



The Family Circle.

THE PRECIOUS TOKENS.

I have something Jesus gave me
For my own!
It is something which he sent me
From his throne.

I do not seek for hidden gold,
In earth's ground,
Nor give my wealth to gain the pearl
Which I found.

It is something which I carry
Near my heart:
It is safe till Jesus bids me
From it part.

In itself it has no value
More than tears,
Though I'm weary as I bear it,
I've no fears.

It is precious as a token
From my Lord,
That His heart thought is as loving
As His word!

Like His presence, it doth bring me
Peace divine;
'Tis His sweet and tender whisper,
"Thou art mine."

What is the gift I clasp so closely,
Wouldst thou see?
'Tis a cross, which Christ my Master,
Sent to me.

If my human hand had found it,
I should grieve,
But my Jesus laid it on me,
I believe!

Oh, how sweet it is to bear it
As His gift,
While the burden of my treasure
Christ doth lift!

—Congregationalist.

A JEWEL LOST.

BY EARNEST GILMORE.

"Lost—somewhere—a golden hour
Of this glowing autumn day;
Since the sunrise, ere the sunset,
I have lost it on my way."

Fanny Randolph sat in a darkened room brooding over her trials. It did seem as if no one in the whole world was as burdened as she was. She wished she could fly away somewhere and be at rest. "Such an unsympathetic set of children as ours I never heard of," she wailed, and then following the wail came a burst of hot tears.

"What's the trouble, Fannie dear?" asked a cheery voice, as the door opened softly and a sunshiny face peeped in. "Seems as if I heard the sound of sobbing. Where are you anyway? It's as dark as a pocket here," and Susie Holloway stumbled over an inconvenient hassock before she reached her friend's side. The sobbing had ceased. Fannie laughed as she answered, "I'm here, having just been enjoying the luxury of a good cry. The fact is, I'm completely weary of housekeeping and the care of children; it is monotonous and wearisome beyond endurance."

"Have you been in here enjoying the luxury ever since you closed the blinds?" asked Susie, in a matter-of-fact tone.

"Yes, ever since; it does not seem long though. Did you see me close the blinds?"

"Yes. I am sorry you lost a jewel, Fannie."

"Why, Sue, I have lost nothing, it was Laura Don; she lost the ruby out of her finger ring, but her father says she can have another as soon as they go to the city."

"But, Fannie, you, too, have lost a jewel, and your father will never replace it," Susie said soberly.

"What do you mean, Sue?"

"I mean you have lost this hour brooding. Let me recite you a couple of verses from the 'Link of Gold.'"

"For my hour was a jewel,
And with sixty small ones set:
Round each minute sixty seconds
Made the radiance brighter yet."

"Oh, has anybody seen it?
Seen my precious hour of gold?
I would go to buy another,
But such treasures are not sold"

Fannie was crying again, but this time the tears were not angry ones, but those of repentance.

"I'm so sorry, Sue, that I have been so wicked; I who profess to follow our Master. Let me tell you my troubles, Sue, and you will help me. I do not want to lose any more links of gold."

"Tell on, dear, I'm listening."

"It is hard to be both sister and mother."

"So it is, Fannie."

"And it is hard to have so poor a servant as Bidy is; she almost distracts me."

"Then get some one to take her place as soon as you can. In the meantime make the best of her. What are her principal faults?"

"She is a wretched cook, and is very untidy; such a looking table as she sets, everything on askew. Father don't enjoy his meals much."

"Can't you teach her better?"

"No; I have tried a good many times."

"Couldn't you help for awhile—assist in the cooking and set the table? I do."

"I suppose I could, but I don't like puttering around the kitchen."

"I would not putter, whatever that may be, I would work," Sue answered, smilingly.

"But Bidy is not the worst of my trouble. Albert is so trying. I believe he tears his pants purposely to make me mend them, and Carl is forever cutting chips and littering up the house, and as for Janie, I don't know as there ever comes a day that her demands upon one are not 'outrageous.'"

"Fannie, my dear, you are blue and no mistake. Come out of this dark room. I want you over to my house a little while, and when you return I will give you a recipe that was once given to me to use."

"A recipe for what?" "To bring sunshine out of darkness." Fannie went with Sue, remained a half hour, and then returned with a slip of folded paper in her hand.

She opened and read, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." And then underneath were the pencilled words: "Please use the recipe in your own family first, dear friend."

The afternoon had nearly passed away when Albert and Carl returned from school. They burst into the sitting-room like young hurricanes, but were struck dumb with surprise, when instead of the expected, "Do stop your everlasting noise!" from Fannie, she said, "Your coat is all mended nicely Albert; it lies on your bed, and you'll find something you wanted in the pocket," adding to Carl as Albert ran up the stairs, "I have cleared out the big closet for you, Carl, so as you can whittle all you want to. I shouldn't wonder if you would be a famous carver some day."

Carl said nothing but went to explore "the big closet," coming back just as Albert was kissing Fannie. He heard him say, "Oh, Fan, how good of you to give me your red silk handkerchief. I've begged for it so often that I didn't deserve it, but I'll make it all right though. I know where some royal cat-tails grow, and I'll bring you some of the finest you ever saw before I'm an hour older."

Albert could not say any more, for Carl pushed him aside to take Fannie's smiling face between his hands. He kissed it tenderly saying huskily, "I've been a mean fellow, Fan, chipping all over the house just to be hateful, but you've punished me now, heaping coals on my head. Oh, what a cute little workroom that closet makes, so light, too, with the big, clean window. Oh, Fan, I'll make you some of the prettiest things you ever saw—Swiss cottages and a clock and a double bracket." And then an hour later, when Mr. Randolph and his children gathered at the supper table, a gleam of light broke over all the faces. And why? Because the table was laid so neatly, with the vase of beautiful flowers in the centre, and the egg-toast was so delicious and the flaky brown potatoes done to a turn. "You are improving wonderfully, Bidy," Mr. Randolph said, as the girl brought in the tea.

"Shure, sir, it's Miss Fannie needs all the praise, fer 'tis her that's done it all. Bless her, but I'm affther thryin' to larn, an' I will larn, too." Then Bidy went into the kitchen and Mr. Randolph looked at his daughter. That look she never forgot; it took deep root in her heart, and with it went the last vestige of darkness. She rejoiced that she was the possessor of a wonderful recipe. The recipe is free too. Are you using it?—*Christian Intelligencer.*

TWO WAYS.

BY MRS. E. M. NELSON.

There are quite too many among Christian people who utterly fail to realize how easy it is to darken the active imagination of a little child with a nameless horror that overshadows his soul for years or for life, or how easily it is to arouse his keen delight in things beyond his material surroundings so as to glorify to him the future here and hereafter.

Years ago there lived next door a dear little two-year old child, a shy little dark-eyed thing, who ran to meet me and followed me about like an infant double. One evening from apparently perfect health she passed into a lethargic state, followed speedily by convulsion after convulsion, the frail body racked in the grasp of that fierce manifestation of disease, until, in a few hours, despite the wisest professional counsel, and most assiduous care, all hope of recovery was gone, and we stood about the poor exhausted baby watching the labored breathing as the life panted itself away.

Leaning on his mother's knee and close to his little sister's side stood Frank, five years old, watching in puzzled wonder the scene, now so strangely quiet in contrast to the wild haste and bustle of applying restoratives, and evidently feeling much relieved that the darling sister was so much better.

Suddenly out of the complete stupor in which she had lain the wee thing opened wide her brilliant eyes, raised herself from the pillow in haste, looking above and beyond us all at something invisible to us. The little hands reached towards it, a wonderful light broke over the baby face, and a rapt expression of marvellous, unspeakable delight glorified the sweet smile into something indescribably beautiful.

We waited breathless in this audience-chamber of a passing soul. In a moment the eyelids fell, the limbs relaxed, and the lovely image of what had been our pet and darling was all that was left before us. We felt that angels had been among us though we knew them not, but the smile with which she went left its charm upon the baby face even in the dreamless sleep.

The little boy stood in wonder looking at the happy face, uncomprehending death. But at that instant the mother, for the first time realizing that her child was dead, with one shriek threw her arms around the boy, breaking into a wild confusion of cries and lamentations: "O Frankie, little sister is dead, is dead! She'll never speak to us again, nor ever come back to play with you! You'll never see her any more, and she's going to be buried in the cold, damp ground, and the worms will eat my baby up! Oh! Oh! Oh!" And wringing her hands and rocking wildly back and forth in her chair, she was oblivious to the fact that the boy was white with terror and trembling in every limb.

Some one tried to comfort him, but he rushed from the room in an agony of fright; and though in the days following his face was swollen with weeping and he could neither be forced to eat nor coaxed to play, he would not once enter the room where the sweet form of the baby girl lay, a flower among the flowers, and even when the family went to take leave of the precious clay he could not be induced to go with them, but broke into frantic screams and struggled with all his puny strength to break away from the kind hands that gently persisted in trying to overcome his aversion and painful fright.

This was the impression made upon his young mind by the wicked foolishness of his mother, when it might so easily have been that through all his life death would have been a beautiful mystery into which even his tiny sister went with shining face, instead of the horror into which his mother's wild unreason had transformed it. That was one way, this the other.

Not long ago a young wife with a devoted husband and winsome daughter, four years old, began to fade in health, and soon realized she could never recover. The husband's mother, living with them, observed that she and the child often had long talks together, and it became more noticeable towards the last, when, her strength so rapidly failing that she could not speak above a whisper, the little daughter knelt upon a hassock at her mother's side as she lay in her reclining chair and listened as if never tired of the faint whispers from her lips, inaudible to all others.

A sudden change for the worse coming on, the little girl was sent away, and in a few hours the suffering mother had ceased to breathe. The next morning the grief-stricken father said to his mother, "I'll take you over to get Mamie, but you must tell her that her mother is dead, for I cannot!"

With great sorrow of heart the good woman complied with his request, but judge you what must have been her trial, realizing so perfectly as she did the distress she must bring to the tender heart of the little one always so devoted to that mother.

She could hardly find voice to greet her when the little girl ran into her arms, but feeling her strength giving way she dared not wait. Drawing the child to her, she said, "Mamie darling, your mamma has gone away." A sudden and astonishing change in the child's manner stopped the words upon her lips. A swift transition had come over her; she stood an instant spell-bound, as if linking in these tidings with something in the past, and then burst out, holding tightly her grandmother's hand, "Oh, has she gone to that beautiful place? Has she really gone? And she won't be sick any more, and she can sing again the way she used to sing to us! and she's all in white, and the angels are there and Jesus too, and"—for the first time the brave little voice faltered, a sob breaking through the words, the tears streaming down the flushed cheeks as the quivering baby voice went on—"and I can't see her any more now, not for a long, long time, and she—she can't come back home any more; but by-and-by if I'm Jesus' little lamb, I'll go where she is! And I won't be afraid, for mamma 'll be waiting for her little Mamie all the time!"

The father caught his child to his heart. "Out of the mouth of babes" had come consolation. His child's words recalled the thought, lost in the first intensity of grief, that he and she, the desolate husband and the orphaned babe, should in God's own good time go home and find her waiting.

Through those weeks of failing strength and of suffering the mother-love had conquered its own anguish of parting in painting on that baby soul a picture of immortal glory and unfading joy which nothing earthly can ever dim. Death to her will never be aught but "going home."—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

WILLING TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

"But, aunty dear, I cannot see just what we have to do."

"We must attend to our hearts, and see that they are quite right with God."

"It would be a great deal easier to do something else, aunty; I cannot quite make out about getting the heart right."

"We have all sinned against God, and we all owe him a great debt, Clarice."

"Yes, aunty, I know."

"Somebody is able and willing to pay that debt for us."

"Yes, Jesus is able and willing to do it."

"Then the next thing is, are we willing to let him do it?"

"What a strange question; aunty!"

"No, it is not a strange question: it is just the question we need to settle before we can find out anything about getting the heart right."

"But, surely, everybody must be willing, aunty?"

"No, child: more than half the people of the Christian world are not willing; a very great many people want to get the debt paid, but they object to the right way, Jesus died for us all—not for a few of us. He will satisfy our debt to God, if we will let him: all we have to do is to make up our minds that he can settle, and that we will let him do it."

"Surely, everybody knows that he can, because he suffered and died just for that, and surely it seems as though everybody must be willing."

"No, dear; many think they can pay the debt themselves by being very good, but they can never be perfect, and God requires perfection; only the blood of Jesus can cleanse the sins of our hearts and lives. Many think they must do some great thing themselves, and forget that it was Jesus who did the great thing, and that we have only to be willing to believe in him, and to take the benefit. Then there are many who are not willing, because they like their own way and pleasure so much that they are not content to give up this heart and have it made right."