

Saturday Night.

Placing the little hats all in a row,  
Ready for church on the morrow, you  
know;  
Washing wee faces and little black fists,  
Getting them ready and fit to be kissed;  
Putting them into clean garments and  
white,  
That is what mothers are doing to-night.  
Spying out holes in the little worn hose,  
Laying by shoes that are worn thro' the  
toes,  
Looking o'er garments so faded and thin—  
Who but a mother knows where to begin?  
Changing a button to make it look right,  
That is what mothers are doing to-night.  
Calling the little ones all 'round her  
chair,  
Hearing them lisp forth their soft even-  
ing prayer,  
Telling them over that story of old,  
How the dear Lord would gather the  
lambs to his fold,  
Watching, they listen with childish de-  
light,  
That is what mothers are doing to-night.  
Creeping so softly to take a last peep,  
After the little ones all are asleep;  
Anxious to know if the children are  
warm,  
Tucking the blankets round each little  
form;  
Kissing each little face, rosy and bright—  
That is what mothers are doing to-night.  
Kneeling down gently beside the white  
bed,  
Lowly and meekly she bows down her  
head,  
Praying, as only a mother can pray,  
"God guide and keep them from going  
astray."

THE SMOKING TREE.

BY I. C. OAKLEY.

Susie Wood fell into trouble very often on account of her curiosity. It was one day in the opening of spring, when they were beginning to open the windows because the days were warm. She had had very strict orders to keep away from the house, because there were yet fires in the house, and it was likely she would take cold. But she could not help it when she caught sight of a tree smoking just outside the window of her room. It was while her sister was getting her ready for dinner. "Oh, see! see! the tree is on fire!" exclaimed Susie. "Let me go—I've got to go!" She pulled away so suddenly that she left the button in her sister's fingers. "Now you see what you've done!" said her sister. Then she indignantly went away and left Susie leaning out of the window watching the tree. Little puffs of gray smoke seemed to be rising from the branches. There were no large leaves yet, and she could plainly see all the small twigs going puff! puff! all over the tree, sometimes one, sometimes a dozen together. "It's the mulberry tree, I do believe—I hope it isn't going to burn up." But the puffs went out in a minute, and when they cleared away, the twigs were there, covered with pale green buds and young leaves, as good as before. "And I guess it isn't fire after all. Maybe the tree is shooting. I've read about the tree shooting in the spring; only it would have to make a banging if it was firing itself off!" Susie watched this mysterious and pretty sight a good while. When she grew tired and noticed how far down the sun was, she began to think of her sister and the button and the consequences. She managed to finish dressing herself. She went down-stairs feeling so guilty that she did not dare ask anybody about the tree. She took her punishment as she usually did, without crying. "Anyhow, I've got something to do in my room," she said, as they locked the door; "and you needn't lock the door—you know very well I wouldn't come out—not even if you want me. Not unless Charlie was sick and wanted me," she continued, talking to herself; "I wouldn't come out for anything else. And I s'pose I must wait till Uncle Jack comes before I can find out what made the mulberry tree do so."

When her mother came to say good-night, Susie was quite humble. "You know I wouldn't do it if I could help it, mamma."

Tom told her the next day that there was a story in the Bible about a burning bush. "It was on fire and didn't burn up, like your tree. But that was a miracle; so I suppose you think you can show me a miracle, but I can't come, for I've got to go swimming with the other boys."

Uncle Jack usually came Sundays, and he and Susan went up-stairs and watched the tree. "It doesn't smoke only in sunny weather," explained Susan, "but it's sunny enough to-day."

The tree was smoking finely. Uncle Jack said it could be easily understood if they could get hold of one of the branches. So they contrived to hook one in by putting a nail into the end of a long fish-pole. Then they put the twigs in water and waited to see what would happen. It was this:

The twig was covered with soft buds like the "pussies" on the willows. Some of the buds burst open suddenly and scattered a cloud of white pollen. With a small magnifying glass they could see just how it went on. Uncle Jack picked off some green clusters from one of the pussy tails and put them under the glass. He called them flowers, but they were only little bundles of stamens with their heads folded down and turned inward. While they watched them they suddenly straightened right out, as quick as a flash, and shook out a tiny cloud of pollen. "A lot of them go off together," he said; "one of the pussies has, I suppose, forty or fifty flowers. You see these buds that grow further down, they are very different! They are the little green mulberries, and have no pollen; but the pollen from the pussies has to fly to them to make the seeds. The pussies will not make mulberries; they will wither away. I will tell you a pretty rhyme:

"This is the golden hour  
When flower is feeling after flower."

Susie learned the rhyme; then she played with the pussies a long time, and laughed to see them straighten out and burst right under her eyes. When she tried to tell Tom, he only said: "You'd better take care; it may be witches' work; perhaps you'd get in trouble and have to be locked up again for disobedience."—The Outlook.

KEEP THE SOUL ON TOP.

Little Bertie Blynn had just finished his dinner. He was in the library keeping still for a few minutes after eating, according to his mother's rule. She got it from the family doctor, and a good rule it is. Bertie was sitting in his own rocking-chair before the pleasant grate fire. He had in his hand two fine apples: a rich red and a green. His father sat at the window reading a newspaper. Presently he heard the child say: "Thank you, little master."

Dropping the paper his father said: "I thought that we were alone, Bertie. Who was here just now?"

"Nobody, papa, only you and I."  
"Didn't you say just now, 'Thank you, little master?'"

The child did not answer at first, but laughed a shy laugh. Soon he said: "I'm afraid you'll laugh at me if I tell you, papa."

"Well, you have just laughed, and why mayn't I?"

"But I mean you'll make fun of me."  
"No, I won't make fun of you; but, perhaps, I'll have fun with you. That will help us digest our roast beef."

"I'll tell you all about it, papa. I had eaten my red apple, and wanted to eat the green one, too. Just then I remembered something that I learned in school about eating, and I thought one big apple was enough. My stomach will be glad if I don't give it the green one to grind. It seemed for a minute just as if it said to me, 'Thank you, little master; but I know I said it myself.'"

"What is it Miss McLaren has been teaching you about eating?"

"She told us to be careful not to give our stomachs too much food to grind. If we do, she says, it will make bad

blood, that will run into our veins and made us dull and stupid, so that we can't get our lessons well, and perhaps give us headaches, too. If we give our stomachs just enough work to do, they will give us pure, lively blood, that will make us feel bright and cheerful in school. Miss McLaren says that sometimes when she eats too much of something that she likes very much it seems almost as if her stomach moaned and complained; but when she denies herself, and doesn't eat too much, it seems as if it were thankful and glad."

"That's as good preaching as the minister's, Bertie. What more did Miss McLaren tell you about this matter?"

"She taught us a verse one day about keeping the soul on top. That wasn't just the words, but it's just what it meant."

At this the father's paper went suddenly right up before his face. When in a minute it dropped down there wasn't any laugh on his face as he said: "Weren't these the words: 'I keep my body under?'"

"Oh, yes! that was it; but it means just the same. If I keep my body under, of course my soul is on top."

"Of course it is, my boy. Keep your soul on top, and you'll belong to the grandest style of man that walks the earth."

BOYS, READ THIS.

Chauncey Depew, against whom no one would think of charging a Puritanic spirit, speaks as follows on the temperance question: "Twenty-five years ago I knew every man woman and child in Peekskill. And it has been a study with me to mark boys who started in every grade of life with myself, to see what has become of them. I was up last fall, and began to count them over, and it was an instructive exhibit. Some of them became clerks, merchants, manufacturers, lawyers, and doctors. It is remarkable that every one of those that drank is dead; not one living of my age. Barring a few who were taken by sickness, every one who proved a wreck and wrecked his family, did it from rum and no other cause. Of those who were church-going people, who were steady, who were frugal and thrifty, every single one of them, without an exception, owns the house in which he lives, and has something laid by, the interest of which with his house, would carry him through many a rainy day. When a man becomes debased through gambling, rum or drink, he does not care; all his finer feelings are crowded out. The poor women at home are the ones who suffer—suffer in their tenderest emotions, suffer in their affections for those whom they love better than life."

It will be a great blessing if boys will not only read this, but will determine that, with God's help, they will never drink the first glass.—Young Reaper.

THE OFFICER'S DOG

Many stories have been told of dogs seeking the assistance of neighbour-dogs to punish others for injuries they have received from them, which shows that these animals possess some means of communicating their wishes to each other. Of these stories the following strikingly illustrates the fact:

In the neighbourhood of the city of St. Andrews, in Scotland, and about a mile distant from each other, lived a retired officer, a farmer, and a miller, each of whom possessed a powerful dog. These dogs, whenever they met, growled and snarled at each other, and sometimes fights took place. The officer's dog, besides guarding his master's residence, went every forenoon to the village, a distance of half a mile, to purchase bread, carrying with him a towel in which the requisite money was tied up.

Each time on his return he was immediately served with his dinner, after which he mounted guard over the house for the rest of the day. In the village were a number of idle curs—bullies, and, of course, cowards—who banded themselves together to attack peaceably-disposed dogs. One day, on the outskirts of the village, they assaulted the officer's dog on his way to the baker's shop. In the struggle the towel was torn from his

mouth, and the money was scattered on the road. The curs then retreated. The dog picked up the money, executed his message, and returned home; but instead of eating his dinner, which, as usual, was placed before him, he, after laying down his burden, trotted off straight across the valley to the farmer's house. The labourers, on seeing him, thought he had come to quarrel and fight with their master's mastiff, and were much surprised at seeing the two old enemies meet not only in a most friendly manner, but trot off, after a short consultation together, side by side, along the road that led to the mill. If the men at the farm were greatly astonished, the miller was more so when he saw his bull-dog receive the four-footed visitors as if they were his most intimate companions. The three held a brief council, and then set off in the direction of the officer's residence, followed at a distance by the miller, where, instead of taking the road that led to the village, they entered it by a circuitous route, and put to the tooth every cur they came across. Then they separated, and each dog returned to its master's abode, to be once more, strange to say, as bad friends as formerly.

ON THE WAY HOME

A short time ago a Christian gentleman, accompanied by a friend, was driving home from a mission meeting—one of a series that had been held in a village some miles distant. The driving was well advanced, and, after they had driven some little distance, they overtook a youth, walking slowly, and with an air of utter weariness and dejection. The gentleman pulled up, and asked:

"Where are you going?"  
"I am on my way home, sir."  
"Have you far to go?"  
"No, sir, just to B——"  
"Well, it is not worth while giving you a lift for that short distance," said the gentleman, to which the young man replied:  
"Oh, no, thank you, sir, I'll easily walk." And so the gentleman drove on. But he was impelled, surely by the Holy Spirit, to stop after he had gone on some little distance, and, looking round, he found the lad running close behind. Waiting until he came alongside, and feeling sure he was dejected and sorrowful because he was not sure of heaven being his home, the gentleman said:

"Are you really and truly on your way home?"  
"No, sir, I am not," was the honest confession; and then, as he was asked to get into the trap, he added, in a tone of anguish, "I must get saved; my sister was saved last night, my brother the night before, and I am left out!"  
"Well," said the gentleman, "if you are willing to be saved, Christ is far more willing to save you. You have but to go to him just as you are."

Without another word the lad fell on his knees, and cried, "Lord, Jesus, take me as I am. I am unworthy; but Jesus died—Jesus died."

The plea was sufficient, the prayer was heard and answered. After a few minutes' silence he said to the two Christians:

"I am saved; won't you praise the Lord with me?"

And they did praise the Lord; for, making a halt, they knelt by the wayside, and beneath the star-lit sky their praises re-echoed in the courts above. After they had exchanged farewells, the lad cried:

"I am on my way home now. I'll go praising him."

Reader, there are two ways—one to the home above, the other where there is weeping and wailing. On which are you going? Jesus died for you. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Pet. 3. 9.)

"All who sell liquors in the common way, to any that will buy, are poisoners-general. They drive men to hell like sheep. The curse of God is on their gardens, their groves, a fire that burns to the nethermost hell. Blood, blood is here. The foundation, the floors, the walls, the roof are stained with blood."  
—John Wesley.