

# SUNBEAM

Vol. XXV.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 10, 1904.

No. 25.

## AROUND THE LAMP.

Is any hour so sweet as when, after the day's busy cares and toils are over, the household gathers round the evening lamp? In our picture the aunt or mother reads, while all the young folk, down to little Mabel, attentively listen, and their nimble fingers fly all the more swiftly for the charming story in which they are interested. Our long winter evenings give a fine opportunity to get through a good course of interesting reading in this way.

What a contrast this Christian family presents to the heathen of whom we sometimes read. And yet our English ancestors, before they heard the Gospel, were almost as barbarous as any savages on the face of the earth. So much do we owe to the influence of Christianity.

## ONLY A DOG.

We were all crying, every one of us. Father declared that it was smoke that had got into his eyes and made them smart, but mother threw her apron over her head, and sat rocking and sobbing for ten minutes. Phæbe and I just threw ourselves down on the floor by poor Leo, and I took his dear old shaggy head in my lap, and the hot tears dropped one by one; and Phæbe patted

his old stiff ears and smoothed out his thin grey hairs; and then we took off his brass collar that was marked all over with

hieroglyphics that we had scratched with pins in the proud days when he first wore it; then we cried again, and just then in walked Squire Toots, and he didn't seem to know what to do when he saw us so distressed; he looked at us and then at Leo. Then he took out his handkerchief

body would suppose it was a person; and it's only a dog!"

That just made us feel all the worse! There wasn't any heaven for him to go to, and we knew we could never see him again, and we couldn't remember any life without Leo, we were such little tots when

he came to us, and he had been one of the family all the time. Father used to lecture him just as he did us children. "Where did I see you to-day, sir?" he would say; "over at Mr. Mason's associating with that dog that steals? Shame!" and then Leo would whine, and pretty soon father would say, "Leo, go to bed, sir!" and he'd sneak off to his box in the back shed and lie awake all night to protect us while we slept, and he never once in fourteen years was forgetful of his trust—and he was "only a dog."

Only a dog! Why, was there ever a time that we went racing home from our school that Leo hadn't met us half-way to race with us and do all sorts of funny tricks at our bidding? And how proud we had always been of him with his handsome stately presence and superior manner, and how safe we felt to hear his deep-chested bark as we went to sleep!

Well, death had found him sure enough, and we buried him out in the grove in a little hollow where he loved to lie on hot summer days, and there



AROUND THE EVENING LAMP.

and gave his nose a real blowing, and said huskily:

"Why, it's wicked to feel so bad. Any-