

THE HOME.

The Past is Past.

My life is all before me; The past is past; I cast no backward glances. At last—at last. Each day brings its own brightness, Each busy day; Each hour its song or sadness, And flies away. I've climbed the heights of pleasure— The shining heights; And drank from pain's full measure In darkest night; But now before me stretches An open sea; And I am swiftly crossing, Dear Lord, with Thee. It may be longer—shorter— The journey o'er; But mellow lights are beaming From distant shore, And in my inner vision Shines out, as of old, Upon life's fading background, The past is past.

Judith's Way.

BY SARAH D. HOBART.

Farmer Keene faced his young daughter-in-law with a very decided frown of disapproval. "It's all nonsense," he said, "a farmer's wife's no business hiring work done. The Betsy's always made her own dresses, and what's good enough for her is good enough for the rest of the family, I calculate."

"But I never made a dress in my life! I don't know how," protested Judith, the tears rising to her eyes. "Then it's time you learned," said the stern mentor departed for the field, leaving his daughter-in-law overwhelmed with shame and self-reproach.

Love was his life; discord the one thing that made existence unendurable, and this was not the first time in her two years of married life that she had unwittingly thrown some bombshell into the peaceful family circle. It seemed so hard for her to keep within her limitations.

First, it had been her request for a woman to help in house-cleaning. She was slender, and quite unused to severe labor. She had been a teacher of music before her marriage, and had learned house-keeping in a fragmentary fashion. Though the aunt with whom she made her home kept no servants, stout hands were always called in requisition when heavy tasks demanded aid.

The Keene policy necessitated the calling of John from his labors in the field to assist in moving heavy furniture, heating carpets, and other tasks which Judith could not manage with the help of the invalid mother-in-law.

Now, John was a hard-working, ambitious young fellow, overflowing with brains, energy and hard labor the excess of capital which his father put into the partnership. He could not be spared from the field in the busy season, nor could he take his one man from plowing or seeding to do house work.

stress for the work she herself could only have executed humbly by a week's persistent effort. She spread out the dress pattern upon the table and looked at it despairingly. It was a cashmere, a birthday present from John, of his favorite color of green. She then she heard John's step upon the doorstep, and he confronted her before she could wipe the treacherous drops from her eyes.

"I'm going to town to get the horse shod," he began, then stopped abruptly. "Was, what's the matter, Judith?" "Oh, it's nothing," she was all smiles again, and the cloud had vanished. "But why don't you shoe the horses yourself, John?" Her husband gave her a glance of surprise.

"Because I don't happen to be a blacksmith," he answered shortly. "I expect Green will be here to tea. He's coming to fix the pump." "But you surely could do that, John," urged his wife.

"Yes, but it's his regular trade, and he will do it in half the time. I must get some nails and spikes. Jones will begin to work on the woodshed to-morrow, and the Jordans are coming to lay over the north cellar wall, Friday." "But why don't you build the woodshed yourself? and why don't you lay the stone wall?" she persisted.

John looked at his wife as if he were beginning to doubt her sanity. "Because I am neither a carpenter nor a stonemason. A Jack-of-all-trades is a master of none. I should like to know what all you, Judith?" "Just this," she pushed him down into a rocking chair and seated herself upon his knee. "I've been thinking of what father said this morning, that the farmer's wife had no business to hire work done of the farm. I know you half agreed with him, by your looks, and I am wondering why so much more should be expected of the farmer's wife than of the farmer? You quite resent the idea of becoming blacksmith, carpenter, mason, and so on, but you see no inconsistency in the expectation that I shall be cook, laundress, housemaid, dairymaid, seamstress, and a score of trades besides."

"A Jack-of-all-trades is master of none." "It is any wonder that women accomplish what men do, when they have to do so much more?" "There is one thing that I can do well. I was considered a good music teacher, was I not?" She looked in his face anxiously. "The best in Drayton," he answered, proudly.

"Thank you. Now I am a poor seamstress. I have hated the sight of a needle all my life, though I learned sewing because it was womanly work, and I wished to be womanly. Mrs. Flynn would be glad to do the washing, which is a terrible strong enough to do, and which is a terrible tax upon my vitality. A half day's work at my profession would pay her for the laundry work for several weeks. Don't you see what it all means, John? I want to take back my music class. Can you help me when I say the word? We are only half a mile from the village; my work would enable me to put a strong girl in the kitchen, and I think life would be pleasanter for all of us, while I would be doing the one thing I can do well in the straggling under a burden I can bear."

ated had not rain fallen, for the soil was dry as dust when the seed was sown. The result of this experiment was that the seeds which had been trodden in grew finely from the start, and matured their crops to a marketable condition by fall.

This experiment demonstrated two things— that a corn crop, even in the vicinity of New York as late as July 2nd, will produce "roasting ears" in October, when they are a delicious addition to the stock of table vegetables, and command a ready sale at a high price in the market; and, that without firming the corn will not germinate at so late a date.

This practice of firming the soil has now become quite general among professional and many amateur gardeners; but it is still unknown or neglected by the great majority of those who plant gardens. People who have not had experience are apt to be afraid to tread too heavily upon the seed-rows. They want to give the delicate plantlets a chance to get to the surface. But there is no danger of pressing down a dry soil too heavily. Mr. Henderson's practice is to sow such seeds as cabbage and celery about two inches deep, the sower to be followed by a man who, with the ball of his right foot, presses down his full weight on every inch of soil where the seed has been sown, and then leveling lightly with a rake and passing a light roller over the rows.

Those who are intending to plant corn and other seeds late in the season—or, in fact, at any time, now or later—would do wisely to keep this advice of the eminent gardener constantly in mind, and to act upon it, as occasion requires. But one caution needs to be remembered. Mr. Henderson says: "By no means tread or roll in seed, if the ground is not dry. The soil may often be in a suitable condition to sow, and yet be too damp to be trodden upon or rolled. In such cases these operations may not be necessary at all, for rainy weather causes the seeds to germinate, of course; but if drought, the treading or rolling may be done a week or more after the seed has been sown, if there is any reason to believe that it may suffer from the dry, hot air."

Another advantage which results from firming, and no small one, is that in case of beet, celery, turnips, and any other crop sown in rows, the seeds of these crops will not be so liable to rot, and to rot where the soil is loose, are retarded. The crop is thus given a better chance than if choked or crowded by weeds at the very beginning of its life.

The practice of firming the soil applies equally well to the planting of shrubs and young trees. Many plants are lost through neglect of this simple means of making their survival sure.

Medical Virtues of Onions. A mother writes says: "Once a week invariably, and was generally when we had cold meat dinner, I gave the children a dinner which was hailed with delight and looked forward to. This was a dish of boiled onions. The little things know not that they were eating the best of medicine for expelling what most children suffer from—worms. Mine were kept free by this remedy alone. Not only boiled onions for dinner, but chives also they were encouraged to eat with their bread and butter, and for this purpose they had tufts of chives in their little gardens. It was a medical man who taught me to eat boiled onions as a specific for a cold in the chest. He did not know at the time, till I told him, that they were good for anything else."

"But I take a little," says one, "medicinally." Yes, there are a good many who do that, and the doctors must be dreadful fellows. They seem to be always recommending the best people I know just to take a little. I am not sure, however, whether the doctors have really got on this recommendation. Sure I am that when the doctors give their recommendations the other way they are not always followed with quite so much avidity.

ADVANTAGES OF PRACTICE. I think most people will find their brains clearer, their thoughts brighter, their hands steadier, their judgment cooler and their spirits more equable, if they put the spirits altogether away, and all such things. I cannot conceive of abstinence doing anybody any hurt, nor of being any difficulty to a man who is a man; and if he thinks the slightest good might come of it, I think he should do it. If he felt he might harm himself, I say if he did good to others, let him do it; but if he is certain from the testimony of many it can hurt nobody who practices it, and may prove invaluable to many others, let him do it, and do it at once for his own sake. I was very pleased to meet the other day with a Christian who said, "I always take my glass of wine, and think I shall do so as long as I live; but I know there is a danger in it, and therefore my children have never tasted any. They have been brought up to feel that there is a danger about it, but they never have it, either at the table or anywhere else. That is very good of that brother. At the same time, if his children grow up as smart as most people's children, they will one of these days put some very curious questions. Aunt said, "Now, Jane, you ought to go to bed at once. Little chickens go to roost early." "Yes, aunt," she said, "but the old hen always goes to roost with them." Our children do draw strong inferences, and will probably draw the inference that, if father thinks the glass of wine is not good for John, it cannot be so good for papa himself; and possibly it may not.

FOR THE SAKE OF SERVANTS. We must often deny ourselves things apparently safe to ourselves if we feel that they would be unsafe to those we love, and if that be the rule with you, I think many of you will very soon take the pledge. Do of this kind of thing for your children and servants. Our servants and neighbors will follow us, especially if we are persons of influence. I have heard of a laird who said to his gillie, "Sanders, what would you like to take?" He said he would like to take what the laird took. "I am going to take pale ale," then, laird, I should like a pair of ale, too." You will find that mostly people are willing to take what the laird takes, and we are little lairds in our way in the circles in which we move. If we take pale ale, they will want a pair of ale. It only differs in a letter or two, but does not come exactly to the same result. They say we cannot get home safely at night, because our coachmen are drunk; we cannot leave our house in safety, because our servants have been known to take too much—and great fault is taken of it. "The horrible drink," the master says, when he goes home and takes his glass of sherry, because certain men do not come to work till long past the proper hour. "It is a shameful thing our working classes should drink so much. I think I'll have some champagne."

TEMPERANCE AND THE DOSE. I used to regard—I cannot say I have very much altered my opinion—intoxication as a sort of cutting off of one limb of a deadly tree, and I fancied my business was to lay the axe at the root of the tree, and leave others to saw away at the branches. But soon I began to find that, in cutting down the tree, the toppling off of branches was servicable to the woodman. A tree will come down all the better, and all the more safely, because the awkward limb that was in the way has first of all been removed. So I will use the saw as best I can, and get rid of the accursed bough of this accursed sin. What multitudes have been hanged upon this branch! How many, like Absalom, have been entangled by the hair of the head in these branches of the tree! I like this Gospel Temperance because it does not forget the axe. What if we make men sober if we leave them self-righteous. The work is not done. What if we deliver them from drink—yet if they are not delivered from pride, the work is not done. It might even be possible that, under some lights, we might have done them evil instead of good—only, remember, in some lights—look in the trust and clearest light it must always be a benefit to have saved a man from the sin of drunkenness and to have led him to a higher benefit. Still, it is the Gospel which is the power of the Spirit of God renewing the heart and changing the mind. It is that which is God's great machinery for the salvation of the sons of men. Fresh Jesus Christ. Lift Him High. Tell of the wonders He hath done. This I believe to be the best and most precious work that can be performed by men, and these two things go together.—Freeman.

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THE FARM.

Firming the Ground.

Some years ago that veteran gardener, Peter Henderson, read an essay before the National Association of Nurserymen, Florists and Seedsmen on "The Use of the Feet in Sowing and Planting." His object in preparing the paper was to impress upon his hearers the great importance of "firming" the soil over the seeds after sowing, especially when the soil is dry, or likely to become so, and he urged them to remember what he said, and to act upon it, because of the immense loss to the agricultural and horticultural community from the habit of sowing seeds loosely, or of placing plants in hot and dry soils. This loss, he added, is all the more to be regretted when it is known that by "firming" the soil around the seed or plant we have, in most cases, a certain preventive.

TEMPERANCE.

The Rev. G. H. Spurgeon on Total Abstinence.

At the fifth anniversary meeting of the Metropolitan Tabernacle Blue Ribbon Total Abstinence Society, held at the College Lecture Hall, on the 10th of May, 1871, H. Spurgeon presided and gave an address. COMMENDING THE PRINCIPLE. To-night I desire to commend to our dear friends present the principle and practice of total abstinence—total abstinence from that which is wholly injurious, and cannot, as I think, except in some very remarkable cases, be of use to anybody. It does seem to some people as if it were an awful thing to abstain from the taking of alcohol. I suppose they do not find it difficult to abstain from chloral, opium, and other poisons. Why they should feel so difficult to abstain from alcohol I cannot tell. This I know, that those who find it most difficult are the persons who ought to abstain with the best result. He who can easily abstain, to whom there is no temptation in the drink, let him do it because he can do it so easily; but he who cannot, he will destroy himself, he is caught in the net, he will determine to abstain. I think a Christian man especially should resolve that nothing shall ever conquer him, let it be what it may; that if there be anything, however proper or however pleasing, which is getting to be a snare to him, he will destroy it. He will not suffer himself to be conquered. Shall you, shall I, be bit and bridled by any kind of habit, and shall our souls, which Christ has set free by His own redeeming blood, become the slaves of us or of that? No, by the grace of God it will not be so. If it should seem to you difficult for us to abstain, let us prove our manhood, our strength of mind, our freedom from slavery, and resolve to do it.

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