

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

A SERMON IN RHYME.

If you have a friend worth loving, Love him, yes, and let him know...

A MORE EXCELLENT WAY.

I am not going to say a word against church fairs, because I know I should be speaking against...

It was a time much dreaded by the ladies who managed it, but each year they bravely put their shoulders to the wheel...

One bright June Sunday the pastor set all his people agape by telling them after the sermon that he had resolved to ask them to give up their fair this year...

"Yes I have?" was the slow reply. "Then you don't like to see us play?" "I didn't say that," said the elder woman with a smile...

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ship in one of the smaller Presbyterian churches in the city. Notice was given one Sunday morning, of a congregational meeting to be held the following evening...

"Where is the money to come from?" To the young man's surprise a well-to-do, prosperous merchant arose and proposed that they should get up a supper...

"That is what we propose to do," said the gentleman in the chair. "Yes, sir," said the stranger, hotly, "but how? By begging, sir, and not very straightforward begging, either; by wheedling people to come and gratify their affection for oysters, in order that we may worship God decently..."

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"I ALWAYS WIN." "Have you any particular antipathy against cards, Mrs. Allen?" asked a merry girl of a silver-haired woman whose face was not yet old. "Yes I have?" was the slow reply.

"Oh, how then could you sit and see us play?" "Because I wished to warn you; because there are some temperaments to which success is more baneful than defeat; because one of you put me strangely in mind of my blue-eyed boy."

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In religion, as in the affairs of human life, it is the steady and sustained effort that wins. Some people, like fancy horses, are good on a spurt, but utterly fail out in the all day pull. "How far are you going?" inquired a brisk rider as he overtook Mr. Wesley in one of his long journeys. "To London," was the calm reply of the great evangelist. "And do you think we can reach there to-day?" continued the new comer, who was a little nettled at the itinerant's slow pace. "No doubt, if we take it steadily," was the reply. Content with this assurance, he expressed a desire to bear the good man company. Place was given and the two, for a season, jogged on together. But the pace was too steady to suit the zealous young gentleman; and after an hour of such riding he repeated his question as to the probabilities of reaching London that night. Mr. Wesley renewed the assurance that they would arrive at their destination if they went slow enough. But another hour of steady riding exhausted the patience of the young man, and putting spurs to his horse he dashed on, leaving his companion far in the rear. Wesley continued his measured course unmoved by this little episode. On reaching an inn, soon after mid-day, he met

to him. But he was passionately fond of cards, and because of the fact that he invariably won, he was always ready to make up a party at home or abroad. "I don't know how the fact first leaked out, but it was whispered among his acquaintances that he played for money. "This of course, reached his mother's ears latest of all, and she would not believe it. She watched her boy with trembling eagerness. He bought a horse, he had always fine clothes, and his appearance was that of a restless, dissatisfied man. Every night the troubled mother sat up till he came home; but his hours grew more and more irregular. His business was at length, neglected; his luck turned; he grew haggard and moody. "What could be done? Nothing. He was wedded to his idol. Not only did he play, but he drank; not only did he drink, but he pledged things not his own, in the indulgence of his passion. Finally he forged the name of his employer, fought in a drunken fray, was brought home insensible, and for two weeks raved in delirium. "No one can know what the torture of a mother is when her son disgraces her before all the world—and this he had done. But repentance came. He promised never to touch a card; grew into his original beauty; lifted the hopes of all who loved him; was engaged to a lovely girl and by her tempted to play only a social game; to drink only a social glass; and the consequence was he was ruined! "The love of gaming and of strong drink rushed back upon him like a torrent of iniquity. Again he played for money, again he was brought home drunk, again he committed a crime, and this time his ruin was complete. "One night he rushed home like a crazy man. His mother tried in vain to calm him. She was alone, and he stung to insanity, raved, and tore his hair, and cursed her. A shudder went over the little company. "Yes, he cursed her because she had allowed him in the days of his innocence to touch the cards, because with her own hands she had taught him to play. "I could never do that," said the young man with blue eyes. "So he would have said at your age. A more affectionate son never lived. That night after he had been partially soothed, and had gone to his room, a pistol-shot was heard. Mercifully she was spared the sight that others saw."

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his fellow traveller just leaving, with his horse a good deal used up by the rapid riding, while that of Wesley was fresh and vigorous for the remainder of the route. But the young man dashed on again while the calmer and more philosophic traveller waited leisurely to bait his horse," and then followed at the old pace. The haste of the early part of the day had so exhausted the young man's beast that the last part of the journey dragged heavily. The animal moved slower and slower at each step; his limbs grew heavy and clumsy; and, as might be supposed, just before reaching the capital, near sunset, he was overtaken by his slow companion, who entered the city first and in good condition. Steady riding proved the sure way of reaching the goal. In religion the same rule operates. Spurdy people, who seem to be doing so much, in their furies, in reality accomplish less than those who move slowly but steadily. Dashes and spurts use up our energies rapidly. The half-hour center exhausted the resources that would maintain a steady pace for half a day. Spurdy people are seldom in working condition: it is your steady persons who are always in harness and ready for a movement on the enemy's works. There are spurdy churches as well as individuals. They do up their labors quickly—the labors of a year often being compressed into a few weeks. The result is that such churches get exhausted by the effort and are obliged "to haul up" for repairs. The putting forth of extra exertion in one part of the year, leads them to become dormant in another. By these irregular movements, such people of necessity lose a large part of their influence. They are held to be unreliable, and their example is not imitated. If, instead of this erratic course, the church will steadily keep at the work through the year, it will find larger and better results than by the irregular and exceptional method here indicated.—N. E. Meth.

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awkward, pinched, narrow manhood or womanhood is directly traceable to a repressed childhood. It is a paying investment, in the complete significance of the term, to take children to the most refined and perfect type of pleasures and beautiful surroundings. The ocean, the mountains, beautiful architecture, landscape gardening, should be rendered familiar to them to the greatest possible extent. There is a subtle influence in these things that enters into life, and enters in a peculiar manner to the impressibility and tender sensibilities of the nature of a child. And there is the same beautiful power in galleries of art, particularly in pictures rather than in statuary, as the element of color is more readily recognized by a child than that of form. The recognition of the beautiful in sculpture requires greater maturity, and a sensitive child is very liable to be depressed and frightened at the cold, white figures of sculptured marble. This is merely a matter of individual temperament, and can be readily detected by the mother, or by any one in intimate sympathy with the unfolding of the delicate little life. But beautiful pictures, oil painting in rich colors, are among the finest educative influences. There are no immediate results. The influence may lie latent for years, but it is no less sure or permanent. Placed in an atmosphere of beautiful things, a child grows beautiful in feature and in spirit. It is the true way to develop goodness, harmony, moral beauty. Much of the ethical instruction administered to children is actually harmful and confusing in its tendency. In these early years goodness is best taught indirectly; taught by the preservation of a harmonious spirit in the family, by all sweet words and songs, by leading the child to take pleasure in the natural beauty of sunsets, of opening flowers, and by introducing so far as practicable, the finest scenes of art as given in pictures, and other ways. These surroundings produce the real cultivation. Manners are not a matter of veneering, and adjustment of later life, but the grade of growth into grace and harmony. A beautiful childhood is the background of all after life, and determines its issues for ever. It is all important to surround childhood with beauty. In its atmosphere are generous impulses, loveliness of motive, and nobleness of deed. Somewhere George William Curtis says: "Any good object, an Alp, Niagara, a storm at sea, are seeds too vast for sudden flowering. They lie in experience, moulding life. Some day the height of noble aims, the broad throw of a generous manhood, betrays that in some happy hour of youth, you have seen the Alps or Niagara." No one who is in sympathy with the sweet companionship of a little child can fail to recognize how life grows pure and beautiful in this communion; common objects take on a new meaning; one is drawn upward to all nobleness of thought, all purity of aim, by this sweet sense of the childish, untried life.

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to wash, deceiving her all the time, his conscience seemed touched. We patted the delicate-looking boy on the shoulder as we said, "Remember the talk we have had," and we went on, thinking, alas! of so many mothers "who don't know."

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