

The Inglenook

Why Do We Wait?

Why do we wait till our ears are deaf
Before we speak our kindly word,
And only utter loving praise
When not a whisper can be heard?

Why do we wait till hands are laid
Close-folded, pulseless, ere we place
Within them roses sweet and rare,
And hilies in their flawless grace?

Why do we wait till eyes are sealed
To light and love in death's leap trance—
Dear wistful eyes—before we bend
Above them with impassioned glance?

Why do we wait till hearts are still
To tell them all the love in ours,
And give them such late need of praise,
And lay above them fragrant flowers?

How oft we, careless, wait till life's
Sweet opportunities are past,
And break our "alabaster box
Of ointment" at the very last!

Oh! let us heed the living friend
Who walks with us life's common ways,
Watching our eyes for look of love,
And hungering for a word of praise!

—British Weekly.

Grandma's Way Of Keeping The Eighth Commandment.

"Mr. Burk is wasting his time making us repeat the commandments in Sunday-School—as if any of us were tempted to kill or steal," said Stella.

"The eighth commandment is at least often strained in this family," answered Grandma quietly.

"Mother, if you have seen the children doing anything of that kind you ought to have told me," spoke up Mr. Gordon.

"I did not, say the children were the only transgressors," replied Grandma, laughing.

Mr. Gordon colored. Had grandma been down to his store, and had her puritanical ideas been shocked over the weighing of brown paper with sugar, or some other little advantage allowed to the seller

"I am sure I do not steal," said Stella emphatically.

"Grandma, keep a record of every time we break the eighth commandment the coming week," suggested Mrs. Gordon. "Saturday evening you shall read it, and the one who offends most must buy the kitchen clock I need."

Each of the Gordon family was willing to buy a clock if convicted of stealing.

"If it were impatience, mother, I should expect to buy my own clock," Mrs. Gordon said, as they gathered around the glowing grate on Saturday evening.

"If it were a quick temper, I would open my bank, but I am safe," said Stella.

Mr. Gordon and his son Ben felt too secure to even consider the matter.

"I have not been with each one of you every moment, so can give you only the few things I have seen. These will no doubt remind you of other things in which you have broken the eighth commandment," said grandma, producing a large note-book, with a smile at her doubting audience.

"To begin with Stella. I noticed two old Sunday-School books, the kind everyone wants, in her closet, and a song-book on the piano marked, 'For the Sunday-school room only.'"

"I've always forgotten to return them," interrupted Stella.

"Yes, as you have the handkerchief Bettie left, which is in wash nearly every week," continued grandma. "Then you stopped practicing on Monday to talk a half-hour to Lizzie, stealing time from your music. You forgot to give your mother that important message, and took an afternoon from her when she went out to see about it and got that headache that took another half-day and a dollar to the doctor, besides the medicine, and you took away your mother's patience when she found all this came from your neglect."

"O, grandma!"

"The Bible does not say what we shall not steal, so the inference is we shall not take anything that belongs to another without his consent. It certainly took money out of your father's pocket when you carelessly broke the

parlor window yesterday. When you took the second dish of berries last night you took Bettie's fruit as certainly as the boy at the corner took the oranges from the old man. Both went without fruit they supposed was theirs. When you took your mother's new veil and lost it—"

"And my new lead pencil," interrupted Ben, who was rather enjoying his positive little sister's discomfort.

"Thursday you broke into my room and stole a much-needed rest from me," went on grandma, with a smile.

"Put down the nights her cousin stays, and they keep us awake until midnight, talking and giggling," added Ben.

"You may take some of these samples to yourself, Ben, for with all of her neglect of the eighth commandment, Stella has been often very helpful and sweet to us all, so I pass to your own private record," answered the old lady. "Besides the stolen books in your room, I saw a silk umbrella that had another name than Ben on it."

"I mean to take that back," murmured the culprit.

"I believe that excuse would not hold in court," replied grandma. "Monday evening I have recorded that my grandson boasted that the car was so crowded the conductor had failed to ask for his fare."

"But, grandma, he is paid for collecting fares."

"Your 'Thou shalt not steal' has nothing to do with the conductor's duty to his employer," went on grandma, in a tone very severe for her.

"The next evening, when company came, the cake saved for supper was gone and your mother thought Bettie must have eaten it, while I saw a tall young man slip away from the cake-box."

"A fellow can't steal," murmured Ben, hanging down his head.

"It is only a question whether the cake is for your lunches or for the family tea which makes taking it right or wrong," went on grandma.

"Then several times I have heard a young man tease his little sister until he took away her sunny temper."

"O, grandma, teasing isn't stealing."

"My boy, if teasing takes away from Stella something she wishes to keep, what is it but stealing. Then, the mornings you were late to breakfast, I heard busy Bettie say it took the best of the morning getting your breakfast and cleaning up after you."

"Ben has nearly bankrupted us all, if you are going to consider the times we all waited for him," laughed his father.

"Two evenings he stole the time from his lessons to read a foolish story, and will probably steal some of the Sabbath to get those lessons. Ben took his father's good temper when he took his cuff buttons without asking, and his mother's when he took her new magazine and lost it, and his grandmother's when he took her new church paper to wrap up a package, and thus stole part of her Sunday reading," read grandma from her note-book.

"I'm sorry I took your paper," murmured Ben, who was really a good-hearted boy. "Any way, you haven't anything against mamma, for she gives up to everyone."

"That's her worst fault," said grandma. "She is robbing her old age by using up her nervous force, and robbing you children of self-dependence by everlastingly waiting upon you."

"Didn't you catch her getting money out of my Sunday trousers pockets?" asked Mr. Gordon, smiling at his wife.

"No, indeed, she was too well brought up for that, though some wives are justified in getting what they have earned in that way. But besides stealing time for work that ought to be used in sleep or rest or improving your mind, you have broken the commandment, too, Rebecca. I have noticed you do not hurry up supper when your sewing-girl is here, so in a week you manage to get an hour or more for nothing; and Thursday you took Bettie's afternoon to have her put up fruit."

"I meant to give her Friday, but company came. See I did wrong, mother; for I do not like it if a girl takes as much as a spoon of thread that does not belong to her," answered Mrs. Gordon.

"Now, Benjamin, you went to the store last Sunday afternoon, and took some of the Lord's Day for accounts."

"But the book-keeper, mother—"

"Yes, no one steals unless there is need of something, though I can hardly say that when you take Rebecca's time picking up after you."

"What's a wife for, mother?"

"Not to pick up collars off the bureau, coats off the chairs, and handkerchiefs and old letters off the floor. It is like spending pennies for someone who intended spending dollars for you, when a man takes his time in picking up after him. You stole Thursday evening from the prayer meeting, when you were much needed there, and then took two hours of the minister's time to talk about something on Saturday morning; and I heard his wife say, this afternoon, he would have to sit up till midnight to finish his sermon, because he had had so many callers."

"Look here, mother, you need not read the rest of the book. I'll admit we do not keep the commandments any too well, and I fear in business it is even worse. I hope the children will learn one lesson. It is not so bad to take things from the cupboard or our bureau drawers, but it makes them indifferent to property rights, and might make them form a habit of taking them from others, when it would be considered theft. Any way, mamma must be considered as children we will get her that parlor clock she has been wanting, and the kitchen clock too," said Mr. Gordon.

"You have given me a new idea, mother," said Mrs. Gordon. "We must follow the Golden Rule very closely, or we shall often break the eighth commandment by talking idleness, or time, or health from others, and really robbing them more than if we had taken only money or other property."—Sunday School Times.

Crutches.

"Take this little white powder; it will give you a night's delightful sleep," says some persuasive friend, and you look hesitatingly and longingly at the fobbed paper which encloses such longed-for possibilities. It is so hard to lie awake night after night, hearing the clock strike one, two, three, four, knowing full well that you will be desperately sleepy when the rising bell shall send its tocsin pealing through the house, and realizing, too, that the next day's duties will confront you as an armed battalion, when you will have neither courage nor strength to face them.

But it is a mistake, believe me, to take the sleeping powder, unless, indeed, your physician absolutely orders it. The narcotic, however innocent, the sedative, however subtle, is in itself a crutch, and the use of a crutch always the acknowledgment of infirmity. Furthermore, a crutch is liable to snap, or to slip, or to prove treacherous, or to lose itself or be lost when most needed, and only a cripple, never a strong man, carries one.

In this whole matter of insomnia the wisest way is to fight the wakeful fiend by lying calmly still, with eyes shut and hands and feet serene, if you can. To be genuinely tired by exercise in the open air, to detract the blood from the too active brain by a light jog before going to bed, and, above all, not to fret and worry, are better remedies than the whole range of the apothecary's shop affords.

In a beautiful volume printed for the entertainment of a family I lately came upon a pleasant bit of description, referring to an old gentleman past eighty, who, as the old often do, lay awake at twelve o'clock. A granddaughter in an adjacent chamber heard her crooning something softly to herself, and asked if anything were amiss. "Oh, no," was the quick and cheerful reply. "He gives songs in his crutch." No need of a crutch for this strong soul.—Harper's Bazar.

Comparative Census of European Countries.

According to figures given by the latest number of La Revue Francaise de l'Etranger, the total population of Europe, by calculations made on the latest census, is 380,000,000, which is a gain of 37,000,000 over that computed January, 1888. Here is a table showing the figures given in the Revue Francaise de l'Etranger:

European Russia and Finland	106,200,000
Germany	52,300,000
Austria-Hungary	43,500,000
The United Kingdom	38,800,000
France	38,600,000
Italy	31,300,000
Spain	18,000,000
Belgium	6,500,000
Portugal	5,000,000
Sweden	5,000,000
Holland	4,000,000
Switzerland	3,000,000
Denmark	2,000,000
Norway	2,000,000

The density of the population according to each square kilometer (about 0.386 square mile) is thus reckoned: In Belgium, 220; Italy, 189; Holland, 148; England, 128; Germany, 97; Switzerland, 73; France, 72; Austria, 69; Spain, 36; Russia, 20. While the annual increase of the population of Russia has been 1.45 for every 100 in the last ten years, that of Germany has been 1.15, of Austro-Hungary 0.86, of England 0.25, of Italy 0.45, of France 0.08. At this rate of augmentation, in 100 years, Russia would have 228,000,000 inhabitants, Germany 106,000,000, Austria 79,000,000, England 65,000,000, Italy 44,000,000, and France only 40,000,000.