

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

AMEN.

BY F. G. BROWNING.

Beneath the pressure of life's cares to-day, I sit in tears; But I can say That I had rather walk this rugged way, If Him it please. I cannot feel That all is well, when dark'ning clouds conceal The shining sun; But then, I know God lives and loves; and say, since it is so, Thy will be done. I cannot speak In happy tones; the tear drops on my cheek Show I am sad; But I can speak Of grace's suffer with submission meek, Until made glad. I do not see Why God should let me permit some things to be, When He is love; But I can see, Tho' often dimly, through the mystery, His hand above! I do not know Where He sits, that I have tried to sow With greatest care; But I shall know The meaning of each waiting-hour below, Sometime, somewhere! I do not look Upon the present, nor in Nature's book, To read my fate; But I do look For promised blessings in God's Holy Book; And I can wait. I may not try To keep the heart from back—but hush that sigh, It might have been? And try to will. Each rising morn, and to God's sweet will Respond. Amen.

LOST! AND SO NEAR HOME!

BY RUTH ELIOT.

"Lost! and so near home!" was the agonized cry of the poor wife on hearing that the husband whose return she was hourly expecting had sunk beneath the raging waves. Nobly had the gallant vessel breast-ed the fierce storms of the mighty ocean, and safely passed through its many dangers. Already were the crew looking forward to a speedy reunion with their loved ones, when, close to their native land—in sight of its peaceful shores—the Royal Charter sank, and all hands perished. Lost! and so near home! The cry rang through the land, and many a heart bled for the mourners. Husbands, fathers, brothers, sons, all lost! and so near home! A lady was walking down a narrow street to visit a sick woman. It was a close, sultry evening, and the doors of the low, dirty houses, on either side of the way, were thrown wide open to admit any fresh air that might chance to find its way among those stifling habitations of poverty. At one of these doors, a poor unhappy-looking woman stood watching, and as she saw the lady approach, stepped eagerly forward saying, "If you please ma'am, will you come in and see my husband?" "Is he ill?" asked the lady. "Yes, ma'am, he's very ill; he can't live much longer, the doctor says. He's been ailing for many months now." "Does he know how ill he is? Is he ready to die?" "Well, no, ma'am, that he ain't, and he takes on dreadful. He knows he's going to die, but he's been such a bad man all his life, that he says there's no hope for him. If you will come in and speak a few words to him, ma'am, I'm sure I'd take it very kind of you." The lady entered the house and mounted the steep ladder which led to the room above. A haggard, gray-haired old man raised himself in bed as she came in, and, gazing wildly at her, demanded her business there. "I have come to talk to you of Jesus," replied the lady gently. "Jesus! I've got nought to do with Him—it's no use talking to me about Him." "But do you not wish to have something to do with Him? Is he not the very Friend you most need?" "It is no use talking about Him, I tell you; He'll have nought to do with me." "But have you ever asked Him?" "Asked Him? yes, many a time; but it's no use now, my time is past." "Jesus can save even at the eleventh hour," said the lady quietly. "I know He can, but He won't. I might have been saved years ago, but I wouldn't then and now it is too late." "It was not too late for the thief on the cross." "No, and he was a bad 'un, no doubt, or he wouldn't ha' been there; but most like he had never heard of the Saviour afore, and I have heard of Him ever since I was a boy. Now, I've been a great sinner, and now the Lord will have nought to do with me." "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," said his visitor earnestly. "It is for just such sinners as you those words were written. The Lord is full of mercy toward

them who truly repent. Jesus, the sinner's Friend, gave His own life for yours; He is come to declare the love of God to us. It is not too late to ask Him to pardon your sins." "Do you know what sort of a man I've been, ma'am?" asked the old man, turning his bloodshot eyes full upon her. "I know that you have broken many of God's laws, and that you have sinned against light and knowledge, but I know also that Jesus is able to save to the uttermost." "Ma'am, I've been a drunkard, a Sabbath-breaker, and a swearer. I have been a cruel husband and a bad father, and now I am lost! It is no use talking to me any more, for I know I am lost!" The strange emphasis on the last words impressed the lady forcibly. He seemed to speak from certain knowledge rather than belief, and she wondered what he meant. "How do you know?" she asked at length; and the old man trembled with excitement. "How do I know?" he cried. "How do I know? Why, they come and tell me! They come to the bottom of the stairs when she is out and I am all alone, and call out, 'Lost! lost! lost!' Three times they say it, always three times—'Lost! lost! lost!'" He shrieked out the words, raising himself on his elbow and pointing wildly to the stairs, while great drops of perspiration rolled down his face. In vain his visitor spoke of the Saviour's loving-kindness and tender mercy. "I was nearly saved once, but it's too late now," was his only reply; and a length she left him. It was no use talking, no use praying, for he paid no attention. His brain was evidently affected by his agony of mind and body. O, sad, sad sight! A hoary head descending to the grave covered with the sins of years! No hope for the future, no joyous looking forward to a glorious resurrection; and yet he was nearly saved once! He had nearly closed in with God's offers of mercy, nearly obtained forgiveness for the guilty past, but only nearly, not quite. And now "Lost! lost! lost!" was the cry ever echoing in his ears, unheard by others, but as real to him as if issuing from human lips. Across the ocean there rings a constant cry, "Send over the Gospel, for the heathen are dying around us, and they know not the Saviour!" and our hearts are ever ready to respond to the appeal. But sad as is that cry, there is a sadder one nearer home, "Lost, and I was nearly saved once!" It is hard to think of the heathen dying in ignorance of Christ and His salvation, but it is infinitely worse for the man who knows what he has lost; who has read and heard of the golden city—the many mansions—the beautiful home prepared for God's people. Infinitely worse is it to die in sight of the fatherland than out in mid-ocean with no knowledge of its peaceful shores. Surely if there be one thought sadder than any other to the lost sinner it must be this, "I was nearly saved once!" This is no fancy sketch, it is true. As that old man lay on his miserable bed during the solitary hours, those strange voices came to haunt him with the mournful cry, "Lost! lost! lost!" He had neglected the many offers of mercy, refused to hearken to the voice of Jesus, and on his death-bed he found himself alone, or worse than alone, for was not his master with him? O, fatal error to put off seeking salvation! Wesleyan Conference Office Tract.

OUR LITERATURE.

John Wesley was anxious that "the people called Methodists" should not be an embodiment of ignorant piety. He wrote for the people. He was one of the first, if not the first, to attempt to popularize literature. He led the way "in those praiseworthy efforts which were made to diffuse useful information of every kind, and to smooth the path of knowledge to the middle and lower ranks of society." He was a voluminous writer, and not merely on theological subjects. He published books on various branches of science, grammars in five different languages, histories both civil and ecclesiastical. The early Methodist preachers traveling round their extensive circuits had their saddle-bags well stocked with useful books, which they sold to the members of society. In those days of theological strife the Methodists used to sharpen their sword-blades by reading Wesley's and Fletcher's polemical works, and refreshed their spirits, and added to their stores of information, by reading the biographical sketches, the sermons, and the other varied contents of the *Arminian Magazine*. We hope that the Methodist people in Victoria are readers; but we fear that very

many of them have very little acquaintance with Methodist literature. There are those in all our colonial circuits to whom Methodism is the Church of their choice, although it was not the Church of their fathers. There is no one in their homes who can tell them of what they heard in the fatherland from the lips of those who were contemporary with John Wesley—John Nelson, Joseph Benson, Adam Clarke, Samuel Bradburn, and the other mental and spiritual giants who lived in those days. Many of our young men and women are growing up, and they have not read a life of John Wesley or a history of Methodism. They have not had their hearts stirred, or their ambition excited, by reading the lives of those "heroes of the Holy Ghost," the early Methodist preachers. They are urged to follow in the footsteps of the saint-like Bramwell and Stoner, Carvoso and John Smith, Mrs. Mortimer and Hester Ann Rogers. But these are "names and nothing more," to many who have been taught in our Sunday-schools, and who have been converted through Methodist instrumentality. It would do the younger Methodists of our generation both mental and spiritual good to make themselves familiar with the biographical, historical, and theological works of our own Church. Stevens' histories of Methodism in England and the Methodist Episcopal Church in America read like a romance. Thomas Jackson's *Early Methodist Preachers* contains the biographies of many men like John Nelson, of whom Robert Southey said that "he had as high a spirit and as brave a heart as ever Englishman was blessed with." Richard Watson's and Jabez Bunting's sermons take front rank among the sermonic literature of the English language. The theological works of Wesley and Fletcher, Watson and Pope do not suffer by comparison in their keen analysis, their clearness of statement, their logical completeness with those of the theologians of any church. The biographical department of the literature of our Church is especially rich, and no true Christian can read the lives of the godly men and saintly women who have lived well and died well without being stimulated to follow them, even as they also followed Christ. We believe that, were our people generally to resolve to read Methodist literature, the result, under God, would be a heightening of the spiritual life of our churches, and the bringing about of a genuine revival of religion.—*Spectator and Methodist Chronicle, Australia.*

A DYING VISION.

John Pope, pupil of Couture, associate of the New York National Academy, one of the founders of the Artists' Fund Society and an enthusiast in his profession, died at his home in Fourth avenue, says the "Sun," on Wednesday night, believing that at last after forty years of labor, he had found the secret of perfected art. A man more thoroughly enraptured with his calling never lived. He painted while daylight lasted, and then spent the evening in producing the crayon drawings so much admired in the exhibitions at the Academy of Design. Though as a portrait painter he excelled, the dream of his life was to produce strong figure pictures, in which the background of landscape would form as effective a part as the figures themselves. This was his ruling passion in life, and as he neared the end the passion grew stronger. On Wednesday evening, as he lay back on his pillows, very weak and ill with hemorrhage of the lungs, his wife, who with their two children was watching at his side, was startled by his suddenly rising in bed and crying feverishly: "Quick! give me my palette and brush. I must paint. Don't attempt to stop me now, for at last I see it all. I can do it now, for I have just discovered the art, through the influence of visions of exquisitely graduated music. It is plain as day at last." His wife, alarmed at his excitement, made a weak attempt to dissuade him, but as opposition only increased his excitement and it was evident that his end was very near, she humored him. His palette, brushes and canvas were brought to him, and his tented relatives arranged the coverings of the bed so that they would look more like the drapery of his studio. He began his work with a haste amounting almost to frenzy. "At last, at last," he cried, "I have found the beauty which all my life and over all the world I have been struggling for." He painted faster, and faster, evidently believing that the canvas would show the beauty that he conceived, although it was in truth a sad realization of the conception. It was late in the day when he began his last bed picture. It grew

darker and darker as he went on, and his sorrowing family sat around him powerless to ease his last moments. At last it grew so dark that even he in his excitement noticed it. "Let us go to the studio," he cried, suddenly. "No, no; not to-night. Wait until to-morrow." "We must go to the studio," he exclaimed, making an effort to rise to his feet. The tax upon his strength was too great; without another word he fell back on his pillows dead.—*Christian Union.*

IT WON'T HURT YOU.

"Liquor won't hurt you if you'll let it alone," said one, with a sneer, to another who was making a strong fight to have it kept out of the town by law. "You needn't meddle with it. If others take it that is their lookout." "But liquor does hurt thousands who let it alone, who hate it utterly and never set foot in a saloon." "I should like your evidence," said the other, a little puzzled. "Just step around the corner into Mrs. Watson's house—a pretty little house, but it will not be hers much longer. The rum-seller has it in his grip; I hear she must move out next week. Watson is working on his new veranda, which is to run around three sides of the tavern, to pay up another liquor bill, while his wife and children are starving. They never touch liquor, but it has hurt them. I can pick out twenty families in this little place where it has done its mischief, more or less, and it is so the world over. Every man that drinks involves others with him. Those that let it alone have to suffer. Probably five sufferers to each drunkard would be stating it very low. Now, I mean to work hard and fight hard, if need be, for those who have no helper; and if the law can be made to help them, well and good." Our boys are to be our future lawmakers. Let them be well established in temperance legislation. Let them look on liquor license just as they would on a stealing license or a license to commit murder. All these and far more are included in every permit to sell rum.—*Youth's Temperance Banner.*

A REMARKABLE INCIDENT.

A remarkable and curious fact, recently authentic, has recently been brought to my knowledge. Names and places are, of course, suppressed, as the parties directly interested would shrink from any publicity. The son of a widowed mother grew up to be a brilliant, promising, but reckless young man. That is to say, he was talented, popular and successful, as the world goes, but was unrestrained by any regard to moral principle. He was gay, dashing, and ready for anything in the way of the wildest frolics. Thoughtful friends could not fail to see that the conclusion of all this was almost certain to be a brief career, closing in dissipation and a hopeless end. For several years this course was run, and his reputation as an exceedingly clever but "fast" young fellow had come to be well established. All this time his mother's prayers had gone up with unceasing importunity before the throne of God. There they were, a mighty host, pleading for the deliverance and salvation of her son. One day, the young man, walked into the noon prayer-meeting of the city where he lived and was well known. There had been nothing, up to the moment, to indicate any change in his course, and his presence was a matter of curious wonder. At last he rose, and all eyes were turned upon him. He alluded to his past life, which he said he was well aware was perfectly familiar to them all. He stated that he had had enough of it. He had pondered it all within the preceding twenty-four hours, and had determined to face squarely about. Henceforth he proposed to cast in his lot on the Lord's side. He had come to the conclusion, deliberately, and now he wanted the prayers of all, that he might be aided in carrying out his new born determination. It may well be imagined what an effect was produced upon that meeting by this frank and manly avowal of one whose course had been so unpromising up to that moment. But now comes the remarkable part of this narration. His mother was in another city, miles away. As she sat down at the dinner table that very hour, she remarked: "I have no longer any concern about ——. I do not know whether he is converted, and so my prayers are answered, or whether he is irrevocably doomed to be lost from this time forth, so that I cannot do anything to save him. I know the load on my heart which I have car-

ried so long is all gone, and I am at perfect rest." The story I have told is strictly true. Do we get a glimpse in it of "ministering spirits," sent forth unto "the heirs of salvation," and catch a hint of one of the offices which they sometimes perform?—*Congregationalist.*

SINGING AT HOME.

Urge Sunday-school men over all this nation to have the children carry home their song books and sing at home. Churches and Sunday-schools lock up their hymn-books six days out of seven, and the result is, very little is being done for home. One singing would be so much better on Sunday—if the children sang and played the hymns and tunes at home. I think that was the reason why we had such splendid singing at Baltimore. Bands and hand-organs were playing the tunes, and boys were whistling them on the street, and you could hear the songs on nearly every street you passed through. But the singing is getting flat again all over the country in the churches. There is hardly a church in them that sings well—the singers are all gone up to the organ-loft, and many of them unconverted. Now for the objection that will be raised that the children will carry the books home and forget to bring them back. The way to meet that is to let all the children buy their books. They are not so poor that they can do that. Or let the school pay for one half, and let the scholar pay for the other half. Then the scholar will own his book and will take good care of it. Let the superintendent urge the scholars to bring their books with them. Let the school keep a few for visitors, and those who forget to bring their books. In this way inside of six months we will have better singing by far than we have ever had in this country. There is no trouble in getting the people to get a book if we speak to them about it. We are trying this plan in our Chicago school and it works. It can't help it.—*D. L. Moody.*

A NOBLE OFFERING.

The Superintendent of one of the street-car railways leading out of New York into the country, told a touching story to a friend the other day which found its way into a city paper. Sitting alone in his office one day, a strange gentleman entered, who proved to be an officer in the army. He carried a little box in his hand. After some hesitation, he said, conquering great agitation: "I have a favor to ask you. I had a little boy, and I've lost him. He was all the world to me. When he was alive my wife used to search my pockets every night, and whatever loose change she found, she would put away for the baby. Well, he's gone. Here is the box. We talked the matter over, and came to the conclusion we could not do better than to bring the money to you to pay the fares of poor, sick children out of town during the summer. It would please him to know that he is helping to save the lives of other poor children. As soon as the box is empty we will fill it. While we live we will keep up the bank." The box had been twice emptied and filled, and hundreds of sick or dying children have owed to this dead baby their one breath of fresh air this Summer. How much more tender and true is such a memorial of the beloved dead, than a pretentious monument, or even a painted church-window, beautiful though they be! In England it is a frequent practice to build and furnish a life-saving station on the coast, in remembrance of a friend who is gone, and, in this country, memorial beds in hospitals are becoming a usual way of keeping in memory those we have lost. Surely if the dead can look back on earth they are better pleased to know that kind living deeds are done in their names, than to see them emblazoned on cold stone in forgotten grave-yards.

OUR YOUNG POLES.

SUGAR.

Probably there is no reader of our paper but has something of a fondness for sugar. No boy or girl however young or old, that has not a well developed "sugar tooth," and it may not be uninteresting to know something of the history of this article, for indeed it has a history, reaching far into the past. The sugar cane is a native of China, and seems to have been cultivated there and in India from the earliest times. The ancient Jews, Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians had so little intercourse with these nations that little or nothing of it was known to them. It was taken from India into Arabia by some Arabian

navigators. Here it was used as a medicine, and supposed by them to be a kind of honey, which exuded from canes and reeds. From Arabia it was taken into Northern Africa, and from thence by the Moors into Spain. After this the Spaniards and Portuguese planted it in the Canary and Madeira islands, and from thence it found its way into Brazil and the West Indies; but so little was known of it that, as late as thirty years before the discovery of America by Columbus, it was used in Europe only as a medicine under the name of "Indian salt," and was brought from the East as costly spices were. It did not come into general demand until after tea and coffee were introduced into Europe. The first direct-shipment of tea to England was nearly fifty years after the landing of the Pilgrims. So we see that sugar could have been very little used during the early times of our country. The process of making loaf sugar was discovered by the Venetians less than four hundred years ago, and does not seem to have been known by the Chinese. Before this discovery brown sugars were the only kind known. The way in which sugar is made perfectly white was found out in a very curious manner. A hen that had gone through a clay mud-puddle, went with her muddy feet into the sugar house. It was observed that wherever her tracks were, the sugar was made white. This led to some experiments, and over since clay has been used to refine sugar. As Miss Biddy went tracking through the sugar-house, she little thought what results were to follow. There are several other processes of refining sugar which are regarded as objectionable on account of poisons used, more or less of which, it is said, is left in the sugar. We fear this is too true, though we are assured by the author of the article on sugar, found in Johnson's Cyclopaedia, that he has examined a great number and variety of sugars, sold at retail in New York, and has never found an adulterated or unwholesome specimen, and tells us there is no foundation whatever for this belief; so if this author be correct, we sugar lovers need not yet, for fear of being poisoned, banish our favorite. Most people regard sugar as nutritious, but Leiberg and Dr. Edward Smith declare it only an element of respiration, and that actual experiment proves that animals fed alone on it will starve to death; though when used with other food it has a tendency to produce fat. It is readily digested by healthy stomachs, but dyspeptics need beware. There are other articles from which it is made beside the sugar cane, as dates, figs, palms, beets, sweet potatoes, Indian corn, and even pumpkins and melons; but the most delicious sweet of all is made from our own maple, and no nicer times do our boys and girls have than at the old-fashioned "sugaring off times." Sugar is found in almost all vegetable food, especially fruit, and Dr. E. Smith says it is so necessary, that the starch, which abounds so largely in our vegetable food, is transformed into sugar in its course of chemical change within the body. Sugar is also contained in milk, and that which causes our milk to sour is, simply the sugar being changed into acid.—*Northwestern Advocate.*

HERE I AM.

A lawyer had a cage hanging on the wall in his office in which was a starling. He had taught the little fellow to answer when he called it. A boy named Charlie came in one morning. The lawyer left the boy there while he went out for a few minutes. When he returned the bird was gone. He asked, "Where is my bird?" Charlie replied that he did not know anything about it. "But," said the gentleman, "Charlie, that bird was in the cage when I went out. Now tell me all about it; where is it?" Charlie declared that he knew nothing about it; that the cage door was open, and he guessed the bird had flown out. The lawyer called, "Starling, where are you?" The bird spoke right out of the boy's pocket, and said just as plain as it could, "Here I am!" Ah, what a fix that boy was in! He had stolen the bird, and hid it, as he supposed, in a safe place, and had told two lies to conceal his guilt. It was testimony that all the world would believe. The boy had nothing to say. The bird was a living witness that he was a thief and a liar. We have not all of us—a starling, but we have a conscience—not in our pocket, but in a more secure place—in our soul; and that tells the story of our guilt or our innocence. As the bird answered when the lawyer called it, so when God speaks our conscience will reply, and give such testimony as we cannot deny or explain away.

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