

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

BREAKING THE NEWS. The sunshine on the kitchen floor was darkened. Through the kitchen door came Lucy, quick as feet could run. Her long hair flying in the sun, Her blue eyes sparkling and the blood bright in her cheeks. She came and stood, Her hand on mother's ironing board, And for a moment, said no word.

THE SECRET OF THE LORD.

The following is a chapter from "Memorials of Isaac Marsden," a recently-deceased English local preacher. The book should be in every Methodist home:—

One Sunday morning while he was staying at my house, we left home together about ten o'clock, and started on our way to chapel. He slipped his arm in mine, and as we had plenty of time we walked slowly along, chatting as we went. He carried a few tracts and leaflets in his pocket, and spoke to every person he met, and invited them to the service.

He met a group of young men evidently bent on Sabbath-breaking, and very kindly invited them to chapel. As they declined to go, he warned them of their folly and sin, and told them they would find the way of transgressors very hard. Then he gave them a text of Scripture each, and asked them to commit it to memory.

He had a cheery word and a kindly invitation for everybody, and he distributed his tracts and leaflets and texts of Scripture. Suddenly, without a word to me about his intentions, he withdrew his arm from mine, and abruptly turned down a narrow passage almost blocked up by waggons and carts and farming implements; but he found his way easily across a back yard, and entered a cottage. I had passed the place hundreds of times, but had never noticed the quaint old house, with its leaden diamond-shaped window frames and its nicely sanded floor. It was in such a quiet nook that I was surprised he could find it; and as he had left me so abruptly, I followed him to learn the object of his visit.

It proved to be a 'hush shop,' where ale was sold without license and during the hour of Sunday-closing. About a dozen men were seated round a long table, smoking and drinking. He marched boldly up to the end of the table near the door, and with his heavy walking-stick in his hand, said in a commanding voice: 'Come with me to the Wesleyan chapel; my Master has sent me to call you to His service.' Then he paused, and waited for a reply; but, as no one spoke, down came his walking-stick on the table, and made the mugs and glasses dance again. 'Down on your knees, every one of you,' said he. Still they moved not; so he began to pray after this fashion:—

'Lord, I have called them, but they will not obey. As they will not come to Thee, do Thou in mercy visit them.' Then, putting his stick on the man's shoulder nearest him, he said, 'Lord, save this poor drunkard. Some of these days he will fall under the horses' feet and be crushed to death under the cart wheels, and will find himself in hell. Nothing but Thy great mercy can save him from a drunkard's grave. Lord, save him now!'

This man was the village carrier, and often his horses had found their way home from a neighboring town to their own stable door, and left him drunk and asleep by the roadside. Often he had fallen asleep a long

the parcels in the cart, and it was a work of considerable difficulty to drag his helpless form into the house. As this extraordinary prayer was being offered, he glanced at the door, and would have given his last sixpence if he could have escaped; but Mr. Marsden's bulky form blocked the doorway. He heaved a sigh of relief when the stick moved from his shoulders to the next man.

The prayer for the next man was to this effect: 'Great God, save this swearing man! He takes Thy name in vain; he cannot talk without swearing; every other word is an oath; he is sinking down to hell as fast as time can carry him. Save him, Lord!' The man seemed thunderstruck and confounded. He moved un- easily and cast furtive glances round on his companions, and then at the door. It was evident the preacher had sketched his character to the life; for some of his companions nodded their assent and smiled, while the victim himself alternately blushed and turned pale, as this terrible revelation was made.

The stick was moved to the third man's shoulders, and there came a prayer: 'Lord, save this poor gaol-bird! He has been hunted like a partridge for his sins? He has been a poacher and a thief, but Thou canst save him. Lord, seek him and save him now!' This man was the most notorious gaol-bird in the village. He had been out of prison long enough to allow his hair to grow, so there was nothing remarkable in his dress and appearance. But he was well known as a poacher and a thief, and was constantly under the surveillance of the police. His face was livid with rage, but he was so taken by surprise that he knew not how to act; so he resigned himself to his fate, doubtless consoling himself with the thought that he was getting no more than his share; for the preacher was dealing out his denunciations with the utmost impartiality.

The fourth was a young man of sallow complexion and shabby-genteel appearance; and when the stick reached his shoulders, he trembled visibly. 'Lord, have mercy on this young prodigal! He has left a pious home, and godly parents, and kind friends; and here he is reaping the wages of sin. He has lost his character, and his peace of mind, and his best friends, and soon he will lose all chance of heaven. Save him! Save him!' cried the preacher.

There was a shudder and a groan from the victim, that confirmed the truth of the preacher's words; and his comrades cast glances of mingled astonishment and approval of the preacher's conduct. Still the stick went round the table, resting on each man's shoulder in order; and the preacher gibbeted each man's besetting sin, and sketched his character to the life. How he gained this information about the place, and how he knew the men, are mysteries that I have never been able to solve. Certainly I never told him, and I don't know who had any opportunity of doing so.

There was no escape for the men. They were caught red-handed, breaking the law in drinking on unlicensed premises, and during prohibited hours. The preacher did not give any of them chance to escape; for he looked each man steadily in the eyes, and prayed with his own eyes open. He watched every movement, and noted every sigh and glance and groan, as though he read the secrets of their hearts.

When he had finished this strange-service, he resumed his journey to the chapel, as though nothing had happened. He had been keeping his congregation waiting about ten minutes beyond the usual time; but in his opening prayer he pleaded eloquently for the drunken revellers who were at that moment desecrating the Sabbath.

I am not aware that he told anybody where he had been or what he had been doing. The circumstances of his visit to the hush shop were so peculiar that the men could not keep their own counsel. They told their friends about this extraordinary preacher, and it was matter of common conversation for the rest of the day. It is no wonder therefore that the police were making very diligent inquiries about the house before the night was over.

The drunkards blamed me for revealing their hiding-place to the preacher, and furnishing him with information as to their histories, and peculiarities, and habits; and

they would not believe me when I assured them I had never said a word to him on the subject. I was as much amazed as any of them at the accuracy, power, and pathos of his prayers. If he had known them all his life, he could not have described them more perfectly.

The men were so annoyed at this exposure, and the amusement it caused to the general public, that they were anxious to vent their indignation upon him by interrupting his services. But though they were loud in talk, and collectively brave enough to suggest severe measures against him, they were individually afraid of him. They had had such revelations from him as gave them a wholesome dread of his tongue. They would think twice before any of them encountered him again.

On the following evening they were sitting smoking and drinking in the 'snug' of a well-known public house, and discussing their adventures at the hush shop on the Sunday, when he appeared opposite the window, and commenced an open-air service with a few of his friends. A notorious character, who had not been at the hush shop, was deputed to attack him publicly, while they gave him their countenance and support. The man began by interrupting the service, asking questions of an infidel character, ridiculing religion, and reviling Methodists. He was met by two or three staggering truths that fairly knocked his self-confidence out of him; and then he lost his temper and made use of the vilest language. Mr. Marsden said: 'Friends, let us pray for this poor fellow. O Lord, have mercy on this bad husband! He has broken one poor woman's heart, and almost killed another. He is not fit for any decent woman to live with; and now he comes forth as the champion of infidelity and sin. O Lord, save this "frog of the devil," this bad husband, this wicked man.' But before the prayer was ended the objector found the place too hot for him and prudently departed. I did not know till some time afterwards that he had worried his first wife to death by his wickedness, and was divorced from his second wife; but these facts lend additional importance to that remarkable prayer. I afterwards asked Mr. Marsden why he called the man a 'frog of the devil'; and he referred me to Rev. xvi. 13 for an explanation, though he added that the passage was the inspiration of the moment and exactly suited the case.

On the following evening the drunkards had some difficulty in finding a champion. As we were singing in an adjoining public-house, one of the ringleaders said to an impulsive, reckless young fellow in the room: 'Tom, thou dare not go an harken to yon felly praychin. If th' does, th' 'll get converted!' Tom said: 'If th' 'll pay for a gallon o' ale, I'll go.' The ale was paid for, and consumed by the company, and after our preliminary service in the street was over he followed us to chapel. He took a back-seat under the gallery near the door, intending to keep up a running fire of opposition as long as he prudently could, and then retreat. But the preacher spied him, and I fancy he recognized him as one of his friends from the 'hush shop,' for he soon brought him prominently before the congregation in his prayers after this fashion:—

'O Lord, save that young man by the door. He is a gambler and spendthrift, and will soon drit away to a drunkard's hell, if Thy hand does not save him to-night. He promised his sainted father he would meet him in glory; and he promised his pious mother that he would follow her to heaven. But he has forgotten his promises, and is like the prodigal, far from home and peace.'

So the life and character of poor Tom were sketched in that prayer, till the arrow of conviction was driven deeply into his soul. He fairly roared for mercy, and two or three of his companions followed his example. They spoiled an admirable sermon that night, but they gave us a most successful prayer-meeting.

Among those who followed us to the chapel were a number of navies. They had been attracted by the commotion and uproar in the streets, and doubtless expected some excitement at the service. They had more than they expected, for the power of 'Tom came like a second Pentecost, and they began to cry for mercy. One of them, a rough, brutal fellow, who was seldom sober, and

who seldom spoke without oaths and curses, looked up into the preacher's face, and with tears in his eyes said, 'Master, pray for me.'

'No,' said he, 'pray for yourself.'

'I can't,' said the poor penitent. 'But you must,' said the preacher.

'What must I say?' he asked. 'Tell the Lord how bad you have been,' was the answer.

'O Lord, I have been a bonny—and then he used some words more forcible than polite; but they were the best words in his vocabulary to express his sincere repentance and deep contrition.'

He was soundly converted, and joined Tom and several of his old companions in Christian fellowship and evangelistic work.

The 'hush shop' was closed, and the public-house lost some of its old supporters; for they became total abstainers and consistent members of Society.

Two or three new Society classes were formed, and considerable additions were made to the other classes, as the results of this raid.

There was a genuine revival of religion throughout the place, and all churches and congregations caught the infection. To use the words of a poor old woman at a love-feast afterwards: 'The Lord has been makin' new uns, un mending t'owd uns.'

THE LAW OF LOVE.

(2 KING'S IV. 3.)
Pour forth the oil—pour boldly forth; It will not fail until Thou fallest vessels to provide Which it may largely fill.
Make channels for the streams of love, Where they may broadly run; And love has overflowing streams To fill them every one.
But if at any time we cease Such channels to provide, The very fountains of love for us Will soon be parched and dried;
For we must share if we would keep That blessing from above— Ceasing to give, we cease to have— Such is the law of love. —R. C. Truesdell.

AERIAL NAVIGATION.

Germany and Russia are both pushing forward experiments in flying machines for use in war or otherwise. It appears that the direction in which these are working is the only one likely to be successful. It ignores the ridiculous inflated gas bag, which is enormous in size, difficult and costly to fill in air, and floats a gigantic derelict—at the mercy of every current of air, a huge mark for the first gunner who can hit and bring it to the ground. Baumgarten, in Germany, and Baranovski, in Russia, adopt the principle of the incline plane pressed against the air, and thus capable of making some attempt at least to regulate its own course. In the kite the power that presses the incline plane is the hand of a boy acting through the string. In the sail of a boat the resistance of water to the sidelong motion keeps the sails pressed against the wind. In flying machines the pressure is given by an engine carried by the machine, and acting by means of fans of one sort or the other. The difficulty at present is the weight of engine and fuel, but with the new development of electrical practical knowledge we may fairly expect to see accumulators which will supply the maximum of power with the minimum of weight. Then the problem of flying in the still air will be solved. Whether we shall ever be ready to ride the storm is another matter.—Pall Mall Gazette.

PEOPLE WHO MARRY.

According to the figures compiled by the clerks in the Bureau of Statistics, in 204 out of the total number of 11,085 marriages in 1882, the bridegrooms were under twenty years of age. The number of brides under that age was 2,651. The bridegrooms between 20 and 25 years of age numbered 3,922, the brides 4,662. There were 3,382 men married who were between 25 and 30 years old, and 2,121 women between the same ages. The bridegrooms between 30 and 35 years of age were 1,625 in number, and the brides 747. But 880 men and 435 women were married who were between 35 and 40 years of age. The old bachelors who became benedicts between 40 and 45 years of age numbered 447, and the women who when married confessed to the same age were 205 in number. There were 276 men and 109 women married between the ages of 45 and 50, and 150 men

and 59 women between 50 and 55. Seventy men and 20 women were married who were over 55 and under 60. The bridegrooms over 60 years of age and under 65 numbered 45 and the brides 8. The bridegrooms over 65 and under 70 numbered 10, and the brides 2. Fourteen men married between the ages of 70 and 80, but no bride acknowledged herself over three score years and ten. One bridegroom was between 80 and 90 years of age and five women refused or failed to state their ages. The record does not indicate which of the contracting parties in the above list were married for the second time.—N. Y. Sun.

TRAINING THE MEMORY.

The late Thurlow Weed had a wonderful memory. He retained faces, names, dates and facts. In answer to one who had asked him if he had ever done anything to strengthen his memory, Mr. Weed replied by giving an account of a method which had accomplished two things—it made his wife a confidant, and it developed a surprising memory. 'I had to adopt a regular method, and I hit on one that was very effective. I will tell you about it for the benefit of other young men. I got married in 1818, when I was working in Albany as a journeyman printer. 'In a few months I went into business, establishing a newspaper for myself, and some of my friends thought I was 'cut out for a politician—that is, I probably impressed my views strongly on those about me. 'But I saw at once a fatal weakness. My memory was a sieve. I could remember nothing. Dates, names, appointments, faces—everything escaped me. 'I said to my wife: 'Catherine, I shall never make a successful politician, for I cannot remember, and that is a prime necessity of politicians. A politician who sees a man once should remember him forever. 'My wife told me that I must train my memory. So when I came home that night I sat down alone and spent fifteen minutes silently to recall the events of the day. 'I could remember little at first; now I remember that could not then remember what I had for breakfast. Finally I found I could recall more. Events came back to me more minutely and more accurately. 'After a fortnight or so of this, Catherine said: 'Why don't you tell your business to me? It would be interesting, and my interest in it would stimulate you. 'Then I began a habit of oral confession, as it were, which I followed for almost fifty years. Every night the last thing before retiring I told my wife everything that I could recall that had happened to me or about me during the day. 'I generally recalled the very dishes I had had for breakfast, dinner and tea; the people I had seen and what they had said; the editorials I had written, and an abstract of them; the letters I had sent and received, and the very language used as near as possible; when I had walked or ridden—everything, in short, that had come within my knowledge. 'I found I could say my lessons better and better every year, and instead of growing irksome, it got to be a pleasure to run the events of the day in review. 'I am indebted to this discipline for a memory of somewhat unusual tenacity, and I recommend the practice to all who expect to have much to do with influencing men.'

KILLED BY A WORM.

A gentleman was walking with a friend one day through his beautiful grounds, when they came to a fine large tree that was decayed to the very core. 'That tree,' said the proprietor, 'was destroyed by a single worm. A short time since it was as vigorous as any of its companions, when one day a wood-worm was discovered forcing its way under the outer bark. A naturalist who was at that time my guest remarked on seeing it that if left alone it would ultimately kill the tree. It seemed so improbable, that the worm was supposed to remain. Gradually it bored its way into the fibre of the tree, slowly but surely doing its work. The following summer the tree shed its leaves much earlier than usual, and in the second season it was a dead worthless thing. The worm which seemed so very insignificant had found its way to the heart of the once noble tree and destroyed its life. How forcibly do we see this same thing illustrated in the common walks of every day life. A young man is persuaded by his companions to take the first glass of wine. It seems like a little thing, but it is the beginning of a course of degradation and eternal shame. The clerk in the bank appropriates a few shillings of the funds entrusted to his care. One step leads to another, until at last he is arrested and cast into prison as a defaulter. A boy begins to practice little deceits at school or at home, which, unless discovered and checked, will make him a base and unprincipled man. Such is the destructive power of little sins when the continued indulgence in them is practised.

DONT SELL IT TO THEM.

One day a young man entered the bar-room of a village tavern and called for a drink. 'No,' said the landlord, 'you have had the delirium tremens once, and I cannot sell you any more.' He stepped aside to make room for a couple of young men who had just entered, and the landlord waited on them very politely. The other stood by silent and sullen, and when they had finished he walked up to the landlord and addressed him as follows:— 'Six years ago, at their age, I stood where those young men are now. I was a man with fair prospects. Now, at the age of twenty-eight, I am a wreck, body and mind. You led me to drink. In this room I formed the habit that has been my ruin. Now sell me a few more glasses and your work will be done. I shall soon be out of the way; there is no hope for me. But they can be saved. Do not sell it to them. Sell it to me; and let me die, and let the world be rid of me; but for heaven's sake sell no more to them!'

WELL TRAINED.

A Protestant little girl being asked by the priest to attend his religious instruction, refused, saying it was against her father's wishes. 'The priest said she should obey him and not her father. 'O, sir, we are taught in the Bible, 'Honor thy father and thy mother.' 'You have no business to read the Bible,' said the priest. 'But, sir, our Saviour said in John v. 39, 'Search the Scriptures.' 'That was only to the Jews, and not to children, and you don't understand it,' said the priest. 'But, sir, St. Paul said to Timothy, 'From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures.' (2 Tim. iii. 15.) 'O,' said the priest, 'Timothy was then being trained to be a bishop, and was taught by the authorities of the Church.' 'O, no, sir,' said the child, 'he was taught by his mother and his grandmother.' On this the priest turned her away saying, 'She knew enough of the Bible to poison a parish.'

AN HONEST BOY.

In a country school a large class were standing to spell. In the lesson there was a very hard word. I put the word to the scholar at the head, and he missed it; I passed it to the next, and so on through the whole class, till it came to the last scholar—the smallest of the class—and he spelled it right; at least, I understood him so, and he went to the

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