

## A Child's Tear.

"My home—yes, it's bright and clean, sir,  
And I'll tell how it came to pass;  
It was'n't my work or doing at all—  
It's all due to that little lass.

"I was going straight down to hell, sir,  
And all through the curse of the drink;  
How I treated poor Mary, my wife, sir,  
God knows I can't bear to think.

"I didn't know as I loved her  
Till the wild dark night she died,  
When I found her lying so cold and still,  
And that new-born child by her side.

"The little lass, she has grown, sir—  
Last June she was eight years old;  
And what she has been to me, sir,  
Can never on earth be told.

"When a kid, there was no one to mind her  
But a woman as lived next door;  
And she being given to drink, too,  
Let her fall one day on the floor.

"And ever since, the poor creatur'  
Has been lame with a crooked knee;  
So I'd often lift her up in my arms  
To take her about with me.

"For I really loved the poor mite, sir,  
And her sweet little eyes of blue  
Were as blue and as bright as her mother's were,  
And they looked me through and through.

"One night I was off to the 'public'—  
I'd been drinking already—'twas late,  
And I took little May to carry her,  
But I couldn't walk quite straight.

"Oh, daddy, don't go!" she whispered,  
But I quickened my drunken pace,  
And I said, 'Not another word, young 'un,  
Or I'll give you a slap in the face.'

"I was brutal, sir—I know it;  
But the devil was in me then,  
And when he gets hold of us with the drink  
We are only brutes—not men.

"And the little lass, she wor quiet,  
And I felt a hot tear fall;  
And it seemed to burn right into my hand,  
Though she wiped it off with her shawl.

"Straight into my soul it entered—  
It melted my hardened heart;  
So I said 'I'll go home, lassie,'  
That night I made a new start.

"Now every morning and evening,  
I kneel and with heart sincere  
I bless my God for saving a soul  
By the touch of a little one's tear.

## The Old Sexton's Views.

In childhood it was my lot to dwell for many years beside an old churchyard. The vicissitudes of life have frequently obliged me to change my dwelling-place since then, but it has been my peculiar privilege at times to live near the quiet resting-places of the dead. This proximity has led to many hours of profitable meditation; for a peaceful frame of mind may be educed from the contemplation of the green hillocks beneath which lie the dust of those who have entered upon "true existence."

Mundane affairs must ever be attended by uncertainty and disappointment; but how momentary will be the vexation consequent upon failure, when we remember that it is the common lot of monarch and lowliest subject to die, and in the great hereafter be judged by One who cannot err! This consideration must impress the mind with the total insignificance of the things of time, compared with those of eternity.

Each successive season clothes the silent cities of the dead with new beauties, that fill the soul of the reflective observer with love to God, and adoration of his power as Creator.

Beautiful analogies are traced upon Nature. In autumn, when early frost has changed the sumach leaves from green to gold and scarlet; when the cricket sings her last mournful little song;—then come the saddest days of all the year, for on every hand may be seen the emblems of death. Sere leaves silently fall; distant objects appear to be receding from view—they assume shadows and indistinct outlines, scarcely discernible through the purple haze that sits upon the hillside. The soul acknowledges a silent pathos, for now all Nature, verging towards decay, reminds the young, as well as the old, of the shortness of life.

Through winter nights, when the earth lies wrapped in a winding-sheet of snow; when pallid moon and twinkling stars "their great Original proclaim"—the tall, white gravestones stand like monitors, unmoved by the fitful gusts of wind that sway the leafless trees. Shall not we, too, stand firm against the stinging blasts of persecution—of adversity—assured that "he that endureth to the end shall be saved?"

Joyous springtime presents to us, by analogy, a hope that animates the future with the promise of an eternal spring. Under the revivifying power of the sun, what an awakening takes place! Buried beneath mounds of fallen leaves, the indigenous plants have been quietly awaiting the time for their appearing. Gladly they greet the light and warmth—lifting towards the sky their pretty star-like faces. Through the grass the insects dart, clad in new suits of green and gold. Nature has been quickened, and is alive again.

"Then, O my soul, though summer be gone,  
Take courage, nor bate of thy hope one jot;  
Shall the grass, and the flower of the grass, live on,  
And thou, in thy winter, be all forgot?"

Rest in thy faith, for on the glorious resurrection morn thou shalt be clothed anew. Then shalt thou be satisfied.

In the drowsy noontide of summer, when fleecy clouds sail o'er the blue sky—when zephyrs are lulled, and birds retire for a *siesta*—no sound disturbs the repose of Nature. External influences lead the mind into the expansive field of speculation, there to compare the vast probable glories and joys of heaven with the glorious sunshine and serene air which make the earth so delightful to sojourners.

But, as time rolls on, it carries us hither and thither; and to-day I find myself, after an absence of twenty years, once more beside the old churchyard, endeared to my heart by recollections of childhood. The wicket creaks, and the paling is moss-covered and bending with age. Near the entrance stands a large, gray stone, so timeworn that the inscription cannot be read. The paths have been changed, and so many graves made, that I am at a loss to discover spots I was once familiar with. Hearing sounds in another part of the enclosure, and drawing near, I come upon "Uncle Andrew" and drawing near, I come upon "Uncle Andrew" the old sexton. A few minutes' conversation suffices to show that, in this case, more information may be got by quietly listening than by inquiring.

"Do you see that marble pillar over yonder?" he asks.

I turn, and read: "Sacred to the memory of Walter T—, who died and was buried at sea, August —, 18—, aged twenty-four."

"Epytaps don't count for much, generally speakin'," continues the sexton; "but every word on that pillar is true. It was always a mystery to me why that God-fearing, airnest young man, was called away! It is about fifty-five years since I first helped my father dig graves in this here lot, and I guess I have helped to lay away every one and I guess I have helped here sence. That plot in the

east corner, with five headstones, is where the Shelby family lays. They were a very high and towerin' sort of folks; that couldn't find anything scarcely good enough to eat, drink, or wear. They had lots of this world's goods, them days; but they never did no work; just lived on, and died out of the way after a while. G— was the last one to go. He squandered everything, When poverty overtook him he was humbled. He says to me: 'Lost opportunities leave terrible regrets, Uncle Andrew.'

"Riches seems to be a terrible drawback to them that has 'em. They git so took up a countin' what they've got down here, that they forgit to lay anything up in the bank up yonder. I ha'nt dug but two graves in four months."

"For whom is this one?" I venture to ask. Before replying, he removes a large, round stone, out of its bed of clay.

"It is for Aunt Christina. You remember her. Well, she lived to be eighty-one; and I do suppose she had her share of tribulation. But she was provided for in a remarkable way these last few years. 'Peared like as if the Lord put it into people's hearts to take keer of that old body.

"That monyment there was just put up yistirday to the memory of G—, aged twenty-one. O what a property he had come into! His grandfather had it all tied up in sich a shape that he couldn't git through with it. Besides, he had health and strength; but he was drowned in the bay, as he was skatin'. That's the way it goes. Too many is striving to git riches for their poor, dyin' bodies, while their souls is purpers. I hear a good many say of one who h'aint made much purfession, 'that he died as he lived;' but, as fur as I kin see, that ought to be said of everybody. Death finds every man sarvin' either the Lord or the devil."

Uncle Andrew prepares to leave, saying to me: "I do suppose everything seems turned around to you, there's been so many changes; but the pints of the compass aint no great help in a place like this."

Uncle Andrew hobbles away, and I walk slowly to the wicket, thinking of God's goodness in sparing my life, when he has seen proper to call so many of my schoolmates. I pass the pillar sacred to W—, whose requiem was sung by the sad sea waves, and out through the gate to the highway. Earthly cares break in upon my meditations, and I lay them aside sadly.

DEMORISTVILLE, ONT.

## Turning On the Light.

In connection with certain excavations among buried homes of the past, a very brilliant room was suddenly found. Like a treasure-house of rare stones it was most brilliant in colour. For a brief instant it flashed. As the light of day, though, flooded the room, that brightness was strangely dulled, and the glowing colours paled. The turning on of the light injured the beauty it revealed.

When we go into eternity we carry with us these hidden chambers of character that we have been furnishing and filling in the years behind us. Will there be any dimming of detail, though, as the light of eternity floods every nook, every corner of character? That light, on the other hand, will bring out into greater distinctness all that is within. If we have been doing right, we need not fear to have our hearts laid bare. If doing wrong, we may shrink from the sharp, searching, intensifying light of eternity, as God may turn it on. The best way to make sure of an eternity that we will not fear is to do right to-day.