



The Family Circle.

## "HE TOOK HIM BY THE HAND."

That is a beautiful thing that is said of our Lord, "He took him by the hand, and led him out of the town." And is there not here a helpful hint for every saint that seeks to follow in his steps, and like him go forth to succor and to save?

We like the hearty hand-shaking of the good old times; not the half-reluctant proffer of cold finger-tips, but the cordial grasp betokening real sympathy. The formal bow may do for the fashionable parlor, but it will not suffice for the Sunday-school folk. Get hold of your scholars by the hand, if you mean to get hold of them by the heart.

Gough tells of the thrill of Joel Stratton's hand laid lovingly upon his shoulder, just at the time when he was reeling on the brink of hell; and of another gentleman of high respectability, who came to his shop when he was desperately struggling to disengage himself from the coils of the serpent, and almost ready to sink down in despair; and how he took him by the hand, expressed his faith in him, and bade him play the man. Gough said, "I will;" and Gough did, as everybody knows.

There's a great deal in it. Some of us are not too old to remember how it was with us when we were boys ourselves, when a real, live gentleman took us by the hand—not, of course, the schoolmaster, with the dreaded ferule—but with friendly grasp, and held on and talked with us; we remember how he grew upon us—our respect and affection—and how we always had a kindly feeling for him afterwards; and how, when we encountered him, even at a distance, there was the quick, glad recognition, and a sort of mutual telegraphing, the purport of which seemed to be, "We understand one another."

There is about many teachers a distance and reserve, a diffidence; a daintiness, a something that hinders them from taking hold of their scholars; and we beg them to look to it, and resolve to cure it at whatever cost, and, as a good beginning, learn a lesson from our Saviour, and at your next class meeting take them all by the hand.—*The Baptist Teacher.*

## WINTER AMUSEMENTS.

One of the most puzzling questions which parents have to deal with is that which relates to the amusements of their children, and especially to those among them who have reached young manhood and young womanhood. The most of us are too apt to forget that we have once been young, and that, while we are tired enough with our daily work to enjoy our evenings in quiet by our firesides, the young are overflowing with vitality, which must have vent somewhere. The girls and young women particularly, who cannot join in the rough sports of the boys, have, as a rule, a pretty slow time of it. They go to parties when invited; but parties are all alike, and soon become a bore. A healthy social life does not consist in packing five hundred people together in a box, feeding them with ices, and sending them home with aching limbs, aching eyes, and a first-class chance for diphtheria. But the young must have social life. They must have it regularly; and how to have it satisfactorily—with freedom, without danger to health of body and soul, with intellectual stimulus and growth—is really one of the most important of social questions.

It is not generally the boy and the girl who spend their days in school that need outside amusement or society. They get it, in large measure, among their companions, during the day; and, as their evenings are short, they get along very comfortably with their little games and their recreative reading. It is the young woman who has left school and the young man who is preparing for life, in office or counting-room, in the shop or on the farm, that need social recreation which will give significance to their lives, and, at the same time, culture to their minds. If they fail to unite culture with their recreations, they never get it. It is not harsh to say that nine young men in every ten go into life without any culture. The girls do better, because, first, they take to it more naturally, and, second, because, in the absence of other worthy objects of life, this is always before them and always attainable. The great point, then, is to unite culture with amusement and social enjoyment. Dancing and kindred amusements are well enough in their time and way, but they are childish. There must be something better; there is something better.

It is an easy thing to establish, either in country or city neighborhoods, the reading

club. Twenty-five young men and women of congenial tastes, habits, and social belongings can easily meet in one another's houses, once during every week, through five or six months of the year. With a small fund they can buy good books, and, over these, read aloud by one and another of their number, they can spend an hour and a half most pleasantly and profitably. They will find in these books topics of conversation for the remainder of the time they spend together. If they can illuminate the evening with music, all the better. Whatever accomplishments may be in the possession of different members of the club may be drawn upon to give variety to the interest of the occasion. This is entirely practicable, everywhere. It is more profitable than amateur theatricals, and less exhaustive of time and energy. It can be united with almost any literary object. The "Shakespeare Club" is nothing but a reading club, devoted to the study of a single author; and Shakespeare may well engage a club for a single winter. Such a club would cultivate the art of good reading, which is one of the best and most useful of all accomplishments. It would cultivate thought, imagination, taste. In brief, the whole tendency of the reading club is toward culture—the one thing, notwithstanding all our educational advantages, the most deplorably lacking in the average American man and woman.—*Scribner's Monthly.*

## SELFISH DAUGHTERS, AND WHAT MAKES THEM.

"Oh, I wish my mother were here!" exclaimed a young lady, one morning this summer, as we stood on the piazza of a large, old farm-house among the Catskills, drinking in the pure mountain air, and viewing with intense delight, mingled with awe, the grand old mountains with their evergreen summits towering to the skies. I turned with a feeling of pleasure to the young girl; she was quite pretty, one of four young school-teachers who had come here to spend their vacation. As I looked with admiring eyes upon the girl she pushed out a little foot whose boot had lost several buttons, "because," she added, "if my mother were here she would sew those buttons on my shoes." There was no more beauty to that face in my sight, and I could not repress the look of disgust which rose to my eyes as I turned hastily away; but her words followed me. She was talking to one of her friends: "Every morning," she said, "if I have anything to be mended, I send it down for my mother to do; I never do anything of the kind myself!"

And that girl had reached her twentieth year! What a daughter! I had thought, when she first spoke, that her desire for her mother's presence was that that dear one might enjoy with her the beauty of the grand scenery, and the luxury of the pure, strengthening air. But no: it was that she might mend her shoes. What a motive! Probably, at that very moment the over-worked mother was preparing breakfast for her family, (which was not small, as the young lady had herself said) in a hot, close room in the city, while her daughter was wishing that she were with her to be her slave. What a wife that girl will make! What a teacher she is for the children committed to her care! It is to be hoped that there are not many like her. And, now, whose fault is it? why has she grown up into this selfish state, her soul cramped into such a compass that no sunshine of nobleness can creep into it? Is it not the mother's fault to a great degree? She has petted her child, indulging every desire, sacrificing herself continually to gratify her daughter's whims. She has worked and denied herself many a luxury, perhaps, that this girl might receive an education, cultivating, unconsciously a spirit of selfishness more ugly than homely features, ignorance, or plain clothes.

Let a mother bring up a child to regard her wishes and comfort as much, at least, as its own, to strive through all its life to make "mother" happy, and, in the coming years, the daughter will never look back, when that mother is gone to her rest, and think, with bitter regret, of the hours of toil that she might have lightened.—*Phren. Journal.*

## "FOLLOW THOU ME."

This passage has its application to all those unfavorable surroundings in which we are often placed. It is not an easy thing to be an out-and-out Christian in certain families or in certain social circles. It was not an easy thing for Daniel to be a God-fearing Puritan in voluptuous Babylon, or for Paul to stand up for Jesus at the Court of Felix. Perhaps some of you say: "My 'set' are worldly and fashionable. They go to theatres oftener than to prayer-meetings. My relatives are irreligious. The current is against me." Very well. What is that to thee? Follow thou Christ. If your associates are possessed with the delusion that happiness is only to be found in sensual pleasures, then prove to them how cheerful you can be while denying ungodly

lusts. If they among whom your lot is cast are frivolous, do you be sober. If they are extravagant, do you be frugal, "as becometh the saints." If they live for self-indulgence, do you set the example of living for Christ and for others' welfare. If they choose death, do you choose life, and then prove to them the wisdom of your choice. "Be ye holy as I am holy" is a command you cannot shirk or deflect at a terrible cost. Oh! it is a shame to us who profess Christ that we often ask: "What will this one say or how do others do?" Follow me! This is the true "higher life," this perennial endeavor to find Christ's footsteps and to walk therein.

When the grand old missionary, Judson, was one day laid aside from work, his wife thought to divert him by reading to him some newspaper sketches of himself. One compared him to Paul, another to John, etc. The modest old hero was annoyed, and exclaimed: "I do not want to be like Paul, or Apollon, or any other man. I want to be like Christ. We have only one who was tried in all points as we are and yet was without sin. I want to drink in his spirit, to place my feet in his footprints and to measure their smallness and shortcomings by Christ's footsteps only. Oh! if I could only be more like Jesus!"

If our churches are to be quickened and advanced, then the marching-order to which we must keep step is: "Follow me!" The only safe counsel for the enquiry room is to point every awakened sinner to the atoning Jesus. The two words which Jesus probably uttered oftener than any other were: "Follow me!" They are the essence of all true creeds. They are the test and touchstone of true Christianity.—*Dr. Cuyler.*

## "HELP MY POOR PAPA."

Here is an anecdote that deserves record, and the facts come to me so directly, and on such authority, that I vouch for them as confidently as if they had occurred under my own roof. There lived, a year ago, in this country, a gentleman of good repute, high social standing and connections, and large business employments. He became embarrassed in his mercantile affairs, yielded to temptation, and put his hand too easily to documents which required a very different pen. He was indicted for forgery, tried, convicted, and sentenced to prison.

He has a little daughter of six or eight years of age, who has not ceased to pray for her father every day, regularly, since his incarceration began. A short time ago her mother heard her in a distant room, praying very loud, and with an unusual degree of pathos and intensity. The child was on her knees, her little hands clasped, her whole body in motion, and she was saying, "O dear Lord, don't you hear me? May be I've prayed too softly, and you couldn't hear me; but I mean everything, and I don't care who hears me, if I can only make you hear me, and see how I want you to help my poor papa!" When her mother asked her why she prayed so loud, she gave the reason which she had put in her artless petition, and said, "Mamma, you and I have been praying for papa a whole year, and it doesn't seem as if God had heard us; perhaps we've been afraid to pray loud, and I felt to-night as if I must make God hear me, and do something for poor papa." When that miserable man learns this story of his little daughter, he may find in it a chastisement with more healing power than the sentence of the offended law; and, who can tell? perhaps the touching constancy and fearlessness of the child may now, at length, work out, under God, the very answer to her prayer which she has waited for so long.—*Watchman and Reflector.*

## WHAT TO DO WITH ILLUSTRATED PAPERS.

The very best thing to do with illustrated papers after your own family have finished reading them, is of course to send them to some one who cannot afford the luxury of buying them, or to the prison libraries; but it often happens that odd numbers lie around the house and are torn up or burned up, simply because one does not know what to do with them.

A very pretty use for odd pictures and prints of all sizes and descriptions is to make them into Christmas-books for children. It is pretty work for your own children to do, and they make tasteful and valuable presents for the children of friends. The following directions may perhaps assist the young people in preparing a pleasant surprise for some one whom they love:

Take one yard of blue glazed muslin, of a pretty shade, one of pink and one of white; fold each into six squares, unless your pictures are very large, when four squares will probably answer. Lay them one upon the other and stitch one side firmly together; then taking a sharp pair of scissors cut the three remaining margins in even and regular points. Now trim your pictures neatly and arrange the third page, leaving the outside leaf for a cover. The pictures should be put on with

starch, laying them face down upon the table and brushing the backs evenly and uniformly with the starch, then lifting and placing where you wish to have them, leaving a margin of about an inch of the red cambric around the edge of the pictures. When the page is arranged and partly dry it should be pressed with warm iron. If the pictures are small several can be nicely grouped together, or one large one and two smaller will often do nicely upon the same page. The cover can be decorated in rather different fashion, by leaving the edge plain and loop-stitching a border in colored worsted, and pasting a name and inscription in letters, also cut from headings of papers.

With a little exercise of ingenuity a very pretty thing can be made of waste pictures, which are really too good to throw away.

## SELECTIONS.

—It would seem impossible that deaf-mutes could be taught to sing; yet this is what M. Rota, a professor of music at Trieste, has done. Recently they have given a public exhibition in Paris, and they sang not only in perfect time, but preserved the pitch, which was mysteriously conveyed to them by their teacher.

—Prof. Capen, of the Cortland Normal School, says that it is a popular fallacy that the pale faces and broken down constitutions found in our schools are due to hard study. He adds: "If the habits of life of these so-called hard-workers could be traced, it would be found that late hours, unventilated sleeping rooms, lack of exercise, exposure, rich food or food that is poorly or unwisely cooked, fast eating, and the like, are the direct and the efficient causes of their poor state of health."

—That plaything which is least definite in its form and limited in its application, will prove best adapted to the child's intellectual development. Jean Paul recommends clean sand as an excellent means for the proper amusement of young children. That substance, assuming the most homogeneous forms and properties in the imagination, is regarded as "building material, as projectile, as a cascade, water for washing, seed, flour, as inlaid work, and raised work, as a ground for writing and painting." Hence a box with building-blocks is preferable to the most beautiful representation of a mine, since the latter, after a close examination, preserves its features and offers no new points of perception to the mind; while the former admits numerous variations and combinations, which may become even more complicated and original, and thus keep pace with the growing intellect.—*Education Journal.*

—"What one point did that superintendent try to impress on his school in his twenty-minutes' talk?" was a question which one visitor might have asked of another as the two came away from a Sunday-school room. "I am sure I don't know," would have been the only fitting answer. "Then what was the good of the address?" "There again I can't answer you," would have closed comment on that service. If a superintendent takes the time of a school in the closing minutes of its session, he ought to have clearly in his mind the one truth he would impress on the minds of his scholars. Then his every word should tend to the point he would emphasize. It is a small matter that the superintendent makes an address. It is a great matter that the scholars leave the room with one precious thought, one profitable impression, as the result of a superintendent's address.—*S. S. Times.*

RECORDING PRAYER.—Mr. George Miller says: "I would particularly advise all, but especially the younger believers, to use a little book, in which they may note down on the one side the requests which they bring before God. There are certain matters which God has laid on our hearts, and we should note them down. It would be helpful to us to write, 'At such-and-such a time I began to pray for such-and-such a thing;' and then to continue to pray with regard to this matter. If we do so, we shall find that sooner or later the prayer will be answered. Then let us mark on the opposite side, that it has, at such a time, pleased God to answer that prayer. After some time, read over the memorandum-book, and you will find how again and again it has pleased God to answer your prayers—and perhaps regarding matters about which you little expected the answer to come; and soon you will find the wondrous effect of this on your heart, in increasing your love and gratitude to our heavenly Father. The more careful you are in marking what you ask, and what God has given, the more distinctly you will be able to trace how again and again it pleased God to answer your prayers, and more, you will be drawn out to God in love and gratitude. You will find precisely as the Psalmist found it when he says, 'I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.'"