



The Family Circle.

IS IT PEACE OR WAR?

AN ORIGINAL TEMPERANCE RECITATION.

Is it peace or war? from a million throats
Ever rises the anxious cry,
As in stately hall, and in nameless hut,
All ranks and conditions die.

Is it peace or war? when throughout the land
There are foes that are deadlier far
Than a million men and ships might be
In a bloody, unrighteous war.

Is it peace or war? when this mighty realm,
With a past that is full of praise,
Is beaten and blanch'd with one great vice,
While the wondering nations gaze?

Is it peace or war? when the soil once red
With the blood of the martyred slain,
Is laden each year with dishonored dead,
While the living rush wild in their train?

Is it peace or war? though our fleets are still,
And our soldiers are free from blood,
If foes that can laugh at powder and shell
Are robbing our land of God?

Is it peace or war? when in every town
There are houses we pass each day,
Which, had the strong angels their Lord's com-
mand,
Would be blown to the winds away.

Is it peace or war? when a brother man,
For a life of inglorious ease,
Will sell us the poison that robs our life,
And smile at the ruin he sees!

Is it peace or war? when in many a home,
With an agony never expressed,
The hope and the love and the light have gone
By the breath of the virulent pest?

Is it peace or war? when a mother strives
With sleepless effort and pain,
To ward off the curse from her husband's head,
And restore him to manhood again?

Is it peace or war? when a father flies
From the sight of an imbecile wife,
And the more than motherless innocent bairns
Bear the weight of that woe through life.

Is it peace or war? when the godly pair
Who have never disgraced their name,
Are killed by a stroke of unspeakable grief
O'er a child they have lost in shame.

Is it peace or war? when the sweetest hearts,
And minds of an infinite grace,
Fall side by side in a common doom,
With the herds of the commonplace.

Is it peace or war? when the cause of God
Is enchain'd in this powerful spell,
And the holy-song of the angel choir
Dies away in this chant of hell.

Peace there is none! It is war! wild war:
O men, from your dreams arise,
Sleep on, and the nation will surely die;
Fight now, it will reach the skies.

THOMAS LOVE.

—League Journal.

MARY JONES; OR, WHAT A WELSH GIRL DID TO GET A BIBLE.

BY THE REV. R. SHINDLER, ADDLESTONE, ENGLAND.

Mary Jones was born in a very humble cottage, called Ty'n y ddal, in the small hamlet of Llanfihangel-y-Pennant, situate in a romantic valley at the southern foot of Cader-Idris. This was in 1784, about a year before Mr. Charles commenced his Circulating Schools. The district was one of great attractions, but there were neither railways nor coaches then to open the scenes of wild beauty to the lovers of the picturesque. Now the narrow-gauge line from Towy to Abergynolwyn takes one to within walking distance of what was then an isolated spot. In 1794 Mr. Charles established one of his circulating schools at Abergynolwyn, which was soon followed by a Sunday-school, both being under the superintendence of John Ellis. Mary Jones was one of his earliest pupils, though she had to walk two miles over a rough and exposed road. She was punctual in her attendance, a ready learner, and one able to store in her memory large portions of the Sacred Book, which was always in use. But Mary did not possess a Bible of her own. There was not one in the village. The nearest one she had access to was at a farm-house, two miles distant. To this she might freely go, and it was so that every

week she went to read and search its pages, and store up its precious contents in her memory. For six years she did this, the desire of her heart gaining strength meanwhile, which was to possess a Bible of her own. But Bibles were dear, and her means were small, for her parents were poor. An occasional copper, however, did come in her way, and these she stored up, a penny or a half-penny at a time, to accomplish her purpose. But where could a Bible be obtained? None of her neighbors could tell her. She heard, however, from one William Hugh, a preacher, who sometimes visited the little Calvinistic Methodist chapel, that a new edition of the Welsh Bible had been issued, and that if one was to be obtained anywhere it must be of Mr. Charles, of Bala. She was sixteen years of age, and she had saved, as she thought, about as much money as a Bible would cost. But Bala, though in the same county, was nearly thirty miles from her home, and though the road was unknown and the people at Bala strangers, she determined to travel thither, find out Mr. Charles, and buy a Bible if one could be had for money.

The snow was still lying on the summit of old Cader-Idris, though spring had begun to rejoice at its sunny foot, when Mary Jones set out early for her long journey to Bala. This was in 1800, a year after the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge had issued its last edition of the Sacred Scriptures. A small bag or wallet had been lent her by a neighbor in which to bring back the treasure she hoped to secure. On her outward journey it sufficed to carry her shoes, and a little refreshment in the shape of coarse bread, which a draught here and there from the runlets she would pass in her way would serve to wash down. The air was clear, the skies were bright, and old Cader with his now cheerful face seemed to remind her of Him who, before the mountains were brought forth was from everlasting, the Refuge and Hope of all who trust in Him.

It was evening when she reached Bala, and too late to see Mr. Charles that night, for he observed the rule which all busy men should observe. "Early to bed and early to rise." But William Hugh had directed her in the first place to call on a venerable preacher named David Edward, and tell him her errand. The old man was at once won over to her cause.

"Well, my dear girl," said he, "it is too late to see Mr. Charles to-night; he is accustomed to retire to rest early, but he gets up with the dawn. You shall sleep here to-night, and we will go to him as soon as he gets up to-morrow, that you may be able to reach home before night."

The next morning David Edward awoke Mary from her sound sleep at an early hour. "Mr. Charles is up," said he, "for there is a light in his study."

The decisive moment was then near at hand. David Edward knocks at the door, and Mr. Charles himself answers it. It was an affecting scene, a memorable interview. Having expressed surprise at the early call of his friend, Mr. Charles invites them to his study.

David Edward introduces Mary, and tells her tale for her, enlarging more than she could have done on her weekly visits to the farm house, her long savings, her toilsome walk, and her great anxiety to possess a copy of the Divine Word. Mr. Charles questioned her at length, and drew from her many affecting facts of her personal history. Evidently touched by all these things, he felt compelled to say, nevertheless: "I am extremely sorry to see this little girl, she having come all the way from Llanfihangel to buy a Bible; but there is not one to be had. All the Bibles I had from London have been disposed of months ago, excepting a few copies which I have reserved for a few friends, according to promise. What I shall do for more Welsh Bibles I know not." There were marked compassion and tenderness in his tones, but his words pierced the heart of Mary. She burst into tears, and her cries and sobs were heard all over the house. Disappointment, distress laid hold upon her; long-deferred hope, now apparently dashed to the ground, made her sick and faint. It was a supreme moment. There was a struggle in the bosom of the humane minister. Mary Jones's tears vanquished him, doing what her words could not.

"Well," said Mr. Charles, "my dear girl, I find you must have a Bible, however difficult it is for me to give you one without

disappointing other friends; it is impossible for me to refuse you."

So saying, he handed her a Bible, and she handed him the money she had brought. She tried to speak her gratitude, but her tears flowed too fast—tears not now of distress, but of joy. It was a Bochim. Mr. Charles wept, old David Edward wept, and Mary wept. At length Mr. Charles said:

"If you are pleased, my girl, to get a Bible, so am I pleased in giving it to you. Read it often, treasure it in your heart, and be a good girl."

The way back to Llanfihangel was a lighter one than the way to Bala, for now had not God granted her that which she desired of him? Sixty-six years after, when reciting these facts to Mr. Rees, she wept for joy at the goodness and faithfulness of God.

Mary Jones, having become possessed of a copy of her coveted treasure, proceeded, as is sometimes done at public meetings, by way of resolution. The first resolution was to read it through, carefully and thoughtfully, word for word. This she did four times over. The second resolution was to read, search, and commit to memory chapters of her own new Bible. This also she fulfilled, storing up in her memory the Book of Job, the Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, the Gospels, the Epistles of John, the Epistles to the Romans, Ephesians, and that to the Hebrews. The third resolution was to read a portion of the blessed book every day of her life, and this also she did as long as health permitted, until her death, in 1866.

In process of time Mary Jones was married to a weaver named Lewis, a Christian man, with whom she lived many years, becoming the mother of a numerous family. The latter part of her life she lived at the village of Bryn-crug, near Towy, Merionethshire. She was a faithful servant of God all her days, and though she was always poor, she always found money to help two causes, that of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and that of the Calvinistic Methodist Missionary Society. When the Rev. J. A. James, of Birmingham, proposed, in 1854, to send a million Testaments to China, a collection was made at the chapel at Bryn-crug. Beneath a heap of coppers was found one golden half-sovereign. That was traced home to Mary Lewis, who was now a widow. How did she manage such a contribution? And how was it that she had always something to give? The fact is, she kept a large number of bees, for the cultivation of which industry her cottage was favorably situated. Her hives always flourished. Her honey was always good; and the bees were so well acquainted with her that they would settle upon her hand. They were fast friends, and never had a misunderstanding. Her yearly income from the honey covered the expenses of her household, and the proceeds of the wax was divided between the Bible Society and the Missionary Society. On December 28th, 1866, Mary Jones passed away to her long-desired rest. On her death-bed she gave her Bible to her pastor, the Rev. Robert Griffith, of Bryn-crug. Mr. G. gave it, with a written account of her life, to Mr. R. O. Rees; Mr. Rees presented it to the library of the Calvinistic Methodist College at Bala; from which place it has been transferred, at the urgent request of the Committee, to the library of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in London.

Mary Jones little knew, when she toiled barefooted along the road to Bala, that the recital of her persevering efforts would clinch the nail which Mr. Charles had driven into the hearts of the Committee of the Religious Tract Society at their annual meeting, two years after, and thus help to bring into existence the great Bible Society she loved so well. But so it was, for, "Thus saith the Lord, Who hath despised the day of small things?"—*New York Observer*.

LITTLE ANNIE'S SERMON.

Very happy she looked as I rode by and saw her sitting on the stile by the roadside, with Trip, the dog, at her feet; so I drew my horse in and stopped to speak to her.

She was one of my pets, and I was the minister.

"Are you resting, Annie?" said I, as she smiled at me from beneath her big parasol. "Yes, sir," she said. "My feet are very tired, but I'm not tired at all."

"Your feet are tired, but you are not? Well! well! That is a new idea to me, child. So your feet and hands are not a part of the real you?"

"No, sir, please; I don't think they are. I tell my feet and hands what to do, and they do it; for they are only my servants, mamma says, to mind what I say."

"Is not your body a part of you, Annie?" I said, smiling in the dear little face again.

"No, sir,—not the real me. My body will be put in the ground when I die; but I shall be in heaven, sir, if I love God."

"Then you don't care so much about your body as your soul, my child?" I said. "Well, sir, I care a great deal, because my body holds my soul, mamma says, just as I care for the pretty case where I keep my garnet ring."

"But the ring is the real thing, after all, and the case is of much less value."

"Yes, sir; yet the case makes the ring look more, and I like to have it neat and pretty."

"So you like to have your clothes neat and pretty, I suppose, Annie; but you never forget that your body is only the casket to hold your soul? I wish all the little girls would remember that. Some of them care a great deal more about the ribbons and laces they wear than about the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, I am afraid."

"I think that's a lovely verse," said Annie. "It always makes me so happy just to think about it."

"Then you understand it, my child? Tell me what it means to have a meek and quiet spirit."

"To be 'meek' means to be gentle when people are rough to you; just as Jesus was when the soldiers and the people were cruel to Him. Don't you remember, He was just as lovely as ever?"

"And what is it to have a 'quiet spirit,' Annie?" said I.

"To have a 'quiet spirit,' I suppose, is to take just what God sends. If He lets the sun shine, so I can go out to play, it's all right; and if He makes it rain, so I can't, it's all right; and if I'm sick, it's all right; and if I'm well, it's all right too."

"Is it easy to feel so, my child?" said I, wonderingly, longing to have more of the same child-like trust myself, as I looked at the sweet, contented child-face.

"Oh yes, sir; it's easy ever since I knew how much God loves me. If you think He doesn't care about you, it's so different!"

"But you think God can't hurt any one whom He loves, child?"

"Oh no, sir—any more than you or I could; and a great deal less too, for God is always loving and good."

"But does He never make any mistakes, Annie?" said I, wishing to hear what answer she would give.

I shall never forget the look of wonder upon the dear little face as she answered:

"He wouldn't be God, sir, if He ever did wrong, or made any mistakes."

I bade her good-bye, and rode along the road carpeted with white daisies and golden buttercups, with Annie's simple, earnest words ringing in my ears all the way—

"God would not be God if He ever did wrong or made any mistakes."—*Herald of Mercy*.

SMOKING.—If we were retained to make out a case against tobacco we should adopt John Ruskin's objection as a thesis. It is a fact—a fact full of painful significance—that increasing numbers of young men are smoking, and, as Ruskin truly says, the man who smokes much idles much. The heavy smoker is a lotus-eater. He is prone to dream. Give him in his leisure an armchair, a cheerful fire, slippers, and a cup of strong coffee, and he will smoke away, gazing into the fire, and imagining that he is having a "good think," when really he is in a state of mental vacuity. This, it seems to us, is the most practical objection to smoking that has ever been urged.—*Tyneside Echo*.

OVER-WORK is always bad economy. It is, in fact, great waste, especially if conjoined with worry. Indeed worry kills far more than work does. It frets, it excites, it consumes the body—as sand and grit, which occasion excessive friction, wear out the wheels of a machine. Over-work and worry have both to be guarded against. For over-brain-work is strain-work; and it is exhausting and destructive according as it is in excess of nature. And the brain-worker may exhaust and over-balance his mind by excess, just as the athletic may over-strain his muscles and may break his back by attempting feats beyond the strength of his physical system.—*Christian at Work*.