



The Family Circle.

"SO HE GIVETH HIS BELOVED SLEEP."

Sleep a little: let your eyes
Close to this world's irksome glare;
Why should you look to and fro?
God is everywhere.

Sleep a little: let your hands
Rest from such incessant toil;
Your ten fingers are not all—
God holds sea and soil.

Sleep a little: let your head
Cease from beating problems so;
Some sheaves furnish only straw—
God says "Come," and "Go!"

Sleep a little: let your heart
Vex no more for other love;
To you in your hungering want
God stoops from above.

Sleep a little: let your feet
Stop and rest; the world will run
In its path and to its task—
God will see that done.

Sleep in hope: the night is dark:
Curtains dark are good for sleep.
Till the sunshine flood the skies
God your soul will keep.

Sleep in peace; all fearless here
Stretched at ease. Let burdens fall
On the floor like clothes cast down—
God can manage all.

ALFRED NORRIS.

—Sunday at Home.

ENOUGH TO DESTROY.

BY MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON.

"How cold the room is to-day!" said Mrs. Snow to Mrs. Patter, as they sat side by side at the Cherry Hill sewing society. "We usually have a good fire if we have nothing else cheerful at our meetings."

"The stove is broken to-day, and the fire cannot be made properly," explained Mrs. Harding, from the other side of the work-table.

"Indeed! who broke the stove?" asked Mrs. Fuller, who sat in front of the sewing-machine by the south window.

"Some one at the last singing-school, I believe," replied Mrs. Harding, curtly.

"It was John Estlin, of course," put in Mrs. Snyder; "but the stove is not broken; the grate is lost, that is all."

"Of course, then, it was John Estlin," put in another woman; "no one else would have done such a shiftless thing as to have taken out the grate in making the fire."

"The grate to a stove is a queer thing to lose," laughed Mrs. Miller, and several others laughed also. They always made a point of laughing if Mrs. Miller led off.

"Perhaps he thought it would fit some of his stoves at home," suggested Mrs. Purce.

"I never heard that he would steal; I knew that he would lie," interposed some one else.

"Lie? Does he, really?"

"No doubt of it. He told my husband there were no shingle-nails at the store when he was shingling his barn, and he had just come from town when he said so, and John was up in the evening, and there were shingle-nails in plenty."

"You don't say so! Can that be possible? He is a liar, of course, and now if he has carried off this grate, it proves that he will steal. It is a pity! How his poor mother must feel if she knows of it!"

Mrs. Fuller dropped the garment she was engaged upon, and, leaving her position at the sewing-machine, crossed the room to the stove.

"Are you frozen out, Mrs. Fuller?" "So you think you will try your hand at the fire, Mrs. Fuller?" "We will award you a vote of thanks to begin with, only it is impossible to make a passable fire in this stove without a grate." "We must take a vote of the society to see if we shall buy a new grate. It wouldn't do to get one without; if we should, the one who sent for it would get the reputation of trying to 'run the church.'"

Mrs. Fuller made no reply to all this talk, but, lifting a cover from the back of the stove, she took the tongs and produced the missing grate.

"Oh, Mrs. Fuller, you are a witch!" cried the girls. "No, she is a fairy." "I have heard her say her ancestors were from Scotland; she has the Scottish gift of second sight!"

"Oh, no. John Estlin told her what he had done with it. They are great friends, you know. She rode home with him from singing-school, you will remember."

Mrs. Fuller colored a little at the last sneering words, but she said bravely,—

"John Estlin had nothing whatever to do about the grate; I put it there myself. Some one in putting wood in the stove pushed it over, and as the fire was nearly out, and we were all on the point of freezing, I shoved it back out of the way; there was nothing else to do with it under the circumstances. There are at least half-a-dozen here who saw me do it, and yet they allow John Estlin to be accused of stealing because people have fallen into a habit of talking about him, and there is no one who cares to take his part. Mrs. Wiggin says he is my friend, and I hope he is, for I am certainly his friend. He is a gentleman in looks and in appearance; he is very helpful. I hardly know what we would do without him in the Society. I never heard of his telling an untruth until to-day, and I happen to know that when he was on the way to the store for shingle-nails, my husband told him in all honesty that there were none there, and he believed him, of course. You see he has not stolen the grate to the stove, and I think the accusations brought against him this afternoon have as much foundation of truth as most of the other stories flying about town to his discredit. He has faults, of course, and so have we all, but he has some virtues, and one is, he never speaks ill of anybody. It is easy to destroy, but it is hard to build up. Little Minnie, I see, has just pulled in pieces the garment that it has taken me an hour to baste ready for the machine. It required money and skill and labor to build our beautiful church last year, but you all know it took only an idle tramp to burn it down. Anyone may pull a rose in pieces, but only God can make a rose. I believe all the hard things that are being said about our young brother could be as easily explained as this little matter about the grate has been, if those who knew the truth would stand by it."

"Well, I think so, too," said Mrs. Nichols, "for the night it was said he was at Brockton in bad company, he was at home the whole evening, for my husband and I both were there until quite late. We told of it a number of times, but the majority seemed determined to believe that he was at Brockton, so we let it go."

Upon this, one and another began to tell something they knew in the young man's favor, and the minister's wife said, as the grate was adjusted, and the fire crackled merrily,—

"Even this small discomfort of the missing grate has borne good fruit, I trust; and I hope we may all take from this talk the lesson that I fear most of us need to learn, that always and in all places there are destroyers enough, and it should be the business of those who reckon themselves among God's people to be builders, and if we have grace in our hearts, and power from above dwells within us, our efforts to help ourselves and to sustain others shall be blessed."

—Standard.

A SECRET, AND HOW IT WAS TOLD.

BY ELIZA M. SHERMAN.

"The usual Wednesday evening meeting will be held in the chapel, and we sincerely invite our young people to attend. The topic for the evening will be 'Prayer.' Scripture texts or personal experiences on the subject will be in order; and if it would rejoice my heart to see more out, how much more would our Saviour rejoice to see his people in his house of prayer!"

The Rev. Mr. Barclay paused in the reading of the usual notices, and looked up appealing at his large choir of young folks, but two of whom belonged to his church. He had offered so many earnest, supplicating prayers for them, and for his large Bible class of young ladies; and yet the work seemed almost hopeless, and the good man was well nigh discouraged.

"Girls, what did you think of the sermon and all, this morning?" asked merry Lulu Hastings, after service, when the girls were waiting for Sunday-school to commence.

"What do you mean by 'all,' Lu?" said Nellie Andrews.

"Well, I was thinking particularly of the prayer-meeting notice. I thought Dr. Barclay seemed discouraged. I heard him tell father there were very few who attended the prayer-meeting."

"I wonder if Jesus isn't discouraged?" It was Irena Holbroke who spoke now, and there was dead silence for a moment; then Lulu asked,—

"What do you mean by that, Rena?"

"Why, here are all of us girls—some seven or eight of us. Six of us have found Jesus, and we hold private prayer-meetings as if we were ashamed of it. Here is Dr. Barclay praying for us, praying for a revival, which has already begun in our hearts, and I wonder how many of us have ever told him we have found Jesus?"

Dead silence, broken at last by timid Mary Lee, who exclaimed,—

"I, for one, can never tell him. I am afraid of ministers!"

"Why, Mary Lee! They are very much like other folks. Why should you be afraid of them?" This from Bessie Sewall, whose elder brother was a minister.

"But, dear," said Irena, "the Bible says, 'They that confess me before men, them will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven.' We all want that."

"Yes, of course," replied Stella Mayhew "but must we do this?"

"I'll tell you," said Irena; "Let us all think and pray over this until Wednesday afternoon, and then see what the result will be."

Wednesday afternoon, came, and the young ladies were gathered in Irena's pleasant home, to talk over the matter.

"Well," asked Irena, "what do you think about this? I, for one, have decided to see Dr. Barclay and tell him of my new hopes; they are so precious to keep to myself. What have you decided, Lulu?"

"I asked Jesus to decide for me, and he said, 'Confess me before men.' That is all I have to say," answered Lulu in a subdued voice.

"And I," said Mary Lee, "am ready to tell Dr. Barclay I am trying to serve Christ."

"What do you think, Stella?"

"I must do it, for Jesus says so. I am praying that he will change the 'must' to a joyful 'I will,' and I think he will."

"As for me," exclaimed pretty Nellie Hastings, "I am afraid it will tell itself. I told mother and father and Uncle Ben already; and I am not afraid to tell the minister."

"I told my brother, too," said Bessie, "and he said I should have told others also."

"Girls," said Irena, "let us go over now and tell Dr. Barclay! There he is, just going into his gate."

"I am agreed," said Nellie, Lulu and several others in concert.

Twenty minutes later there was a knock at the parsonage door, that quickly brought the good doctor. To say he was surprised at the number of his visitors, would be a mild way of putting it; but they were all seated at last in the study, while the kindly face of the minister looked inquiringly at them.

"I am glad to see you, for I think you bring good news. How is it, Miss Lulu; am I a Yankee at guessing?"

"I think you are, doctor. I have come to tell you I have found Jesus."

"So have I," "and I," "and I," went rapidly round the little circle.

Dr. Barclay leaned his head suddenly on his hand, while a few bright drops fell from his eyes as he murmured, "Mine eyes have seen the salvation of the Lord." Then he rose and gave each hand a hearty grasp of welcome and fellowship.

"My children," he said, as he seated himself, "this is my birthday, and you have given me the most valuable of all gifts—the gift of your confidence. Oh, I have prayed so long for you, that you might come to Jesus and be his dear followers. Let us thank him that our prayers are answered."

Then following a short, earnest prayer, and a long, confidential talk, in which the girls told him how recently they had found Jesus; how they had at first thought to keep it to themselves until they were fully established, but had agreed "to tell to all around, what a dear Saviour they have found."

In the evening at the "usual Wednesday evening prayer-meeting," the girls were all present; and the meeting was no longer stiff, dull, or formal. Each had a word for Jesus; each told it without hesitation.

These young ladies had learned an lesson

which they never forgot—the lesson that they could not serve God in secret. If he is in the heart, he must be in the life.—Church and Home.

A BLIGHT ON THE CHURCHES.

WHAT IS THE REASON?

The time is surely come when the entire Christianity of the British Isles should be aroused to meet the ever-accumulating necessities of a dying world. Apart from the rampant materialism and supercilious agnosticism abroad in society, there is undoubtedly in the churches a widespread indifference, a lurking scepticism an ignoring of the saving doctrines of the Gospel, the substitution of ritual observances in place of the new birth and spiritual life. Indeed there is a strange blight resting even on those who are evangelical. And there is a pretty general complaint of an absence of power in the ministrations of the church generally, that the services are uninteresting and even wearisome, while few conversions are said to be taking place under the ordinary ministry; and the hearts of many are sinking within them from the apparent hopelessness of any change for the better.

May not the inquiry be suggested whether the unsatisfactory and ineffective condition of things is not traceable to the Church's insensibility to the mandate of Christ? May not the withdrawal of power from the churches in part be accounted for by their neglect to fulfil the great command? Does not Christ's commission warrant such an inference—"Go make disciples of all nations; and, lo, I am with you even to the end of the world?" Can the Church wonder should Christ withdraw power from her, even in her home ministrations, when she deserts the special duty for the discharge of which His abiding presence was promised? On the other hand, could we conceive of any means more likely to lead to an extensive revival of vital religion in the Church at large, than that she should be started into action—ministers and people alike—by the trumpet call to arise, go forth, and subdue the kingdoms for Christ? Were the churches to realize that the function of their existence is to spread Christ's name in the earth, would not the result bear resemblance to what is promised to the Gentiles when Israel is restored—life from the dead?

Is not the case such as to demand the immediate attention of all the churches of the world to reconsider Christ's command, and in view of the races yet in darkness, and of the overwhelming increase in the population of the world (experts estimating that during the last hundred years it has even doubled), to lay to heart what can be unitedly done to meet the exigencies of mankind? Is the subject not worthy of international conference? We have Pan-Presbyterian, and Pan-Anglican Councils; why not a Pan-Missionary or Pan-Evangelistic Council?—Dr. Somerville.

TOBACCO'S PHYSICAL EFFECTS.

A bill has been introduced into the Massachusetts Legislature, prohibiting the sale of tobacco to those under age; and the Committee on public health, before whom the measure has gone, examined Professor Hitchcock of Amherst college, on the matter.

He advocated the bill on the ground that the injurious effects of tobacco were especially pronounced in the young, particularly in retarding the changes of the tissues, which are a most important factor during the period of growth, and that the habits formed during that period are peculiarly tenacious.

Dr. H. L. Bowditch said that he would have the bill go further, and provide for the arrest and fining of all minors under sixteen found using tobacco. In his long practice he has seen continued evidence of the evil effects of tobacco, especially in producing nervous diseases and neuralgic affections of the heart. From other specialists he has learned that cancer of the lip is found only in tobacco users; and he has no doubt that nine-tenths of the sufferings of General Grant were due to his indulgence in the weed. Cigarettes, he said, are more injurious than other forms of tobacco, because the tobacco in them is drugged.

Under the bill proposed, not only is the sale of cigarettes or tobacco to minors under eighteen forbidden, but it is equally forbidden to any except the parents or guardians to give them tobacco.