



The Family Circle.

## SCHOOL LIFE.

I sat in the school of sorrow,  
My Master was teaching there;  
And my eyes were dim with weeping,  
And my heart was full of care.

Instead of looking upward,  
And seeing his face divine,  
So full of the tenderest pity  
For weary hearts like mine.

I only thought of the burden,  
The cross that before me lay;  
So hard, and heavy to carry,  
That it darkened the light of day.

So I could not learn my lesson,  
And say "Thy will be done!"  
And the Master came not near me,  
As the weary hours went on.

At last in my heavy sorrow,  
I looked from the cross, above;  
And I saw the Master watching,  
With a glance of tender love.

He turned to the cross before me,  
And I thought I heard him say,—  
"My child, thou must bear thy burden,  
And learn thy task to-day.

"I may not tell the reason,  
'Tis enough for thee to know  
That I, the Master, am teaching,  
And give this cup of woe."

So I stooped to that weary sorrow;  
One look at that face divine  
Had given me power to trust Him,  
And say, "Thy will, not mine."

And thus I learned my lesson,  
Taught by the Master alone;  
He only knows the tears I shed,  
For he has wept his own.

But from them came a brightness,  
Straight from the Home above,  
Where the school life will be ended,  
And the cross will show the love.

—Leaflet.

## A PINCHING NIGHT.

A CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR STORY.

By Charles N. Simeon.

"Your mother and I are going over to set up with the Barker child."

Pa Bascom's fingers were in the straps of one of his boots when he began that sentence. Before he finished it, though he spoke rapidly, his foot had slipped into the thick leather with an emphatic thud.

He did not seem to see how pale his Elijah's face grew. Apparently he did not hear anything nestling in the side pocket of the boy's coat. That he had been told on Monday that his lad would lead the young people's meeting that very night seemed to have disappeared from his mind as completely as his foot had in the boot.

"Be careful of the fire. And if you hear a tramping around in the barn be sure and go out and see what it means. Stay up as late as you can, so's to have the house nice and warm when you go to bed. It's going to be a pretty sharp frosty night."

"The Barkers' child is so sick that we ought to hurry all we can," she said as she pulled her hood tightly down about her face.

"Good night, Lijah, and be sure and keep up a good fire so my plants won't freeze. There's my bread I put to rise down by the stove door. You can take a look at that now and then."

That was the mother's parting injunction to her son.

"They don't seem to think or care anything about the young people's meeting. I didn't tell them, though, that Eli Wardwell was coming to-night, because I was going to lead. And I've been trying to get him out for such a long while! I'm sure he'll go back home when he sees I'm not there—and that will be the end of what I've hoped so much from. And I'll never find out now what has been holding Hi back so long."

But the sight of some bean husks in one of his father's shoes made him pause and look at them for a moment.

"Father must have been thrashing them out while I was at school to-day," he said to

himself. "And that was work that I had expected to do. His other work was pinching him, too."

Elijah could not but feel that his father had been very kind to do that.

"And he must have felt pinched and tired enough when they came after him to go and sit up with the Barker child. And mother—she's had to work unusually hard while I've been going to school. Yet neither of them complained a bit, when they were called off in this way that will hurry them so about what they had planned to do this week."

The expression of Elijah's face was greatly changed by the time he had harbored these kind thoughts in his heart. And when he had quietly put down his father's shoes in the corner, his hand slipped into his coat pocket, and he softly rustled the notes which he had written out for his talk at the Endeavor meeting.

"Must have seemed selfish to father when I slipped off by myself to write these when I came home from school. Guess it pinched his patience more than it did mine as he told me he had to go away, and that my duty was to stay at home from the meeting."

Then the merry jingle of sleigh bells rang in upon his reflections. The sound took the happy shine out of his eyes. His fingers clutched upon his notes. He knew that the Tinkhams were going to the young people's meeting. And how would the evening pass off with him absent? He could not recall a night when the leader had not been promptly on hand. And Hi Wardwell, what would he do when he found that his friend was not there? The boy again decided that the meeting would be a poor one, and that Hi would not remain at it.

"I'm just pinched up here in a corner," he flashed out as though his parents were there to hear.

A few moments later he hurried out to the barn with the lantern. He had a bushel basket in his hand. There was a great purpose in his heart, though that member thumped a little harder than usual as the boy struggled with his thoughts.

"I can't thresh beans in the barn very well, but I can shell out a lot by the fire, and when that's done I can look after some of mother's work which has got behind-hand."

Those were the resolves which made the boy hurry out so eagerly. And when he went back to the house, his steps were still lighter, though he had given one or two very longing glances towards the cosy little church in town.

A half-hour later he was singing away so cheerily at his work that he did not know any one was near the house until the kitchen door opened suddenly and there stood one of his schoolmates with a curious expression upon his face.

Before Elijah could speak his surprise, the other said impulsively: "Guess I'm the one that's got pinched this time!"

"Why, what do you mean, Oliver? Come in, come in. You look as though you were cold."

"I am rather chilly," said the other boy, awkwardly, as he came into the kitchen. "That is, outside. But I'm pretty warm about the heart."

"Didn't you want to do down to the meeting to-night? and if you did, how do you happen to be singing, and looking the way that you are?" he added abruptly.

"Yes, I wanted to go, Oliver. But—well, I'll tell you. Father and mother trusted me that I could look after things here. And I couldn't help thinking that if they did that I ought to trust the Lord to take care of the young people's meeting, when he knew I couldn't be there, and how much we had prayed about it."

"Was tougher work than getting some of the beans out of those dry pods?" said Oliver emphatically.

"It was, indeed?"

"Well, I know just how it feels. Let me have some of the pods. I can talk easier if my hands are busy. I'm going to help in the meetings after this. I've held back and said you and some of the rest weren't in earnest. I met your folks going over to Barker's. I couldn't resist the temptation to come right over here, and see how you stood the disappointment. I must say I feel better. And I'm the one that's been keeping Hi Wardwell from the meetings. I thought to-night he'd never go again if he didn't find you there. But

if he has any such feelings I shall talk them all out of him. Why, Elijah, what makes you cry, and you're not shelling a single bean!"

Oliver knew well enough, though, how such news as his had filled the boy's heart with such joy that he could only sit and look at him.

"I hoped good would be done—but I never dreamed of this," was all that Elijah could say.

"Wouldn't wonder if we'll hear more to encourage us from the meeting," answered Oliver, rubbing his own eyes in spite of his efforts to wink back the tears.

He was so earnest in that belief that neither he nor Elijah were a bit surprised when the Tinkhams called in on their way home from the young people's meeting and reported that it had been the best one ever held.

"We didn't wait a minute," explained Benny Tinkham. "I knew Elijah must have been hindered when he didn't get to the church ten minutes before the required time. I led the best I could, and we had Eli Wardwell to help us for the first time."

"We'll never forget this pinching night," laughed Oliver with the tears of joy shining on his cheeks.

"No, indeed," answered Elijah emphatically.—*New York Observer.*

## WHY WE AGREED TO GIVE A TENTH.

BY THE REV. CHARLES H. SMALL.

I was considerably stirred up by the sermon that Sunday morning, more than I was willing to admit; I said to my wife as I came in—she, poor dear soul was sick and could not go; not a "Sunday sickness," she never had that kind—I said to her, "Well, Maggie, what do you suppose our young minister held forth on to-day?"

"The Gospel," she replied in her quiet way.

"Oh, yes," I said, "it was the Gospel, I presume, but it was the Gospel of giving. He took his text from away back in the Prophets, something about robbing God." (Mal. iii. 8.)

"I don't doubt we need it, and I should like to have been there," came forth from the pillowed head in the big easy chair. Maggie was getting better and able to sit up part of the day. Nurse had the baby in the adjoining room, a fine fellow!—but that is another story, as Rudyard Kipling would say.

"The dominie set forth some pretty plain truths in very forcible language; he got well warmed up. I should have thought old Spatterwood would have winced some under it; he hugs his money as tight as a bear hugs his victim, and he has quite a little hug, too. But what I objected to this morning was the statement that very few of us gave as much as we ought. He dwelt on the Jews giving a tenth, and said he doubted if many gave a twentieth of their income in these days."

"Well, do you think we do?" asked Maggie.

"Of course, I do; you know we are very liberal. I don't think we give much under a tenth."

I got out my pencil and a piece of paper and began to set down the figures.

"Well, to begin with, we pay \$40 for new rent. Then, when that special collection was taken up for the floating debt, I gave \$10. When the home missionary collection was called for, I was stirred by the appeal and gave \$5; for the foreign work I gave \$2; for work among colored people, I gave another \$2; and then for church-building I gave \$1. There were collections for several objects; I never gave less than 50 cents; I presume in all, \$2."

"I gave five cents a week," broke in Maggie; "that is \$2.60 a year."

"Yes, and I put ten cents in the basket each Sunday; that is \$5.20. Then I gave \$5 to the charity work instead of dealing it out a little here and there unwisely, to encourage beggars in their beggary. There, I believe that is all," and I began to add it up. I added the column twice. I wasn't in much of a hurry to announce the result; in fact, it was not as great as I had supposed.

"How much is it?" quietly came from the easy-chair.

"Seventy-four dollars and eighty cents." "And our income," she went on, half to herself—she always called it our income,

counting herself a partner, doing her share at home towards getting it, and deserving her share of the use of it. I believe she is about right—"our income is sixteen hundred dollars, one twentieth of this is eighty. We fell short a little, didn't we, dear?"

"Well, yes, it seems so," I said slowly; "the result is not what I had supposed it would be."

Maggie looked at me in her gentle way for a moment and I knew there was something coming. She spoke: "It is a strange coincidence, but while you were at church I was reading an article on benevolence, in which there was this incident: It was somewhere in England, contributions were being called for to support an orphanage; a wealthy Quaker and his wife walked up to the table; he took the pen and put down five pounds; she, looking over his shoulder, said: 'Why, William, is thee not ashamed to give so little?' 'No, it is all I can afford.' 'No, no, William, thee can give more for the poor homeless ones.' 'Thee can write,' he said, thrusting the pen into her hand. She took it and put a cypher after the five, and they walked away pledged to give fifty pounds."

"My dear, I want to suggest a tenth. I think we can, and ought to give it."

I dissented, feeling all the time, however, that she was right, which disarmed me; and I finally agreed to do it.

That was a year ago. Maggie asked me last night if I thought we had better give up our tenth and go back to the old way.

"I can't do it now, for I must practice what I preach," I said. "I have been at old Spatterwood for a year, urging him to try the scheme, and he has finally consented to do it."

"And then, too, it has been quite easy and very pleasant giving the past year, hasn't it?" asked Maggie.

"Yes, it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Reader, will you not use your pencil a little and see what proportion you give, and then try setting aside a tenth each month?

Among the many excellent suggestions that have come from Mr. Gladstone is one in a recent *Nineteenth Century*, that an association be formed in which each member engages "to give away a proportion of the annual receipts, which the individual will fix, will alter, if he pleases, and which, altered or unaltered, he will not be called upon to promulgate. . . . He will, however, not fail to remember that his obligation is only to give not less than the proportion he has fixed. It does not restrain him from giving more. It is to be hoped that with practice his ideas will alter and improve." Will you not agree with yourself before God, to set apart a given proportion of your income? If you do not know what it is, make an estimate and give a proportion of that.—*Christian at Work.*

## A JEWESS CONVERTED THROUGH A HYMN.

A young Jewess was passing the door of a chapel in England. She was attracted by the sound of music, and went into the porch to listen. The minister gave out the lines—

"Not all the blood of beasts,  
On Jewish altars slain,  
Can give the guilty conscience peace  
Or wash away the stain."

She was surprised to hear mention made of "Jewish altars" in a Christian place of worship, and waited on until the next lines of the hymn were read out—

"But Christ, the Heavenly Lamb,  
Takes all our sins away;  
A sacrifice of nobler name,  
And richer blood than they."

She was more than ever startled and interested, for she felt there was something here such as she had been conscious she needed, but had never known; and so she continued to listen while the minister read, and the congregation sang the rest of the hymn. She returned home. But the truth had found its way into her heart, and it soon became known among her friends, that she had embraced the faith of Christ. When, after some time, she was on her death-bed, her greatest comfort was in this hymn, and she died while repeating one of the verses.