

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

WRITE THEM A LETTER TO-NIGHT.

Don't go to the theatre, concert or ball, But stay in your room to-night; Deary yourself to the friends that call, And a good long letter write— Write to the sad old folks at home— Who sit when the day is done, With folded hands and downcast eyes, And think of the absent one.

COALS OF FIRE.

Farmer Dawson kept missing his corn. Every night it was taken from his crib, although the door was well secured with lock and key. "It's that lazy Tom Slocum!" he exclaimed the morning after missing more than usual. I've suspected him all the time, and I won't hear it any longer.

"What makes you think it's Tom?" asked his wife, pouring out the fragrant coffee. "Because he's the only man around who hasn't any corn—nor anything else, for that matter. He spent the summer at the saloons while his neighbors were at work. Now they have plenty and he has nothing—serves him just right, too!"

"But his family are suffering," rejoined his wife; "they are sick and in need of food and medicine; should we not help them?"

"No!" growled the farmer; "if he finds his neighbors are going to take care of his family, it will encourage him to spend the next season as he did the last. Better send him to jail and his family to the poor house, and I'm going to do it, too! I've laid a plan to trap him this very night."

"Now, while Tom is reaping the bitter fruits of his folly, is it not the very time to help him to a better life?" suggested the wife.

"A little course of law would be the most effective," replied the farmer.

"In this case coals of fire would be better. Try the coals first, William, try the coals first."

Farmer Dawson made no reply, but finished his breakfast and walked out of the house with the decided step of one who has made up his mind, and something is going to be done.

His wife sighed as she went about her work, thinking of the weary, heart-broken mother with her sick and hungry babes around her.

The farmer proceeded to examine his cribs, and after a thorough search found a hole large enough to admit a man's hands.

"There's the leak!" he exclaimed; "I'll fix that!" and he went to work setting a trap inside.

Next morning he arose earlier than usual, and went out to the crib. His trap had caught a man—Tom Slocum, the very one he had suspected!

it while he filled it with the coveted grain.

"There Tom, take that," said the farmer, "and after this when you want corn come to me and I'll let you have it on trust or for work. I need another hand on the farm, and will give steady work with good wages."

"O, sir," replied Tom, quite overcome, "I've been wanting work, but no one would hire. My family are suffering, and I am ashamed to beg. But I'll work for this and every ear I've taken, if you'll give me a chance."

"Very well, Tom," said the farmer, "take the corn to the mill and make things comfortable about home to-day, and to-morrow we'll begin. But there's one thing we must agree to first."

Tom lifted an enquiring gaze. "You must let whisky alone," continued the farmer; "you must promise not to touch a drop."

The tears sprang into Tom's eyes, and his voice trembled with emotion as he said: "You are the first man that ever asked me that. There's always enough to say, 'Come, Tom, take a drink, and I've drunk until I thought there was no use in trying to be a better man. But since you care enough to ask me to stop drinking, I'm bound to make the trial; that I will, sir.'"

Farmer Dawson took Tom to the house and gave him his breakfast, while his wife put up a basket of food for the suffering family in the poor man's home.

Tom went to work the next day and the next. In time he came to be an efficient hand on the Dawson place. He stopped drinking and stealing, attended church and Sabbath-school with his family, and became a respectable member of society.

"How changed Tom is from what he once was!" remarked the farmer's wife one day. "Yes," replied her husband, "twas the coals of fire that did it."

"HE KNOWETH ALL." The twilight falls, the night is near, I fold my work away, And kneel to one who bends to hear The story of the day.

The old, old story; yet I kneel To tell it at Thy call; And cares grow lighter as I feel That Jesus knows them all.

Ye, all; the morning and the night, The joy, the grief, the loss; The roughest path, the sunbeam bright, The hourly thorn and cross,

Thou knowest all—I lean my head, My weary eyelids close, Content and glad swills to tread This path, since Jesus knows.

And He has loved me! all my heart With answering love is stirred, And every anguished pain and smart Finds healing in the Word.

So here I lay me down to rest, As mighty shadows fall, And lean confiding on His breast Who knows and pities all.

"NOT LOST BUT GONE BEFORE." "Not lost but gone before," is a very common expression, and yet its true source has been almost wholly overlooked.

It has figured as an epitaph upon grave-stones and has been utilized by the poets and other writers. The thought is, indeed, a Christian thought, but the words are the words of a Pagan.

It was the stoic Seneca who said "Not lost, but gone before." There is in his thirty-sixth epistle a remarkable sentence in which we read, "Death, which we dread and shun, interrupts life, does not take it away: the day will come again which shall restore us to the light, and which man would shun unless it brought back those who are forgotten."

The meaning of that is not that of the Christian, and nothing else in Seneca, so far as we can discover, can be compared with the phrase under consideration. But Cyprian, the martyr, who wrote in the third century, supplies us with something very definite.

In his discourse "On Mortality," Cyprian speaks in this language; "Our brethren should not be bewailed when by the summons of the Lord they are delivered from this world; for I know that they are not lost but sent before (non los amitti sed premiti), that when they retire they precede (or go before), so that they ought to be longed after as those who go on a journey or a voyage, and not lamented." He adds, what might serve as a motto for the Funeral Reform association, "that black garments should not be put on here when they have already put on white robes there."

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worn. He appealed to the secretary of the treasury, who decided against him. He then brought suit within ninety days in the United States court. His wife swore that a portion of the whole had been worn in good faith. The duties paid on that portion were refunded, while those on the remainder were retained.

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AS BECOMETH WOMEN PROFESSING GODLINESS.

And what shall we say of our daughters? What are we doing for them? Are we training them to be pillars in the temple of God? or are we, by precept and example, teaching them that social position, wealth, culture and taste in dress are more to be desired than true godliness! You perhaps have all heard the little story which, while amusing, cannot fail to bring to every true Christian heart a touch of sadness—of a little girl who, in saying her evening prayers, after asking God's blessing on herself and all her dear ones, closed with this petition: "And, O Lord, please make us all stylish!" Are our daughters being led to feel that these things are of the first importance? Truly our Father has given us all things richly to enjoy, and he desires that his children should possess the beautiful things of earth, but not to the exclusion of higher things. It becometh not women professing godliness to yield so large a part of their time and thoughts to the decoration of these frail and perishing bodies, nor even to the cultivation of the intellect, while the culture of the soul is neglected. What will the harvest be from all this in our own hearts and in the hearts of our daughters, and in the hearts of those who look to us for example?

Where do we stand to-day as women professing godliness? Does not the trump give forth an uncertain sound? How much are we to blame for the dearth of spirituality in our churches? Let us hear what the prophet says to us in the 32nd chapter of Isaiah, 6th and 11th verses: "Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech. Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled ye careless ones: strip you, and make you bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins. The enemy of souls is subtle and insinuating. He tells us that if we give true allegiance to Christ we can not have social position, or we cannot do this or that, of which we are so fond. Or sometimes he says to us, in a very sweet and winning way, "There is no harm in this or that, and you can be just as good a Christian, and yet have a little pleasure; or he will say: "If you will only do so and so, you will have more influence over sinners;" and so by his specious arguments he entices us.

The Bible lays down no law; neither dare we. Each must be a law unto himself or herself. We are pleading to-day for more consecration in living, and we know there is a pleasure and delight in serving Christ which can not be surpassed. The more self-renunciation we have, and the less we kick against the pricks, the more of peace and joy we have. In the words of another, "The needle of the compass will not settle until it points toward the polar star, and so the soul can find no peace until it turns with full purpose of faith to Christ." Note the words full purpose. There must be a purpose, and that purpose the yielding of all to Christ; and it must be a full purpose, full of faith. Oh, that we would allow ourselves to be kept for the Master's use? He can not use us unless we will it so. And there is so much to be done. He says: "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few. Who will go work to-day in my vineyard?" England's sweet and sainted poetess, Francis Ridley Havergal, is a beautiful example of consecration. Her life bore the fragrant blossom of godliness. Her little poem of "Consecration" breathes an aspiration known and understood only by a Christian heart:

"Take my life, and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to thee. Take my moments and my days, Let them flow in ceaseless praise. Take my hands, and let them be Swift and beautiful for thee. Take my voice, and let me sing Always, only, for my King. Take my lips, and let them be Filled with messages from thee. Take my silver and my gold; Not a mite would I withhold. Take my intellect, and use Every power as thou shalt choose. Take my will, and make it thine; It shall be no longer mine. Take my heart, it is thine own; It shall be thy royal throne. Take my love, my Lord; I pour At thy feet its treasure's store. Take myself, and I will be Ever, only, all, for thee."

—Journal and Messenger.

IMPORTANT TESTIMONY.

The Evening Journal, Chicago, quotes the return of the last census, showing that \$750,000,000 are spent yearly in the United States for intoxicating liquors, and adds: "But the cost of liquor drinking is not altogether in money, it costs immensely in other directions, entails injuries and heart-aches that are quite beyond the figures of the arithmetic accurately to compute. Four fifths of all the inmates of our jails, prisons, penitentiaries and reformatories are brought there directly or indirectly, by strong drink. There are 500,000 of