



### The Family Circle.

#### WEEDING THE ONION BED.

BY MARY E. C. WYETH.

The day was long, and the sun shone hot  
Upon farmer Goodson's garden spot,  
Where corn and cabbages, beets and peas,  
Melons and cucumbers, those and these,  
Grew and spread in the sun and light;  
Wrestling upward and downward with  
might,  
While in and among them, flourishing still  
As only weeds can, weeds grew with a will.

"Weeds grow apace," the old farmer said,  
Leisurely viewing his garden bed;  
Well, the plough for the corn, for the cabbage  
the hoe,

But then in some places, I ought to know,  
There's nothing so certain the weeds to de-  
stroy

As the fingers and thumb of a trusty boy,  
So, raising his voice, he shouted to Ned:  
Here, sonny, come weed out this onion bed.

The day was hot, and the beds were dry,  
As garden beds are in late July;  
And Ned was reading his story book,  
In the cool, sweet shade by the orchard  
brook.

While wondering whether he'd come with  
grace,  
Or with frown and pout on his bright young  
face,

I looked, and lo! there was plucky Ned  
Tugging away in the onion bed.

Oft and again as the day wore by,  
Till the sun went down in the Western  
sky,  
I glanced toward the garden, and always  
there

I caught the gleam of his gold brown hair  
As under the hat, his curly head  
Bent low o'er the weeds in the onion bed.

Ah, years have journeyed and gone since  
then,

And Ned is a man in the world of men  
With heart and hand, and a steadfast will,  
He is pulling the weeds of evil still,  
A shining record and noble fame  
Belong to-day to his honored name.  
Yet nowise grander he seems to be,  
Than long ago he appeared to me  
When promptly bending his curly head  
Patiently weeding the onion bed.

#### A STORY FOR TO-DAY.

BY MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON.

The early morning Chicago and North-Western express made a very brief halt at a little station out upon one of the interminable prairies one Monday morning last autumn, and the passengers in the last coach looked with interest at the group of persons who were hurried on board.

It was a modest, quietly appressed woman, with a pleasant face and a low, even voice, who had evidently so long accustomed herself to the limited quarters of a prairie cabin, that she felt bound to pack her luggage, her six pretty children and herself in as small a space as possible.

When it became known that the beautiful little family of children were natives of the prairie, and that they were going for the first time to mamma's home in New Hampshire to spend Thanksgiving, there was not a person in the coach who did not feel an interest in and desire benedictions upon them.

As it happened, before this group of little people came in, there had not been a child in the coach all the way from Cedar Rapids, and the six engaging young strangers brightened up the weary through passengers wonderfully. One after another the children were borrowed from their mother and invited to share this one's fruit, and that one's lunch, and to look at the pictures in another's book, so that long before they reached Chicago, every one of the genial passengers knew that the quiet mother was Mrs. Marcia Haywood, and that she had a married sister, Mrs. Jane Hanover, also settled in the West, who, with her four boys, were going home with her to Thanksgiving,

and that the two families expected to meet in Chicago.

"We were very happy because we were able to take the early Monday morning train," said Jennie Haywood, the eldest of the six children, who was perched upon the arm of a seat and prattling away to a very sympathetic audience. "We didn't think of going till we had a letter from Aunt Jane that she was going, and she sent the money to pay part of our expenses; so papa said we must go, of course, and she wrote that we must travel on Sunday, too, across the prairie to the station in our ox-cart so that we could take the cars to-day and meet auntie in Chicago at the time she appointed. But mamma said she wouldn't travel on the Lord's Day on any account, and papa said he should be afraid something dreadful would happen to us if we did. So mamma got everything ready on Saturday, and on Sunday we went to meeting as usual. The minister knew we were going East, and he preached a sermon on purpose for us. Such a lovely sermon as it was! It made almost everyone cry, because, you see, I suppose it made them homesick; for, you know, all the settlers came from somewhere in the East, and they are all talking about going back on a visit some Thanksgiving, as soon as they have money enough to spare.

"There was a stranger, gentleman, at church who had come North to look up some land claims. He stopped at the minister's over Sunday because he thought it would be wrong to drive along on that day. He talked in our Sunday-school so nicely that all the children knew what he meant. He told stories about people who failed to prosper in the end because they broke the Sabbath and neglected to join in the worship of God when they could. He said they were not superstitions nor happenings, but the sure result of breaking one of His commandments. After meeting he talked with papa and mamma and told them he was going to start that night, when the moon was up, and drive to the station; that he had two horses and a big waggon, and could take us along with him as well as not. So, as we were all ready, we came with him. It was much nicer than it would have been to ride in our ox-cart, only we had to bid poor papa good-bye away there at home instead of having him with us all the way across the prairie."

When the train reached Chicago there was no Aunt Jane awaiting Mrs. Haywood, and no message from her, so Mrs. Haywood kept on in company with the passengers, with whom she now felt quite well acquainted, feeling confident that her sister had gone on by a preceding train.

That ingenuous little story of Jennie's had started an interesting and edifying discussion concerning the observance of the Sabbath among the passengers. Then the quiet mother told of her trials when she first settled on the prairie, in endeavoring to keep the Sabbath holy, as she had been taught to do in New England,—how it dawned upon her at first that if there were to be sober, honest, prosperous, God-fearing communities in the great West, effort must be put forth to make them so and keep them so.

In order to do their part in this direction in their own little community, she and her husband had started a Sunday-school which met, at first, in their little cabin, and afterwards in a temporary building erected for it. The school had been a success from the first, and now an organized working church and a settled minister, whose salary was wholly paid by the community, was the happy result. Besides, there was not a Sabbath-breaker in the neighborhood.

"That is the only way to do in the West," said Mrs. Haywood, "where everything is so free and so roomy and so inclined to run at loose ends." So engrossed were the more thoughtful of the passengers while the "Sunday question" was under discussion, that the little stations, the villages and the larger towns seemed to flit by the car-windows like bright-winged birds. The gentle mother and the happy, light-hearted brood of children had spread such an element of good fellowship throughout the car that before night the passengers all felt like old friends, and bade each other good-bye at Albany, the next afternoon, with real regret.

Before the arrival at Albany, however, the gray-haired old gentleman had drawn up a paper which all the passengers signed, pledging themselves to the upholding of the Christian Sabbath in whatever situation in life they might be placed. As there were a

minister, an editor of an influential secular paper and two or three teachers in the car, the wholesome ideas provoked by the pleasant discussion were likely to be reiterated on wider fields. The old gentleman told Mrs. Haywood, as he assisted her and her children on board the northern train at Springfield and bade them good-bye, that many people from the best social, professional and business circles all over the country were stirring in the matter of Sunday observance, and that she herself had assisted in the good movement by the relation of her prairie experience and the earnest, intelligent discussion it had elicited on the journey.

The next morning the sun rose clear and bright over the red buildings, broad meadows and evergreen uplands belonging to the Lovejoy homestead, which lay pleasantly upon an easterly slope in one of the picturesque hill-towns of Southern New Hampshire.

As Grandpa Lovejoy was stubbing down the gravel walk with a pail of paint in his hand, the "Depot Village" omnibus drove up the road and into the yard. Grandpa looked, dropped the pail and cried, "Marcia! can it be that these old eyes behold my precious little chick again?"

"I'm so glad to get here in the morning," said the sweet, quiet home-comer, after she had been lifted out of the vehicle by her father, who could not speak a word from his glad surprise, and had been hugged, kissed and cried over by the rest of the family. Before entering the house, she paused to glance around. "It all looks so natural," she said, with joyful tears; "just as I have dreamed of seeing the dear old home so many, many times. But where are Jane and the boys? Was it to surprise you that she did not tell you of our coming?"

"Jane? Jane?" they all echoed.

"Yes, father, hasn't she arrived yet? I supposed, all the way from Chicago, that she was on a train in advance of us."

"No, daughter," said John Lovejoy, who now had two of the children in his arms, while the rest were clinging to him, "she has not come, and we have not heard from her for at least a month,—have we, Ruth?"

A foreboding cloud hung over the group, to be dispelled in a measure by little Ruthy, who piped up sweetly, "Don't worry; the good Lord will take care of His own." That was what the man with the horses told papa when we came away,—don't you know, mother?"

All the next day at the Lovejoys there were frequent arrivals of relatives and a merry jingling of sleigh-bells mingled with voices of kindly greetings. But the expected daughter and her boys did not come, although the big yellow pung was twice sent to the railroad station to meet the incoming trains. At four o'clock, after waiting two hours, the gathered family sat down to a dinner which, in point of quantity and quality, is served only on Thanksgiving days in New England. There was, however, a lurking shadow of disappointment and anxiety present at the feast which all the thankfulness and childish merriment could not dissolve.

Grandpa Lovejoy had just bowed his venerable head to ask a blessing upon the food, when there was heard a loud shout in the direction of the front yard from boisterous young voices which almost drowned the brazen chime of sleigh-bells.

"They've come!" exclaimed Jennie. "That's cousin Johnny's voice, I know. Oh, they are awfully noisy boys!"

"It's the team from the 'Corners,' and they must have come by the way of Boston," said John Lovejoy as they all left the table and hurried out.

"Oh dear, I'm here at last," said poor Jane; "but such a time as I have had, and I'm so weary, and this snow, and the sun just setting, and seeing you all—it is just like a dream, and it makes me so homesick even now," and the tired woman broke down and sobbed upon her mother's shoulder.

"You see how the way of it was," said Johnny Hanover, the oldest of the boys, going at once to gentle Aunt Marcia, and twining his arm about her neck; "We started Sunday morning in spite of all you wrote against it. When we got to our railway station the agent persuaded papa, because he said there was money to be saved, to buy tickets for us to come on by a different route from the one we intended to take. There was a mixed train just leaving the station, and the agent said that, if we got

right aboard of that, we should connect with a through express at the 'junction.' After we had started, and our hurry was over, we looked at our tickets and found that they would not take us through Chicago at all, so as to meet you. Then we missed the express and had to take an accommodation train, and we have missed connections all along, and everything has gone wrong, and mamma is almost tired to death."

"And me is 'most 'tarved, too," said the youngest boy, "'cause we lost our lunch-basket a dood while ago where we tooked some more cars."

"It all came from our disregard of the Sabbath," said Mrs. Hanover, who had wiped her eyes and found her voice, while loving hands removed her wraps, bathed her hands and face and smoothed her hair, "I began wrong in my new Western home, but Marcia could see that the New England settlers must carry with them the home Sabbath, and she acted accordingly. While she and her husband brought over her old neighbors, as well as the foreign element, to adopt her views, we, in our section, fell in with the new ways, and made too much of a holiday of the Sabbath. Father, I am to make you a long visit, and when my boys return with me, they shall carry with them the old-time Sabbath," and all the now thoroughly happy company, as they drew up to the yet steaming table, said "Amen."—*Watchman.*

#### NOT ASHAMED OF HIS COLORS.

BY MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON.

BOY WANTED. Enquire at No. 1 Exchange street. Private Office.

Everybody in the large manufacturing town of Handsborough and its vicinity knew that "No. 1 Exchange street" was the large wholesale and retail china and glass warehouse of Lowell, Clark & Company. Everybody also well knew that a situation in that old and respectable house was the most desirable one that could be had in all that region, and at the same time the most difficult for any boy or young man to secure.

Among a group of bright, handsome lads who were reading that advertisement in the *Handsborough Morning Journal* on this fair autumn morning, was Tom Harding. "Just like Major Lowell to advertise in that short way, with no particulars," said he. "He will just enjoy having half the boys in this town, and in a dozen other towns about here, answer that advertisement in person. It will give him a chance to question, then quiz, and then discharge them with a long lecture. And the Major will remember every one of them who had the hardihood to come before his awful majesty, and will call him by name should he happen to meet him at any time during his mortal life. I want a job bad enough, but I won't go near him."

Nevertheless, that afternoon Tom Harding did walk along down to No. 1 Exchange street in company with his cousin, Ernest Sawyer, who had seen the laconic advertisement in the copy of the *Journal* his father took at his home in Hudsonville, twenty-five miles away, and had come up to Handsborough at once on the noon train to answer it in person.

"I came in the baggage car with my brother who is the baggage-master," said Ernest. "I am a sort of spare hand for the railway company, so it did not cost me anything to run up. I should like the situation first-rate; father knows Major Lowell, but I suppose there isn't much chance, it's so late in the day, for one thing."

"Not a shadow of a chance," replied Tom, "but as long as you are here we will run down there and see the show. I've heard of a dozen boys already who couldn't get the job. I saw two or three of them; they looked crestfallen enough."

"Hallo!" said Tom, as the two boys were walking along arm in arm, "What sort of a badge is that you are sporting on the lapel of your coat. You can't be a Free Mason; you aren't old enough for that."

"Oh, no!" replied Ernest, laughing and turning around so that his cousin could get a better view of the bit of bright blue ribbon with its modest silver pin bearing the words, "Dare to do Right."

"Thunder!" cried Tom. "It will be as much as your neck is worth to walk through the streets of this town among the roughs with that temperance banner waving on your person. I advise you to take it right off."