

meeting night. But after a while they ignored the prayer-meeting appointments; often, church members, and those, too, who had used to take part in the exercises, when a few faithful ones were struggling to keep the altar burning, were off at a neighbouring house exercising their feet. When the parties were first commenced those persons did not dance, only looked on. It was not long till they began "wetting the floor" too. And all the while they kept saying, "It does us no harm." But the harm was right there, and they did not see it—did not see it, because the devil, by the instrumentality of the dance, had lulled them into spiritual insensibility. "A Church Member" can see no harm in dancing, and says, "I have been in the habit of thinking there is less harm in this being done occasionally than in pernicious gossip, often passing into scandal, or in some of those games which are sanctioned in what are called serious families." If a greater evil is wrong that does not make a lesser evil right. It would certainly be wrong for me to maliciously kill a man's fine horse, but that wouldn't make it right for me to steal a little corn from him "occasionally." We all know what the tendency of dancing is. It may not be wrong, in itself, for a select few to dance, as "A Church Member" lets his children do, but the tendency is evilward. Is he absolutely certain that his children shall not in those little dances acquire such a liking for dancing that when inducements are held out to them to attend the promiscuous dance, they will not, on any account, go to it? He prays with, and I hope for, his family. It's all right to lock your doors before you retire, but that won't keep the coals, which were in the ashes that you put in a wooden box after supper, from burning your house over your head when you are fast asleep.

And so with card-playing. Dr. McCosh some years ago introduced a billiard table into the gymnasium of his college, believing that it would keep the boys from billiard saloons. But the fact was that many who became, in that gymnasium, dexterous players, were tempted to go to questionable places and play for "bets." "A Church Member" had better stop and think, for he does not know but those "wicked cards" may lead his boys into wicked company, and to the devil. His card-playing don't hinder his prayers, nor trouble his conscience, he says. Let us whisper to him, Do you pray to God to bless that exercise, and so "save your conscience?" or do you include that when you confess, "we have done many things that we ought not to have done?" Do you leave anything undone that had better be done while you are wasting precious time playing cards? Are all the children well up in the Shorter Catechism?

I have spoken about the effect his training—in the way they should *not* go—may, yea is more than likely to, have upon his children. But suppose there is no danger in that regard, what will others think of it? Frolicking young folks will say, "A Church Member" plays cards with his family and lets them dance, and so sit down and play for money, with breath vile with blasphemy, and tobacco and whiskey fumes, or go and dance all night at what I call *base ball*. Just let me get the ear of "A Church Member" again. All this card playing and dancing may do you no harm, but the devil will make use of you to ruin others. Stick a pin there. You want to "do the right thing in the right way." Well then, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." Read the eighth chapter of first Corinthians and ponder well and prayerfully the last verse, which says something about making others offend. Read also Romans xiv.

RODERICK HENDERSON.

Hartsville, South Carolina, Jan. 22, 1880.

A WEAK mind is like a microscope, which magnifies trifling things, but can not receive great ones.—*Ches-terfield*.

ACTIVE men, like millstones in motion, if they have no other grist to grind, will set fire one to another.—*Fuller*.

It is our duty to be happy, because happiness lies in contentment with all the divine will concerning us.—*Bethune*.

A WIFE'S constant effort to make home attractive often has more to do with the husband's habits than anything else.

IN philosophy as in nature, everything changes its form, and one thing exists by the destruction of another.—*Lord Lyttelton*.

## PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

### HOUSEHOLD LOVE.

We sometimes wonder whether most families take into account the blessedness and beauty of household love, of that tender, strong, sweet sentiment, which more than anything else binds the members of one family together, and unites them to each other in ties which even death cannot break. There are few people who would not be horrified were they told that they did not love their near kindred, and, really, in the great crises of life, the coldest prove that they have some affection. But there is far too little demonstration in most homes. We are afraid or ashamed to shew how much we care for our brothers and sisters, and often there are cross, snappish words, and bitter thoughts, and unkind looks, where there should be only peace and mutual helpfulness. Many a wife drags wearily through a long day, performing her duties in a hopeless way, when a few loving words from her husband, a few words of appreciation and praise, would have given her courage and cheer.

It isn't the things you do, Charlie;  
It's the things you leave undone,

says Phoebe Cary, in one of those homely strains of hers which go straight to the heart. Another little newspaper waif, which has kept afloat because of buoyant truthfulness, tells how the good wife arose in the morning, how she had the milk, and the butter, and the bread, the dishes, the breakfast, the children, the dinner, and the mending, on her hands, and how tired and spiritless she felt, till her husband came in, and called her "the best and dearest wife in town," and then how light the labour seemed, and how easy were the tasks. Wives, too, sometimes need to be reminded that their husbands are overborne by troubles and solitudes, that they are struggling with temptations and trials every day, and that they need to be strengthened, stimulated, and encouraged by gentleness and kind attention. There are women in the world whose only idea in life is that they shall be considered, their convenience consulted, and their indolence ministered to. A selfish, sordid, narrow-natured woman, can make it almost impossible for her husband and sons to succeed in life's conflicts. We know one home which was wrecked, so far as earthly happiness was concerned, because the wife, instead of being helpful, was devoted to luxury and ease, spending the money her husband toiled to earn, on laces and silks, and extravagances of various kinds, till he grew discouraged, and his nobler qualities were choked and stifled. Alas! when woman's hand pulls down her home! Every wise woman buildeth her house, and is its queen. There cannot be one law in the household for the husband and another for the wife. Both must work and live together; and if there be true love between them, they will endure the hardness of life very bravely and cheerily.

Children should be loved through their little tempers, through their occasional naughtiness, and through the days when they are not sweet, but trying and capacious. The dearest children have such days. One is puzzled to know why Lulu, who went to bed a cherub, should be a little fury in the morning; why Harry, usually candid and open as the day, should at times be sullen and disagreeable. There are often physical reasons for these transformations. You have had sour bread. You have been letting rich pastry and cake enter too largely into your bill of fare. You have suffered the delicate child and the strong one to sleep together, or the fresh air has not vitalized the sleeping apartment sufficiently. Perhaps you are not confidential enough with your children, and do not make yourself acquainted as you ought with their companions. But whatever mistake you make, be sure you love them, and shew them your love.

It is a beautiful picture which is made by the story of Charles Kingsley's life with his children. "I wonder," he would sometimes say, "if there is so much laughing in any other home in England as in ours?" "A child crying over a broken toy is a sight I cannot bear," he said, and never was he too busy with sermons or books to mend the toy and dry the tears, if the little grieved one came to him. And he agreed with Richter that children have their days and hours of rain, when "the child's quicksilver" falls rapidly, and when parents should not take too much notice either "for anxiety or for sermons." When he died, his eldest son, broken-hearted on hearing of his loss,

wrote from his home in America a testimony which was most beautiful as to the wisdom, love, and friendliness of the fatherhood that had encircled the lives of all the children in the home at Eversley. Reverence for God, veneration for goodness, cordial regard for each other, had made that home well-nigh perfect—a vestibule of heaven.

Very beautiful is that tribute which Carlyle inscribed on the tomb of his wife, who left him thirteen years ago. "In her bright existence she had more sorrows than are common; but also a soft invincibility or capacity of discernment, and a noble loyalty of heart, which are rare. For forty years she was the true and loving helpmate of her husband, and by act and word unweariedly forwarded him, as none else could, in all of worth that he did or attempted. She died at London, 21st April, 1866, suddenly snatched away from him, and the light of his life is as if gone out."

Ah! friends,

The world goes up and the world goes down,  
And the sunshine follows the rain,  
But yesterday's smile, and yesterday's frown,  
Can never come back again.

Let us watch opportunities. Let us be careful to do right and to be right to-day. We are not sure of to-morrow. One and another who were with us when the last September's gold was tinting the woods and plains, have gone above. Not lost—oh! no—but how we miss them! How the heart aches in the night, when we lie awake and *want* the sweet sister, the precious friend, and the brother who was part of our very being, with us no more now, but gone to be with Jesus. It were better, far, for many of us, if, instead of grieving so deeply for our lost, we set ourselves resolutely to making our remaining ones happier, by the constant exercise of forbearance and patience, and the daily benignity of love in the household.

There are fragmentary families, composed, one might say, of the remnants of other families, which are less easily kept in harmony than those which are made up in the natural way of father, mother, and the children. Perhaps the cousins, uncles, and aunts, the distant relation who has no other home, or the orphaned child who is sheltered by your fireside, have their own peculiarities. No matter how difficult this problem or any other may be, there is one way to settle it—the way of unselfish love and faith in God.—*Christian at Work*.

### THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

Thoughtful Christians to-day have far less dread of the assaults of infidelity in any or all of its forms upon the Church, than they have of the encroachments of the world. That there is reason for alarm in this direction cannot be doubted; the indications are plain. Even writers who have no special concern about religion as a personal matter, see and speak of this tendency with apprehension. There seems to be a general assault for the purpose of breaking down all distinction between the Church and the world—between professing Christians and those who do not make and do not intend to make any confession of faith in Christ. The "Central Presbyterian," Richmond, Va., puts the case well when it says:

"The most lamentable feature in our surroundings, is the obvious yielding that is to be observed on the part of the Church to the world. The Church has caught the infection, and in many quarters (even in the sturdy Presbyterian Church) Christians are compromising all sorts of questions, and mingling more and more freely with the throngs that are crowding the avenues to Vanity Fair. One sees no harm in relaxing his observance of the Sabbath; another sees no harm in going to the theatre, which, she says, might be converted into a great moral engine; another sees no harm in a little game of cards; another sees no harm in spinning around for six hours in the arms of a young man she has just met; another finds her religious yearnings only satisfied by beautiful flowers, and Eau de Cologne, and many-coloured windows, and the very finest quality of vocal music. We are gravely told that in this busy age there must be some modification in the old Sabbath laws, and that the exigencies of business demand that the cars shall run, and that people shall travel, and that the relaxations from business require excursions to suburban beer gardens and Sunday concerts. The Christian is admonished against making too serious a business of his religion; after all, it is suggested, the