



## The Family Circle.

### SHEPHERD SONG.

[From the German of Uhland.]

BY MARY E. ATKINSON.

O winter, tiresome winter,  
Thou makest the world so small!  
Thou shuttest us up in the valley,  
In the house imprisonest all.

And if I ever go over  
My fair-haired love to see,  
Scarce through the narrow window  
Can she catch a glimpse of me.

If I pluck up courage and venture  
In at the cottage door,  
She sits between father and mother,  
Nor lifts her eyes from the floor.

O summer, beautiful summer,  
Thou makest the world so wide!  
As we climb the grassy mountain  
It broadens on every side.

And if on the cliff you are standing,  
My sweetheart dear and true,  
I call, and the echo repeats it,  
Yet nobody hears but you.

And if close in my arms I hold you,  
On the glad, free mountain height,  
Nobody sees us, darling,  
Though the world is all in sight.

—Christian Union.

### A TRIFLE SAVED.

Jane and Edward Rands have been married some years, but when they commenced house-keeping Edward's means were very small, for he received but a moderate salary as a clerk; and his wife had to tax all her powers in making both ends meet.

Like those of other people, the Rands' expenses have increased; yet, by observing the golden rule of never having anything unless they could pay for it, they have kept out of debt.

It is half-past four o'clock, and Mrs. Rands, who has been spending an hour with a sick neighbor, folds her work and hastens to get tea for her husband and children.

At the close of the day when the little ones go tired but happily to bed, the husband and wife sit down for a quiet chat.

It is the hour that Edward and Jane prize most of all; in this hour the broad-winner confides to his helpmeet all the little anxieties and hopes connected with his business life; and Jane encourages and sympathizes with the toiler in her own quiet way.

"Mr. Hudson has promised me a rise at Christmas," says Edward.

Jane smiles as she answers, "That is something pleasant to look forward to."

"I was wondering, my dear," continues her husband, "if, in any way, we could squeeze out enough money to buy you your long-wished-for sewing machine?"

Jane shook her head as she answered, "I think not, it would straiten us too much—we must wait a bit longer."

But as she spoke a tiny smile curled the corners of her mouth—as if a pleasant thought was running through her mind—and she sent a quick glance at her husband which said as plainly as possible,

"Ah! I have my little secret about that," but the smile died away as she asked anxiously: "What is the matter?"

Edward Rands was sitting with knitted brows and cloudy face. His wife's voice roused him, and with an attempt at ease he said,

"Matter? nothing; I was thinking of something I did to-day, I may as well tell you, for there should be no secrets between husband and wife."

"What is it, dear?" she questioned quietly. Edward shifted his position uneasily before he began.

"Well, I did something out of my usual line to oblige a friend. As I was going along Fenchurch street, I met James Cox; you know he's a very old friend, we were boys together; we had a chat, and, to make a long story short, he's in a little trouble and wanted to raise some money. He and his wife have been living too fast, I'm afraid."

"He wanted to borrow of you?" interrupted Jane, anxiously.

"Oh no, dear! he only wanted me to become a security for him for ten pounds, a mere matter of form, he said, just to put my name to a bill; he'll pay it when it's due, and then he will have the money."

"And did you?—have you?" enquired Jane, breathlessly.

"Well—yes, dear—he is such an old friend I couldn't say No."

Jane spoke not a word of reproach, but the look of care and trouble that settled on her face caused her husband some pain; but what was done could not be undone, so he tried to make the best of it.

"It will be all right," said Edward, cheerfully "I wouldn't have had anything to do with it if I had thought otherwise."

"No, of course not."  
But though Jane kept her fears to herself, her husband knew they were there, and he longed to take her to task for all her dismal thoughts.

"Though it will be no laughing matter if James does not take it up," he thought to himself; "where to turn for the money I shouldn't know."

Jane's face became graver and graver as the time for payment drew near. She had heard of similar cases where those who had become security had been let in for the amount, and whose homes, in consequence, had been broken up.

The night before the bill was due Edward was a little excited and irritable, and Jane had to tax her every power in soothing, and in making things appear as smoothly as usual.

"Good-bye, dear!" said Edward next morning, as he stopped to give his wife her usual kiss, "make the most of your fears to-day," he added gaily, "for to-night I hope they will all vanish."

Jane tried to smile as she breathed fervently, "Ah!—I hope so."

The day lagged! How Jane trusted and hoped!

"Hasn't father come home yet?" and a little wondering face pushed open the parlor door.

"No, dear; but tell Jane and Nellie to come in to tea; we won't wait any longer; father's late to-night."

The voice was very gentle, and the children little guessed the load of anxiety that their mother was suffering.

Tea over, the children soon went to bed, and Jane's fears increased with every hour.

"At last!" she said, as she heard his well-known step coming up the gravel-walk—his step certainly, though much heavier than usual.

Jane's fears were confirmed when her husband walked past her; and sitting down—without noticing the cosy little tea that was prepared for him—he covered his face with his hand as he murmured—

"I'm let in for it, Jane—they've come upon me for the money! and I've not got it, you know—I've not got it!"

Removing his hand, he disclosed two haggard-looking eyes.

Jane placed her arm soothingly round his shoulder as she said in soft tones—

"Don't afflict yourself, Edward, dear, for you did it out of kindness."

"Kindness!" he repeated, impatiently; "call it weakness! Is it kind to beggar you and the children for the sake of another who has no claim upon me?"

"We shall not be beggars," she answered softly.

"No, true; not as long as I can work for you! But what is to be done, Jane? the money must be paid! There is but one way—"

he stopped and looked anxiously into his wife's face.

"What is that, dear?"

He hesitated. He knew how proud Jane was of her home, and he guessed the pain that the sacrifice he was about to suggest would cost her.

"The only way to get out of this trouble is by selling a part of our home."

Jane's face flashed, but her husband continued firmly,

"If the sum had been heavier all must have gone; but, as it is, a part will satisfy the demands! Can you make this sacrifice, Jane?"

As he spoke he stood up; and placing his hands on his wife's shoulders, looked searchingly into her eyes.

For the moment there was silence; for one moment Edward was kept in suspense as to whether he should find his wife the willing help-meet he calculated on or no.

Then, while the light brightened in Jane's eyes, and with the sweetest of smiles on her lips, she answered,

"Quite willing, dear husband, to do that, and much more for your sake, if necessary; but it's not necessary—it's not necessary at all, dear Edward!" she repeated warmly; and slipping her hand into her pocket, she pulled out a little red bag, and holding it up before his astonished eyes, continued, "there's the money; so the house need not go; and it's all for you, dear Edward!" but the last words ended with a little sob; tears of joy coursed down her cheek as she laid her head on her husband's shoulder and received his fond caresses.

"But I can't understand it, Jane!" he exclaimed, in bewilderment; "there's some mistake!"

"No mistake," she answered; and taking the little bag from his hand she emptied its contents; then and there, on the table, lay ten golden sovereigns. And while her husband looked from her to the gold, and from the gold to her, she knelt in front of him, and told the history of the yellow shiners.

"I didn't get them all at once, you know. They have been the savings of years. The first one was my marriage gift from dear father, 'the foundation of a nest egg,' he called it; the rest came by slow degrees. Out of the weekly money you allow I have always been able to put by a trifle. As long as we could live within our income, I've always considered ourselves rich. Then, instead of having my beer twice a day, I only take it at supper; so I have the penny at dinner. That, done for years, has mounted up. Then, by management, I've made one gown last the time of two."

"And yet you always look well dressed?" interrupted her husband, admiringly.

"Yes; thanks to dear mother's careful teaching, I'm able to twist and turn to advantage."

"And to save to advantage," added Edward, as he pressed a loving kiss on her cheek. "But for what were you saving this?" he questioned earnestly.

"For whatever was wanted with it," she answered, with a laugh. Then, as she saw her husband read her secret, she added, "Well, I have two pounds left now towards the sewing-machine, for I had saved twelve pounds; so the nest is not empty yet."

The loving look that accompanied the words satisfied Edward that at no sacrifice would his wife stop where his peace of mind was concerned; and not one thought of regret did Jane send after her sewing-machine; only too thankful did she feel in having the means to supply the present want.

As Edward sat enjoying his cosy tea, he felt that his wife was a treasure indeed, and he firmly resolved never to hazard her peace of mind by again lacking the moral courage to say "No" to a friend.—*Susie, in British Workwoman.*

### THE CALL TO PRAYER.

BY THE REV. E. E. ROGERS.

"Thus saith the Lord God: I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock" (Ezekiel 36: 37).

Thus God builds up his church. He might work independently; but he chooses not to do it. He is, doubtless, able to dispense the treasures of his grace, and send his Spirit to work mightily in unregenerate hearts, without the intercessions of his people; but he has chosen to connect the praying of the church with the salvation of the world. The redeeming Christ says to his people, "Share with me, in your measure, my vicarious work; travail in birth for souls; go down into your Gethsemane and bear your burden; blend the agony of your yearning for a world's deliverance with mine."

He calls his people to prayer. As the upper-room and Pentecost were united, so now the pleading of a million closets, and the united supplications of ten thousand prayer-meetings must be connected with great victories for our Zion. I want to breathe into every pastor's ear the hint that Moody has no monopoly of salvation. All the machinery of salvation and the means of converting power are at your command. But the power, the power itself, is the Lord's. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Hide not the fact, evade it not; we want the baptism of the Holy Spirit for ourselves, and our people need it, as the thirsty fields of summer need the rain.

Let us take the promise, and, boldly, importunately, plead it: "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?" How many are saying, "We must have a revival this winter?" How many fathers and mothers in Israel are mourning over the spiritual death which has prevailed so long? When shall the change begin? How shall the longed-for work of grace be secured? The most convenient answers are, "Send for Moody;" "Send for Hammond;" "Send for Earle."

"Ah, brethren, let me say it reverently, send for the Holy Spirit. Date and subscribe to the message, with tears, in your closet; and be sure that the message is endorsed by the name of Jesus Christ, and that the plea is made in his name. We are so prone to run hither and thither for help, and fall back on an arm of flesh. Preaching is impotent till the Holy Spirit makes it potent. Our most fervent appeals are utterly powerless, until the Holy Spirit uses them.

Much we need the old-time converting power. Then skepticism will vanish, the ball-room will be deserted, and the place of prayer will be full; apathy and carelessness will give place to intense anxiety about the soul's salvation; tears will bedew the cheeks,

and the cry for mercy will break from the lips. Oh, for converting power! Let the call go forth, with a pathetic, heart-breaking earnestness, never known by Moslem tongue: "To prayer!" "To prayer!"—*S. S. Times.*

### "IS THAT ALL?"

BY REV. FREDERICK G. CLARK, D.D.

Mrs. A—, twenty years ago, was before the session of our church to express her faith in Christ. Her husband, a respectable cartman, had accompanied her to the place as a gentleman should. He was a little surprised when I said to him, "Come in with her; you are very welcome, and hear what is said." He came into the room where the session were sitting. His wife answered a few simple questions which the pastor put to her. There was nothing answering to the formidable term "examination" which has scared off so many humble people from the communion—a word which I never apply to this business. The substance of the interview was simply that this lady, conscious of her need of Christ, did heartily accept Him as her divine Saviour, to love, trust and obey. On this confession she was received to the church. Immediately her husband showed great emotion, and said, with tears and broken utterance,

"Is that all? Why can't I come too? I love God, and pray to Him every day on my cart!"

The surprise was universal; tears came in every eye. The husband's name was enrolled by the side of his wife's, and they sat together at the next communion.

The test of a score of years justified this transaction. I have no memory more fresh and pleasant than that of this godly family. They were poor and humble. But for quiet earnest, clean and godly living, I know nothing to exceed that of the home of Mr. A. He has lately gone to join the holy throng above.

My conviction is that there is to-day many an Ethiopian eunuch reading Esaias the prophet.—Yes, reading the very story of the "Lamb dumb before his shearer," yet needing a Philip to interpret the reading and preach unto him Jesus. There is many a person in every congregation, hungry and weary for Christ, but not knowing how near that Christ is to him. Many a Mary weeps and asks for her Lord, who in a moment would shout "Rabboni," if her eyes could be opened.

Many a man of business, convinced of the emptiness of this world, would be only too glad to exclaim—"Is that all?"—and to follow Jesus in the way, if we could free the Gospel of ceremonies in which our philosophy has entombed it. Explain it as we can, the door of the Kingdom is beset with ghostly forms of superstition and ceremony, besides the real hindrances of an unwilling mind. The greatest teacher is he who can drive off these ghosts and meet realities on their own ground. He who shall bring in the largest sheaf in the coming harvest, is very likely that one who shall be wise enough to ask of every man what Christ asks, and nothing more.

I believe there is great ripeness in our congregations. The full blaze of Christian instruction has quickened many a heart. The problem is, with God's help, to persuade men how accessible Christ is, and how simple are the elements of Christian faith.—*N. Y. Observer.*

### SAVINGS BANKS IN SCHOOLS.

In the autumn of 1866 M. Laurent, professor of Civil Law in the University of Ghent, Belgium, proposed to some of the teachers of the public schools of that city the establishment of savings banks in the schools, with a view of promoting among the children, and more particularly those of the poorer class, habits of economy that would be likely to improve their position in after life. Some objections were raised, but successfully combated, and it was resolved soon after to make the trial, and in 1869 two of the communal schools were furnished with the necessary material by the city council. The result has been eminently successful; and at the present day, of the 15,000 scholars who frequent the public schools of that city, more than 13,000 who commenced by their savings bank at the school, have succeeded in getting to themselves accounts open at the savings banks of the State, with the very respectable sum of 463,064 francs, nearly \$90,000, at their credit, all or mostly all collected by penny contributions at school. At the commencement of this enterprise it was viewed with an evil eye by many of the parents of the children; but the young people soon converted their elders; and it is considered one of the most gratifying consequences of this movement that not only the young are encouraged in forming habits of frugality and economy, but the parents and relatives of the children are induced to become depositors at the savings bank, instead of spending, as before, all that they earned, without thought for the future. In the city of Ghent, itself, the progress in this