

Our Home Circle.

OUR HERITAGE.

BY MRS. A. N. SNOW.

"Thine eyes shall behold the land that is far off." Where is the land to which we pilgrims hasten? Where are the bounds that separate from this? Somewhere, we know, earth's gloomy shadows lessen; In some unclouded clime is purest bliss.

We ask the question, but in vain we listen; No answer comes; the heavens their silence keep; The stars in never-broken stillness glisten. The waves of ocean madly foam and leap.

But nature all is dumb; save the immortals Who tread the land of which we sing and dream, None know where rise the mystic, pearly portals; We fail to catch their distant glint and gleam.

But we shall see it; oh, the grand revealing, When, with these eyes, that country we behold! To wounded hearts, 'twill bring a blessed healing, Eternal youth to whom the world call old.

"The land that is far off." Isaiah's vision Did not bring nigh the home for which we long; But faith sees even here the shores elysian, And hears the echo of the heavenly song.

Yet the full burst of glory waits us yonder; Our ravished ears shall hear the chorus grand When through the New Jerusalem we wander, All up and down the prophet's "far-off" land.

THE MAJOR'S CIGAR.

"How are you, Quartermaster?"

"Well, Major, is that you? How are you?"

We met at a railway junction, and, if he had not spoken first, I should not have recognised my Virginia comrade of '61. It was not merely the disguise of silk hat and shaven cheeks, but, as I told him, after we had chatted a little about each other's ups and downs since the war—I was sure this was the first time I ever saw him away from a table, without a cigar in his mouth.

"Haven't smoked for five years," was his reply. "I'm down on tobacco as thoroughly as you ever were."

"Good! Tell me about it."

We locked arms and sauntered up and down the platform. Dropping the dialogue, this was in substance his story:

"It wasn't a sudden conversion. I never was quite so easy in mind over the habit—when you used to hear me about it—as I pretended to be. Intended, all the time to taper off when I got home from the army, and not smoke so much. And I did. Smoked less in three weeks than I used to in one. But one summer I went off on some business for our company, which kept me up in the mountains, among the charcoal-burners, three days longer than I expected. I got out of cigars, and could not get any for love or money. In forty-eight hours I was more uncomfortable and unstrung than I ever was before in all my life. I actually borrowed an old Irishman's filthy clay pipe and tried to smoke it. I thought of that miserable summer which we spent crawling about the trenches in Virginia, and I wished I was there again with a cigar in my mouth! Then I began to realize what a shameful bondage I was in to a mere self-indulgence—I—a fellow who secretly prided himself on his self-control, and nerve and manliness; who never flinched at hard fare or rough weather—a downright slave to a bad habit, unnerved and actually unfit for business for lack of a cigar! It made me mad at myself; I despised myself for my pusillanimity.

"Going into the matter a little further, I found that the money I had spent for cigars in a dozen years would have paid for my house and furnished it; would have met all the bills for my wife's little summer trip to Europe with me, which has been her one air-castle so long. I saw that I had actually smoked away more money than I had laid out for our library, our periodicals, and our intellectual culture generally. Cigars had cost me nearly twice as much as I had given to church work, missions and charity. My conscience rose up at the record. I knew I could not plead any equivalent for the outlay. It had not fed me, it had not strengthened me; it had simply drugged me. Every cigar had made the next cigar a little more necessary to my comfort. To use the mildest word, it had been a useless expenditure.

"My detention up there in the mountains was calculated to open my eyes to my domestic short comings, and I saw as I never had before, how selfishly unsocial tobacco had made me at home. I smoked before I was married, and my wife never entered any protest against my cigars afterward. But our first baby was a nervous thing, and the doctor told me it would not do for it to breathe

tobacco smoke. So I got in the way of shutting myself up in the library evenings, and after every meal, to enjoy my cigars. As I look at it now, nothing is more absurd than to call it a social habit. It's a poor pretense of sociability where a man is simply intent on his own enjoyment. My wife owns up, now that my tobacco-saturated breath and tobacco-saturated clothing were always more or less a trial to her. The satisfaction it has given her to be rid of a tobacco atmosphere, and the thought of my contemptibly selfish indifference to her comfort all these years, have humbled me I tell you. And I wouldn't exchange my own daily satisfaction now-a-days in being a cleaner man—inside and outside—for the delight that anybody gets out of his cigars.

"I didn't need to go out of my own doors to find reasons enough for giving up the habit, but I think I found still stronger ones, after all, when I went away from home. The more I thought about the harm tobacco does in the community at large, the more I felt that it was time for me to stop giving it the moral support of my example. I don't take as much stock as some folks do in the terrible effects of tobacco stories. It depends a good deal on what sort of grandfathers a man had—whether they bequeathed to him the temperament of an ox or a race-horse, the constitution of a bull-dog or a little tan-terrier. The doctors differ on this matter, and the evidence is strong enough to convict on the other counts of the indictment anyhow. I know I smoked too much, and that my nervous system is the worse for it. And I think that the people who are likely to be hurt most by it are just the ones who are most likely to smoke excessively. And then I've noticed that the medical men who stand up for tobacco are always men who use it, and are liable to the suspicion of straining a point in justification of their own self-indulgence.

"On one point, though I believe the authorities agree. No one denies that it is a damaging indulgence for boys. It means a good deal when smoking is forbidden to the pupils in the polytechnic schools in Germany, purely on hygienic grounds. The governments of these smoking nations are not likely to be notional on that matter. But the use of tobacco by our American boys and young men is excessive and alarming. We ought to save our rising generation for better work than they can do if tobacco saps the strength of their growing years, and makes the descent easier, as no doubt it often does, to worse vices. I don't know how to forgive myself for the temptation I set before my Sunday-school class of bright boys, year after year, by my smoking habits. I always hoped they didn't know that I smoked, but of course they did. It isn't in the family either that the selfishness of the habit is most apparent. I don't believe, other things being equal, there is any other class of men who show such a disregard in public for other people's comfort as tobacco users do. I don't mean the chowers who spit in country churches and leave their filthy puddles on car floors. They're hogs. A man would be considered a rowdy or a boor who should wilfully spatter mud on the clothing of a lady as she passed him on the sidewalk. But a lady to whom tobacco fumes are more offensive than mud can hardly walk the streets, in these days, but that men who call themselves gentlemen—and who are gentlemen in most other respects—blow their cigar smoke into her face at almost every step. Smokers drive non-smokers out of the gentlemen's cabins on the ferry boats, and the gentlemen's waiting-rooms in railway stations, monopolizing these public rooms as if they only had rights in them. I can't explain such phenomena except on the theory that tobacco begets the moral sense and makes men specially selfish. Take the people of Germany for instance. No other Western people are such smokers, and no others are so boorish in their behaviour, especially toward women. I don't insist that one fact explains the other; but I have my suspicions."

The major's train pulled in just then, and as he took my hand to say good-by, his smoking-car drew his parting shot: "See there! Did you ever reflect how the tobacco habit levies its taxes on everybody? The railway company furnishes an extra seat to every smoker, which, in the nature of the case, must be paid for by an extra charge on the tickets of all the passengers. What a rumpus it would raise if the Legislature should attempt to furnish luxuries to any special class at public cost, in this way. How we'd vote 'em down. I vote against this thing by throwing away my cigar!"

—S. S. Times.

THEOLOGY IN A SHIPYARD.

"At high water to-morrow we launch her," said the carpenter-foreman to me, as he was shutting the vestry after meeting.

I wanted to see that launch. On time I was there. Around and over the stately hull there was time to stroll. The clatter of a hundred beetles and mallets, the racket of braces, "shores" knocked away, and cries of the carpenters, kept the ears busy. I sat down on a log alongside, to watch and wait. After a while she—the ship—seemed to "set eyes, on me" and answer my steady gaze. I heard:

"You, sir, on that log yonder, you are a minister, are you? Now if you'll mind it, I can show you some theology here that will help you pray and preach better than some of you commonly do."

It was easy enough to believe that; so I said, "Come on, speak out."

"Now," said the ship, "I'm a kind of system of theology in nature and condition."

"Theology, and a system of it! I should like to see how," said I.

Whereupon, grave as a professor, it spake thus: "By nature I'm of the dry land; sprang from its each timber in me grew there; each bit and spike was mined there. All parts of me are of the earth, and so earthy. That's my natural state—you've heard that phrase? Now I'm a ship, made of parts and powers, and worth forty times what the stock in me by nature is worth, if only I can change myself out of this, my natural state. I'm a dead loss, utterly useless as to the end for which I was made, unless I quit this 'natural state'—that is, get into this sea before us. There I shall come under new laws of life, motion, service and destiny—i. e. live a wholly new kind of life."

Did I see it?—I thought I did.

"You preachers call such a change in a man conversion, and say men are lost if not so changed—converted. Now this launching of me is like your conversion, said the ship. "In a moment I'm by it in a new world; under new laws—conditions of existence; in new uses and work, and such as were not possible to me before; and mark—once in that new state, or off land, I never can get back again—except (sadly) as a ruined wreck."

"That's very like some of our preaching," I said.

"But it's a short work, a dead end; and one in a moment, which is ready. You hear that racket of mauls and mallets all around under me 'driving up wedges' and knocking out the props?"

Indeed, I could not hear much else just then.

"That's what you ministers have to do to get sinners who are vain and self-confident ready to rest on Christ. These props and shores I lean upon are just like the good works, good resolutions, and such like to which men stick so terribly."

And I thought the ship was right.

—Lyman Whitting D. D.

THE PAINTER OF THE "ROLL CALL."

Elizabeth Thompson was born at Lausanne. Her mother is a lady highly endowed for art; her father was the friend of Charles Dickens and other eminent literary men. Her early years were divided between Italy and England—the winters spent in the sunshine of the South, the summers in the fields of Kent. Mr. Thompson devoted himself to the education of his two daughters, and attended to their physical as well as to their mental and artistic training. Elizabeth Thompson and her younger and gifted sister were taught to play cricket, and to be first-rate markswomen. The child who was to be the battle-painter of her day early showed the fascination exercised on her imagination by scenes of war. As the father read history to his little girls in the nursery, she scribbled representations of horses and soldiers fighting, flying, camping out. Some of these childishly drawn horses and figures—still carefully preserved—show action and vigor; the horses run and the soldiers fight.

At fifteen, Miss Thompson made a short stay in the South Kensington Schools of Art, but the weariness of copying outline designs overcame her; she left, and soon after received her first lessons in oil painting from Mr. Standish. Later on, she returned to the South Kensington Schools, no longer as an elementary student, but passing on at once to the life class. She also became a member of the Sketching Club. Fellow students still remember those spirited little pen-and-ink drawings of artillery and infantry in action, in flight, in repose, that used to be passed from hand to hand during the hour allowed at midday for luncheon and recreation. Meanwhile, Miss Thompson tried her luck with exhibitions. Her first water-

colors were rejected by the Society of British Artists, but the following year the Dudley Gallery hung a vigorous sketch, "Bavarian Artillery Going into Action."

At the age of twenty-two, Miss Thompson returned to Florence with her family. There she studied under the able guidance of Signor Balucchi. She divided her time between her master's studio and the cloisters of the churches, copying the incomparable frescoes of Andrea del Sarto and Fra Gio. The following autumn saw the completion of her first subject picture, the "Visitation." Exhibited at Rome, it won an honorable mention. Sent up for exhibition at the Royal Academy, it was rejected by the council and returned to the artist with a hole through the sky. Miss Thompson's second picture, the following year, was again rejected; but this time it returned to her uninjured. The third year she was more successful: her picture, "Missings," was accepted. The scene represented a wide landscape, traversed by a soldier on horseback, leading home the sinking figure of a wounded and missing comrade. The picture was hung high; but it attracted the attention of those who look beyond the line. Critics also noticed about this time some spirited water-colors exhibited in various galleries.

Miss Thompson now received her first commission; it came from a gentleman in the north. The subject of the picture was left to the artist's choice. Miss Thompson chose the calling of the roll after an engagement in the Crimea. The theme had long haunted her imagination. She set to work upon it with ardor. The fate of this picture is a matter of history. When it came before the selecting committee, it was received with a round of cheers; then followed the royal speeches, the paean of applause from the press, the gathering crowd daily assembled before the canvases where a young girl told the story of thinned ranks and the tragedy of war. Finally, in the height of the season, came the removal of the picture to Windsor for the Queen's inspection. Her Majesty expressing a wish to possess it, the owner loyally ceded his claim.

During the hubbub of popularity Miss Thompson remained quietly at her work. The following year she exhibited "Quatre Bras," a picture which Mr. Ruskin admits, in his notes of that year's Academy, to have approached with "inimitable prejudice"; first, because the learned professor did not believe that any woman could paint, and then because he entirely distrusted the "fuss" made about it. Mr. Ruskin was convinced before "Quatre Bras." "This is Amazon work," he writes: "the first fine pre-Raphaelite battle picture we have had." The next year came "Balaklava," the return of a handful of men after the famous charge up the brow of a hill. It was painted with that fine sense of all the opportunities presented by a scene which is one of this artist's characteristics. In 1877 Miss Thompson married Major Butler. At the Academy of 1878 she was unrepresented. In the following year were shown two of her finest works, "Listed for the Connaught Rangers," "The Remnants of an Army." Mrs. Butler's pictures display a rare energy of dramatic imagination—a power of developing the scene she illustrates by well-chosen incidents. It is not only the soldierly episodes of war that attract her; but its human and pathetic passages. "The Defence of Rorke's Drift," painted for the Queen, was not finished in time for last year's Academy, but is now, we understand, at Windsor. In this rapid survey of Mrs. Butler's works, we must not omit her illustrations to her sister's poems, "Preludes," and to some of Mr. Thackeray's ballads.—The Queen.

SAVED BY A THOUGHT OF HIS MOTHER.

A distinguished public man of Indiana, lately deceased, was engaged at the time of his sudden death, in writing reminiscences of his early life. He was narrating to his daughter, who was writing from his dictation, the story of a terrible temptation which assailed him when quite a youth. By attention to business and correct deportment he had won the implicit confidence of all who knew him. This confidence was shown, when on one occasion—before the days of easy and rapid communication by means of railroad and telegraph—he was entrusted with \$22,000 to deliver in the then far distant Cincinnati. Day after day, on his long horseback journey, he guarded his treasure with the most scrupulous fidelity, without a thought of dishonesty. But he said:

"There was a moment, a supreme and critical one, when the voice of the tempter penetrated my ear. It

was the old tempter that sang in the ear of Eve. It was when I reached the crown of those imperial hills that overlook the Ohio river, when approaching Lawrenceburg from the interior. The noble stream was the great artery of commerce at that day, before a railroad west of Massachusetts had been built. What a gay spectacle it presented, flashing in the bright sunlight, covered with flatboats, with rafts, with gay painted steamers, ascending and descending, and transporting their passengers in brief time to all parts of the world. I had to but sell my horse and go aboard one of these with my treasure, and I was absolutely beyond the reach of pursuit. There were no telegraphs then flashing intelligence by an agency more subtle than steam, and far outrunning it; no extradition treaties requiring foreign governments to return the felon. The world was before me, and at the age of twenty-one, with feeble ties connecting me with those left behind, I was in possession of a fortune for those early days. I recall the fact that this thought was a tenant of my mind for a moment, and for a moment only. Bless God, it found no hospitable lodgment any longer. And what, think you, gentle reader, were the associate thoughts that came to my rescue? Away over rivers and mountains, a thousand miles distant, in a humble farmhouse, on a bench, an aged mother reading to her boy from the oracles of God."

At this point his voice suddenly choked, his emotions overcame him, he said to his daughter, "We will finish this at another time"—laid his head back on his chair, and died almost instantly and without a groan.—From Womanhood, by R. Herbert Newton.

CONQUERED UNBELIEF.

Coming home from years of study abroad, a young man, one evening, in conversation with his only surviving parent, shocked him with a sneer against the religion of Christ. Not a word of reproach came from the lips of the grieved father. He took his little lamp and went to his chamber. All night that young skeptic heard the tramp of the feet of that sleepless sire, and the sound was a knell of sorrow, the cause of which he well knew. In the morning the father brought to his son the well-worn Bible of a sainted mother, and desired him to read and compare its teachings with his memories of her life. He read and found a tear-stained and deeply indelible verse, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Conviction seized him. The beauty of her character, the patience, purity, and fidelity she had shown, were convincing evidences of the unspenkable superiority of Christian character over the hollow fruits of skepticism. He cast away the toils of the tempter, knelt and consecrated his life and his splendid talents to his Saviour, whose voice then and there seemed to say, "This is the way, walk in it."

The surest way, therefore, for us to conquer the unbelief about us is to live the faith we profess, and thus hasten the day of its grand coronation!

QUIETNESS.

I would be quiet, Lord,
Nor tease, nor fret;
Not one small need of mine
Wilt Thou forget.

I am not wise to know
What most I need;
I dare not cry too loud
Lest Thou shouldst heed:

Lest thou at length shouldst say,
"Child, have thy will;
As thou hast chosen, lo!
Thy cup I fill."

What I most crave, perchance
Thou wilt withhold,
As we from hands unmet
Keep pearls, or gold;

As we, when childish hands
Would play with fire,
Withheld the burning coal
Of thy desire.

Y'choose Thou for me—Thou
Who knowest best;
This one short prayer of mine
Holds all the rest.

—Sunday Afternoon.

Our Young Folks.

WAS IT WORTH WHILE?

"It is hardly worth while for you go to Sabbath-school, Miriam," said Mrs. Osborn. "Its pouring, and you are not very well. I do not think many of your girls will be there."

"Mother dear," said Miriam, putting on her water-proof and thickest shoes, "if only one was to come I should think it worth while to go."

One eager face was waiting to smile a welcome when the teacher reached the school-room. Lucy Mills had as far to come as Miss Osborn, and had come on crutches, for

she was a cripple. She had been seeking her Saviour, and her path had been a clouded one, but now she had found him, and all was right. Her eyes sparkled, as putting her thin hands into her teacher's she said: "I was afraid you wouldn't come to-day, dear Miss Osborn. I wanted to tell you, first, I'm so happy—I've lost all my troubles now."

"Have you found your Saviour?" asked Miss Osborn.

"Yes," said Lucy, "and I'm so glad."

Miriam felt that it had been worth while to come.

ABOUT DUNCES.

It is somewhat discouraging for a boy of moderate abilities, who aims to do his best, to be told that others accomplished in childhood what he can only do by hard study in the best years of his youth. But a boy should not relax his efforts. He will succeed if he gives his heart and mind to his work.

That distinguished teacher, Dr. Arnold of Rugby, once spoke sharply to a dull boy. He replied:

"Why do you speak so angrily, sir? Indeed, I am doing the best I can."

Dr. Arnold said he never so felt a rebuke in his life.

Sir Isaac Newton was a pronounced dunce in his early years, and is said to have had no relish for study. One day the "bright boy" of the school gave him a kick in the stomach, which caused him severe pain. The insult stung young Newton to the quick, and he resolved to make himself felt and respected by improved scholarship. He applied himself to study, and ere long stood in his class above the boy that kicked him, and ultimately became the first scholar in the school.

Newton owed his pre-eminence in his philosophical studies more to perseverance and application than to any marvellous natural endowments.

Oliver Goldsmith, than whom no boy could appear more stupid, was the butt of ridicule. A school dame after wonderful patience and perseverance, taught him the alphabet—a thing which she deemed creditable to her school, and which she lived to mention with pride when her pupil became famous. He made no progress in exact studies, but liked history and Latin poetry. He was a sore trial to his ambitious mother, who made fruitless efforts to quicken his wits by her sharp words.

His relatives, teachers and school-mates all told him he was a fool, which verdict he did not dispute, but took good-humouredly. Even when he had produced the "Traveler," an eminent critic said to a friend, "Sir, I do believe that Goldsmith wrote that poem; and that, let me tell you, is believing a great deal."

Sir Walter Scott was a dull boy, and when attending the University at Edinburgh, he went by the name of "The Great Blockhead." But he wasted no time on trifles, and in pursuing a study that he loved—for example, history or the classics—he was persevering and methodical. He was one of those whose knowledge on a subject that interested him increased, until it lay like a great volume upon his mind. When Walter Scott began to make use of that knowledge, society gave him another name, somewhat different from the Edinburgh appellation. It was the "Great Magician."

A certain Edinburgh professor once pronounced upon a student this severe opinion: "Dunce you are, and dunce you will ever remain." That student was Sir Walter Scott.

Hutton, the antiquarian, whose knowledge of books was deemed remarkable, was slow to learn when a boy. He was sent to school to a certain Mr. Mead. He thus tells his experience: "My master took occasion to beat my head against the wall, holding it by the hair, but he could not beat any learning into it."

Sheridan found it hard to acquire the elements of learning. His mother deemed it her duty to inform his teacher that he was not bright to learn like other boys. Adam Clarke was pronounced by his father to be a "grievous dunce," and Dr. Chalmers was pronounced by his teacher as an "incorrigible" one! Chatterton was dismissed from school by his master, who finding himself unable to teach him anything in a satisfactory manner settled it that the boy was a "fool." Teachers are apt to become impatient over dull scholars, and predict of them that they will never come to anything. Such unalloyed prophecy ought to discourage no scholar that tries to do well.

If a dull boy feels an inspiration stirring within to know something worthy in literature, science, or art, let him set his face as a flint towards his object; let him be patient, hopeful and self-reliant, unmoved by laughter, undiscouraged by evil prophecies.