The Family.

THE PRAIRIE.

For the PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

Home of the poet's soul! Oh, boundless plains,
And gentle slopes, with flower-decked verdure clad,
Where wild King Winter in fierce beauty reigns,
Where fair Queen Summer's charms make gay and glad.

I love thee, prairie! love thee passing well!
Love thee in gloom of night, in glow of morn;
When wintry winds wail out the Autumn's knell,
When Spring's sweet breezes say "The flowers are born!"

Let discontent, in sickly raving, prate
Of ease-soft cushioned, and of social bane,
Of high refinement and of homes of state,
Of grace and culture in more favoured lands;

Mid this wild vastness, thoughts that surge on thought
In vain would grasp what mind around may trace,
From Nature, reigning lone, in state-robes, wrought
In beauty, bearing yet Creation's grace!

Who runs may read God's Name upon the sod,—
His signature on leaf and plant and flower;
The prairie's mighty vastness preaches God—
Her untamed wilds are Nature's virgin bower.

Around above, beneath, anear, afar,
I see, I hear, I feel a Power, a Cause!
A spirit breath that o'er the mortal bar
Breathes peaceful awe, and all earth's whispers pause.

"His meaner works"—majestic, mystic, fair,
—Though travail-pangs fell savage still must show,
In beauty beaming through sin's veil declare
The Consummation glory's full orbed glow!

The birth-blind savage, groping after light,
Hath felt this power, to it in darkness bowed
Weak hands, stretched out to grasp an unseen Might,
The Spirit of the flood, or storm, or cloud.

But oh! the soul that Love has waked to love—
That Light has lightened, tho' from far off beams,
What blissful transports *here* its joys may prove
Tracing the life that from these shadows gleams!

Here far, far from noise of rumbling city cars,
Far from the busy street the jostling mart,
Alone with God, beneath His evening stars,
His presence felt within the wondering heart,

Then best I love thee, prairie, wild and strange!
When Nature's evensong floats calmly round;
And thought in fullest, farthest flight may range,
Nor find one discord in that pæan's sound!

M. A. NICHOLL.

THE MANSE, *Broadview N.-W. T.*

THE SAINTS OF OUR CHILDHOOD.

The remembrance of the people who made our childhood sunny and bright, should influence us to be interested in child-life wherever we find it. It is surprising when we consider it, what slight things, trifles as they seem to us, make deep imperishable impressions on the hearts of children.

What "little things" they were that made sweet memories for us in those far off days, and how they have stayed with us through the changes and burdens of life! We sit alone and call up sweet faces, repeat over kindly words, gratefully remember the helping hand given over the hard places of those untried childhood days. Those people whom we loved with our pure, unselfish, childish love, are now in our maturer years enshrined as saints in our hearts.

And we remember, too, the people who had no sympathy with the young, who expected the judgment, patience, and uncomplaining labour of the men and women who were doing the work of maturer years. We remember the faces that frowned at us when we made mistakes, or did the "naughty things" incident not only to child-life, but to adult-life, as well. We remember those who never gave us an encouraging word when we had tried the best we could to do our duty—those who witnessed our conflicts and our victories, but who never gave us words of commendation, but who always made much of our failures.

At this moment two women come to mind who have long since passed away from earth. They were both good women, both hard working women, but their ways were so different in their dealings with children. Visiting them in the summer time, and having free scope to ramble over the large farms, with their pretty brooks, their green pastures, and their groves, was a great treat to us city children. We were to help these good women some, in consideration of our pleasant outing; they were burdened with many cares, and the wearying labours that used to come in the olden time of farming.

Aunt Elvira's work was always so momentous, so stupendous, that as soon as we sat down to the breakfast table, she began to tell over what had to be done that day. One thing followed another until, taken as a whole, we thought we could never get through it all—at least our part of it. She moved around in such a frightened sort of a way, with cap-strings flying and hurried step, that we were flustrated, and jumbled up everything, trying to keep up with her; and then she fretted so much, for fear she should not get her required daily work done. She was wearied, for she did work very hard. Looking back from a distant standpoint, it is surprising how the dear, good women in the farm-houses could accomplish so much.

Aunt Serena was entirely different in her way of getting help out of us. We did more for her than we did for Aunt Elvira. But we did not know it. "One thing at a time, children, and when you've finished that, then we will see what comes up next." Meal times were resting spells, and always made bright by the pleasant talk which she managed to get us and the "men folks," who had been busily employed outside, interested in. Aunt Serena always had a fund to draw from in the way of stories about the time when she was a little girl, that she told us while we were helping her with her household tasks. She was just as good and considerate of the chore boy who worked there, as she was of us. It was never a wearisome labour to him to keep Aunt Serena's wood-box and water-pails full. In looking back on her wonderful life, she was a saint on earth in very truth. When things went wrong on the farm, and her husband came in with dejected face, and asked "Don't you feel discouraged, mother?" She would always say "No, I am not discouraged; I am disappointed of course."

Being with such persons makes children endeavour to cultivate grand and good characteristics. We are not careful enough to leave an impress upon the characters of children with whom we come in contact, that shall help them when they have grown up and are face to face with the stern realities of daily living. Child-life is helpful to adult-life if it makes us more particular about our ways and our words.

A business man not long since was asked why he helped a friend with money at a time when the circumstances were such that the money in all probability would never be returned. He replied, "That man's mother was always so good to me when I was a boy that I am glad to help him even if I never get a cent of the money back. I was a half-grown boy, noisy, and I know I must have been a torment to her oftentimes, but she was always so very patient and kind to me, and with all her cares and hard work remembered the little things that go to make a boy's life happy."

Don't expect too much of children. Make the work given them to do as pleasant and light as can be by words of commendation. Never discourage, encourage always. A perverse child will not be any less perverse if told there never was such a bad child, and never will be, and you have utterly given him up. Our influence for good over children depends upon our quiet ways, our Christian example of daily living, and our sympathy with them in their undertakings, their mistakes, and their wrong-doings.

To understand child life, and be able to adapt oneself to the characteristics of that life, its needs and limitations, is the secret of gaining an honoured saint-ship in their hearts while life shall last.—*Susan Teall Perry, in Evangelist.*

SUSY.

"I wonder where Harry is? Harry!"

No answer came, and Susy went about the house, calling for her brother in a voice which was not at all pleasant.

"What do you want, Susy?" asked her mother, opening the door of her room.

"I want Harry, mamma. Do you know where he is?"

"I saw him running toward the village a little while ago."

"Well, I think he's the meanest boy I ever saw."

"What has he done that is so mean?"

"Why, he knows I want to go early to the lawn party, and now he's gone off and no one knows when he'll be back."

"I dare say he'll come by the time you are ready."

"Oh, but I wanted him to pick me some flowers for a bouquet; and I wanted him to black my shoes."

"Patience, my little daughter. Jane will black your shoes, and you can get the flowers yourself."

"Harry always does it better than Jane does," grumbled Susy.

"Then, if Harry is usually so good to you, I don't think you ought to complain of him."

"But he had no business to go off, just when he knew I wanted to go early. Are you coming to help me with my hair, mamma?"

"Yes, as soon as you get your shoes blacked."

Susy went down to Jane, spending all the time used in blacking her shoes in making complaints against Harry.

"I hate to wear these old hair ribbons," said Susy, as her mother brushed and braided her hair.

"They are faded, but they do not look badly."

"I think they do. I ought to have some new ones."

"If I could get them for you, you should have them, Susy."

"It's hateful not to be able to have things. Emma Morse has new ribbons whenever she wants them, and I don't have anything."

If you could have looked at Susy's face just then, you would have wondered to see how many pretty things were sadly spoiled by ugly temper. Her smooth forehead was tied up into a knot, while the blue eyes under it had lost all the sweetness which should belong with bright eyes. And the red lips were twisted into an ugly scowl. How could they help it when such cross, crabbed words were coming through them?

"Go and look in the glass, little one. Do you know who made those pretty features for you? Don't you think the dear Lord meant them for smiles and pleasant words, instead of snarls and frowns?"

If Susy ever thought so, she surely did not think so to-day, for she kept on fretting and complaining about Harry, until poor mamma was glad enough to be done braiding the glossy hair. But the complaints lasted until the white dress was buttoned and the shoes put on.

"Now I am going to get my flowers. And if I get my clean dress dirty it will be all Harry's fault."

Ah, Susy! How can you keep on a scowl when the sun smiles down on you and the flowers smile up at you? How can you grumble when every bird is singing its song of gladness and thanksgiving for all the beautiful things in which you have a share?

"I don't see Harry coming yet," said Susy, as she went back to the house. "I believe I'll go without him."

"I don't think I'd do that," said mamma. "You know Harry is a little bashful, and perhaps he would not go at all if he had to go alone. He would be disappointed, I know."

"I don't care if he is. He has no business to keep me waiting. You can tell him to come on after me. It's all nonsense, his being bashful about it."

Susy put on her hat and walked down the road, often turning back to see if Harry were coming. As she reached the turn in the road she gave one more look, and said, "No, he isn't coming. He's the most provoking boy that ever lived. I shall keep right on and not walk slowly for him any longer."

"Susy! Susy!"

Before she had taken many steps beyond the turn, she heard Harry's voice.

"Susy! Oh—I'm so tired." Harry came up to her all out of breath.

"Why did you go away and stay so long?" asked Susy. "You knew it would be time to go."

"Wait till I can talk," panted Harry. "Why, see—is this what you wanted?"

"Oh, how beautiful!" exclaimed Susy. "Where did you get it, Harry?" She looked with delight at the pretty ribbon which Harry took out of a piece of paper.

"Over at the village, of course. I meant to go earlier, but papa wanted me to rake up the leaves. And I meant to get back quicker, but I had to go to so many places before I could find the ribbon. I heard you say you wanted blue ones, and they had pink ones most everywhere. I ran most all the way. Now let me tie them on for you. I can do it pretty near as well as mamma."

"Harry," said Susy, "where did you get the money for them?"

"Oh—a fairy gave it to me."

"Grandma, I guess," said Susy.

"Now, come on, quick," said Harry, "and we'll be there in plenty of time."

"I'm sorry I felt so cross at Harry," said Susy, when she was talking to mamma before she went to bed. "He went all the way to the village for new hair ribbons for me. I was so sorry I did not enjoy the lawn party half so much."

"I am glad you were sorry," said mamma. "Your brother was very kind to take such a long walk and spend all his money for you—"

"Oh, mamma, did he do that?" asked Susy, with tears in her eyes.

"Yes, dear, he did. All the while you were saying such unkind things about him he was doing his very best to get something to please you."

"I'm glad he didn't know what I said. Mamma, it isn't any harm when he didn't know, is it? It wouldn't hurt him any."

"No, dear, it couldn't hurt your brother; but have you thought of how it hurts yourself?"

"How can it hurt me?"

"Don't you know that every unkind thought is a blot on your heart—your heart which the Lord made pure and clean, and commanded you to keep with all diligence, that the stain of sin might be kept from it? Have you forgotten that ugly thoughts write themselves upon your face, and that ugly words once spoken can never be called back? Ask the dear Saviour, my little one, to help you to shut out evil thought and to keep back evil words."

I hope Susy will not forget her lesson, and that every little girl or boy who may chance to read this may try the only way of trampling down evil in the heart.—*Sydney Dayre, in Interior.*

IN THE NARROWS.

"When I was a child," said a venerable old lady lately, "I was taken by my uncle upon a sea voyage. The first hour spent upon the vessel was full of misery. Smaller boats at the docks thumped against her side, and jarred her; a heavy smell of bilge-water in the hold nauseated me, the decks were heaped with luggage; the coming dangers of the voyage assumed terrible proportions; there was no ease nor comfort anywhere on board.

"My uncle who was an eccentric old man, smiled at my complaints and grumbling.

"'You are still in the Narrows,' he said. 'Wait until you are out at sea.'

"The next day, when the ship under full sail was scudding along in the sunshine across the vast blue plain, all my uneasiness and fears were forgotten.

"I have often remembered his warning when with young people. The voyage before them is so full of vague terrors! the little discomforts of starting are so hard to bear!

"A young girl at her first party, for example. Her plain dress her awkwardness, her homely face—these things are great and real griefs to her, and if she is slighted and unnoticed, she goes home wretched, feeling that she has been on trial before her peers, and has been condemned for life.

"I long to say to her, 'You are only in the Narrows. Wait until you are out at sea,' and to tell her of the ugly girls who, as women, are making the world a better place to live in, or of the despised wallflowers who are happy wives and mothers.

"Or take a boy. He exaggerates so enormously the importance of the little events of his college life. The injustice of the faculty, if he is conditioned, is monstrous, his rivals are unscrupulous and selfish, his friends without a fault. Life as he goes to meet it is full of vast threats or promises. He either hopes to make a splendid victory, or is certain that he will be worsted at every turn.

"He is in the Narrows. When he reaches the open sea, he will measure distances more correctly. Friends and foes, and events, will appear in their just proportions. He will have learned to appreciate himself more fairly, and to know what he can do and cannot do."

"Young people," says a German writer, "are sometimes appalled at the lookout on life because they regard it as a vast whole, full of uncertain dangers; but it is really made up of days and hours and minutes. Even if they are foes, we fight but one at a time, but they never are all foes."

A boy looking forward to the difficulties which await him in the future, which he knows he is not fitted now to meet, forgets to take into account the fact that a sober, earnest man gains strength to live by living, just as the ship, blocked and helpless at the dock, unfurls her sails in the free wind of the open sea, and speeds straight to her harbour.—*Youth's Companion.*

TAKING A DARE.

First, there was a night on Chesapeake Bay, leaving Baltimore at eight o'clock on one of the fine big bay steamers. The little men, Oscar and Phil Rae, enjoyed the new experience greatly, and voted it "a jolly sight better" than getting on the cars and going out to Pikesville every summer.

They were allowed to sit up an unheard-of length time to watch the moonlight putting silver night-caps on the waves and the long streak of light following the ship, then they tumbled into one berth, and slept so soundly that when papa called them at daylight in the morning they could hardly believe they had been to sleep at all. But all night long the engine had been thumping like a great iron heart in the centre of the ship; all night the wheels had been turning in obedience to its throbs, and now here they were at Old Point Comfort, and everybody seemed in as great a rush to get off as if the ship were on fire.

"Now boys," said their father, after they had breakfasted on fish and soft crabs and were prancing up and down the sand "at twelve o'clock I will take you into the surf to bathe, don't go an inch into the water until then."

"No, sir, we will not, father," answered the two boys.

Mr. Rae felt satisfied that they would obey, and went into the hotel. But who can warn a boy off from all the dangers he can get himself into? Away out from the glass room stretched an unfinished pier, where the little fishing-smacks were tied and where in the afternoons crab catching was in fashion.

Of course Oscar and Phil were at the end of the pier in two minutes; there they found a small sunburnt boy lying on his stomach watching a little boat, riding on the water.

Our boys could climb like sailors or like cats—they had learned that at Pikesville—and in another minute they had clambered down the end of the pier, and were frolicing in the boat to the wide-eyed surprise of the boy above.

"I say Ossie," cried Phil as the other flopped himself down at the end of the boat, "I dare you to stay there and let me rock you."

"I never take a dare," said Oscar resolutely.

So Phil stretched his short legs as far apart as they would reach across the boat, and began to sway backward and forward, singing, "Rock-a-by baby your cradle is green."

Oscar would not show any scare, but suddenly the boat lurched like an angry creature, and in an instant it was almost full of water. Fortunately, it sank slowly enough for the boys to reach the end held by the rope; but they could not have clung there long. The small sunburnt boy quickly gave the alarm, and Oscar and Phil were dipped up, all wet and scared.

"But, mamma, I can't take a dare," whispered Oscar.

"Then you are a very cowardly little boy," said mamma gravely. "A brave man is not afraid of anything but doing wrong."

"But a brave man runs into danger," said Phil triumphantly.

"Only to do his duty, my little boy;" and then mamma told Oscar and Phil about the Lord on the pinnacle of the temple, and how he would not tempt God by a foolish risk of life.

I think Oscar and Phil take a different view of "dares" now.—*E. P. A., in Occident.*

"DID YOU EXPECT ME?"

The anecdote is told of Rev. Mr. Kidd, a Scotch minister who was very eccentric, and had his own way of doing things. "Just as the year was opening," says one of his parishioners, "I was very busy in my shop when, right in the midst of my work, in stepped the parson. 'Did you expect me?' was his abrupt inquiry, without ever giving or waiting for a salutation. 'No, sir,' was my reply, 'I did not.' 'What if I had been death?' he asked in a solemn, earnest tone, and out he stepped, as suddenly as he had come, and was gone almost before I knew it."

The Children's Corner.

TELL THE TRUTH.

Don't be afraid, little Johnnie, my boy;
Open the door and go in;
The longer you shrink from confessing a fault,
The harder it is to begin.

No wonder you wait with a pitiful face,
And dread the confession to make,
For you know, when you're naughty, the worst of it all
Is in making your mother's heart ache.

But courage, my boy! Never mind if the shoes
Are muddy and wet, and all that;
Never mind if your clothes have been terribly torn,
And you've ruined your pretty new hat—

Go in like a man, and tell mother the truth,
Like a brave little lad, and you'll see
How happy a boy, who confesses a fault,
And is truthful and honest, can be.

—*The Nursery.*

"WAS IT OUR JESUS."

A little three-year-old girl stood at the window one Sunday, "watching for papa," who was at church. Soon she spied him coming; and as he entered, she said, "Papa, what did Mr. R—— preach about this morning?"

Her father replied, "He preached about Jesus."

"Papa, was it *our Jesus*?" she asked.

"Yes," said her father, "it was *our Jesus*."

The eyes brightened at the thought that papa's minister knew her Jesus, and spoke about Him in his congregation.

Do you, dear reader, claim this Jesus as yours? I hope so, for it is a most blessed thought that every little girl and boy may have Him for their own Saviour. No matter how much He loves other children, there is room, ever room, in His affection, for you and as many others as will ask Him to care for them. "They brought young children to Him, . . . and He took them up in His arms, and blessed them." Mark x. 13, 16.—*Selected.*

THE MOTHER OF THOSE CHICKENS.

It was a very hot morning, and so still. Not even a cock-crow. The Patridges had all gone to church. They had shut and clicked the gate, and driven away in their one-horse wagon. Faust had kept his head through the bars and watched them till they disappeared down the green roadside. Then he had turned slowly away. It was always the same thing every Sunday. They always left him, and he had nothing to do but first to sit on the porch, and then to go to the gate and look up and down the road, and then to walk around the house and come and sit on the steps again. Once upon a time he and Stephen used to hunt all day long through the woods, but even that was over, and there was nothing but ploughing now on the farm. When Faust thought of this he felt so restless he turned around and lay down on the other end of the step.

Just then over the fence, with a wag of the tail and a whisk of the ear, Duke, the Ardens' dog, came bounding. He ran up to Faust, who had jumped on the path, and sniffed noses with him, and they both went dashing down the road. What fun it was!—the green grass under their feet and the green trees over their heads, and not a thought of anything. And how they sent the gray squirrels skipping, and how the neighbours' cats got out of the way, and the birds darted about in the bushes! It made Faust so excited he forgot the calves and the cats and the chickens he was to look after at home. And if he did remember for a moment he forgot again, for in the darkest part of the woods what should happen but from under a pile of loose brush an old hen sprang, cackling and shrieking, and running as fast as she could, legs and wings both going. There was no time to see who she was, and Faust and Duke both jumped after her.

They had a long chase. It would take too much time to tell all about it, but by-and-by they were back in the Patridge barn-yard, and the hen, blinded and desperate with fright, had bumped against the wall of the corn bin and crawled inside through a hole. In a minute Faust had his head there too; but his body—that was the dreadful part of it—his body would not go, and when he tried to pull his head out again his head would not come. His eyes grew big with terror, for there, right opposite him, pressed close against the wall, panting with fear, squatted the hen. She never moved. It was like a great ugly dream, and Mr. Patridge, he knew, would see them both when he came, and understand all about it. And Duke? He had run away, as every dog does that leads another into mischief. There was nobody to help him. When Faust at last heard Mr. Patridge he shook all over, and his heart beat so loud he thought one minute it was Stephen's footsteps, and then he thought Stephen's footsteps were the beating of his heart. And then somehow or other he never thought anything till he found himself lying with a bandaged head on a shady part of the porch. He felt very sick and sore, but he was wondering about Stephen. He heard the family at dinner. Mrs. Patridge was making a great noise with her knife and fork, as if agitated.

"Stephen," she said, "thee might as well tell me about the dog; I never put overmuch faith in him." But Stephen only said, "Faust's a good dog, wife, a good dog," which made Faust's tail wag till it sounded on the hard wooden floor, and he began to love Stephen all the more, and to wish, as he lay there, that hundreds of chickens would come and just crawl and climb all over him, so that he could show Stephen he never would touch them again. But then that might have been the fever, or a good resolution that did not know how else to come. Nobody can really tell about these things. All I know is that two days after, when Mr. Patridge opened the gate, Faust went right up to Mrs. Yellow-Jacket's coop and sat down, as though he were saying, "Don't you see you can trust me?"

Mrs. Yellow-Jacket did not like this, but then she never liked anything. When her chickens went away she puffed out her feathers, and darted about, and poked her head out of the slats. She said that they did not love her. But when they came back she could not sit still, she was so tired and so nervous, and when the cock crowed she started violently, for that she said sent a shiver up her spine, and made her think how tiresome a hen's life was. When Faust came he looked so big and quiet they began to walk all over him, and one got on his paw, and when they were tired, the soft warm fur on his breast felt so nice they all nestled there instead of going back to their mother. They used to do this every day that summer. Faust felt like a new dog, and could not tell why. Mrs. Yellow-Jacket had fled long since. She had shivered so often at the crowing of the cock, that Mr. Patridge had thought she was ill, and opened the door of her coop. She had shaken out her feathers, and stretched her legs out behind her till they seemed very long. She had run her bill through the feathers on her breast, taken one drink of water, and walked away. But she had never looked at her chickens. Faust, for the last time in his life, when he saw her, wanted to chase a hen that was so cruel, and he half jumped, but she only held her head very high as much as to say, "You have robbed me of my family, now see how you like them yourself."

That night when the young chickens were trying to roost in the trees, and the little turkeys had settled themselves with faint high whistles on the wood-shed roof, Faust saw Mrs. Yellow Jacket take her place on the highest roost. Then he knew that it was all over. But what to do with his chickens at night he could not tell. He wandered about with them for a few minutes, all of them piping after him, and then he walked straight to his own kennel and stepped inside. He was so proud of himself for thinking of it, for with many feeble flappings of wings all of Mrs. Yellow-Jacket's family came inside. He lay down on his side, and determined never to move the whole night through. "They sha'nt miss their mother," he was saying to himself.

After this he found plenty to do, for two of the chickens were always finding the same worm, and one pulling it one way and the other the other, and two were always fighting, and one was always getting lost, and he had to go out and find him. But when they were bigger, and able to look after themselves, Faust used to put his head down on his paws in his doorway, and wonder how it had happened that he had become the mother of those chickens. When Stephen came and looked at him with a smile, he thought Stephen might understand, and he used to jump up and put his paws on Stephen's shoulders, and look in his eyes as though he were trying to speak. But when Stephen would take his hands out of his pockets and stroke back the long soft ears from Faust's head, and looking in his eyes say, "Good old fellow, good dog!" Faust seemed suddenly to understand all about it, and just why he took care of those little creatures.

The whole family came to see Faust. Little red-haired Nettie Nichols, when the sun was warm, would come and sit on the stump near by singing to her doll. She liked to be near him, though she never spoke. Mrs. Patridge came all summer, and looked at him over the fence. She never felt sure, she used to say to Stephen; but toward winter even this excellent woman began to change her mind. "Thee was right, Stephen; there was much in that dog the careless would not allow for."—*Harper's Young People.*