

The Family Circle.

LORD, HERE AM I.

Still, as of old, Thy precious word
Is by the nations dimly heard;
The hearts its holiness hath stirred
Are weak and few.
Wise men the secret dare not tell;
Still in Thy temple slumbers well
Good Eli: O, like Samuel,
Lord, here am I!

Few powers, no wisdom, no renown,
Only my life can I lay down,
Only my heart, Lord, to Thy throne
I bring; and pray.
A child of Thine I may go forth,
And spread glad tidings through the earth,
And teach sad hearts to know Thy worth!
Lord, here am I!

Weak lips may teach the wise, Christ said;
Weak feet sad wanderers home have led;
Weak hands have cheered the sick one's bed.
With freshest flowers;
O teach me, Father! heed their sighs,
While many a soul in darkness lies
And waits Thy message; make me wise.
Lord, here am I!

And make me strong, that, staff and stay,
And guide and guardian of the way,
To Thee—ward I may bear, each day,
Some fainting soul:
Speak, for I hear; make pure in heart,
Thy face to see, Thy truth to impart,
In hut and hall, in church and mart!
Lord, here am I!

I ask no heaven till earth be Thine,
Nor glory-crown, while work of mine
Remaineth here; when earth shall shine
Among the stars.
Her sins wiped out, her captives free,
Her voice a music unto Thee,
For crown, new work give Thou to me!
Lord, here am I!

"IF WE KNEW!"

BY MRS. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

In a recent number we copied a scrap of poetry with this significant title. It struck us very forcibly as containing a profitable lesson, and has haunted us, daily, ever since. Ah! if in early youth "we knew!" If we could look along the map of life clear to the end, and see all the breakers and quicksands, which, by patience and self-control we could have avoided, how different would be the view we now take of the "backward track!" No doubt, it is well, in many ways, that we cannot read the future; trials and sorrows that no skill or foresight could have turned aside, would have been doubled by anticipation and fore-knowledge, and yet—we doubt if there are many, who, looking back from the "halfway house," would not willingly endure the double pain and sorrow, if they might have had the power to foresee the inevitable result of certain courses, and, profiting by this foreknowledge, have avoided the danger or the sin.

Brother! Sister! Would you be impatient or cross to your little playmate "if you knew" those little "baby fingers" would "never trouble you again?"

Two little boys were at play—one of three years, the other but eighteen months. Both wanted a rocking-chair. Full of health and animal spirits, the dispute ran high, and, at last, the elder struck the little one. Only a few days and the baby hands were folded in "snowy grace" upon the cold and quiet heart, and laid in the grave. A short time after, hearing bitter sobs in the garden, the mother found the lonely brother—himself but just past babyhood—lying under the peach trees, watching with eager eyes some birds flying over his head, and calling between his sobs, "Oh, birdies! little birdies! Fly up! Fly higher! and tell Jesus Christ if he will only let Georgie come back to me he may have the rocking-chair all the time, and I never, never, will strike him again—never! never!"

Oh, Father! Don't be harsh with your son. He disobeyed your commands, and of course he has done wrong; but he is only a little child. It was the overflow of exuberant life, and not wilful disobedience. If you could look forward to what soon may be, how leniently would you judge—how gently would you chide; and, by your gentleness secure the obedience much more effectually.

Ah! Poor, tired mother! You are very weary, and half sick. Your eyes are heavy for want of sleep, and your head throbbing with the noise and shouts, and wild frolics of your little ones. But it is health, and strength, and life. Be patient! If, soon, with hot and tearless eyes, you watch by the little crib where fever may conquer that life, but late so joyous and full of activity, can you endure what may be, if you have scattered "thorns, not roses, for your reaping by and by?"

"I have asked you twenty times to mend this coat, and it is not done yet. 'No time!' How long would it have taken? But, well—I can go ragged, I suppose. You take little heed to my wishes or advice. You must take your own way, or you'll not be satisfied."

Husband! you love your wife; you would be indignant if a looker-on should hint that you misjudged, or were over-exacting. Why do you say such ugly, biting things? Your heart, or that silent monitor, your conscience, tells you that she did not mean to disregard your wishes or advice. She was tired, or overtaxed with care and frequent interruptions; or, perhaps sickness is creeping upon her. Whatever the reason, the offence was but a little thing. Even if she was self-willed, or irritable, be patient with her. You know a certain tone of your voice or a love-look from your eye, would have brought her to your side in an instant—sorry, self-upbraiding—loving and honoring you with her whole heart. Ah! "If you knew!" These first morose, fault-finding words, perhaps are "leaving on her heart a shadow—leaving on your heart a stain" which may be the beginning of coldness,

mistrust and defiance—or possibly a deeper sin, where, but for them, you could have secured joy and gladness, growing sweeter and purer day by day! Deal gently. You, her husband, can make her happy, loving and good; or you can make her irritable, unloving and evil.

"John! Why do you always wait and wait, and hinder me so? You can come when I call you, just as well as to keep me waiting, if you only choose to do so. But you are always so obstinately bent on taking your own time, regardless of other people's comfort."

Wife! It is just such little, impatient, waspish words, that tempt your husband to seek quiet comfort and appreciation away from your side. No matter if he speaks "just as impatiently" to you "fifty times a day," show him a better way. Why retort, or shrink from the "little shadows" which you can, by gentleness, dispel? You have even more power in your gentleness, than your husband has in his strength. Yield a little. It is not hard, and you reap a glorious reward. Is not your husband's love and confidence worth keeping by a little patience and forbearance? But if not for present joy, to ward off future misery at least, "set a guard over the doors of your mouth that you sin not with your lips," and so tread life's pathway with him to whom you have vowed a wife's fealty, that if called to sit in the desolation of widowhood, there shall not be added to that sorrow, the anguish of self-upbraiding, for little services impatiently rendered or love requited by coldness or irritability.

When we have passed through all the labors and trials of earlier life, and in full maturity, or just on the decline, recall the friends of our youth, and the sweeter family ties, how the heart aches with the memory of

"The hasty words or action,
Strewn along our backward track,"

and vainly yearns for one more opportunity for the better performance of our whole duty in all love, fidelity and patience. But God

"Pity us all,
Who vainly the faults of youth recall
For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: 'I might have been.'"
—The Mother at Home.

CROSS BEARING.

There is more joy in enduring a cross for God, than in the smiles of the world; in a private, despised affliction, without the name of suffering for His cause, or anything like martyrdom, but only as coming from His hand, kissing and bearing it patiently, yes, gladly for His sake, out of love to Him, because it is His will so to try thee. What can come amiss to a soul thus composed? "It is a renewed pleasure to be offering up one's self every day to God. The sweetest life in the world is to be crossing one's self to please Him; trampling on one's own will to follow His." How strange that the children of God will resist suffering, and sometimes feel that their Heavenly Father is dealing hardly by them in causing them to pass through sorrows and afflictions. Sorrows and crosses are the surest tokens of God's favor to His children, and as we bow to them, bear them joyfully, they "yield to us, and by us the peaceful fruits of righteousness." I have felt for many years very jealous for the Lord of Hosts, and desire to receive all the good of every trial, every suffering, my God and Father is pleased to cause me to pass through. I feel that the most insignificant event or circumstance of my daily life is ordered and directed by Him. There is no matter too small to carry to God, be it a cause of grief or joy. When our will is lost in the Divine will, then it is that we have found the "philosopher's stone," that turns everything into gold. We get good out of every event; everything turns to our spiritual good. How rapidly such a soul grows in grace! Yet the more one knows of God, the higher we rise in Him, the more boundless appears "the height and depth of the riches of His love." What a boundless ocean, what an immensity is God's love! Truly can I say it is my meat and drink to do and suffer His will. "Lo come, to do Thy will, O God." The yoke of God is easy, and His burden is light. How blessed is it to bear the burden of the Lord, to glory in the cross of Christ.—God's Furnace.

PARDON.

There was a poor man named John Holmes, who was dying of consumption in a miserable tenement house in the lower part of the City of New York. A city missionary had called upon him quite often during his sickness; to minister to his wants, and had sought most earnestly to lead him to Christ as his Saviour. One day when the missionary was visiting him, John said to him, "You speak of salvation through Christ as the only way; you don't talk of good works as having anything to do with our being saved. Won't you explain this matter so that I can understand you?" The minister told him that every one had sinned, but Christ had died to save sinners and offered a free pardon to all who would repent of their sins and trust in Him as their Saviour. Sinners are not saved by their good deeds, but by the blood of Christ which they can plead and obtain pardon. This plea is like a pardon which the Governor sends to one who has broken the law. "Suppose," said the missionary, "you had stolen fifty dollars to get food for your family and were arrested for it. You know the law is that if you steal fifty dollars you must go to prison. You are taken to Court, and you admit that you stole the money, but you tell the judge that you have been a good man and that you never stole before and never will steal again. You say that you stole the fifty dollars when you were in want to enable you to buy food. The judge would say, that the law is that if a man steal fifty dollars he must go to prison

for doing so; that it matters not that the man never stole before and never will steal again; that the law is positive. The judge would sentence you to prison if you made such a defence. But suppose the Governor, hearing of your case, should feel sorry for you and should send you a pardon, you would plead this pardon, and the judge would order your discharge. But if you would not use your pardon because you did not understand how it operated, and all the reasons for offering you the pardon, but should insist upon your own goodness and your general moral character as the ground of the defence, the Governor's pardon would not save you, and you would be punished for your obstinacy in refusing to plead the pardon offered you. So Christ has provided a pardon for all sinners which they may have, provided they accept the pardon on the terms He has prescribed: Repentance for sin and faith in Him as their Saviour. This pardon they must plead with God, and their plea will be rejected and they will perish in consequence of their refusal to accept salvation as it is offered to them in the Gospel."

Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me;
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
O, Lamb of God I come!

HOW STRINGENT BECAME LIBERAL.

Mr. Stringent was sixty years old—very old, I should have called him, when I was a child. He was "brought up" in a thrifty, economical way. His father was a small, snug farmer; but, as his wants were but few, he was called "well to do in the world," which, I suppose means, "well to do for this world." His children received a fair education, and were always among the best scholars. No better cows and no better sheep were owned in those parts, than those owned by old Mr. Stringent. His maxim was, "to keep what you have got, and get all that you can get." This maxim he inculcated most faithfully into the minds of his children. In process of time old Stringent died, and, fortunately, such men carry nothing with them. The children grew up and were scattered abroad, and I have nothing to say about them, except that they were all keen to gain this world. I am to speak of the youngest son Simon, who took "the old place," that is, the farm, agreeing to pay off his brothers and sisters their shares as fast as he could earn it.

And now Simon, in his youth, was married, and settled at "Craig's Valley," as the farm was called. He had to support himself and his young family, and yearly to pay a good round sum towards his debt. Early and late he toiled. Carefully and anxiously he saved everything possible. His expenses were the lowest possible; everything went to "the debt." And if there was anything Simon dreaded more than another, it was a call for charity, or, as he termed it, "the everlasting contribution-box;" the announcement that a "collection would be made next Sabbath," would invariably make him unwell and unable to attend chapel. Indeed, so delicate was his constitution, that once in a while, when he had been caught, he was sure to have the nose-bleed, and be compelled to go out before the box reached him. But years passed on, and his habits grew strong and his debts grew feeble, until, at the end of fifteen years, he had paid off every debt, and owned a large farm, free from nearly every incumbrance.

But now a new chapter in his life was to be experienced. There was an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the people. Very many sang the new song. Very many rejoiced in the hope of life eternal. Several of the children of Simon were among the new-born children of light. Simon was the last to become interested. He was the last to feel his sins; and he struggled and resisted a long, long time, before he yielded to the demands and conditions of Christ. Then he was very slow to take up the crosses, as they lay in his path. He was afraid to commit himself. He was slow to erect the altar of prayer in his house. He was slow to confess Christ before the world. But he battled all these difficulties and overcame them, because he really had Christian principles in his soul. But now he met a difficulty which seemed insurmountable, unexpected and very trying. He found that now his brethren and his Bible took it for granted that he would be liberal. How could he, who had never given away a shilling a year, be expected to give tens and even hundreds? How hard to understand the Christian fact—that "none of us liveth to himself!" He tried to convince himself that a man's first duty is to provide for his family; and conscience told him that he had been doing nothing else all his life. He tried to satisfy himself that "Charity begins at home;" and conscience told him that he wanted it to stop there also. When he read his Bible, he seemed as if he was always stumbling upon such texts as, "Freely ye have received, freely give." One day he sat a long time motionless, trying to convince himself that he had not received much. "Why, what little I have, I earned myself by hard labor. Pray, what have I received?" and then conscience would begin her whispers: "Why, Simon Stringent, you received a good constitution—you were never sick a day in all your life!"

"That is true."
"And you received a shrewd mind; you know how to manage and make money. And you have received a great deal of sunshine, and a great many rains on your farm, and a great increase of your cattle and flocks; and you have received a large, healthy

family, no deaths in it, and you have received many years of life already, and hope for more; and you have received the Sabbath and its blessings; and you have, as you hope, received the pardon of your sins, and a hope of life eternal through God's own Son. Received! Why, you have received everything; it has been nothing but receiving, and now you must give!"

O Simon! how hard you breathe! How the perspiration stands on your brow! Had he been dreaming, or had the Spirit of God been teaching him?

The very next day, Simon, or, as he was now called, Mr. Stringent, heard a loud and tender appeal from the missionary field. And now a collection was to be made—not in the chapel, where every man could dodge, or conceal his parsimony, but by an open subscription, black and white. The collector was to come around at once. Then it was that the dialogue which is said to have taken place, between Mr. Stringent and the devil, occurred.

"How much must I give?" said Stringent.

"As little as you can—and be respectable," said the devil.

"I am very far from being rich," said Stringent.

"You are the richest man in the church," said conscience.

"Suppose I give five pounds."

"Fully enough," said the tempter.

"Freely ye have received, freely give," said conscience.

"Remember your great family, their schooling, and clothing, and the new furniture, and the new carriage which you need," said the tempter.

"I shall put down ten pounds," said Stringent.

"You are beside yourself! Why they will expect you to do in like proportion for everything hereafter. There's no end to these calls," said the tempter.

"I shall put down twenty pounds," said Stringent.

"Yes, but do consider," said the tempter; "you know your taxes are awful this year; and you know your oats are very light, and they sell by weight, and not by the bushel, as they once did, and the drought has injured your grass, and your fruit will be next to nothing."

"Yes," said conscience, "but your corn is magnificent, and so are your potatoes; and if hay is light, the price is certainly heavy; and your workmen never earned as much as they do this year; and the shipment of timber which had been growing long before you were born, has brought an enormous price."

"I shall put down fifty pounds!"

"O Mr. Stringent! Mr. Stringent! you are nearly crazy—to throw away money so! Why, sir, with that sum you could buy two young cows, or ten first-rate!"

"Get out—get out, you tempter of my soul! I shall put down one hundred pounds this time, and if you don't let me alone, I declare I will double it!"

And Mr. Stringent did put down; and he felt so much better, and grew so strong under it, that it was well understood between him and the devil, ever after, that if he was tempted he would double his charities. And so well did he abide by it, that he became one of the most liberal men in the community. And when he went round to collect for charities, as he often did, the most liberal man always being the best collector, and when his brethren would make excuses, he would shake his head, and say, "I only wish you could have such dialogues with the devil as I have had!"—The Church.

PYRAMID LAKE.

The peculiar rock formations from which this lake derives its name, are remarkable even among the "Rockies." The principal pyramid towers above the lake to a height of more than 500 feet, presenting in its general outline a remarkably perfect pyramidal form. Close scrutiny shows portions of its sides to consist of volcanic tuff, which greatly resembles a vegetable growth of vast size. In color the pyramidal mounds vary with the varying light. At some moments they convey the impression of a rich, warm, brown tint; at others the hue is a cool gray that more nearly resembles the color which a close examination will prove to be the true one.

A visit to the largest pyramid developed the fact that it was occupied by tenants entirely capable of holding inviolate their prior right of possession against all human visitors. From every crevice there seemed to come a hiss. The rattling, too, was sharp and long continued. The whole rock was evidently alive with rattlesnakes. In every party that ever entered into a country infested by rattlesnakes are some men who derive great pleasure in killing every snake that may show its head or sound its rattle. A loud shout of "Snakes! rattlers!" brought out the band of exterminators; but such a number of snakes came upon the field that it was clearly beyond the power of our snake-haters to carry on the combat with any hope of final victory. They gave up, and abandoned the locality to the serpentine tribe, which will probably retain the ownership for a period of time indefinite and unlimited.

The water of Pyramid Lake is clear, sparkling, and very salt. It abounds in fish, among which are the couler, a sprightly fish, having flesh the color of salmon, and quite as game. In weight this fish ranges from three to twenty pounds, and an occasional specimen rises to the fly that will scale quite twenty-five pounds. Besides the couler there is an abundance of trout, not precisely the speckled beauties of the Lake

Superior region; neither do they bear a very close resemblance to the sluggish, black, spotted trout of our more Southern States. It is a trout, nevertheless, which rises readily to the artificial fly, and is a pleasing morsel for the epicurean palate. Cooked in the various styles known to the campers, this fish will compare favorably with its eastern brethren. Other varieties of the finny tribe abound in Pyramid Lake; but these are the ones which will be most sought after by any courageous disciple of Izaak Walton, who leaves the cars of the Central Pacific Railroad where it strikes the Truckee, and who ventures down to its outlet in this curious lake.—T. R. Davis, in Harper's Magazine for September.

BUDGET OF ANECDOTES.

(FROM THE BIOGRAPHY OF REV. WILLIAM MARSH, D. D.)

—In almost every large town which he visited in Germany, he found that the converted Jews had been apprised of his intention of coming, and were on the lookout for him—their leaders hastening to welcome him with respect and love, as one whose devotion to the best interests and general welfare of their nation had been long known and appreciated. In one place the chief Rabbi, still a rigid Jew, visited him, to express gratitude, in the name of his people, for his efforts to alleviate their trials, and to promote their temporal advantage.

—In the evenings several friends were invited to meet him, and the conversations—chiefly sustained by himself and my father—were most animating and edifying. One of those conversations, on the subject of death as the gateway of life, and on scriptural indications of the varied sources of happiness in the land beyond the "gateway," produced such an effect upon a man of the world who was present, that he said, as he left the room, "That is the religion I would give all I have to possess. Now, for the first time, I realize what a happy thing it is to be a Christian!"

—"I am beginning my Bible again. When Mr. Cadogan was offered Tom Paine's works, he said, 'I have not done with Moses and the prophets yet.' We shall never have done with them."

—In his strong view of the error of accumulating money, he would say, "I have read a melancholy thing in the paper to-day—a man died possessed of £100,000!"

—"I am going to set a task to all who reject the Bible; they are to write me four chapters that will be equal to the xiv., xv., xvi. and xvii. chapters of St. John. They will deserve a great prize if they write me four better."

—During his illness he had spent much thought and prayer upon one who was at that time very prominently before the public—the Bishop of Natal; and at length, "while he was musing, the fire burned," and he could not refrain from entering into correspondence with him. It need scarcely be said that his words of argument, warning and entreaty were written in gentle and deferential though uncompromising language. The Bishop answered him at some length, and with most respectful courtesy, appearing to be touched by the faith and fervor which had led an old man, amidst a suffering and dangerous illness, thus to lay to heart that which he believed to be the peril of such views for him who held them and for those who should be led by him.

A few days afterwards the bishop enclosed for his perusal a letter from a working man in Glasgow. Its object was to express thanks, on his own behalf and that of others of his class, for the deliverance which Bishop Colenso had given to their minds from the thralldom of old prejudices into the unfettered liberty of free thought and speculation.

There was something about the whole letter deeply saddening. The writer had evidently been taught in his childhood from

"The big, ha' Bible, once his father's pride," but now, leaving the simple faith of those early days, was wandering in the mazes of skepticism without a light to guide him.

My father was greatly distressed by the tone of the letter, and wrote by that day's post, to a Christian friend in Glasgow, begging him to go at once and see the man, seeking power from the Holy Ghost to reach his heart with the message of the Gospel of life and peace—"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Three days later came the solemn answer, "I lost no time; but my visit was too late. The night before the man had died suddenly."

GOD'S WORD.

Seeing a man reject the inspiration of the Scriptures, while he said he maintained his belief in Jesus Christ and His redemption, I had compared him to some one who has a costly perfume in a glass vessel; he breaks the vessel, thinking that he can at the same time preserve the perfume, but he loses it all. Set aside the inspiration of the Scriptures, and all Christian doctrine will disappear. This is not a theory; I have seen it to be a fact; therefore the question is one of the greatest importance. I am not ignorant of the objections, of the difficulties that are raised, but the plenitude of the divinity to be found in the Scriptures is too great to be in the least prejudiced by them. "Thy word is truth." Not to believe that the Bible is God's message is voluntarily to deprive one's self of all true, wholesome, well-founded knowledge about God and our future state. It is turning to darkness; it is to ruin our own prospects, and perhaps, also, the welfare of many others with us.—Marie D' Aubigne.

Statistics show that the deaths from drunkenness in England amount to 50,000 a year; in Germany to 40,000; in Russia, to 10,000 a year; in Belgium, to 4,000, and in France to 1,500. In this country it is estimated that 60,000 persons annually are the victims of intemperance.