

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

THE NEW YEAR. A year is dead! A year is born! At two "cross-roads" we stand and view...

Along the second road we see A radiant form with ample wings; Born from the great eternity...

Thus Hope is born with every year, And wears for all a sunny look; It always brings a festive cheer...

As days, and weeks, and months unroll, And light breaks forth from hidden gloom, The year, unfolding thus its scroll...

Whatever shades may meet our eyes, That spring from our Hope's cloudy feet, From thankful hearts let songs arise...

That every new and cherished year Brings much for Hope, and less for Fear.

GOD'S SECRET SERVICE.

Our pastor came to the choir-meeting Saturday night, to give us his hymns for the next day's services. When the practicing was over...

"Do read us one, Mr. Wood," said a member of the choir. "Ah well, so I will," he said, "some day," and took up his hat to go.

"No, but to-night," we begged. It was an unreasonable request, and no doubt he felt it so. It was ten o'clock, he was tired, the next day's duties were heavy for us all...

He read that thrilling sermon on "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." And so filled were we all with the solemn joy of the hope thus wonderfully set before us...

I said all; but in the company was a young man who was not a Christian, and there seemed nothing in the sermon for him. He was not a member of the choir, but by one of those "chances" guided by Providence to blessed results...

In a few weeks this young man stood up in our village church to profess his faith in Christ and his purpose to serve him. Long afterward Mr. Wood told me the story of his conversion as young Wilton had told it to him...

"I felt no interest in the sermon," said he, "and was merely waiting for Miss Nettie; but as you read on, I looked around, and every face in the room wore a look of joyous expectation; that I stood in a company of children on their way home, and with a sinking heart I realized that I was not of their company..."

to save sinners, and that I am one of them."

This happened a dozen years ago. I heard of young Wilton the other day as superintendent of a mission Sunday-school in one of our Western cities, and active in every good work within his reach...

DEAD FRIENDSHIPS.

As "a man is known by the company he keeps," so is he known by the company that he does not keep—that he cannot keep because not in harmony with his character. The friendships one outgrows marks epochs in the soul's growth that are worthy of consideration...

Yet whatever high purpose or stern conviction causes us to leave a friend and pass on without him, it is inevitable that sadness passing speech should attend the separation. We loved him and leaned upon him; or we loved him, and he leaned upon us. When we discover that we cannot lean upon him, nor induce him to lean upon us, when the verdict of all his feeling toward us is summed up in the decision, "I have no need of thee," we realize that the hour is come for us to separate...

ANSWERED PRAYER.

I have often met with professors and non-professors who ask me, "How do you know that a prayer was ever answered?" "How do you know that the thing you would not have had the very thing you asked if you had not prayed at all for it?" So I asked my heavenly Father to give me something tangible, that I could lay hold of so strongly that the devil could not wrest it out of my grasp...

and slept sweetly all night. The next day I wrote my child a letter, telling of the exercise of my mind on Saturday night. It was Sunday when I wrote the letter, and at the same hour of the same day she wrote me; being seventy-five miles away from me, she received my letter on Monday evening, I received her letter on Monday evening.

When I opened her letter the first words that met my eyes were like this: "My darling mamma: I was dreadfully sick last night; at half-past nine I went to bed, as sick a child as you ever saw; I cried out, being all alone, 'must I die here, away from home and dear mother?' when all at once I saw you praying for me, and sooner than I can write it to you, all pain left my body, and I cried myself to sleep with joy."

After this experience in prayer who could make me believe that God does not hear and answer the prayers of his children? Surely, no good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly. I prove him every day.—Words of Faith.

HINTS FOR VISITORS.

Try, without being too familiar, to make yourself so much like one of the family that no one shall feel you to be in the way, and at the same time be observant of those small courtesies and kindnesses which all together make up what the world agrees to call good manners. Regulate your hours of rising and retiring by the customs of the house. Do not keep your friends sitting up later than usual, and do not be roaming about the house an hour or two before breakfast. If you choose to rise at an early hour, remain in your own room until near breakfast time, unless you are very sure that your presence in the parlor will not be unwelcome. Write in large letters, in a prominent place in your mind, "Be Punctual." A visitor has no excuse for keeping a whole family waiting, and it is unpardonable negligence not to be prompt at the table. Here is a place to test good manners, and any manifestation of ill-breeding here will be noticed and remembered. Do not be too ready to express your likes and dislikes. It is well to remember that some things which seem of very little importance to you, may make an unpleasant impression upon others, in consequence of a difference in early training. The other day two young ladies were heard discussing a gentleman who had a great many pleasant qualities. "Yes," said one, "he is handsome, but he does eat his pie with his knife." Take care that no trifle of that kind is recalled when people are speaking of you. Make up your mind to be entertained with what is designed to entertain you. If friends invite you to join them in an excursion, express your pleasure and readiness to go, and do not act as though you were conferring a favor instead of receiving one. No visitors are so wearisome as those who do not meet half way whatever proposals are made for their pleasure. If games are proposed, do not say that you will not play, or "would rather look on," but join with the rest, and do the best you can. Never let a foolish feeling of pride, lest you should not make so good an appearance as the others, prevent your trying.

SURNAME OF THE ROYAL FAMILY.

The Whitehall Review says: "At dinner, the other night, the conversation lapsed, as it sometimes will lapse with the best, into questions hardly distinguishable from conundrums. A celebrated historian was present, and I put a question to him which I know has puzzled a great many people at different times. 'What is the surname of the royal family?' 'Guelph,' of course." That is the usual answer, and it was the historian's. I ventured to suggest that, although the royal family are Guelphs by descent, her Majesty's marriage with Prince Albert, of Saxe-Coburg, must have the effect which the marriage of a lady has in all other cases, and that the surname of the present house must be the Prince Consort's. "But what is the surname of the Prince Consort's family?" Simple but staggering. No one knew. All guessed, and all were wrong. I happened to have looked up the subject a few months ago, so I knew the name was

'Wettin.' Of course no one had heard it before. Every one smiled at the horrible idea of the Guelphs being reduced to Wettins. The point was referred to Theodore Martin. 'You are quite right,' said the graceful biographer of the Prince Consort. 'Wettin is the family name of the House of Saxony, to whom the dominion of Saxony came in the year 1420. The King of Saxony and the minor princes of the House of Saxony are therefore all Wettins, or German; Wettiner.'

THIS VERY HOUR.

Years gone down into the past, What pleasant memories come to me Of your untroubled days of peace, And hours of almost ecstasy!

Yet would I have no moon stand still, Nor wheel the planet of the day, Back on his pathway through the sky.

For though, when youthful pleasures died, My youth itself went with them, too; To-day, eye! even this very hour, Is the best hour I ever knew. —Phoebe Cary.

ANCIENT CIVILIZATION.

Professor J. S. Newberry, of Columbia College, delivered a lecture recently before the Long Island Historical Society in Brooklyn, on "The Ancient Civilization of America." He told in a concise and clear manner the story of the mound-builders of the Mississippi Valley, so far as it can be traced in the Southwest, Mexico and Central America, with many interesting details gathered by him while assisting in the exploration of the territory still inhabited by the descendants of those interesting people. His remarks were illustrated by magic lantern pictures, and he held the interest of the audience that had crowded the pretty hall of the Historical Society for two hours.

When the white men first landed on these shores, Professor Newberry said, they found them covered with dense forests and inhabited by the red Indians. For many years it was believed that America was what it was called, a new world, and that the Indians were the original inhabitants. But the white men pressed forward, turning up and planting that which seemed to be virgin soil, leaving hamlets and towns and cities in their wake, until they crossed the barriers of the Alleghanies and entered the basin of the Ohio. It was their promised land, rich in everything and without a rival on the earth's surface in fitness to become the home of a great nation. Throughout this country they found the records and monuments of an agricultural people who had lived there certainly hundreds, perhaps thousands of years before. Long before the Spaniards had penetrated into Mexico and found there cities which were lighted at night, protected by police, built up of palaces, having schools of law and medicine and music, and workers in gold and silver and other metals. The representatives of the inhabitants of these cities and the peaceful cultivators of the fields roundabout had been all but driven off the face of the earth by the rapacity of the European invaders.

Of the monuments left by the mound-builders, Prof. Newberry said that it had been estimated that there were not less than 10,000 in Ohio alone. They were most common wherever the land was best adapted to agriculture. They were evidently a peaceful, agricultural people, familiar with pottery, ignorant of the use of iron, but acquainted with copper, which they mined on the shores of Lake Superior, as was shown by the flecks of silver found in the copper relics of the people. Their ancient excavations excelled in magnitude all the modern mines. They never went down into the earth more than twenty or thirty feet, and used the trunks of trees with portions of the limbs left protruding as ladders. Though utterly and strangely ignorant of coal and iron they worked mines in North Carolina, some in Kentucky and they also sunk oil wells in Pennsylvania. The growth of trees over the trenches dug along the lead veins of Kentucky, near Lexington, shows that it must be at least 500 years since they were abandoned. Fragments of cloth had been preserved through the action of the salts of copper, and showed that the people were acquainted with weaving. As to their extermination, it was evident that they had gone down before the invasion of northern barbarians, such as had also taken place in Europe.

OUR TWO ARMS.

Katie Genfield and May Hoffman, aged each about four years, were discussing theology. In other words, they were talking earnestly about heaven and the way to get there.

"You don't go to heaven when you die, at all," said Katie. "When our big boy died they put him in a great big coffin, and put that down into a deep grave, and he didn't go no place."

"Mamma, do they go to heaven when they die?" inquired May.

"Yes, yes," said Mrs. Hoffman, intent on her work.

"How do they get there?" "I do wish you wouldn't bother me," replied Mrs. Hoffman, "you are a perfect little nuisance; do let me have a minute's peace," and she placed the smoking pie just taken from the oven on a shelf in the pantry, for the dinner that was engrossing her whole attention.

May's eyes filled with tears as she inquired timidly: "Mamma, do you wish that God hadn't made me?"

Her mother ignored the question, but stooped down and kissed her little one affectionately, and said: "There, girls, run into the dining-room and have a good time, you are in my way here."

"I told you they don't go to heaven," said Katie, when they had reached the dining-room. "They do, too," insisted May; "Mamma said they do. She didn't say how they go. I'll tell you how; you just hold up your two arms to Jesus, and he jumps you up into heaven right through the coffin."

Well done, little May! There was more orthodox theology in that speech than we often hear from learned minds who are moving or trying to move the world. It contained a whole lesson for parents as well as children. Just hold out your two arms to Jesus—the arm of repentance and the arm of faith—and he will jump you right through the grave into heaven.—Western Adv.

BETTER THAN MONEY.

The life of the vast majority of men is a monotonous routine of money getting. They travel in a circle day after day, and it is a very small circle too, not larger than that of the laboring man who was met one morning, while on his way to work, by a celebrated English divine, who asked him: "Where are you going, John?" "To work," he replied. "What are you going to work for?" "Why, to earn money!" "What do you want to earn money for?" "Why, to get bread to eat." "What do you eat bread for?" "To get strength." "Why do you want strength?" "Why, so I can work." There was the little circle—work, money, bread, strength, work. But the money getter for the sake of money, has a still smaller circle. His circle is work—money. If possible he piles up his millions, simply that he may see the pile. He does not even estimate the comforts that his wealth affords him. His greatest pleasure is in making more money, and for what? He cannot answer that question. No man with only the short space of life to live can give any intelligent reply to the inquiry, "What object have you in amassing so many millions more than you can possibly utilize, or your family will need?" Absolutely the most foolish man on earth is the money-getter, when his fortune is already all that his necessities can require.—Western Rural.

ASKING, NOT TAKING.

A sick soldier, whose suffering was so great that he often wished he was dead, being asked, "How are you to escape everlasting pain?" he replied, "I am praying to God, and striving to do my duty as well as I can." "What are you praying for?" I asked. "For the pardon of my sins." "But now, if your wife were offering you a cup of tea which she had prepared for you, what would be your duty?" "To take it from her, surely." "Do you think that God is offering you anything?" "Oh, yes, sir; I think he is offering pardon to all, through Jesus Christ." "What is your duty, then?" "Ah, I don't know," he said with much feeling, "I ought to accept it." "And yet you keep asking him for what he offers, instead of taking it at once! But now, tell me what you really require in order

to be this moment a pardoned man?"

"I only want faith in Jesus," was his answer.

"Come, then, at once to Jesus. Receive him as your Saviour; and in him you will find all that you need for time and for eternity."—Congregationalist.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

NELLIE'S ERRAND FOR JESUS.

"Come, Nellie," said Mary, "with me to see Florence and spend the afternoon. She has lots of nice playthings, and we will have a beautiful time."

"No," said Nellie, very pleasantly, "I cannot, for I must carry some things to a poor family for my mamma."

"Oh, no matter about that; come with me and have a good time, and let them take care of themselves."

"Mary," said little Nellie, "I wish you liked to help the poor. You cannot think how happy it makes me. My dear mamma tells me every time I carry anything to the poor I am running errands for Jesus."

Mary went alone, but all the time she was at Florence's house something kept saying to her, "Did you do right in speaking as you did?" This little voice, which is called conscience, said, "How much better you would have felt had you spoken in a pleasant manner."

Mary stopped at Nellie's on her way home, and asked her to forgive her for speaking in such a cross manner, and said she wished she had gone with her, for she did not have a good time at all. I wish you had seen dear Nellie, for you do not know how pleased they were, and the grandma said, "You dear little ones, you are trying to walk in the footsteps of Jesus who went about doing good, and may God bless you!"

May, all my little readers be willing to run errands for Jesus! —Zion's Herald.

MOTHER'S TURN.

"It is mother's turn to be taken care of now." The speaker was a winsome young girl, whose bright eyes, fresh color, and eager looks, told of light-hearted happiness. Just out of school, she had the air of culture, which is an added attraction to a blithe young face. It was mother's turn now. Did she know how his heart went out to her for her unselfish words?

Too many mothers, in their love for their daughters, entirely overlook the idea that they themselves need recreation. They do without all the easy, pretty, and charming things, and say nothing about it; and the daughters do not think there is any self-denial involved. Jenny gets the new dress, and mother wears the old one, turned upside down, and wrong-side out. Lucy goes on the mountain trip, and mother stays at home and keeps house.

Emily is tired of study, and must lie down in the afternoon; but mother, though her back aches, has no time for such an indulgence.

Dear girls, take good care of your mothers. Coax them to let you relieve them of some of the harder duties, which, for years, they have patiently borne.—Intelligencer.

"THE PICKET GUARD."

It is composed of eight boys. It meets quarterly in the pastor's study. A map of the village, the population of which is four thousand and two hundred, is divided into eight parts, one part being assigned to each boy. It is his business to know who lives in every house in his district and what church each family attends; at the meeting he reports changes of residences, and any other facts which he may think the pastor would be glad to learn. The houses on the map are all numbered, and lists correspondingly numbered are made of the families.

This plan interests the boys in the work of the church. It says the pastor must labor, and makes him well acquainted with his field. It brings the boys to the study, where, aside from the work of the evening, they have a social visit and slight refreshments. The opportunity is afforded to give instruction upon some religious topic and to engage with them in prayer. The plan having been tested, it is confidently recommended to those in similar circumstances.—Presbyterian Journal.