

## The Family Circle.

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN

### TO THE EVENING STAR.

O thou lone star, that hoverest in the western sky,  
Watching the death bed of the dying day,  
Waiting to seal his brow, then, pointing out the way,  
To lead him on where sunny seas and lakelets lie.

Serene thou stand'st, and true, and bright'ning ever,  
Thy pure light shining o'er his dark'ning face,  
Touching its lines with holy, heavenly grace,  
Holding the earthly bonds that slowly sever.

The sun hath brought him here, and left him now to die alone,  
But thou hast come with brightness from afar,  
Lending that brightness where his own doth fail,  
Sweet star,  
'Till he shall gather beauty wondrous more, where he hath flown.

And so thou waitest, on, with quiet, reverent care,  
Whilst silently and slow thy comrades, one by one,  
Come and watch with thee till thy faithful watch is done,  
Till o'er the mountain-tops the morning trembles, fair.

Whence comest thou, O star, and art thou, as they think,  
Sun of some world that movest on like ours,  
Placed in heaven's blue dome, upheld by awful powers,  
Forming in this grand chain but one small, shining link?

Whate'er thou art thou hast thy work, thou keepest on thy way;  
Thou teachest us of truth, and purity, and strength;  
Thou teachest us to live each day for God, until at length,  
All former things, all earthly life, and death have passed away.

Ancaster. A. L.

### THE EMPTY SLEEVE.

While engaged with a commercial house in the city of Cleveland, Ohio, my business frequently called me to many of the important cities and towns of the State. During one of my regular visits to a town in the southern part of the State, which was noted far and wide for the bad character of its saloons and their proprietors, the following incident occurred:

The train was late when I arrived at L—. After a hasty supper I was invited by the hotel proprietor and his wife to accompany them to a temperance meeting. The lecturer, they said, "was stirring up the whole town." The meeting had commenced before we arrived, and I noted from the crowded condition of the church, the stirring songs, and the pointed remarks of the speaker, that a deep interest was prevailing in the temperance movement in this community.

When the speaker concluded his address, an invitation was extended to all those who desired not only to sign the pledge, but also a petition to Council to suppress, by a local option ordinance, all of the saloons of the place. Quite a number went forward and signed both papers, among whom were a few of the most intemperate people of the town.

Just previous to the closing of the meeting, there arose in the central aisle a tall, dignified gentleman, elegant in appearance, with a pleasing, cultured face, who walked slowly to the speaker's desk, and asked permission of the chairman to occupy a few minutes before closing. His request was cheerfully granted. He said:

"I did not come here to-night to speak, only to listen; but, as I always take a deep interest in the temperance work, I could not be quiet until I added a few words to encourage some of those who signed the pledge to-night. My personal experience may help someone to be firm, and sustain them in their efforts to reform.

"I was born in the town of W—, and received a careful college education. My father started me in business, which proved a success from the start. I gathered around me many warm friends. I married a cultured and refined young lady of a neighboring town, whose parents were highly respected. We had two children, a son and a daughter. I was popular, and was called to preside at nearly all of the social and political meetings of the place, and on my way home I was frequently induced to partake of a glass of wine or beer. The habit became fixed, and I found that much of my time was taken up at the club and social meetings, and that my hours for going home were late.

"My wife spoke kindly to me about my drinking. I replied, 'Never fear; I will never become a drunkard.'

"But as time went on I became more and more a slave to drink, until my friends kindly admonished me. I noticed that my business was being neglected. It was not long before a receiver was appointed to wind up my business affairs. My store, goods, beautiful home, and all went to liquidate my debts, and I was obliged to move into a very poor house on a side street. Now nearly all my former friends deserted me, and I could secure no work, for I could not be trusted.

"At this point I lost my pride, and went about the town and through the streets half drunk, slovenly and shabby, being a complete slave to the drink habit. Then I sold all of the few things which we had been able to keep to procure whiskey and food.

"When my cash was gone I joined a gang of sewer and street workers, and shovelled gravel. Each day my dinner pail went to the saloon, and at night we went there in company, and often stayed late, going home hungry, tired and cross, until I made my home almost a hell.

"One night I had been drinking more than usual, and when I arrived at home I was angry. I saw a light through the window, but the door was locked. I tried to get in, but could not. I pounded at the door in rage. The only response I could get was from my boy, who appealingly said, 'Go away, papa; you won't hurt mamma, will you?' I said, 'You will see if this door is not opened soon.'

"Groping around the door my hand fell upon a hatchet which had been used for cutting kindling-wood that day. With this I broke in the lower panel of the door. From within I saw a small arm extended through the opening, and heard a small voice crying, 'Papa, go away.'

"In my anger and desperation I caught that arm, and with one blow of the hatchet I cut it off, and threw it on the ground.

"The frantic screams of my wife and children soon brought a number of the neighbors and also a policeman. After a severe struggle, with blood dripping from my face, I was taken to prison. My boy was conveyed to an hospital, and my wife and daughter were cared for by loving friends. When morning came I was sober, and then I fully realized what I had done. Oh, what would I have given to have replaced that arm and recalled the horrid deeds of that night!

"Court was in session, and I was taken before the judge for trial. I asked no lawyer to defend me. I told the judge that I was guilty. My wife was not to blame, and no sentence was too severe to impose

upon me. I was responsible for the crime which whiskey, beer and the saloon-keeper assisted me to accomplish. But with the help of a higher Power I would never drink another drop again. I was placed in prison, and had ample time to reflect. I exclaimed, 'O, what a wretch I have made of myself!' and I determined to make a man of myself among my own friends at home.

"I was released in time through the influence of my friends. I came to my own town, sought my wife and children, and asked their forgiveness. I once more commenced business in a small way, and have succeeded from that day until this. I now have the happiest, pleasantest home in America. I desire to introduce my son, Fred, will you please come forward?"

Immediately a fine-looking man arose from his seat and stepped forward to the platform; and as the interested eyes of the audience rested upon the youth, they knew the story to be true, for at his side hung an empty sleeve. His father placed his hand upon the boy's shoulder, and said, "This is the best boy living;" and Fred added, "My mother, sister and myself all say that father is the best man on earth."

Looking around, I could not see a dry eye in the audience. Then there were hundreds anxious to reach the desk to sign the papers, and later on every saloon in the place was wiped out.—J. B. King in *New York Witness*.

### TIBET.

Tibet remains the last and only hermit nation. Its inaccessible position, away from the current of the world's trade, has saved it thus far from the importunities of commercial nations.

Tibet is seven times larger than New York and Pennsylvania combined, with a population of six millions, lies in the very centre of Asia, guarded by the Himalayas on the west and the Nan Shan mountains on the north, a high table land from 10,000 to 17,000 feet above the sea, diversified with mountain chains and river gorges, with agricultural settlements in the south, nomads in the middle, and desert and wild beasts in the north and a Siberian climate. Its winds, robbed by protecting mountains of all their moisture, bring little or no rain, so that agriculture is carried on by irrigation, fresh meats are desiccated in the open air, and wood never rots but often becomes brittle and pulverizes from excessive dryness. And yet Tibet is the land of fountains and gives birth to more and mightier rivers than any other land. It sends the Yellow River and the Yang-tze-Kiang clear across China, the Cambodia through Farther India, the Irrawaddy through Burmah, and the Brahmapootra and the Indus through Hindustan.

The present population is by no means homogeneous, and their diverse characteristics would indicate that they sprang from different nationalities; that adventurers or fugitives wandered in from Mongolia, and China, and Burmah, and India, and gradually became assimilated. Their first government was by chiefs, and the tribes combined as the exigencies of their condition demanded until they assumed something of a national character. They were often overrun by the Mongols and Chinese, but maintained their independence until 720, when they became permanently subject to China, although

still allowed to govern themselves in all domestic and religious matters, according to their own laws and by an ecclesiastical hierarchy of their own creation.

The primitive religion of Tibet was the Bon or Bonpa faith. The basis of this was the old Shamanism or spirit worship of Mongolia, which still lingers among the Tartars of Southern Siberia. When it came in contact with Buddhism, it became so corrupted and modified that it is now little more than a sect of Lamaism, although it still has its own temples and monasteries and priests.

Lamaism is the exclusive religion of Tibet, and this is simply Buddhism a little modified by Shamanism. Both of these religions believe in demons or evil spirits, so that it was an easy thing to borrow from each other. The great and fundamental doctrine of Lamaism is the transmigration of souls, or the continuous rebirths as milestones on the road to Nirvana. Upon this it has built up a complete system of spiritual hierarchy, and differs from pure and theoretic Buddhism only in matters of administration pertaining to government and worship. Tibet's capital is regarded throughout all Asia as the Mecca of Buddhism, for it is the only place in all the world where the incarnate Buddha reigns.

In the 15th century Gedun Dub, head of the Tibetan priesthood, a strong willed, ambitious man, proclaimed himself an incarnation of the Buddha, who, according to Buddhistic authorities, had appeared for the last time in the sixth century before Christ. He assumed the title of Dalai Lama, or according to Huc, Tale Lama, that is, "ocean priest," a priest whose wisdom and holiness were boundless as the ocean, and being the Buddha claimed divine honors.

Every Buddhistic soul is in process of rebirths as long as there is any stain of sin, but sinless saints, those who have attained to perfection, can be incarnated. The Tale Lama and the higher grades of lamas are incarnated saints of different degrees of saintliness, while the lower lamas and monks, being only on the road to saintship, are still in the process of being reborn. For precautionary reasons the Chinese emperor made two Grand Lamas of equal rank, but he of the capital absorbed nearly all of the power, so that practically there is but one, and he possesses all civil as well as ecclesiastical authority. He surrounds himself with counsellors and administrators of different grades, who serve him just as the cardinals and archbishops and bishops do the Pope.

The lamas and monks are very numerous, constituting one-seventh of the entire population. They are unmarried and live in great monasteries or lamaseries, some of which have 18,000 inmates, and as their clerical duties are light, they are supposed to spend their time in contemplation and study. Every monastery has its printing press, and this occupies considerable of their time, for they do not use movable type, but print from engraved blocks, and their religious literature is quite extensive, as it has been accumulating for nearly 2,000 years. When the Grand Lama at Lassa, the pope of the Buddhist church, dies, great apparent care is taken to ascertain his true successor. Prayers are offered in the lamaseries, the great council of the hierarchy is assembled, and from among all the boys of four or five years of age presented as the possible new incarnation, three are selected