

The Family Circle.

THE "THREE BELLS."

Captain Leighton of the English ship "Three Bells" some years ago rescued the crew of an American vessel sinking in mid ocean. Unable to take the crew off in the storm and darkness, he kept by until morning, often during the night shouting through his trumpet, "Nixter fear; I'll stand by you!"

THE "THREE BELLS."

Beneath the low-hung night cloud
That raked her splintering mast
The good ship settled slowly;
The cruel leak gained fast.
Over the awful ocean
Her signal guns pealed out.
Dear God! was that Thy answer
From the horror round about?
A voice came down the wild wind,
"Ho! ship ahoy!" its cry:
"Our stout 'Three Bells' of Glasgow"
Shall stand till daylight by!
Hour after hour crept slowly,
Yet on the heaving swells
Tossed up and down the shiplights,
The lights of the "Three Bells."
And ship to ship made signals,
Man answered back to man,
While oft to cheer and hearten
The "Three Bells" nearer ran.
And the captain from her taffrail
Sent down his hopeful cry,
"Take heart. Hold on," he shouted,
"The 'Three Bells' shall stand by!"
All night across the waters
The tossing lights shone clear:
All night from reeling taffrail
The "Three Bells" sent her cheer
And when the dreary watches
Of storm and darkness passed,
Just as the wreck lurched under,
All souls were saved at last.
Sail on, "Three Bells" forever,
In grateful memory sail!
Ring on, "Three Bells" of rescue,
Above the wave and gale!
As thine in night and tempest,
I hear the Master's cry,
And, tossing through the darkness,
The lights of God draw nigh!" — Whittier.

AN "OWER TRUE" TALE.

The people of Verdale were going to have a pastor of their own.

The Church had been organized under the labors of the pastor of a neighboring church, and a tasteful little edifice had been erected in which to worship, and now the day, to which they had looked forward so eagerly, was at hand.

Sabbath after Sabbath found a new candidate in the pulpit, but first, one could not preach a good sermon, another did not have an engaging manner; but at last one came who must surely suit them. He was a tall, well built man, with a face shining with an inward peace, and a kind and friendly manner. One felt after half an hour's chat with him, as if he sympathized with all one's griefs, and rejoiced in one's pleasures. And his sermon was full of strong meat, elegantly served. They could not do better than accept him, so he was soon the pastor of Verdale Church.

"Yes, Mrs. Newcomb," said Mrs. James, as she sat in her neighbor's parlor on Monday afternoon, "we have got the right man at last."

"His name? Mr. Ellingwood and if ever there was a born preacher, he is one. He is a young man, so, of course, he will draw in the young folks. And dear knows I they need some one to draw them! And such a sermon as he preached yesterday! He is certainly a man sent from the Lord."

Yes, Mr. Ellingwood was a man sent from the Lord. Every day his heart was thrilled with an all-absorbing desire to do just the work the Master would have him do, at the Master's own time. "Lord what wouldst thou have me to do?" was his daily question, as he went out after the erring ones, or tried to strengthen the weak ones.

He was not long in discovering that, though there were many good people in the place, they were afflicted with that dread disease, gossip and back-biting. So, with a conscience ever ready to trouble him if he did not rebuke evil, his sermons were plain

and searching for those who would near; but many thought of their neighbor's shortcomings, and were pleased with their pastor.

Under his ministrations the Church awakened to new life. The Sunday school grew more interesting, and one class, which many had tried, but few cared to keep very long, was given to the pastor. And how the pastor's heart yearned over those boys! They were rude fellows, full of animal spirits, who could not, or would not, keep still five minutes at a time.

Day after day they were carried in prayer to God, and Sabbath after Sabbath were taught faithfully from God's Word. Dare we who look on and still see their restlessness, say that no good is being done? If so, many poor teachers might fold their hands and say, "It is of no use—I can see no result of my work." But no—"God's Word will not return unto Him void"—"for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not."

Time passed on. Mourning hearts were made to see their sorrow in a new and better light, young people and old were drawn nearer to the Father of all, and God seemed with them. The people were filled with joy, and all felt that their pastor was all they could wish. After a time the pastor brought home a bride, a dear little woman, fair and fresh as a flower, and ready to help in any good work. Days, weeks and months passed by happily and busily for many, but some who had been earnest and efficient at first began to fall away. "Really I feel tired this morning. I guess I won't go out to service till evening." Perhaps when evening comes they are still so weary they feared they would faint by the way—but they were still able to attend to business or any amusement which occurred during the week.

The watchful pastor soon noticed the missing ones and used every effort to draw them back. To some he gave a word of counsel, to another, not being able to see him in private, he sent a letter. But for that man, Mr. Taylor, Satan had planned, as he was one who would have a strong influence for good or evil. When he received the letter so full of the loving spirit of the Master his heart was touched, but Satan whispered, "What right has he to dictate to you?" "Sure enough," he thought, "he is not so old that he can dictate to everybody; but the man is so full of egotism he thinks he is the only good man in the place, but if I choose to stay at home and read good books it will do just as well as going to Church." Oh, Peter, you will be sorry some day! You do not realize that you are running away from the Master! But Satan was well pleased and hastened away to make mischief at choir practice. Once there he "nudged" Mrs. M. and told her to listen to Mrs. G. scream. Mrs. M. did so and thought Mrs. G. could not sing well enough to be head soprano. "And here comes Mrs. E., she's always late, and Mr. H. is altogether too authoritative. I declare I wish I never belonged to this choir. I'll leave if things don't go better." So Satan put unhappy thoughts in one, jealous thoughts in others, careless thoughts in others which grew and blossomed until there were many unlovely things said and done in the choir. A few more whisperings by the evil one and the choir was spoiled—broken up by a quarrel. Then did Mr. Ellingwood act the part of a peace-maker, but all to no purpose. The members only felt as if he was a meddler. Then he gave a stirring appeal from the pulpit, and asked who, out of love for the Master, would volunteer to sing. "Would they not ask God's and their neighbors' forgiveness, and sing, not for man, not to show how fine a choir they could maintain, but sing 'as unto the Lord.'"

But no, Satan had been too busy, and people's tongues were too sharp. When one ceased the warfare another took it up, and so those children of God revelled out the work which had been wrought with such labor and prayer. But, thank God! they

did not undo all the work, for Christ is still stronger than Satan and all his hosts, and many a note was struck which will continue to sound through all eternity.

Then Brother Taylor and some other zealous (?) brethren and sisters began to feel that to do their duty they should try to get a minister whom everybody would like. But how could they get another minister when they still had one? They could not tell him to leave, so they "must get the minds of the people" which meant they must change the minds of the people.

"Don't you think we want a change?" said one "pillar" to another. The other looked around and saw that Sister S. would not speak to Sister B., and was about say, "Yes, brother, we need an outpouring of the Spirit," when the other said emphatically, "We need a new minister!"

"A new minister! Why brother?" "Why haven't you heard?"

"No, what?" in great astonishment, not knowing what dreadful thing must have occurred.

"Why, Ellingwood is just hated by the majority of the people. Now look at the way this church is filled—only about half as many as when it was first built, and young Hendrick says all the young people say they will not attend church while he stays. And then look at that Sunday-school class—"

"Yes," interposed the other, "I have noticed a much larger attendance than ever before, and am sure he has a hold on them."

"Well, but what do they come for? Laughing and giggling fully half the time. He is not the man for them. And he wrote such an insulting letter to Brother Taylor! Because a man doesn't attend church every Sunday ('And does sell goods on Sunday,' mentally inserted the other), to be talked to as if he had committed some heinous offence. If he had used me so, I would feel like chasing him out of the place."

"But, brother, have you made this a matter of prayer?"

"Prayer! I trust you do not think we are heathens! Of course we pray for our church in all its forms."

"But, would it not be better to find out how many like him, instead of how many dislike him? We all thought the Lord sent him and this does not appear to be the right way to part with him. The Bible says, 'Love the brethren' and 'Be patient with all men,' and Brother Ellingwood has obeyed that command, and we would do well to follow his example."

"But he has faults which—"

"So have we, brother."

"Well, you will see that he has very few friends, and I do not wonder—a man who does not care who he offends is not the one for this place. Why, if we had a man who would draw, there are outsiders who would attend, and I know one man who would give \$250."

You may be sure that poor Mr. Ellingwood soon felt that the hand shakes were not so cordial—and rumors were floating that he had said and done many things of which he had no remembrance. Then some of the brethren came at intervals and told him sad stories of Brother N's family, who were offended by his last sermon, and Sister Y. who felt hurt because he had not called during her son's illness (though the pastor could not tell by intuition when any of his flock were ailing, and no messenger had been sent him to acquaint him with the fact), till he felt as if life was a burden and hoped that like the "way-worn traveller"—"Deliverance will come" in some way. At last it did come in this way. A brother suddenly discovered that Brother Ellingwood was communicating with a church which he would accept as a pastorate if he was only freed from the one at Verdale. So a meeting was called at which they decided to release him and to send him a letter to that effect.

The pastor was overwhelmed when he got the letter. "What made them think I wanted to leave," he wondered. But Satan knew that a brother had only heard the pastor say that W— desired a pastorate and the right man would find a good field.

So he went to seek a new home, and ere long found a field where the people were full of spiritual life and ready to water the seed which the pastor planted.

But Verdale church did not have a pleasant or prosperous time. Satan had put so much of his leaven in the place, that the people were always at the first or last end of a quarrel; and the next pastor, who was to suit everybody, found he could not please anybody, so he left them, praying that the one which took his place might have better success; and the people, loosed from Satan's bondage, might live in the sunshine of God's love.

Teacher and Scholar.

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JULY 7th } THE TEN COMMANDMENTS { EXOD. 20:1-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—LUKE 10:27.

MEMORY VERSES.—3:17.

CATECHISM.—Q. 27.

Home Readings.—Mt. Ex. xiv. 19-31. 7. Ex. xv. 1-27. W. Ex. xvi. 1-36. Th Ex. xvii. 1-16. F. Ex. xviii. 1-27. S. Ex. xix. 1-25. Sub. Ex. xx. 1-17.

After a year spent in studying the life of our Lord, we return to the Old Testament to resume our study of Israel's history. We had followed the course of events until Israel had escaped from the pursuing Egyptians through God's mighty intervention at the Red Sea. The home readings cover the intervening events which lead up to our lesson for this week. There are two things to be noted in our study of the ten commandments: the character of the law and the contents of the law.

I. The Character of the Law.—By this we mean what these commandments were intended to be to Israel. We know that in New Testament terms the difference between Paul and the Judaizing teachers who gave him so much trouble hinged upon this matter; and we know that much misapprehension exists even to-day about this question. Some would have us believe that of the Law God said, "Do this and live, while others contend, and contend correctly, that the word was rather, 'having life do this.' In other words the Law was given as the rule of life to people already in covenant with God, and as a new covenant, in which life was promised on condition of obedience. "I am Jehovah, thy God," etc., makes it plain that the ground upon which the Law proceeded is that covenant of promise made with Abraham 430 years before this time. God had remembered His promise and had delivered His people from the bondage of Egypt and now as His people their lives were to be ordered according to this law. This is a matter of great importance to us, for according to the argument in the epistle to the Galatians, that covenant of promise is the very same covenant under which Christians stand, and therefore the Law, as a rule of life, is still binding upon us. We are not at liberty to set aside any of these commandments as Jewish, and therefore not binding upon us; if the covenant, through which we are now received as people of God, is the same as that through which Abraham and his chosen descendants became the people of God, then the rule of life prescribed for them remains the rule of life for us. The Law then is the rule of life which God has given for the guidance of His covenant people.

II. The Contents of the Law.—Of course we are dealing only with that portion of the Law which is contained in our lesson, namely the ten commandments or the moral law. We know that these commandments were first spoken by the voice of God Himself at Sinai, and afterwards written on two tables of stone and laid up in the ark of the covenant. As to the division which marked the end of the first table we know nothing; but a very superficial knowledge is sufficient to show us that this law falls naturally into two parts. The first sets forth man's duty towards God, and the second his duty towards his fellow-men. The sum of the first four commandments is found in the first part of our Golden Text; the sum of the other six in the last part of that text. Put very briefly these commandments may be summarized as follows. The first presents the object of man's worship—Jehovah—the covenant God and His alone. The second presents the mode of worship; not as man may fancy, but as God prescribes. The third presents the spirit in which the matter of God's worship is to be treated. The fourth sets forth the time which is to be set apart expressly for God's worship, one whole day in seven, and that the day which marks the most important event in the world's history. Coming to the fifth commandment we find man's duty to his fellow men introduced by setting forth the duty he owes to his parents—those who stand nearest to him. The sixth demands respect for one's neighbor's chiefest possession—his life. The seventh respect for one's neighbor's wife. The eighth for one's neighbor's property, and the ninth for one's neighbor's good name; while the tenth is the interpretation act of the whole, and shows that the demands of the law are not satisfied with man's outward obedience, but extend to the spirit in which these duties are performed.