

HOME CIRCLE.

COALS OF FIRE.

Farmer Dawson kept missing his corn. Every few nights in was taken from his crib, although the door was well secured with lock and key.

"It's that lazy Tom Slocum," he exclaimed one morning, after missing more than usual. "I've suspected him all the time, and I won't bear it any longer."

"What makes you think it's Tom?" asked his wife, pouring out the fragrant coffee.

"Because he's the only man around who hasn't any corn—nor anything else, for that matter. He spent the summer at the saloons while his neighbours were at work. Now they have plenty, and he has nothing—serves him just right, too!"

"But his family are suffering," rejoined his wife; "they are sick and in need of food and medicine; should we not help them?"

"No," growled the farmer; "if he finds his neighbours are going to take care of his family it will encourage him to spend the next season as he did last. Better send him to gaol and his family to the poor-house, and I'm going to do it, too. I've laid a plan to trap him this very night."

"Now, while Tom is reaping the bitter fruits of his folly, is it not the very time to help him to a better life?" suggested his wife.

"A little course of law would be most effective," replied the farmer.

"In this case coals of fire would be better. Try the coals first, William; try the coals first."

Farmer Dawson made no reply, but finished his breakfast and walked out of the house with the decided step of one who has made up his mind and something is going to be done.

His wife sighed as she went about her work, thinking of the weary, heart-broken mother with her sick and hungry babes around her.

The farmer proceeded to examine his cribs, and, after a thorough search, found a hole large enough to admit a man's hand.

"There's the leak," he exclaimed; "I'll fix that," and he went to work setting a trap inside.

Next morning he arose earlier than usual, and went out to the cribs. His trap had caught a man—Tom Slocum, the very one he had suspected!

He seemed to take no notice of the thief, but turned aside into the barn and began heaping the mangers with hay, sweet-scented from the summer's harvest field. Then he opened the crib door and took out the golden ears—the fruit of his honest toil.

All the time he was thinking what to do. Should he try the law or the coals? The law was what the man deserved, but his wife's words kept ringing through his mind. He emptied the corn into the feeding troughs, then went around where the man stood with one hand in the trap.

"Hello! neighbour, what are you doing here?" he asked.

Poor Tom answered nothing, but his downcast, guilty face, confessed more than words could have done.

Farmer Dawson released the imprisoned hand, and, taking Tom's sack, ordered him to hold it while he filled it with the coveted grain.

"There, Tom, take that," said the farmer, "and after this when you want corn, come to me and I'll let you have it on trust or for work. I need another hand on the farm, and will give you steady work with good wages."

"Oh, sir," replied Tom, quite overcome, "I've been wanting work, but no one would hire me. My family was suffering, and I was ashamed to beg. But I will work for this and every ear that I've taken if you'll give me the chance."

"Very well, Tom," said the farmer, "take the

corn to the mill, and make things comfortable about home to-day, and to-morrow we'll begin. But there's one thing you must agree to first."

Tom lifted an enquiring gaze.

"You must let whiskey alone," continued the farmer; "you must promise not to touch a drop."

The tears sprang into Tom's eyes, and his voice trembled with emotion, as he said:

"You are the first man that ever asked me that. There's always enough to say, 'Come Tom, take a drink,' and I've drunk until I thought there was no use in trying to be a better man. But since you care enough to ask me to stop drinking, I'm bound to make the trial; that I will sir."

Farmer Dawson took Tom to the house and gave him his breakfast, while his wife put up a basket of food for the suffering family in the poor man's home.

Tom went to work the next day and the next. In time he came to be an efficient hand on the Dawson place. He stopped drinking and stealing, attended church and Sunday school with his family, and became a respectable member of society.

"How changed Tom is from what he was!" remarked the farmer's wife one day.

"Yes," replied her husband, "it was the coals of fire that did it."

PLANTATION PROVERBS.

W'en a niggah's slow an' shif'less den his chances run to seed,
Kase yo' nebbber pick de cotton from de 'noxious bottom wood.

Allus fix up fur de winter wid provision 'bout de house,
Kase a cat kin nebbber trabble fro a hole wot scrapes a mouse.

W'en yo' double up in harness nebbber play de reckless fool,
Kase an ox don't wuk to 'vantage w'en he's yolked 'long-side a mule.

Nebber try to fill a bar'l f'um a scant ten-gallon keg,
Nor to win a prize at dancin' w'en yo' own a wooden leg.

Nebber turn yo' back on heaben cos yo' habent cash or lan's.
Dar's a heap ob pure religion in a pair ob horny han's.

Nebber try to preach a sarmint w'en yo' trade is hoein' corn,
Nor to pass for Marsa Gab'r'l cos yo' owns a dinner horn.

W'en yo' lookin' fur a dinner nebbber hold yo' head so high
Dat yo' miss de roasted possum racin' arter pigeon pie.

—J. Russell Fisher, in *Toldo American*.

HOUSE BUILDING.

House-building should take into large consideration the evils of stair climbing. So many lives are shortened by it. To the women who do their own work the stairs are a constant menace. If buildings are to be carried up so high, somehow it must become feasible to carry the inmates up also. The security of light and air to rooms is admitted to be indispensable; yet the provisions are so often inadequate. A single window or two on one side of a room may admit light, but is totally insufficient for air. Circulation of air in a room cannot be secured by windows on one side, unless where there are doors on the other side, which can be opened at the will of the occupant. This is a very serious embarrassment to the health in many houses. Thorough airing means far more and requires far more attention than is imagined. Physicians called to attend patients in the corner of some well-lighted room have found the air in that corner close and foul when the parts near the outside window were well aired.

A central shaft carried through the centre of these larger and closely located houses, seems to be a necessary addition, in order that air may have outflow and inflow. Even this same form of apparatus for causing draught is not infrequently essential. Pure circulating air in houses freed from dampness, and sunshine in each room, are capable

doing wonders for the health of the people. No wonder that children so often wither or grow like sickly plants. We draw the attention of those even of our smaller cities and towns to the need of such care over house construction as shall secure the blessings of a well-aired and dry and well-lighted, healthy home to our people. Our home-life needs this kind of precaution or else we shall suffer moral and social not less than physical evils.

THE STRONGEST DRINK.

Rev. O. H. Spurgeon says to the boys: Water is the strongest drink. It drives mills; it's the drink of lions and horses, and Samson never drank anything else. Let young men be teetotalers, if only for economy's sake. The beer money will soon build a house. If what goes into the mash-tub went into the kneading-trough, families would be better fed and better taught. If what is spent in waste were only saved against a rainy day, workhouses would never be built. The man who spends his money with the publican, and think the landlord's bow and "How do ye do, my good fellow?" means true respect, is a perfect simpleton. We don't light fires for the herring's comfort, but to roast him. Men do not keep pothouses for labourers' good; if they do they certainly miss their aim. Why, then should people drink "for the good of the house?" If I spend money for the good of any house, let it be my own, and not the landlord's. It is a bad well into which you must put water; and the beer-house is a bad friend, because it takes your all, and leaves you nothing but headaches. He who calls those his friends who let him sit and drink by the hour together is ignorant, very ignorant. Why, Red Lions, and Tigers, and Eagles, and Vultures, are all creatures of prey, and why do so many put themselves within the power of their jaws and talons? Such as drink and live riotously, and wonder why their faces are so blotchy and their pockets so bare, would leave off wondering if they had two grains of wisdom. They might as well ask an elm tree for pears as look to loose habits for health and wealth. Those who go to the public house for happiness climb a tree to find fish.

A CONSTITUTIONAL WALK.

Few people walk enough in winter, yet it is precisely at that season that people of close sedentary habits should walk. How grateful the crisp air is to the lungs! How clear and sweet it is to the nostrils! How it inspires and sustains one in a swinging gait of four or five miles an hour! How the cheeks glow, and the eyes shine, and the muscles tingle with delightful vigour, after such a walk through the winter sunshine! A chaise-ride is not half so good, for it robs the trip of the necessary exercise. Try it, you who seek health and strength. Winter walking as a "nervine," is a million times better than medicine, and for improving the complexion it is worth a whole harbour full of lotions and washes. It will put an edge on appetite that you can't buy at the doctor's, and in promoting digestion it is better than a corner drug-shop's entire stock of bitters and pills. If you have never tried it, take a walk. Keep your mouth closed, your shoulders well thrown back, your head up, and remember that your legs—especially your hips—were given you to walk with. Some people walk with their knees, bodies and shoulders—and no wonder they don't like it. We don't like to see them. There is an art in walking as in other things. If you don't believe it, observe the motion of some shapely woman who knows how to walk or study the gait of a man who has some spring and liveness in him. It is never too late to learn how to walk by walking.