

Boys and Girls.

"JUST COMFORTABLE."

"Where's mamma?" cried blue-eyed Bessie, running breathlessly into the room the other morning. "Never mind, you'll do, aunty; I only want to know something. Is my pa rich?"

"Not very. Why?"

"O, 'cause Benny Bend and May Monk and Kate Kinsley are out here telling about their pas, and I didn't know about mine."

"Well, Bessie, I'll tell you. Your pa is not too rich, and not too poor; he is just comfortable."

The child stood for a moment, looking thoughtfully, then repeated over and over to herself, "Not weddy rich, not weddy poor, jest comferable," and went out.

Presently her mother came in, Bessie following her.

"Well, Bessie, said she "have you been a good girl to-day?"

"No, mamma."

"Why, Bessie, I hope you have not been a bad girl."

"No, mamma," said the little thing. "Not weddy bad, not weddy good, jest comferable."

"ALMOST."

Some five years ago I knew a young disciple of the Lord Jesus, who labored zealously for her Master, and won Him many precious souls. But I have one particular instance to relate:—

She was at school, where she had, by her consistent conduct, won the confidence of all her fellows, and among them she had formed a mighty prayer-meeting. On one of these occasions, her little band were singing the hymn, "One more day's work for Jesus," when she noticed a girl weeping bitterly. She drew her aside, and found that a brother of the sobbing girl was very near to death. "And," sobbed the sister, "he's so far from the Kingdom that I weep for his soul; I feel that as he is he will never kneel at 'Jesus' feet.'"

My young friend found that the dying man had heard of Jesus Christ, but kept putting off the day of salvation, till, like many another, he was now almost lost. She was for a moment perplexed as to the course to be pursued, but she commended her way to her Father, feeling sure that He would open up a means whereby she might aid the sinking soul. And at last it was decided that she and the sister should leave early the next morning, and by midday they had reached the end of their sad journey.

You may think this was nothing wonderful to do; but, by leaving school in the term, Matty lost all chance of the prize which everybody felt was almost hers. Yet she could have lost the best prize ever offered to gain the smile of her Lord.

Matty entered the darkened chamber, and after a few words began to pray. As she prayed she gained eloquence; her pleading seemed to gain immediate response, and Christ was truly in the room where, before, nothing but groans and despairing sighs prevailed. "Oh," said the young disciple, "there is one Physician who can heal all your wounds, who even now will save you and give you new life." "Ah, I neglected Him in my youth, and a short time ago I was almost persuaded, but now it is too late," gasped out the dying man.

Oh, how Matty pleaded to her Master! She showed how that He came "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." How that He was all tenderness, all mercy to those who should seek Him acknowledging their need of Him. "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you, even now," urged Matty, "even though you have tarried so long by the way, our Father will let you in." Blessed words to the poor weary soul! "I see

it all now," he murmured, with a radiant smile, "He died for me because I AM ALMOST lost. I shall not die now for I feel He has given me 'everlasting life.' Tell them all I have found the Lord Jesus when I had almost given up." And then, trying to sing

"Yet there is room!—still open stands the gate. The gate of love; it is not yet too late."

he passed from this transitory stage into eternal life.

And Matty went back to school to carry on her holy influence among the many young souls to whom her faith was as a beacon-light, ever pointing out the way to truth. She lost her school prize by her absence, but she gained a higher—that of knowing there was "joy among the angels over one sinner" saved. She was not strong and in time she too was called to the "Lamb's bright hall of song," able to sing to the last:—

"One more day's work for Jesus;
How sweet the work has been,
To tell the story, to show the glory,
When Christ's flock enter in!"

My dear young reader, you may be at school, you may be at home, but depend upon it the Lord has work for you to do. Do it. Do it as unto Him, and never be heard saying, "It is almost time I did something for Christ," or "Jesus is almost mine." Never rest until you have changed that word "almost" into *fully*, or at the last day your indecision will have decided for you, and you will be quite lost.

If Matty had not been fully persuaded of the power of her Saviour, do you think she could have spoken so boldly for Him to the almost lost soul, which otherwise would have been lost indeed? Do you, my dear young friend ever say a word for Jesus? Do you ever tell or speak to your young companions of the "wondrous love" wherewith He loved you and them to the sacrifice of his own blessed life? It was to the least of you that He said, "Forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven." To-day you are not forbidden by anyone; will you come freely of yourself to Him?

MARGARET B. GERDS.

Temperance.

The Swedenborgian Conference at Liverpool included a great temperance meeting in its programme, and resolved to form a general temperance society for the whole church.

Cases of sunstroke have been very frequent lately in New York. A hospital physician there writes: "I find that a majority of the persons I am summoned to attend are those who use liquor freely."

Later and more complete returns as to the effect of Sunday-closing in Ireland show a diminution of 60 per cent. in the arrests for drunkenness over the Sunday-closing area, and of 25 per cent. in the exempted cities.

Prince Leopold has expressed a deep interest in the success of coffee-taverns, and, with a view to give practical effect to his sentiments, has not only permitted the association of his name with a handsome tavern opened last week at Kingston, but has become a large shareholder in the undertaking.

Over 100 of the men connected with the South Devon Militia signed the pledge some time ago. As they are now widely scattered, it is impossible to ascertain how far the pledge is being kept; but it is reported that forty-six of the number have been found faithfully adhering to it, on being visited by an Army Scripture Reader.

Nearly 10,000 persons were present at a demonstration held by the Liverpool branch of the Total Abstinence League of the Cross. The temperance work which has been so successfully carried on in Liverpool among the Catholic population is mainly owing to the labors of Father Nugent, who has just started on a visit to America.

The *Times* states that the total number of matrimonial causes entered for trial and disposed of in the Divorce Court in the past year was no less than 643. The writer contends that the Court "exercises a wise and useful jurisdiction. And as in the criminal courts, so also in the Divorce Court, drunkenness is the fruitful source of the evils with which it has to deal. The records of the Court teem with illustrations of this fact, and to form an idea of the depths of degradation into which women who give way to the vice fall, these records should be studied."

A return has been made to the House of Commons of all convictions between Michaelmas, 1876, and Michaelmas, 1879, of all persons arrested for drunkenness on Sunday in England and Wales. The return is made by counties, boroughs, and districts having a separate police force. In England with a total population, according to the last census, of 21,495,131, there were 46,317 persons convicted of drunkenness on Sunday, of whom 32,447 were *bona fide* residents in the districts where they were arrested, and 13,870 were not *bona fide* residents. In Wales the numbers were:—Population, 1,217,135; convictions, 1,084; *bona fide* residents, 842; not such residents, 14,112. The numbers in the Metropolitan Police district were:—Population, 3,810,744; convictions, 12,332; *bona fide* residents, 7,469; not such residents, 4,863.

A DOOMED ARMY.

"Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching!" How many of them? Sixty thousand! Sixty full regiments, every man of which will, before twelve months shall have completed their course, lie down in the grave of a drunkard! Every year during the past decade has witnessed the same sacrifice; and sixty regiments stand behind this army ready to take its place. It is to be recruited from our children and our children's children. Tramp, tramp, tramp! the sounds come to us in the echoes of the footsteps of the army just expired. Tramp, tramp, tramp!—the earth now shakes with the tread of the host now passing. Tramp, tramp, tramp!—comes to us from the camp of the recruits. A great tide of life flows resistlessly to its death. What are they fighting for? The privilege of pleasing an appetite, of conforming to a social usage, of filling sixty thousand homes with shame and sorrow, of loading the public with the burden of pauperism, of crowding our prison-houses with felons, of detracting from the productive industries of the country, of ruining fortunes and breaking hopes, of breeding disease and wretchedness, of destroying both body and soul in hell before their time. Meantime, the tramp, tramp, tramp! sounds on the tramp of sixty thousand yearly victims. Some are besotted and stupid, some are wild with hilarity and dance along the dusty way, some reel along in pitiful weakness, some wreak their mad and murderous impulses on one another or on the helpless women and children whose destinies are united to theirs, some stop in wayside debaucheries and infamies for a moment, some go bound in chains from which they seek in vain to wrench their bleeding wrists, and all are poisoned in body and soul, and all are doomed to death. Wherever they move, crime, poverty, shame, wretchedness and despair hover in awful shadows. There is no bright side to the picture. We forgot—there is just one. The men who make this army get rich. Their children are robed in purple and fine linen, and live upon dainties. Some of them are regarded as respectable members of society, and they hold conventions to protect their interests! Still the tramp, tramp, tramp! goes on, and before this article can see the light, five thousand more of our poisoned army will have hidden their shame and disgrace in the grave.—*Scribner's Magazine*.

JENNY LIND AT HOME.

The forgotten Swedish prima donna lives in a spacious and charming mansion in a retired nook in South Kensington, embowered by trees and flowers. In the elegant drawing-room, hung with pictures and tastefully decorated with old china, artistic draperies, etc., I found a lady whose blue eyes and kindly smile bore me back at once over the waste of some thirty years. Again I sat an eager, excited school-girl gazing with anticipation on the verge of my first great art-delight. I saw once more before me the tall, slender figure, in its white satin draperies, with green leaves and diamonds adorning the abundant fair hair, and the olden thrill creeps over me that heralded the first notes of that marvellous, that incomparable voice, whose tones were to those of the velvet-throated Patti or the silver-voiced Nilsson as the regent to the diamonds of a duchess. Shall I forget how old men, who knew just as much about music as they did of Sanskrit, used to sit with the tears streaming down their cheeks while Jenny Lind was singing, "I know that my Redeemer liveth!" There she stood before me, the unforgotten idol of my girlish idolatry, changed, indeed, by the lapse of years, yet unmistakably the Jenny Lind of old. The abundant brown hair, with a few lines of silver amid its locks, was turned under in the peculiar fashion in which she always wore it, and the eyes are lovely as ever in their expression and in their soft depths of lustrous blue. As she talked, her gloved hands lay clasped upon her knee in the easy, graceful posture that was familiar to us in the Swedish songstress long years ago. I called her attention to the fact, and she smiled at my remembering the attitude, and the pretty German monosyllable "so!" which used to be another of the little peculiarities that we noticed and loved because they were hers, escaped from her lips. A grand piano-forte in one corner of the room, and a large three-quarter-length portrait of herself, painted at the height of her renown, recalled her past queenship in the realms of song. She was handsomely yet plainly dressed in a rich black silk, closed to the throat with coral buttons, a shawl of old Cluny lace was draped around her shoulders, and she wore a very simple cap of fine old Venetian guipure. She spoke in warm tones of affection of the United States, not in reference to the welcome and the worship it had accorded to her in by-gone years, but because, as she said in her quaint English that had such a charm about it, "Your country takes the rabble of all other countries and gives them all a chance." I spoke of the fact that when she sang in America there were no opera houses there. "And of that I was glad," she remarked, "for I had quitted the stage, and it was for that reason that I was anxious to go to the United States, since there I would have no temptation to return to it." I also spoke of the intense sympathetic quality of her talent, and the marvellous power that she possessed of swaying her audience at will, particularly in devotional music. Something of the old beautiful, rapt expression came into her eyes as she answered, "It was because my voice came from God and I sang to God!"—*Lucy H. Hooper*.

The British Medical Association, at its final general meeting at Cambridge, adopted the report of the committee for promoting legislative restrictions for habitual drunkards. The meeting further adopted a motion by Dr. Rodgers requesting the support of the association to obtain from the Legislature some provision whereby habitual drunkards who become chargeable to the rates should be restrained from continuing their vicious habits.