

Poetry.

THE LIFE GAUGE.

They err who measure life by years, With false or thoughtless tongue, Some hearts grow old before their time, Others are always young.

Family Reading.

THE EVENING READING.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth, Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

And that she walks among her girls, With praise and mild rebuke; Blending on rude village chairs, By her angelic looks.

I have heard many people say—and earnest, good people too—that they did not know how to employ Sunday evening; that they were grieved to allow such to be the case, and blamed themselves for the very feeling;

But yet that it was a fact that they were glad when the evening of the Lord's Day was over! It may be even that I have felt weariness of the sort myself,—a kind of weariness of body and spirit that it was difficult to shake off, and that no effort of my own will was powerful enough entirely to subdue.

I am therefore very anxious to write down an account of a Sunday evening, in a place where I have spent many happy hours; in the hope that, possibly, some one reader of this little story may take the lesson it gave me to their hearts, and to go and do likewise.

It was at a rather large house in the country that I was staying in February, 18—.

The weather was cold, and the wintry wind howled round the corners of the house, and rustled the leafless branches of the beech grove which immediately adjoined it.

But wind and weather were alike excluded from the comfortable dining-room at Fairford Hall.

Deep red curtains were drawn over the two large windows; the fire had just been replenished with two great logs of wood, and gave a glowing, blazing light, which pervaded every corner of the apartment, and cast strange gleams upon the quaint old figures which were carved on a highly varnished wooden settee, which projected between the fireplace and the door.

The house was very still. In general it rang merrily with the voices and laughter of happy children; but now they were fast asleep in their beds, though they had sat up a little later than usual, the much-prized and never-forgotten privilege of Sunday evenings; and quietness reigned over the house.

Dinner had been over some time, and the rest of the family were in the drawing-room; but, as an old friend of the family, I was admitted at my own special request, to the "evening reading."

Seated in a dark corner, behind the friendly shelter of a large antique screen, I was able fully to take in the scene before me.

(O, for the pencil of an artist to render it as I saw it!) and without disturbing the others, or even, I believe, in their eagerness, unthought of by them, to gaze lovingly upon the group.

In the centre of the room, with the light of a single lamp falling full upon her, sat the young mistress of the house. But a few years since a bride, and now the "happy mother of children," methought she looked even as a child herself,—so young and so fair.

In front of her were ranged a row of children, allowed, as an especial favour and reward, to come to the "evening reading." Some were choristers, some the first-class girls in the village school, and one (a young man now) had been the lady's favourite pupil in her own distant home, and being in place in the neighbourhood, considered it a special privilege and delight once more to hear his former teacher's voice, and be present at her "evening reading."

And so she read, and they listened, with bright, eager faces, drinking in every word that fell from her lips, as if it came to them from some superior being, and had great effect in impressing the good words there spoken on the hearers; some of them had come over a wild, heathy path; from very comfortable dwellings, where the wind we had been listening to as a solemn and distant thing that affected us not personally, blew in upon them by their scanty fire through many a crack and crevice of their poor cottages. What wonder, then, if the scene I have been describing seemed fairly land to them? It was not very different to the even, as I sat there listening and looking, and fancying the old family portraits, lighted up by the flashes of the crackling fire, looked down with benign, approving eyes upon their youthful descendant!

She always took pains to find interesting books to read to the children, as her object was to make the reading a pleasure to them; and this evening it was the story of "Michael, the Chorister," that she read.

Here and there she put in a few words of explanation and comment, which brought the story more home to the hearts of the hearers; and all seemed deeply interested. Tears came into many of their eyes as they heard the touching account of little Michael on his sick bed; but when the feelings which made him escape from the temptation of fighting were related, one of the hearers, little Alfred Hill, burst into a fit of crying, and sobbed bitterly.

Alfred was a slim, delicate-looking boy, about ten years old, and one of a large family. He had been brought up in the school, as had been his father, and now was a chorister, though he had left school to help his father in his trade, which was that of a shoemaker.

Alfred had a particular interest in him, and his little sister Ellen, who was also one of the party I have been describing.

His distress at first made her think the story was perhaps really too painful for him, and she offered to leave off; but he begged her so earnestly to go on reading, that she did, determining to talk to Alfred a little by herself, when the others were gone, as she thought there was something on his mind he would perhaps tell her, and feel the happier for having spoken of it.

She finished her reading, therefore; and then the children clustered round her piano-forte, while she closed their happy evening by singing with them, in her sweet and thrilling voice, several favourite psalms, hymns, and chants.

When they were all departing, she called Alfred back, and said she wanted to talk to him a little more. The moments of story feeling had passed, and a cloud of reserve was beginning to form over the heart of the boy; but the gentle words of the young lady soon melted it away.

"Tell me, Alfred," she said, "what it was that made you so much more unhappy than the other boys about poor Michael. What did you think about?"

"He was so very good," faltered Alfred, on the verge of another cry, which, however, he stoutly repressed.

"So very good?" said the lady, inquiringly. Alfred did not speak.

"What did you think most good in him? His love of going to Church? or his patience when he was so sick? or his not fighting?"

"His not fighting," said little Alfred.—"His stopping, though he wanted to fight, when he saw the Cross upon the Church spire?"

And his eyes flashed for a moment in a way which showed the difficulty of subduing his temper would have been to him, as indeed it is to most people, ever since the days when wise King Solomon pronounced "him that ruleth his own spirit to be greater than him that taketh a city."

"But why should Michael's being so good make you sad?" resumed the lady. "Perhaps you have done something wrong you feel sorry for now, and you think Michael would not have done so? You had better tell me; you will feel happier when you have spoken it off your heart, I think, and perhaps I may be able to give you some advice how to conquer the bad feeling when it comes again."

The kind voice and the gentle words overcame all Alfred's hesitation. He squeezed his hands together in the intensity of his nervous feeling, and then, in a low and tremulous voice, said,

"I felt very angry with Ellen at dinner time to-day; she took my piece of crust; and then I was very naughty, and would not speak to her, when she came to kiss and be friends; and then I went to Church,—and Alfred's sobs again came thick and fast, while he stammered out, "and I thought how bad Michael would have felt, when he was doing, if he had done so wicked a thing."

The lady was deeply touched at the working of the boy's mind, this revealed to her by his own candid confession; and she paused a few minutes before she replied. Then she said,

"I am pleased, Alfred, to see that what I have read has been of some use to you, and that it has made you think of your own faults, and helped you to see what was right. I hope, next time you discover angry feelings stirring in your heart, little Michael will come into your mind again. You know you may as well die at any time, and it might have pleased God you should die without making peace with your little sister; and how sad that would have been! I am glad you told me what was in your heart, as now you will feel happier. And now, would you not like to tell Ellen you are sorry at once?"

Alfred looked very downcast at this, and did not answer.

"God said, 'Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,'" resumed the lady.

"I should like Ellen to come, if you will call her," said Alfred timidly.

Then the lady called little Ellen into the room, and told her it was his conscience telling him he had been so unkind to her, that had made Alfred so unhappy that afternoon; and Alfred was going slowly up to her, when the little girl came and threw both her arms round his neck, and embraced him so lovingly, it was plain there was not a thought of unkindness in her little heart. "As I saw this little scene, I thought to myself, 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.'"

The reading was over, the children were all gone, and the sounds of the gentle voice in my ears were as "a tale that is told"; but I did not forget that evening reading for long, and I determined to write down this little account of it, in the hope that possibly some one reader of this tale may try and imitate the practice of the Sunday evening readings at Fairford Hall. Then may this little crumb I "cast upon the waters of life" be found again "after many years." It is a true story, and I have therefore neither added to it nor taken from it, but told it just as it occurred. It is not very often that such bits of encouragement occur to a teacher, as to see so immediately the fruit of their instructions. Like the green spots in the sandy desert, these cheering buds of promise bloom but rarely by our paths in the pilgrimage of life, to cheer on the weary and the faint-hearted in what is often but discouraging labour, because we see no results. Still it does not follow that, because we do not see them they are not there. The little seed we sow in the earth lies long hidden there before it brings forth any fruit; the little word we speak to the reserved and seemingly insatiable child, may sink into its heart, and bring forth fruit there after many days.

May God grant that this little story may be of the true bread which is found after many days, as it proves the history of Michael, the Chorister, to have been! May He bless those who read those words to them, and long preserve her to the prayers of the poor; for, to end as we began, with the beautiful words of the American poet—

To clothe her with such grace; That shines upon her face.—LONGFELLOW.

"Why do you speak so positively?" said her mother. "Why should I doubt you? I am glad to hear what you say. Ann is a very good girl; and I hope you may indeed continue to love her, and never give her pain by slighting her. Her mother and I have been friends ever since we were at school together; and that is a long time to keep a friend is it not?"

Fanny coloured. "I am sure I shall always love her," returned she, strongly accenting every word—"quite sure: nothing will alter me, and I am sure that I will never give her pain. (The motion of Mrs. West's head showed she wished that she might not.) I know what you mean; you think I am apt to change my mind: I may have done so before; but I never had such a nice, kind, good-tempered friend as Ann. I am positive that I shall never change her for any one."

Her mother made no observation; she looked, indeed, as if she could have said something if she had been so disposed, but she pursued her work in silence; and Fanny, though much nettled at the hint which had been thrown out, and longing to repeat her assurances of unalterable affection, had no other resource than to follow her example. No sooner, however, was she in company with Ann, than she repeated the conversation which had passed between herself and her mother.

"And will you change?" asked Ann anxiously; "I should be so very unhappy if I thought you would."

"Change? dear no," cried Fanny; "I'm sure I never shall, you are such a darling, such a sweet girl; those that mother meet were not like you, they were queer, disagreeable girls, not worth keeping for friends; and besides, I never loved them; and you know how dearly I love you."

"But if they were such queer girls, why do you choose them for friends at all?" inquired Ann, by no means so satisfied with her answers as Fanny wished her.

Fanny was puzzled what reply to make to this question. "O because—that's plain to be seen—because I, that is they—but what does it signify why?" said she. "There are many things happen that we can't tell why. Very likely they chose me; and you know we can't help people choosing us for friends, if they will do so; can we?"

"No," replied Ann, and she sighed as she spoke. "But it is not pleasant to be cast off for another. When I love anybody, I love them at all times the same. I should like to keep my friend forever."

"O! to be sure," cried Fanny, "so should I; and so I always should have done, if everybody had been like you, but that they never were, and never will be. And if others change, we must change too; it would be hard to be blamed for them. But don't let us talk in this way; you will never be different from what you are now, and I shall always love you as I do at this moment." And throwing her arms around her she kissed her tenderly.

Ann, smiling fondly on her, returned her caresses; and no two little girls could seem happier or more attached to each other than they were.

Soon after this, Fanny's aunt, the wife of a respectable tradesman in a neighbouring town, came with her daughter, a girl about her own age, to pay them a visit. Mrs. Morgan, for such was her name, being anxious to avoid putting her sister to expense, which she knew she could not well afford, yet unwilling to wound her by any seeming superiority, brought with her, as a present to Fanny, a very pretty frock, exactly like her cousin's. The frock was joyfully accepted, and immediately made up. Sunday came, and—who was so delighted as Fanny? who had such a kind, good aunt as she? or such a pretty, agreeable cousin as herself? Mrs. West and her sister led the way to church, the two little girls followed. Fanny saw not the ground on which she trod, so high did she hold her head; but she contrived, nevertheless, to notice every one whom she passed, and hoped in return that she herself was noticed by all. Her cousin Mary had an appearance altogether smarter than herself, and she was not a little flattered at walking by her side, or at its being known that she had such a relation belonging to her.

As they turned the corner of a street, she saw Ann Nicholls standing at the door of her grandmother's cottage, waiting to walk with her to church. Ann, smiling brightly and affectionately, nodded to her; but strange to say, Fanny's memory seemed suddenly to have failed her, for she scarcely recognized the friend she was to love always the same. She barely returned the nod, and pursued with increased animation her conversation with Mary, holding her head, if possible, more erect, nor deigning to take any further notice of her.

The whole of the day she was full of her frock and of her cousin's good qualities; she thought not more of Ann, or of the look of mortified affection that her countenance exhibited at the slight she had shown her. It might be, indeed, that this look had escaped her, so fully was she occupied at the time with her own and Mary's appearance. Be that as it may, Fanny thought no more of it, nor any thing else, till the departure of her cousin two days after.

Evening came. "How dull I am!" exclaimed she; "I will go and look for Ann," and off she set with all speed. "I shall be very much vexed," thought she, "if Ann is from home." But vexation sprang not up from that quarter: Ann was at home, but how altered in her manner! She showed no pleasure at seeing her, nor even attempted to interrupt Fanny's continued prattle, or to return any of her repeated expressions of "How glad she was to see her again!"

"Why, what's the matter?" cried Fanny, at last:—"What's come to you Ann?"

"Something," replied Ann, the tears starting in her eyes, "that I would not see before—the truth, and very painful it is. O, Fanny! I did indeed love you, and would have loved you always as I promised; but you have shown me that you love a new frock and a new friend better than you do me. So now you may keep them, for my friend must be like myself, one who will not be ashamed of me in any company, nor desert me for another only because she has known me the longest."

At this Fanny was so much affected, that she could not utter a word.

"KOHIMARAMA."

This is a pleasant little bay in New Zealand. It is about three miles from St. John's College; and being a nicely sheltered spot,

the Bishop now sends thither the Melanesian boys for whom the air of St. John's College is too keen. Two years ago a Clergyman's wife and a little native girl were living there, of whom we have to tell our readers. Our extracts are taken from the letters of a Clergyman written from St. John's College, Auckland, in December 1851.

"I have just brought C— up from the seaside, where she has been spending a fortnight or three weeks at the little bay, where the Bishop's schooner lies at anchor when he is at home.

"Kohimaramā is the beautiful name of this beautiful spot; it means a focus, a place where light is collected; and well describes a small bay completely enclosed by hills and peaks, except to the North, our sunny side.

"Down at the bay lives a native who works for the College; and there was a little niece of his dying of dropsy; to whom C— sent food and physic daily. On Thursday last, just as I got down, I saw C— in her own (litter) going to read some prayers to her, as she was near her end. How beautifully touching were the poor child's words—'Ka haere ahau' (I go). 'Kiaha?' (Where to?) 'Ki te Atua' (To God). 'Ka pai to haere?' (Is your going well). 'Yes, you glad to go?' 'E pai ana! (It is well). And she shortly fell asleep in Jesus, as we may hope.

"Two deaths lately, have brought to my mind very much the gracious dealings of God with His children, and have encouraged me to hope that the Bishop's two schools, for boys and girls, have been great blessings, even if they only have helped to prepare two children for eternity.

Little Peta (Betty), the girl of whom I was speaking, was taken ill last year, but was fed up and recovered strength. Her Aunt was persuaded to let her go then to the Native Girls' School, and she stayed there nearly a year, behaving very well, and learning, we may hope, what enabled her to say, 'My going is well.'

"The other was a case of a boy in our school, who was last year a very indifferent good-for-nothing; but having been turned out of one department, he went a-begging as it were in the College, and was admitted by the printers on probation. He turned over a new leaf entirely, and in his illness and at his death showed signs of great improvement. One of his relatives said to me,—'If he died at his own home he was then a bad boy, and his heart would have been dark—but now that he had come to the College and learnt to do what was right, his heart was light about him.'"

The next extract is from another letter written in July, 1852, which mentions a pupil who was brought to the same lady while the Bishop of New Zealand was away on his recent voyage among the Melanesian Islands.

"C— has just got a new Melanesian pupil, who has arrived rather inopportunistically, considering the season. However, his arrival relieves our minds from anxieties respecting the Bishop's voyage, and first intercourse with the Solomon Islands. It seems to have become known in Meste's Island (Lidia, or San Christoval), that he was learning 'white-fellow's words,' &c., and the whole island is on the qui vive to do the same; consequently, when a trader named 'Blaxland' touched there for wood and water, they all came crying after him to send the Bishop and Missionaries; and one boy, a brother of Meste's, came on board, and asked the trader to take him to the College, which he did, and sent the boy here, unluckily in the winter time, just after the Bishop had sailed.

"It is satisfactory to know that the Bishop will be well received at Lidia, and that there is plenty of wood and water there."—Gospel Missionary.

GEORGE SIAPO.

Mare or Nengone is an island in the South Pacific Ocean—one of the group which you will see marked in the maps as the Loyalty Islands. Siapo, a native lad, was brought from thence to St. John's College by the Bishop of New Zealand, in 1849. In the following year he was taken back to Nengone to see his friends, and again restored to the College for further instruction in 1851. He was now thought to have attained a competent knowledge of the Christian religion, and when the Bishop sailed on his fifth Missionary voyage in 1852, he took with him Siapo and three other young natives of Nengone, named Cho, Napi, and Kaiwahi. On the morning of July 10th, these four youths were baptized by the Bishop in their native island, in the presence of nearly a thousand people. The Bishop sailed on to some of the other Islands; and after his departure, two of these lads began to keep a school, and to impart to their young countrymen the knowledge which they had themselves acquired in St. John's College. They soon got together 130 scholars. Their schoolroom was simply a cavern in the face of a rock. A few chapters of the Bible have been already translated into their language by the agents of the London Missionary Society. We gave our readers in last October an account of the behaviour of the people of Nengone when they are saying their lessons.

On the 25th September, the Bishop called again at Nengone as he was returning to New Zealand; and took on board several lads and two young women, one of whom was engaged to be the wife of George Siapo. The *Bardmaid*, with the Bishop and his crew, including twenty-five Melanesian scholars, anchored in safety at Kohimaramā on October 20th.

And now comes the sorrowful part of our history. After they had been but a few weeks in New Zealand, George Siapo fell ill; and by degrees it became apparent that it was the will of God that George Siapo should return no more to his native island. Like George Apalé, whose history our readers had last February, he was full of faith and hope in his last days. Soon after Christmas the Bishop, to whom Siapo was much attached, was obliged to leave Auckland to go on a long journey. We are told in a letter from the spot—"the evening before he went was spent at Kohimaramā with Siapo, and the Bishop took leave of him as of one whom he was not to see again on earth. He had administered his first and last communion to him a few days before, in the full and earnest trust that he was indeed a Brother in the faith beloved in the Lord, and he parted from him in the hope of meeting him in that day, when he and the children whom God has given him, shall stand before the Judgment-seat. But it was a sorrowful parting, from

the feeling of the loss he will be to his own island, Mare, and the mission. He lingered for a fortnight longer, and died on the 14th January.

When he felt that he was dying, he spoke freely, as he had never done to any one before—'for he was a very reserved character—and it was a great comfort to find how well prepared he was for the last. He told the Rev. W. Nichill, he had thought that he might die here, and had asked his brothers to let him come over though it should be so, and they had said 'go,' and he was glad he had come—and he expressed strongly his happiness in dying in the Christian faith—and said, his sorrow was only for his people and his island. He entreated Mr. Nichill to go to them again, and charged the other Nengone lads who were with him to 'take care of Mr. Nichill' over and over his love. His dying words were of them—his love of home—yet his belief in the Catholic faith, 'I see one God, and one home for us all; good-bye, dear Mr. Nichill, who has been with us at Guama.' C— said he never saw anything more beautiful than the expression of his large, soft, dark eyes, as he lay on the sofa that morning, evidently near his end—but it was not till quite at the close that 'the fire kindled and at the last he spoke.' The Bishop had laid John Thol in his grave on 15th December, and on 15th January C— committed the body of George Siapo to its resting-place; just eight months before we had knelt by Apalé's dying-bed and prayed with him.

Siapo was the flower of our Melanesian youth, but I trust that although dead, he will yet have a living voice and influence among those that remain. There are some very pleasing specimens among them, though none equal to him in appearance, manner, and attainments.—Gospel Missionary.

PUBLIC WORSHIP.—An habitually late attendance upon public worship intimates something wrong in the person's own mind, and is the occasion of much annoyance to others. It necessarily interrupts the minister, whose mind should be composed, and steadily fixed upon the solemn work in which he is engaged. And it is an interruption to the whole congregation at large, whose eyes and ears cannot but exert an influence upon their heart. Under such circumstances it is scarcely practicable, it is at least very difficult, for even the most zealous worshipper to pursue his devotions without distraction. Let each worshipper, then, seriously ask himself—was I present before the commencement of the service, with my thoughts prepared for the solemn duty, to discharge which I went to church? and have I thereby proved my sense of what is due to the honor of God, and to myself? Or, by a late attendance, have I dishonoured God, disturbed my fellow-worshippers, and voluntarily deprived myself of a portion of my religious advantages?

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Canada Company's Office, Toronto, 12th August, 1853.

Toronto, London, Woodstock, Hamilton, Guelph, Galt and Kingston Papers to copy until 30th September next. 5-td

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Toronto, London, Woodstock, Hamilton, Guelph, Galt and Kingston Papers to copy until 30th September next. 5-td

George Siapo.

Mare or Nengone is an island in the South Pacific Ocean—one of the group which you will see marked in the maps as the Loyalty Islands. Siapo, a native lad, was brought from thence to St. John's College by the Bishop of New Zealand, in 1849. In the following year he was taken back to Nengone to see his friends, and again restored to the College for further instruction in 1851. He was now thought to have attained a competent knowledge of the Christian religion, and when the Bishop sailed on his fifth Missionary voyage in 1852, he took with him Siapo and three other young natives of Nengone, named Cho, Napi, and Kaiwahi. On the morning of July 10th, these four youths were baptized by the Bishop in their native island, in the presence of nearly a thousand people. The Bishop sailed on to some of the other Islands; and after his departure, two of these lads began to keep a school, and to impart to their young countrymen the knowledge which they had themselves acquired in St. John's College. They soon got together 130 scholars. Their schoolroom was simply a cavern in the face of a rock. A few chapters of the Bible have been already translated into their language by the agents of the London Missionary Society. We gave our readers in last October an account of the behaviour of the people of Nengone when they are saying their lessons.

On the 25th September, the Bishop called again at Nengone as he was returning to New Zealand; and took on board several lads and two young women, one of whom was engaged to be the wife of George Siapo. The *Bardmaid*, with the Bishop and his crew, including twenty-five Melanesian scholars, anchored in safety at Kohimaramā on October 20th.

And now comes the sorrowful part of our history. After they had been but a few weeks in New Zealand, George Siapo fell ill; and by degrees it became apparent that it was the will of God that George Siapo should return no more to his native island. Like George Apalé, whose history our readers had last February, he was full of faith and hope in his last days. Soon after Christmas the Bishop, to whom Siapo was much attached, was obliged to leave Auckland to go on a long journey. We are told in a letter from the spot—"the evening before he went was spent at Kohimaramā with Siapo, and the Bishop took leave of him as of one whom he was not to see again on earth. He had administered his first and last communion to him a few days before, in the full and earnest trust that he was indeed a Brother in the faith beloved in the Lord, and he parted from him in the hope of meeting him in that day, when he and the children whom God has given him, shall stand before the Judgment-seat. But it was a sorrowful parting, from

the feeling of the loss he will be to his own island, Mare, and the mission. He lingered for a fortnight longer, and died on the 14th January.

When he felt that he was dying, he spoke freely, as he had never done to any one before—'for he was a very reserved character—and it was a great comfort to find how well prepared he was for the last. He told the Rev. W. Nichill, he had thought that he might die here, and had asked his brothers to let him come over though it should be so, and they had said 'go,' and he was glad he had come—and he expressed strongly his happiness in dying in the Christian faith—and said, his sorrow was only for his people and his island. He entreated Mr. Nichill to go to them again, and charged the other Nengone lads who were with him to 'take care of Mr. Nichill' over and over his love. His dying words were of them—his love of home—yet his belief in the Catholic faith, 'I see one God, and one home for us all; good-bye, dear Mr. Nichill, who has been with us at Guama.' C— said he never saw anything more beautiful than the expression of his large, soft, dark eyes, as he lay on the sofa that morning, evidently near his end—but it was not till quite at the close that 'the fire kindled and at the last he spoke.' The Bishop had laid John Thol in his grave on 15th December, and on 15th January C— committed the body of George Siapo to its resting-place; just eight months before we had knelt by Apalé's dying-bed and prayed with him.

Siapo was the flower of our Melanesian youth, but I trust that although dead, he will yet have a living voice and influence among those that remain. There are some very pleasing specimens among them, though none equal to