

"Oh, Annie! but you know I've told you what game they make of teetotalers at our office. Fancy me a teetotaler. I really couldn't!"

"I'm sure you would be glad after," pleaded Annie; "won't you try?"

"Couldn't. You've asked too big a present. There, aren't you going to bed? Mother was saying just now that you ought to be gone."

"Yes. I'll go now. Good-night, Willie." There was a ring of disappointment in Annie's tone, and as she kissed her brother, the latter saw that her eyes were full of tears.

He let her go, and sat still looking into the fire and thinking of her request. He wished she had not asked him such a thing, it was so hard to refuse her; and yet how could he be a teetotaler. She did not know what it meant to him, or she never would have thought of it for a minute.

And yet he was dissatisfied with himself for having refused her, and soon began to wish that whatever he might have to suffer in consequence, he had said "Yes," instead of "No."

Annie was beginning rather slowly to undress when she heard a voice at the bottom of the stairs saying:—

"Annie, I want you!"

In a moment she was on the staircase. Willie came a few stairs up to meet her.

"Do you really want that present very much?"

"Oh, yes!" and her voice trembled from eagerness, for she was an enthusiastic little abstainer, and it was one of the greatest desires of her life that Willie should sign the pledge.

"All right, here it is; you'll never want another present as long as you live, will you?"

"No, never; I'm quite satisfied," answered Annie. Good-night, Willie dear."

"Good night; you're a good girl."

"I'm sure you won't be sorry," Annie bent over the banisters to say before she went into her bedroom. And when she was safely shut in she unfolded that scrap of paper, and read over and over again her brother's name, "William Field," by the light of a dim candle.

"Thank God for my beautiful birthday present," she said reverently, as she put it away in an old purse at the back of her drawer.

How many times during the next few days and weeks that piece of paper was taken out, and the name William Field read over! If Willie had known it he would have laughed, but Annie did not tell him how much she treasured his birthday present. He did not see it again until just four years later, when he had grown from an awkward boy into a tall, fine-looking young man. Annie had grown too, though not very fast—she still seemed a very little thing to her big brother.

On her sixteenth birthday she stood beside him with a pleased, happy face, for he had just put into her hands a beautiful-bound volume of poems, which she had long coveted.

In the midst of thanking him she darted away, and returned in a minute with a piece of paper in her hand.

"This puts my new present in this shade," she said laughing; "do you recognize it?" And she held it open before him. "It was a more valuable present than I expect to have again."

Half-laughing, half-serious, Willie said, "It cost me some thing!"

Then he put his arm round his sister and went on very gently:—

"But there's another side to it, Annie. It has been the making of me! The battles I had over my teetotalism brought out every scrap of manliness I had in me. I learnt real lessons of courage and independence through it; my success I feel is nearly all, directly or indirectly, the result of it, and when I see what drinking habits make of many other men, I cannot be thankful enough for my little sister's request four years ago."

With eyes full of tears Annie bent her head and murmured again as she had done many times before, "Thank God for my beautiful birthday present!"—*Temperance Record.*

H. B.

Our Casket.

JEWELS.

The truly valiant dare everything but doing any other body an injury.

We ought not to judge of men's merits by their qualifications, but by the use they make of them.

A churlish, croaking, gloomy professor of Gospel religion is a living libel; he haunts society like a ghost.—T. L. Cuyler.]

Never fear to bring the sublimest motive to the smallest duty and the most infinite comfort to the smallest trouble.

There are a great many duties that cannot wait. Unless they are done the moment they present themselves, it is not worth while to do them at all.

Ideas make their way in silence like the waters that, filtering behind the rocks of the Alps, loosen them from the mountains on which they rest.—[D'Aubigne.

No life can be well ended that has not been well spent; and what life has been well spent that has had no purpose, and has accomplished no object, that has realized no hopes?

Virtue consists in making desire subordinate to duty, passion to principle. The pillars of character are moderation, temperance, chastity, simplicity, self-control; its method is self-denial.

Perhaps your Master knows what a capital plowman you are; and he never means to let you become a reaper because you do the plowing so well.—[Spurgeon.

Self-distrust is the cause of most of our failures. In the assurance of strength there is strength, and they are the weakest, however strong, who have no faith in themselves or their powers.

You may tame the wild beast; the conflagration of the American forest will cease when all the timber and the dry wood is consumed, but you cannot arrest the progress of that cruel word which you uttered carelessly yesterday or this morning.—[F. W. Robertson.

The fishermen of Brittany, so the story goes, are wont to utter this simple prayer when they launch their boats upon the deep: "Keep me, my God; my boat is so small and Thy ocean is so wide." How touchingly beautiful the words and the thought! Might not the same petition be uttered with as much directness every morning and evening of our daily life.

BITS OF TINSEL.

A Burlington mother has miraculously cured her youngest hopeful of smoking by the laying on of hands.

"We do not dwell on that point," said the minister when he sat down upon an upturned tack.

Why are fowl the most economical things farmers keep?—Because for every grain of corn they give a peck.

"Ella, is your father at home?" said a bashful lover to his sweetheart. "I want to propose something to him." "No, Clarence; papa is not at home, but I am. Couldn't you propose to me just as well?" And he did, with perfect success.

"Got all kinds of ties here?" said a would-be wit, entering a well-known furnishing store. "Yes, sir," replied the shopman. "Well, I should like a pigstye," remarked the customer. "All right, sir, just bend down your hogshead, and we'll take your measure."

"What a blessing it is" said Pat, slightly muddled, "that night never comes on till late in the day, when a man is all tired out, and he couldn't work no more anyhow, even if it was morning."

"Yes, sir," said the liquor dealer, "it is a good law that prevents anyone from opening a school within 500 feet of a liquor saloon. School houses are the ruin of the trade, anyway."—*Somerville Journal.*

"John, how does the thermometer stand?" "Against the wall, dad." "I mean how is the mercury?" "Guess it's pretty well; it hasn't complained, lately." "You little rascal, is it colder than yesterday?" "I really don't know, dad; but I'll go out and feel."

"Don't be afraid!" said a snob to a German laborer. "Sit down and make yourself my equal." "I would haff to blow my brains out," was the reply of the Teuton.

"What shall I write?" asked the new reporter. "About a half column," said the city editor. And the fresh young man wrote an elaborate description of the Washington monument.