

The Family.

MY LITTLE BIRD

My little bird while in the light
 Co-mingled with its song,
 Though tenderly I sang to him,
 And patiently and long.

Sometimes a strain or two he caught,
 As he lost the air,
 And mingled with its strains
 He picked up here and there.

At last a certain thick I laid
 Above my wayward bird,
 Then sang the song I chose for him,
 While to the dark he heard.

Shut in from luring sights and sounds,
 He learned to sing my song,
 And in the light he poured it forth
 In cadence sweet and strong.

There is a song the Lord would have
 His dear disciples learn,
 But when the world is bright to them,
 To worldly songs they turn.

And notes of revelry and mirth
 They mingle with the strains
 The Master long was teaching them
 With so much love and pains.

Then clouds of sorrow o'er their homes
 He doth in mercy bring,
 And, shut in gloom, at length they learn
 The song he'd have them sing—

The song of love and peace and trust,
 On earth their sweetest song,
 Their song of songs in realms of light
 With all the joyful throng.

—Ex.

AT PETERHEAD IN THE HERRING SEASON.

"THE last train on Saturday night; rather a strange time to begin a week's holiday in the capital of Buchan." "No; not so strange after all," said my friend, as he grasped my hand. "A holiday week, just like any other week, would better begin with the Day of Rest." A very profitable day it proved itself to be. We should have liked to see more of the stranger fishermen at the regular church services, and the reasons why they are not there furnishes a problem worthy the attention of the representatives of the different churches. We had very mingled feelings indeed when surveying the extraordinary means of grace—the various agencies at work during the busy fishing season, doing their utmost to meet the requirements of the additional crowds which almost double the ordinary population. These agencies are both within and without the lines of the Church. There, with its coat of many colours, is the Salvation Army—not only without, but making no secret of the fact that it is also against everything church-like. The impression its agents leave upon us was anything but a favourable one, as they came parading along the streets with their banners just at the time when they must encounter the peaceable church members and their families as they enter the house of prayer. Yet it is not the boys and girls who have charge of the movement in these sea-coast towns that are to be held responsible for the disintegrating effect which they have upon the Church. We must go to the centre of the movement and leave the charge at the door of those who guide the operations from headquarters. A very different spectacle was awaiting us in the large music hall rented by the Highland Committee of the Free Church, in order that services may be supplied to the many Gaelic-speaking fishermen who have come from the northern shires. What reverence in the prayer; what music in the psalm; what almost painful silence during the preaching of Divine truth! To us, indeed, it was all in an unknown tongue, but the tear, the half-suppressed sigh, the deep attention, bore in upon the mind the thought that without a deep-felt reverence, worship belies its name. The regular Divine services were now completed, and we visited alternately the open-air meetings of the Free and United Presbyterian Church deputies and that of the North-east coast mission. Evangelistic hymns are gradually making serious inroads upon the use of the Psalms, and perhaps there is a fitness in the change; but where the Psalms are still used in the opening praise, it was very fine to see one old fisherman uncover his head and begin to raise with quivering voice the grand old tune of "St. Paul." It was something to hear those fishermen pray. Yes! and say a closing word as well to those who so often, like themselves, are tossed about upon the open sea. It wasn't logic or grammar that guided their burning words; theirs was a rhetoric wild and impetuous as the billows beating on their native shores. Their wives were present with children in their arms—sitting upon the little stools which they themselves had brought, until the last paraphrase having been sung, they were quietly dispersed by the benediction of the preacher.

Early astir on Monday morning—what a sight opened to our gaze as we proceeded to the Gaidle braes on the north side of the town! With scarcely sufficient wind from the land to fill the dark brown sails, the boats in one long continuous chain were gliding away out on the surface of a glistening, rippling sea. Could anything surpass that sweeping curve of multitudinous sails which, beginning in bold full outline with the head of the promontory on which the town is built, thinned away to the horizon brink, where one by one they disappeared? One could only stand in silence and gaze upon the moving picture until memory, like the prepared plate in the photographer's camera, should receive the indelible impress of its image, and retain it as its own forever. We would see no more of the fishing boats till their return on the following day; and we therefore turned away to fill up the interval by visiting the ruins of the two ancient castles of Inverurie and Ravensraig. These relics of perhaps the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries stand, the one close by the other, upon the river Ugie, at about three miles distance from Peterhead. Robert the Bruce, according to tradition, trod these very halls! What sounds of revelry and savage warfare rang through and around these ancient piles when inhabited by Marischals and Cheynes, until on the overthrow of the Jacobite rebellion of 1715 the estates were forfeited to the crown and the castles themselves deserted and allowed to fall into decay!

We did not reach the quay on the following morning until many of the boats had returned, and it was with the greatest interest we stood for the next two hours to watch the arrival of the others, each seeking for itself a berth in the all too crowded harbour. What a hive of work and bustle! Over 600 boats, each with six and sometimes seven of a crew, yielding up their various catches of sparkling herrings to

the knives of the "gutters," while these—hundreds of girls dressed in oilskins—standing round the troughs into which the finny prey was cast, were gutting, salting, packing—working far into the night before the catch for the day was completed. It was in connection with this latter fact that a beautiful contrast presented itself. The boats had again proceeded to the fishing ground, and as the evening shadows began to fall we ascended the heights behind the town. These commanded a wondrous sight. On the left lay the town, with over seventy curing yards, each aglow with the blaze of many lamps. Away on the right stretched a very sea of glass—a perfect mirror for the bright, full orb moon.

Tourists, we are told, who reach Peterhead "should not omit to visit Slains Castle and the Bùllers of Buchan." These lie some six or seven miles to the south, and as a stage coach runs in that direction at least twice a day we had no great difficulty in obeying the injunction. The special object of interest in connection with the Bùllers is "the Pot." Approaching it from the sea, on a calm day, we perceive what seems to be a large cave in the face of the towering cliffs. It is just wide enough to allow the little boat to enter, but once inside, we find ourselves in a large oblong chamber, open to the sky. We look at the perpendicular heights above us, then at the deep, dark depths below, and it is almost with a sigh of relief that we re-cross its weird-like threshold. It has received its name from the appearance it presents during the time of storm. The waves, as they roll on towards the cliffs, rush furiously through this opening, and dashing themselves against the sides of their prison walls, roar and boil as in a seething caldron, and thus it is called "the Pot."

We only glance at the castle of Slains, firmly rooted on its rocky site at about a mile's distance farther south, and at the extensive granite quarries right in the face of the sea-bound cliffs at an equal distance to the north, for it is almost the hour when the "bus" for Peterhead returns. The homeward journey is broken at Boddam, a little fishing town four miles south of Peterhead, where we ascend the numerous steps of the Buchaness lighthouse and examine the mechanical apparatus of that revolving light—its lamps, its concave mirrors, arranged in such a way as to throw its converging rays out upon the darkened waters to a distance of sixteen miles.

We conclude as we commenced the week. It is Saturday night again, and the fishing of another week is completed. The nets are spread in adjoining fields, and there at the same spot, as on the previous Sabbath, an open-air service is being held. Again we listen to the preacher's message, and join in the psalm and prayer. We had been enjoying the scenes of nature; and this is the praise of nature's God. As the voices blend in the dismission hymn we read in the words a meaning and a pathos we had not felt so fully before. As we turn away we are reminded of the words of Keble:—

When round Thy wondrous works below,
 My searching, rapturous glance I throw,
 Tracing out wisdom, power and love,
 In earth, or sky, or stream, or grove;
 Let not my heart within me burn
 Except in all I Thee discern.

—John Adams, M. A., in *Xmas Christian Leader*.

"I CAN'T" AND "I WILL."

SAMMIE GAY was bright, generous, but very quick tempered. His father and mother had tried faithfully to point out the foolishness and danger of yielding constantly to so dangerous a foe. Frequent punishment had followed paternal counsel, but still Sammie yielded far too often to the tyrant temper, which proved after all a hard master to the kind-hearted boy.

When there was to be a festival at the Broad Street church, and Sammie begged leave to go, his mother said, yes, he could go, and have fifteen cents to spend if in the intervening two days he would not yield once to any improper show of temper; not that it was any part of her plan to hire Sammie to do right, but the wise mother knew that once in awhile some tempting incentive would go a great ways towards stimulating a boy to real effort in the right direction. But the mother was made both glad and sorry, when on the afternoon of the festive day, poor Sammie declared with a burst of tears that he couldn't go, because he got "awful mad" that morning and called Tommy Ting "a hateful, dirty, spider," because he crawled softly up behind him and scared him half out of his wits.

Mrs. Gay was glad that if Sammie was quick-tempered, he was not a coward, but dared to tell the truth, although it cost him considerable in the way of fun and pleasure. And she did not forget nor neglect to commend the boy for his truthfulness, for the affair happened in the school-yard and could easily have been concealed had Sammie had less courage and conscience than distinguished him. So that evening when the time for the festival came, Mrs. Gay invited Sammie to take a little walk with her, and during the pleasant stroll she showed how a hasty temper betrayed anyone into all kinds of sin and folly.

Then she spoke in her calm, kind way of the improper language he had used in calling Tommy Ting the names he did, language no little gentleman would soil his lips by using. "Now, my child," she added cheerily, "I've heard of an excellent plan for preventing one's self from saying hasty words and making improper speeches; whenever you feel the least angry, stop and count ten before allowing yourself to speak one word."

Sammie thought that a splendid idea, and declared his belief that he could kill his unfortunate temper in that way without doubt. He would try it the very next day.

And so he did, poor child, for when Nick Neal the bad boy of the school, taunted him with having failed in spelling, he answered never a word, but just began counting ten with all his might, but when Nick called out in his most provoking tone "Ah, so the little parson hasn't the courage to say a word!" up went Sammie's hand in quick revenge, and he had to remain in from recess in the afternoon for striking another boy.

No wonder poor Sammie cried that night, and told his sympathizing mother it was no use, he could not conquer his temper, it was bound to overcome him every time.

After Sammie was in bed, and settling himself "to think over things," his mother came into his room with a book in her hand, and with ready delight he knew that meant a story before going to sleep. And it was a wonderful story, all about a boy who won an astonishing victory in making "I can't" yield to "I will!"

The hero was not a very strong child, and every difficult task or duty made him shrink back and say: "I can't"; but one night he dreamed a great

glant by the name of "I will" came and conquered the feeble, but persistent "I can't" until was it driven away forever. But the great captain, under whose leadership the victory was accomplished, was named "Perseverance"; for "I will" did not come off conqueror at once. There were several long battles, first; but the boy dreamed that "I will" was not to be put down, and when finally, "I can't" was really driven away, he never came back again.

Sammie thought this a splendid story, as indeed it was, and his mother noticed how his eyes flashed, and what a look of strong purpose and resolve came over his face as he listened to the well told, truthful story.

The next night, when bed-time came, Sammie looked so happy his mother said she knew he had something good to tell her; and he laughed, and said "twas a long story; but he thought for all that she would like to hear it; and as his mother certainly did want to hear all about it, he began.

"Well, all the way to school this morning I kept thinking of 'I can't' and 'I will,' and I say to myself, 'I will make this old tempter of mine give in; yesterday I thought, oh, I can't, I can't, but now I will, and the first thing while I was thinking these thoughts, some one jumped at me and screamed 'boo' as loud as he could, and there was that bothersome Nick Neal again, and my first thought was, 'I can't keep my temper, but quick as a flash I say, 'I will' so I just laughed and said: 'Well, that was pretty well done, Nick, 'spose you try it again.' Well, he plagued me all the way to school, and that 'can't' and 'will' kept up a battle all the whole way, but 'will' came out victorious."

"Well done," says mother, "I'm glad to hear that."

"But the best of it," continued Sammie, "was when recess came. Nick wanted to borrow a knife and none of the fellows would lend him one, his hands were dirty and he looked so mean. I had another battle with 'can't' and 'will,' but up I marched and handed Nick my knife. And if you'll believe it, Mother Gay, Nick used it as careful as could be, and when he brought it back, said very like a gentleman, 'Thank you, Sam, I won't bother you any more, nor won't let any of the other fellows either.'

"But after recess I failed in geography, after I'd spent an hour studying, and thought I knew my lesson perfectly. Oh, how I wanted to skuff my feet, but then came another battle with 'can't' and 'will,' and I got the better of my temper again."

"This afternoon while we were playing ball, Tommy Ting let the ball fly right at my face, and gave me the biggest blow; my, how it hurt! I ached to hit Tom back, and 'twas the worst battle I had to-day; temper kept saying, 'I can't restrain myself, then the good giant would say, 'I will'; and so I said, 'Please try and not do that again, Tommy, and he actually wanted me to take a cent his father gave him to spend, but of course I wouldn't."

"I had one battle more when cook wouldn't give me a biscuit after school, but it came easy that time, and I rather imagine if I kept right on fighting, bye and bye I won't have so much trouble with this temper of mine."

The tears were in his mother's eyes when Sammie finished his story, and that night she read the story of "I can't" and "I will" to him again, to impress it on his mind; and now Sammie says he is an out and out warrior, for he has to fight battles every day. But he also says it is constantly becoming easier to conquer his temper, because "I can't" is getting tired of having to give up to "I will"; then others see what an effort he is making to keep down his hot temper, and help him all they can.

Sammie will conquer at last, and so will every dear child who makes up his mind in earnest to listen to the good voice of valiant "I will," and crush out the foolish voice of "I can't." One is small but persistent, the other a giant, but the boys must never forget that many a giant ever since the days of Goliath of old has been slain by what, after all, is no stronger than a sling and a stone, so he must make a strong fight on the part of the good giant "I will!"—Mrs. Cheever, in *Golden Rule*.

SCHOOLGIRL SENTIMENT.

THE autograph books of half-a-dozen school-girls being subjected to close inspection lately, the result was as follows:—"Penses à moi, ma chère amie," occurred thirteen times; "Thine till death," twelve. One-third of the "sentiments" (either original or selected from the modern poets) touched lugubriously on death and the grave; more than another third discoursed of the worthlessness of life, the falsity of love, and the treachery of friendships; and the remainder were tinged with a profound melancholy, which would lead us to suppose that the only hope of these blighted souls lay in dynamite, or any other fulminating agent, which would most quickly remove them from the necessity of living.

Now these girls are not orphans, nor inmates of an almshouse. The world has, on the whole, used them fairly. They are as well-fed, well-clothed, and healthy as any other young women of fifteen; as fond of picnics, new hats and caramels, and as ready for jolly fun or a hearty meal.

But their sentiment is not confined to their autograph books. Take them in full dress to a concert, or any place of public entertainment, and they are suddenly as transformed from their natural selves as Tom the soldier, stiff and dumb in helmet, belt and knapsack, is from Tom in his slippers and shirt-sleeves.

"Ah, how sweet!"
 "Simply perfect!"
 "That music is divine!"
 "That soprano is angelic!"
 So they cry in lisping falsetto ecstasies, totally different from the straightforward, downright tones they use at the breakfast table. Tone, smile, manner, are false and factitious.

What is the matter, girls? Why, when you come before the public in any way, do you hide your downright plain selves, and put on this giggling, simpering, vapid sentiment, which deceives nobody?

The young woman who falls into ecstatic raptures over a prettily set scene on the stage will come out into the solemn grandeur of a starlit night, and remain blind and dumb.

Wait to feel emotion before you express it, if you would not stamp yourselves as silly and affected. Some day, when God proves your soul by pain, or when you stand by the grave of your mother, you will understand that grief and death and sorrow are not a species of spiritual *bric-à-brac*, to be treated with feeble sentiment.

NOTES BY "PHILO."

UNION WITH OTHER CHURCHES.

ONLY very sanguine people can expect much to come out of the late meeting at Ottawa, where a conference was held on the subject of co-operation between the Methodist and Presbyterian churches in home mission fields. Even if the Church courts of the two bodies were to take up the question, it would be vain to look for any very important practical results. It is not a hopeful sign of the Christian spirit in a Church, when in order to procure just or generous treatment at its hands, it is necessary to wait for the action of committees on co-operation, which it may appoint.

At this moment our Church acts in a fair and Christian spirit in regard to the locating of her labourers. She does not intrude where there is no need for her services, nor seek to build up her stations by persuading the members of other communions to separate from these, and unite with her. As a rule, our pastors and presbyteries act in a spirit of honour towards other Churches. The former do not use means to draw attendants from other Churches to their own. They do not receive with open arms, fugitives from discipline in a neighbouring congregation. They do not baptize the children of those to whom the ordinance has been denied on proper grounds by some other Christian body. They do not do these things. If we have not such a noisy method of religious life as some others, we have still a sense of honour which our religion only deepens, which would not allow of our doing these things. Nor would our pastors and presbyteries require a committee, after endless discussing, to send them any instructions on these points.

What the Churches need, is something which no wise committees can provide them with, or compel them to possess. It is more of the spirit of Christ—that spirit which would seek the glory of Christ, rather than the glory of a particular denomination—which would lead a Church to pass by an occupied field, and locate itself where the gospel was not preached—which would prevent a Church building in a poor and sparsely settled district a new house of worship, where there was one of some other body near by, capable of accommodating the district. The Church that has not grace enough, and honour enough, to act thus in charity and unselfishness toward a sister Church, will not be supplied with these by ever so able committee men, or committee arrangements. Such a Church needs a revival of the Christian spirit, and that, a revival the effect of which will go deep into its nature, and abide with it. However, this very little straw shows the wind is blowing from a favourable quarter.

IMPORTANCE OF DOCTRINE.

The articles on "Calvinism" which have appeared in the REVIEW are written in a very Johannine spirit. Only a veteran in the good fight could knock down his opponents in so amiable a temper. Calvinism is well shown to be not necessarily severe or sour in its spirit. The Church is indebted to the REVIEW for these articles. But would it not be well in the same spirit to carry the war into Africa somewhat? Our good friends are very angry with Calvinism as they imagine it to be. It might be well to point out the danger and weakness of an unintelligent Arminianism. Controversy, for the sake of contending is not profitable, but intelligent discussion of erroneous doctrine is of great use, and is greatly needed by many of our people. It might be well to set forth as the same able pen can do, what Arminians teach. It might be asked with profit, What is the effect of a system of teaching which sets forth the tenet that the soul once saved may eventually be lost?—That holds that the same individual may require to be converted more than once. This is an important question, one only of many that might be mentioned as involved in Arminian teaching. Let us have union by all means with all who love the Lord in sincerity, but let us know whether our Lord commands us to teach as Calvin taught, or as Arminius taught, or as neither. Let us know what is the gospel we are to believe, and in order to know we must have discussion on it. A powerful Christianity can only grow out of the truth intelligently held. It is in no narrow spirit these remarks are made. Calvinism has always produced a robust type of Christian life. It holds up a high ideal. And while no intelligent Christian would say a word in disparagement of the Christian life of those who cannot accept the truth under this form, it is well to ask to what better form of truth "can we go" for spiritual enlightening and upbuilding.

A PHASE OF MODERN RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS.

Modern religious activities do, in some cases, manifest impatience with Divine methods, and a lack of reverence for the Divine Majesty. One hears good people pray sometimes, and speak, as if God had not a "set time" in which "to favour Zion." "Now is the day of grace," cannot be repeated too loudly. But also "now" is at the disposal of this Sovereign grace. While the prayers of the Church have never been offered in vain, the Church has often had "to cry day and night," and wait long for the deliverance it sought. The equilibrium of the truth must be maintained, and not only one view put forward, and that the view of it which loses sight of the Divine Sovereignty. David was wise when he preferred to fall into the hands of God rather than into the hands of men. Let us not be impatient with God. And in this view, that the "lines are in His hand," is our most powerful motive to activity. Many intelligent people think that a larger presenting of the truth in the light of the Divine Sovereignty is much needed in the churches at present.

PROGRESS.

Always let it be remembered, however, that the cause of our Lord marches forward with ever increasing power. Discussions in a right spirit do not hinder it. Even human blundering, innocently done, has been over-ruled not infrequently for good. Undoubtedly the knowledge of the Church is enlarging. Her spirit approaches more nearly to that of her Lord, through all error and conflict. What is needed is less of self-seeking, less of denominational pride, less of "glorying in man," and more of "glorying in the cross." This does not show itself in indifference to doctrine, or in a so-called liberality that holds even opposing views of truth to be equally worthy of respect,—rather in zeal for truth and purity in doctrine. We cannot expect to get far ahead of the Apostle Paul in our charity and liberality, and yet even he was intolerant of any form of truth other than that which the spirit of Christ revealed.

—What is the state of the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund? Have you contributed anything to it this year?