

## The Story Page.

### Waiting.

"Will you be in early to-night?" This question, asked imploringly by the mother of her son, a fine-looking young man, received only the abrupt reply, "O, I don't know."

"Are you going any place in particular?"

"Yes, I'm going to the club."

The mother had a perfect horror of the very word "club." She knew nothing about clubs excepting that it was a place her beloved son seemed in duty bound to go every night, and from which he never returned until very late—either midnight or after. To her the club was something which made her son forget mother, home and heaven. She was a kind, Christian mother, and every indication of evil in her child pierced her heart and left it torn and bleeding. When he remained at home with her (which was, however, very seldom, and usually when he did not feel well enough to go out) she was, indeed, happy.

One night she felt very bad from the effects of having been sitting up half the night before waiting, and she pleaded earnestly with her son not to stay out late. He readily promised, as he often did, forgetting the promise just as soon as the door of his home was closed behind him. "Please come in in good time tonight," she said, in the same sweet tone. "I don't feel very well, and I'm all alone. I'll wait right here for you until you return."

"I'll be home in good time," he replied, "but if you do not feel well you had better go to bed."

"No, I'll wait right here for you."

"Well, I'll be in early."

Pulling on his gloves, he went out the door, really feeling sorry that his mother was not well. The thought of his remaining at home with her never occurred to him. He was entirely too selfish for that.

He had not gone far down the street when he met one of his friends who saluted him with, "I've got a date for you to-night. A party of us are going to the theatre, then to the cafe and after that to the club. I've engaged your seat with the rest, as we always take it for granted that you are one of us."

"Certainly," he replied, lighting a cigar: "I'm delighted; I felt a little blue to-night, and I just want a night of it to drive all thought away."

"What's the matter with you? It's not very often that you feel blue."

"No, but mother isn't well to-night."

"O, bother about your mother; what do you care? I thought you cut loose from all such nonsense long ago."

"Well, so I did, and here goes for a glorious time to-night. To the theatre first; all right, come ahead."

They entered the opera-house, but at first all he could hear was, "I'll wait for you; I'll wait for you right here." For just a second he felt a pang of regret, but as soon as the play began he threw himself heart and soul into the evening's enjoyment. He forgot all good impulses, and by the time the play was over he was self-appointed leader for the remainder of the evening.

The party did not break up until about two hours after midnight. Wending his way homeward, he soon came in sight of the house and there he saw a light. The words came back to him, "I'll wait for you; I'll wait for you right here." "Could she still be waiting for me?" he wondered. He unlocked the door, went in, there she was waiting, but he did not care to encounter her, so he hurried on to his room.

Conscience, however, would not let him rest. It was his turn to listen. He listened long, but he heard nothing. Unkind though he was, he went to her room to see whether she could have climbed the stairs without his having heard her. She was not in her room, however; so he stole cautiously down to the parlor, where she had awaited his coming. The light had not been turned out and he could see her distinctly as he entered. "She must have fallen asleep waiting," he thought, "and does not know when I came in. I'll ask her why she doesn't go to bed." One step nearer, and he spoke to her. "Mother!" A little louder, my boy; she does not hear you. "Mother." He was stunned and bewildered. He could not believe what was very apparent—that his mother, instead of climbing the stairs in their own hallway, had climbed the golden stairs and fallen asleep in the arms of her Saviour.

He noticed a little slip of paper in her hand. Thinking it might be a last message to him, he eagerly seized it, and this is what he read: "I'll wait for you in heaven, my son."

The succeeding days were days of torture to him. His friends with whom he had had such glorious times were overawed at the presence of death and did not come near the house to see him. This suited him very well, for what good could they do him? He cared not to see them; he had been softened for the time being. Days passed; he grew lonely. Once more he went to the club. He received such a hearty welcome that it was not long before he went every night, as before. But now there was something continually ringing in his ears: "I'll wait

for you in heaven; I'll wait for you in heaven, my son."

One evening, when they were having an unusually hilarious time, he suddenly rose up and said, "Boys, I'm going home."

"Going home! What's the matter with you? It's only half past ten o'clock."

"Nevertheless, I'm going home; mother's waiting for me."

"Your mother—your mother is dead."

"Yes; but she's waiting for me in heaven, and this kind of living will never take me to heaven."

The jeers of his companions had no effect on him; he was being drawn by a higher power. They did not know, they could not see the golden thread of his mother's prayers drawing him onward toward a higher and a better life.

From that day he avoided his former companions as much as possible, and from that day he began a nobler and a better life. His path was not an easy one, and often and often he was almost led away by temptation, but the thought would come to him in time to save him, "She's waiting for me; she's waiting for me in heaven." Then he would conquer, and in this way he was helped over many a rugged path.

All through life the sweetest and the saddest words to him were, "I'll wait for you in heaven; I'll wait for you in heaven, my son."—Presbyterian Messenger.

### A Case of "Goneness."

BY HELEN CAMPBELL.

"But you promised me, Tim."

"Shure, an' I know it, ma'am. May the devil fly away wid me if I'll break it agin, ma'am, but there's a goneness, on me of mornings that nothing but a sup of whisky lightens up. It isn't me alone. You ask any of the men an' they'll tell you the same. It's a goneness, that to quiet it would make a man sell his grandmother's bones, or take the pennies off a dead man's eyes, an' you'll see 'em crawling down the stairs and makin' over to the saloon—thin that hasn't had the sinse to have the bottle safe under the pillow. If you'd wake up but once that way ma'am—God forgive me for the thought of it!—you'd know 'twasn't so easy. An, thin, whin it's in, the next thing is knocking round the children and Bridget comin' in for a whack and maybe the stove lids flyin', and you up for assault! That's the way it begins, an' the devil only knows where it'll end."

"What did you have for breakfast, Tim?"

"Shure, 'twas a good one, ma'am. The wage comes in steady and we can have our bit of meat three times a day. 'Twas beef that Bridget fried, and coffee an' bread, ma'am. By the same token, what was left of it is in me dinner pail."

Tim lifted the cover with pride and showed me the contents: a lump of beef that had been put on in a cold pan with cold grease, which melted slowly and in time, as the stove covers reddened and the lid of the coffee pot danced, blackened and dried and went to table as juiceless and as unsavory as a fried boot heel. And by it were the thick slices of baker's bread—a loaf of it having less real nourishment than a single slice of whole-wheat bread—rank butter lending an added touch of grossness and coffee, as rank, rounding out a meal warranted to bring a "goneness" to the stomach of a rhinoceros.

This is the case, not alone for one dweller in the tenement house, but for thousands. "The workman's dinner pail" stands for but one of three daily meals, each one a foundation for drunkenness, since each one means a steady and always increasing irritant to the stomach. Add to food which fills but neither satisfies nor nourishes the other facts of tenement-house life—overcrowding, foul air, cleanliness made impossible—and it is plain that the drink habit must become as natural as the eating habit, with small blame to the man or woman who yields to its power.

In Tim's case there had been very earnest and honest attempt to drive it out. Hard times had brought the little family to the "slum" region about Mulberry Bend, where they lived in a room and dark bed-room of the order known to this quarter. As bricklayer he received a fair wage, but accident had sent him to the hospital for many weeks, and patient Bridget had nearly lost courage. Bridget Second in the meantime reached the age of eight—a preternaturally aged child, with her father's curly red hair and twinkling blue eyes, but the twinkle was nearly lost in an anxious pucker. The mother scrubbed and cared for two down-town offices, the child scrubbed in the same determined fashion at home, and the baby, discouraged from the beginning, presently made one more in the long procession toward the Potter's Field.

It was a slow process to secure Bridget's consent to a course for little Bridget in the Wilson Industrial School, but the father ordered it as soon as he heard the wish, and the child became a regular pupil.

Away from New York for many months, I lost sight of them all, but on returning sent for Tim, who appeared

promptly in the early evening. What had happened? Tim's eyes were clear, a distinct layer of fat covered his prominent bones, his hair was brushed as smooth as native kinkiness allowed, and he stood there smiling but eager to tell a tale I was no less eager to hear.

"You look very well, Tim, and quite changed? Have you got a new place?"

"It's the 'goneness,' ma'am, that's out of me quite. I wouldn't have belaved it, but it's so. An' it's all of little Bridget's being that wild to cook that we had to let her for peace. She's as old as most at fourteen, an' they let her in a cookin' class, for she never told how old she was or wasn't, an' the child took hold of it all like a grandmother. An' last week, ma'am, we were invited to some sort of a cillibration, an' thim ten children cooked a dinner before our eyes, a dinner to be proud of, an' we ate it! An' little Bridget takes the money an' buys as she's taught, an' she cooks with a taste to it, an' I eat till I'm ashamed and Bridget the same."

"Let the child teach you," I says to Bridget, but she says she's no time an' little Bridget won't have her round the stove, but just says, 'You scrub the offices, mother, an' I'll see there's something good to eat whin you're back.' It's a born cook she is, an' to see her wid her sticks of arms, pushing 'em into a 'bakin' of bread, makes me laugh an' cry together. The cook to the queen couldn't beat her Irish stew, an' she knows a pay soup would make a hermit come out of his cell and smack his lips at the smell of it."

"As to the 'goneness,' ma'am, it's there for a minute now an' agin, but little Bridget an' me we smashed the bottle together, an' she says, 'Father, if I keep you full enough o' good stin' I know you'll never be wantin' it bad.' Thrus for her, ma'am, I don't, though I wouldn't a thought that was the way out.'—Congregationalist.

### Honoring Parents.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

One of the most touching scenes in any biography is that of the great Dr. Samuel Johnson, in his old age, standing bare-headed on a rainy day in the market-place of Utoxeter to do penance for having disobeyed his father when a boy. Filial reverence is one of the best evidences of a sound heart. When our almighty Creator had graven on Sinai's tables of stone four commandments enjoining homage to himself, the very next commandment enjoins obedience to parents. This is the one commandment that has a rich promise connected with it.

Probably the reason is that the home underlies both the state and the church; the household is older than either of them. The family is the earliest and the most potent training-school for this world and for the next; and at the starting-point of a vast majority of the best Christian lives stands a faithful Christian mother. Truly godly parents really represent God in the household; they get their authority directly from him; and therefore the wilful dishonoring of such parents is wilful dishonoring of God. There is not the slightest hope of any wholesome religious and soul-converting influence in any family where the parental authority is trampled under foot.

The word "honor" is very deep and strong; it takes hold of the heart, and roots down into the core of the heart. It amounts—as the twelfth chapter of Hebrews tells us—to "reverence," and this, too, when parents are inflicting wise and loving chastisement. The surest way for parents to forfeit the respect of their children is to be too weak, or too indolent, or too unprincipled, to maintain a corrective discipline. Parents must deserve to be honored, and then they have a right to expect and to require loving and loyal obedience.

What the law on Sinai commanded is re-enacted in the New Testament. "Children obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right." Filial obedience is thus made a part and parcel of Christian piety. It ought to be prompt; it ought to be cheerful; it ought to be without protest. General Havelock once rose from his table and exclaimed, "I left my boy on London Bridge, and told him to wait there till I came back!" He hastened to the spot, and there the brave boy was, and had been for several hours! Such obedience was the ground-work of a noble character. That was a wise advertisement.

"Wanted—a boy who always obeys his mother."

The mark of Christian obedience is to follow parental counsels even when they "go against the grain," and require painful sacrifice or self-denial. If a parent has a divine right to correct, it is the filial duty to submit to correction. "A wise son heareth his father's instruction; but a scorner heareth not rebuke." "A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him." I have watched the careers of hundreds of young people, and have never known one to succeed who went in the face of the wishes of discreet Christian parents. Is old-fashioned reverence for parents dying out? Do the young obey their fathers and mothers "in the Lord" as

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