

The Family.

PEACE.

How vain are thoughts that wing the soul,
But lift it not to purer light!
Like gorgeous sunset clouds they roll,
Then fade across the hills of night.

-The Church Magazine.

A LADY'S EXPERIENCE ON THE DESERT.

All this region [the north-western stretch of the peninsula] looks like the level beach of a sea. The Red Sea must have covered it at one time. It is hard sand and gravel, and as easy to walk upon as a gravel walk.

MAKING A HOME.

At a reception in Washington lately, a woman, famous in the last generation, fell under the discussion of a cotene of her old friends, one of whom spoke of her wit and power of repartee, another of her broad, generous charity, a third of her keen instinct in reading character.

An American who saw in his youth an Englishwoman pre-eminent at that time for her learning and genius, was questioned as to his impression of her. "She overwhelmed me with her knowledge; her broad, liberal views and her philanthropy opened a new world to me.

Carlyle, who had been used to coarse surroundings in his early home, was deeply impressed by the refinement, the pretty "bits of finishing," the gentleness, in the home of the woman he afterwards married; and the most pathetic part of his wife's history is her heroic effort to give this dainty charm to the rough dwellings in which he placed her.

There is no trait in the Englishman stronger than his love of home, and hence he is apt to value in woman the quality of "making a home" above all others. The sailor's wife "makes the hearth clean," to show her joy at his return. It is the "household motions" of Wordsworth's ideal women that are "light and free," and all Shakespeare's lovely heroines are domestic women.

"Let me see your home, and I will tell you what you are," the Russian Paulovitch says to his countrywomen. Our American girls, in their zeal for music, art, or it may be authorship, are sometimes apt to forget this. They leave the oversight and the details of housekeeping to servants, forgetting that the soiled tablecloth and greasy carpet tell tales of character as loudly and emphatically as do neatness and taste.

They forget, too, that while their picture or song or story may prove a failure, a dainty, cheerful home is a poem which all men can understand and will certainly take to heart.

SAVED FROM A DOUBLE DEATH.

It was midnight. The din of London traffic had ceased, and the footfall of an occasional pedestrian or the tattle of a night cab was all that broke the silence.

Two Christian men were walking across Westminster Bridge. They were on an errand of mercy—seeking for outcasts, in imitation of their Master, who came to seek and to save the lost. They had not long to seek, for about the middle of the bridge their attention was attracted by two miserable looking creatures, who were standing by the parapet—or rather leaning unsteadily against it—for, intoxicated as they were, to stand was not easy.

They were man and wife. Their garments were tattered, the last remnants of self-respect seemed to have utterly left them, and as the sickening gaslight revealed their dirty, haggard faces, and the deplorable indications of the poverty induced by drunkenness, the spectacle was one scarcely likely to move the sympathy of the occasional by-passer; for the few who were about had left them to the tender mercies of the police.

Not so, however, the two Christian friends. Large-hearted, and believing it possible to rescue the most degraded, they stopped. Addressing the man, one of them asked—

"Friend, where are you going at this time of night?"

It was the woman who answered in a hoarse, feeble, jesting tone, "We are going to wash in the water."

"No, no; not to-night," said her husband kindly, "come with me."

And the two gentlemen, disregarding a natural reluctance to such company, induced the miserable pair to go with them as well as their unsteady gait would allow, and they were soon sheltered for the night in a lodging-house. It was no time then for talking further to them, so they were left to sleep off the effects of their drunken excess.

The morning came, and morning to a drunkard after an outbreak of his vice is hardly welcome. The nervous prostration—the sense of abject weakness to resist temptation—the renewed craving for the ruinous intoxicant, are sometimes, in addition, accompanied with a quickening of the conscience. It was so in this instance, and realizing their degraded condition, the unhappy couple listened patiently to the words of kind counsel which were addressed to them by their newly-found friends. It need hardly be said that those reminded them, with earnest feeling, of the ruin in which their sin was involving them, not only in regard to this world, but also to the life beyond.

Both man and wife were at length induced to attend a service at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and, singular as it may appear to many, yet easily accounted for by the recollection of the kind providence that fills our lives with apparently undesigned coincidences, the preacher referred especially to the miserable results of intemperance in this life, and the terrible doom of the drunkard in the next. The poor man saw himself as with new eyes. It seemed to him as though the preacher knew all about him (though in fact he knew nothing of the case), and that he spoke directly to himself as a messenger from God. He trembled—he felt that an eye was on him, from whose gaze he could not hide; the whole of his distorted life—like a panorama—was spread out before him; the early temptations—the feeble resistance—the fall—the resolve to do better—the failure—the self-abandonment—the self-loathing—the almost despair of his present condition, were all present to him, and the sight of himself shook his spirit to its centre. His heart cried for mercy to "God who willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live."

Little by little, light and joy dawned upon his dark and troubled soul.

Soon afterwards he was baptised, and his name entered in the list of members worshipping at the place where he had realized the saving power of God's Word.

Now let us change the scene. It was Saturday night. A Christian visitor was going his rounds after the prayer meeting he usually attended. Entering a house occupied by well-to-do working people, he walked up the staircase, and tapped at the door opposite. Entering, he saw before him a working-man, quiet and content, with a Bible on his lap, and his little girl sitting by his side reading the Child's Companion, while a cheerful fire burned in the grate. This was the drunkard who intended suicide at Westminster Bridge. His wife, transformed into a thrifty housewife, was out marketing.

"Ah, sir," said the man, "that is not for supper. Since God met with me at the Tabernacle, we never stay at home on the Sunday morning, but the wife gets dinner ready on Saturday night, and then in the morning we just bank up the fire and put the saucepan on again, and when we come home from chapel there is a nice hot dinner for us." Singularly enough, the man had obtained a situation which, one would think, must expose him to constant temptation. He was employed at a bottling establishment at the West End of London. It will not surprise the reader to learn that fears were entertained lest he should relapse into his old habit. So one day, in passing, the visitor just alluded to called at the office, and inquired of one of the managers whether the man was still employed by the firm, and, if so, how he was conducting himself. The answer was all that could be desired, "He is still in our employ, sir, and we have not a better man in our service."

Let the Christian worker be encouraged. If ever Christian man attempted a task apparently hopeless, here is an instance. Let us despair of none, let us ever be wise to win souls, "always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not vain in the Lord." —The Lantern.

LITTLE SCOTCH GRANITE.

LITTLE children who are always true, who would "rather die than lie," are always honoured. People may sometimes make fun of them, but in their secret souls they honour them and wish they were like them. The story of a true boy, which we clip from the Manchester Times, illustrates this:

Burt and Johnnie Lee were delighted when their Scotch cousin came to live with them. He was little, but very bright, and full of fun. He could tell curious things about his home in Scotland and his voyage across the ocean. He was as far advanced in his studies as they were, and the first day he went to school they thought him remarkably good. He wasted no time in play when he should have been studying, and he advanced finely. At night, before the close of school the teacher called the roll, and the boys began to answer "Ten." When Willie understood that he was to say ten if he had not whispered during the day, he replied:

"I have whispered."
"More than once?"
"Yes, sir," answered Willie.
"As many as ten times?"
"May be I have," faltered Willie.
"Then I shall mark you zero," said the teacher, sternly, "and that is a great disgrace."
"Why, I did not see you whisper once," said Johnnie, that night after school.
"Well, I did," said Willie. "I saw others doing it, and so I asked to borrow a book; then I lent a slate-pencil, and asked a boy for a knife, and did several such things. I supposed it was allowed."
"O, we all do it," said Burt, reddening. "There isn't any sense in the old rule, and nobody could keep it; nobody does."
"I will, or else I will say I haven't," said Willie.
"Do you suppose I will tell ten lies in one heap?"
"O, we don't call them lies," muttered Johnnie.
"Then wouldn't it be a credit among us at night if we were so strict?"
"What of that, if you told the truth?" laughed Burt, bravely.

For a short time the boys all saw how it was with Willie. He studied hard, played with all his might in his spare time, but, according to his account, he lost more credits than any of the rest. After some weeks the boys answered "Nine" and "Eight" oftener than they used to. Yet the school-room seemed to have grown quieter. Sometimes, when Willie Grant's mark was even lower than usual, the teacher would smile peculiarly, but said no more of disgrace. Willie never preached at them or told tales; but somehow it made the boys ashamed of themselves, just the seeing that this sturdy, blue-eyed boy must tell the truth. It was putting the clean cloth by the half-soiled one, you see, and they felt like cheats and story-tellers. They talked him all over, and loved him, if they did nickname him "Scotch Granite," he was so firm about a promise. Well, at the end of the term, Willie's name was very low down on the credit list. When it was read he had hard work not to cry, for he was very sensitive, and he had tried hard to be perfect. But the very last thing that day was a speech by the teacher, who told of once seeing a man muffled up in a cloak. He was passing him without a look, when he was told that the man was General —, the great hero. "The signs of his rank were hidden, but the hero was there just the same," said the teacher. "And now, boys, you will see what I mean when I give a little gold medal to the most faithful boy—the one really the most conscientiously 'perfect in his deportment' among you. Who shall have it?"

"Little Scotch Granite!" shouted forty boys at once, for the child whose name was so low on the credit list had made truth noble in their eyes.

GUARD THE CHURCH'S HONOUR.

THE world is unfriendly to the church. The more spiritual the church is, the more unfriendly the world. It is ready to criticise it. Often its spirit is of hatred. The Saviour foretold that it would be so.

The good name of the church is her power. With this she can go forth as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. Men will be attracted to her. They will yield to the motives which she will present to them. They will seek a place in her communion as a coveted distinction. So, with her good name under reproach, the church will be weakened. It will be harder for her to gain the ear of the community. Hence the diligence of Satan to soil the good name of the church by unjust aspersions, and also to tempt the members to do or permit what will bring upon her just reproach.

To her members the good name of the church is committed. For it each one is responsible. Cherish it. Shield it. If you know anything against the church, do not spread it. Sorrow over it. Do your utmost to repair it. But resolve that you will have no share in publishing scandals, whether false or true, or in circulating reports to the injury of the pastor, the officers, or your fellow church members. The church has difficulties enough in her path already. Hold her up to honour.

Do your utmost to make her worthy of honour. Compel the world to honour her in your pure, devoted, consistent, Christian life. You can do your part to build the walls of Jerusalem. And no person outside the church can do so much to tear down the walls as a gossiping, fault-finding member, without the self-respect and honour, and spirituality which silence cavit, and compel the world to acknowledge that God is with his people. —Christian Advocate.

NOTES BY "PHILO." WISK LEGISLATION.

It is to be hoped that the presbyteries will either reduce to a practicable measure, or consign to an early grave, the scheme submitted to them for the supply of vacant congregations, and the employment of probationers. There are sixteen articles in this proposed scheme, and at least one-half of these, in my opinion, are unnecessary. Why should a committee of ministers, as proposed in article one, be necessary to assign licentiates and ministers to synods for appointment and nothing more? Ministers may go to any synod they please for employment, but out of charge a minister is to be sent to any synod this committee may choose for him? No ministers in possession of their senses will submit to any such arbitrary authority, nor ought licentiates to be expected to place themselves under such a regulation. That committee could keep a licentiate out of any synod as they pleased. It will be found, if this synodical method of working is to be adopted, licentiates and ministers must have liberty to seek employment where they please as any other man may. Then there will be no need for this committee of Assembly. Then why should the conveners of the Home Mission Committees compose the synodical committees? These gentlemen have enough to do already. That regulation must be altered. Other members of presbytery are as competent as these brethren for the work. We have already enough of the monopolizing of work in a few hands. Then why should this committee be given power to allow a vacancy to supply itself for one-third of the time? The presbytery can do that whether this committee does it or not. And the vacancy can and will do it in spite of the committee. And so on from article six to the end of this scheme. Not one of the regulations has in it anything new or that will relieve the present difficulty. The scheme is no improvement on the old scheme worked so long and fairly by Dr. Torrance as convener. The only idea in it is that of relegating the supply of vacancies to the synods. That may survive, but the whole details require to be altered. It should be kept in view that to be licentiates, pastors, and presbyteries have rights that no scheme can interfere with or supersede. Everything in the last eight regulations is already within the competence of pastors, vacancies, licentiates and presbyteries.

UNIFICATION OF FOREIGN MISSION WORK.

This idea of unifying the foreign mission work of the Church was sprung on the General Assembly at London, late at night, when there was no time or opportunity to discuss the proposal. There was no great demand for it either in east or west. However, the idea was taken up. It was resolved to attempt it. Schemes of unification were proposed. Now one of them is sent down to presbyteries, and along with it the question of unification. Surely the question of unification should have been decided upon authoritatively before plans were submitted on which it could be carried out. Because if unification is desirable, and if it should be carried out, the plan by which it may be best carried out will soon be discovered. The proposed plan is good enough to begin on. Details may safely be left to the future. Our Church is afflicted sometimes with too much wisdom, as well as with too little. There are always gentlemen ready to draw up constitutions and regulations so that now our committees have so many regulations that in some cases it amounts practically to having none at all; and every matter is relegated to a committee, and the committee draws up recommendations and there is an end of it. Think of how pastors are burdened with recommendations of committees on State of Religion, Sabbath Schools, Temperance, and regulations of Home Mission and Augmentation Committees—all this ending in very little attention being paid to these multitudinous requirements.

HOME MISSION WOMEN'S SOCIETY.

or whatever it is called, is another institution with voluminous regulations, being foisted on the Church. And for what reason? Is not the home mission work supported with sufficient generosity? Are our people not got at for money by a sufficient number of channels already; have not the women of our churches enough to do at present? The opinion of many is that they have. And that this new-fangled scheme for multiplying means of extracting money from our congregations is totally unnecessary and uncalled for. It has an ugly appearance of competition with the Women's Foreign Mission Work. Its only effect can be to annoy and irritate a people already sufficiently appealed to for funds. It deserves only to be decently interred.

"AN ELDER'S" LETTER.

Some curious characters find their way into the eldership, both teaching and not teaching. The Elder who wrote in your last on ministerial support, deals with the subject in a way one would not expect from one who was conversant with his Bible. He seems to write in a spirit of hostility to, rather than sympathy with, the ministers of the Gospel. Nor is it clear what he is driving at, unless it be as he says: "That the members of Christ's Church should not seek to live in a higher position than that of a mechanic," and unless it be to injure the augmentation scheme and prevent what the church considers an adequate salary being paid to her ministers. If this is the Elder's mission it is not a very high one, nor a very honourable one, at least in the opinion of some of his fellow elders. If the Apostle Paul had a congregation composed of men holding such views as he sets forth it is certain the Apostle would rather work with his own hands than take money from them. And if this Elder does not wish to contribute to the support of the Gospel lest ministers grow too rich or too worldly, he is at liberty to devote his gifts to some other object. The aim and effort of Mr. Macdonnell and the Augmentation Fund is at least a generous one. And our friend need not fear that ministers will grow too rich and too worldly from anything they get from it. Certainly if they do, we can feel he has done his best to prevent it. They will not do so with his consent. But let him remember the words of the Apostle, who, though he scorned to take support from a people who suspected him of worldliness, taught them very unmistakably in many exhortations that "they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." "If we have sown unto you spiritual things is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" (Cor. ix. 11.)

A BIRD'S nest! Mark it well within, without; No tool had he that wrought, no knife to cut, No nail to fix, no boltkin to insert, No glue to join; his little nest was all, And yet how neatly finished! What else had, With every implement and means of art, And twenty years' apprenticeship to boot, Could make me such another? —Professor Hewitt, 1793.