

The Inglenook.

When to Become a Christian.

How old must I be, mother, before I can be a Christian?"

The wise mother answered, "How old must you be darling, before you love me?"

"Why, mother, I always loved you. I do now and I always shall," and she kissed her mother; "but you have not told me yet how old I shall have to be."

The mother made answer with another question: "How old must you be before you can trust yourself wholly to me and my care?"

"I always did," she answered, and kissed her mother again; "but tell me what I want to know," and she climbed into her mother's lap and put her arms around her neck.

The mother asked again, "How old will you have to be to do what I want you to do?"

Then the child whispered, half guessing what her mother meant, "I can now, without growing any older."

Then the mother said, "You can be a Christian now, my darling, without waiting to be older. All you have to do is to love and trust and try to please the One who says, 'Let the little ones come unto me.' Don't you want to begin now?"

The child answered, "Yes."

Then they both knelt down, and the mother prayed, and in prayer she gave to Christ her little one, who wanted to be His.—The Children's Friend.

One Deed.

BY RICHARD WATSON GILDER.

One deed may mar a life,
And one can make it;
Hold firmly thy will for strife,
Lest a quick blow break it!
Even now from far on viewless wing
Hither speeds the nameless thing
Shall put thy spirit to the test,
Haply or e'er you sinking sun
Shall drop behind the purple west
All shall be lost or won.

Story of Sir Walter Scott.

Bright men have sometimes grown up from dull boys. A good story is told of Sir Walter Scott. It seems that he was far from being a brilliant scholar, and at school he was usually at the foot of his class. After he became famous, he one day dropped into the old school to pay a visit to the scene of his former woes. The teacher was anxious to make a good impression on the visitor, and put the pupils through their lessons so as to show them to the best advantage.

After a while, Scott said: "But which is the dunce? You have one, surely? Show him to me."

The teacher called up a poor fellow, who looked the picture of woe as he bashfully came toward the distinguished visitor.

"Yes, sir," said the boy.

"Well, my good fellow," said Scott, "here is a crown for you for keeping my place warm."—Sel.

The Habit of Kindness.

I know a home in which the very atmosphere is so charged with human, loving kindness that it is a delight to be a guest therein. I have been a guest in that home for weeks at a time, and I never heard a single harsh, unkind word spoken to or about anyone. One day I said to the sweet and gentle mistress of the home:

"Do tell me, if you can, the secret of the beautiful and unflinching kindness that forms a part of the very atmosphere of this home. What is the real secret of it?"

"Why, I do not know that there is any secret about it. It is a kind of habit with us. You know that some people fall into the habit of always complaining. Others form the habit of always speaking sharply, while still others are habitually morose and sulk continually. Now, it is just as easy to form a good habit as a bad habit, and, if one would only think so, it is just as easy to form the habit of kindness as it is to form the habit of unkindness. When I was a little girl at home, my father had his children sing nearly every day:

"Oh, say a kind word if you can,
And you can, and you can;
Oh, say a kind word if you can,
And you can, and you can."

"If anyone spoke an unkind word in the house, some one would be sure to sing these lines, and so we came to speak kindly nearly all of the time. So much happiness came from it that I resolved when I came in possession of a home of my own that habitual kindness should be the rule there."

How They Made Up.

Two little children who couldn't agree
Were having a tiff, and were "mad as could be."
They looked at each other in silence awhile,
Then a sudden glad thought made one of them smile.

Said she, "Say, you ain't very mad, are you, Bessie?"

"Well, no," said the other; "nor you, are you, Jessie?"

"Then let us make up," little Jessie suggested.

"Well, you be the one to begin," Bess requested.

But that didn't suit. So the tiff lingered still,
While the small-sized disputants were claiming their will;

When, what do you think brought about sunny weather?

Just this—they agreed to begin both together.
—Christian Work.

God Knows Best.

BY REV. JOSEPH PARKER, D. D.

God is often hungering me down; but I love to be treated so after a while. I know at certain moments what I should like to do, and I feel that God must be on my side, but the Lord sends me a sign and says, "No"; and I take my little programme and put it into the fire, and the next day I say, "Lord, I thank Thee for that 'No'; Lord, into Thine hands I commit my spirit," if we do this in the right tone of mind, we shall never be wrong; if momentarily misapprehended or misunderstood, God will cause our night to break forth as the morning, and our judgment shall go out as the moonday. O, rest in the Lord; have no life of thine own to pester thee; let it be God's life in Christ.

Walking on the Water.

The Lord came to these disciples over the very waves which constituted their trial. So he frequently makes his pathway into our hearts over the affliction which is at the moment distressing us. No one else can do that. For in every one of our distresses there are elements which we must keep hidden from our fellow men. But these are entirely known to Christ, and it is just through these secret doorways that he enters into our souls and brings with him his cheer and succor. Brother, is there no comfort for you here? The Lord makes your trial his very avenue into your spirit. Look out for his coming, then, and see that you give him a right royal welcome when he does appear.

Still further, the disciples did not know Christ when he came, and aggravated their misery for themselves by supposing that he was a ghost. But let us not laugh at their superstition, lest we should be found also making merry at our own expense. Have we never mistaken Christ for a ghost, or perhaps worse still, for an evil spirit? We have been in trouble, and matters, as we think, have come to a crisis, when something happens which at first we judge will surely bring ruin upon us, and we cry out for fear, "We are undone! the Lord hath forsaken us! we are utterly overwhelmed! But we wait a little, and in a wonderful way we see that what at first sight seemed our undoing has actually become our salvation. Have you never had an experience like that? And as you heard the Master's voice saying to you, "It is I; be not afraid," have you not had your fears put to shame and reproved by his favor? Brethren, this night scene on the Galilean lake was the rehearsal of much which is happening every day to the people of God; and if we studied it more closely we should have far fewer difficulties about what we call the mysteries of Providence.

Once more: when Christ comes, and is recognized, he brings relief. The very recognition of him is a relief; for there is no real distress and no formidable danger to the Christian while his Lord is nigh. The presence of the Master may not immediately still the tempest, but it will enable us to walk upon the waves. The man who can see Jesus in his troubles always keeps them under him; it is when he fails to keep his eye upon the Lord that they threaten to overwhelm him. So long as Peter was "looking unto Jesus" there was an influence beneath him that held him up above the waters; but when he saw the winds boisterous he began to sink. Ah! how many of us are like him there! We see the wind boisterous; there is a likelihood that we shall lose money, or forfeit the good opinion of our fellows, or perhaps lose life itself; and so we let that which is immediately before our eyes shut out from our hearts the remembrance of the glorious promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."—William M. Taylor, D. D.

Robert Louis Stevenson's Bible carefully annotated by his own hand, and his mother's book of Psalms and Hymns, have been sold in the United States. They were bought in Samoa by Lieutenant Edward Safford, of the United States Navy. It is said that the notes and markings in the Bible are specially full and interesting. They were made in the later years of Stevenson's life, the book having belonged to his father.