

Family Reading.

TARES AND WHEAT.

Standing together, side by side,
Tares and wheat in the master's field,
Each with its shining blade of green,
Each with the grain in its silken shield.
The wheat was sowed by the master's hand,
The seed was good, and sowed with care;
But while men slept in the Summer night
An enemy came and scattered tares.
Side by side, in the cheerful sun,
Each refreshed by the soft'ning shower,
Alike they wave in the balmy breeze,
And bend their heads in the evening hour.
Waiting together till harvest time,
Tares and wheat in the master's field,
The reaper comes, with his sickle keen,
And each to his shining blade must yield.
"Cast forth the tares, in the fire to burn,"
But saith the master in accents sweet,
"Into my barns, with thanksgiving and joy,
Gather my beautiful golden wheat."
Ah, thus in our Master's harvest field
The wheat and the tares grew side by side;
He sendeth His sun, He sendeth His rain,
Blessings He scattereth far and wide.
At last He sendeth His reaper forth,
His reaper Death, with his sickle keen,
And he gathers the beautiful golden wheat
And the worthless tares that grow between.
O patient soul, in the harvest field,
Wait, oh, wait till the Master come;
He knoweth His wheat from the enemy's tare,
His own will He bear to His harvest home.

OUR NEW NEIGHBOR.

CHAPTER IX.

"Now, don't say you are not surprised; I'm sure you must be!" so Miss Harcourt addressed herself to Mrs. Darrent. "But the fact is, my boys were out this evening. I felt a little lonely, and went out for a stroll. My feet carried me here—it is a charming corner, you know—and seeing you look so very cosy, I could not resist the inclination to join you. Some people have the knack of making themselves comfortable."

Whatever Eleanor Darrent's private feelings might be, she was bound to answer this speech politely. Miss Harcourt was asked whether she would prefer the drawing-room to the lawn; and upon her pronouncing enthusiastically in favor of the latter, a chair and footstool were provided for her, and she began to talk about the current topics of the hour.

Leaving generalities, she proceeded presently, in the tone and manner which Mrs. Darrent always disliked—to her fine instinct they favored of the artificial—to make comments, lively and full of admiration, upon everything about her.

"One gardener? Did you say you had only one? He must be a miracle. I wish I could achieve anything like this perfection of neatness. But they say you help in the garden yourselves. Ah! yes; you have a taste for flowers—a charming taste! And you live in the open air. My boy, Sidney—by-the-by, I have never thanked you for your kindness to him. You have taken it for granted? Yes! I was sure you would! You are of those to whom kind acts are their own reward. But, as I was saying, Sidney came home the other day frantic—yes, really, I don't exaggerate—frantic

with pleasure about a certain supper on your lawn. Nothing would suit him, but I must have our dinner carried out of doors. I gave in to his whim, but he was not satisfied. He said—it was not polite of him, was it?—that Melbury Lodge and Forest House could not bear comparison."

"No one but a child would think of comparing them," said John Darrent, who, in Miss Harcourt's company was always a little more blunt than usual; and his wife explained, courteously, "They are in such different styles."

"Oh!" said Miss Harcourt, "I never dreamt of pitting them one against the other—I was only repeating what the boy said. We cannot expect thought, you know, in creatures of that age. By-the-by, what a delightful time all these young people are having! We ought to be grateful to Mr. James Darrent—I am sure I am—for playing the tutor so kindly. Sidney says he has picked up more of natural science in the course of their few rambles than he did from all the expensive courses of lectures he attended in town. As for Sibyl, she is quite enthusiastic, dear child!"

She paused, and John Darrent, who felt himself bound to keep the ball rolling, remarked, sententiously, that observation often teaches more than books.

"Yes, that is true. But then the faculty of observation must be cultivated. This is what your brother is doing for our young people. Is it true, by-the-by—one cannot help feeling interested in such a man—that he was educated for the medical profession?"

"Perfectly true; he took his degree before he went abroad."

"And did he ever practice in London?"

"For a short time only. The life did not suit him. He gave it up."

There was that in John Darrent's way of answering these questions, which would have betrayed to a less acute person than Miss Harcourt that he did not care to pursue the subject further.

She was silent, and there came into her face an expression unusual to her. It was as though some strong inward emotion, rising suddenly to the surface, were breaking through the mask of real reserve and artificial frankness, which was all the world ever saw of Caroline Harcourt. When she spoke again, her face was pale, and her voice was low and very earnest.

"You think me curious," she said; "that is natural; but it is not the case—indeed it is not. The real fact is that I heard something strange a few days ago about your brother, and ever since, I have been trying to speak to him. I am told that, as a medical man, he came in contact once, with one in whom I am interested—a woman—a beautiful woman."

Now, John Darrent was endowed with a sense of mental rectitude not common in natures so highly sympathetic. Nothing, it is probable, ever caused him so keen an emotion of regret, even remorse, as one of those discoveries, made by most men from time to time—for our friends are always surprising us—that, by acting on a superficially-formed opinion he had passed an incorrect and uncharitable judgement upon his neighbor. Hence he was in the custom of holding in abeyance his opinions with regard to those about him, and was always ready to be instructed by those flashes of revelation, which, bringing to the surface qualities held in reserve, show us character; if, that is to say, our eyes are open; for over blind prejudice not the keenest sunray has any enlightening power.

But the wisest of us have our pet aversions, and these, as all the world knows, have a misleading effect upon the mind. The artificial in man or woman grated on every sensibility. It jarred him; it set his teeth on edge, like the scraping of iron. Caroline Harcourt had a thousand artificialities, and he had long since put her down as a woman who, by continual pandering to the world, had destroyed her truer self,

and outlived any capability of deep feeling.

But her faltering words that evening, her changed expression, her sudden earnestness, seemed to indicate possession of the powers he had, with undue haste, denied her.

John Darrent, as, moved with a new sympathy, he turned to his visitor, blamed himself for his sweeping condemnation.

The immediate effect was a complete change in his manner, from cold politeness to friendly interest.

He said, "It is no secret that my brother James practised in London, Miss Harcourt. He witnessed many painful scenes. Had he persevered, I believe he would have gone mad; whether the scene to which you refer was among them—"

"Oh!" interrupted Caroline, clasping her hands; "if I knew! if I could only speak to him! But I never have an opportunity; he is always surrounded; and," casting down her eyes, "to bring the sad subject into general conversation would be more than I could do. It would kill me."

John Darrent said, "I can understand your feeling. Our sorrows look more ghastly than they need in the light of the indifference of others. However, there is no reason you should not speak to my brother quietly; he is coming in presently. If you go into my study, I will send him to you there; that is the best plan. My study," smiling, "is a sacred place; there will be no fear of interruption from the young ones."

"How kind you are!" murmured Caroline Harcourt. And John Darrent once more detecting, or suspecting, the artificial in her tone, and feeling impatient, rose from his seat, observed that, James and the children were late, and strolled to the gate to watch for them. Mrs. Darrent, meantime, conducted their visitor to the library, where, shortly after, the traveller, looking not a little perplexed, joined her.

As it has already been hinted, James Darrent was perfectly well aware of the identity of Adeline Rosebay with the lovely and unfortunate Mrs. Cockburn, who, after the death of her husband, during his trial for fraudulent bankruptcy, and mal-appropriation of trust-moneys, had disappeared from society. He met her first, when, as a young girl of seventeen, she was being thrust into the marriage which had turned out so disastrously; he met her for the second time in the streets of London, staring with horror in her face, at a news-sheet, which, amongst other items of intelligence, bore, in large type, the words, "Death of Cockburn, the banker, in prison."

When she turned white and sick with horror, and reeled like one stricken, he, with gentle decision, took her by the arm, and (for they were in a crowded part of London) hailed a conveyance, and went with her to her home. She was not without friends, and, when he called to inquire for her on the following day, he was told that a doctor was in attendance, and that she was in a high fever, which it was feared would end fatally.

He had then taken his passage for South Africa, and, deeply interested as he felt, he knew he could do nothing. As a fact, he did not see the bankrupt's widow again; he did not even hear of her until the day when his niece Maggie introduced him to Mrs. Rosebay.

His surprise, as may be imagined, was great; his sense of relief was still greater; for the two visions of the brilliant girl, and the heart-broken agonized woman, had, throughout his three years of wandering, haunted him with a terrible persistence, for which he could not account.

To no one, not even his brother, had James Darrent confided the secret that he had ever known Adeline Rosebay before. It was her will to live unknown; he would respect it.

(To be continued.)

WHERE WERE YOU?

Where were you last Sunday? "At home not feeling very well." Did you ever close up your store, and, by way of explanation, stick up a notice, "Detained at home by headache?" and why not, pray?

"Visitors came in, and I could not leave them." Ah! Would you continue in your service a young man who should offer you a like excuse from staying away from your store on Monday evening? And when you stand at the bar of God, and the Judge asks you why you did not go to his sanctuary more, will you look him in the face and say, "Oh! we had company."

"It looked like rain; indeed, it had begun to sprinkle." Did it? Had it? Would the prospect have kept you away from market or store? Indeed, have you not been known to go to a concert or a dancing party in the midst of what might have been the beginning of another deluge? Is it not time an umbrella was invented that would protect Church members from the rain on Sunday?

"I went to hear the Rev. D. Boanerges." And so the Athenians of Paul's time are not dead yet, but some still who spend their time in nothing else but either to tell or hear some new thing? Is this what the houses of God are for? Is this to make "them gates of heaven?"

"I had an engagement that prevented me from attending." You had? And on God's day you were immersed in business? Have you had advices that the fourth commandment has been repealed? Surely it is safer and more profitable to overcrowd Saturday than to lose a Sunday!

Men act the fool nowhere as in matters of religion. Here they expect to get everything for nothing. Unconscious of God's presence, insensible to his love, with a positive disrelish for his society, they would think themselves terribly abused if informed that they will not be permitted to spend an eternity with him.

TRUST IN GOD.

The only being in the universe who is absolutely trustworthy is God. Not anything or everything else can be relied on to support the soul in those hours when it most needs support. Not riches, for they "shall certainly make to themselves wings and fly away," and "he that trusteth in his riches shall fall." Not our own strength, for that "is perfect weakness." Not our own righteousness, for the woes denounced against such as trusted in themselves that they were righteous, prove that it is untrustworthy. Nor are earthly friends always to be relied on. "Take ye heed every one of his neighbor, and trust ye not in any brother; for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbor will walk with slanders." And if they were thoroughly faithful and willing, they have not the power to help us in the hour of greatest need. Nor is our own wisdom sufficient for our support and guidance. Hence the command—"Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding." How precious and abundant are His promises to protect and bless those who trust in Him! "They that put their trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abideth forever." It is such trust that enables us to commit ourselves and our dearest interests to the unwearied love of our heavenly Father, knowing that He will care for us, and, according to His promise, make all things work together for good to them that love Him. This trust brings peace and hope and strength to the soul amid the severest vicissitudes of life; so that whether we are tried with pain or bereavement, or beset with temptation, we shall still be able to rest in the everlasting arms of Him who careth for us.