

My Ships.

I stood and watched my ships go out  
Each one by an unmooring pier  
What time the quiet harbour filled  
With flood-tide from the sea.

The first that sailed—her name was Joy—  
She spread a smooth, white, shimmering sail,  
And went away with bounding spars  
Before the sighing gale.

Another sailed—her name was Hope;  
No cargo in her hold she bore,  
Thinking to find in western lands  
Of merchandise a store.

The next that sailed her name was Love—  
She showed a red flag at the mast;  
A flag as red as blood she showed,  
And she sped south right fast.

The last that sailed—her name was Faith—  
Slowly she took her passage forth;  
Tacked and lay to—at last she steered  
A straight course for the north.

My gallant ships they sailed away  
Over the shimmering summer sea;  
I stood and watched for many a day—  
But none came back to me.

For Joy was caught by Pirate Pain;  
Hope stranded on a hidden reef;  
And Love to k'ire and fundered fast  
In whelming seas of grief.

Faith came at last, storm-beat and torn—  
She recompensed me all my loss;  
For as a cargo safe she brought  
A Crown linked to a Cross.

THE OLD ORGAN

OR

"HOME, SWEET HOME."

By Mrs. O. F. Wallon.

CHAPTER XII.—CHRISTIE WELL-CARED FOR.

"WHAT'S the matter with that little lad?" said one of the men to the landlady, as she was preparing their breakfast the next morning. "He's got a fever or something of the sort. He's been talking about one thing or another all last night. I've had toothache, and scarcely closed my eyes, and he's never ceased chattering the night through."

"What did he talk about?" asked another man. "Oh! all sorts of rubbish," said the man with the toothache, "bright cities, and minerals, and snow-drops; and once he got up, and began to sing; I wonder you didn't hear him."

"It would have taken a great deal to make me hear him," said the other, "tired out as I was last night; what did he sing, though?" "Oh! one of the tunes or his old organ. I expect he gets them in his head so that he can't get them out. I think it was 'Home, sweet home' he was trying at last night; and the man went to his work."

"Well, Mrs. White," said another man, "if the boy's in a fever, the sooner you get him out of this the better; we don't want all of us to take it."

When the men were gone the landlady went up to Christie to see if he were really ill. She tried to wake him, but he looked wildly in her face, and did not seem to know her. So she lifted him by main force into a little dark room under the stairs, which was filled with boxes and rubbish. She was not at all unkind woman; she would not turn the poor child into the street in his present condition; so she made him up a little bed on the floor, and giving him a drink of water, she left him, to continue her work. That evening she fetched the parish doctor to see him, and he told her that Christie was in a fever.

For many days little Christie hung between life and death. He was quite unconscious of all that went in; he never heard the landlady come into the room; he never saw her go out. She was the only person who came near him, and she could give him very little attention, for she had so much to do. But she used to wonder why Christie talked so often of "Home, sweet home," through all his wandering of mind his senseless moans of all that went in his dull brain, little Christie was longing, for the city bright.

But, after a time, Christie began to recover; he regained his consciousness, and slowly, very slowly, the fever left him. But he was weak that he could not even turn in bed; and he could scarcely speak above a whisper. Oh, how long and dreary the days were to him! He had begun to grow tired

of waiting on him, and so Christie was for many a long hour without seeing anyone to whom he could speak.

It was a very dark little chamber, only lighted from the passage, and Christie could not even see a bit of the sky. He felt very much alone in the world. All day long there was no sound but the distant shouts of the children in the court; and in the evening he would hear the noise of the men in the great lodging-room. Often he was awake the greater part of the night, and lay listening to the ticking of the clock on the stairs, and counting the strokes heard by the hour. And then he would watch the faint gray light creeping into the dark room, and listen to the footsteps of the men going out to their daily work.

No one came to see Christie. He wondered that Mr. Wilton did not look after him, when he missed him from the mission-room. Oh, how glad Christie would have been to see him! But the days passed slowly by, and he never came, and Christie wondered more and more. Once he asked Mrs. White to fetch him to see him, but she said she could not trouble to go so far.

If little Christie had not had a friend in Jesus, his little life would almost have been broken, in the loneliness and desolation of those days of weakness. But though his faith was sometimes feeble, and he was then very downcast in spirit, yet at other times little Christie would talk with Jesus, as with a dear friend; in this way he was comforted. And the words which the clergyman had read to his old man were ever ringing in his ears, "Let not your heart be troubled." Still, those weeks did seem very long and tedious. At last, he was able to sit up in bed, but he felt faint and dizzy whenever he moved. For he had had a very severe attack of fever, and he needed all manner of nourishing things to bring back his strength. But there was no one to attend to the wants of the poor-motherly boy. No one, except the dear Lord; he had not forgotten him.

It was a close, stifling afternoon. Christie was lying upon his bed, patting with the heat, and longing for a breath of air. He was faint and weary, and felt very cast down and dispirited. "Please, dear Lord," he said aloud, "send someone to see me."

And even as he spoke the door opened, and the clergyman came in. It was too much for Christie! He held out his arms to him in joy, and then burst into tears.

"Why, Christie," said the clergyman, "are you not glad to see me?" "Oh, yes," said little Christie, "I thought you were never coming, and I felt sure a long way from home! Oh, I am so glad to see you."

Then Mr. Wilton told Christie that he had been away from home, and that another clergyman had been taking his duty. But the night before he had preached for the first time since his return in the little mission-room, and he had missed Christie from the room; but he had asked the woman who cleaned the room about him, but she had told him that Christie had never been there since he went away. The clergyman had wondered what was the matter, and had come as soon as he could to hear.

"And now, Christie," he said, "tell me all about these long weary weeks." But Christie was so glad and so happy now, that the past seemed like a long, troubled dream. He had waked up now, and had forgotten his sorrow and loneliness.

The clergyman and Christie had much pleasant talk together, and then Mr. Wilton said,

"Christie, I have had a letter about you, which I will read to you."

The letter was from little Mabel's papa, who was a friend of the clergyman.

"MY DEAR MR. WILTON,—There is a poor boy of the name of Christie in his surname I do not know) living in a lodging-house in Ivy Court, Percy Street. He lived formerly with an old organ-grinder, but I believe the man was thought to be dying some weeks ago. My dear wife took a great fancy to the boy, and my little Mabel frequently talks of him. I imagine he must be left in a very bad condition, and I should be much obliged if you could find him some respectable person who will act as a mother to him."

"I enclose a cheque which will pay his expenses for the present. I should like him to go to school for a year or two, and then I intend, if you will consent to serve Christ, to bring him up to work as a street-singer amongst the lowest class of the people in your neighbourhood."

"I think I could not perpetrate my dear wife's memory in any letter way than by carrying out what I know were her wishes with regard to little Christie. No money or

pains will I spare to do for him what she herself would have done, had her life been spared."

"Kindly excuse me for troubling you with this matter; but I do not wish to defer the final attie where Christie and his old master lived was the last place my dear wife visited before her illness; and I feel that the charge of this boy is a sacred duty which I must perform for her dear sake, and also for the sake of Him who has said, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'"

"Believe me, dear Mr. Wilton, 'Yours very sincerely,  
'GERALD LINDSAY."

"Christie," said the clergyman, "the dear Lord has been very good to you."

"Yes," said little Christie, "old Treffy was right; wasn't he, sir?"

"What did old Treffy say?" asked the clergyman.

"He said the Lord had some work for me to do for him," said Christie, "and I didn't think there was anything I could do; but he's going to let me after all."

"Yes," said the clergyman, smiling; "shall we thank him, Christie?" To be kept away by Christie's bed, and little Christie clasped his thin hands and added his words of praise:

"O Jesus, I thank thee so much for letting me have some work to do for thee; and, please, I will stay outside the gates a little longer, to do something to show thee how I love thee. Amen."

"Yes, Christie," said the clergyman, as he rose to go, "you must work with a very loving heart. And when the work is over will come the rest. After the long waiting will come 'Home, sweet home.'"

"Yes," said Christie, brightly, "there's no place like home, no place like home."  
(To be continued.)

AN EXPERIMENT.

"How can I see the bottom of the river or lake?" is a question that often arises in youthful minds. Now it isn't so hard a problem after all. The young people will be pleased to know that the object can be attained by the use of a water telescope such as the Norwegian fishermen use to ascertain the position of the herring shoals. It is made quite simply. Procure a tube made of tin, and funnel-shaped, about three and a half feet long, and nine inches in diameter at the broad end. It should be wide enough at the top to take in the observer's eyes, and the inside should be painted black. At the bottom, or wide end, a clear thick piece of glass must be inserted, with a little lead in the form of a ring to weight the tube. When the instrument is immersed in clear water, it is astonishing how many fathoms down the observer can see. A great deal of genuine instruction and amusement can be gathered out of such an instrument for young folks.

"Oh, I could not," he replied. "If I could not get to smoke I almost went wild. I could think of nothing else. That my grandmother might not suspect me, I would work extra hours instead of spending my regular wages for cigarettes. For months I kept up this scheme, although I knew it was killing me. Then I seemed to fall to pieces all of a sudden." His disease took the form of dropsy in the legs, and was very painful.

"Sister Cornelia continues the story: 'During all his sufferings he never forgot what had brought him to this terrible condition. He kept asking me to warn all boys against their me. A few days before he died he called me to his bedside and said that he thought he had not lived in vain if only those boys who are still alive would profit by his sufferings and death.'"

There is no other form of tobacco so dangerous as cigarettes, because the nicotine in the smoke is not absorbed in the loose tobacco, and smoked clear up to the end, but is taken, unfiltered and undiluted, into the lungs. It was not the poison in the paper, but the poison in the tobacco which killed Samuel Kimball, and is ruining the health of thousands of other pale-faced boys.—*Epworth Herald.*

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS IN CHINA.

MARRIAGE in China is attended by many ceremonies and by many strange customs. Very few bridegrooms see their brides until the wedding night; it being considered a great breach of etiquette for young ladies and young gentlemen to associate or even to see each other before marriage. All the arrangements are made through the parents. During these ceremonies many presents are exchanged between the two families. Among them, green and red paper, a live pig, and a goose and quander; the latter three to be emblematic of the future happiness of the wedded pair.

The bridegroom prepares two cards announcing his engagement. On the outside of the one he keeps is pasted a paper dragon; on the outside of the other, which is sent to the bride, is the picture of a phoenix. The bride is conducted to her future home by the groom's best man. She is accompanied by a band of musicians. At the door of the house the bride alights and is lifted over a pan of burning charcoal into the house.

Seated on a platform near the centre of the reception-room, the bridegroom awaits his bride. Reaching the foot of the platform, she humbly prostrates herself. He then descends, and lifting her up, raises her veil, and looks upon her face for the first time.

Shipping Away.

Fare thee shipping away—thine sweet, swift life,  
Like a leaf on the current o'er;  
With never a break in their rapid flow,  
We watch them as they go by one they go  
Into the beautiful bow.

As silent and swift as the weaver's thread,  
Or an arrow's flying gleam;  
As soft as the larkspur's broadest lid,  
That fits the willow's golden bed,  
And tippeth the many blades.

As light as the wraith of the thistle-down;  
As fast as the lark's dash;  
As pale as the blush in the weaver's throat;  
As sweet as the wood lily's wooing note,  
So tender and sweet they dash.

One after another we see them pass  
Down the dim lighted stair;  
We hear the sound of their steady tread  
In the steps of centuries long since dead,  
As beautiful and as fair.

There are only a few years left to love;  
Shall we waste them in idle strife?  
Shall we trample them under our selfish feet  
Those beautiful blossoms, rare and sweet,  
By the dusty ways of life?

There are only a few swift years—ah! too  
No evasions (avails he heard)  
Make life a rare pattern of rare design;  
And fill up the measure with love's sweet  
wine,  
But never an empty word!

"TELL THE OTHER BOYS"

WARNING against the cigarette habit multiply. Some of them are terrible. Every little while physicians furnish testimony of how utterly cigarettes poison and destroy the system. One of the most pathetic warnings against the vile habit was given not long ago by a choir boy in one of the Brooklyn churches, who died in great agony at St. John's Hospital. This is the story as given in the *Lives of Life*:

"Almost his last words were: 'Let a boy who smokes cigarettes look at me now and know how much I have suffered, and he will never put another cigarette in his mouth. He was a bright boy, an exquisite singer, and had many friends. He lived with his grandmother and worked in a chandelier factory.'"

"Here is his story as he told it to his sister, Sister Cornelia: 'To me he confessed that this trouble had originated from cigarette smoking. Some days he said he smoked twenty cigarettes. At first he kept his grandmother in ignorance of his indulgence. As he continued to smoke the appetite grew upon him with such force that he could not break it off, and it began to affect his constitution.'"

"Why," I asked him, "did you not stop when you saw what it was bringing you to?"