

now, our dearest children playing with their pet dogs at Christ's very feet.

I once thought this irreverent. How foolishly! As if children whom He loved could play anywhere else! What the Venetian sought to portray in his pictures of the true relation, the true harmony, between things celestial and things terrestrial, we are just now beginning to realise. For a long time the idea of the other Italian school of art was ours also, and we kept our religious feelings and aspirations in a specially rarified and glorified atmosphere, apart from our daily life, with its commonplace duties and material needs. Ideas and feelings, so divorced, had a way of etherialising into vagueness and fading away altogether. We are wiser now, and cry,

All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul.

Each age brings its portion of truth wrested from experience, to the cairn of the past, and ours is this:—The true food of the celestial is the right ordering of the material life, for since "God dwells in all, from life's minute beginnings up at last to man," we can cast far behind us the asceticism of the mediaeval Christian; and if we have lost the enjoyment in life of the Greek, we have entered into something far better, the liberty in Christ which makes us free indeed, and our homes as happy and joyful as that one in Bethany whither the Master loved to go.—"Christian Commonwealth."

THE HOME CIRCLE.

THE UP-TO-DATE WOMAN.

Here lies a poor woman who always was busy;
She lived under pressure that rendered her dizzy.
She belonged to ten clubs, and read Browning by sight,
Showed at luncheons and teas, and would vote if she might.
She served on a school board with courage and zeal;
She golfed, and she kodaked, and rode on a wheel;
She read Tolstoi and Ibsen, knew microbes by name,
Approved of Delsarte, was a "Daughter" and "Dance."
Her children went in for the top education,
Her husband went seaward for nervous prostration.
One day on her tablets she found an hour free—
The shock was too great, and she died instantly!

—Philadelphia Record.

THE INTERRUPTED LESSON.

It was a sultry Sunday in July, oppressive with the suggestion of coming thunder. All day long the sky had been heavy and threatening, and the faint breeze which had arisen heralded the near approach of the storm. Inside the little ivy-covered schoolroom at Ellesmere groups of hot, restless children fidgetted and yawned, while tired-looking teachers tried in vain to captivate their wandering attention. Even the eyes of the third class boys were eagerly watching the clock, and the lads were whiling away the time with sly pinches and winks to the fourth class who adjoined them. And when the minister's gentle little wife failed to keep her class attentive, there was small chance of success for anyone else, for Mrs. Grey was acknowledged to be the most capable teacher on the books.

"Boys," she pleaded, "listen to me a moment. I know this lesson sounds uninteresting to you now. Most of you probably know very little of trouble yet. You have never longed for the sympathetic touch of the Lord, for the consolation He only can give. But one day you will each have to walk side by side with sorrow, and learn the lessons which she sets for you. In that hour you will need His comfort—"

As she spoke a vivid flash of lightning lit up the room, followed by a crash of thunder. A sobbing cry of "mamma," a hurried patter of little feet, and Leslie Grey had reached the mother's arms, and had hidden his face on her shoulder.

"As one whom his mother comforteth," Mrs. Grey said, softly, "My little boy has illustrated our lesson for us."

The—Rifles had had a still day's work, and had come off victorious, but heavy-hearted. Little knots of men hung around the tent where their gallant young

colonel was lying mortally wounded, eagerly waiting for some glimmer of hope from the doctor.

The doctor looked pityingly at the patient. "Poor fellow," he said, "he cannot last out the night. Such a pity. A plucky chap, and so young."

"Mother."

The man who was watching by his bedside bent down sadly.

"What is it, Colonel?"

"I want my mother."

"Shall I send her a message from you?"

The blue eyes opened wearily. "Is that you, Ford?" he said. "I have made such a hopeless tangle of my life, and I want her to come and talk to me, and tell me how to start fair again. Can't you tell me 'Ford'?"

The bronzed face beside him lost some of its hard lines, and the eyes grew softer. "I haven't thought much about things of that sort lately," he said, huskily. "I knew once, though. I remember one lesson. I can never forget it—of our teacher telling us how God was waiting to take our tangled lives, and make them all fair and square again."

He paused for a moment, and a low "go on" came from the wounded man.

"And how Jesus came to look after the people who had gone wrong, and bring them back to the right way again. Sometimes she told us how ready He was to help when we were in trouble of any sort."

Another pause, but the pleading glance started him again.

"Once, Colonel, she talked about the future; about the days when sorrow or death would come near to us and we should need someone to take care of us, and comfort us. That day her lesson was cut short, for a storm came, and her little boy got frightened, and slipped away from his class, and ran into her arms. That helped us to understand the lesson. We didn't know much about sorrow or trouble, but when we saw the little chap rush sobbing into his mother's arms, we thought of our own mothers, and how good it was to have someone to tell when things went wrong,—somebody who knew how to comfort a fellow. And then she turned our thoughts up to God again, with the verse she gave us to learn, 'As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.'"

The Colonel shivered slightly. "Ford, that was my mother, and I was that frightened little lad."

A long deep silence fell on the two men. Neglected, half-forgotten truths came crowding in upon them, and conscience, long stifled, spoke again.

Presently there was a slight movement, and the white lips parted. "God," he murmured, faintly, "my mother's God, have mercy upon me, a sinner."

Another silence, then he spoke again, "Ford, tell mother."

Overhead the stars were shining calmly, and the earth lay still and peaceful. Inside the tent, two men had passed into the peace of God, but the river of death flowed between them.—S. S. Chronical.

SUNSHINE.

The secret of a happy life is to have sunshine in the heart. If there is no sunshine in our lives, all will seem dark to us wherever we go. Some one has expressed this in a fable:

"A cold fire-brand and a burning lamp started out one day to see what they could find. The fire-brand came back and wrote in its journal that the whole world was dark. It did not find a place, wherever it went, in which there was light. Everywhere there was darkness. The lamp came back and wrote in its journal: 'Wherever I went, it was light.' What was the difference? The lamp carried sunshine with it and wherever it went it illumined everything. The dead fire-brand had no light in it, hence everywhere it went everything was dark. If we would be happy ourselves, and make others happy, 'scatter sunshine.'"

A little girl was sitting at the breakfast table; through a crevice in the wall of the dining-room the sun was shining on the table. The little girl chanced to lift a spoonful of rice to her mouth, upon which the sun was shining, whereupon she exclaimed: "O mamma, I swallowed a spoonful of sunshine!" Our lives and homes would all be brighter if we would swallow some sunshine occasionally.