

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

WORK ON.

Work while the day is thine,
Work for the night is near,
Work that the light may shine,
Work in the holy sphere.
A gentle voice is calling thee:
My brother, sister, work for Me.

SUMMER BOARDERS.

BY LUCY R. FLEMING.

Mrs. Hinton took summer boarders: for she was a widow, and the Hinton purse was never a heavy one, and the busy little lone woman could devise no other plan by which to increase the dimes and dollars.

But Mrs. Hinton's warm heart could not consider her boarders solely as a means of money making. She made them feel welcome to the homelike, airy rooms of the farm house, and really took a personal interest in the jaded mothers and pale children who sought health and summer rest at the Rye Farm.

"They have made all possible inquiries about everything—the water, the fruit, rooms, scenery, the post-office, and telegraph, distance to the village, but not one has asked if a church is near, or what possibility for reaching it." And Mrs. Hinton scanned the letters again.

"It may be none of my business, but surely some of these ladies and gentlemen are church members."

"None of my business?" something seemed to whisper to Mrs. Hinton. "It may be your Father's business, therefore yours."

She sat with her head on her hand a moment, and then rose, smiling brightly to herself, as she resolved, "I must show them that they are in a Christian house; may be the Lord is putting two kinds of work in my hands this summer. I shall try and do both heartily as unto him."

The first evening the boarders gathered at the farm table, abundantly and tastefully spread, the buzz of talk and laughter, and the unfolding of napkins were stayed at sight of Mrs. Hinton's bended head, and a low yet distinct voice asked for a blessing on the evening meal. There were surprised looks, and smiles, and covert whispers.

"A blessing at a boarding house table—did you ever!" But Mrs. Hinton's heart was gladdened when a lady paused near her after supper and said heartily:

"It seems to make me feel at home at once, to hear a blessing asked at the table." And little Nell Gray slipped up and said, "Father says those words at home, and I'm glad you do too."

It is always the first step that costs, and after that evening, guests and waiters paused respectfully for the expected words of thanks.

When the Sabbath came, balmy and beautiful, the ladies in crisp morning toilets, and the gentlemen in their lounging suits, were gathered on the cool piazza, and Mrs. Hinton came among them saying pleasantly:

"Our church is within walking distance, but the carryall is at the service of those who cannot walk, and wish to go. I hope some of you will go. Our minister will be glad to see you."

There was a pause, and Miss Stratton's conscience gave her a quick stab, for she had deliberately resolved "to let religious things alone, while she was in the country."

"I felt," she said afterwards, "as if I think Balaam must have felt when he saw the angel of the Lord standing in his path." But she went to church that Sunday, and every other while she was at Rye Farm. She took the Bible from her trunk, and the works of love which the autumn and winter witnessed in her home and church life showed that not an angel only, but even the Spirit of the Lord had come with a still small voice to Helen Stratton. And Mr. Edwards, who had gradually let himself slip away from his Sabbath-school work, before he left the city, became so interested by his visit to the country Sunday-school, that seeing a need of teachers, he complied with the invitation to take a class, and so delighted the boys with his genial manners, and clear, ready explanations, that some others beside the teacher himself found that summer best to their spiritual health.

There was sickly, despondent Mrs. Curtis, who, at first, went to church "just for the ride," but before her summer vacation ended found such good tidings brought her by the earnest minister's lips, that a new life sprang up in her heart, and she learned to lean upon the arm that never tires, and to her little country church became the very gate of heaven.

"I am so glad I came here," she said when parting from Mrs. Hinton, and when a few months later Mrs. Hinton heard of her death, she said, "I am so glad, too, for I think God gave her a new peace here."

The minister, too, was cheered and stimulated by the increase of his congregation, and the appreciative faces lifted to his, Sunday after Sunday. When Mrs. Hinton thanked him one day for a good sermon, she little thought that striving to help her boarders, she had been God's instrument in helping her pastor also.

Only being a Christian in her own home—only speaking a word at the right time—it did not seem a great thing to do. But so great was it, that the backslider was reclaimed, the faith of some strengthened, light brought to the darkened, and the Master's cause upheld.

MRS. BEECHER.

The wife of Henry Ward Beecher has recently been communicating some interesting details of her early housekeeping experiences to an inquisitive reporter. When she married, Mr. Beecher was the minister of a small church out West, with a stipend of £75 per annum. As the congregation consisted of twenty-four women and one solitary man, who was afterwards excommunicated, the only wonder is that they were able to raise so much. They began house-keeping in two small rooms over a store; and this is the way in which they furnished them; "My brother gave us a piece of carpet, and other members of the family gave us a cooking stove and two lamps. A classmate of Mr. Beecher gave him a set of knives and forks, and a friend gave a set of crockery. When we got home we asked permission to paint the dirty floor. The proprietor denied our request, because he was afraid it would rot the wood. Mr. Beecher threw off his coat, rolled up his sleeves, and helped me to scrub the rooms with soap, water, and sand. It was some days before the stains were got out. We were given a table and a double bed, and I made mattresses of cheap material, and filled them with busks. Then Mr. Beecher wanted a bookcase. I saw a dilapidated old washstand lying in the yard. It was very far gone, but Mr. Beecher got it fastened together, put some shelves on it, and it answered nicely for a bookcase. On a piece of wire stretched across one corner of the room I hung a curtain of fourpenny calico and kept behind it my washub, flour barrel, and cooking utensils. On a stick across the top Mr. Beecher hung his saddle. I fastened some sticks to the legs of the single bedstead, and made it a high four-poster. I hung a canopy about it, and on a piece of tape inside we hung our clothes. When we had company we took the canopy down." They had a hard struggle in making both ends meet, but Mrs. Beecher agrees with her husband in regarding these early days as the happiest in their life.

Wise men, after the fact, are always prophets. But we never hear their voices in time to profit by them.

OUR LATTER DAYS.

A cloudy morning, and a golden eve
Warm with the glow that never lingers long;
Such is our life; and who would pause to grieve
Over a fearful day that ends in song?
The day was gray, and dim with mist and rain;
There was no sweetness in the chilly blast
Dead leaves were strewn along the dusky lane
That led us to the sunset light at last.

'Tis an old tale, beloved; we may find
Heart-stories all around us just the same.
Speak to the sad, and tell them God is kind;
Do they not tread the path through which we came?
Our youth went by in recklessness and haste,
And precious things were lost as soon as gained;
Yet patiently our Father saw the waste,
And gathered up the fragments that remained.

Taught by His love, we learnt to love aright
Led by His hand, we passed through dreary ways,
And now how lovely is the mellow light
That shines so calmly on our latter days.

SYMPATHY FOR THE SORROWING.

How few are able to console a friend in the anguish of bereavement! Even the most kind-hearted persons fail in this task because it is almost impossible for them to enter into the condition of the sufferer or to produce in their imagination feelings which they have never experienced, or having experienced, have forgotten. So in cases of excessive joy, few real sympathizers can be found, though many kind-heartedly disposed persons may offer congratulations. Fortunately, however, these extremes of feeling in either direction are rare, and the ordinary experiences of mankind are such as are at least possible for most of us to realize. The degree to which we do this, however, depends largely upon the delicacy of our perceptions and the manner in which we cultivate them.

Some persons seem to have an intuitive knowledge of the feelings of others. They can detect shades of pleasure and of pain, of approval and disapproval, of hope and fear with an almost unerring instinct. They quickly learn what is likely to excite their various emotions, and thus acquire the power of arousing or subduing them. How they use this gift depends upon the quality of their hearts. If they are generous and kind, they will become true sympathizers, and sow seeds of happiness all around them. Without any embroilment or artificial method, they will console distress, calm anger, subdue irritability, say and do pleasant things, and avert what is disagreeable, thus diminishing the sorrow and adding to the joy of all around them.

GOOD ENOUGH WEATHER.

"If a long season of inclement weather is not sufficient excuse for my failing to plant more than four Sunday schools during the past month, then I can offer no other," writes a Southern missionary. "No complaints, however, about the weather," he adds, "for I shall not soon forget a little rebuke I received a short time ago while stopping to warm and take shelter from a storm in a freed-man's humble home.

"What a dreadful day this is!" escaped my lips as I greeted old Aunt Judy on entering her cabin door.

"Bress de Lord, honey," said she, "don't ebery ting come from de Lord? Den, if ye is a Christon, the wedder is good 'nuff for ye; and if ye ain't no Christon, de wedder is more'n too good for ye."

"The harder it rained the louder did Aunt Judy sing, 'Tank de Lord for eberyting!'

"After awhile the storm ceased, and with thanks for her kindness, I put a few dimes into the hand of the pious old woman to help her get a pair of Winter shoes: 'Good-bye, Aunt Judy, your short sermon is well worth a collection.' Soon the cabin door was out of sight, but my pathway seemed to grow brighter, and 'de wedder has been good 'nuff' ever since."

AT THE GATE.

The pastor of St. John's Church (Lutheran), New York, among other incidents of his ministry, contributes the following:

"Part of the wall of a burned house had fallen on a six or seven-year old boy, and terribly mangled him. Living in the neighborhood I was called to see the stricken household. The little sufferer was in intense agony. Most of his ribs were broken, his breast-bone crushed, and one of his limbs fractured in two places. His breath-

ing was short and difficult. He was evidently dying. I spoke a few words to him of Jesus, the ever-present and precious Friend of children, and then, with his mother and older sister, knelt before his bed. Short and simple was our prayer. Holding the lad's hand in mine, and repeating the children's gospel—'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of heaven,' he disengaged his hand from mine and folded his. We rose from our knees. His mind began to wander. He called his mother. 'I'm sleepy, mamma, and want to say my prayers.' 'Do so, darling,' replied the sobbing mother.

"Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep;— If I—should—die—"

"He was beyond the river of death. On the wings of that simple prayer, that has borne so many of the lambs into the Good Shepherd's bosom his soul had sped to him that gave it.

"I can see his little pale figure, with clasped hands and closed eyes, like a sleeping angel before this moment, though more than nine years have passed since the incident occurred.

"How that mother treasured that prayer! No sermon, probably, ever made the impression on her heart that those few lines made, coming from the lips so soon to be speechless forever.

God bless the unknown hand that wrote these four beautiful lines!"—Early Dec.

THE LABOR OF AUTHORSHIP.

David Livingstone said, "Those who have never carried a book through the press can form no idea of the amount of toil it involves. The process has increased my respect for authors and authoresses a thousand-fold.

I think I would rather cross the African Continent again than undertake to write another book."

"For the statistics of the negro population of South America alone," says Robert Dale Owen, "I examined more than a hundred and fifty volumes."

"Another author tells us that he wrote paragraphs and whole pages of his book as many as forty and fifty times.

It is said of one of Longfellow's poems that it was written in four weeks, but that he spent six months in correcting and cutting it down.

Butcher declared that he had rewritten some of his briefest productions as many as eight or nine times before their publication. One of Tennyson's pieces was rewritten fifty times.

John Owen was twenty years on his "Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews"; Gibson, on his "Decline and Fall," twenty years; Adam Clarke, on his "Commentary," twenty-six years.

Carlyle spent fifteen years on his "Frederick the Great." A great deal of time is consumed in reading before some books are prepared. George Eliot read one thousand books before she wrote "Daniel Deronda." Alison read two thousand books before he completed his history. It is said of another that he read twenty thousand books, and wrote two books.

Some write out of a full soul, and it seems to be only a small effort for them to produce a great deal. This was true of Emerson and Harriet Martineau. They both wrote with wonderful facility. These "moved on winged utterances; they threw the whole force of their being into their creations."

Others wait for moods, and then accomplish much. Lowell said:

"Now, I've a notion, if a poet
Beat up for themes, his voice will show it;
I wait for subjects that hunt me,
By day by night won't let me be,
And hang about me like a curse,
Till they have made me into verse."

A DOMESTIC REVELATION.

It has always been a mystery to many family men how their servant girls could dress better than their wives, but a Cincinnati man has accidentally stumbled upon the solution to the problem, and it is now an open secret. He paid his cook \$2.50 per week and she had as fine an assortment of jewelry and dresses as his wife, and the pair had secretly wrestled with the puzzle it suggested, until finally they engaged a new cook. The new girl was honest! What high wages that female ought to receive! As the husband tells the story to the Commercial: "She

had been sent out to a certain grocery to do some marketing, and, while gone, was accosted by another grocer and offered by him a silk dress if she would give him my trade. Being honest she came straight home and told of it. This set my wife to thinking, and she asked the girl if that was a common practice. 'Oh, yes,' she replied, 'but I never would beat my mistress that way.' The inquiry developed the fact that the servant girls, especially the cooks who do most of the marketing, 'stand in' with the grocers and meat men, and carry their custom where they can make the best commissions. When I lived in the city I did my own marketing, but when I moved out on the Hills I arranged with a grocer to supply me and took a pass-book. I gave this to the cook, with directions to always buy the best of everything at that place. The same was done with the butcher. Soon the tea and coffee became unfit to drink, the butter was bad, and the meat, from the place where I always got the best, was tough and almost unfit for use. My wife complained, and the girl told her that that grocer and that meat man cheated her or did not keep first class articles, but she knew where she could get the best of everything. We accordingly withdrew our patronage from our old places, and the change was immediately apparent, for everything appeared on the table in first class condition. How did I account for it? Why, simply this way: The girl had been hired by the other grocer and butcher, by a percentage of what she purchased, to spoil the tea and coffee from the old grocer, and to get inferior meat of the butcher as a pretext for leaving them, and she carried out the terms of the contract. We came to notice that whenever we changed cooks we likewise changed grocers and butchers, until we employed the honest one who 'put us on to it.'"—Boston Globe.

THE FAMILY ALTAR.

I can never forget the time when the family altar was erected in my house. The pastor had preached a faithful sermon on Christian duty, and had dwelt on religion in the family, and especially the duty of all Christians to raise the family altar. The sermon was full of pathos and appealed to all our hearts and consciences—wife and I talked of the sermon as we journeyed home, and both had been impressed as never before.

On repairing to my chamber at the usual time for retiring that night, I found her seated in her accustomed place, the babe, our first born, sleeping in the cradle and upon the little stand was the Bible, and with a sweet smile she said; "Husband, suppose we begin to-night." There was no retreat, and then for the first time my voice was heard in prayer in my family; it was many long years ago, and she who then so gently and sweetly led me in the path of duty has gone to her reward, yet the recollection of that occasion, and of her who under God was the author of it, will ever be fresh in my memory. Imperfectly, I fear, the duty has been performed, sometimes neglected, but never, without that memorable night coming vividly to my mind.

Christian mothers, have you a family altar?

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

AT THE TABLE.

I wish mother would never have company. A fellow can't get enough to eat when people are staring at him.

As I was visiting Frank's mother at the time, I thought this remark was rather personal. I suppose I blushed. At any rate Frank added:

"Now, Aunt Marjorie, I did not mean you; I meant strangers, like ministers and gentlemen from out West, and young ladies."

"Oh!" said I; "I am very glad to be an exception, and to be assured that I do not embarrass you. Really, Frank, it is an unfortunate thing to be so diffident that you cannot take a meal in comfort when guests are at the table. I suppose you do not enjoy going out to dine, yourself?"

"No," said he; "I just hate it." Perhaps one reason why boys and girls do not feel so comfortable and at ease as they might on special occasions at the table is because they do not take pains to be perfectly polite when there is no one present but the ordinary home folks. In the first place, we owe it to ourselves always to look

very neat and nice at our own tables. Boys ought to be very careful that their hair is brushed, their hands and faces clean, their nails free from stain and soil, and their collars and ties in order before they approach the table. A very few moments spent in this preparation will freshen them up, and give them the outward appearance of little gentlemen. I hope girls do not need to be cautioned thus.

Then there are some things which good manners render necessary, but about which every one is not informed. You know that you are not to eat with your knife. When you send your plate for a second helping, or when it is about to be removed, leave your knife and fork side by side upon it.

It is not polite to help yourself too generously to butter. Salt should be placed on the edge of the plate, never on the tablecloth. Do not drink with a spoon in the cup, and never drain the last drop. Bread should be buttered on the plate and cut a bit at a time, and eaten in that way. Eating should go on quietly. Nothing is worse than to make a noise with the mouth while eating, and to swallow food with noticeable gulps.

Do not think about yourself, and fancy that you are the object of attraction to your neighbors.—Harper's Young People.

BOYS, BE OUTSPOKEN.

"I take no stock in a man who is known as a mush of concession," said a speaker, addressing a public meeting. The phrase is more forcible than elegant. But it expresses the contempt felt for the timid and subservient man who perverts St. Paul's example and becomes all things to all men.

The outspoken Hamlet could not help despoiling the courtier Polonius after this conversation:

Ham.—Do you see yonder clod that's almost in shape of a camel? Pol.—By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham.—Metinks it is like a weasel.

Pol.—It is backed like a weasel.

Ham.—Or, like a whale?

Pol.—Very like a whale.

Every man, whose good opinion is worth having, respects the antagonist who has courage to declare his convictions. The fact is illustrated by an anecdote told of George Moore, the English merchant and philanthropist.

Mr. Moore was a religious man whose Christianity was a part of himself, and went wherever he went. He loved the Bible, and was not ashamed to avow his faith in it as God's word.

He was dining at a friend's house, when one of the guests, a gentleman of "advanced thought," ventured to say, "Surely there is no one here so antiquated as to believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures?"

"Yes, I do," said George Moore, speaking up promptly, from the other side of the table, "and I should be very much ashamed of myself if I did not."

Silence followed, and the gentleman did not pursue the subject. In a few minutes the ladies went to the drawing room, and the gentleman followed.

"Can you tell me," asked the skeptic of a lady, "who is the gentleman who so promptly answered my enquiry in the dining-room?" English etiquette does not permit the introduction of the guests.

"Oh yes; he is my husband, Mr. George Moore," answered the lady in a tone which indicated that she was proud of him.

"I am sorry," continued the gentleman, "you have told me that so soon, for I wished to say that I have never been so struck with the religious sincerity of anyone. I shall never forget it."—Youth's Companion.

Good Luck.—Some young men talk about good luck. Good luck is to get up at six o'clock in the morning; good luck, if you have only a shilling a week, is to live upon eleven pence and save a penny; good luck is to trouble your head with your own business, and let your neighbors' alone; good luck is to fulfill the commandments as to do unto other people as we wish them to do unto us. They must not only work, but wait. They must plod and persevere. Pence must be taken care of, because they are the seeds of guineas. To get on in the world, they must take care of home, sweep their own doorways clean, try and help other people, avoid temptations, and have faith in truth and God.—De Fraine's Lectures.