

[SELECTED.]

The Last Kiss.

IT came at last. The preparations all completed, shirts, stockings, boots, etc., carefully packed away in the great chest, ironbound and strong to resist the shaking and tossing of a long voyage. Everything a mother's care could suggest and her love provide. Full to overflowing was the big trunk; one had to jump on the lid to press it down for locking. It is the last evening—I shall never forget it. Supper was over, or what was the apology for supper, for we only pretended to eat. Somehow we all felt a sort of lumpiness in our throats, which refused to go away. We tried a little music, and gathered around the piano, and being Sunday evening attempted some of our favorite hymns; alas, in vain! One by one the voices ceased, and soon the piano was hushed. I could bear it no longer; the suppressed emotion was insupportable, and as the hour for rest had come, I begged all to retire to their rooms. You, who have bidden farewell to those you love, can understand well what I felt when my own dear boy, of 17 years or so, came and, putting his head upon my shoulder, burst into tears. How hard it is to say "good-bye." All the tender memories of the little cradled boy, the infant's prattling tongue, the schoolboy's boisterous play; all came like a great rushing tide into my mind. But now he is going—going alone to a far-distant shore—where no mother's eye can reach, and no father's love can shield. Before the living God we both knelt. How I prayed and wept! Even now I seem to hear the wild sobbing of my boy over the thought of to-morrow morning—bidding good-bye for the *last time*.

Too soon that morrow came, with its crowded vessel, and the noise and commotion of the last of the cargo hurriedly being stowed on board. Hark! the bell is ringing—the last has come. Farewell, my boy, farewell; and planting a *last kiss* upon his brow, I am over the side of the ship, and on the quay. One last look, as I turn the corner which hides him from my sight. That last look: I see his face now; the bloodless lips compressed with deep emotion, the ashen countenance, and those eyes following me until out of sight—gone. Oh! If it is hard, passing hard, to say good-bye on earth, what must it be to say farewell for ever? What indeed!

My reader, think of this. This year may be the last of your life,—anyhow, the last will come. There will be the last year, the last day, the last earnest sermon, the last solemn warning, the last invitation to Christ, the last offer of pardon. Yes, the last throb and beat of that heart of yours will arrive, and then, what? *Eternity*. Oh! man immortal, why so indifferent? Why trifle? Why not at once flee from the wrath to come? Flee to Jesus, flee to Him now. God loves you, Christ died for you, the Holy Spirit whispers to you. What does He say? This—"To-day, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart."

[EDITORIAL.]

Caring for the Poor.

THROUGH the kindness of Christian friends the Toronto Mission Union Workers were enabled to invite the poor families of the district to a free supper on Tuesday the 16th of February. Over 350 persons sat down to a bountifully spread table, to which, it is needless to add, they devoted themselves heartily. The lady workers spared no effort toward securing the enjoyment of the party. A more orderly or appreciative gathering could scarcely be secured, and the appreciation went beyond the tea table, and was evidenced in the Gospel service which was held in the large hall. Here the truth as it is in Jesus was fully and plainly presented and there is reason to believe that souls were won for the Master.

THE work at the Mission Hall is being owned of God. Scarcely a week passes without some evidence being given of the Spirit's work upon those attending. Several interesting cases of conversion have been witnessed, and those labouring in the Mission have been cheered by the fact that so many of those who have been led to Christ during the past years have stood firm, and to-day are working members of different churches in the city, and while thus joining (as was their duty, and as they are urged) with the Church, have not forgotten their *birth-place*, but have continued to be helpers in the Mission. As the work of the Mission becomes known, its value is being more appreciated. Of course there are some who shrug their shoulders, and cast out insinuations as to its work and workers, but this has been expected; and if the work were carried on to please the few who thus object, it certainly would never merit the favour of the majority who now stand by the work, and it is a question whether it would receive the favour of God as it now does. One thing is certain, the Mission is an established fact. It entered upon work—it has kept at the work, and *it is going to continue* the work. We have enjoyed many opportunities of seeing the work, and of becoming conversant with all its methods, and we have no hesitation in saying that its lines, its aims, and its methods are Scriptural, and therefore must be successful. We also expect to see it largely increase in usefulness, and spread its borders till many now comparatively neglected corners of the city are, through its efforts, brought beneath the influence of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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