

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

HE LOVETH BEST.

He loveth best within whose breast The love of Christ is shed; His grateful heart doth love impart, As one gives daily bread.

He loveth best whose soul hath pressed The sweet from bitter cup, In loved accord with his dear Lord, Who stooped to drink it up.

He loveth best who with request Doth wait upon his God, So all alone, with tear and moan, His pleading bends the rod.

He loveth best with holy zest, Whom much hath been forgiven; The wicked sin that entered in, Just to the bond hath given.

Who loveth best doth patient rest, Through suffering, on God's Word, And for a while, close to His side, With application stirred.

He loveth best whose cherished Guest Is Father, Spirit, Son, God dwelt in, both great and small, His love has victory won.

CONSOLATION.

BY LUCY J. RIDER.

"Oh, Annie, Annie, Annie!" were the only words of greeting, and the stricken woman laid her head against the shoulder of her friend, and the slow-dropping tears told of eyes that had grown used to weeping.

"Poor child! Poor, tempted child!" said the visitor, and that was all she said; but the firm, warm hand-clasp told of the sympathy the lips could not utter.

"Why did you come?" said the sufferer, after a while. "I am glad you did come, but you cannot help me—nobody can help me anymore."

"There is help—a very present Help," replied her friend. "God has not helped me," was the reply, with a quiet more hopeless than passion.

"I know how wicked it is to say it, but it's the truth. He did not spare me the trouble, and as for helping me to bear it, I think that any one without a particle of Christian hope or help, would have done quite as well as I."

"Do you ask for help?" "I pray, or at least I try to." "And as you pray, expect?" "I don't know—no, I don't think I do. Oh, Annie, if you knew all, you would see that there isn't any help—only if I could die!"

The visitor did not insist. She only stroked the thin hand of her friend, and repeated tenderly, "Poor child! Poor, tempted child!"

"But I am not tempted, Annie; I am simply crushed." "You are tempted, Dear; and because you do not know it is temptation, you are in the greater danger. Do you not remember how Sam made his fiercest attacks upon our Saviour at the end of the forty days of fasting and being with the wild beasts in the wilderness, when he was in the very extremity of mental and physical weakness and distress?"

He is trying the same thing with you to-day. In your extremity he comes to you, and because there is no help on earth, he would have you believe there is none in heaven. If you could only look up, my dear friend."

"How can a person look up, whose whole life is blasted?" "Whole life blasted? Oh, Mary, what a mistake. If, even, it should be true, that all along your earthly life you should never again have a gleam of joy, still your whole life would not be blasted. Life is very long. After we have lived a few millions of years, we shall look back at such things as this, and they will seem very small."

The suffering woman turned her head wearily. "Heaven is a great way off," said she, "and I cannot bring it near enough to lighten this awful darkness of earth."

"No, heaven won't lighten it, but the Sun that shines in the heaven, the Sun that makes heaven what it is, and makes a heaven who rever He shines—the Sun will lighten it. We cannot cut a room dark, while the sunbeams are pouring in at every window, even if our tiny lamps are blown out. But, Dear, have you been careful to keep the curtains of a window out of the way, so the Sun of Righteousness could shine in?"

The mourner turned her head and looked into the face of her friend. There were deep lines there, too, that told of no common suffering, and the tears even now were on the thin cheeks; but the look was one of perfect peace, and the light from the unseen Sun illuminated every feature.

"Listen, Dear," she went on. "You would not turn away from help, would you, if it should come to you? Do you remember how our Lord Jesus met the tempter in the keenest moments of his trial?"

"It is written." "Then let me give you something that is 'written': 'God is our Refuge and Strength; a very present Help in time of trouble.' The strength of the hills was in the quiet voice."

"Help. A very present Help." Her friend repeated the words like one who hears them for the first time.

"Notice, Mary," continued her friend. "It isn't help on earth that fails so utterly; nor even help in heaven, that fails, too, sometimes: It is help in God. Heaven is far away, but he is 'very present.' Only we dishonor and grieve him so often by shutting our hearts against his help, and passing blindly by his offered hand."

"Tell me how to get at it, Annie," said the mourner, and her voice had a new thrill of life and hope.

"You do not need to get at it, Mary. Remember, it is God who is our help. He is longing to help you. He knows just how it all is, and just as you would long to gather a suffering child of yours up into your arms, where you could make it forget its pain in the sweetness and fullness of your overflowing love, so he longs to gather you 'with everlasting kindness' into his arms, and pour over your broken heart the balm and the comfort of his love. God is our help. Not that he gives us his help apart from himself, but he becomes our help. Don't you believe in the love of God, Mary?"

Has it never been 'shed abroad by the Holy Ghost' in your heart? Let it come now, then. There is enough in him alone, to fill our hearts with joy and peace, unhelped by any joy of earth. Do you believe it, Mary? Mrs. Browning says, 'Can he suffice for heaven and not for earth?' Just open your heart, Dear, and let him come in. Stop your struggling, stop thinking of the hopelessness of it; don't try to understand how he is going to help you. You never can understand it. That is God's part. Simply lean back on his promise that he is a very present Help, and let him come and help you now. Just as you lay your tired head on my shoulder, just so close your eyes and lean back in Jesus' arms. He will be a Help. He will not fail you. Will you trust him, Mary?"

The suffering woman closed her eyes and the tears for a moment ceased to flow. "I will try, Annie," said she.

An hour later the visitor rose to go. Her mission had not been in vain.

"But what shall I do if it all comes back again?" said her friend. "That awful wave of horror and hopelessness. For oh! I'm afraid it will come."

"Don't be overwhelmed nor surprised. Satan tempted the Master for forty days, and he will not leave you in one day. But when he comes to you, and because there is no help on earth, he would have you believe there is none in heaven. If you could only look up, my dear friend."

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from Thee. Oh Master, do not let me go—hold me tight in spite of myself. Be better to me than my wild wishes, more kind than to answer my blind beseeching. I remember how once the earthly father that Thou didst give my tender years, hold me close in his strong arms of love, though I screamed and fought to escape him. So hold Thou me, my Heavenly Father, so hold Thou me, and do not let me in my childish ignorance and wilfulness write away from Thee, into the outer darkness.

"It is all dark here, too, Lord. The flames of anguish around me do not give me light. And they are very hot. I cannot keep still, Lord. I must strive and cry out. My father used to let his little girl cry out when she was in pain. Let me cry out a little in Thine ears! But do not mind my crying. Do not let me struggle away from Thee till thou hast wrought out all thy will concerning me."

"But what is this that I see? Thou didst not send me here, dear Master; Thou broughtest me here. I should be consumed if Thou, Thyself, wast not with me in these flames. And now I see that they are hissing around Thee, too. Thou hast come into the furnace with us, and the flames that make me write are curling around Thy form also. Thou barest the pain that Thou mayest stay here with me—no Thy most rebellious, most unworthy child! I raise my tear-dimmed eyes, and Thine own are streaming too. Thou art touched with the feeling of my infirmity. Oh Master, Master, I have brought upon Thee this pain. I resisted all Thy gentler chastening, till Thou sawest that nothing but this furnace would do for me; but even then, Thou wouldst not send me into it alone, Thou camest with me Thyself."

Now, Lord, I will be still. This 'marvel of Thy love' hath conquered me. I will look up into Thy face, and thy love shall hush me. There is light in Thy countenance if not in the fire. And it ever again I lose sight of its shining, I will smother my groans in Thy bosom, they shall never again rise into Thine ears—if Thou wilt help me—if Thou wilt help me.—Central Christian Advocate.

NEVER A BABY LIKE MINE.

As I journeyed along by a cot in the gloom I was charmed with the sweet little nest, Where a young mother sat by the wide open door.

Softly rocking her baby to rest, And the song that she sang had this tender refrain:

As it flowed from her heart like new wine: "Hush, oh, hush, hush, my darling! the angels all know There was never a baby like mine."

Al, no, no, pretty mother, I said to myself, Shouldst thou seek o'er the land or the sea There'd be "none such" to thee, though as fair as the sun.

C-unless babies to others might be, There'd be none with such sort, shapely limbs, and such eyes; Such hair, with its wonderful shine, And the proud lips would still sing the tender refrain:

"There was never a baby like mine."

Thus kind Heaven has decreed, with the wisest of ends That the mother shall care for her young, With the strong jealous love that will never grow less.

While the song of the cradle is sung, Then fold, little mother, thy hair to thy breast And murmur that sweet lay of thine: "Hush, oh, hush, hush, my darling, the angels all know There was never a baby like mine."

WRITE TO MOTHER.

How long since you have written to her? How long since the loving mother heart in the old house has been gladdened by a letter from her boy? Can you not picture her in your imagination, as you have often seen her in your boyhood, going quietly from room to room as she cheerfully performs the work of the house? And how many times, as she is thus busily employed, does her mind go out to you each day, and over and again will she say, "I wonder why Jimmie doesn't write? It seems so strange that we don't get a letter from him."

How many times during the long, neglected silence of her absent son does she live through his sickness and death among strangers? How the mother's heart yearns to be with him as she thus pictures him! So unbounded is her love for him she thinks nothing less than death would cause him to neglect her so.

But Jimmie, in the meantime, has become so engrossed in business and pleasure that his mind rarely turns to his boyhood home. When he does stop long enough in his busy career to think of

father and mother, he promises himself that he will write to them soon. But just the time to do so seems never to come, and so the days glide into months, and while he is enjoying prosperity and happiness the dear ones at home are in painful suspense over his silence.

We heard a mother say, recently, whose boy had been absent for five years and had been heard from but once or twice during the time: "Oh, the torture that my heart has endured will never be known. But the watch has been in vain. Every time the gate latch clicks, or I hear a step on the garden walk, my heart leaps into my throat, for I think it may be Johnnie coming home."

But a short time after our conversation a letter came from the wanderer, saying that he was sick and was coming home. Ah! but then the strength and tenderness of the mother was shown. Not a word of reproach for his long neglect. The long suspense and anxiety that he had caused her was forgotten. It was only joy, joy, and the years of suffering were completely buried in the excess of happiness that she felt at seeing her boy again.

Oh, what suspense and trouble of mind the absent sons can save their mothers by frequently giving a few minutes of time to each letter! But what pleasure that short time will give in the old home, and how the mother's heart will lighten at this frequent testimony of her son's thoughtfulness and love.—Christian at Work.

DELHI.

From the mosque we enter the great street of Delhi, the Chandni Chalk—a wide and beautiful bazaar, with rows of trees in the middle like the Unterden Linden in Berlin, but not comparable in beauty—no native city in the East presents such streets as the cities of Europe or America; but Chandni Chalk is a great trade avenue, and has fine buildings along it. But that which renders it forever an object of interest and fascination is the awful tragedy with which its name is associated.

About midway of it is a public square of not large extent, but in which the infamous tyrant, Nadir Shah, caused to be massacred at one time more than 800,000 helpless human beings, and was only restrained from making the hecatomb larger by the entreaties of visiting nobles and a Persian monarch, who entered his capital as a conqueror. The place is pointed out in the Mosque Rooh-un-ord-Dowlah, near by, where the monster sat and ordered the horrid procession pass along the same street, not far from the spot where the monster sat. It was a different scene, but perhaps in its effects not less horrid; it was one of those abominable, infant marriages which blight India to-day.

The procession was immense—miles long with all sorts of vehicles, and a vast crowd—the most grotesque scene imaginable. The bridegroom was a little boy about six years old. He was seated on a charger, loaded down withinsel, and surrounded by gold-covered attendants, who held him in the saddle and carried canopies over him and fanned him with great fans of peacock feathers, while he rode along amid the plaudits of the excited thousands. Who can say which denotes the greater tragedy?

AN ENGINEER'S REMEDY.

My engineer was a gray-haired, thick-set man of fifty, quiet and unobtrusive, and deeply in love with his beautiful machine. He had formerly run a locomotive, and now took a stationary engine because he could get no employment on the railroad. A long talk with the superintendent of the road from which he had been removed, revealed only one fault in the man's past life—he loved strong drink.

"He is," said my informant, "as well posted on steam as any man on the road; he worked up from trainboy to fireman, from fireman to engineer, has rendered us valuable services, has saved many lives by his quickness and bravery; but he cannot let liquor alone, and for that reason we have discharged him."

In spite of this discouraging report I hired the man. During the first week of his stay I passed through the engine room many times a day, in the course of my factory rounds, but never found aught amiss. The great machine

ran as smoothly and quietly as if its bearings were set in velvet; the steel cross-head, the crank-shaft, the brass oilcups, reflected the morning sun like mirrors; no speck of dust found lodgment in the room. In the "fire-room" the same order and neatness prevailed; the steam-gauges showed even pressure, the water-gauges were always just right, and our daily report showed that we were burning less coal than formerly.

The most critical inspection failed to find anything about either engine or boilers that showed the faintest symptoms of neglect or carelessness.

Three weeks passed. The man who had been recommended as "good for five days' work and then two days' drunk," had not swerved a hair from his duty. The gossips were beginning to notice and comment upon the strange affair.

"I should like to speak to you a moment, sir," said he one morning as I passed through his sanctum.

"Well, John, what now?" I said, drawing out my note book. "Cylinder oil all gone?" "It's about myself," he replied. I motioned to him to proceed.

"Thirty-two years ago I drank my first glass of liquor," said the engineer, "and for the past ten years, up to the last month, no week has passed without its Saturday-night drunk. During those years I was not blind to the fact that my appetite was getting a frightful hold upon me. At times my struggles against the longing for the stimulant were earnest. My employers once offered me a thousand dollars if I would not touch liquor for three months, but I lost it; I tried all sorts of antidotes, and all failed. My wife died praying that I might be rescued, yet my promises to her were broken within two days. I signed pledges and joined societies, but appetite was still my master. My employers reasoned with me, discharged me, I could not stop and I knew it. When I came to work for you I did not expect to stay a week; I was nearly done for; but now!"

and the old man's face lighted up with an unspeakable joy, "in this extremity when I was ready to plunge into hell for a glass of rum, I found a sure remedy! I am saved from my appetite!"

"What is your remedy?" "The engineer took up an open Bible that lay, face down, on the window ledge and read: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin."—H. C. P. in the Christian.

WHAT WILL YOU BE?

We see two boys standing side by side—both are intelligent-looking and kind-looking; but one becomes an idle, shiftless fellow, and the other an influential and useful man. Perhaps when they were both boys no one could have seen much difference between them; when they were men the contrast was marked. One became dissolute step by step; as one went up the other went down. It is a question of great moment—What will you be? One determines he will do right and improve his powers and opportunities to the utmost. He is industrious, learns his business, becomes a partner or proprietor, and is known as a man of influence and power. Another does not determine to be bad, but is lazy, and neglects to improve his opportunities. He shirks work; he fools around; next he is seen with tobacco, and probably beer and whiskey follow; his appearance shows he is unhealthy; he does not do his work well, he loses his position, and becomes intemperate and probably a criminal. There are many to-day who are standing at the parting-place. You can take one path and you will go down as sure as the sun rises. If you prefer to hang around a saloon to reading good books at home, then you are on the road to ruin. If you do not obey your parents, if you run away from school, if you lie, if you swear, you will surely go down in life. If a boy steadily improves his time, tries to learn his business, obeys his father and mother, is truthful and industrious, is respectful and pleasing toward others, he will succeed. No one can stop his doing well in life. He has determined that he will be a noble specimen of a man and every good person will help him.—Scholar's Companion.

Idleness is indeed the nursery of sins, which as naturally grow up therein as weeds in a neglected field.—Barrow.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

SOMETHING TO DECIDE.

She was homesick, at least not exactly, though it was her first day at school, but she was thinking. It was almost bed-time, and she dreaded it.

For the first time in her life she must get herself ready for bed in a room with three other girls, strangers to her, and two of them at least laughed and chattered so much that they made her nervous. If she could only slip away to her room before the others, and have a few minutes of quiet! But there was no use in trying for that; the moment the bell rang they were all expected to troop to their rooms.

If the truth must be told, Sophie Baker felt a little like a coward. She did not mind brushing out her lovely hair before the girls, nor getting out her pretty dressing-case and using her ivory handled tooth-brush, nor even putting on her dainty night-dress with its delicate lace trimmings; the thing that she did not want to do was to kneel down before those girls and pray. She knew there were girls who never did this; she had heard Mollie Andrews, only a few days before she left home, laughing about a girl in school who kept her "baby" habits, and always "said her prayers" before she went to bed.

And Mollie Andrews had been in boarding-school for two years and knew how things went. What was to be done? Sophie was the youngest of all the girls, and could not bear to be laughed at, and she "most knew," she said to herself, that none of those girls prayed. Yet she had never in her life gone to sleep without praying, and it shocked her to think of doing so.

Of course she wouldn't; but couldn't she slip into bed, cover her head closely, and pray as well as she could on her knees? This was what she asked herself with a beating heart, while the girls buzzed around her, busy with a last glance at their next day's lesson.

Sophie had been very carefully taught; she knew that if she were sick and could not kneel down God would be as well pleased with her prayer in bed as he would on her knees, but how about creeping into bed and praying because she was ashamed to have others see her?

It made her cheeks glow to think of it.

"I'll never do it," she said at last, decidedly. "I shall kneel down and pray just as usual, even if they all laugh and poke fun at me." After that she felt happier, it was so comfortable to know just what she was going to do.

It took her longer to brush her hair than usual that evening, and the merry voices around her did not quiet the beating of her heart, but at last she dropped on her knees and buried her face in the pillow and tried to pray. It was very still all about her; the girls might be planning some fun, but they did it quietly. A sweet sense of being with Jesus stole into Sophie's heart, and when she arose, the loud beating which it had almost seemed to her the rest could hear was still.

But why were the other girls so quiet? She looked about her, every girl was on her knees. One by one they arose quietly, with no air about them of having done anything strange or unusual; they kissed one another good-night, their voices just as happy as before, but a little quieter and very soon the light was out, and they were resting on their pillows.

"I have much people in this city." It was a part of a verse that Sophie had learned not long before, and it floated through her mind as she went to sleep.

Perhaps the Lord Jesus has "much people" in that school where she had foolishly imagined herself the only one who prayed! She did not feel lonely any more, and it seemed to her very silly to have been afraid to pray. What if she had jumped into bed without it, and all the others had knelt? How ashamed she would have felt!—Pansy.