

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

A MOTHER'S YEARNING

"If, sitting with this little worn-out shoe
And scarlet stocking lying on my knee,
I knew the little feet had patterned through
The pearl-set gates that lie 'twixt Heaven
and me
I could be reconciled, and happy, too,
And look with glad eyes toward the
jasper sea.

"If, in the morning when the song of birds
Reminds us of a music far more sweet,
I listen for his pretty, broken words,
And for the music of his dimpled feet,
I could be almost happy though I heard
No answer, and saw but his vacant seat.

"I could be glad if, when the day is done,
And all its cares and heart-aches laid
away,
I could look westward to the hidden sun,
And with a heart full of deep yearnings
say,

"To-night I'm nearer to my little one
By just the travel of a single day."

"If I could know those little feet were shod
In sandals wrought of light in other
lands,
And that the footprints of a tender God
Run side by side with his, in golden sands,
I could bow cheerfully and kiss the rod,
Since he would be in wiser, safer hands.

"If he were dead I would not sit to-day
And stain with tears the we sock on my
knee.
'Bring back again my little boy to me!'
I would beseech, knowing it is God's way,
And that they'd lead me to him o'er
death's silent sea.

"But O! to know the feet, once pure and
white,
The haunts of vice have boldly ventured in,
The hands that should have battled for the
right,
Have been wrung crimson in the clasp of
sin,
And should he knock at Heaven's gate to-
night,
I fear my boy could hardly enter in."

POWER OF A BOOK.

An old Puritan doctor, Richard Sibbes, wrote a book, years ago, called the "Bruised Reed," which fell, just at the right time, into the hands of Richard Baxter, and brought him under the influences of the enlightening power of the Spirit of God. And then Baxter's ministry was like the sun in his strength, and he wrote a book called "The Call to the Unconverted," which continued to speak long after Baxter himself had ceased to speak with human tongue.

That "Call to the Unconverted" went preaching on, until it got into the hands of Philip Doddridge—prepared by his pious mother's teaching from the Dutch titles of a mantelpiece, with very quaint scriptural pictures—and it was the means of enlightening him to a broader knowledge and richer faith, and a deeper experience of the things of God.

And then Doddridge wrote a book called "The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," which, just at a critical period in his history, fell into the hands of William Wilberforce, who wrote a book called "Practical Christianity," which, far down in the sunny Isle of Wight, fired the heart of a clergyman who has attained a broad and wide reputation; and most deservedly, too—for who has not heard tell of Leigh Richmond?

He wrote the simple annals of a girl, and published it under the title of "The Dairyman's Daughter;" and into how many languages has that been translated, and been made of God a power for the spread of truth? The same book on "Practical Christianity," went right down into a secluded parish in Scotland, and it found there a young clergyman who was preaching a gospel that he did not know; and it instructed him in the way of God more perfectly, and he came forth a champion, valiant for the truth upon the earth, until all Scotland rang with the eloquence of Thomas Chalmers.

What a chain! Richard Sibbes, Richard Baxter, Philip Doddridge, William Wilberforce, Leigh Richmond, Thomas Chalmers!—*Watchword.*

"POOR GRINDSTONE."

A year or two ago an old lady died in an inland town of New York, whose fortune and family gave her a high social position, but who bore among her neighbors the odd sobriquet of "Grindstone," because, as they explained, "All the tempers and tongues of the town were sharpened by coming near her."

In her youth poor Grindstone had been a beautiful, warm-hearted girl. But she had a keen eye for any ridiculous trait in others, and a scathing, merciless wit in exposing it.

She had also a peculiar talent which is attributed to Theodore Hook, of extemporizing verses, each of which satirized some persons present. At every party she was called on for such a song, which was received with loud applause and laughter. But each verse was a stab that cost her a friend.

The girl (like hundreds of other girls who are making the same fatal error) was not ill-natured, and did not mean to hurt anybody by her cruel jests. She only craved admiration, and mistook the amusement she caused for homage to herself. It is probable that she died not knowing why, when her former school-mates were happy wives and mothers, she had been left alone to a bare, bitter old age, with neither friend nor lover.

In every social circle may be found some young girl—usually bright and clever—who assumes superiority to the young people about her, and delights in "taking off" their peculiarities and weaknesses.

In places of summer resort, where common-sense would suggest that people go to be friendly and happy together for a brief month or two, there is almost always a family or group who hold themselves aloof from other people, eye their companions with ill-natured amusement, and apparently find their highest enjoyment in satirizing them.

These unfortunate wits never are conscious that they themselves are the losers, and the only real victims of their poisoned arrows. All happy, genial enjoyment goes by without warming them. They meet men and women with noble natures, high aims and beautiful lives, who could give them priceless helps and comforts through life, but they see only their queer noses, or country manners, or ridiculous gowns, and gain from them only a moment of insane laughter. They would probably have found nothing in Moses but his stuttering speech, or in Paul but his weak and contemptible body. The world, after all, gives us precisely what we choose to take from it. When all that is pure and good, and noble in life waits for us, it is a ghoulish taste to go about peering and groping, to find only that which is diseased and defective and decayed.

SONG.

"We have prayed through the fog, now let us have a song," said Mr. Spurgeon, some four years ago, as he hastily took up the hymn-book after prayer to announce the second hymn of the morning service—the fog lifting itself at the moment just enough to let in a little sunlight. Instantly five thousand voices joined the preceptor in a song of praise to God, who seemed, like the song to flood the house with joy and gladness. Even at this distance of four years and four thousand miles, the glad notes of that song reverberate through all the corridors of memory, and fill our minds with thanksgiving and praise. Of a revival of song in all our Methodist Churches during this Century of Methodism! Of music—such as it is—we have plenty; but of joyful sing, O how little! If pastors and people will unite in the effort, much can be done to deliver our worshipping assemblies from the leaden load of inarticulate loudness which makes worship a task.

Why should a congregation sit fifteen minutes waiting for the choir? It ought to be no insult to the choir and no breach of propriety for the congregation to join in singing a good song while waiting for the time for the regular services. It would prepare both preacher and people for a more spirited worship. It would help to put life into the songs of the regular service; it might possibly serve to bring down a baptism of solemnity at least upon that worldly amusement called a voluntary. Not that all voluntaries are worldly amusements, but that many of them are such, and most ridiculous ones at that.

And then, after the sermon, we might have some free and hearty singing, kept up for a longer or shorter time, according to the mood of the congregation and the length of the preceding services. We have no thought of getting rid of the organ and the choir—not we; but we would like in some places of our Methodism to ring-fire these staid institutions, and set them in a blaze of devotion. There is nothing 'twixt earth and heaven more of a bore than much that takes the place of singing. O for a revival of song! Song that swells from the heart, that trembles on the lips, waked by the memory of a thousand mercies, and clinging to the skies like the ladder of Jacob!—*Western Ad.*

Envy is a vice which keeps no holiday, but is always in the wheel and working its own disquiet.

"ANOTHER STONE."

Yes, stone the woman—let the man go free! Draw back your skirts, lest their perchance May touch her garments as she passes; But to him put forth a willing hand To clasp with his that led her to destruction And disgrace. Shut up from her the sacred Ways of toil, that she no more may win an Honest meal; but open to him all honorable Paths, where he may win distinction; Give to him fair, pressed down measures of Life's sweetest joys. Pass her, O maiden, With a pure, proud face, if she pale out! A pure, polluted palm; but lay thy hand in His on bridal day, and swear to cling to him With wisely love and tender reverence. Trust him who led a sister woman To a fearful fate.

Yes, stone the woman—let the man go free! Let one soul suffer for the guilt of two— It is the doctrine of a hurried world, Too out of breath for holding balances Where nice distinctions and injustices Are calmly weighed. But ah, how will it be On that strange day of fire and flame, When men shall stand before the one true Judge? Shall we then make a difference in Sin? Shall He, the searcher of the hidden Heart, in His eternal and divine decree Condemn the woman and forgive the man?

THE VALUE OF MEMORY.

Several weeks since a representative of *The Free Press* was engaged in a general conversation with the late James Burns, when that gentleman remarked that he had an idea that newspaper men must pay especial attention to the cultivation of their memory.

"It is a valuable quality, and most newspaper men, perhaps, do cultivate their memory to the best of their ability."

"Valuable quality! It is one of the best. I had the fact impressed upon my mind when a young man by that great statesman, Daniel Webster, and it was a lesson I never forgot."

Upon being asked to relate the experience, Mr. Burns told how, in 1836, Daniel Webster paid a visit to Detroit and was given a reception by the citizens at the old National Hotel, which stood where the Russell House now stands. Public exercises were held at the Cass Grove, and in the evening the reception was held and was largely attended. "I was about 26 years old," said Mr. Burns, and had just risen to the distinction of being in business for myself. For that reason, I suppose—at all events I know no other cause—I was invited to be privately introduced with a lot of other young business men, to Mr. Webster.

"Well, sir, I went fully impressed with the greatness of Mr. Webster, and I confess, somewhat elated over the honor thus accorded me. We all assembled in the parlor. I remember Theodore Romeyn and the late C. C. Trowbridge were among those present—fifteen or twenty in number. Presently Mr. Webster entered the room and we were introduced. A social general chat of perhaps half an hour followed, Mr. Webster talking all over the room and with no one in particular, after which we took our leave. The remarkable feature which impressed me was the fact that Mr. Webster, who had met fifteen or eighteen ordinary young men for the first time, and that in a general way, called us by name and without hesitation or mistake, as we took our leave."

"I've heard that memory of names was one of Daniel Webster's strong points."

"But the story isn't finished," said Mr. Burns. "Four years later I was in New York buying goods. I had not seen or heard anything of Mr. Webster in that time. I had just turned from Wall-street to go up Broadway when I saw a magnificent figure walking ahead of me. Confident that it was Mr. Webster I quickened my pace, passed him, and at the next corner stopped to get a fair look at him. I was not mistaken in the man, and was immediately filled with a desire to speak to him, but I was held back by the thought that he wouldn't remember a young chap like myself. I followed him a block before I could make up my mind to accost him. Everybody on Broadway turned and looked admiringly at him as he passed, and finally I thought it would be in keeping with Western character to be a little forward. So with 'How do you do, Mr. Webster,' I stepped to his side.

"Turning slightly and half stopping in his walk, he looked intently into my face and said: 'Why, how do you do, Mr. Burns? I am glad to see you, sir.' And so we walked together up to the Astor House. I actually believe he inquired after every man he met at his Detroit reception, and that he called each man by name, as though they were his intimate friends. From that hour I knew the value of a good memory, and from that hour I began to cultivate my own."

"And you believe your experience with Mr. Webster was of value to you?"

"Value! Well, sir, it was one of the most valuable things that ever happened to me. It prompted me to begin a sort of self-discipline which I dare say has been worth thousands of dollars to me."

—*Detroit Free Press.*

FEAR TO BE FRIVOLOUS.

Frivolousness will ruin any life. No frivolousness succeeds in any great enterprise. No frivolous man succeeds in business of a commercial kind. Business is not a trick in amusement; it is hard work, hard study, daily consideration, incessant planning, wakefulness that ought never to sleep. If so for a corruptible crown, what for an incorruptible? The danger is that we make light of the Gospel because of our disregard for the manner in which it is spoken. Were we anxious about the vital matter, we should not care how it was uttered. All mere study of manner, and way of putting familiar truth, is an accommodation to the frivolity of the age. When we are told to make our services more interesting, our music more lively, our preaching more animated, we are told to stoop to the frivolity of the time, that we may entrap a truant attention and arrest a wandering mind. Given an anxious people, hungering after righteousness, knocking at the church door, saying, "Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will enter in and be glad; this is the day the Lord hath made," we need not study any mechanical arrangements or urge ourselves to an unusual animation of manner; the urgency of our desire, the purity and nobleness of our sympathy, would supply all the conditions required by the God of the feast, for the pouring out of heaven's best wine and the preparation of all the fatnings of the heavens for the satisfaction of our hunger. God makes all the universe contribute to the soul's growth.

"My oxen and my fatlings are killed and ready, therefore come to the marriage."

He keeps back nothing from the soul. He plucks the highest grapes in the vineyards of heaven for the soul. He seeks out the goodliest and choicest of His possessions and treasures that the soul may be satisfied; He has kept back nothing; last of all, he sent His Son, saying:

"They will reverence my Son."

In that fact see the symbol of all that can be crowded into the suggestion that God withhold no good thing that can minister to the soul's growth, in truth and love and grace.—*Rev. Dr. Parker.*

"FOUND DEAD."

I had been keeping watch with a sick child, a bitter January night. The air seemed all ice, the sky was moonless, starless, and dark; the sidewalks like glass, so frozen were they, and the few who were abroad at midnight, wisely deserted them for the car-tracks.

How glad I was when it was daylight once more, but recalled with a shiver the dreariness of the night when I read in the local column of a morning journal a paragraph headed, "Found Dead"—unknown—an inquest was held, the coroner's verdict, died of exposure and intemperance."

Some additional comments there were—a few cents in the vest pocket, a newspaper advertisement, a fragment of a letter in a woman's writing, evidently from a person of culture, some traces of manly beauty on the face, notwithstanding the marks of dissipation—and that was all. I watched for the sequel; it came: "Not having been identified or claimed, the young man who was found dead in the streets on the night of — was buried at the expense of the city." We all know what kind of burials are these!

"Died of intemperance and exposure." It should have been "Murdered by rum." We think sadly of the heights from which he came step by step to such a strait. Cared for by a woman of culture—"once"—ah! once, loving hearts shrined him. "Unknown," save by God and his angels, and yet there may be somewhere a home where he is still watched for—we cannot tell.

"Still some traces of manly beauty on his face"—the face on which once kisses were pressed—once a pure child-face.

Perchance as life's sands ran

out that winter's night, a touch of the Holy Spirit may have moved to prayer the anguished heart, and back on the winter-wind may have come the answer, "Thy sins are forgiven thee?" And who can tell but the peace of the forgiven may have left on the dead face something of childhood's rest and purity shining out through the rum-fiend's seal, "Dead and unknown!" Alas for the nameless graves, the blighted lives, the broken hearts!

Similar announcements are not rare in our dailies and weeklies, and yet they seem to make so little impression on the great reading masses! I wonder why we should not collect all such items, some in each State and bring them out in such a form as to rouse, convict, convince with these facts, the thoughtful public, of the humanity at least of putting away by law the evil traffic, which has written of so many, who, but for this might have been good, loyal, useful and great—"Found Dead!"—*Mrs. G. Hulse McLeod, in Union Signal.*

DANCING.—"No man in India would allow his wife or daughter to dance. And as to dancing with another man, if a woman were to attempt it, her husband would leave her at once, as one who was lost to modesty and virtue. In regard to Western nations, there is nothing that more perplexes them, than that fathers and husbands should allow their daughters and wives to indulge in promiscuous dancing. No argument will convince them that it is the proper thing for a virtuous woman or that it is not, at least, of a licentious tendency. The prevalence of this practice is one of the greatest reproaches, in their esteem, to Christian nations. With them, dancing is simply an accomplishment of a prostitute, and even she dances only with her own sex."

It is always a choice of masters to which Christ is urging men. It is not by striking off all allegiance, but by finding your true Lord and serving Him with a complete submission, that you can escape from slavery. Then give yourself to Him completely. Let Him mark you as His by whatever marks He will.—*Phillips Brooks.*

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

MISSIONARY MUSIC.

Have you ever brought a penny to the missionary box—
A penny which you might have spent like other little folks?
And when it falls among the rest, have you ever heard a ring?
Like a pleasant sound of welcome which the other pennies sing?

This is missionary music, and it has a pleasant sound,
For pennies make a shilling, and shillings make a pound;
And many pounds together the gospel news will send,
Which tells the distant heathen that the Saviour is their friend.

And, Oh! what joyous music is the missionary song,
When it seems to come from every heart, and sounds from every tongue;
When happy Christian little ones all sing with one accord
Of the time when real us of darkness shall be kingdoms of the Lord!

But sweeter far than all the rest which Jesus loves to hear
Are children's voices, when they breathe a missionary prayer—
When they bring the heat petition to the great Redeemer's throne,
That he will choose the heathen out, and take them for his own.

This is the music Jesus taught when he was here below;
This is the music Jesus loves to hear in glory now.
And many a one from distant lands will reach his heavenly home
In answer to the children's prayer, "O Lord, thy kingdom come."

Then, missionary children, let this music never cease;
Work on, work on in earnest for the Lord, the Prince of Peace.
There is praying work and paying work for every heart and hand,
Till the missionary chorus shall go forth through all the land.

TWO PENNIES.

It was a bright spring evening when little Polly stole softly into her father's room, with shoeless feet, and her golden hair falling lightly over her white night-gown; for it was bed-time, and she had come to say "Good night."

"Father," said the little one, raising her blue eyes to his kind face, "father, may I say my prayers beside you, for mother is too ill for me to go to her to-night?"

"Yes, pet," he answered, tenderly stroking the curly head. And reverently the child knelt down beside him, and repeated her evening prayer, adding at the close with special earnestness, "God bless my two pennies."

What can the child mean? thought her father in surprise, and when the little white robed figure was gone, he went and asked her mother if she knew what their little daughter meant.

"O, yes!" said the lady. "Polly has prayed that prayer every night since she put her two pennies into the plate at the last missionary meeting."

Dear children, have you ever prayed to God for a blessing on the pennies you have put into the missionary box? If not, be sure you never forget to do so in the future.

A CANAL-BOAT CHILD.

"Please, sir, will you gi' me a copper?" asked a poor little ragged boy of a grey-haired gentleman from Leicestershire one cold winter day, as he walked down a country lane near Daventry. The child's face had a dull, clayey look; his hair hung in dirty matted masses round his head; his large bright eyes shone out above the thin, hollow cheeks with a hungry wolfish look; the few dirty tatters he had on barely covered his nakedness; a blue bruise on one of his arms where the rags left it bare, his swollen feet and ankles, and his poor, emaciated frame bespoke neglect, hardship, and fearful ill-usage.

"What is your name, my little man?" asked the gentleman, as he felt in his pocket for something to give him.

"Joe, sir."

"Joe what?"

"I dunno, sir, they allus calls me Joe; never nothink else."

"How old are you?"

"Nine, sir, goin' on for ten." "Oh, thankee, sir," added the little fellow, as he clutched the shilling the gentleman gave him, "you wouldn't split on me, sir, if I told you all about it, would you, sir?" The child looked behind him fearfully, and then with a pitiful expression of entreaty up into the kind face bending over him.

"No, no, my poor child; you may tell me all and have no fear; I should be hard-hearted indeed if I did anything that would bring you into more trouble; you seem to have had sufferings enough already."

"All right, sir. Well, you see I'se runnin' away from t'boat on the canal. My sister Liz, an' me wur took to the boat wen we was quite little uns. Mammy died in the hospital and father fell into the Cut, they telled us; we doesn't mind much about it. Then as there was nobody to take care on us, uncles took us on to his boat to live with his wife and children. They aint been good to us, sir. We gets kicked and knocked about a lot, and don't get much to eat nothor. We has often to get up at three in the mornin', wen it is cold an' dark, has me an' Liz to drive the horse when uncles wants to make up for lost time as he has wasted boozing at the "public." Last night he came on to the boat from the bank awful drunk, and kicked me on the arm, an' made this mark. I couldn't stand it no longer I couldn't, so I gets up early this mornin' afore anybody was awake, and comed away as fast as ever I could. I waked Liz softly an' tried to get her to come with me, but she wur 'traid like, so I comed by myself. I walked a main long way to-day, sir."

"And what are you going to do now?"

"Why, sir, I'll try to get some work, and earn a lot o' money so as I can send some to Liz. Maybe by-and-by I'll be able to get her away from the boat and keep her, they does use her cruel bad."

"Can you read?" A sorrowful shake of the head was the only answer to this question. "Write?" Another head shake. "My poor child, have you never been to any school?"

"Oh no, sir, boat-children on the canals doesn't go to school. They has got to work, drive the horse, or steering or legging the boat, or summat like that."

"Come with me, my boy, and I shall see what can be done for you." The gentleman took this poor little waif to his house, and after a good feed and scrub had him dressed in some clothes belonging to one of his own children, a boy about the same age as this poor ragged robin, but how different in appearance!

"Joe" was sent to school and then to work. Liz, rescued from the canal boat, when old enough entered the service of Mr. and Mrs. Coledale, the kind-hearted benefactors of the poor orphan children.—*Methodist.*