



The Family Circle.

THE TICK OF THE CLOCK AT MID-NIGHT.

Tis the tick of the clock at midnight,
Solemnly, startlingly clear,
Like the throb of a fevered pulsation
Made audible to the ear.
Through the house reigns a death-like silence,
The death—like silence of sleep,
Whilst the fragments of Time, like meteors,
Pass flashing across the deep.
From the coming Eternity rushing,
They illumine for a moment our sky,
But no power can stay their departure;
They touch us and hover by.
They touch on the heart of the watcher,
And utter these words in his ear:
"Can ye not watch for one hour?"
And our soul-stirring message hear?
We are God's messengers speeding
With swift and invisible flight,
And we speak to you best in the silence
Of the quiet dead-hush of the night.
Remember we carry our message
Of what ye are doing on Earth,
To the Bountiful Father in Heaven,
Who endowed you with souls at your birth,
What are ye doing, Oh mortals!
With that glorious gift of a soul?
For what are your strongest yearnings,
And what is the longed-for goal?
Pleasure, and power, and riches,
Leisure, and freedom from care—
Is it for these you are striving?
Such strivings must end in despair.
Like a butterfly crushed in the grasping,
So pleasure is crushed when caught,
And power must end in weakness,
And Riches must end in nought;
Whilst indolent Leisure lies basking,
Sleepily, selfishly glad,
Till the Adder of Conscience stings it
And the Terror driveth it mad,
Soon the dawn will streak the horizon
And herald the fateful day,
Prepare! Lo, the Kingdom of Heaven
Approacheth! Watch and Pray."
—Good Words. W. A. GIBBS.

TAMMY'S PRIZE.

"Awa' wi' ye, Tammy man, awa' wi' ye to the schule, aye standin' haverin', and the old shoemaker looked up through his tear-dimmed spectacles at his son, who was standing with his cap on and his book in his hand.
Tammy made a move to the door. "An' is't the truth, Tammy? and does the maister say't himsel'? Say't ower again."
The boy turned back, and stood looking on the ground.
"It wasna muckle he said, fayther. He just said, "It'll be Tammy Rutherford that'll get the prize i' the coontin'."
"He said you, did he?" said the old man, as if he had heard it for the first time, and not for the hundredth.
Again Tammy made a move for the door, and again the fond father would have called him back, had not the school bell at that instant rung out, loud and clear.
"Ay, ay!" said he to himself, after his son had gone, "a right likely lad, and a credit to his fayther," and he bent again to the shoe he was working at, though he could scarcely see it for the tears that started in his eyes.
The satisfied smile had not worn off his face when the figure of a stout woman appeared at the door. The shoemaker took off his spectacles and wiped them, and then turned to the newcomer—
"A bra' day till ye, Mistrees Knight. An' hoo'll ye be keepin'?"
"Oh, brawly, Maister Rutherford. It's the sheen I've come aboot for my guidman; the auld anes are sare crackit."
"Aweel, mistress the new anes'll be deen the morn. Set yersel' doon," and complying with this invitation she sat down. "An' hoo's yere Sandie gettin' on at the schule, Mistress Knight?"
"Deed, noo ye speak on't he's a sare loon; he'll niver look at's lessons."
"He winna be ha'in' ony o' the prizes, I'm thinkin', at that gate."
"Na, na; he'll niver bother his heed aboot them; but he's sayin' yer Tam'll ha'e the coontin' prize."
"Ye donna say sae! Weel, that is news," and he looked up with ill-concealed pride. "The lad was talkin' o't himsel'; but, 'deed, I niver thoct on't. But there's nae sayin'."
"Aweel, guid-day to ye, and I'll look in the morn for the sheen."
"An' are they sayin' Tam'll ha'e a prize?" continued the old man.

"Ay, aye, the laddie was sayin' sae," and she went away.

The shoemaker seemed to have fallen on a pleasant train of thought, for he smiled away to himself, and occasionally picked up a boot, which he as soon let drop. Visions of Tammy's future greatness rose in his mind—perhaps of too slight a fabric were they built; but he saw Tammy a great and honored man, and Tammy's father leaning on his son's greatness.

"Presairve us a' it mair nor half-six" (half-past five), and he started up from his reverie. "Schule'll hae been oot an' o'er, an' the laddie's no hame." And he got up and moved towards the door. The sun was just sinking behind, he horizon, and the light was dim in the village street. He put up his hand to his eyes and peered down in the direction of the school.

"What in a' the world's airth's keepin' him," he muttered, and then turning round he stumbled through the darkness of his workshop to the little room behind. He filled an antiquated kettle with water and set it on the fire. Then he went to the cupboard and brought out half a loaf, some cheese, a brown tea-pot, and a mysterious parcel. He placed these on the table, and then gravely and carefully unrolled the little parcel, which turned out to be tea.

"Presairve us, I can niver min' whaur ye put the tea or hoo muckle. It's an awfu' waicht on the min' to make tea."

His wife had died two years before, and his little son, with the assistance of a kindly neighbor, had managed to cook their humble meals. Porridge was their chief fare, but a cup of tea was taken as a luxury every evening.

"I'm jist some fear't aboot it. I'll waicht till Tammas come in," and he went out again to the door to see what news there was of his son.

The sun had completely disappeared now, and the village would have been quite dark had it not been for the light in the grocer's window a few doors down.

The door of his next neighbor's house was wide open. He looked in and saw a woman standing at the fire, superintending some cooking operation, with her back to him.

"Is yer Jim in, Mistress?"

"Na," she said, without turning her head. "He'll be doon at some o' his plays. He's nae been in frae the schule yet."

"It's the same wi' Tam. Losh! I'm wonderin' what's keepin' him."

"Keepin' him, say ye, what wad keep a laddie?"

Half-satisfied, the shoemaker went back to his house, and found the kettle singing merrily on the fire. He felt a little anxious. The boy was always home in good time. He crept round again to his neighbor's.

"I'm gettin' feart aboot him," he said, "he's niver been sae late's this."

"Hoot, awa' wi' ye, he'll be doon, maybe, at the bathin' wi' the lave, but I'll gang doon the village wi' ye, an' we'll soon fin' the laddie."

She hastily put her bonnet on her head, for the night air was cold, and they both stood together outside the cottage.

He clutched her arm. What was that? Through the still night air, along the dark street, came the sound of muffled feet and hushed voices as of those who bore a burden. With blanched face the old man tried to speak, but he could not. A fearful thought came upon him.

They are coming nearer. They are stopping and crowding together and whispering low. The two listeners crept up to them, and there in the middle of the group lay Tammy dead—drowned.

"With a loud shriek, "Tammy, my Tammy," the old man fell down beside the body of his son.

They carried both in together into the little room, behind the shop, and went out quietly, leaving one of their number who volunteered to stay all night.

The shoemaker soon revived. He sat down on one side of the fire, and the man who watched with him sat on the other. The kettle was soon on the fire, and he watched its steam rising with a half interested indifference. Then at times, he would seem to remember that something had happened, and he would creep to the side of the bed where the body lay, and gaze on the straight, handsome features and the bloodless cheeks, quiet and cold in death. "Tammy, my man; my ain Tammy, speak to me ance—jist ance—I'm awfu' lonesome-like." Then the watcher would lead him quietly to his seat by the fire, and there they sat the whole night long till the stir of the outer world aroused them.

The school is filled with happy, pleasant faces. The prize day has come. There stands the minister, looking very important, and the schoolmaster very excited. The prizes are all arranged on a table before the minister, and the forms for the prize-winners are before the

table. And now everything is ready. The minister begins by telling the parents present how he has examined the school and found the children quite up to the mark, and then he addresses a few words to the children, winding up his remarks by telling them how at school he had thought that "multiplication is a vexation," &c., but now he found the use of it. And then the children laughed, for they heard the same speech every year, but it made the excitement greater when they had the prizes to look at, as they shone on the table in their gorgeous gilding, during the speech. And now the schoolmaster is going to read out the prize-winners, and the children are almost breathless with excitement—you might have heard a pin drop—when, from the end of the room, a figure totters forward, the figure of an old man, white-headed, and with a strange glassy look in his eye. He advances to where the children are sitting, and takes his place amongst them. Every one looks compassionately towards him, and women are drying their eyes with their aprons. The schoolmaster hesitates a moment, and then looks at the minister. The minister nods to him, and he begins the list. It is with almost a saddened look the children come to take their prizes, for they think of the sharp, bright, active playmate who was so lately with them, and they gaze timidly towards his father, who sits in their midst.

"Thomas Rutherford," reads out the master, "gained the prize for arithmetic."

"I'll tak' Tam's prize for him. The laddie's na weel. He's awa'. I'll take it," and the shoemaker moved hastily up to the table.

The minister handed him the book, and silently taking it, he made his way to the door.

A quiet old man moves listlessly about the village. He does nothing, but every one has a kind word for him. He never walks towards the river, but shudders when its name is mentioned. He sits in his workshop often, and looks up expectantly when he hears the joyous shout of the boys as they come out of school, and then a look of pain flits across his face. He has one treasure—a book, which he keeps along with his family Bible, and he is never tired of reading through his blurred spectacles the words on the first page—

BARNES SCHOOL.
FIRST CLASS.
PRIZE FOR ARITHMETIC
AWARDED TO
THOMAS RUTHERFORD.

—Henry W. Thompson, in the Christian World.

DIFFICULTIES OF MISSIONARIES IN CHINA.

Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary to China, landed at Canton in 1807. He belonged to the sect of the Independents, and was sent out by the London Missionary Society, then thirteen years old. Morrison studied in England before he started, and procured from the British Museum a 'Harmony of the Gospels' and the 'Pauline Epistles,' translated by an unknown Roman Catholic missionary. These books and a manuscript Latin and Chinese Dictionary formed his literary equipment for his great task. An impress of sterling truth marks the works and the character of the pioneer of evangelical religion in the Middle Kingdom. The narrative of his labors is a plain home-spun story, showing a gigantic aptitude for hard work, strong north-country common-sense, and, underlying all the rest, an unshaken confidence in the support which spiritual religion offers to its children.

Robert Morrison was born in 1782. He embarked for China in 1807 to found an Anglo-Chinese College. From the day when, to quote his words, 'the good hand of God brought him' to the place of his appointed labor, until the day when his body was buried beneath the willow trees at Macao, he lived like a hermit and worked like a horse to get at the heart of those two mysteries, the Chinese language and the Chinese mind. We get glimpses of him toiling by the light of his earthenware lamp, with a folio volume of 'Matthew Henry's Commentary' set on its edge to prevent the wind from blowing out the flickering flame. At one time his type-cutters are seized by the Chinese and his work delayed by the loss of the blocks; at another the Romish priests forbid any of their converts to help him in learning the language. But steadily, with patience that was never exhausted, and a temper which was never exasperated, this son of a Northumbrian farmer worked at his gigantic task and completed his dictionary. He was assisted by an able coadjutor in Dr. Milne, who however died before his predecessor, and the two produced the first version of the Bible ever made by Protestants into Chinese. Twenty-six books of the Old Testament and thirteen books of the New were wholly the work of Morrison, though as he always stated with characteristic candor, the Chinese MS. in the British Museum, a copy which he procured under the Mis-

sionary Society's care, was the foundation of the New Testament in Chinese which he completed and edited.

The first problem which presented itself to Morrison was the discovery of a term for God. To quote his own words:—

"I have put down in my Dairy for this day that I was perplexed, not knowing what words to make use of, to express to the Chinese, with whom I conversed, the Supreme Being; whether to adopt the Teenchoo of the [Romish] missionary, or to make use of words which are commonly understood by the heathen to denote spiritual and superior beings, or their gods, which are many. I do not now feel on that head any difficulty. I make use of both modes of expression but give the preference to their own, viz., Shin, which is the most generally understood. When I make use of other names they imagine that I bring to them another God—the God of my country. From this notion, which is perfectly in unison with all heathen ideas of gods, I keep as far distant as possible. I do not bring to them another God, but endeavor to convince them that their ideas of Shin are erroneous; that there are not many gods, but one, and He is the same to every nation under heaven. I even let them retain the word Teen (heaven), but engraft upon it proper ideas as we do in our own language. Those who know anything of religion have lost the heathen idea of heaven, and mean by it the God who reigns in glory there. It is a matter of small importance to give to the heathen new words in comparison to the giving of right ideas of things. It appears to me that the Roman missionaries have made much noise about forcing the Chinese to receive the word Teenchoo (the Lord of Heaven, which, by the way, is a good expression); but then they have brought to them at the same time numberless objects of worship, saints and martyrs perfectly of a piece with their old heathen ideas."

It will be seen from this passage that the first Protestant missionary adopted the word Shin in his version of the Holy Scriptures, and we know that in the last prayer that he composed he used that word and none other in addressing the Supreme Being!

Dr. Medhurst, the second of the Protestant Missionary sinologues, adopted Shangti. Abel Rémusat, a sinologue of exceptional abilities, could not tolerate the use of Shin. Later, a compromise has been arrived at in Peking, and certain Protestants agree to adopt Teenchoo, the term in use amongst the Roman Catholics, but in the south of China, one missionary uses one term, another another, and some all three!

The contest still continues, and we frankly acknowledge the results are most disastrous. It is above all things necessary that, in China, the Christian missionaries should, as far as in them lies, forget or conceal their differences, and present an unbroken front to the heathen. Unhappily this dispute about the character to be used for God, prevents them from even assuming the virtue of unity. It is not a question of things indifferent on which the Church is at issue, it is a root question and one that concerns the essentials of religion. The man who preaches the Shin 'JEHOVAH' preaches a different God from the man who preaches the Shin 'SHANG-TI.' We are not speaking out of book when we say this difference causes may earnest missionaries poignant grief, and increases the difficulty of their work among the natives to an appreciable extent.—Edinburgh Review.

GIVING A PARTY.

To get into my first subject I will begin by asking, what is your object in giving a "party," or "entertainment," or in any wise asking people to meet under your roof? There must be a why and a wherefore in this as well as in any thing else. The first object methinks must be to give and get some form of innocent pleasure. You wish your friends to feel at their ease and enjoy themselves. Now this purpose is almost sure to be frustrated if the giving of the entertainment put any marked strain upon the resources of your house and household. I do not mean that people should take no trouble to entertain their guests, but this trouble should be taken well beforehand, and not allowed to be conspicuous at the time. A host can never show agreeable hospitality if he fusses over its exercise. If he is secretly conscious of a special effort to entertain he cannot feel any real ease himself, and thus cannot create the sense of it in his friends. Let him attempt nothing which is not easily within the ordinary resources of his establishment. Do not let him, e.g., provide such dishes as he never sets before the members of his own family, or his cook is not accustomed to produce. Neglect of this precaution has spoiled endless would-be entertainments. The machinery of the household is put out of gear just when it should work most smoothly. A sense of strangeness is shed upon it at the very time when it should be most companionable. The importation of unaccustomed viands from

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