

The Family. THE CHILDREN. The following tender and beautiful poem has been known to how truly, ascribed to Charles Dickens.

When the lessons and tasks are all ended, And the school for the day is dismissed, And the little ones gather around me, To bid me good-night and be kissed: Oh! to little white arms that encircle My neck in a tender embrace: Oh! the smiles that are halo of heaven, Shedding sunshine of love on my face.

And when they are gone I sit dreaming Of my childhood too lovely to last; Of love that my heart will remember, When it wakes to the pulse of the past, Ere the world and its wickedness made me A partner of sorrow and sin: When the glory of God was above me, And the glory of gladness within.

Oh! my heart grows weak as a woman's, And the fountains of feeling will flow, When I think of the paths steep and strong, Where the feet of the dear ones must go; Of the mountains of sin hanging o'er them; Of the tempest of wrath wild; Oh! there is nothing on earth half so holy As the innocent heart of a child.

There are angels of hearts and of households; They are idols of God in disguise; His sunlight still sleeps in their tresses, His glory still gleams in their eyes; Oh! those trants from home and from heaven They have made me more manly than mild: And I know how Jesus could liken The kingdom of God to a child.

I ask not a life for the dear ones, All radiant, as others have done, But that life may have just enough shadow To temper the glare of the sun; I would pray God to guard them from evil, But my prayer would bend back to myself; Ah! a seraph may pray for a sinner, But a sinner must pray for himself.

The twig is so easily bent; I have banished the rule and the rod; I have taught them the goodness of knowledge, They have taught me the goodness of God; My heart is a dungeon of darkness, Where I shut them from breaking a rule; My love is sufficient correction; My frown is the law of the school.

I shall leave the old house in the autumn, To traverse its threshold no more; Ah! how I shall sigh for the dear ones, That meet me each morn at the door; I shall miss the "good-nights" and the kisses, And the gush of their innocent glee, The group on the green, and the flowers That are brought every morning to me.

I shall miss them at morn and at eve, Their song in the school and the street; I shall miss the low hum of their voices, And the tramp of their delicate feet; When the lessons and tasks are all ended, And Death says, "The school is dismissed," May the little ones gather around me, And bid me good night, and be kissed.

THE PAPERLESS MAN. BY SYLVANUS COBB, J. R.

"No, sir! I don't want nothin' of the kind. In the first place, he's got the money; and in the second place, if I had the money, I wouldn't have none of your papers.

So spoke Titus Closely, in answer to a man who had called to see if he would like to subscribe for a newspaper. Said man kept a store in the neighbouring village, and was also the postmaster; and he had made arrangements to add to his business by the establishment of a newspaper agency.

"I can furnish you with any paper you may like," he explained to Mr. Closely, "and I can furnish it cheaper than you can get it in any other way, because by buying of me you will save the postage. I shall have papers devoted to the interests of the Family; papers for the Farmers; papers for the Mechanic; and papers for both young and old; and, in short, I may assure you that any one of them would be worth more to you than I propose to ask. Ask your wife what she thinks. You have no idea of the vast amount of valuable information you will find."

Nancy Closely wanted a paper; but her husband said—

"O, bother! I don't want it, I tell ye. I've got as much as I can do to look arter my farm; and, if Nancy and the children want to read, they can get tracts of the minister."

"Your neighbor, Deepwater, has subscribed for two papers," said the agent. "He will take a pleasant high-toned literary paper for his family, and a paper devoted to Art, Science and Agriculture for himself.

"The more fool he!" cried Titus Closely, contemptuously. "John Deepwater can't afford to be no more'n a man. My farm's bigger'n better'n his; and I tell ye, flat an' square, 'at I ha'n't got three dollars to throw away for a newspaper."

"But—Titus—"

"Shut up, Nancy! I tell ye, I don't want it. And Nancy closed her lips; and the agent went his way; and Titus Closely went forth to plow his ground with the great old wooden plough which his father and his grandfather had used before him.

And time passed on. The newspaper agency was established at the village post-office; but Titus did not patronize it. He felt that he had a principle at stake. He had said he wouldn't, and he wouldn't! But in one thing he was consistent; he would not allow his wife nor children to borrow papers of his neighbor Deepwater if he knew it.

One evening Titus Closely and his wife took tea by invitation with neighbor Deepwater.

"I declare, Nancy," said Titus to their way home, "I have made it a study to make our family braver a living thing, and of real interest and profit to the children."

"How do you do it?" said I.

"In the first place," continued the Deacon, "I set my children to learning Scripture. I believe in their being accustomed to commit the Word of God to memory. There's old Aunt Sue, for instance, so blind she can't see and so deaf she can't hear. If she had not committed the Bible to memory when a child, she would not have any Bible now. What do you suppose she would take for her knowledge of Scripture, for the verses she cons over to herself, on her sick bed?"

"Money could buy that," said I.

"I would give the world for such a memory of the promises of God as Aunt Sue has," said Mr. S.

"It does not cost so much as that, my dear,"

"Whew" whistled Titus, as he sat in his kitchen, with a crumpled report of the Awarding Committee in his hand. A friend had given him the printed document. "John Deepwater has got the premium for sheep. By hook or by crook I'll bet I clip more'n wool than he does next season."

"Because you've got more sheep," suggested Nancy. "But wait and see. The wool breed which he has procured is a very valuable one."

"Bah! think what it cost him: fifty dollars for a pair on 'em!"

"And," added Nancy, "he sold two of his spring lambs to Mr. Thompson for eighty dollars."

"Git out!"

"Prudence told me so, John Deepwater saw so many flattering accounts of those sheep in his paper, that he knew it would be safe to invest."

Titus referred again to the Report.

"Hello! I'm blessed if Polly Downer hasn't got the first premium for cheese—five dollars!"

"Yes," said Nancy, "she was telling me about her cheeses. She found out how to make them in her paper. I tell ye, Titus, it's a good thing to have a good newspaper. I wish you'd—"

"Bah! Don't talk to me!" And Titus threw down the Report, and retired from the kitchen in disgust.

The winter passed; and the spring's work was done; and the time for sheep-shearing came. Titus Closely shared one hundred and fifty sheep, and obtained therefor not quite six hundred pounds of wool, being less than an average of nearly four pounds to the sheep.

"Titus, didn't I tell you that neighbor Deepwater's sheep would prove far the most valuable? It costs no more to keep one of his splendid animals than it does to keep one of ours. And then his lambs are heavier; and his mutton is—"

"Stop yer gab, Nancy! I know what ye're pithin' at: It's one of them 'tarnal papers! Let John Deepwater go it, if he wants to. I've got more wool'n he has."

"And you wintered more than twice as many sheep as he did?"

"Shet up! will ye?"

Nancy was silent. But the end was not yet. After the haying had been done, Mr. Deepwater and his wife called over and took tea, and spent the evening, with Titus and Nancy.

In the course of conversation Prudence told Nancy many new things which she had learned of household mysteries, while Mr. Deepwater talked to his host of the great improvements which were being made in agriculture. And Titus was interested in spite of himself though he tried to appear otherwise.

"By the way, Titus," said John Deepwater, late in the evening, "when you get ready to sell your wool, I think I can recommend you to a good market."

"Much obliged, John; but I've sold."

"Sold? To whom?"

"To Saddle and Ryder of Brinkton."

"Did they come for it?"

"Yes. Old Saddle came himself."

"What did he pay you?"

"Thirty cents."

"Thirty cents?—Thirty cents a pound?"

"Yes."

"Goodness mercy, John! You didn't sell your whole clip at that price?"

"Y-es. Why?"

"Why?—Why—wool, like yours, is worth forty-five cents and I was authorized by Mr. Fairman to offer you that price for your clip. You must have had over five hundred pounds!"

"Yes," said Titus, gaspingly. "I sold five hundred and seventy."

"But—didn't you know that wool had risen in value?"

"No. Mr. Saddle said thirty cents was all 'twas worth."

"Mr. Saddle deceived you. But you should have watched the Market Reports. Didn't you notice them in the paper?"

"I—don't take no paper."

"I declare, Titus, I am sorry for you. But it can't be helped now."

Mr. Deepwater saw how badly his friend was feeling, and he said no more.

When the company had gone, Titus Closely took down the old slate from its peg by the side of the looking-glass, and began to cipher. The difference between thirty and forty-five was fifteen, and fifteen multiplied by five hundred and seventy gave a product of eighty-five dollars and fifty cents!

On the following morning Titus Closely wrote to the village, and subscribed for two papers—one for himself, and one for his wife; and in time he came to regard the newspaper as one of the greatest institutions of the age.—N. Y. Ledger.

MODEL FAMILY PRAYERS.

Mrs. Laciua and I went over last week to spend the evening with Deacon S.

"Deacon," said I, "Mrs. Laciua has your boy and one of Mr. Hardcap's in her Sunday-school class. Both seem pretty well acquainted with Scripture, but that is the only point of resemblance between them. Your boy seems delighted with anything that throws light on the Bible, and asks a good many more questions than Mrs. Laciua cares to answer; while James Hardcap is as obstinate as a mule."

"He says he hates the Bible," says Mrs. Laciua, "and wishes it was at the bottom of the sea. What do you wish I do not know. He does not seem to be altogether a bad boy either."

"I should like to know how to teach your children the Bible?" said I.

"I teach them at family prayers," said the Deacon.

"At family prayers?" said I.

"Yes," said he. "To tell the truth, I think family prayers, as well as the blessing at the table, is apt to degenerate into the merest form. It becomes a sort of spiritual tread-mill; so many verses to be ground out every day, one chapter, long or short, dull or interesting. We go through it without half as much devotion as our servants do in repeating *Pater-nosters* and *Ave Marias*, and with no more spiritual profit. I have made it a study to make our family braver a living thing, and of real interest and profit to the children."

"How do you do it?" said I.

"In the first place," continued the Deacon, "I set my children to learning Scripture. I believe in their being accustomed to commit the Word of God to memory. There's old Aunt Sue, for instance, so blind she can't see and so deaf she can't hear. If she had not committed the Bible to memory when a child, she would not have any Bible now. What do you suppose she would take for her knowledge of Scripture, for the verses she cons over to herself, on her sick bed?"

"Money could buy that," said I.

"I would give the world for such a memory of the promises of God as Aunt Sue has," said Mr. S.

"It does not cost so much as that, my dear,"

said the Deacon: "It only costs a little patient persistent study in childhood."

Mrs. S. shook her head. "I don't know about that," said she. "Some folks aren't like other folks."

"I use to hire my children," continued the Deacon, "to commit verses to memory. I paid them a penny for every five verses. But it did not work very well. They were after the pennies, not after the Bible. They learned the verses, but they did not learn to love them. And they soon forgot what they learned."

"They kept their pennies better than their verses," said Mrs. S.

"Mr. Hardcap makes his boy learn Scripture for a punishment," said Mrs. Laciua.

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