

Patchwork.

Is an ancient eastern city dwell a king of
wondrous power,
Whose domain was far extending and whose
wealth grew hour by hour,
Till he planned to build a temple like the
wise old king of yore,
That his fame might be eternal, and might
sound from shore to shore

So with gold and gems and ear-rings
They built up the arches high,
But could find no painted window
That could please the monarch's eye;
And a solemn proclamation
Was re-echoed far and wide
By his own right-royal heralds,
And by prince and lord beside.

"Know ye," said the solemn message,
"Tis the king's most gracious will
That a great reward be offered
For the painter of most skill;
And whoever makes a window
Most fitted in design
Shall receive a crown and kingdom
Which shall descend to mine."

So from all those wide dominions
Came the artists, one by one,
And they worked with care unceasing,
Till the windows all were done,
And were lifted to their places
In among the arches tall,
For the king to give his judgment
Which was grandest of them all.

But they had not counted rightly:
There was still one empty space,
And there was no time to purchase
A new window for the place,
When some one of them remembered
A poor workman who, in fear,
Had begged the coloured pieces
Of the crystal lying near;

And by patient cutting, fitting,
Using up each fragment small,
He had made a patchwork window
That was plainest of them all;
And its many-coloured figures—
Every shape and size and style—
Made the workmen jeer and cavil,
Made the skillful artists smile.

But it must be used one evening,
And amid so much beside
It would simply pass unnoticed
Till its place could be supplied;
So they set it, like the others,
In its frame of carvings rare—
For the king was then approaching,
And the shouts rang through the air.

On the canvas, in all his glory,
Facing up, on every hand,
At the saints and martyrs' holy;
At the old apostles' band;
At the calm, sweet-faced Madonna,
With her wondrous child and Lord;
And at angels bringing tidings,
With their white wings spread abroad.

But before the patchwork window
Paused the king in great amazement,
For the setting sun was shining,
With a rare and ruddy blaze
Through the scarred and criss-cross trac-
ing.

And he watched the sunbeams pour
A hundred brilliant rainbows
On the tessellated floor.

While the nave was filled with glory,
And with splendour from on high,
And the people bowed in silence,
For the Lord seemed passing by,
"Bring the artist!" cried the monarch;
"His shall be the crown and gold;"
And the workman, humbly kneeling,
Gained a wealth and power untold.

From the legend, full of meaning,
Shall we not take courage now,
That our work will be accepted,
Though it seems but poor to view?
In our weakness bring no offerings,
Prayer and labour, money, time;
But at best we make but patchwork
When we aim at deeds sublime.

Yet we know that in God's temple
All our work shall find a place,
Though we labour because of our neighbours
Build with greater power and grace;
But when through our patient life work
Shines our heavenly Father's love,
It will glow with matchless beauty,
And be fit for heaven above.

A Genuine Love Story

A YOUNG clergyman and his bride
were invited guests at a large party
given by a wealthy parishioner. In all
the freshness and elegance of her bridal
wardrobe the young wife shone among
the throng distinguished by her comeli-
ness and vivacity and rich attire; and
when during the evening her young
husband drew her aside and whispered
to her that she was the most beautiful
woman in all the company and that his
heart was bursting with pride and love
for her, she thought herself the happiest
wife in the world.

Ten years later the same husband
and wife were guests at the same house
where was gathered a similar gay com-
pany. The wife of ten years wore the
same dress she had worn on the provo-
cative occasion; of course it had been
altered and made over, and was old-
fashioned and almost shabby. Toil and
care and motherhood and pined cir-
cumstances had taken the roses out of
her cheeks and the lithé spring out of
her form. She sat apart from the
crowd, careworn and pre-occupied. Her
small hands, roughened with coarse
toil, were ungloved, for the minister's
salary was painfully small. A little
apart the ten years' husband stood and
looked at his wife, and as he observed
her faded dress and her weary attitude,
a great sense of all her patient, loving,
faithfulness came over his heart. Look-
ing up, she caught his earnest gaze, and
noticed that his eyes were filled with
tears. She rose and went to him, her
questioning eyes mutely asking for an
explanation of his emotion, and when
he tenderly took her hand and placing
it on his arm led her away from the
crowd and told her how he had been
thinking of her as she looked ten years
before when she was a bride, and how
much more precious she was to him
now, and how much more beautiful for
all her shabby dress and roughened
hands, and how he appreciated all her
sacrifice and patient toil for him and
for their children, a great wave of hap-
piness filled her heart; a light shone
in her face that gave it more than its
youthful beauty, and in all the company
there was not so happy a couple as this
husband and wife, their hearts and faces
aglow from the flaming up of pure
sentiment that transfigured and en-
nobled and glorified all the toils and
privation they had endured.—*Exchange.*

Write to Mother.

How long since you have written to
her? How long since the loving mother-
heart in the old house has been glad-
dened by a letter from her boy? Can
you not picture her in your imagination,
as you have often seen her in your boy-
hood, going quietly from room to room
as she cheerfully performs the work of
the house? And how many times, as
she is thus busily employed, does her
mind go out to you each day, and over
and again will she say, "I wonder why
Jimmie doesn't write? It seems so
strange that we don't get a letter from
him."

How many times during the long,
neglectful silence of her absent son does
the live through his sickness and death
among strangers? How the mother-
heart yearns to be with him as she thus
pictures him! So unbounded is her
love for him she thinks nothing less
than death would cause him to neglect
her so.

But Jimmie, in the meantime, has
become so engrossed with business and

pleasure that his mind rarely turns to
his boyhood home.

When he does stop long enough in
his busy career to think of father and
mother, he promises himself that he
will write to them soon. But just the
time to do so seems never to come, and
so the days glide into months, and while
he is enjoying prosperity and happiness
the dear ones at home are in painful
suspense over his silence.

We heard a mother say, recently,
whose boy had been absent for five
years, and had been heard from but
once or twice during the time: "O the
torture that my heart has endured
will never be known. I have watched
and waited during these long years,
hoping that every mail would bring me
tidings of my boy. But the watch has
been in vain. Every time the gate-
latch clicks, or I hear a step on the
garden-walk, my heart leaps into my
throat, for I think it may be Jimmie
coming home."

But a short time after our conversa-
tion a letter came from the wanderer,
saying that he was sick and was coming
home. Ah! but then the strength and
tenderness of the mother was shown.
Not a word of reproach for his long
neglect. The long suspense and anxiety
that he had caused her was forgotten.
It was only joy, joy, and the years of
suffering were completely buried in the
excess of happiness that she felt at see-
ing her boy again.

O what suspense and trouble of mind
the absent sons can save their loving
mothers by frequently giving a few
minutes of time to writing to them.
Only a few minutes to each letter!
But what pleasure that short time will
give in the old home, and how the
mother's heart will lighten at this fre-
quent testimony of her son's thought-
fulness and love.

Her Weakness.

SOME surprising facts concerning the
novelist George Eliot are brought to
the light in the memoir just published
by her husband, Mr. Cross. The plia-
bility with which she yielded to the
influence of others amounted to weak-
ness. In her youth, she was surrounded
by strict members of the Evangelical
dissenting churches, and she was as
orthodox as they in her opinions, and
apparently as devout in her conduct.

She was then thrown into the society
of a clever family of deists, and in two
weeks after the perusal of a book
written by one of them, was induced
to renounce Christianity and all belief
in the immortality of the soul. The
singular part of this change is, that,
judging from her letters, it was made
with careless indifference, as lightly as
she might change her opinion on any
matter of transient interest.

She had reached middle life when
she met Mr. Lewes, and in a very
short time was persuaded to break
legal laws and to live with him as his
wife, he being already married. While
he lived, his influence over her was
unbounded, but two months after his
death she turned for consolation to
another man.

The brilliancy of George Eliot's
intellect has blinded young people to
the errors in her life and opinions.
Genius in this case has gone far with
the world to justify in her a total
disbelief in all that we hold most
sacred, and a full gratification of her
own will regardless of any restriction
either of society or of religion.

Her life, as written by her husband,
shows that the cause of these errors
lay in a certain weakness which made
her, as she herself says, "a chameleon,"
that reflected the opinion and will of
whatever persons were closest to her
at the time.

Young girls who are influenced by
her powerful intellect should remember
that what was wrong for George Eliot
must be wrong for all women. If all
young girls were to renounce Christ
and disregard the laws of social life,
what face will the world wear to the
next generation?

The writings of George Eliot are
brilliant and introspective, and to
those who know how rightly to use
them are helpful to intelligence. They
are, as it were, her better self. But
she owed to her profession a better
personal example, and this the young
reader should remember. Genius may
be a false light, if it lead one from the
safe ways of obedience to moral law
and essential faith.

If a bright beacon light lead us into
a quagmire, let us not gaze upward to
the light, but in justice to ourselves see
how deep and fatal the quagmire is.—
Youth's Companion.

The Tobacco Question.

WORDS of personal experience have
added weight beyond any words of per-
sonal precept. If you tell a man what
ought to be, or what may be, he is not
sure to agree with you; but if you tell
him what is, or what has been, it is not
so easy for him to join issue with you.
"Facts are God's arguments." We
have been touching recently various
practical matters of personal duty, in
our counsel in these columns; and
now we are backed by confirmatory
words from one Christian worker after
another, in the line of our counsel.
A correspondent from Michigan writes
about the tobacco-selling question con-
cerning which a Massachusetts reader
asked for information. He says:

"I wish to give your Massachusetts
correspondent who inquires whether it
is right for him as a Christian to sell
tobacco, a little of my own experience.
I am, and have been for a number of
years, a country merchant, carrying a
stock of goods which is always expected
to include tobacco for many years' aid,
I have also for many years been a Sunday-school superinten-
dent, a friend of temperance, and I did
not use tobacco. Not finding it neces-
sary to have the Lesson Committee
label a lesson 'Temperance' in order
to my finding temperance in it, I find
myself very frequently trying to warn
the young men and boys of the dangers
coming from the use of liquor and
tobacco; for no one can doubt but the
use of tobacco brings a young man into
associations to drink. Not thinking it
right to use tobacco, and frequently
advising the young against its use, the
Lord soon showed me that it was very
inconsistent, and very wrong, for me to
sell it. So for six years not an ounce
of tobacco, nor a cigar, have I sold; and
the Lord has taken care of the result;
for instead of its proving a loss to me,
my business has been more prosperous
than ever before. To him that know-
eth to do good, and doeth it, not to him
it is sin." (James 4: 17).—*S. S. Times.*

While her mother was taking a
fly out of the butter, little Daisy
asked, "Is that a butterfly, mamma?"