## OUR HOME CIRCLE.

A HANDFUL OF EARTH. is a problem a wonder for all to see,

hand! is a magic surprising, a mystery

tange as a miracle, harder to understand

What is it? only a handful of earth : to your

A dr. rough powder you trample beneath your feet, Dark and lifeless; but think for a moment It hides and holds that is beautiful, bitter,

Think of the glory of color! The red of the Green of the myriad leaves and the fields Letion as bright as the sun where the daffo-

dil biows, Purple where violets nod as the breezes

Think of the manifold form of the oak and the vine, Nat, and fruit, and cluster, and ears of gardiored water-filly, a thing divine, Unfolding its dazzling snow to the kiss of

Think of the delicate perfumes born on the gale, Of the golden willow catkin's odor

Apring,
Of the breath of the rich narcissus waxen-Of the sweet pea's flight of flowers, of the nettle's sting.

Strange that this lifeless thing gives vine, flower, tree, Color and shape and character, fragrance

That the timber that builds the house, the ship for the sea, Out of this powder its strength and its toughness drew!

That the cocoa among the palms should suck its milk From this dry dust, while dates from the Summon their sweet rich fruit, that our shining silk The mulberry leaves should yield to the

How should the poppy steal sleep from the very source
That grants to the grape-vine juice that

worm's slow toil.

can madden or cheer How does the weed find food for its fabric coarse
Where the lilies proud their blossoms pure uprear :

Who shall compass or fathom God's thought profound?
We can but praise, for we may not under

stand; But there's no more beautiful riddle the whole world round

Than is hid in this heap of dust I hold in my hand. -Celia Thaxter.

#### "THE LITTLE OLD WOMAN."

"Let me turn the horse here and go up the other road," said my beautiful and dainty Boston through a lovely and picturesque locality in Norfolk County, Mass. "We shall be sure to see that erooked, wretched old woman gardener at her dirty work, if we keep along the turnpike. She always disgusts me so."

"Do you refer to Miss Wheeler?" I asked in surprise.

"Yes." replied my cousin, deftly drawing the crimson and yellow webbing of the reins through her jeweled hands, "I believe that is the name. You have often seen her browsing around in her garden, of course.'

"O, yes," I answered; "but cousin Mabel, you do not know her as I do, and you entirely mistake her character and condition. She is not 'wretched' at all, but on the contrary, she is the neatest, most cheerful and the very happiest person in my circle of acquaintance. Her face and form, I admit, would not constitute a poet's ideal of female beauty. Her gowns are faded by the sun, to be sure, but they are clean and tidy. Her hands and face are browned from her out-of-door employment, and her back is humped by illness in early youth, for she was an invalid until she was forty years

"At about that time, one Spring, a neighboring physician who chanced to see her told her she must make up her mind to die within the next four months or else pass the greater part of her time out of doors, for seclusion and confinement in her cramped-up quarters had nearly killed her. That alternative was hard for her to take, as she was fond of books and fancy work, and had dainty, refined tastes. But she was a Christian woman, and believed it to be her duty to try, by every means in her power, to prolong the lite which her Creator had given her, not only to be a blessing

to herself but to others. "She was very fond of flowers, and at first busied herself about them. She soon became interested in her vegetable garden, and she found that she could earn considerable money in the cultivation of small fruits, as well as by raising early vegetables. Besides, she knew that in order to content herself in her new out-door life she must be employed. Before the Fall she found herself in greatly improved health. That was twenty years ago; and now at sixty, be found there. The end there she says she has enjoyed twenty is the city of the great King.

years of perfect health and consequent happiness. She will tell you that there is not a woman of her age in this country so strong and wen and happy in every respect as she is. She now owns the comfortable and roomy, enlarged and modernized house she lives in as well as the garden plot, orchard, and adjacent wood lot, and does all the work out doors

and in. "It cannot be said she lives lone, because she extends the shelter of her roof and the provision of her board at times to this and that homeless one with whom she comes in contact, and who is sick, or tired, or thrown out of employment.

"The pastor of the church to which she belongs, and to which she goes on the Sabbath and on the occasion of the week-day meetings, on foot in nearly all kinds of weather, told me the other day that the little white house among the trees was a very heaven of rest both to the body-weary and the heart-weary, and that the little bent figure flitting about was the presiding angel."

"O," said my cousin, "let us drive past her house by all means and see if we cannot get a glimpse of the dear, kind, happy old lady."

So, driving onward, we soon found ourselves in front of the low gate of the little house, where a bouquet of bright choice flowers was placed in our hands by this dear disciple, whom the blessed religion of Jesus Christ prompts to work, day in and day out, to give of the fruit of her labors to the homeless and needy, and to neglect no opportunity of speaking a word for the Master, who has given her the gracious privilege of being one of the most useful, if not the most humble of his

#### THE LAST LEAP.

handmaidens.

A young employe on the train of the Northern Central Railway, whose home was near one of the way stations, was accustomed to precious, utter, or intense. Over leap from his train while it was in and over again are we told that motion, when nearly opposite his God's mode of judgment is a moral home rather than wait till it stop- rule, and never are we given to ped at the station. He had done understand that mere ability or this scores of times, and never external achievement is the measthought of the danger after the ure of triumph. Work which has first few experiments. When no soul has no life. Work which some one suggested that he was has a soul-and that remark ap risking life or limb, he answered | plies to the hod-carrier or the caconfidently, 'Oh, I've done it | nal-boy as truly as to the architect often, and always came out right." or the painter-bears within it But the confident young man did | the promise of life and of approval it once too often, and a brief para- both by God, who notes all, and by graph in our morning paper stat- man, whose eyes are not always ed that Mr. -- leaped from a train | so blind that he cannot mark the at-and was crushed to death difference between work that must

precious heir-loom. He was toy- Times. ing and playing with it in the bright sunlight, on the deck of a ship. He tossed it up and caught it over and over again. Then he leaned over the bulwarks of the vessel in a spirit of daring and foolhardiness, and continued to toss up his shining gem and catch it again. "How dare you risk it?" said a bystander. "What has been done can be done again," was the answer. "I've done it often." Hardly was the boast uttered when he missed his aim and the precious jewel dropped into the sea. The last venture!

There are greater disasters than the loss of jewels, or even the loss of a precious human life, to which men and women are daily exposed. They are tossing up jewels of faith, of hope, of character—the chances of eternal life. while leaning over the bulwarks of time, and one by one the precious treasures are slipping out of their grasp, and sinking forever in the bottomless abyss of despair. They do not mean to do it, but they stop not until the last fatal throw ends it all. The first throw, the first daring leap, may be made with fear and trembling, but repetition brings confidence, and at last reckless indifference The end is a fatal leap, and death.

Dear reader, are you courting danger? Are you running any risks? Are you entering into temptation? Are you trifling with the jewel of conscience? Are you experimenting on "short-cuts" in the way of life—turning from the good, old way in which the saints of all the ages have gone up to everlasting honor? Do it not! At once stop it! Once too often, and it will be too late for ever! Your next false step risks. You cannot afford it. Behold there is a highway cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in—the way of holiness the way of peace—the way of safety. One with pierced hands and feet will walk with you there. No lion or ravenous beast shall be found there. The end thereof THE SOUL OF WORK."

Enduring work, whether in literature or in any other kind of labor, is work that comes from a direct and definite purpose, and a purpose at one with the generous welfare of man. If its defects and failures are those of occa-ional error and sin, its ultimate influence is not destroyed, however it be diminished. But if it is born of a wish to be deliberately bad, or even it it ignores the canons of right action, it can bear withma itself no elements of long lasting. We believe it to be strictly true that no great book, or picture, or statue, or building, or war, or social scheme, or work of any kind, has ever retained a lasting place in the world's esteem, without bearing clear signs of a right purpose and a definite acceptance of the principles of truth and rectitude. It is true, as Keats said in his most famous line, that a thing of beauty is a joy forever; but by a thing of beauty the world means something in close union with the innocence of inanimate nature or the best and truest in man. Power may, indeed, be shown in the most netarious ways, and a poet or a painter may bring to his basest work the charms of consummate art; but his work does not live unless it is deliberately good, so to speak, or, at least not consciously evil. Purpose and character must ultimately succeed, and the absence of them leaves room for nothing but ultimate failure. \*\*\* And the soul of work in every line of labor must be marked by these five things-integrity, sincerity, purity, charity, faith. Such virtues as these must always follow in the path of that soul which alone can look for immortality of life, or even for a perpetuity of earthly memory and love. Those of us who believe God's words to be true can find nowhere in the Bible any statement that art for art's sake is good, or that a thing is praiseworthy because it is externally beautiful, under the wheels. The last leap! live, and work that must die, soon-

# THE SARCASTIC GIRL.

The sarcastic girl is in the language of the negro elocutionist and orator, growing "more prevalent" every day. She is a trifle more insufferable than her giggling, gushing, romance-loving sister, whom, however, she always contemplates with pitying contempt, not entirely free from disguised

She has not the ability to distinguish between impudence and satire, and it is an easy task to convince her that ill-bred rudeness of speech is the perfection of irony, and to say spiteful and unpleasant things to everybody she meets is sure to win her a reputation of being sarcastic.

She eagerly cultivates her fancied talent, never allowing an opportunity to exercise to pass unimproved, and she generally succeeds in making herself heartily disliked by those who are unfortunate enough to be numbered among her acquaintances.

The family think her brilliant when everyone else pronounces her insulting. The habit of being 'sarcastic" grows upon her, until, by the time her fond parents conceive her to be a prodigy, sogrows older she becomes dissatisfied with her loneliness.

Then, too, she hears whispers that she has been prounounced hateful" by the people who once

told her she was brilliant. If she marries, her husband soon tires of her society, and in common with the rest of the world, avoids her as much as he can and seems to envy those who are more your boots for the ten cents?" may be your last! Let fools take fortunately circumstanced in this respect. She feels this, and it only makes her more spiteful and disagreeable. Her children feel no sweet companionship in her barefooted. If I give you the presence; their natural affection boots, I must freeze to death; if for her is quenched by her un- I don't give them to you, I shall happy disposition, and they early burn to death. Stranger, it is learn to withold their respect, harder to burn to death than to Her life is as miserable as it can freeze to death; give me the gin, be, and when she dies she passes you may have the boots."

away almost, if not entirely, unregretted, a warning to the sarcastic girl, if she should but dis-

My feet are wearied and my hands are tired-My soul oppressed, And with desire have I long desired Rest-only Kest

Tis hard to toil, when toil is almost vain, In barren ways; 'Tis hard to sow and never garner grain In harvest days.

The burden of my days is hard to bear, But God knows best; And I have prayed—but vain has been my For Rest, sweet Rest.

Tis hard to plant in spring and never reap The autumn yield; A Tis hard to tiff and when 'tis tilled to weep O'er fruitless field. And so I cry a weak and human cry,

And so I sigh a weak and human sigh, For Rest - for Rest. My path has woun I across the desert years And cares infest

So heart oppressed;

My path, and through the flowing of het I pine for Rest.

I was always so: when still a child I laid On mother's breast My weary little head—e'en then I prayed, As now, for Rest.

And I am restless still; 'twill soon be o'er, For down the West Life' sun is setting, and I see the shore Where I shall Rest. -Father Ryaz.

#### THE HANOVERIAN SCHOOL MASTER.

The schoolmaster unites in one person the duties of sexton, gravedigger, and bell-ringer. All teachers must have passed an examination held by the State, for which they are prepared by some years' study at preparatory schools, and a three years course at one of the eight normal schools in Hanover. In order to enter these schools, the applicant must be eighteen years old and be able to pass an examination in elementary studies. Teachers earn from one hundred and seventy-five to two hundred and twenty-five dollars a year. In E., the teacher received eighty-seven cents a year from each of his one hundred pupils, fifteen dollars a year from the church for his services as a sexton, besides fifty cents for each adult's and twenty-five cents for each child's grave dug by him. From the State he got eighty-two dollars, and from the village seven dollars and fifty cents a year with six acres of good farming land and a house. All the books and maps I saw were of the most old-fashioned sort, and the teacher was drunk whenever he had money enough to buy schnapps. The church consistory appoints A man had a valuable jewel, a er or later.—The Sunday-school and removes the village teachers throughout Hanover. Teachers are not considered socially equal to nor do they associate with ministers. With the teachers ends the list of village officers, and next comes those communal servants for whom we in this country have no equivalent.—Popular Science

# MUST DRINK OR DIE.

When the use of alcoholic liquors reaches a point where a man must "drink or die," it is a sure sign that he will soon drink and die. The terrible power which the appetite for intoxicants has over its slaves is vividly illustrated in the following incident:

One wintry afternoon a trembling man entered a tavern in New Hampshire, carrying a small package of clothing. Going to the bar he said:

"Landlord, I am burning. Give me a good glass of gin." The landlord pointed to a line

of chalk-marks and said: "John, you see the old score, not another drop till that is paid." The poor wretch glared fiercely

at the man behind the bar. "Landlord, you don't mean that. You have got my farm, you have got my horses, you have got my tools. All that I have got in the world is this little bundle of ciety avoids her as a pest. As she clothes. Please, landlord, give me for them one glass of gin.

"I don't want your old clothes. calinly answered the man. "Pay the old score first."

The drunkard staggered back. A gentleman then said "What will you give me for

enough to buy two glasses of gin. I see you have a good pair of boots on your feet. Will you give me The miserable wretch hesitated

for a moment, then said. "Stranger, it I give you the boots, I must go out in the snow

He sat down and began to draw them off. The gentleman did not however intend to take them, but cover it, and profit by the lesson. he was testing the strength of the terrible appetite. Others were looking on and they-said the man should have the gin. They sup plied him liberally, and he drank all he could and he took all the rest away. When night came he drank the last drop, and he went to sleep in a barn. The frost-kingcame and took the poor man in his arm. The next morning he was found in the barn frozen to

# A SAD LESSON.

death.

As the heavy prison bolts turned on the minister, he looked sadly on the prisoners in their strange garments, and thought with more and more anxiety of his errand. was busy at something else-He had come to see a young man of his congregation convicted of is too bad to have the game broken forgery. The broken-hearted pa- up." rents had begged him to visit the prison, hoping the peace of the another." Gospel might reach even his "That makes no difference," exgloomy cell. As the minister claimed the players. "We'll show kindly greeted him, the youth you. Come along." scarcely replied, but gazed with a sort of defiance. He began giv- in the lad's life. He nobly saiding the mother's tender message, with the interest all the church felt in his welfare. "Do you know what done it?" "What have I done?" replied the pastor, and settled his position among striving to understand his strange his associates. He was the boy language. "I began the busi- who could say "No," and henceness," returned the youth, speak- forth his victories were made ing very loud, "in your Sunday. easy and sure. I well remember school. Don't you remember the the pressure brought to bear in a Sunday-school fair, when they college upon every young man to first set up raffling and hid a gold ring in a loaf of cake! Just for twenty-five cents, too, I got a whole box of little books. I was pleased with my luck, and went in afterwards for chances. Sometimes I gained, and sometimes I college have been Nehemiahs ever lost. Money I must have for lotteries. I was half mad with excitement; and so I used other folk's names, and here I am! Don't let the church come blubbering around me. They may thank themselves! Their raffling was what done it! It ruined me.

#### PERSONALITIES AND ILL-REPORTS.

Keep clear of personalities in general conversation. Talk of before I died."

"Men sir, i wen sir, i went sir, i wen sir, i went sir, i smallest minds occupy selves with persons. Personal ities must sometimes be talked. because we have to learn and find out men's characteristics for legitimate objects; but it is to be with confidential persons. Poor Burns wrote and did many foolish things, but he was wise when he wrote to a young friend:

"Aye tell your story free, off hand, When wi' a bosom crony; But still kep something to yoursel' You'll scarcely tell to ony."

Do not needlessly report ill of others. There are times when we are compelled to sav. "I do not think Bouncer a true and honest man." But when there is no need to express an opinion let poor Bouncer swagger away. Others will take his measure, no doubt, and save you the trouble of analyzing him and instructing them. And as far as possible dwell on the good side of human beings. There are family boards where a constant process of depreciations, assigning motives, and cutting up character goes father she died for. I heard as forward. They are not pleasant how she said she would die for places. One who is healthy does not wish to dine at a dissecting table. There is evil enough in men, God knows. But it is not the inquirers' class." the mission of every young man and woman to detail and report it all. Keep the atmosphere as pure truly walking in the footsteps of as possible, and fragrant with gentleness and charity.-Dr. John Hall.

# OUR YOUNG POLKS.

"THY KINGDOM COME." I'm a little herald, But the kingdom needs my voice; To herald in the King of kings Is all my happy choice.

I can teach a text to brother, And speak kind words of peace. And help to bring His kingdom in, Which ever shall increase.

I cannot be a herald hold To distant lands to-day But, if I learn my lessous well, I hope I may some day.

I'm only a little worker, But the kingdom needs my hand. I'll use these busy fingers To do my Lord's command.

And day by day He'll give me work My happy childhood through; Some task of patience and of love, Which only I can do.

I'm only a little soldier, But the kingdom needs my sword: I'll draw it from its scabbard—God's own most holy Word.

First using it in my own heart; To cut away each sin : My mother bids me not forget His kingdom is within.

I'll daily pray, "Thy kingdom come?" Seeking each day to bring.
Some rebel thought to own him Lord, Some friend to own him King.

# MORAL COURAGE.

In every school the differenceis clearly marked between the boy who has moral courage, and the boy who is mere pulp. The one knows how to say "No." other is so afraid of being thought "verdant" that he soon kills every. thing pure and fresh and many in his character, and dries up in to a premature hardness of heart.

Five lads were once gathered in a room at a boarding school, and four of them engaged in a gime of cards, which was expressly forbidden by the rules. One of the players was called out. The three said to the quiet lad who

"Come, take a hand with us. It

"I do not know one card from

Now that was a turning point

"My father does not wish me to play cards, and I will not disober

The sentence settled the matter ioin in a wine drink or to take a hand in some contrabrand amusement. Some timber got well seasoned. Some of the other sort got well rotted through with sensuality and vice. The Nehemiahs at since. The boy was father of the man.—Band of Hope.

## A WILLING SACRIFICE.

Some years ago a minister was called to see a little girl seven years old, who was dying. She lived in a back street. When the minister got there a woman showed him where the child was, and he sat down to talk with her.

"What do you want, darling!" "Well sir, I wanted to see you

"Are you dying?" "Yes sir."

"Would you not like to get well

again?" "I hope not, sir."

" Why not?"

"O, sir, ever since I became a Christian I have been trying to bring, father to church, and he won't come; and I think if I die you will bury me, won't vou."

"Yes, darling." "Yes, I have been thinking if I die father must come to the funeral: then you will be able to preach the gospel to him, and I should be willing to die six times over for him to hear the gospel once."

She died as she had expected, and just before the time she was to be buried the minister himself was taken sick, and could not attend the funeral. But some time afterward a rough looking man called upon him and held out his hand.

"You don't know me?"

"No, I don't." "I am the tather of Mary-the

me six times if I could only hear the gospel once. It nearly broke, my heart. Now I want to join

He did join, and became a true friend of Christ. The little girl was Jesus, because she was willing to die, even in order that her father might be saved from his sin. If we do not need to die for others, we should at least try to be like Jesus in living for them and in doing all that we can to lead them to be Christians.—Exchange.

READY BEFOREHAND .- "What are you doing now? I never saw a girl that was so always finding something to do !" "I'm only going to sew a button

on my glove.' "Why, you're not going out, are you?

"Oh! no. I only like to get things ready beforehand, that's And this little thing, that had

been persisted in by Grace Hammond until it had become a fixed habit, saved her more trouble than she herself ever had any idea of; more time, too. In fact, it was of almost inestimable value to her. Ready beforehand-try it. As surely as you do faithfully, you will never relinquish it for the slip-shod, time-enough-when-it's wanted way of doing.

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