



The Family Circle.

THE CITY'S POOR.

O God, the city groaneth at my feet!
I look on crowded thousands faint with woe
Have I no help for them? no message meet?
Teach me that I may know.

I see the little children every where,
Wan little children, old when life is now,
Poor, friendless fledgelings where the woods are
bare,
Flowers, where there falls no dew.

Whose are they? For their parents heed them
not,
Nor care the busy throngs that pass them by;
Their homes are penury and shame, their lot
To suffer, sin, and die.

The fair, green hills, the boundless fields, where
bloom
The vernal cowslip and the summer rose;
The free, glad sunshine of God's glorious room,
Their childhood never knows.

The songs of birds, that in sweet season mate
And fill the pleasant May-time with delight,
Teach not those little prisoners of fate
In their perpetual night.

Yet have they guests that will not be denied,
The beggar brood of darkness evermore,
Fever and famine, and all ills beside,
Camped by each hovell door.

The stars turn pale, the very sunbeams stray
Dew-drenched in those alleys' grisly shade—
And O, to think our palace-builders stay
So near them undismayed!

We pile the marble for the rich man's tomb,
We hang the satin at my lady's head,
Are suffering souls, are living hearts in gloom
More worthless than the dead?

The frothy tides of fashion come and go,
And every bubble hath its foams in train;
But the great under-surge of human woe
Uncensing calls in vain.

One passing sigh is pity's only gift,
Murmured from breasts that should be first to
bleed;
"How sad, but 'tis God's law that one man's
thrill
Comes by another's need."

Preposterous trifling! shall a selfish mind
Hide the world's trouble with a pious plea?
Sad truth asks honest eyes, and none are blind
As those who will not see.

Still yawns the deep, and struggling misery calls;
Come down and help us; we are well-nigh
spent!

The darkness closes—Ere death's ruin falls,
Is there no angel sent?

"We yet are brothers, though the primal stain
Makes labor seem a never-ending ill;
And through the shadows, sorrow more than gain
Shall keep us brothers still.

"We ask for hearts, though busy, beating yet,
We ask for hands, yet warm, to bring us aid;
These are the gifts that selfish souls forget,
These are the debts unpaid."

Surely our riches are not where we think,
And the kind thought is more than all our store.
The laugh of children, not the guinea's chink,
Rings at love's open door.

Therefore, O God, I tread this city street,
With sadness that is not a foolish grief;
And from Thy heavens I bear my messages sweet,
"Take heart, I bring relief!"
—*Belle Eyre, in 'Youth' Companion.*

THE MINISTER'S BARGAIN.

The new minister came down from his room in a costume more suggestive of a day-laborer than a gentleman of the cloth. He was young. This was his first charge, unless his young wife might be considered his first charge, which he had cared for well. She met him now at the foot of the stairs, her pretty nose turned upward, and a look of smiling disgust on her face.

"James!" she exclaimed, "how you do look! Suppose Deacon Brown should come to call?"

"Tell him that I am at the back of the lot," said her husband, cheerfully, "and that they must give me a larger salary if they don't expect me to beat my own carpets."

It might not have been anything remarkable if the worthy deacon, seeing his

pastor, had been shocked at the reverend gentleman's appearance. He wore an old slouch hat, and the remainder of his toilet was entirely in keeping with that tramp-like remnant. Even his every-day clothes must not be subjected to the trial of carpet-beating.

The carpet was not very large, nor very new, although the housekeeping trials of that little family were both. It belonged with the parsonage, and had stood, with the entire building, the wear and tear of many a donation party and the playful feet of many little children. The sturdy young man soon had it stretched across the line and proceeded to whittle a convenient stick into proper shape. The day was very windy, and anyone who has tried to beat a carpet in such weather understands the difficulties which constantly beset him. It is simply astonishing how much dust can hide itself within the outside company character of a deceitful ingrain carpet—how it will, when its faults are discovered, elude every effort to correct them! But the young minister was not to be discouraged. In this new field he would have harder foes to fight.

In the late part of the forenoon his wife came out to tell him that one of the deacons had actually come, and he replied that he would receive him there at his post, or King Eolus might decide to carry the little carpet off on a breezy trip. Thus it came to pass that the clergyman, wiping the perspiration and dust from his face, was soon discussing church-work with Mr. Everett.

"You will not find the field a difficult one, I fancy," said that gentleman, "although there are a few perplexities. There is one man who is a great vexation and disappointment to us. Mr. Bedford, yonder, some years ago became alienated from the church, and since then has done a great deal to hinder, rather than to help, our work. He is a wealthy man; in fact, the only one in the village, and was a great loss to the church. I was hopeful that a new pastor might get hold of him, but I almost fear he is beyond our reach."

The minister cast his eye toward the pretty stone house, up the brook a little way, surrounded by the prosperous farms of its owner, stretching out to the background of wooded hills. Who knew but it might be his mission there to help this erring one, so rich in gold, but so poor at heart!

The odor of broiling beefsteak was already beginning to suggest a welcome repast in the tiny dining-room, and the carpet was conquered. The wearied worker was turning his face toward the breeze that slipped softly along the brookside, when there approached him an elderly gentleman, with somewhat severe lips and deep-set eyes.

"I am looking for a man to beat my carpet," he said; "it must wait no longer. I have been watching you this morning, and I think you are about the sort of a man I want. You look as though you would be glad of a job. Is this the parsonage carpet? Whata dirty little rag it is! My name is Bedford; my home is the stone house yonder. Well, what do you say?"

It may be that a roguish smile played for a moment about the young minister's handsome features, but it was suppressed before his would-be employer had noticed it.

"I think," he said, "that I will be able to do your work."

But his sudden idea must be even more quickly decided upon. "If you don't know," said his interviewer, sternly, "I will seek elsewhere. I am a prompt man, and I wish others to be."

"I will do your work for you," said the clergyman, "and will be at your house in an hour."

The engagement being made, his visitor left, and he hastened in toward the beefsteak, fearing that his real character would be betrayed by his wife.

"Kittie," he said, as he came down a second time, without having improved his toilet, "I am going over to the stone house, across the brook, to beat the gentleman's carpet."

"James!" said his wife, again showing merry dismay. "To what limit will your generosity extend? I am afraid you are not planning to make a very long stay in this church. When are you going to write your sermon?"

"I have my text," he said, gaily; "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." And I am not showing

any generosity, either. I have hired out. Good-bye!" and, with a parting kiss, the workman started for his task.

Mr. Bedford's Brussels carpet, of fine texture and choice pattern, had never been served better than that afternoon. The young minister did his work well, and, when it was done, looked at the clean fabric, spread upon the green grass, with as much satisfaction as he had had over his first sermon. Mr. Bedford's place afforded more assistance than he had at his home, but this carpet was also larger than his, and the day was plainly waning when, the object of his labors deposited with his own muscular arms in its proper place, he sought his employer, and informed him that his work was done.

"Well," said Mr. Bedford, uttering the favorite monosyllable more pleasantly than usual, "you have done it well; I shall inquire for you when I need further help. What is your name, and how much do I owe you?"

The roguish smile overcame its bashfulness this time, and stayed boldly on the clergyman's face. He reached into his ragged pocket and drew forth his card:

REV. JAMES WESTWOOD,
Avondale Berean Church.

Sabbath services 10:30 a. m. and 7 p. m.

"My card," he said, pleasantly, handing it to his employer; "and if you will make yourself at home in my church, Mr. Bedford, and we may look to you for help and sympathy, we will consider this matter square."

It is not in my power to describe the astonished look, or astonished thoughts, which succeeded this disclosure. Mr. Bedford seemed undecided as to whether to be disgusted or amused.

"So you are the new minister?" he said. "I have that honor," said the ragged and reverend gentleman.

"Well," said Mr. Bedford again, grimly, "your wages are high—something out of my line entirely, I may say; but you have done your part, and it's a fair bargain: I said I would let you set your own price. Will you remain to tea, Mr. Westwood?"

But the new minister wended his way across the brook-path toward his little home, and, with a lighter heart than if he had earned many a dollar by his hard day's work; and dollars were not too common in his modest pocket-book, as you, dear friend, well know.

Suffice it to say, that the bargain was kept; that a prominent pew in the village church became the property of Mr. Bedford, until, instead of his creating surprise by his presence there, the doctor used to write his name in his memorandum, whenever he did not appear in his place on Sabbath morning. Let me pause to tell that one morning, not long afterward, a large package was left on the porch of the tiny parsonage, which was found to contain a carpet of as fine texture and finely harmonized tints as Mr. Bedford's own, just the size for the parlor of that home; let me even add, that, as the anniversary returns each year, one more floor in the house is decked with a new and lovely covering, from the stone house over the brook, and that when the number is complete, it is suspected that the church itself is coming in for a share; for Mr. Bedford always declares that the young minister has never received his full wages for that job done by the ragged carpet-beater.—*R. M. Alden, in Herald and Presbyter.*

GOING TO COLLEGE.

At this season many fathers and mothers are asking whether going to college is advisable for the son or daughter, who, in turn, is considering whether it be best to "prepare." Since the decision for or against is generally made at this initial point, we have a few suggestions which, we hope, will aid all those undecided in regard to the important step. If parents can afford to give the time or money, or both, which a four years' course requires, we say to parents, "Give it," and to boys and girls, "Take it." At a certain period in a boy's school life, generally when he is sixteen years old, he wants to leave school and go into store or shop. Boys who would begin their fortune-making at once, parents who are inclined to let them, should both remember several things as to a college course. The time spent in study does not unfit one for business life. If a boy has the true business talent he will rise

all the more quickly for knowing something more than that which is immediately connected with his own duties, and any one who has observed for himself knows that a college graduate often overtakes the boys who left school too early. Another point not commonly thought of is the opportunities in college for physical development during the years when both boys and girls most need them. Shut up in office or shop for eight hours a day, with few inducements to good, hard exercise, the boy's muscles become flabby before reaching their full size, the chest ceases to increase in expansion, and no wonder that a well-developed, athletic business man is the exception. Provided that there be no shirking of study, it would pay to send a boy to college for the sake of the opportunities offered by athletics and in the gymnasium with its systematic training.

We are aware that this inducement to a college course is not often presented, and it should not stand as a leading motive. The ideal education consists in training all the powers, spiritual, intellectual and physical, and if an education slight any one of these it is faulty. Never were there so many college students who do not intend to become professional men as there are to-day. The old and well-tried arguments for a liberal education are being accepted, and the college is appreciated by a rapidly increasing class. It is because we believe thoroughly in these benefits that we also urge other less obvious reasons for the college course.

The case in brief is this: What does college do for one? It shows a man his ignorance; the educated man appreciates, as no one else can, the fact that there is much to learn in the world. He does not present the painful spectacle of a man utterly ignorant of his own lack of knowledge. The educated man is not one crammed with facts; but one who has learned, in some degree, how to use, in the contest with his ignorance, the soul, mind, and body which God has given him; and because college advantages, properly appreciated, produce such men, we urge all who can to accept them. In regard to expense, a young fellow who lately worked his way through one of our universities said that he possessed, on graduating more money than on entering. Never were there more opportunities to work one's way to an education than now.

On the whole, too, we believe there is no place where the moral and religious life of our young men receives more attention and development. Sad as have been some of the wrecks that have drifted out from college halls, and rationalistic and non-moral as are the influences which surround some of our great colleges, we believe that the college is as likely, to say the least, to graduate pure and honest Christian men as the shop or the store.

These arguments are intended for the girls as well as the boys, for until the much desired common gender pronoun is found we must use the masculine.

Boys and girls, if you are standing at the forks of the roads to-day, and if you have determination, fair intellectual ability and some moral stamina, take the road that leads to the college hall, if it is not altogether hedged up before you.—*Golden Rule.*

AN ODD SPECTACLE.

A horse with goggles was one of the attractions of the Clinton square market place. The Manlius farmer who owned him said he discovered recently that the animal was very near-sighted, and an oculist took the necessary measurements, and, sending to New York, had a pair of concave spectacles made expressly for Dobbin. When the farmer tried them for the first time the horse appeared to be startled, but recovering from his surprise manifested every symptom of pleasure. They are made so as to be firmly fastened in the headstall, and cannot be worn without that piece of harness. "When I turn him out to pasture," said the farmer, "he feels uneasy and uncomfortable without his goggles, and last Sunday he hung around the barn and whinnied so plaintively that I took out the bit and put the headstall and goggles on him, and he was so glad that he rubbed my shoulder with his nose. Then he kicked up his heels and danced down to the pasture. You ought to have seen him. I hate to let him wear specs all the time, though for fear he will break them."—*Bridgeport Standard.*