

The Family Circle.

SALUTATION TO JESUS CHRIST.

BY JOHN CALVIN.

The following sacred hymn is taken from Dr. Schaff's volume entitled Christ in Song. Dr. Schaff says: "This hymn, together with eleven others (mostly translations of Psalms), written in French, was recently discovered by Felix Bovet, of Neuchâtel, in an old Genevese prayer-book, and first published in the sixth volume of the new edition of the works of Calvin, by Baum, Canitz and Renee, 1863. It reveals a poetic vein, and a devotional fervor and tenderness, which one would hardly have suspected in the severe logician." The English translation is by the wife of Prof. Henry B. Smith, D.D., of the Union Theological Seminary, New York.

I greet Thee, who my sure Redeemer art, True Bridegroom and sole Saviour of my heart! Who so much toil and wo And pain didst undergo, For my poor, worthless sake; And pray Thee, from our hearts All idle grief and smarts, And foolish care to take.

Thou art the king of mercy and of grace, Reigning omnipotent in every place; So come, O King! and deign Within our hearts to reign, And our whole being sway; Shine in us by Thy light, And lead us to the height Of Thy pure, heavenly day.

Thou art the Life by which alone we live, And all our substance and our strength receive; Comfort us by Thy faith Against the pains of death: Sustain us by Thy power; Let not our hearts prevail, Nor our hearts faint or fail, When comes the trying hour.

Thou art the true and perfect gentleness; No harshness hast Thou, and no bitterness: Make us to taste and prove, Make us adore and love The sweet grace found in Thee; With longing to abide Ever at Thy dear side, In Thy sweet unity.

Our hope is in no other save in Thee, Our faith is built upon Thy promise free; Come! and our hope increase, Comfort and give us peace. Make us so strong and sure That we shall conquerors be, And well and patiently Shall every ill endure.

Poor, banished exiles, wretched sons of Eve, Fall of all sorrows, unto Thee we grieve! To Thee we bring our sighs, Our groanings and our cries; Thy pity, Lord, we crave; We take the sinner's place, And pray Thee, of Thy grace, To pardon and to save.

Turn Thy sweet eyes upon our low estate, Our Mediator and our Advocate, Propitiator best! Give us that vision blest The God of gods, Most High! And let us by Thy right, Enter the blessed light, And glories of the sky!

O, pitiful and gracious as Thou art, The lovely Bridegroom of the holy heart, Lord Jesus Christ, meet Thou The Antichrist, our foe, In all his cruel rout! The Spirit give, that we May, in true verity, Follow Thy word of truth.

THE BLACKSMITH OF REGENBACH.

[From the German of Hoffman.]

There is a village called Regenbach in the Principality of Hohenlohe-Langenburg, where some twenty odd years ago, the following stirring and heart-rending occurrence took place.

It was in the afternoon, during spring or harvest, my kind informant was not certain which, when there were seated in the public room of the tavern many men and women of Regenbach, engaged in quietly chatting with each other, no one of them dreaming of the fearful and terrible event which was to take place that day. The Blacksmith also was sitting in the cheerful crowd,—a stout, robust man with a very determined face and brave look, but at the same time with such a pleasant smile upon his lips, that every one who saw him was obliged to love him. Every tricky fellow kept out of his way; for the brave Blacksmith would tolerate no injustice or wickedness; and it was poor policy to quarrel with him. His arms were like bars of iron, and his fists like sledge-hammers. There were few men who were equal to him in bodily strength.

The brave Blacksmith was sitting not far from the door, chatting with a neighbor, about I know not what. Suddenly the door sprang open and a great dog came staggering into the room;—a great, strong, powerful dog, with an ugly, terrible face. He held his head down, with his dreadful, burning-red eyes, his mouth was open wide, his lead-colored tongue was hanging out, and his tail was squeezed between his hind legs. In this way the animal came into the room, which had no other mode of egress than the one door. Scarcely had the Blacksmith's neighbor, it was the Barber of the place, seen the animal, when he became pale as death, as white as the lime on the wall, and springing up cried out in a voice of terror: "Lord Jesus have mercy upon us. People! the dog is mad!"

Picture the terror! The room was nearly full of men and women, and the mad animal stood in front of the only door, so that no one could leave without passing by him. The beast began to snap wildly on the right and the left, and it was impossible for any one to pass him without being bitten. Then there was an agonizing scream of terror! Every one sprang up and moved backwards, looking with a staring gaze full of mortal fright at the

mad dog. Who could protect them from him?

Then the Blacksmith arose, and when he saw the mortal fright that had seized every one, and it occurred to him, as quick as lightning, how many happy people might be made inconceivably miserable by the raging animal, he determined to do that which has scarcely its like in magnanimity and nobleness in the whole of history. True, his brown cheeks became slightly pale, but his eyes sparkled with true heroic fire, and a lofty resolution lighted up the forehead of the plain, simple man.

"Back! all of you!" he thundered with his deep, powerful voice. "Let none of you stir, for no one but myself can manage the brute! There must be some one sacrificed, and I will offer myself! I am going to seize him, and while I do it, fly the whole of you!"

The Blacksmith had scarcely spoken these words, when the brute sprang forward towards the shrieking human mass. "Now, with God's help!" cried the Blacksmith, and immediately he leaped upon the raging animal, seizing him with his giant arms, and threw him upon the floor.

Oh! but that was a fearful, horrible struggle that followed! The dog bit at him fiercely, and struggled with groans and dull howls. His long teeth tore the arms and thighs of the great-souled Blacksmith, but the latter did not relax his grasp. In spite of the fierce pain, in spite of the certain awful death that would follow the struggle, with a giant's strength he held the snapping, biting, howling brute down until all had fled,—until all, all were in safety except himself. Then he hurled the half-strangled brute away from him against the wall, and dripping with blood, covered with the poisonous saliva, he left the room and closed the door behind him. The dog was killed by a shot through the window. But what could be done for the unfortunate, brave Blacksmith?

Weeping and wailing, the people whom he had saved at the expense of his own life, surrounded him.

"Be quiet, men; don't weep for me. Women and children," he said. "One was obliged to die in order to save the others. Do not thank me; for I have only done a sacred duty. When I am dead, remember me in love; and pray for me now that God may keep me from long or much suffering. But I must now take care, that no further harm be done by me, as it is certain that I shall be attacked by the disease."

And he went right away to his shop and there sought for heavy chains, the heaviest and strongest in his stock; then he kindled his fire and worked his bellows until the chains were made white hot, and with his own hand he fastened himself hands and feet to his anvil which no human strength could tear away from the ground, no more than human strength could break the iron chains. "There, now it's done," he said after he had completed his work in silence and earnestness, "now you are all safe and I am harmless. As long as I am alive, bring me my food; the rest I leave to God." Into his hands I commend my spirit.

Nothing could save the brave blacksmith, not weeping, not pity, not even prayers. The disease seized him—and after nine days he must die—but in truth he died only to awake before the throne of God to a more beautiful, and more glorious life. He died, but his memory shall live from generation to generation, from child to child, and be blessed to the end of time.

Look over all the pages of human history, and you will find no deed more worthy of the noblest fame than the deed of this simple man—the Blacksmith of Regenbach. It is indeed easy for a noble soul, like Winkelried, to die, or to throw life away like the high-souled Roman youth Martius Curtius; but to meet certain death, to be obliged to die and yet to be obliged to wait, through anxious, fearful hours and days, for the most terrible form of death—this is to die not once only, but a thousand times. And such a death died the Blacksmith of Regenbach, such an offering did the Blacksmith of Regenbach make for the preservation of his neighbors. Blessed, ever blessed be his memory to us!—The Reformed Church Messengers.

DISADVANTAGES OF BEING A RICH MAN'S SON.

The following story is said to be strictly true:

Mr. P., a wealthy man, retired from business, was urged by a friend to engage in a mercantile scheme, from which large profits were apparent. "You are right," said he, "as regards the probable success of the scheme, but I shall not embark in it. I have too much money already."

He was asked to explain, and remarked: "Yes, I would not cross the street to gain thousands. I should be happier if my income were less. I am old, and, in a year or two, whatever I possess will avail me naught. My daughters are dead, and I have three sons whom I dearly love. My own education had been neglected; my fortune was gained by honest labor and careful economy; I had no time for study, but I resolved that my sons should have every advantage. They each received a classical education, and then I gave them the choice of a profession. The eldest would be a physician; the second chose the law; the third resolved to follow my footsteps as a merchant. This was all to my mind; I was proud of my sons, and trusted, one day to see them distinguished, or at least useful to their fellow-men. I spared no expense in their training; they had never wanted money, for I gave each a liberal allowance. Never had men fairer opportunities; but look at the results: the physician has no

patients; the lawyer no clients; while the merchant—instead of following my example—is above visiting his counting-room! In vain I urge them to greater diligence. What is the response? "There is no use, father—we shall never want money; we know you have enough for all." Thus, instead of being energetic and useful members of society, my sons are mere idlers and men of vain display. Had they been forced to struggle against difficulties to gain their professions, and were even now dependent on their own exertions for support, they would, in all probability, have done credit to themselves and me."

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL LETTER BOX.

We know not who originated this attractive little auxiliary of Sunday-school work, but we do know that where it is used its effects are most happy. Have placed in a convenient position, for instance just at the main entrance, a letter-box, suitably inscribed. Encourage the children to write little notes to you, either with or without their names. All of these that may suitably be read before the school; read and comment on briefly. Such as are of a more private sort may be answered in other ways. A happy illustration of this process was recently witnessed at Grace Mission, in New York. After the opening exercises, Ralph Wells, the superintendent, produced his Sunday's mail. One scholar tells of having found Jesus. What a theme for a half-minute's comment. Another is seeking Jesus. How suggestive. Another asks prayer for her father. Another for his class-mates. Then comes a blank piece of paper, which some mischievous boy has put in. Mr. Wells holds it up, and turning one side to the school and then the other, and remarks: "The little boy, or girl, who put in this paper asks for nothing, and will get just what he asks for. A few more words, as to the sadness of such a state of unconcern, and sinful satisfaction, and then he passes on to other duties. Recently, on one Sunday morning, but one little note was in the box—only one, but it read: Mr. Wells, I do want to love the Lord Jesus Christ. How much of sweet variety and profit might such a Post Office Box introduce into every school."

EFFECTS OF TOBACCO ON BOYS.

Dr. Decasine, in the course of investigations on the influence of tobacco on the circulation, has been struck with the number of boys, aged from nine to fifteen, who smoke, and has been led to inquire into the connection of this habit with impairment of the general health. He has observed thirty-eight boys, aged from nine to fifteen, who smoked more or less. Of these, distinct symptoms were present in twenty-seven. In twenty-two there were various disorders of the circulation, bruit de soufflet in the neck, palpitation, disorders of digestion, slowness of intellect, and a more or less marked taste for strong drinks. In three the pulse was intermittent.

In eight there was found on examination more or less marked diminution of the red corpuscles; in twelve there was rather frequent epistaxis; ten had disturbed sleep; and four had slight ulcerations of the mucous membrane of the mouth, which disappeared on ceasing from the use of tobacco for some days. In children who were very well nourished, the disorder was, in general, less marked. As to the ages, eight of the boys were from nine to twelve years old; nineteen from twelve to fifteen. The duration of the habit of smoking was, in eleven, from six months to a year, and in sixteen more than two years. The ordinary treatment of anaemia in general produced no effect as long as the smoking was continued; but when this was discontinued, health was soon perfectly restored if there was no organic disease.—British Medical Journal.

FRESH AIR AT NIGHT.

Too many people sleep with their windows down; such people are thus excellent subjects to take cold. Now as a very large part of our time is spent in slumber, it becomes us to give as much fresh air to that period as possible. Our rule is this: Let each window in the bed-room be opened both at the top and the bottom, and let the fire be shut off, or steam or heat, from furnace or stove, then let all the winds of heaven blow. No matter if the thermometer marks zero; if you would have a robust constitution, you must let the wind blow upon you. Do not, by any means, avoid a draft, though Hall's Journal and all the doctors in Christendom say nay. Let the winds blow. This world is a world of winds, and show me a man who shuns drafts and I will show you a man who pays a good doctor's bill regularly. The arm is made rugged and strong by exercise; the constitution is never injured by watchful exposure. Some men go too far, and women often show no care for dangerous and damp currents of air. No person who bathes regularly, is in the sunlight much, and does not avoid fresh currents of air, even to acustoming one's self to all varieties of weather, will be in danger from sleeping in the open air. Indeed, we believe it would bear the test of all ages and climes, were the house-top always to become the place for rest. We know a man who takes a bath in the ocean surf every day, summer and winter. When the thermometer is at zero and when at ninety, yet is he at his station for a plunge. It seems almost incredible. He lives in Boston, and for years he has kept up exposure of this kind freely. Now all men need not imitate the Boston hydropathist, but it shows us to what tough uses this nature of ours can be subjected. Rough winds make rugged the cheeks of men. The winter winds that blew the snow all through the log cabin where we were born, were winds that rocked the cradle of a race that shall give liberty to the world. Winds give sturdy, oak-like character; do not shut out

the winds, if you would not call the doctor soon. The lungs are the life of man; then let us have all the air we can find. Get out of the city as fast as ever you can, and be sure you get a good breathing spot. Poison once fastened upon the lungs never can be eradicated. Fresh air is better than all that the device of man has invented to give one holy and noble thoughts. Up with the windows, girls and boys, while you sleep. There is death in a close room.

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.

A plain man in the Second Baptist Church of Chicago, a straightforward, unpretending mechanic, without even a good common school education, has gathered around him, every Lord's day, three hundred and fifty scholars in a Bible-class; which he teaches with an interest and effect that are truly surprising; and he will go through the driest parts of the Scriptures, and invest them with a meaning, and draw from them practical lessons of instruction, that astonish all who hear. In 1866 there were one hundred and six conversions in his class. The secret of his success is earnestness, and the skill that earnestness gives. The only true success must come from a thoroughly earnest soul, and without this, the greatest culture, the most careful teacher-training, will be of no avail.

A RASH CRITICISM.

Sydney Smith once said that every statesman who had a rush of ideas, should have his foolometer by his side to warn him against offending public opinion. We were impressed with the wisdom of this precaution of the great satirist, by the utterance recently before a Boston audience, of a very foolish expression, as offensive to the literary taste as the religious sentiment of Christendom. In one of his historical lectures, recently delivered in Boston, Wendell Phillips, is reported as saying, that John Bunyan was a crazy man, and his "Pilgrim's Progress" a book unfit to be read, particularly by children.

No one questions the fine literary culture and classic eloquence of Phillips. He is the very first of American orators. This acknowledged pre-eminence only makes more glaring his foolish utterance. Evidently in the rush of ideas, he had not his foolometer by his side. It is difficult to account for such folly in Phillips, unless we adopt the epigrammatic solution of Holmes, who disposed of the bigot, by comparing his mind to the pupil of the eye,—"the more light you let into it, the more it contracts." This foolish utterance from such a man shows the wisdom of that old saying, of Dr. Johnson: "My friends, clear your mind of cant."

By the way, Dr. Johnson who was one of the most desultory readers and rarely read books through, made an exception in favor of the Pilgrim's Progress. That work, he said, was one of the two or three works which he wished longer. This is no common praise from the most pedantic of critics, and the most bigoted of Tories. Mr. Phillips, is unfortunate in saying that Pilgrim's Progress is particularly unfit for children, when in almost every nursery it is a greater favorite than Jack the Giant-Killer. Bunyan succeeded in making his allegory not only attractive to the imagination, but instinct with human sympathy. Hence while other allegories only amuse the fancy, the allegory of Bunyan has been read by many thousands with tears.

Cowper said seventy years ago, that he dared not name John Bunyan in his verse, for fear of moving a sneer. But surely we live in better times, and we confess no little surprise at this reported utterance of the great American orator. Phillips, if for no higher reason, should value Bunyan for his style, which is invaluable as a study to every one who wishes to obtain a wide command over the English language. "There is no book in our literature on which we could so readily stake the fame of the old unpolished English language; no book which shows so well how rich that language is in its own proper wealth, and how little it has been improved by all that it has borrowed."

To any who may be affected unfavorably by such thoughtless flings at the great dreamer, by men who think more of their philosophy than their Bible, and more of their philanthropy than of their Christianity, we would quote the testimony of Macaulay: "We are not afraid to say, that though there were many clever men in England during the latter half of the seventeenth century, there were only two great creative minds. One of these minds produced the Paradise Lost, the other the Pilgrim's Progress."—The Lutheran Observer.

THE ASS IN HISTORY.

BY H. T. TUCKERMAN.

The ass is intimately associated with the East and patriarchal life, their most ancient legends, domestic economy, and the experiences of modern Oriental travel; his origin has been ascribed to inland Africa, Nubia, and Abyssinia. In the schedule of Abraham's possessions, when he went down into Egypt, she asses are noted; among the possessions of our neighbor the Decalogue forbids us to covet, is his ass; the princes and rulers of Judah rode thereon, and Moses is said to have proscribed the use of horses, because of their unsuitableness to the country; Deborah apostrophizes the great, "Ye who ride on white asses;" and in the story of Isaac's sacrifice, the patriarch is described as rising early in the morning and "saddling his ass;" from Balaam's ass who saw the angel of the Lord, and stood still until her master's eyes were opened to the celestial vision, long apparent to the beast he so cruelly smote, to the ass's foal whereon our Saviour rode into Jerusalem in triumph, the animal most despised by modern civilization figures

benignly. It was with the jaw-bone of an ass that Samson crushed his foes; and the evidence of prosperity of the thirty sons of Jair of Gilead, cited by the sacred historian, is not only that they ruled that number of cities, but rode on as many asses. Doubtless one reason for their decadence in popular estimation is the inferiority of the breed in Europe; about the Tagus and Euphrates, where they yet exist in a wild state all the old testimony to their fleetness and beauty is confirmed. Both the Church and classical literature illustrate the traditional worth of the ass. The Feast of Asses was founded in honor of Balaam's, and, in the middle ages, both Christian legends and pagan ceremonies, wherein originated the drama, rehearsed, in quaint pantomime, the memorable episode in the history of the ass; Balaam rode on a wooden ass, the clergy walked in procession in costumes intended to represent Moses, David, the prophets, and other renowned Hebrews and Assyrians.

Homer compares Ajax to an ass, in no degrading sense, as whoever has seen the wild breed of the Syrian mountains can well understand. The Persians regarded it as a brave feat to run one of them down with greyhounds. Bassorah is famed for its excellent breed; one of the best now is at Smyrna, of Asiatic origin, and in Spain, where the race is cultivated! but naturalists maintain that the superior kind of ass comes from stocks which were not the progenitors of those known commonly as the donkey of Europe. Asses, it would seem, have, like more noble animals, their aristocratic exceptions; but though prized in countries where the breeding of mules is profitable, so great is the want of appreciation of the ass, that experiments to improve the race, though full of promise, based on the original qualities of the animal in a state of nature, meet with little or no encouragement.

How have the mighty fallen, even in the assine realm! Once worshipped as a sacred creature, cared for with exquisite nurture, the favorite of monarchs, the free and fleet denizen of mountain and desert, a gift for princes, a grace of courts and pride of households—the ass is now the drudge of mendicants, the butt of gamins, the vagabond of animals, the contemned, belabored, overburdened victim, and the synonym for imbecility and obstinacy in the human species. Only in the Orient do some of his ancient honors linger, and now and then, in Southern Europe, we catch glimpses of the original glory of the tribe, or learn, on dizzy summit of dreary wild, to appreciate the patient, frugal, sure-footed creature, who bears us so safely where no other quadruped could pick his way without a stumble, or keep his face without drooping.—Putnam's Magazine.

SLEEPING IN CHURCH.

A good deal has been said lately about sleepers in church, too caustic and too indiscriminately condemnatory. There may be some cases of somnolency in the sanctuary, which are sacrilegious and deserving of public reprobation. When a man or woman sleeps in church from pure indifference to the sanctities of divine worship, or utter thoughtlessness about the soul or the word of God, let the misdeed be rebuked in a becoming manner. But such somnolists are, we think, the exceptional cases.

Sometimes there is physical debility, or nervous exhaustion, which induces sleep as soon as the body is in repose; sometimes there is a chronic constitutional somnolency which baffles the best intentions; such cases indicate the propriety of being cautious and discriminating in our strictures upon the slumberers.

And then there are often causes external to the sleepers, that must be considered. Often there is defective ventilation, or stupidity in the thermal condition of the room, that would induce sleep in a saint. Sometimes we are sorry to say, the somnolency in the pew, may come from the pulpit. There is something contagious in drowsiness, and there is no use of lecturing the pew, if the pulpit is soporific. We should go to the root of the matter. If speaking metonymically, the pulpit is awake and living, there will be no somnolency in the pew.

Our friend L. W. H. has sent us the following historical fragment, translated from "Courrier des Etats Unis"—which we publish for the use of any churches that may need the corrective suggestion.

How people are kept awake in the Danish churches, in the 19th century.

A Belgian paper publishes the following royal rescript which, under the reign of Charles VIII, predecessor of the present king, was issued on May 17th, 1846, and directed to the diocese of Aahaus.

"Having been informed that the number of those who sleep in the churches during divine worship, has increased to a considerable extent, we have designed to decree that each congregation shall appoint a few men whose duty it shall be to go around in the church in order to keep the church-goers awake. To this effect, these men shall be armed with a long pole, surrounded with a piece of leather whereupon they shall touch the heads of the sleepers."

THE RICHEST MAN IN CHICAGO IS POTTER PALMER, who just before the war, went there with \$7000 worth of dry goods, did business on the high pressure system, made a fortune of some millions, which he invested in real estate, and is now covering it with marble blocks. He began life as a farmer's boy, is forty years old, and a bachelor.

A MAN telegraphed another for a shipment of beans. He received for a reply, "N. B." (Nota Bene).