

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

NOT KNOWING.

I know not what shall befall me;
God hangs a mist o'er my eyes;
And so at each step in my onward path
He makes new scenes to rise,
And every joy he sends me
Comes a strange and sweet surprise.

I see not a step before me
As I tread on another year,
But the past is still in God's keeping,
The future His mercy shall clear,
And what looks dark in the distance
May brighten as I draw near.

For perhaps the dreaded future
Is less bitter than I think;
The Lord may sweeten the waters
Before I stoop to drink,
Or if Marah must be Marah,
He will stand beside the brink.

It may be He is keeping
For the coming of my feet
Some gift of such rare blessing,
Some joy so strangely sweet,
That my lips will only tremble
With the thanks they cannot speak.

Oh, restful, blissful ignorance,
Thou blessed not to know;
It keeps me so still in those arms
Which will not let me go,
And hushes my soul to rest
On the bosom that loves me so.

So I go on not knowing;
I would not if I might;
I would rather walk in the dark with God
Than go alone in the light,
I would rather walk with Him by faith
Than go alone by sight.

My heart shrinks back from trials
Which the future may disclose,
Yet I never had a sorrow
But what the dear Lord chose;
So I send the coming tears back
With the whispered words,—He knows.

HOW A CHRISTMAS CARD
SAVED A LIFE.

Merry Christmas time was drawing near, and I wanted some pretty illuminations to give away, so I went one morning to where I knew I should find a beautiful variety. While I was looking over a multitude of mottoes, and, making my choice, I noticed a lady near me, apparently bent on the same errand. After a few minutes, as she seemed unable to find what she was seeking, I asked her if there were any among those I had chosen which she particularly liked.

She thanked me pleasantly, and said she had selected all she wished except one, and she felt sure of finding it among the unassorted cards, for it had been published, she thought, by the Tract Society only the year before.

"It is one with purple pansies—heart's ease, you know—and the verse,

"Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you."

I want it for a special use," she said; and then added impulsively, "Those words saved a life—a soul—last Christmas. You don't wonder they are precious!"

Then, in a few words, she gave the outline of the story of one who had, through terrible trials, lost faith in human love, truth and honor, and, worst of all, in his misery had made shipwreck of his faith in God.

It was Christmas Day. He started to leave the house with the full purpose of committing suicide. The children were just coming home from a Sunday-school Christmas-tree, eager and happy with their pretty presents. He stole out through a room from which they had passed, so that no one might see him leave the house. Lying on the floor, just where he must step to cross the threshold, was a card, with purple pansies and the words, "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." Startled, thrilled by that message from heaven facing him, as if to drive him back from his wicked, cowardly purpose. Faith in God and his love came back, and with it came courage and strength to take up the heavy burden of a bruised and shattered life. God did care for him, and was a very present help in trouble.

The story touched me deeply, and has often recurred to me since, though I have never seen the lady again, and know nothing further of the circumstances. It always comes back with special force whenever I have to choose Scripture verses to give away. Since we have the promise, "My word shall not return unto me void," may we not rightly ask God's peculiar blessing on these little messengers, which go to so many homes we may never enter? I could not help thinking that perhaps some one had been praying "in secret" for God's blessing on that very message.

The hand of God was so clearly in it all, guiding the choice of the text, providing that this one and no other should be given to the little child, that her chilled fingers should carry it safely through the streets, and then drop it at the very moment, and in the only place, where it would save a life, that it seemed to me that it would be for his honor to repeat the story of his loving care, which came to me so strangely.

May it be the Father's message to some other poor troubled heart, assuring him of the faithfulness of him who "will not suffer us to be

tempted above that we are able; but will with the temptation make a way of escape, that we may be able to bear it." May it remind him of One who was wounded for our transgressions, and on whose tender, human heart we may to-day cast all our sins and our sorrows, and our cares, and be sure that he will care for us.—M. L. Demarest.

ORIGIN OF THE GYPSIES.

The later researches of Potts, Micolosich, and others, leave no doubt as to the Indian origin of the Gypsies, although the exact tribe from which they sprang has not been as yet, definitely ascertained. Many of the individual words, such as *pani* (water) are identical in Gypsy and Hindustani; but the grammar of the first mentioned language, as shown in the mutilated form which remains in English Romany and the more perfect system of the Turkish Tchingianes, is quite different from most of the modern vernaculars of India, and has but few points of contact with the older dialects. There are in India several tribes whose characteristic habits are very similar to those of the Gypsies of England. The Jats, Naths, and Brinjaries, for example, singularly resemble them; and a very good case has been made out in favor of the first mentioned as the original Gypsy stem. It is a historical fact that somewhere about the year 420 A. D. a number of strolling minstrels did find their way into Persia; they were called *Lurs*, and are described by Firdousi in terms which might equally well apply to a band of English Romanyes. The word "Luri" is still used in Persia for strolling minstrels and vagabonds; while, under the form *Nuri*, it is the generic appellation of Gypsies in Syria and Egypt. Arab historians speak of these people under the alternative name of *Zutt*, which, with much reason, believed to be a corruption of *Jat*. The Gypsies call themselves everywhere "Rom" or "Romany," which would point to the "Dom" or "Rom" tribe as their original stock, the initial letter of the word being equivalent to their D or R. These people, who are principally found in Behar, are essentially a roving tribe. Among other things which distinguish them from other Hindu castes, is their indifference to ceremonial impurity, such as that which arises from touching a dead body, and their liking for swine-flesh. Now Gypsies in Europe are very peculiar in their eating, and are, perhaps, the only race who will eat animals that have died a natural death. *Mullo Baulo*, "dead pig," is their favorite delicacy; and one of the most typical and most amusing of the Romany ballads which Borrow has collected, celebrates the trick formerly so common among them, of poisoning a pig in order the next day to beg its carcases for food.—*Saturday Review*.

GOOD MANNERS.

It is a mistake to regard manners as something external or distinct from the nature, to be put on or taken off at will. The bearing to which we instantly accord respect, is the outward blossoming of an inward growth, and bears the same relation to character that the flower does to the plant, not absolutely necessary to its existence, but a graceful expression of internal qualities which give it strength and vigor. Some foreigner once said of Abraham Lincoln that he was a grand gentleman in disguise. In him the outward expression, though far removed from Chesterfieldian polish, was still so true to qualities to which the world accords its highest respect, that it became a good manner of its own, and thus proved the truth of the assertion in regard to growth. A fine manner pre-supposes a certain force of character and firmness of purpose which invest the owner with composure and self-respect—a certain equipoise which enables him to possess his soul in peace, where a mind that is not so ballasted goes careering about in every breeze, a source of discomfort to itself and all who behold it. It also pre-supposes a kind heart and a quick sympathy for others. There are native characteristics wanting where a smooth exterior is of little real value. Shall we not then cultivate good manners? May we not acquire a gentle, courteous demeanor, to which we may not have been born? Most assuredly; but unless we conform to the law of development just expressed, we shall achieve no success worthy of the name. Let us suppose a harsh, vindictive nature assuming the gentle manner of one who feels and lives unselfishly. In a moment of forgetfulness—and such moments will come—the mask drops off and discloses the real man

who lives behind it. For those who behold the disclosure there is no possibility of forgetfulness, and for them the mask will not only fail to do its work, but will produce a sense of incongruity that will give absolute discomfort. Duplicity never succeeds to any great extent. A greater amount of thought and force must be given than with a higher motive would be necessary to insure the genuine feeling whose outward expression we desire. If we feel kindly we shall act kindly.

IRON-SHOD.

The safety of a mountain climber depends upon being *well shod*; therefore the Swiss guides wear heavy shoes with sharp spikes in the soles. On a bright July morning a famous man of science started with two gentlemen to ascend the Piz Morteratsch, a steep and lofty snow mountain in Switzerland. Though experienced mountaineers, they took with them Jenni, the boldest guide in the district. After reaching the summit of the Morteratsch they started back, and soon arrived at a steep slope covered with thin snow. They were lashed together with a strong rope, which was tied to each man's waist.

"Keep carefully in my steps, gentlemen," said Jenni, "for a false step might start the snow, and send us down in an avalanche."

He had scarcely spoken when the whole field of snow began to slide down the icy mountain side, carrying the unfortunate climbers with it at a terrible pace. A steeper slope was before them, and at the end of it a precipice. The three foremost men were almost buried in the whirling snow. Below them were the jaws of death. Everything depended upon getting a foothold. Jenni shouted loudly, "Halt! Halt!" and with desperate energy drove his iron-nailed boots into the firm ice beneath the moving snow. Within a few rods of the precipice Jenni got a hold with his feet, and was able to bring the party up all standing, when two seconds more would have swept them into the chasm.

This hair-breadth escape shows the value of being well-shod when in dangerous places. The lesson is especially needed by the young. No boy is prepared for rough climbing unless he is well shod with *Christ's* principles. Sometimes temptation tries the track under him, and then he must plant his foot down with an iron heel or he is gone. A poor boy of my acquaintance signed a pledge never to taste liquor. One day his rich employer invited him to dinner. There was wine on the table, but the lad was not ashamed to say,

"No, I thank you, sir; I never touch it!"

Then came on a rich pudding, which the boy tasted and found that there was brandy in it; so he quietly laid the tasted morsel back on his plate. The employer discovered that the boy had "pluck" enough to stand by his convictions, and he will never be afraid to trust him. He is a sure-footed boy.

God knows what steep places lie before us. He has provided the "shoes of iron and brass" for us to put on. They are truth, and honesty, and faith, and courage, and prayer. A clear conscience will keep the head cool. And up along the hard road there is a sign-board, on which is written in large, bright letters, "He that walketh uprightly walketh surely."—*T. L. Cuyler*.

NAMELESS GRAVES.

On sunny slopes of the quiet hills,
On primrose banks of the forest hills,
The nameless dead are sleeping;
By the lonely firs in the mountain glen,
Where bitter winds are keeping;
On the sad sea shore where the tempest raves,
Humble and many are the nameless graves.

Who owneth a tear and will not weep
O'er the unwritten words that sleep
Under those mounds of sorrow?
How they longed for day, as night passed away,
And met no glad tomorrow!
O, warm is the dew that sometimes laves
The wild flower wealth on those nameless graves.

O think of the dead, and lightly tread
The turf that covers such lowly heads,
Their struggling past remember;
Think well of the gloom that surrounded their doom.

Life that was all December,
And think of their faith, poor sorrowing slaves,
While you drop a tear on their nameless graves.

A day is set in the Book of Time
When the trumpet of the Great Sebbins
Earth's weary ones shall waken;
The cold dead shall rise to purified skies,
And tombs shall yawn forshen.
O, then we shall know that the grace which saves
Hath many dear hearts in the nameless graves.
—*Wm. Lyle*.

THE FOUNDATION OF CALICO PRINTING IN AMERICA.

Amasa, the father of William Sprague, laid the foundation of calico printing in this country in 1828, and erected his mill on the site of his present Cranston print works. The difficulties which young American printers were obliged to overcome were stupendous. For a long

time Amasa struggled with almost insurmountable difficulties, displaying a perseverance seldom seen. Sometimes the fabrics were ruined by the acids, and sometimes the colors would run together and produce the most disastrous results.

The difficulties seemed to increase in number. Thousands and thousands of yards were often ruined, and what were then considered small fortunes were more than once lost in this way. Amasa Sprague, however, was not to be foiled, and he determined to go to Europe to see how the business was done there. He knew beforehand that it was the purpose of the English manufacturers to conceal their process of the art of dyeing, bleaching and printing. The only way then, was for him to secure work in some establishment, and this he succeeded in doing for the compensation of only a few shillings a week. Step by step he gained favor and advancement from his employers, until at last, to his great happiness, he was promoted to some position in the coloring room, where he learned the long coveted art. When he felt satisfied that he had acquired sufficient knowledge of it he returned home. He started his print-works in the town of Cranston, and gradually advanced in prosperity.

LOGIC AT HOME.

"Mamma, you must let me go to dancing-school, indeed you must."

"No, my child, papa does not like it."

"But mamma, all the girls in school go."
"No matter, my child; papa does not think it is the right thing for persons like us, for church members, to send their children to such places."

"But what is the harm, mamma?" replied Susie, mentally recording a verdict against church members and all belonging to them, "the Strongs, and the Weeks, and the Smiths, and the Joneses, and Lillie Brown, the clergyman's daughter, are all in it. Everyone goes mamma."

Mamma, weakening a little, agrees to talk to papa. She tells him how odd the child feels, doing differently from the rest; how much it may be against her; how she must have associates, and how all of their set see no harm in the thing. Her plea is successful. Susie goes to the dancing-school because *they* all do it.

"I'm very unhappy about Frank," says Susie's father, as he walks his room, half undressed, about midnight; he's out almost every night till after twelve; I wish you would speak to him. And he never goes to church.

"Why don't you speak to him yourself?" is the reply of Frank's mother. "A father is the natural person to talk to a young man. Frank's not a child."

There is more discussion about it, with a little tendency on the part of each to lay the blame on the other. Frank's father does not tell however, what he happens to know about Frank's fashionable friends as theatre-goers, and about certain 'troubles' in which some of them have become involved that promise badly for them as business men and as husbands.

At length he makes up his mind to speak to Frank.

"Frank, my boy, why do you go out every evening and stay so late as this?"

"Why father, it's not so very late; it's barely twelve o'clock."

"That's late enough, and you are out almost every night."

"Well, father, I was with my friends. In fact I came away and left some of them behind me."

"Frank, I want to tell you, you ought not to go to so many of the places that your friends frequent. It is not right for you."

"Why, father? everybody does it. I'd be odd if I didn't go. All the fellows we know go. Charlie Strong and Harry Weeks were with me this evening."

"No matter, my son; you are to do right, no matter what others do."

"But father, one cannot but have friends. You don't want me to be odd and unsocial. Mother said I must keep my set of acquaintances."

And Frank's father retires from the discussion, silenced and mortified to think that his influence over Frank is gone. He abdicated long ago in favor of "the set" and "the set" felt no responsibility. It needed one more to share the pleasures—and the cost of them. It recognized Frank's capacity for these ends. It had not promised, on Frank's behalf, to renounce the pomp and vanities of this world. It cared very little whether Frank did well or ill if he filled his place in the set. It did talk a good deal when Frank began to take too

much wine and "make a fool of himself." The Strongs turned the cold shoulder to him, and when Frank went off and married, a well-to-do lady, to whom the "set" had introduced him at a supper, the "set" expressed its sympathy in the impressive and touching words, "We always thought Frank a fool."
—*Dr. John Hall*.

A TOUCHING INCIDENT.

A boy about eleven years of age, a cripple by paralysis from infancy was being carried by his mother from the cars to the ferry at Jersey City. Just as they were leaving the train, a quiet, unassuming gentleman came to them, saying "That boy seems too heavy a burden for you; will you allow me to carry him?" The mother assented, and the little fellow put his arm about the stranger's neck, and was carried to the boat and placed carefully in a good seat, and there left with his mother until the boat had crossed, when the gentleman returned to his charge, and with a smile that lingers still upon the memory, and kind words that soothed and comforted, carried the boy to the waiting-room in the New York depot, where, on being ascertained he could be of no further assistance, he bade the boy good-bye and left him, speaking cordially as he passed out to an elderly gentleman, who was just entering. The grateful boy beckoned to this elderly gentleman and asked, "Can you give me the name of the gentleman to whom you just spoke?" "That is Bishop Jones of the Methodist Episcopal Church." That boy had never been taught to venerate Methodists or Methodism, but from that hour was often heard to say he knew at least one good man who was a Methodist. His limbs never received the coveted strength, but God converted his soul and gave him abundant grace to bear his affliction.—*Dr. H. B. Ridgeway*.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

Here is a man your neighbor. He meets your boy some day, engages in conversation with him, and by and by pulls a bottle of liquid out of his pocket and asks him if he will not have some, it is really nice. The boy takes it; the sharp taste gives him a pleasing sensation, and he takes more. This time he is seized with dizziness and forgetfulness, and wakes from a stupid sleep with a dead feeling of pain. But the man is kind, and next day offers him more. Soon after he introduces him to other boys of his age, together they use this liquid, they are infatuated with it, and become so much under its power that they lose health, purity and respect. At the end of several weeks he brings your boy home to you in that condition. How would you look upon the action of your neighbor with regard to your boy? You would denounce it, and if the law gave you no relief, you would horsewhip the scamp till he could not stand. But just let him get an office, put out a sign and get a little paper from the authorities, and he can go on doing this very thing to your boys and all other boys whom he can gather together. Has the act changed in its baseness and terrible results? No, not in the least. But now the man has risen from the low plane of dastard villainy to the respectable level of "Licensed Victualer," "Hotel Keeper," "Saloonist," laws are made for his protection, and the hat must be respectfully raised as he passes. He does it now as a business. The public take him under a delightful and pleasant patronage. Here is a man who wishes to live by his wits; so he pursues the gambler's calling, and victimizes "green 'uns." We say, "The villain—put him behind the bars." But if a number get together and concoct a national "Three card" game, and call it a lottery, the State incorporates it, the passive goodness of the country endorses, and even churches make lesser imitations of it and play at fairs and festivals. The morality changes as the bulk and numbers interested change.

The burglar uses his jimmy and tools to break open a bank. If we catch him he is put away in a safe place. Suppose a man sets up a factory in a village, purposes to make burglars' tools and sell them to the craft; is his calling moral and honest? Yet we make no outcry against the brewers and distillers, even though they supply the instrumentalities of ruin to the drink shops we deplore.—*Morning Star*.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

There was sorrow in the nursery, for nurse had come in to tell us that baby, our little brother, whose birth only two months before, had given us so much delight, was dying fast. The doctor had just left, saying that there was no hope. Mamma had sent word that we were to go into his bedroom, very quietly, to have one more kiss, and take a last look at our little darling, and then we must stay in the nursery alone, while nurse helped her. Poor mamma looked so white and sad, it made us cry to see her, and baby Willie lay pale and still on her knee, with his big, blue eyes closed, and his breathing so faint, we almost thought he was even then dead.

We crept quietly out of the room again, and instead of returning to the nursery, where we thought nurse might interrupt us, we went to an old lumber room, at the top of the house, where we used generally to retire when we wished to be alone. We did not run gaily up stairs as usual, but walked slowly and quietly, the tears running down our cheeks all the way. For some time we did not speak. Annie was the eldest, being eight years old; I was the next; and then came little Jack, who was only four. At last Annie said, "Jesus raised Lazarus to life again, and I think He would raise baby if we all asked him." To this I agreed, and Jack, of course, was too young to have much voice in the matter; but we decided that we would sing a hymn first. We chose one that we had heard in chapel a Sunday or two before, and that we thought would suit our case very well:

"Why do we mourn departing friends,
Or shake at death's alarms?
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends
To call them to His arms.
The graves of all His saints He blessed,
And softened every bed;
Where should the dying members rest,
But with their dying Head."

It was rather a queer choice, when we were just going to pray that God would let baby live. But Jesus knew our meaning better than we could express it. We sang two verses, Jack joining very lustily and beating time on a box with an old spoon, for he was too young to feel as much subdued as we elder ones did, and as he did not know a word of the hymn, he made rather a queer noise.

Nurse came running up, thinking we were heartless children, to be singing and making so much noise when our little brother was dying. She stopped at the door for we were all on our knees, and Annie's sweet, serious voice was saying,— "You let Lazarus get better, and the ruler's little girl; please let baby, because mamma looks so sad, and we should all be so unhappy if he died." Then we jumped up, with our faces quite bright, and little Jack said, "Now he's sure to get better," and Annie and I thought so too. Nurse went with tears in her eyes to mamma and said, "O ma'am, those dear children are having a prayer-meeting in the lumber room about baby, and they say he is sure to get well now." Then a faint hope sprang up in mamma's heart that perhaps God, in answer to her children's prayer, and to give them faith in the power of prayer, would let baby live.

Mamma was worn out with nursing and watching, and so papa persuaded her to lie down for a short time, while he watched by Willie. About one o'clock he called her, for he saw a change, and thought the end had come. They watched together for two or three hours, but still his slender hold on life was not loosened.

Early in the morning Dr. Foster came, without much hope that baby would be still alive. But his face brightened when he saw him, and he stooped to listen to his breathing. "Why," he said, "there is a wonderful change; the fever is gone and his breathing is quite regular! He will do nicely now. This is mainly owing to your good nursing though," he added with a smile, "perhaps a little credit is due to the skill of the doctor." Mamma, however, thought it was neither her tender nursing, nor the doctor's skill that had wrought the change, but our earnest and believing prayer on the day before.

When we woke, we found mamma bending over us with such a bright, happy face, that we knew at once what she had to tell us. "Baby is well! baby is well!" we shouted; and little Jack whispered softly, "Cos we prayed."

We were rather disappointed when we saw Willie, that he was not quite well and strong yet, but all danger was passed. He recovered quickly, and now he is such a great, strong, rosy boy, that I can hardly believe he was once the frail little baby, for whose life we prayed so earnestly in the old lumber room ten years ago.

Let this true story encourage other children to call upon the Lord in times of trouble.—*Early Days*.

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