

The Family Circle.

[For the Am. Presbyterian.]

AT THE RIVER.

Here then, at the River, we meet at last, And the meeting is gladness and pain; For 'tis only this hour, here on the shore, The next we are parted again.

But the sad, sad years are over, thank God, And the parting cannot be long; It is this, that hushes my beating heart, As the waves roll up so strong.

It is just the very old story, Paul, Of Israel, after the sea, These sorrowful years of our wandering, That have chastened you and me.

Our promised land was almost in sight, The journey was smooth and brief, Yet we turned the way of the wilderness, Though both hearts broke with their grief.

And now, we are linking that hour with this, And all that has gone between Is like a long, long loop that is made In the winding of a stream.

What was, and what might be, were once so close, That a step had joined them then; But we, each stood out, across the strait, Till the wilderness began.

Ah, well, the time is long ago, And the dear Lord cares for all; Though bearing the scales to weigh His worlds, He follows the sparrow's fall.

And so, though we walked in the wilderness, An angel walked with us there; Our raiment upon us waxed not old, And a gift ever answered a prayer.

Ever into His sovereign, loving will, Converged our crookedest lines, And the pillar of cloud, and the pillar of fire, Were equally guiding signs.

And though we journeyed so widely apart, With either, by day or by night, The Covenant Angel dwelt in them both, And both led up to the light.

And this, sad, sweet hour, here on the shore, Is our Lord's last, precious gift; But our hands unclasp, and the angel waits, And the current is strong and swift.

And so I kiss you good night, dear Paul, Here at the River, good night, The hours grow brief—we shall meet again, In the morning's abiding light.

K. H. J.

LITTLE FANNIE'S WATCH.

Fannie's mother died when Fannie was a wee little baby. While she lay dying Fannie's mother prayed God to give her little daughter a watch to always wear in her bosom, which should tick so loudly whenever she thought of doing anything wrong, that Fannie would stop right still and not obey the wicked thoughts.

God answered Fannie's mother's prayer, as she believed He would when she smiled so contentedly and was taken up to heaven. This little watch ticked and ticked away very quietly in Fannie's bosom, and she skipped and ran around as happy and merry as any little girl one sees tripping about.

So Fannie grew up into quite a big little girl six years old. Jimmy Johnson lived next house to Fannie. He was a large stout boy ten years old.

Jimmy had a little pony that his Uncle Will sent him from Canada; a little, short, thick, stubby pony that shook its head and trotted off before Jimmy and his little buggy as grand as you please.

One morning Jimmy told Fannie to ask her father if she might go to ride with him in his buggy that afternoon, just after dinner, so when her father came home at noon Fannie ran up to him and said:

"Papa, may I go to ride with Jimmy Johnson and the pony this afternoon?" Mr. Grey placed his hand affectionately upon his little girl's head, and looking down into her eager face, said:

"Wouldn't it do just as well, Fannie, and a little better, to go with me to-morrow morning and take a longer ride after Dixie?" (Dixie was Fannie's father's horse's name.) Fannie's face fell, and her lip quivered as she replied:

"O papa! I'd rather go this afternoon in the little buggy with Jimmy and the pony." Mr. Grey felt sorry to deny his little daughter any innocent pleasure, and he knew just how much she wanted to go with Jimmy; he would want to himself, he thought, if he were a child; but the pony was frisky, and he knew Jimmy was a careless driver, and he felt afraid to trust his little girl off alone with him. So he told Fannie all about it, and promised to take her himself the next morning out into the country to visit her Aunt Mattie, where she might stay all day. This satisfied Fannie, so she ate her dinner contentedly, and kissed her father a cheerful good-bye when he went back down town.

But half an hour after, when Jimmy drove Fly up to the door and called to Fannie to get her hat quick and come on, she wanted more than ever to go with him, and as she stood a minute in the doorway and looked at Jimmy and the buggy and the pony, she forgot everything else, and turned and ran into the hall for her hat, saying, "I'll go, any way."

But just then she heard a loud ticking, and felt a thump, thump, thumping in her bosom, and something seemed to call in her ear, "Don't go, don't go. No, no, no, no!" And the ticking grew so loud that she felt frightened, and was just putting back her hat on the rack when Jimmy called out:

"Come, hurry up, Fannie!" So she snatched her hat and ran out and climbed into the buggy as quickly as ever she could, thinking thus to get away from the loud uncomfortable ticking. But the first step Fly took joggled up the watch in her bosom, and it ticked all the faster and louder, so, as almost to stop Fannie's breath, "O dear!" she began to think, "I wish I hadn't come!" But Jimmy commenced talking right away, and clucked and who'd to

Fly, and touched him up with the whip, and boasted about his driving, and looked so proud and happy and confident, that Fannie didn't listen any longer to the ticking in her bosom, but leaned back in the buggy and looked out at the houses and trees they were passing.

Now if Fannie's father had thought best to give her permission to go, she might have enjoyed the ride, for it did look pleasant to see the little establishment move along so nicely; but she wasn't quite happy, for the watch would tick, though she tried not to hear it. Yet she didn't ask Jimmy to turn around and take her home, as she might have done even then.

But when Jimmy turned his pony towards the city, and told Fannie he would drive up to her father's store and let him see how nicely they were getting on (he supposing, of course, that Mr. Grey had given Fannie permission to go), she became frightened, and was just about begging him to stop the pony and let her get out and run home, when a big white-covered meat-cart rumbled quickly past and came so suddenly upon Fly that he jumped to one side and upset the buggy, throwing Fannie and Jimmy out on the hard stones, and then dashed down the street and away out of sight.

Jimmy jumped quickly up, not at all hurt, and ran after Fly; but poor little Fannie, whose head had struck a large stone, lay quite insensible in the arms of a gentleman, who seeing her fall, ran out into the street and picked her up almost as soon as she struck the ground.

There she lay in his arms, her face as white almost as a piece of white paper, her hair full of dust, and a stream of blood trickling from a cut on her temple.

A crowd collected about them, and among the others Fannie's father stepped up, but when he saw his own little girl lying in the gentleman's arms dead, as he supposed, he staggered and almost fell himself. In another moment he took her from the kind gentleman and bore her home in his own arms.

The doctor came and bound up the cut on Fannie's head, and tried to comfort Mr. Grey, but looked sad; he said he hoped she would get well, but he didn't know.

They darkened the room, and moved about quietly, and spoke in whispers; and Fannie's father sat by her side two whole days and nights before she opened her eyes and spoke to him. Then they wouldn't let her talk, but kept her in bed in the dark a week longer, and when she was lifted up and placed in a cushioned chair by the open window, the light hurt her head so that she buried her eyes in her father's vest and sobbed aloud.

'Twas then that she first remembered how she was hurt, and how she had disobeyed her kind father, and it seemed as if her heart would break.

Her father drew her close to him and talked soothingly to her, and she promised never to disobey him again, and he kissed her cheek and said he believed his little girl never would, only she must ask Jesus to help her keep her promise. Then Fannie sobbed herself to sleep in her father's arms.

After many weeks she recovered her strength, but before she left her room she and her father often knelt down and asked God to give her a new heart, so that she would never wish to be disobedient again, and to make the watch in her bosom tick louder and louder whenever she was tempted to do wrong, and to make her ears quick to catch the ticking, and her heart ready to obey its warning.

Fannie now loves Jesus and thanks Him every day for the watch that she wears in her bosom, which so often keeps her from sinning against Him and her father.

My dear little girl and boy readers, do you know that you each carry one of these little watches in your bosom? Your watch is your conscience,—have you never heard it tick, and jump, and act frightened, when you did wrong or wanted to sin? Dear little girls and boys! always listen to your little ticking, warning watches; pray Jesus to keep them bright and clear, so that when He looks from heaven down into your hearts He can smile lovingly upon you.

A CHILD'S APOLOGY.

Dotty had accused a schoolmate of stealing a lost pencil, but her mother changed to find it and placed it by night at Dotty's side.

Dotty was greatly surprised in the morning to see the pencil lying on her pillow. "But perhaps it is not yours," said her mother. "It may belong to Tate Penny, or some other little girl."

"O, mamma Parlin! here's a place where I scratched with a pin. What made you think I didn't know my own pencil?" "Why, you said Lina had taken that."

"But she didn't, mamma," said Dotty, casting down her eyes. "Excuse me, dear, but you said you just knew she did."

"I meant—I—just thought." "Ah, indeed! You only thought?" "Yes'm."

"And just because you thought, although you couldn't know, you called Lina an 'awful, wicked, horrid girl.'"

"I truly s'posed she was, mamma," said Dotty, with her finger in her mouth. "Your 'truly s'poses' are very cruel things, Dotty. What is going to be done with that little fiery tongue of yours?"

Dotty touched the tip of it, and felt very much as if she would like to pull it out by the roots. "I don't know, mamma."

"Of course you will ask Lina's pardon for accusing her falsely?" "Yes'm."

"And after this I hope my little girl will beware of hasty judgments." "Yes'm."

it, Lina Rosenberg; now I know you didn't, for here it is—came out of my dress—and I'm sorry I said so."

"There, there, I knew you'd find it," said Lina, highly delighted. "I shall be certain sure next time, before I tell a person they did steal," added Dotty, penitently. "Will you forgive me?"

"Oh! yes, I forgive you," replied Lina, with a toss of her pretty head; "only you'd better not say so again. What'd you think if I should 'cuse you of stealing?"

"Oh! you wouldn't," said Dotty, quickly. "You'd know better than to suppose I'd steal."

"Why, Dotty Dimple! that's the same as to say I would."

"Oh! no; Lina, I don't think that. I wouldn't be so wicked! But I don't like to have you sit next to my pocket, though: Won't you please to change places?"—Dotty Dimple at School.

HELPING MOTHER.

"How I love to help mother!" said little Sophie Foster, as, with a sigh of satisfaction, she rose from rocking the cradle. Baby was fast asleep; the gray cat lay winking and blinking before the fire; the sunshine poured in bright and golden, and played with the leaves of the ivy that had been trained over the window. Sophie took a story-book, and sat down to read.

Presently mother came in. She was a sweet-looking lady with soft brown eyes and merry smile; and she came right up to Sophie and kissed her before she knew it. "So baby is asleep. You have been a great comfort to me, dear. My headache is all gone, and now you may put on your red riding-hood and boots and water-proof cloak, and go out to play."

Sophie's face was very bright as she skipped over the sidewalk that afternoon. She had denied her father a visit to a little cousin that she might help mother; and she had her reward. An approving conscience is a better thing to have than great possessions.

Do you love to help your mother, little reader? She has done a great deal for you. She has lain awake nights, and worked and planned for days, all for you. Try if you cannot help her ever so much this week.—Child at Home.

THE WIFE.

Only let a woman be sure she is precious to her husband—not useful, not valuable, not convenient, simply, but lovely and beloved; let her be the recipient of his hearty attentions; let her feel that her cares and loves are noticed, and appreciated, and returned; let her opinion be asked, her approval sought, and her judgment respected in matters of which she is cognizant; in short, let her only be loved, honored, and cherished in the fulfillment of her marriage vow, and she will be to her husband, her children, and society, a well spring of happiness. She will bear pain, and toil, and anxiety, for her husband's love to her is a tower and a fortress. Shielded and sheltered therein adversity will have lost its sting. She may suffer, but sympathy will dull the edge of sorrow. A house with love in it—and by love I mean love expressed by words and looks and deeds, for I have not the spark of faith in love that never crops out—is to a house without love as a person to a machine; one is life, the other is mechanism—the unloved woman may have bread just as light, a house just as tidy as the other, but the latter has a spring of beauty about her, a joyousness, a penetrating kindness to which the former is an entire stranger. The deep happiness of her heart shines out of her face. She gleams all over. It is airy and graceful, and warm, and welcoming with her presence; she is full of devices and plots, and sweet surprises for her husband and family; she has never done "with the poetry and romance of life." She herself is a lyric poem, setting herself to all pure and graceful melodies. Humble household ways and duties have for her a golden significance. The prize makes her calling high; and the end sanctifies the means. "Love is heaven, and heaven is love."

BUDGET OF ANECDOTES.

—When Archbishop Secker was laid on his dying bed, his friend, Mr. Talbot, came to see him. He felt it was their last meeting together, so he said:

"You will pray with me, Talbot, before you go away?" Mr. Talbot rose, and went to look for a prayer-book.

"That is not what I want now," said the dying prelate; "kneel down by me, and pray for me in the way I know you are used to do."

So the good man knelt by his friend's bedside, and poured out his soul for him before his heavenly Father, in such words as his heart dictated. The Holy Spirit blessed them to the comfort of the dying man. There was a life and spirit in them that he could not find in dead forms, however excellent.

When we come to that solemn hour, we shall want something more than a formal religion. It may have satisfied us very well before, but it will give us no light for the dark valley. "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," will have more meaning to us than a volume of the most "beautiful prayers," pronounced with the most faultless elocution.

—Dr. Stonehouse is said to have become one of the most elegant preachers of the kingdom, and for the grace of propriety perhaps he was mainly indebted to Garrick, whose famous criticism will bear repeating.

Being once engaged to read prayers and preach at a church in London, he prevailed upon Garrick to go with him. After the service, the actor, asked the preacher what

particular business he had to do when that duty was over.

"None," said the other. "I thought you had," said Garrick, "on seeing you enter the reading-desk in such a hurry. Nothing can be more indecent than to see a clergyman set about sacred business as if he were a tradesman, and go into church as if he wanted to get out of it as soon as possible." He next asked the doctor what books he had before him.

"Only the Bible and Prayer-book." "Only the Bible and Prayer-book!" replied the actor; "why, you tossed them backwards and forwards, and turned the leaves as carelessly, as if they were those of a day-book and ledger."

The doctor acknowledged the force of the criticism by thenceforth avoiding the faults it was designed to correct.

—Hook was a Bohemian of the first water—or, perhaps it would be truer to say, brandy and water. His wit was exhausted, and he could write admirable things in a moment on the most inauspicious subjects. He inherited much of his celebrated father's musical genius, and sang sweetly, accompanying himself on the piano. He worked hard for an hour, and repaid himself with a fortnight of illness. On one such occasion, when he was dining a messenger came to him from the "John Bull," which he edited, but for which he had written nothing for some weeks, and told him he must write something on the death of the King and Queen of the Sandwich Islands, whereon he sent back—

"Water!—Two Sandwiches!" cried Death, and their wild Majesties held their breath.

It was too plain to all who saw Hook that he had ill used time. Jovial nights and idleness had banished self-respect; and when he died it was to point once more the terrible moral of that misuse of mind and body of which so many of the children of genius have been guilty. In vain friends warned, entreated; things went from bad to worse, until the few mourners experienced a certain sorrowful relief as they bore him at last to rest in an obscure corner of Fulham Cemetery. Mr. Hall gave a sad list, which I will not repeat here, of the noble and great minds which he had known wasted by the passion for drink, and uttered a very impressive admonition to those around him against the besetting temptation of thinkers and scholars.—M. D. CONWAY, in Harper's Magazine for September.

[FROM THE BIOGRAPHY OF REV. WILLIAM MARSH, D.D.]

—Among the crowd in the centre aisle there stood a man so noted for his ungodliness and profane language as to be known in Basingstoke by the name of "Swearing Tom." He was a leader in sin and profanity; and for seventeen years he had never entered a church. It was only curiosity which brought him now. The text was taken from the prophecy of Ezekiel. "I will put a new spirit within you." Towards the close of the sermon the preacher quoted the words, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" (Luke xi. 13)—

marking that, contrary to the conclusion which might have been expected, "the offer was not to children, but simply to those who asked." There was nothing therefore between the worst of men and this most blessed gift from heaven but to ask for it. He then added, "If the most wicked man in this church would go home, and pray that God, for Christ's sake, would give him His Holy Spirit to change his heart, God would hear and answer that man's prayer."

These words went straight to the heart of "Swearing Tom." "I am the worst man here," he said to himself; "I will go home and pray." As he went, he had to pass by the familiar public house, but, unmoved by the calls of his companions, he refused to turn in. On reaching his home, he threw himself upon his knees, and tried to pray in the words which he had heard from the pulpit. The prayer was answered. From that time he became a changed man, and his name of "Swearing Tom" was soon altered for that of "Praying Tom," by which he was known till the day of his death. He placed his leisure time at the disposal of his clergyman for visits to the sick and afflicted, and was made a great blessing, for upwards of half-a-century, in his native town. It was not until Mr. Marsh preached again in that church, after a lapse of thirty years, that he became aware of the blessed result of his first Sunday's sermon, when Tom himself asked leave to speak to him in the vestry, and told him the story of his conversion.

—During his ministry at St. Lawrence, Mr. Marsh, at the week-day services, preached a course of sermon on the Commandments. It happened once that, owing to heavy rain, his congregation consisted only of the boys of the National School. The subject of that morning, "Thou shalt do no murder," the preacher felt to be the most unsuited to his audience, but as it came in the natural order, he proceeded with it. One passage in the sermon had reference to the crime of suicide, and contained the following sentence:—"If any man, in the full possession of his senses, take away his own life, his last act is an act of sin." Many years passed away, and Mr. Marsh was walking in one of the streets of Weymouth, when he was stopped by a respectable-looking man, who looked earnestly in his face for a moment, and then said, "Thank you and bless you sir, for saving my life."

"I think there must be some mistake," he replied, "for I do not remember having ever seen you before."

"But I have seen you," said the stranger, "and never can forget you. I was one of the boys in the National School at Reading, and heard you preach on the Sixth Commandment. A single sentence of the sermon was all that remained in my mind. I commenced business in this town, but after some years of prosperity I was brought, owing to unfortunate circumstances, to the brink of ruin. In my despair I resolved to drown myself, but as I stood on the breakwater about to throw myself into the sea, the words which I had heard fifteen years before, 'If any man in the full possession of his senses take away his own life, his last act is an act of sin,' flashed upon my memory, and with all my heart I said, 'By the help of God, my last act shall not be an act

of sin!' I returned to my home and found comfort in the Bible and in prayer, and that evening I heard a sermon preached in one of the churches, which led me to seek and find peace with God. The next day's post brought me a letter from an uncle, enclosing a cheque for my present relief, and from that time my circumstances gradually amended until they became prosperous, as they have continued to this time. This has been a great mercy—but the salvation of my soul, when I was on the brink of destroying it forever, is infinitely greater, and I owe it under God, to you."

—Some time before this, Mr. Marsh's interest had been greatly deepened in the Jewish cause, by an incident which he used to tell with great animation. He was staying in London for a few days, when his friend, Mr. Simeon sent for him. "I am advertised," said Mr. Simeon, "to preach at Stroud for the Jews' Society, and now I am too ill to leave my bed. Would you go for me?"

"Gladly, if I knew more of the subject. But although I have subscribed to that Society from the first, and like its object, I know too little about it to undertake to preach for it the day after to-morrow."

"Have you a grain of humility? If you have, you will preach my sermon!"

Mr. Marsh laughed, and said, "If that be the criterion, I think I have."

On his arrival at Stroud late on Saturday evening, the portmanteau in which the manuscript of Mr. Simeon's sermon had been packed, was discovered to be missing. Driven by this accident to give his own thoughts from the pulpit, he spent several hours that night in prayerfully searching the prophecies concerning the Jews, and ended by writing a running commentary on Romans xi.

Just before the service began on the following morning, a waiter from the hotel came to the vestry door to say that the portmanteau had arrived.

"Shall I fetch the sermon?" asked a lay secretary of the Society, who was aware of the dilemma.

"No!" said Mr. Marsh, "Mr. Simeon is not to preach to-day; and I am to not to preach; St. Paul is to preach!"

The Society was the richer for that sermon; and incalculably the richer for the intense interest awakened in my father's mind by those hours of deep study of the Word of God touching the chosen nation, the present duties of Christians towards them, and the glorious hopes for their future. From that hour he devoted himself with the tranquil and enduring enthusiasm of his nature to the cause of that Society, and to the temporal and spiritual welfare of the Jews.

A BLIND MAN'S FIRESIDE.

Talk to me, O ye eloquent flames, Gossips and comrades fine! Nobody knows me, poor and blind, That sit in your merry shine. Nobody knows me, but my dog; A friend I've never seen.

But that comes to my call, and loves me For the sympathies between. 'Tis pleasant to hear in the cold, dark night, Moun'ing higher and higher, The crackling, chattering, sputtering, spattering, Flames in the wintry fire.

Half asleep in the corner, I hear you prattle and snap, And talk to me and Tiny, That dozes in my lap.

You laugh with the merriest laughter, You dance, you jest, you sing, And suggest in the wintry midnight The joys of the coming spring. Not even the lark on the fringe of the cloud, Nor the thrush on the Hawthorn-bough, Singeth a song more pleasant to hear Than the song you're singing now.

Your voices are of gladness; Ever they seem to say, After the evening—morning! After the night—the day! After this mortal blindness, A heavenly vision clear, The soul can see when the eyes are dark: Awake! let the light appear!

—All the Year Round.

TEMPERANCE ITEMS.

—Dr. Lyman Beecher once said: "Should a foreign army land upon our shores to levy such a tax as intemperance levies, no mortal could resist the tide of swelling indignation that would overwhelm it."

—About thirty years ago, a few citizens of New Braintree, in Massachusetts, met together and resolved that the best interests of the town required a tavern in which spirituous liquors should not be sold, as the fact was patent to all that too many of the young men in the place would congregate at the "village inn," and were forming habits of social drinking. After talking over the importance of the matter, and satisfying themselves that the enterprise they proposed would not prove a paying one, they subscribed some \$7,000, built a hotel, furnished it, and engaged a landlord to run it free of rent. Soon after this reform, the people of the town came to the conclusion that it was unprofitable business to farm out the poor of the town, as had long been the practice, to the lowest bidder; and at a town meeting they voted to buy a poorhouse farm, and put the poor at work. This was carried into effect. Twenty five years have passed away, and going to that quiet, thrifty town not long ago, the stage-driver said to us on passing the "poorhouse farm," "There is a funny place." "Why so?" we asked. "Because, it is the poorhouse farm, and not a pauper on it. And I suppose the reason is, some thirty years ago a temperance tavern was started here—no liquors have been sold, and there is no drinking, nor drunkenness, and not a pauper in the town."

—Temperance workers, says the Independent, will be sorry to learn that it is proposed to introduce the cultivation of the poppy plant in Louisiana this spring, and the manufacture of opium. It is estimated that an acre of poppies will make fifty pounds of opium, worth from fifteen to twenty dollars a pound, at a cost of less than four dollars for the manufacture, and one man can cultivate three acres. It is a more refined stimulant than any other known, and tenfold more deadly and terrible in its effects.