!" she screamed; "mamma! mamma! O, somebody come to me, or I shall die." There was no answer. The sound of her own voice frightened her; and, covering her face with her hands, she sank down almost fainting. Then she thought of her dear mother and how she had promised her that she would never walk off alone; and now this was the terrible punishment for her disobedience. O, if she could only see her for one moment, put her arms around her neck, and tell her she was sorry! but no! no one could hear her cry. No one would come to help her.

Suddenly she thought struck her—"God can always hear me,"—and kneeling down, she put her little hands together, and said: "Pray God send some one to me, and forgive me for my Saviour's sake, amen." She felt so much better after this, and had so much more hope; that she shouted again with all her might, "Help, papa! help!" and then, to her great delight, a voice answered, "Jessie, I am here. Papa has come."

A few moments more, and she was safe in her father's arms. O, how glad her dear mamma was to see her when she arrived at home.

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that puts our homes to the proof. That is the Christian family day. The intervals of public worship are spaces of peace. The family seems made up that day. The children are at home. You can lay your hands upon their heads. They seem to recognize the greater and lesser love—to God and to friends. The house is peaceful but not still. There is a low and melodious thrill of children in it. But the Sabbath comes too still now. There is a silence that aches in the ear. There is too much room at the table, too much at the hearth. The bedrooms are a world too orderly. There is too much leisure, and too little care. Alas! what mean these things? Is somebody growing old? Are these signs and tokens? Is life waning?—H. W. Beecher.

SOWING GOOD SEEDS.

One lovely afternoon, early in the month of May, a little girl, not more than eight years old, sat at the window overlooking a beautiful lawn and fishpond. She had been reading, but the book had fallen from her hands. There was a sad and pensive expression on her countenance; for she was thinking how she used to love to run about in the green fields and play with her hoop or skipping-rope; but these she had to exchange for a crutch—she was a cripple.

Just then some little sparrows came to pick up the crumbs which the child had thrown from the window. She watched them with the deepest interest, as they hopped about in their happy freedom, till, at length, having satisfied their hunger, with a chirrup, they flew away to join their companions.

The little girl turned away sorrowfully from the window, and stooped to reach her crutch, which had fallen to the floor. In vain did she try to drive back her tears. They would come, and, covering her face with her hands, she wept bitterly. "Whist thus troubled, she felt a hand laid softly upon her head, and looking up, she saw her mother bending over her with a mingled look of anxiety and love in her face.

"What is the matter with my Nellie?" she asked, in a gentle voice.

"O, mamma," exclaimed the child, as she threw her arms round her mother's neck, "it is of no use for me to live now that I am lame. I can never be of any use."

The mother, breathing a silent prayer to God for a blessing on her instruction, seated herself on a low chair, and drawing Nellie on her lap, whispered words of comfort to the troubled little one. "She told her of the Redeemer's love to children, of His sufferings and death on the cross. She told her also of the same and blind, the deaf, and the dumb, who were brought to the living Saviour, and were healed; and then, with a mother's tenderness, she pressed the child to her heart, and tried to show her in how many ways even a cripple might be useful. She told her of the glow-worm, whose tiny light cheers the traveller on his way in the dark night."

"But, mamma," said Nellie, "I am not a glow-worm."

"No, my dear," said her mother; "but you may do what the glow-worm does. It may let your light shine. Have you forgotten those lines which your papa taught you, not long ago?"

"Do what you can—being what you are," she said. "Shine like a glow-worm, if you can't be a star."

You cannot do much, I know; and yet, by your example, you may be made a blessing to others. You may sow the seeds of kindness and love, and mercy, and truth, which, by and by, will, with the Divine blessing, grow up bright and beautiful flowers, that shall bloom throughout eternity."

"But, mamma, how can I do this?"

"Well, my dear," replied her mother; "by giving up your own will for another's pleasure, you sow the seeds of love and kindness; by immediately confessing when you have done wrong, you sow the seed of truth; and you are sowing the seed of mercy when you gave your sixpence to the poor blind man at the door this morning."

With a bright smile of hope the child looked up into her mother's face, and pressing a warm kiss on her cheek, she said, "Thank you, dear mamma, I will try to be more happy and useful!"

RELIGION AND NOT TO DO ANYTHING.

A Christian woman in a revival season had conversed with a young girl upon the importance of a change of heart, and of attending at once to the subject. The girl appeared to be deeply convicted of her need, but was not ready to take the first step.

One evening, as they passed out of a meeting, where many had been anxiously inquiring the way of salvation; she turned to her friend and said, "I wish I could get religion, and not do anything!"

Religion and not to do anything—not labor for God—not strive against sin—not accept denials and sacrifices for Christ's sake—not render weak and imperfect love for love infinite and eternal! There is no such religion.

The young girl was at that time convinced of the truth, and she wanted the results of piety—the safety and happiness of a child of God. But there was something she preferred to a life of piety—she was unwilling to come out boldly and acknowledge Christ as her Saviour.

And so the Spirit, alighted and refused, left her. I do not know that it ever came to her heart again. In a few years she became a critic of things sacred and holy, then an avowed infidel; and then while yet in youth, she passed into another world to meet the God she did not want in this.

When the soul, intelligently convicted of sin, chooses willfully and deliberately, something else than God, there is no certainty that the Spirit will ever again seek to win the truth and holiness, and heaven. Perhaps that one earnest call, and her refusal to obey, was to the young girl the point where turned her eternal destiny. I have

never heard that she afterward gave any evidence of a true desire for God or heaven.

GEORGE MULLER.

George Muller, the renowned founder of the Orphan Establishment, Bristol, England, has received and expended \$2,750,000, every penny of which was sent voluntarily, and without solicitation. He has twelve hundred orphan children under his charge, occupying five large stone houses, each distinct from the others. The following personal description is from the Boston Journal correspondence.

"He lives in the simplest style, and does not allow himself a lounge nor a rocking-chair, unless he is sick. He was a poor man when he began and is a poor man to-day, though he has handled millions of money, and could have spent it as he would. Muller is a Prussian, and was born in 1805. He was in the Prussian army. He was very wicked, and was converted by some signal display of grace; and he devoted himself from that hour to the cause of the poor. He is a tall, slim man, with the bearing of a soldier—with dark hair and gray whiskers—wears a black frock-coat buttoned to the neck, and a white cravat without a collar. He speaks with a brogue. His preaching is very simple, earnest and full of Christ. He is a man of great executive ability, and is the general manager of the immense concern. I have been all over his establishment. It would do credit to any government on the face of the earth. I have talked with the people of Bristol about Muller—merchants, tradesmen, dissenting storemen, and all classes, religious and irreligious—and they all express the highest confidence in his piety, and integrity, and honor, and assign him a high place among model men of the world. His theory is this: that God is a hearer of prayer; that He is the same faithful God that He ever was; that He believes and this He trusts, and has never been disappointed."

"Prayer meetings and lectures as usual on Wednesday evening in the lecture room. Dear brethren, I urge you all to attend these weekly meetings of course not the assembling of yourselves together."

"Some of the dear brethren" departed themselves in this way.

"Brother A—thought I looked like a poor man, and concluded that his family, including himself, of course, had better remain at home. On Thursday evening it was raining very hard, and the same brother had hired a carriage, and took his whole family to the Academy of Music to hear the classic lecture on the Intelligence of the Lobster."

Brother B—thought he was too tired to go so he stayed at home, worked at the mill. He had promised to make for Billy on Tuesday."

Sister C—thought the pavement were too slippery. It would be very dangerous for her to venture out. I saw her next morning going down street to get her old bonnet done up. She had an old pair of stockings drawn over her shoes."

Sister D—thought there wouldn't be more than a dozen people at prayer meeting. She doesn't like these little meetings, so she didn't go. If she had gone, there would have been thirteen. I met her next evening at a social gathering where there were just ten folks. She said she had spent a delightful evening."

Brother E—thought he might be called upon to lead in prayer or make some remarks. He stayed at home. Next day he went around with a petition praying Congress to repeal the tax on beer and wine. His name headed the list of petitioners, and he spoke eloquently and waxed warm as he urged his reasons in favor of repeal.

Three-fourths of the members stayed at home. God was in the prayer meeting. The pastor was there. One-fourth of the members were there, and God blessed them. The persons who stayed at home were each represented by a vacant seat.—United Presbyterian.

THE CONQUERED CONQUEROR.

"How little the circumstances of our death and burial can be anticipated by us. Even the king who has commanded armies and nations is powerless before his last enemy. When William the Conqueror, laying dying in the Monastery of St. Gervais, his son William, waited only to hear himself pronounced his successor to the throne of England, and then he galled off to secure his prize of a crown, leaving his wretched father to wrestle with his antagonist—Death—as best he could."

In a sickly mood his son Henry lingered about until his legacy was declared; and then he hurried off to the treasury to weigh out his silver and acquire it."

Just as the sun was rising the last conflict came, and when those surrounding the royal pillow perceived the hue of death settle over the face, the nobles, knights, and priests all departed to look after their several interests, and the conquered conqueror was left alone. Servants filtered whatever could be carried away, and there lay the once powerful sovereign, deserted and robbed by even his lowest menials.

What an impressive lesson it teaches, us with regard to the weakness of worldly power, the vanity of earthly greatness. Now that the strength had departed from this gigantic form, he could not command the presence of even his children. His whole treasury of gold and silver could not buy their affectionate attendance in his last moments. Even his burial was delayed for the payment of sixty souls, which the man claimed who owned the ground in which his grave had been dug."

Surely we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. All of King William's riches were of this world, and the spoiler was spoiled."

even before the turf was placed on his breast.

"So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

If we have bound hearts to us by love and kindly deeds, we shall be honored and truly mourned when we depart. If we have laid up treasure in heaven, we shall have an inheritance to enter into, when we leave our possessions here. "An inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away"—S. S. Times.

PERPETUAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST.

"A Christian should make his Saviour a perpetual companion—everywhere, and on every day of the week. Christ offers to walk with him in every day's journey of life. What companionship so enlivening and so purifying as His; who, else, can so make our hearts burn within us" by the way?

"Christ's presence with believers is one of the best preventives from sin; one of the best stimulants to duty. Jesus is made into us sanctification" as well as redemption. That is, His is a spirit of holiness. And when we live in hourly communion with Jesus it has a tendency to make us

holy. The sense of Christ's immediate presence is a perpetual check upon our lusts—a perpetual spur to our self-indulgence. Are we provoked to cutting words, or irritating reports? One look from the gentle, all-forgiving Jesus should be enough to seal the lip and to smooth the ruffled brow. Are we ever tempted to keep our brains and over-reaching in business? Selfishness says, "All is fair—others do it—it is the custom of our trade." But what will the pure and holy Jesus say?

How will our accounts books look to Him when He audits them? And so on all through the calendar of duties and the circle of daily temptations. With my Saviour beside me how will I dare to play the coward, or the cheat, or the trifler, or the sensualist, or the tricker?

Nowhere will Christ's presence be more cheering and sustaining than in the weariness of a sick room; or under the silent afflictions of a great calamity. Christ comes to me in the weakness of the night. He draws aside the curtains and says: "It is I, be of good cheer, be not afraid. Here I am, I have suffered with you, without strength and yet strong. And when the last farewells have been spoken through the sobs of the dying hour, this never-failing Friend will sweetly whisper, 'Fear not, I am with thee. Where I am you shall be also. Having loved My own, I will love them unto the end.'—Cuyler.

THE PURITANS AND TOBACCO.

The prevalence of the habit of smoking was a labor to the consciences of the excellent Puritans both in Old and New England. By the early laws in Massachusetts tobacco was strictly prohibited. At the most respectable magazines a minister continued to enjoy their pipe—most of them, like Winthrop with his gun "very secretly" yet not so secretly but that great scandal was caused to the Church thereby. Heretics, Quakers, and witches, they had made short work with; but tobacco, beat them—it was too strong a measure, even under that strong government to hang a man for smoking—not to say that it would have been inconvenient for a rising colony to hang half the community. So, after much grave and anxious debating of the question, a resolution was passed, in their quaint wording, that "tobacco should be set at liberty; and any one who has chanced to observe a modern New Englander's habit in the use of it will admit that this liberality is a present very considerable.—Blackwood's Magazine.

QUAKERS AT HOME.

The Friends present a model of interior home-life. They cultivate the amenities; the consideration; the cheer, and the abundance which make a home happy. They speak to one another with surpassing gentleness; they smile upon one another with a sweet benignity; they welcome the visitor to astounding hospitality. Their religion consists in creating happiness in the household. They are gentle, loving, attentive to children. They seek to promote the decency and cheerfulness among the rising generation.

They are equally attentive to old age, with a chastened respectfulness of manner which exalts the self-respect of declining years. Whatever can be done to make a home comfortable and cheery is first to be done. Other Christians deny to themselves home comforts for the sake of freethinking the Gospel to the heathen; but the Society of Friends believe that charity begins at home. Their Gospel is one of home peace. Their heaven on earth is to witness some foretaste of the rest which remaineth for the children of God.

They testify that the Christian fire-side ought to be warm without heat, cheerful without excitement, bright without dazzle.

At first Christianity seemed to men to have only to do with fair conscience. That was the first relation of course. But even with that it was regarded as having no relation except for the presentment of its conscience alone, in trying to make Christianity comprehensible to the understanding. Now, I trust, we are beginning to see that Christianity is "everything" or nothing. Either the whole is a lovely fable setting forth the loftiest longing of the human soul after the vision of the divine, or it is such a fact as is the heart, not only of theology so called, but of history, politics, science, and art; the treasures of the Godhead must be hidden in him, and therefore by him only can be revealed.—Geo. MacDonald in Sunday Magazine.