

Our Home Circle.

THE DYING YEAR.

Dying? Yes, swiftly dying:— The year is passing away; Its golden hours are flying. No mortal their course may stay. 'Tis going, quickly going. With its pleasures and its woes; The tide of time is flowing, And drawing to its close.

Years passing thus, remind us That the last one soon must come, And each one left behind us Is one nearer to our Home. Nearer to Heaven and Jesus Than we were this time last year! O thought, how dear, how precious! Without which life were drear!

WAITING FOR THE GRIST.

BY MINNIE B. FENWICK.

"It is strange," said a gentleman who sat next to me in the car, and with whom I had struck up quite an acquaintance, "what an influence a look, a word, or the little act of a perfect stranger will sometimes have upon a person."

"Yes," said I; "more than any of us realize."

"It was the simple act of a stranger that changed the whole course of my life."

"Indeed! How so?" "When I was a boy, my father moved to the then Far west—Ohio. It was before the days of steam, and no great mills thundered on her river banks, but occasionally there was a little grist-mill by the side of some small stream, and hither, whenever the water was up, the whole neighbourhood flocked with their sacks of corn. 'First come, first served.' Sometimes we had to wait two or three days for our turn. I generally was the one sent from our house, for, while I was too small to be of much account on the farm, I was as good as a man to carry a grist to mill. So I was not at all surprised one morning when my father said, 'Henry, you can get up old Raan and go to mill to-day.'"

"Saunders' mill was ten miles away; but I had made the trip so often that it did not seem so far. I believe one becomes more attached to an old mill than to any other building. I can see just how it looked as it stood there under the sycamores, with its huge wheel and rough clapboard sides."

"When I arrived, I found the North Branch and Rocky Fork folks there ahead of me, and I knew there was no hope of getting home that day; but I was not sorry, for my basket was well filled with provisions, and Mr. Saunders always opened his big barn to sleep in; so it was no unpleasant time we had while waiting for our grist. The number there was an addition to the time that had been in the habit of gathering, from time to time, in the old Saunders barn—a young fellow about my own age, probably a little older. His name was Charley Allen, and his father had bought a farm over on the Brush Creek road. He was sociable and friendly, but I instinctively felt that he had 'more manners' than the rest of us."

"The evening was spent, as usual, in relating coarse jokes and playing cards. Although I was not accustomed to such things at home, I had become so used to it at the mill that it had long since ceased to shock me, and, indeed I was fast becoming a very interested spectator."

"Well, boys, it is time for us fellows to go to roost," said Jim Finley, one of the greatest roughest on the Rocky Fork, as he threw down his pack of cards and began to undress. We all followed his example, although it was not much undressing we did to sleep on the hay-mow; but we were so busy with our own affairs that we did not notice Charley Allen until Jim exclaimed, 'Heyday! we've got a parson here, we have!' Charley was kneeling by the oats-bin, praying. Jim Finley's jest met with no response. The silence was only broken by the drowsy cattle below, and the twittering swallows overhead. More than one rough man wiped a tear from his eyes as he went silently to his bed on the hay. I had always been in the habit of praying at home, but I never thought of such a thing at Saunders' mill. As I laid awake that night in the old barn, thinking of Charley Allen's courage, and what an effect it had upon the men, I firmly resolved that in the future I would do right. I little thought how soon my courage would be tested. Just after dinner I got my grist, and started for home. When I arrived at Albright's gate, where I turned off to go home, I found the old 'squire waiting for me. I saw in a moment that something had gone wrong. I had always stood in great awe of the old gentleman because he was the rich man of the neighbourhood, and now I felt my heart

beginning to beat very fast. As soon as I came near he said, 'Did you go through this gate yesterday?' I could easily have denied it, as it was before daylight when I went through, and I quite as often went the other way. Charley Allen kneeling in the barn came to my mind like a flash; and before I had time to listen to the tempter I said, 'Yes, sir; I did.'

"Are you sure you shut and pinned the gate?" he asked. "This question staggered me. I remembered distinctly that I did not. I could pull the pin out without getting off my horse, but I could not put it in again; so I carelessly rode away, and left it open."

"I—I—I—" "Out with it; tell just what you did!" "I left it open," I said, rather abruptly. "Well, you let the cattle in, and they have destroyed all my early potatoes—a terrible piece of business!"

"I'm very sorry, I'd—" "Talking won't help matters now; but remember, boy, remember, that sorrow don't make potatoes—sorrow don't make potatoes."

"I felt very badly about the matter, for I was really sorry that the old gentleman had lost his potatoes, and then I expected to be severely reprimanded at home; but I soon found that they knew nothing of the matter, and after several days had passed, I began to rest quite easy. Alas for human hopes! one rainy afternoon I saw the 'squire riding down the lane. I ran off to the barn, ashamed to face him, and afraid to meet my father. They sat on the porch and talked for a long time. At last my curiosity overcame my fear, and I stole back to the house, and went into mother's room to see if I could hear what they were talking about. 'Why, the boy could be spared well enough, but he don't know anything about the business,' said my father. 'There is one thing he does know,' said the 'squire, 'he knows how to tell the truth.' He then related the circumstance which I so much dreaded to have my father hear. After he had gone, my father called me to him, and told me that the 'squire was going to start a store in the village, and wanted a boy to help, and that I could go if I wanted to. I went, and remained in the village store until it blossomed out into a city store; and people say that I got my start in life when I entered Albright's store, but I will always maintain that I got it while I was waiting for the grist.—S. S. Times.

STOP AND OIL UP.

A dear sister once said, "I learned a good spiritual lesson to-day from my sewing machine. I was intent upon doing just so much work—but the machine became obstinate—it would scarcely run. The reason was obvious; it needed oil. As time was limited, the inclination was to go ahead in spite of the impediment; but wisdom suggested, 'It will pay to stop and oil up.'"

She thought, how like this is my soul. How often, when deeply engaged with the affairs of this life, because of an impatient desire to accomplish a certain end, I have pushed forward for the time being, regardless of my stated private means of grace until I became clogged with sore trials, and awakened to the fact that it had been better for me if I had stopped and had the soul oiled with divine grace.

The oil enables us to run with alacrity up the shining way to glory, and makes the machinery of life, whether of a domestic or business character, run a great deal smoother. Yes, it brings everything into complete harmony. It saves all grating, jarring and unpleasant sounds that would otherwise harass us. The little vexatious trials that are constantly crossing our paths will be easily smiled away. The bitter draughts will become sweet; and we can sing away as joyfully as though the discordant elements about us were in perfect harmony.

IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB.

It was on the evening of one of the gloomy days so often met with in the metropolis, that a minister sat in a poor and small, but scrupulously clean room, reading. He had chosen the parable of the invitation to the Marriage Supper (Matthew xxii.); but the words of the solemn warning fell coldly on the ear of a dying woman on the bed. She did not speak till the chapter was ended; then she said slowly, "I was like that man: I have no wedding garment."

"But you may have one if you ask," said the minister softly; you know the old, old story, Elspeth." "Ay! I ken it weel," she replied; "if I had anely done it! but I have slighted him too lang noo, an' He has left me. I am gangin' awa' in darkness; He willna save me noo." "But He says 'whosoever,' interposed Mr. Maxwell; 'whosoever cometh unto Me.'" "Ay! I ken that, but I canna come; my hert seems turned tae stone." After a few words the minister took his departure, knowing well it was useless to say more now, and that there

was nothing he could do but promise to call again on the morrow. It was many years since Elspeth Macdonald had seen her native Scotland; and those years had done much to change the natural Scotch reverence for the Sabbath and Kirk into a very empty "form of godliness."

The next day found Mr. Maxwell again at Elspeth's side, and in the interval of ease that followed a terrible fit of pain he opened his Bible, and read the account of the Saviour's sufferings. For some time Elspeth listened dreamily, but at last one verse caught her attention, the dying prayer of the suffering Redeemer, "Father, forgive them!" "Forgive them!" Almost ere they had finished their cruel task, while the agony of a world's sins pressed upon Him, He thought of their punishment and suffering, and cried "Forgive." Further on came the answer of peace and pardon to the dying thief; was not this "boundless love and mercy? dare she limit mercy like this?"

Swift as a flash of sunlight these thoughts filled her mind; surely it was a ray of healing from the arisen Sun of Righteousness, a glimpse of the glory of the Eternal lighting up her darkness, and melting the "heart of stone."

"Dinna read ony mair, my hert will break!" Elspeth lingered six weeks longer, weeks of pain; but the new peace that had come to her helped her to bear it without a murmur. "I wad like tae be very patient till He cometh tae tak me; for I've been a wastfu' bairn; I wadna hearken tae His voice, an' it winna be ower lang noo, she said to a friend when asked if she did not wish to go. And at another time:

"I greet (weep) sometimes tae ken how I hae grieved Him, and how I might hae done so muckle good by tellin' the gude news; but I ken noo the meaning o' 'savin' tae th' uttermost,' for He has saved me."

A week before her death a kind friend asked her if she would wish to be spared to tell her new-found joy. To which she replied briefly, "I will bide his time."

The last day came soon however, finding her waiting. Once she said: "I ken it is a' His gudeness that I hae nae doubt. I hae prayed for this; tae be kep' fra' a' doubts just when I am gangin' awa, an' He is kep'in' me. Father, forgie me that I dinna come tae it before!"

"You are a' get ready for the Marriage Supper tae the Lamb now?" enquired Mr. Maxwell; and with a great effort she replied:

"I shall hae a garment—white—as th'—driven—snow—washed—in—his blood—a—for—His sake."

The words came slowly; then, as the last one fell, the forgiven one went home, "for His sake."

The reason of Elspeth's joy was told in conversation with a friend on the day of her death: "I hae believed, ever sin' th' day when Mr. Maxwell read the words, 'Father, forgie them,' that his mercy is infinite. Dear leddy, you canna think how often I hae been tempted tae say, He willna save me, because I hae forgotten Him see lang; but I ken He wadna hae sent his angel to break my rocky hert, if He hadna meant tae tak it for His ain; sae I hae just come an' looked at Him, naething mair, for I hae scarcely strength tae ask Him 'ea for my bonnie robe, but 'there is life for a look.'"

"And you have been happy ever since; you have not been grieving that you did not come before?"

"Leddy, if I ainly looked behind me I wad be lost. He has blotted out my transgressions, put them awa fra me. He could do woot my poor service; its ainly showing me how naething in my hand I bring, ainly clinging to his cross."

"But that is how we all must come," said the visitor, "even after a lifetime of what we call service."

"Aye, see it is," Elspeth murmured softly; "it is ainly His presence that will do for us when we are deein; and he will come vera nigh I ken, an' I will nae fear."

"Very nigh!" Nothing but the nearness of the Saviour to comfort then; and surely His presence will be no comfort to those who can only see Him as their Judge, who will only admit those to the Marriage Supper who have the token—the wedding garment.

WOMEN IN THE PROFESSIONS.

Many of the law and medical schools of the United States are open to women on the same terms as men, and at the majority of one hundred and twenty-five theological seminaries, exclusive of the Roman Catholic, opportunities of study similar to those enjoyed by the young men are afforded them, though they may be neither matriculated nor receive a degree. The number of women practicing law is far greater in the Western States than in the Eastern, and a large proportion of the schools, especially of those connected with the State Universities, are free to them. Of the three law schools in New England, only one is open to both sexes—that of the Boston University. The

school has, however, I am informed, not yet graduated a woman. The women of the East who desire to read Kent and to learn forms of procedure prefer to obtain a legal education in the more private advantages of a lawyer's office.

In the chaotic state of ecclesiastical opinion regarding women's preaching, but few have been admitted either to the pulpit or to the theological seminary. Although the number has greatly increased in the last decade, in 1870, of 48,874 clergymen, only sixty-seven were women. The Methodist and Universalist churches have probably proved more cordial in granting clerical privileges to women than the churches of other leading denominations.

To the practice of medicine a larger number of women turn than enter both the legal profession and the clerical. The first medical school for women ever established—the Female Medical Educational Society—was organized in Boston in November, 1848. For thirty years, in both Europe and the United States, measures for giving women a thorough training in medicine have been pushed very vigorously. At times the contest between those favoring and those opposing their practice of the healing art, has been waged with the bitterness of the anti-slavery struggle. The general result, however, has been a victory for the women. In Europe there are no less than twenty-five schools of high standing, in which they can receive a medical examination, the large majority of which have been either opened to them or established with the last ten years. In India, 70,000,000 of whose women are forbidden by social custom from receiving the attendance of male physicians at their homes, several schools have been formed since 1867 for affording women the opportunity of obtaining a regular medical training. Of the eighty-eight medical schools in the United States a considerable proportion admit women on the same terms as men. According to the census of 1870 there were in the United States 62,383 physicians and surgeons, of whom 525 were women.—C. F. Thwing, in Harper's Magazine.

OPPORTUNITIES.

How many sigh for opportunities of usefulness while they never take hold of those at hand. They want something to do—something like Naaman of old, and the simple waters of Jordan are despised by them; but if we remember that life is made up of little things, and the daily consecration of these little things may bring about great results we need not look further than our every day walk and path for means of usefulness. If these words, "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," be our life motto, we shall not need to sigh for opportunities of usefulness.

A lady once writing to a young man in the navy, who was almost a stranger, thought, "Shall I close this as anybody would, or shall I say a word for my Master?" and lifting up her heart for a moment, she wrote, telling him that his constant change of scene and place was an apt illustration of the words, "Here we have no continuing city," and asked if he could say, "I seek one to come." Trembling, she folded it and sent it off. Back came the answer: "Thank you so much for the kind words. My parents are dead. I am an orphan, and no one has spoken to me like that since my mother died, long years ago." The arrow shot at a venture, hit home, and the young man shortly after rejoiced in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of peace. How often do we, as Christian young men, close a letter to those we know have no hope "as anybody would," when we might say a word for Jesus? Shall we not embrace the opportunity in the future?—The Watchman.

Our Young Folks

MABEL'S SECRET.

The first day of the New Year, and the children were quarrelling! A bad beginning. "Alice and Harriet take your knitting work. John and Henry, you may each bring nine armfuls of wood into the wood-shed. Mabel, you may take your slate and write, and I guess, if they are let alone, the two babies will take care of themselves. Now for half an hour, let us have silence. If anybody speaks let it be in a whisper."

So there was silence in the kitchen, except the noise the little mother made with her pie-making, and the occasional prattle of the two babies.

There was generally a good deal of noise at Number Thirteen; and sometimes—pretty often—it wasn't pleasant noise. The children were all young, and all wanted their own way. But they had learned to mind their mother.

Little Mabel sat with her slate on her knees, looking thoughtful. She wrote and erased, and wrote again with much pains-taking labor. At last she seemed satisfied, and going to her mother, said in a whisper:

"May I have a piece of white paper and a pencil out of your drawer? I want to copy something."

Mabel hesitated and blushed, but held it up to her saying, "You won't tell, will you, mother?"

Her mother read it twice over. Tears gathered in her eyes.

"You won't tell anybody, will you, entreated little Mabel.

"No, no, certainly not! It shall be a little secret between you and me."

She got a nice piece of paper, and sharpened the pencil anew for the child, although she was pie-making.

Mabel copied it very carefully, and laid it away in the bottom of her handkerchief box, saying—

"I shall see it often there, and nobody goes there but mother and I."

But it happened one day that Harriet was sent to distribute the pile of clean handkerchiefs from the ironing into the different boxes, and as Mabel's was empty, she saw this writing. It was so short, that she took it in at a glance:

"Resolved to Alwas spek pleasant when Ennybody speks cross."

MABEL FORD.

Somehow it fixed itself in Harriet's mind, and that evening she was busy with pen and ink. The result was a writing in Harriet's handkerchief box, with a resolution written more neatly, but the same in effect:

"Resolved, that I will try this year to return pleasant words for cross ones."

HARRIET FORD.

It made a difference that was easy to see, when two of the children began to practice this resolution. There was less of quarrelling.

"That's mine! You better mind your own business!" said John to Harriet one day, when she took up his top and was putting it in his drawer.

"But, John, mother wants me clear up the room," said Harriet.

"Well, I want the top to stay there!" said John, obstinately.

"Well, perhaps it's no matter. A top isn't much litter," said Harriet pleasantly.

John was fully prepared for a contest. I'm afraid he would rather have relished one. He stared. Then he looked ashamed. Then he spoke.

"What made you say that, Harriet?" Harriet laughed and colored a little.

"Tell me! what made you?" John insisted.

"Come here, and I'll show you," said she.

She took him into the clothes-press where was the row of pretty handkerchief-boxes, each labeled.

She opened little Mabel's and took out the clean, soft pile of handkerchiefs.

"Look there!" said she. John read.

"The good little thing! She never does quarrel, anyhow," said John.

"So I thought I had better put one in mine too," said Harriet, and showed hers.—Youth's Companion.

HOW TO BE CHARMING.

Every young girl cannot be beautiful, for to every one God has not given a comely face, nor a graceful figure. But every one can be attractive. Indeed, health and cleanliness go far to giving those bright eyes, blooming cheeks and clear skins which conduce to good looks, though some have plain and irregular features, and can easily see, by the testimony of the truth-telling mirror, that they are not remarkable for external graces. Let them comfort themselves by the thought that they may make very beautiful old ladies, if they cultivate sweetness of disposition and contentedness of mind, and trust in God's goodness and love.

How can the homely be charming? Well, true self-forgetfulness and kind thoughtfulness for the happiness of others is always winning. The vain, selfish beauty cannot compete with the homely maiden who is popular because she is very lovable. Her father confides in her. Her mother leans on her. Her friends go to her for help and advice. The little girls bring her their broken toys, and the boys come for aid when the lessons are hard.—By and by a marvellous thing happens. She is spoken of everywhere as the "interesting Miss Parker," or the "agreeable Miss Dornell," or the "captivating Miss St. Mark." She has grown interesting, agreeable and captivating, and each quality is far more valuable to a woman than the possession of mere beauty, without other winning personal characteristics.

The power to converse well is a very great charm. You think anybody can talk? How mistaken you are! Anybody can chatter. Anybody can exchange idle gossip. Anybody can recapitulate the troubles of the kitchen, the cost of the last new dress, and the probable doings of the neighbors. But to talk wisely, instructively, freshly and delightfully, is an immense accomplishment. It implies exertion, observation, study of books and people, and receptivity of impressions.—No young girl can hope to shine in conversation as her mother does, but every girl can begin to acquire that graceful art which will draw intelligent men and women to her side, and enable her to retain them, because they are pleasantly entertained.—Christian at Work.

He who talks but little may be suspected of knowing more than he says.

Sunday School

LESSON II.—JAN

THE SONG OF MARY

The occasion of Mary's intelligence conveyed that she was to be the expected Messiah, which many Jewish were in vain; and now it was who had least of all the following remarks of P. ish an appropriate Lesson.—"This hymn that of the mother of and contain several of the book of Psalms, maintained, destitute on this account? By is a very marked difference of triumph Whist! Mary celebra with deep humility a Hannah attributes be the feeling of personal very first words she cries of indignation as to the borrowed Mary gives to these entirely new meaning cation. The prophets this way with the work sors. By this mean Spirit exhibit the count of the Divine work whether Mary turned the Bible before she that every—"era from childhood the sor borah and David; that they went up to the and that the singing daily accompaniment evening sacrifice, as w sential observances of A verse to verse expos effectual way of dealit

Verse 46. This open expressed the exultati soul was filled. The tion is expressed in de in verse 47. To mag exalt His name in app and it is when we rea Saviour—when we are His salvation, that we in God and magnify separately connected. special manifestation which led Mary thus may all rejoice in Hi Even the youngest ma al ground of rejoicin Verse 48. Here she of her special rejoicin her low estate is partl true humility, and pat the low condition into David was fallen. It with prophecy that spring from a branch reduced and humble and Mary's circum But the Lord had regre lines had not preven and finding in her a dium for the accomplish purposes. From her lifted up, so that she tions will call her ble the mother of Jesus C looks forward with as nown which her exalte —to the blessing whic will pronounce upon can be farther from the meaning of her w fiction. How abhorri it of genuine humiliat the knowledge—if she —of the false use the her name—that divin paid her—that she w and called the mother venerate the name of and call her blessed should be the case, let plausible pretexts for any part of the homa God alone, or placin the trust which is du the Son of God. He with the Father, and with Him—no one t and our Saviour—but ly to Him, and throug Father.

In verses 49, 50, she and exalt those of the God, which she saw in His dealings with her—mercy. The birth of many ways, a manifest attributes; and in the His mission, all three to the world in new. I sure never before rec would in Christ be maly with His holiness t and his power wou maintaining and man Gospel which was to God unto salvation to lieve."

Verse 51. It is not germ of St. Paul's gr righteousness of God Romans in these wor is here a probable ref ent course taken by t from that which prou sone so often prescrib They had their antic circumstances of the nance of Messiah. Th that he would sprin most opulent and in families of the house all did they anticipa arise in Galilee. Th scattered the proud, he concerns the thought their hearts: He dis died all their view —Watson.

Verse 52 contains principle of the divi similarly expressed in Old Testament.

Verse 53 is simiar. striking and suggesti