



### The Family Circle.

#### AFTER THE SERMON.

##### THE WORLDLING.

Hereafter! Yes, the preacher said "Hereafter."

I would forget,  
But strangely, 'mid the mirth and jest and laughter,

Creeps vague regret,  
And then the word that haunts me even yet.

I want no future, darkening the present,  
To tremble at;  
Earth is too fair to lose, and life too pleasant,  
For musings flat,  
And groundless fears; hereafter—what of that?

It is a something undefined, mysterious,  
Dreamy, ideal;  
Though he who spoke in simple language serious,

In faith so leal,  
Made it, methought, less hazy, almost real.

Nay, that I like not! Pondering thus is folly;

And, truth to own,  
The fancy makes one moody, melancholy;  
Yet this unknown  
It will be mine to face one day—alone.

Well, others face it. Coward heart, be braver;  
Come eat and drink,  
Hereafter—'tis a shadow: wherefore waver  
And quail and shrink?  
If it be more—we will not pause to think.

##### THE CHRISTIAN.

Unto my listening soul, like wings to waft her  
In thought away,  
The preacher's word came soothingly.  
"Hereafter,"

I heard him say,  
And straight a vision saw of endless day—

Of endless joy! Here charms of earth when strongest

Do take their flight;  
And all her sweetest days, and all her longest,  
And those most bright,  
Must fade too soon in darkness of the night.

Hereafter, endless life, and peace unbroken;  
No measured span;  
But life, eternal life, by every token  
Vouchsafed to man  
Since the round world her circling course began.

Hereafter! let the certainty sustain us  
In darkest hours.  
Hereafter! well might mortal toys onchain us  
Were it not ours;  
But who would lose the fruitage for the flowers?

My soul, bestir thee! Live not for the present,  
Life is too brief;  
And earth and time are things too evanescent

To be the chief.  
Hereafter is—act thou on thy belief.  
—Sunday at Home.

#### THOSE ACADEMY BOYS.

BY ANNETTE L. NOBLE.

"I have found in my expec-ri-ence," said once an old provincial philosopher, "that mankind in general is very much like the generality of mankind."

Had he said boy-kind the case would not have been different; yet when people spoke of the North Bend boys they were in the habit of shaking their heads, as if they were denying the unstated proposition that they were not worse than other boys. As if they were affirming that the boys of East, West, and South Bend were of quite another sort.

In the centre of the pretty village stood their academy, a great drab building, with a flat, projecting roof and a belfry on it; the whole looking like a fatherly, fat old Quaker, under his broad brim. But here the resemblance ceased. No Quaker ever harbored under his hat the iniquity that was covered by that old roof. In the topmost story roomed two or three dozen boys, who swarmed all over the building by day, and out upon unhalloed pranks by night. Next below came the recitation rooms and the one big school-room. On the floor below, dwelt the principal and his family—the new principal; for so they still called him, although for six months he had

been the incumbent of the office. For five years previous, the school had been ruled by a red-haired, keen-eyed, muscular heathen, who taught the fourth story boys with perfect suavity, in case they "foed the mark;" if they did not he labored with them, and they used to complain of rheumatism for some time after. His reign was an absolute monarchy; and throughout its duration, peace prevailed; when it ceased, anarchy and rebellion broke loose with tenfold fury.

Into such a domain came Professor Timothy Whitehart; and over such subjects was he to rule. He was six feet six inches tall, and almost too thin to cast a shadow. So erect was he that the back of his seedy, bottle-green coat was always an elongated hollow. His thin white hair was combed up straight and kept so by his steel-bowed spectacles. Precision and gravity enwrapt him as in a garment. He had been educated for the ministry, but succumbed to dyspepsia and retired early from active duties. He was now a walking compendium of all that the ancients knew and that the moderns have found out.

Well, one bright September morning, the professor took his seat in the great school-room and began exercises by reading and analysis of one the grandest chapters of Job. In the middle of it, Bill McGregor laughed out loud.

"William," said the professor with sorrowful benignity, "you have transgressed. You may stand with your face to the wall for five minutes."

Bill, seventeen years old and a ring-leader in every riot, did it, knowing that the situation would convulse his conferees. And so it proved throughout the long but earnest prayer that followed. The day went by and before night, every scholar had settled it that nothing was to be feared from that preternatural gravity, these quaint methods of punishment, adapted to sensitive little girls. Then the ball opened, so to speak. And if ever fifty boys led one poor man a dance for life, that poor man was Professor Whitehart. They exhausted all the old traditional tricks and invented new ones, appalling and bewildering. They defied all schoolroom discipline by day, and organized a band of "jolly revellers" for nightly recreations. Had their former principal returned, nothing short of a wholesale slaughter would have satisfied him.

The present teacher had but one hold upon them; it was one of which neither he nor they were conscious; they liked his mode of imparting instruction, even though they would not listen much or study at all. He was so clear in his demonstrations, so enthusiastic in his child-like love of learning, that he made the air magnetic with this love, and they were insensibly attracted to what had hitherto repelled them. But he could not know this. He only knew that the great academy bell rang fire-alarms by night to arouse the citizens, and bring the firemen shouting under his windows, that old boots, ham-bones, and feather-beds, flew briskly out of the fourth story window, while dirty water from the hose spoiled half his library; and no one ever found out a cause for the commotion.

Thus it was that when six months had passed, the poor man was utterly dismayed. He would have resigned with joy, had he known any other way in which to earn a crust for his children, to whom he was father, mother, and nurse. Of the professor's life outside the schoolroom the boys knew actually nothing; if they had any idea about it, doubtless they fancied that he dined off Greek roots, evolved mathematical problems for his private amusement, and dreamed Roman history. But one morning matters reached a climax. The professor was late when school time came, and everything had been ready for him some time. That is to say, there were four torpedoes under the four legs of his chair, his Bible mark was changed from the Psalms to the Apocrypha and the boys were prepared to meet him with a full chorus of,

"Oh where have you been, charming Timmy  
Oh where have you been so long?"

Suddenly the door opened and a seven-year-old boy, a veritable professor in miniature, announced: "Pa can't leave little Julia, she's been so sick all night, but he says the Virgil class may come down to him."

Fifteen boys tore down the old stairway like incarnate thunder, and five went by way of the banisters, in order to alight with the screeches of as many steam-whistles. Instinctively they divined where the kitchen was and went that way, so as to exercise the temper of a certain "Biddy" hitherto seen only at a distance. She was not there, but a pan of warm biscuit was. Each boy put one in his pocket for ammunition, and passed on. Something in the subdued light of the room, that served both as parlor and nursery, made them a little less noisy. The professor in an old flowered dressing-gown, was pacing up and down carrying a little yellow-haired girl; her face laid on his arm like a white blossom, and one tiny bare foot was thrust out of her night-dress. She turned her eyes wearily toward the boys, only stopping for a moment her plaintive wail. They shuffled

into their places with some degree of order, and the professor remarked in a weak voice: "Go on, McGregor, I do not need a book."

For the first time in his teaching, the professor showed no enthusiasm over the old-time heroes. He mechanically corrected mistakes as he dipped his nervously shaking hands into water and wet the little head on his breast soothing the child's wail into a moan. He did not see, or did not care for the dough missiles that soon began to fly about. He only paced slowly up and down, with his old calico double gown flapping around his thin legs. The recitation was nearly over, when going nearer Bill McGregor than at any time before, he stopped a moment. The child's bare foot was within an inch or two of Bill, and the temptation was too strong. He tickled the little pink sole and leered suddenly into her face. She shrieked with terror, and flung up her arms around her father's gray head in a half convulsion.

For one second, the boys looking in the professor's face scarcely know him. The melancholy gray eyes flashed with a white light before which Bill recoiled, stammering in shame, "I only touched her toe. I didn't hurt her."

The father did not answer, but dropped into a chair, and, nestling the child in his arms, turned his back on their tormentors. After a while she grew quiet and went half asleep; but the professor did not move. The boys were recovering from their transient disappointment of Bill's manoeuvre, when they saw with surprise the tall form of the professor bend, sway, slide sideways, and in a moment he lay senseless on the floor, still holding the child.

One boy rushed to the kitchen. Bill McGregor lifted the sleeping little one, and, seeing no place to put her, stood and held her, while another dabbed his handkerchief in the child's tin cup of water and drew it across the face that looked so white and haggard against the old red carpet.

In a second the kitchen-door flew open and Biddy O'Flarity scattered the boys right and left; seizing the water, she continued its application, rubbing his hands, loosened his shirt-collar, and lifted up her voice, not to weep, but to let loose her wrath upon the guilty group.

"And now ye've done it, shure, ye dirty, iron-hearted spalpeens! There's niver a mother's son of ye but ought to be hangt! It is all night long the poor man has just walked, walked, walked, wid the baby a-moanin' in the arms of him. Ye've been a-killin' the body by slow murder and a-tormentin' the soul out of him since six month, and I'll wager this morn have completed yer worruck! If any one of ye had had the harrot of a crocodile ye'd a held up wid yer fools' capers, whin 't is the docthur himself as said the marster war a goin' on fit to kill—not slavin' o' nights, all becas of ye, an' a-cummin' down from yer horrid classes wid a big groan out of him, like as if p'ace and patience had parted company wid him for iver. Faith, it made me blud to bile—" and Biddy paused a second, for a faint color was coming into the master's lips, and she became aware that she was rubbing his nose upward in her energy—"me blud to bile onct 'twor that day whin ye bruck the big windays in the house forinst us. An' who paid for 'em? Will ye tell me that? He did, and wint widout mate for one week to make up for it. That day 't was he sez sorrowful like, 'I must give up the school, Bridget. I can't do no dooty wid the b'ys.'"

"'Is it dooty?' sez I. 'Tis the bounden dooty of ye to lather 'em over the back wid a rawhide!"

"He stroked the thin hands of him out, and he sarched 'em over wid his glance. 'Will ye do it?' says I in deloight.

"'I cud,' sez he, 'old as I am, and wake too. But, Bridget,' sez he, 'naythur luv nor larnin' iver war bate in through the skin, an' he wint off a-sighin. 'T was rale mad I wor; but I had a right to cry too, and to wipe away me tears wid me dishcloth?"

"Hold up, Biddy, hold up. He's a-comin' to," said Bill McGregor. "He only fainted away. Here, take this young one. Tell him upon my honor I never hurt her a bit; only touched her bare foot. Come, boys, we'd better vamoose."

By no means loath, the boys sidled out with backward glances at the sick child and prostrate man. Nobody ventured on a war-whoop in the hall, nor even seemed disposed for a right hearty scuffle. The rest of the day was a holiday for the professor's classes. At night the schoolroom bell called all together, as it only did on very unusual occasions. On the dimly-lighted rostrum sat the professor, stiffer, paler, and more solemn than ever. He waited until they were all in their seats; then, rising, he said, with a little quiver running through the precise measure of his tones:

"Boys, as you grow older, a certain experience may some time come to you. You may earnestly desire to do a good work for some one or more individuals, and yet, not being able to find out the right way, you may misera-

bly fail. If this ever happens you will know, as you cannot now, how sore a heart I bear tonight. I hoped six months ago to become your beloved and respected teacher. I presume from your behavior that you hate me. I do not know why. There must be some reason; but I never meant that there should be. This is all I have to say upon that head. What I called you together for was to say that I have resolved to-morrow to give in my resignation to the trustees of the Academy. I am not the person to have charge of you. If, like brutes, you must be tamed with a lash, some one else must tame you. Before I go I would like to know if any of you have any accusation to bring against me—any cause for complaint. I wish to do justice to all. I cannot say, in going that I love you; yet I part with you in sorrow. I have not done you any good, and you have lost six months. This is bad; for time can never be redeemed. But God knows I could do no more. Will you be quiet enough for me to pray this once?"

When the short prayer was ended the professor walked down from the rostrum and out of the door, but the boys remained.

"What a row!" vouchsafed Bill McGregor, after a hush.

"Row" was a queer term to apply to the late exercises, but nobody objected to the word.

"I say let's switch off, let up steam, and behave ourselves," suggested another.

"'T won't do the professor any good now if we do," said the boy at his elbow, just as if it had been a question of doing the professor any good.

But we will not wait for the boys' entire conversation. They stayed there an hour longer; then Bill McGregor and five other boys went down to the professor's room. The rest went peacefully to bed for the first time in six months.

The next day the professor did not allude to the trustees, but he came up stairs with almost comical alacrity—pleased little ripples all around his mouth and a bright, kindly gleam in his eyes. It was a very strange day upon many accounts. Bill McGregor sawed wood in the cellar all recess for Bridget, and looked extremely disgusted when caught at it. Somebody gave the little Whiteharts a dozen oranges, and all through school-hours there was such a degree of attention that, forgetting its cause, the professor would start nervously at intervals with the quick fancy that it was the calm just before some new "gunpowder plot;" then reflecting himself he would smile with now-found happiness.

Now, I would not have any one imagine that the North Bend Academy boys had been converted at one "swoop," so to speak. The truth was the better they behaved the more ashamed of themselves they appeared to be; but away down deep in their souls they were most ashamed of the past six months, and in the months to come the professor became what he at first hoped to be, "a beloved, respected teacher."

"In course he is," soliloquized Bridget one day. "The blessed ould heretic saint, if iver there was sich, wid his head full of knowledge an' a name just fit for the likes of him! And by rayson of what did he raych this pint, if not all along of me own talk wid them b'ys. Faith, they're none too good yet; though 'tis thrue for 'em they threats him like a gintleman and a scholar, and well they may that. I dunno for whatever was b'ys made—the ragin', scraychin', blatherin' wretches! Arrah now, Bill McGregor. Bill! Bill! will ye be afther fetchin' a drap o' soft wather for me b'iler, honey? Come, now, till I give ye a ginger cake, Bill. 'Tis Biddy O'Flarity as says ye're a jewel, Bill!"—*Christian Weekly.*

#### REFUSING CHRIST.

A refusal of Christ is a much easier, and yet a much more terrible thing than most men suppose. A neglect to hear him is a refusal of him. Christ calls us every day and every moment; and when he calls, we either accept or reject him. There is no possible way of escape. There is no neutral ground. Our lives are a continual acceptance or rejection of him. When Christ calls us to be his disciples, we reach a wonderful crisis in our lives. Eternal life or eternal death is suspended on our decision. The question is continually before us, and an answer must be had. It is imperative. A neglect or a failure to decide in the affirmative necessitates a decision in the negative. When our fellowmen present questions of importance, we give them a respectful hearing. Shall we be less respectful to God? What astonishing and daring presumption! Men would not brook many refusals. Christ has borne with us times without number, but he will not always bear thus. There is a point of forbearance beyond which God can not go; and when we consider how often we have already refused him, we do not know how soon that point may be reached. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh." Heb. xii: 25.—*Advocate.*