

A NEW SIGNAL SERVICE.

A CYCLONE in the nursery  
Sent Noah's ark a-flying;  
It made the dolls turn pale with fear,  
And almost fall to crying.  
It rapt the house of jointed blocks  
From turret to foundation,  
And pulled poor Rover's tail until  
He howled in desperation.

The cyclone in the corner stood,  
(Her other name was Florence),  
Her face was overcast with clouds  
The tears rained down in torrents;  
And looking in the door just then,  
Her teasing brother Truro  
Inquired with feigned anxiety,  
"Is this the weather bureau?"

"A weather bureau! What is that?"  
She asked and stopped to wonder.  
"It tells about the storms," he said,  
"Of wind, and rain, and thunder.  
Hurrah! I'll get a flag and make  
This room a signal station;  
And you shall show me every day  
The weather indication."

"What's that?" inquired the puzzled child;  
Again the tears had started.  
"Hold on a minute, you shall see,"  
Said Tru, and off he started.  
He waved a banner in his hand  
A minute or two after;  
It might have been enchanted, for  
It turned her tears to laughter.

"This means no storms to-day," he said;  
"Why, Flo, how did you know it?  
Now every time you smile like this,  
The flag shall fly to show it;  
I'll hang it by the picture here—  
This one of the Madonna;  
'Twill tell you're trying to be good,  
And trying upon honour."

"Though out of doors 'tis cold and damp,  
From wind and rain together,  
Sweet looks will change the dreariest day  
To bright and pleasant weather.  
But if you are a naughty girl,  
And fly into a passion,  
The flag shall disappear at once  
In a very hasty fashion."

A great improvement this has wrought  
In temper and in manner,  
For in the nursery still I see  
A pretty blue silk banner.  
And this I know, that earnestly  
A little maid is trying  
To be a good, sweet child, and keep  
Her signal-flag a-flying.

—Golden Days.

MAMMA MERRITT'S SERMON.

BY JULIA A. TIBBELL.

"I MUST say I haven't much confidence in this new-fashioned kind of religion! When I was young, Christians, 'specially Methodists, didn't wear flowers and ribbons. We used to read biographies instead of story books, and as for playing games and such nonsense—many a time I've sung to myself, 'No room for mirth or trifling here.'"

It was Miss Polly Patterson who spoke. She was spending the afternoon with Grandma Merritt, and the two old ladies had been knitting and talking for a long time before Ruth noticed a word they said.

Ruth had company too. Maudie Downer had brought her worsted work intending to stay to tea. How the two girls had laughed and chatted and played! How many secrets they had exchanged! Just now they were in the deep mysteries of a new stitch.

"A very solemn hymn. Very good for special occasions," Grandma replied to Miss Polly. "But I don't know as religion is very different from what it used to be. I suppose the blessed Lord is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

"That's just it. And because he is the same, folks ought to be as careful now as they ever were. We've got a

lot of young folks comin' into our Church with no sort of idea what self-denial means. You couldn't tell from their looks that they were Christians, and they act as light and giddy as butterflies, besides—"

Ruth heard no more. Mamma was calling her to help at the table. What she had heard settled like lead into her heart. Though not eleven years old, she had given herself to the Saviour, and joined the children's class. She must be one of the number whom Miss Polly meant. It had never occurred to her before that she ought to be grave and sedate. It had seemed so blessed to be a child of God she had thought but little of the crosses she ought to carry. Perhaps she was mistaken, and not really a Christian, after all. She certainly did not like to play and laugh and have pretty clothes and read stories. Could she ever be good enough to enjoy the things Miss Polly had described?

Very soon after tea the company went home. Grandma lay down to rest, and Ruth was left alone with mamma. Mrs. Merritt stitched away on Ruth's new dress till the sound of a sob caused her to look up.

"If you please, mamma," said a choked voice, "don't put any puffs and ribbons on my new dress. I'd rather have it plain."

"Why, what is the matter?" Mrs. Merritt's tone expressed surprise.

"I want to be a true Christian, and—and—" And then the whole heart-burden was told to mother.

Mrs. Merritt did not laugh. Instead she said quietly, "Bring the little box from my dressing table." Opening it, she took out a rattle, a rubber ring, some spools and blocks, and asked what they were.

Ruth thought her mother acted strangely.

"Why, these were some of my toys when I was a baby, but I don't care for them now. I'm too old."

"You did care for them once. I've seen you play for hours at a time, but you were always ready to leave them if I called you to me. Did I love you any less because you were interested in them, or did you love me less because I gave them to you? Have you outgrown all toys?"

A light broke over Ruth's face.

"I see! You mean these things about which I am troubled are my toys, and it is not wrong to like them!"

"Exactly. To be a true Christian you must trust the Saviour, and be loving, honest, and obedient, for his sake. You are still to be a child, and enjoy the blessings he gives a child. Do not try to be an old woman. Even St. Paul did not try to be a man while he was yet a boy. As for crosses, they will be sent when God sees best. You are not to go about searching for them. Leave your clothing and such matters to my judgment. Remember even in play you can do all things heartily as unto the Lord. And now a good-night kiss from my helpful little daughter."

Next Sabbath Miss Polly sighed anew over a ruffle and a puff with which Mrs. Merritt had trimmed the new dress, but there seemed to Ruth a sermon in both. She never wore the dress without recalling her mother's words, and feeling grateful that God loved her even though but a child in taste and action. She has since learned to like biographies and hymns, but still finds pleasure in games and story books as well.

A GREAT THOUGHT AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

This was the great thought. "God sees me, and hears me, and knows all that I do."

It was planted in the mind of a little child, not yet six years old, by a good lady who loved the little children and gathered them around her to talk to them about the great God and his love and care for little children.

The little child was the daughter of a rich man who did not know the God of this great world in which we live. And what was still more sad, he did not believe that there was such a God! Satan put the evil thought in his heart that there was no God to love and care for him, but God's not the great thought that we are telling you of, to push the evil thought away.

Little Annie's father would not let her go to Sunday-school, but when her dear nurse friend Hattie came and begged that she might go to children's meeting with her, he said, "The child is too little to be hurt by anything she will hear," and so he let her go.

He did not know what great loving thought was waiting to catch his little girl, yes, and himself too, and hold them fast in arms of love!

One day the good lady taught the children, "Thou God seeest me," and told them that this great God sees and hears and knows all things. It was all new to little Annie, and it made her feel very solemn and yet very glad, for her teacher said that this wonderful Being knew and loved each little child! She went home, full of the great, wonderful thought, and said,

"Papa, do you know who made you?"

"O, don't talk any of that nonsense, pet," he said.

"But, papa," said Annie, solemnly, "God made you, and he hears all you say, and knows all that you do." And then she folded her little hands, and looking up said, "Thou God seeest me."

"Tut, tut, there, that will do," said her papa and then the tea-bell rang, and soon the family were seated at the table.

Something happened at the tea-table that vexed Annie's papa, and he spoke a dreadful word, so dreadful that I dare not tell it to you.

Annie laid down her little silver knife and said, gravely,

"Papa, dear papa, God sees you, and he hears you, and he knows all that you do." Then she folded her little hands, and looking up said, "Thou God seeest me."

"Leave the table, instantly," said Annie's papa, and the little girl obeyed without a word.

She went up to the beautiful parlours and sat down in her little rocking-chair, and thought about the great God who knows all things. And soon her papa came into the room, and began pacing back and forth with a troubled look on his face.

Annie watched him a little while, and then she went to his side and slipped her little fingers into his, and said, softly,

"Papa, God sees us, and he hears us, and he knows all that we do." Then folding her hands and looking up, she whispered, "Thou God seeest us."

This time Annie's papa did not send her away, but he stooped and kissed her, and that evening he went to the

church where one of God's ministers was trying to get the people acquainted with the Lord Jesus, and going to the altar asked God's people to pray for him!

He became an earnest Christian from that hour, and always says that the good God sent his little Annie to lead him to the dear Saviour—M. M.

SPARKLING AND BRIGHT.

SPARKLING and bright in its liquid light,  
Is the water in our glasses,  
I will give you health, I will give you wealth,  
Ye lais and my lassies.

Better than gold is the water cold  
From the crystal fountain flowing,  
A calm delight, both day and night,  
To happy homes bestowing.

Sorrow has fled from the heart that bled,  
Of the weeping wife and mother,  
They've given up the pearl and cup,  
Son, husband, dau'ghter, brother.

"IT IS MY BOY!"

THOMAS Rochester, N. Y., runs the Genesee river, between steep and rocky banks. There are falls in the river and dark recesses. One time a gentleman who lived in the city had just arrived on the train from a journey. He was anxious to go home and meet his wife and children. He was hurrying along the streets with a bright vision of home in his mind, when he saw on the bank of the river a lot of excited men.

"What is the matter!" he shouted. They replied, "A boy is in the water."

"Why don't you save him!" he asked.

In a moment, throwing down his carpet bag and pulling off his coat, he jumped into the stream, grasped the boy in his arms and struggled with him to the shore, and as he wiped the water from his dripping face and brushed back the hair, he exclaimed, "O God, it is my boy!"

He plunged in for the boy of somebody else and saved his own. So we plunge into the waters of Christian self-denial, labour, hardship, reproach, soul-travail, prayer, anxious entreaty, willing to spend and be spent, taking all risks, to save some other one from drowning in sin and death, and do not know what a reflexive wave of blessing will come to our own souls. In seeking to save others we save ourselves and these most dear to us, while others, too selfish to labour to save other people's children, often lose their own.

THE NEEDLE'S EYE.

THE passage from the New Testament "It is easier for a camel," etc., has perplexed many good men who have read it literally. In Oriental cities, there are in large gates small and very low apertures, called metaphorically "needle's eyes," just as we talk of windows on shipboard as "bull's eyes." These entrances are too narrow for a camel to pass through in an ordinary manner, or even if loaded. When a loaded camel has to pass through one of these entrances, it kneels down, its load is removed, and then it shuffles through on its knees.

"Yesterday," writes Lady Duff Gordon, from Cairo, "I saw a camel go through the eye of a needle; that is, the lower half box of an enclosure. He must kneel and bow his head to go through; and thus the rich man must humble himself."