



The Family Circle.

ARTIE'S "AMEN."

BY PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE.

They were Methodists twain, of the ancient school,

Who always followed the wholesome rule
That whenever the preacher in meeting said
Aught that was good for the heart or head,
His hearers should pour their feelings out
In a loud "Amen" or a godly shout.

Three children had they, all honest boys,
Whose youthful sorrows and youthful joys
They shared, as your loving parents will,
While tending them ever through good and ill.

One day—'twas a bleak, cold Sabbath morn,
When the sky was dark and the earth forlorn—

These boys, with a caution not to roam,
Were left by the elder folk at home.

But scarce had they gone when the wooded frame

Was seen by the tall stove-pipe aflame;
And out of their reach, high, high and higher

Rose the red coils of the serpent fire.

With startled sight for a while they gazed,
As the pipe grew hot and the wood-work blazed;

Then up, though his heart beat wild with dread,

The eldest climbed to a shelf o'erhead,
And soon, with a sputter and hiss of steam,
The flame died out like an angry dream.

When the father and mother came back that day—

They had gone to a neighboring church to pray—

Each looked with a half-averted eye,
On the awful doom which had just passed by.

And then the father began to praise
His boys with a tender and sweet amaze.

"Why, how did you manage, Tom, to climb
And quench the threatening flames in time
To save your brothers, and save yourself?"

"Well, father, I mounted the strong oak shelf

By help of the table standing nigh."

"And what," quoth the father, suddenly,

Turning to Jemmy, the next in age,

"Did you to quiet the fiery rage?"

"I brought the pail, and the dipper too,

And so it was that the water flew

All over the flames and quenched them quite."

A mist came over the father's sight,
A mist of pride and of righteous joy,
As he turned at last to his youngest boy—
A gleeful urchin scarce three years old,
With his dimpling cheeks and his hair of gold.

"Come, Artie, I'm sure you weren't afraid:
Now tell me in what way you tried to aid
This fight with the fire." "Too small am I,"

Artie replied, with a half-drawn sigh,

"To fetch like Jemmy, and work like Tom;

So I stood just here for a minute dumb,

Because, papa, I was frightened some;

But I prayed, 'Our Father': and then—and then

I shouted as loud as I could, 'Amen.'"

—Harper's Young People.

EDNA'S ROOM.

BY MRS. GALUSHA ANDERSON.

"Oh, Aunt Anna, do come in and see the beautiful new carpet that mamma has bought for me," cried Edna, joyfully, one bright spring morning. She stood at the open door of her room. The sun shone brightly into the window and made the apartment cheerful. The carpet was certainly very pretty, and all the appointments of the room displayed the good taste and good sense of the mother who had provided them.

Still, Aunt Anna's praises were confined to the carpet, and that hardly met with her approval.

She sat down in the low rocker by the window and after admiring the combination

of colors to which Edna called her attention, she asked quietly, "Who takes care of your room, Edna?"

"I do," returned the young girl with some pride. "Mamma said that if I would care for it I might have a room by myself. I was so tired of sharing the nursery with the other children, and now that baby has come in there from mamma's room, there really was no place for me."

"Then I suppose that you moved in late last night, or was it this morning?"

"Why no, Auntie! I have been here almost a week. Did I not tell you? But what made you say that?"

"I merely noticed that you had no time to brush up the carpet, and that things looked rather askew all round. Did you make this bed?"

"Yes'm," answered Edna, laughing, "I know it looks as if there were potato-hills all along the edges; but it will not tuck in right. Now you are about it, Auntie, do give me a lecture on taking care of my room. I can see in your eyes that you are anxious to do it."

Nothing loath, Aunt Anna began. "Did it ever strike you that a room takes expression from its occupant as much as one's dress does? In fact that it might be called a mirror in which are reflected the principal traits of its owner?"

"No, indeed, Auntie. What an idea!"

"And yet I have heard you say that Mrs. Blank's house looks just like her."

"Now, Aunt Anna, I do hope that you don't think that this room looks just like me," exclaimed Edna, hastily picking up a soiled apron from the floor and stuffing it into the clothes bag in the closet.

"Some things about it look like your dear mother," answered Aunt Anna, "and in so far it is beautiful. See how she has chosen this carpet. The prevailing tint is complementary to that of the walls, so that together they rest the eye, and at the same time add to the cheerfulness of the room. The pattern is small and not striking, for she understands that a floor covering is not intended for display. If the room were in order, it would reflect her neatness, cheerfulness and love of art."

"As to the art, that is all my doing. I have saved up my spending money for ever so long to buy those brackets, and the vases I decorated myself," said Edna, who plumed herself on dabbling in china painting.

"All of which I understand and appreciate, Edna. But your love of art must be small, when you allow such very pretty brackets to stand with their carvings full of dust, and leave withered flowers in the vases. Neatness is certainly one of the virtues that you need to cultivate."

"But if you had to study every living minute, Auntie—"

"Don't finish the sentence, my dear. Those books of yours do not prevent you from doing almost anything you wish. A few minutes every day, and an hour on Saturday morning would keep this room like a little paradise."

"Please tell me how."

"To begin, when you rise, throw open the bed, and allow it to air. The mattress should be turned every morning, and the window left open top and bottom, if ever so little, before the bed is made. As to the 'potato-hills,' they will disappear with practice."

"Then, whatever you use at your toilet, brush, comb, and the rest, put back into their place. That is the shortest way. I see you have a large bag in the closet for soiled clothes. Put them in at once. Don't leave them on the floor. I should beg a piece of old silk, or, better still, an old soft silk handkerchief from my mother, if I were you. Hang it on its own particular hook, where it can be found without a search, and use it every day to dust every article of furniture."

"That would take time."

"Very little. The great secret of expedition in work is order. A young lady dresses in half the time if she knows just where everything is."

"Those bureau drawers,

"How sad a tale their chaos tells,
Of temper spoiled and wasted time,
When gloves are lost, and church-bells chime."

Edna laughed as Aunt Anna sang her little parody to the tune of "Those evening bells."

"I would not dare let you look inside of one of them," said she.

"I don't wish to, my dear. Not to-day at any rate. But to continue. You will preserve the beauty of your furniture much

longer if you keep a bottle of oil, and another of polish, with a bit of soft flannel to apply it with, and occasionally touch up the rubbed places. But above all you must sweep well, and never neglect the corners. The corners of a room are the test of sweeping. Cover all your small articles with a sheet after they are well dusted and placed on the bed, and turn all your tables and chairs into the hall. I have not time to tell you how to brush down the walls and to dust the pictures. But one thing I will say, give plenty of time for the dust to settle, before you begin to wipe it off. Otherwise you will have your work to do twice over. Then shake your sheet out of the window, and all that will be left to do will be the pleasurable occupation of arranging the room as tastefully as possible."

"You would have me work very hard, Aunt Anna," sighed Edna.

"But you promised your mother that you would take care of your room. And you can find great pleasure in all this, which is by no means as hard as it seems. You can also learn much that will be of use to you in many places outside of the room itself. You can learn to hold yourself to your word. Every time you slight your duties here you break your promise to your mother, and injure both your honesty and your self-respect."

"You can make this room, too, a standing lesson to the younger children. If, whenever they come in here, they find everything beautifully in order, they cannot excuse their own untidiness by saying that sister does no better."

"This is the only spot on earth that is your very own. Here you may sit down among your possessions to study or rest; here you may bring the younger children, when your mother is busy or tired, and by your kindness teach them to consider you as a faithful friend, and your room as a refuge. In coming years you will reap from such seed sowing a harvest of love and confidence."

"Above all, dear Edna, this is your private chapel. Here is the oratory, where you commune with your Saviour. Should you not be willing to expend time and labor to render it a place where you can kneel before God to implore a clean heart and a right spirit, without a sense of the incongruity of your surroundings?"

"I am glad you came in, Auntie. I should never have thought of things so. But after all, it seems odd to urge such a motive for keeping my room in order."

"You have not thought very far, Edna, nor gone very far in the Christian life. You will find that the gospel deals even with bureau drawers. You surely have heard what George Herbert says:

"Who sweeps a room as by God's laws,
Makes that and the action fine."

or better yet the words of Paul, 'Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.'

And Aunt Anna went away, leaving Edna quiet and thoughtful.—Standard.

MR. MOODY'S INTERVIEW WITH A SWEARER.

The following incident was related by Mr. Moody in the course of an address to young men at St. Louis. One evening a man drove up to the building where our meetings were held. He had a fine-looking carriage, and he had his hat on one side of his head and a cigar in his mouth, and he acted as if he didn't want any one to know that he was attending the meetings; and in a careless way he was assuming that he didn't care particularly what was going on; but I noticed that he was listening, and that the tears stood in his eyes. He was trying to conceal it. You know some men act very strangely. They don't want you to know they are affected, and they put up their hands to their faces, and all that. It is not manly for some men to shed tears for sin. It is manly to do a great many mean and contemptible things, but it is not manly for a man to shed a tear over his sins. I said to some of the friends after the meeting was over, "Who is that man that drove up in a carriage?" "Well, that is Mr. P." "Is he a Christian man?" "A Christian man! I will venture to say there is not a man within a hundred miles that has done the damage to the church that this man has done." "Well, how is that?" "Well, he is one of the wealthiest men in that part of the country, and is a man of great influence, but one of the most profane men, and one of the most vulgar

and obscene talking men that is in the community."

"Well," I said, "he is interested."

"No," was the reply, "he is not. If you had heard what he said about you down street to-day, and the fun he was making of you and the meetings you wouldn't think he was interested."

"Well," I said, "you can't tell anything from that. Some men when the Spirit of God wakes them up, talk right opposite to what they feel. It is no sign, and I will go up to his house and see him, if you will tell me where he lives." They said: "You had better not go. He will only curse you."

"That will not hurt me. It will hurt him more than me. He has not power to curse me."

I went up to the man's house and I met him coming out of the gate of his yard. I said, "I believe this is Mr. P."

The man straightened up. "Yes sir; that is my name. What do you want?"

"Well, I would like to ask you a question, if you have no objection."

"What is it, sir?"

"Well, I am told that you have been blessed above every man in this country; that God has given you great wealth; and I am told that he has given you a beautiful wife and a beautiful family of children, and I am told that He has given you good health, and they tell me all that He has received in return from you has been curses and blasphemy, and I would just like to ask you why you treat your Lord in that way?"

Well, the man's countenance fell. "Come in," said he, and the tears began to trickle down his cheeks. He couldn't conceal them then. I went into his drawing-room, and took a seat on the sofa, and the man said, "How can I help it? If I have tried it once I have tried a thousand times to stop swearing, and I can't do it. I curse my wife and I believe I love her. I have got, as you say, a lovely family of children, and as I sit at the table, and before I know it, I am cursing them. I feel ashamed of myself. I confess that I am a bad man, but I can't help it. I have tried and tried, and am trying, but I am growing worse all the time."

"Well," I said, "I know all about it. I have been there."

"What," said he, "did you ever swear?"

"Yes."

"Well," says he, "how did you ever get rid of it; how did you ever stop?" I said,

"I never stopped, it stopped itself."

"Why, how is that?"

"Well, one night I let the Lord Jesus Christ come into this heart of mine, and I have never had any desire to swear since."

"Is that so?"

"Yes, sir; that is so."

"It don't seem possible that you ever swore."

"Well, it don't to me. I am a stranger almost to myself. I wonder at myself. It don't seem possible." And then I went on and told him how he could be saved.

"Well," says he, "I don't understand that."

"No," I said, "but the Lord will reveal it to you if you really want to get the victory over sin, if you want to get the victory over profanity and over every other sin; for if God is going to save you it must be thorough work not only to break off one sin, but all sin. But God lays the axe right at the root of the tree. He don't come to save a man from one sin, but from all sin. And when God works He makes thorough work of it." Well, I preached Christ to him, and after a while I said: "Let us get down here and pray." And after I had prayed I said: "Now you pray."

"Me pray?" said he, "Why, that would be downright blasphemy. I don't want to add sin to sin. Me pray? That would be mockery."

"Why," said I, "don't you want God to forgive you? Don't you want God to have mercy upon you?"

"Yes," says he, "I do."

Says I, "That is honest. Now tell God what you want and ask him to have mercy upon you." After I had prayed, the poor fellow began to pray, "God be merciful to me, a great sinner," and, when I got up to leave, he said, "Now, what shall I do?" "Go right down to the Church of God and let these people know that you have made up your mind to be a child of God—to be a Christian." "Why," said he, "go to church? Oh! I can't do that. Why, what would people say?" "Oh," said I, "you have got to trample that under your feet."