



The Family Circle.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

I say to thee, do thou repent
To the first man thou mayest meet,
In lane, highway, or open street—

That he and we, and all men move
Under a canopy of love,
As broad as the blue sky above.

That doubt and trouble, fear and pain,
And anguish, all are shadows vain,
That death itself shall not remain,

That weary deserts we may tread,
A dreary labyrinth may thread,
Through dark ways underground be led;

Yet if we will one Guide obey,
The dreariest path, the darkest way,
Shall issue out in Heavenly day.

And we, on divers shores now cast
Shall meet, our perilous voyage past,
All in our Father's Home at last.

And ere thou leave him, say thou this,
Yet one word more—they only miss
The winning of that final bliss.

Who will not count it true, that love,
Blessing, not cursing, rules above;
And that in it we live and move.

And one thing further make him know,
That to believe these things are so,
This firm faith never to forego,

Despite of all which seems at strife
With blessings, all with curses rife,
That this is blessing, this is life.

—Trench.

MY TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS.

BY SYDNEY DAYRE.

Three years ago, I one day laid down my knitting and folded my hands and said to myself (I didn't often, you know, have any one else to say things to),

"Susannah Pratt Ryder, you've no need to fear coming to want in your old age." (Pratt was my mother's maiden name, and I was named for her.) For I had just received a certificate of deposit for two thousand dollars in the Life and Trust Bank. So now I had the interest on that, and the little house I lived in, with its acre of ground, which, planted on shares by my neighbor, Jerry Dobson, gave me my vegetables all summer and my potatoes in winter.

I had worked hard for that money, nursing, sewing, and knitting, year in and year out. I had quit nursing since the time I gave Mrs. Lawyer Primo's baby saffron tea for catnip on account of my eyesight getting bad. Sewing had to stop for the same reason, but I hope to keep up the knitting till the time comes for folding my hands and closing my eyes, for it's something to be at and doesn't interfere with thinking of bygone times or saying over a hymn or a text of Scripture, and brings me enough for my annual subscription to the Foreign Missionary Society, and a bit for any worthy object which may come along.

So, you see, I settled down as comfortable and assured as if I'd entirely forgotten what a poor business it is to place your trust in earthly riches. Before I half knew it, you'd be astonished to think how my mind got to dwelling on that two thousand dollars.

And, sure enough, if any one had little call to depend on things it was me. Time was when I'd no need to be looking out for a provision for my old age. For, ah me! there was nowhere a tenderer heart or a stronger or more industrious pair of hands than Isaac Ryder had when we came here to begin life together in this little house, and soon began laying our plans for building on to it.

There is a pretty view from it of woods and river and meadow, and just beyond the village on a low slope is the graveyard. I didn't think much then either way of the view we had of it, but now—I can't since my sight failed just make out the two short graves and one long one there, but I know exactly where they lie.

We never made the house any larger, for the little ones who came to it only stayed a short time. Then, after Isaac lay for years in consumption, the farm had to be sold, all but the house and the acre of ground. I was glad to go to work—it was my only help in forgetting the dreadful loneliness and in keeping down the cry, "If I could only have kept the little ones!"

But it was a comfort, too, to think how Isaac would find them waiting for him in heaven, for he was always great for liking to have his own folks about him. Not to say I didn't feel that way myself, but men somehow can't stand things as women can, you know. And as years went on I got used to the loneliness and settled down for a quiet old age with my two thousand dollars and my knitting, for I keep that up, bless you! yes, indeed, old eyes don't need to stop that. I got so used to doing it nights when sick folks didn't sleep and the light was poor that now, when I'm doing the ribbing, narrowing, or turning the heel, or toeing off, I'm very apt to shut my eyes.

Well, you may imagine it gave me something of a turn when Isaac's nephew, Joshua John Ryder, came and asked me to lend him that money to put into a big business he had a chance of getting into. Isaac had always set great store by Joshua John, and I felt as if he'd want me to do it, and so I did. And though I had an uneasy feeling about it all the time it did come very much as if some one had dashed a basin of cold water into my face when I was reading the "Gospel Recorder" one Sunday morning and came across a piece that said the whole business had failed. I could hardly take it in at first, the words looked so cold and hard; it seemed as if they might have said how it came about, or been regretful or something.

Well, I set up a new stocking the next day, and I knit and knit and knit, and thought and thought and thought. And the more I knit and the more I thought the more I couldn't see how I was to be spared ending my days in the poorhouse. You see, I couldn't do anything but knit, and though an old woman don't need for much, I know I couldn't quite get along on nothing at all but vegetables all summer and potatoes all winter. I began counting up what I could do without, and at last I laid down my knitting and walked down to the store and bought half a pound of thirty-five-cent tea. I'd always been particular about my tea—never could abide cheap stuff, tasting of nothing but yarbs—but I knew I'd have to begin now. When I got back I began wondering if they had tea at all at the poorhouse, and I kept thinking and thinking again till I just gave up and burst out crying.

After a while I heard a knock, and before I had time to say "Come in," in came neighbor Duffey's wife. I was rather glad to see her, for she is a good-hearted soul, though she does like to speak her mind.

"Well," she said, softer'n I'd ever heard her speak before, "what's the matter now?" I told her how I'd been feeling, and she said she'd felt just so herself, and all the neighbors were that worked up over Joshua John for risking my dependence they didn't know just how to express things.

I told her I didn't want anybody to feel hard, for it wasn't likely it was his fault at all. Then she straightened herself up in such a way that I knew she was getting at what was really on her mind.

"But I must say, neighbor, how I've been blessing my stars all day to think how I've never come out and joined the church, for all the minister's been a-laborin' with me for years to get me in. For—I don't mean no harm—but you can't help seein' what a kind of a poor business this thing of trusting in the Lord really is."

Then I straightened up, and says I, "Rebecca Jane Duffey, how you talk!"

"Talk!" says she; "well, haven't I heard you, time and again, talk about how the Lord was a-goin' to take care of you in your old age? And now here's all you've been a-workin' for and a-dependin' on sweep away at one cut."

I says, "But the Lord's going to take care of me yet."

And then she says, "Then what be you a-cryin' for, and a-feelin' like there was nothin' but want before you? And they're all the same, these Christians. When old Deacon Blount's son died, he says, 'The staff of my old age is gone!' when he's

been nigh on to forty year a-cillin' the Lord his staff." And when Mrs. Case's husband went to the bad and the mortgage on the farm was foreclosed, she said, "There's nothin' left for me now." Now, what I want to know is, do the Lord's promises to provide for his people mean anything, or do they not?"

I felt as if I was struck dumb; and before I could say a word off she went, leaving me ready to hide my face in shame and confusion. I saw it was just as she had said. Here was I, all my days been professing to trust in the Lord's care of me, feeling in a way and acting in a way to lead that poor soul to think there was nothing in a Christian profession—honestly obliged to class myself with them that bring reproach on religion.

I opened my Bible and read a bit at a time as I could see, between whiles taking a look towards the two little graves and the one large one over on the hillside in the sunshine.

It had never come before me so plain till neighbor Duffey put it to me. Did I believe the promises or did I not? And if I did, why was I so cast down about all this? And as I thought how little time I had to wait, and how short even the longest life is to wait when you come to put it beside the glory that is never to end, and how little matter 'tis if the place is not just what you'd like it to be where you're waiting to go to your Father's house, that wretched two thousand dollars seemed to grow smaller and smaller and poorer and poorer, and before the sunset had faded away from the little graveyard it seemed to have almost faded out of my mind; and the only burthen I had on it, as I lay down, was how I had, perhaps, laid a stumbling-block before that poor soul Rebecca Jane Duffey.

I was starting to go and see her in the morning, when who should come in but Joshua John. He looked down in the mouth enough, poor man, and I couldn't find it in my heart to feel a bit hard at him, as he seemed to be afraid I might. It's no use telling all he said, except one thing that quite upset me. He wanted I should go and stay with his folks for quite a while. He'd thought it all out how it was the only way he could help make up things to me. I was to let the little house and the acre of ground for one year. It took my breath away to think of it! But it was quite a ways to his house and wouldn't be worth while to be at the expense of going for less time. I looked out at the graveyard, but couldn't see even the white marble specks then for the dimness in my eyes. And it came over me that it didn't do them any good for me to stay to look out at them; but how could I leave them and the little house!

But then it came to me that this might be the very way the Lord was taking to help me, and how could I say No? I said Yes, and it went on so quick I hadn't time to think, which I was glad of. A tenant stood ready to take the little house, and all the neighbors came and helped, for Joshua John wanted I should go right home with him, and he couldn't wait long. So the next day the house that I'd never thought to leave till I was carried out and laid beside the others whisked out of my sight as Sam Duffey's spring waggon that was taking us to the station six miles off drove round the hill. Rebecca Jane was the last to speak to me, and I could hardly understand her for the catches in her throat.

"Don't you lay it up again' me one word I said, neighbor," says she. "I didn't mean a bit of it, 'cept to make you think of somethin' besides your losin' your money. I know the Lord's a-contrivin' for you and—I'm a-goin' to join the church myself next Sunday."

I was so astonished and so glad that I clear forgot to keep watch for a little chink between the hills where I might have got one more look at the little graveyard. Praps 'twas natural enough that all the way I should have a kind of a bitter feeling that I was driven out of my own home in my old age. But when I got to Joshua John's I soon felt ashamed of such a thought, for they gave me such a welcome as did my old heart good. Harriet was afraid the children would disturb me, but they all took to me so I seemed to warm to them right at once. Their pretty faces and blue eyes and curling hair (they favored the Ryders mostly—the Ryders are all

light complected) brought back long-gone days to me.

I had expected, you know, to feel strange and homesick and out of place, just longing to get back to the old place and the old ways, but somehow I wasn't. It seemed sociable like to take my knitting and sit where I could chat with Harriet as she stopped about her work. She's a great hand to get through work lively and be ready to sit down too. And soon the children got to calling out, "Where's gran'mother?" when they came in, for I'd told 'em to call me so. And when they'd wish me good night the touch of their soft little hands and lips would make me sometimes shut my eyes and try to forget all these thirty years.

So the year flew by very fast, and not a word had been said but I was to go back to the little house. Joshua John and Harriet talked as if, of course, I'd want to, and, of course, it wasn't for me to say I wanted to stay of my own invitation. But you'd be surprised to know how I dreaded going back, and how I remembered how lonesome the wind used to sigh about the chimney, and how forlorn it was to sit down to meals all by myself. And Sunday evening, when I was telling the children a story, my voice went down when I said,

"You must remember what I say when I'm gone."

And the youngest little fellow, he put his arms around my neck, and says he,

"I shan't let oo do 'way nebbber."

And they all began to cry till I just gave up. And Harriet, she put the children out of the room, and then she says, a-crying all the time,

"We haven't said anything about your staying on, me and Joshua John haven't, because we thought it would seem like we wanted you to stay because 't would be the easiest way for him to make things right with you. But—I don't know whatever we'll do without you."

I stood right up on my two feet, and says I,

"Harriet Ryder, I'm an old woman, and shan't trouble any one so very long; but the Lord's brought me to a good place, and, if I a'n't in your way, I don't want any other home but yours till I go to Isaac and the little ones."

The tenant of the little house was glad to get it for a term of years. I've made my will, leaving it to Joshua John's children.

If I hadn't lost my two thousand dollars I should never have had such a home among my own kindred in my old age.—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

A LEGENDARY MAID.

Cinderella really lived. Her real name was Rhodope, and she was a beautiful Egyptian maiden, who lived six hundred and seventy years before the Christian era and during the reign of Psammeticus, one of the twelve kings of Egypt. One day Rhodope ventured to go in bathing in a clear stream near her home, and meanwhile left her shoes, which must have been unusually small, lying on the bank. An eagle, passing above, chanced to catch sight of the little sandals, and mistaking them for a toothsome tid bit, pounced down and carried one off in his beak. The bird then unwittingly played the part of fairy god-mother, for, flying directly over Memphis, where King Psammeticus was dispensing justice, it let the shoe fall right into the king's lap. Its size, beauty, and daintiness immediately attracted the royal eye, and the king, determined upon knowing the wearer of so cunning a shoe, sent throughout all his kingdom in search of the foot that would fit it. As in the story of Cinderella, the messengers finally discovered Rhodope, fitted on the shoe, and carried her in triumph to Memphis, where she became the queen of King Psammeticus, and the foundation of a fairy tale that was to delight boys and girls two thousand, four hundred years later.

SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Paradise is for them that check their wrath,
And pardon sins; so Allah doth with souls;
He loveth best him who himself controls.

—Edwin Arnold.