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THE SUMMER BIRD.

Mother, sweet mother! I heard its voice,
And how did my heart at that sound rejoice!
The note of the beautiful summer bird,
O, long is it since that note I heard.

Glad summer is coming! I long to bound
With footstep free o'er the gladden'd ground,
By the bright streams freed from their ice-bound chain.
Mother, sweet summer is coming again!

Say, shall we not roam by the calm lake's side,
Or deep in the shady valleys hide,
While of England you tell sweet tales to me,
The land of thy fathers, so loved by thee.

The mother gazed on her boy so fair,
And her fingers played with his wavy hair.
But the tears o'er that bright-haired boy fell fast,
As her spirit wandered to days long past.

O glad was the time when with joy I heard,
Like thee, my bright one, the summer bird,
In my childhood's home, were those notes to me,
Ever the message of hope and glee.

But deep thoughts now in my soul have place,
And I mourn as I gaze on that loving face,
That the dear ones bound by fond ties to me,
May not pour their love as they would on thee.

Mother, sweet mother! O weep no more,
Or longer think of the days of yore;
My father's heart it would grieve to see,
O'er the past, you were weeping mournfully.

She raised her head at the name of him,
Without whom earth's brightest spot were dim,
And the tears to a happy smile gave way,
As the sun gleams forth on an April day.

Then, with eyes of love, o'er the woodland wild,
They gaze—that mother and that fair child,
That with a welcome glad and sweet,
His homeward footsteps they may greet.

Hark! 'tis his step, and away they flew
To be clasp'd to that heart so fond and true,
And she felt e'en fatherland was nought,
To the joy that loved one's presence brought.

A CHRISTIAN WOMAN.

A worldly man was with some friends in a coffee-house; wine had inflamed the heads and loosened the tongues of the guests. Each sketched the character of his wife, and enumerated her defects as well as her good qualities.

"As to mine," said our worldling, "all that I could say in her praise would fall far below the truth. My wife unites all the virtues, all the amiable qualities which I can desire. She would be perfect if she was not a Methodist. But her piety gives her no ill-humor; nothing disturbs her equanimity; nothing irritates her nor renders her impatient. I might go with you, gentlemen, at midnight, and ask her to get up and serve us with supper, and she would not show the least discontent. She would do the honours of the table with as much assiduity as if I brought loved and long expected guests."

"Well, then! let us put your wife to the proof," said some of the company.

A considerable bet was made. The husband agreed to the proposal, and our wine drinkers, forgetting all propriety, went in the middle of the night, to invade, with their noisy mirth, the peaceful dwelling of the humble Christian.

"Where is my wife?" asked the master of the house of the servant who opened the door.

"Sir, she is asleep, long ago."

"Go, wake her, and tell her to prepare supper for me and my friends."

The wife, obedient to the will of her husband, quickly made her toilet, met the strangers, and received them in the most gracious manner.

"Fortunately," said she, "I have some provisions in my house, and in a few minutes supper will be ready."

The table was spread, and the repast served. The pious lady did the honours of the table with a perfect good will, and constantly bestowed upon her guests the most polite attentions."

This was too much for our drinkers. They could not help admiring such extraordinary equanimity. One of them (the soberest of the company) spoke, when the dessert was brought in, and said,

"Madam, your politeness amazes us. Our sudden appearance at your house at so unseasonable an hour, is owing to a wager. We have lost it, and we do not complain. But tell us how it is possible that you, a pious person, should treat with so much kindness persons whose conduct you cannot approve."

"Gentlemen," she replied, "when we were married, my husband and myself, we both lived in dissipation. Since that time, it has pleased the Lord to convert me to himself. My husband, on the contrary, continues to go on in the ways of worldliness. I tremble for his future state. If he should die now, he would be to be pitied. As it is not possible for me to save him from the punishment which awaits him in the world to come, if he is not converted, I must apply myself, at least, to render his present life as agreeable as possible."

These words affected strongly the whole company, and made a deep impression on the husband.

"Dear wife," said he, "you are then anxious about the fate that awaits me in eternity. Thanks, a thousand thanks for the warning which you give me. By the grace of God, I will try to change my conduct."

He was true to his promise. He opened his heart to the gospel, and became from that day another man—a sincere Christian and the best of husbands.

"Christian wives who have the misfortune to be united to infidel husbands," adds the narrator, "read and read again this anecdote. See how minds are gained to the gospel. Complaints and reproaches, however well founded, do not restore peace to the household; often, on the contrary, they irritate and increase the evil. Be then full of meekness, patience, charity, and the Lord will bless your efforts."

WHY 1700, 1800, AND 1900 ARE NOT LEAP YEARS.

The institution of the civil year, or of a calendar, by which each day should be distinguished by a legal and well-known designation, was one of the earliest fruits of civilization. Few of us, perhaps, have ever reflected on the importance of such an institution, not merely in chronology, in meteorology, and in dating public and legal acts, but in the common affairs of life. Who could keep his birth-day if we had no calendar? Where could there be punctuality in fulfilling contracts if there were no established method of dating them? How could the farmer prepare betimes for seed time; if he could not calculate within a week or two on the proper time? Considerations like the last have decided the most civilized nations to reckon time by the solar year,