

thing to tell her, that would astonish folks in general, and herself in particular.

The apothecary was as steady a young fellow as could be, and he knew it, yet he told her that he drank like a fish.

And when he told the apothecary, the two laughed right heartily.

It was half-past nine o'clock, and Mr. Smith rung at the bell of Mr. Tellit's front door, for he promised to call to see his lady home, and to tell them what farther particulars he could gain from the butcher, at whose store he stopped on his way to the house. Hardly had he touched the bell-pull ere Mrs. Tellit rushed to the door to answer the call, accompanied by Mrs. Smith, who was anxious for the particulars.

They dragged him into the little parlor, and got him up in one corner; there they surrounded him, or at least as far as they were able, and clamorous were their calls for the result of his investigations.

Mr. Smith was a small man, and the only one in the room, so he was somewhat alarmed at the serious aspect of their proceedings, but the longer he waited, the more alarming they grew, and he began as soon as he could.

"Mr. Richards, the apothecary, does not drink ardent spirits," said he in a faint voice.

"What!" said Mrs. S., "does the butcher deny that he told me?" and her face grew very red, and the ribbons on her cap were shaken with the violence of her passion.

"No, he repeats what he said, and still persists that it was true," and Mr. Smith was a little bolder.

"Then how can he be the man he represents him to be?"

"The butcher says he told you the apothecary drank like a fish."

"Yes, those were his words."

"Well, he says that he has never, although he has made numerous researches, been able to discover that a fish drank anything stronger than pure water, and he can find no proof to the contrary; and that the apothecary is a sober, steady, respectable young man."

I have heard of persons who were "chop fallen," but I do not believe they presented such an appearance as did these ladies when they discovered how egregiously they had been "taken in."

"The villain!" said Mrs. Smith, "he needn't say much, he's none too good himself, and I'll never trade one cent's worth with that butcher as long as I live!"

"Nor I—nor I," responded all.

Mr. Smith was released from his position in the corner, and as Mrs. Smith suddenly expressed a desire to go straight home, they separated from the remainder, all of whom vowed all sorts of things should happen to the merry butcher, who had so fooled them.

It was well for the apothecary that this piece of scandal was "nipped in the bud," or it might have been a serious drawback to his financial matters, but his customers still continue to increase, and Miss Tattle, although she vowed so strongly to the contrary, has been seen several times in his store, and Mrs. Smith asserts that the said maiden lady is "setting her cap" for him.

The butcher tells the joke to his acquaintances, to the great discomfort of those concerned.

A MOTHER'S TRUST.

A faithful mother is one who considers herself charged with the care of the *whole character* of her child—with the care of its conduct and its spirit, its person and its life. If, also, a Christian mother, she remembers that to worship God at stated times is not all. It must *live* also to his glory. To spend its Sabbaths with the people of God, is not all; there are days, not a few, that must be spent with the people of the world, and here, also, He must be glorified.

The mother who understands the nature of her child, who knows the many weaknesses and wants which belong to that

nature, knows also that joy and gladness are as necessary to the healthy condition of her child as sunshine and fresh air. She knows that it does the heart good to be cheerful—nay, even to be merry, so long as mirth is well-timed, and tempered by delicacy and right feeling; and in order that her children may be right in everything—earnest in work, and earnest in play—she gives her sanction to their amusements, as well as to their graver occupations. Such a mother does not preside only over the graver scenes, and the holier solemnities of life, and, because she is a Christian, withdraw herself from its lighter and less restrained enjoyments, leaving to the buoyancy of youthful spirits to take what wayward flight they may, and to exhibit themselves under any form of boisterous merriment which occasion may offer to their choice. She knows an invaluable secret for the management of a household, which teaches her a better philosophy than that: it is to *share* the joyous moments of her children, in order that she may know what is in their hearts—in order that she may check the lawless outbursts of tumultuous feeling, smooth off the ill-timed jest by some appropriate word, or preserve the timid from neglect; and while she laughs as gaily as the rest, she still keeps a watchful eye and listening ear, lest any word or act, dishonourable to the Christian name, should wake a false or jarring note, and mar the harmony of such enjoyment.

Such a mother will not allow a simple birth-day festival to come and go without her warm heart-sympathies for youth being deeply stirred—without her earnest prayers ascending to the throne of Him who would not that his children should mock him in their joy. A birth-day celebration to such a mother is not a mere festivity—it is a season of glad thoughts, of gratitude, and hope. Why should she not rejoice? She may be training up immortal beings to rejoice for ever.

It is, indeed, no time for such a mother to withdraw herself when guests are coming in; for children seldom utter half the welcomes which they feel, and her kind looks and words are wanted to make all things harmonize—to lead the timid forth, and make them feel at home.

All things are ready now. The guests have come, the father has returned before his wonted time, and sparkling eyes, and clapping hands, have given him his full meed of praise, for thus performing more than he had promised when he went from home. All things are ready. Creams and cakes, and luscious fruits, and intermingled flowers, and glittering evergreens, that make a perfect bower of the old parlour, where a canopy is raised above a crimson chair for her who is the queen of that gay festival, and moves about amongst the throng, with all her honours blushing on her brow. All things are ready; but the mother sits awhile apart in her own chamber wrapped in thought, for something new and strange is working at her heart. She has a brother on the sea—the youngest of her father's household—a long lost brother—sent to sea, to keep him from a more disgraceful fate. She thinks of him; for momentary thoughts will often rush to wide extremes, and kind and genial hearts are not content with circles of bright joy, from which even one beloved form is absent. It is the hour, too, when we long to gather in all—all; the twilight hour of autumn, when first the glowing fire looks beautiful, and evenings lengthen, and the home within grows richer every day, as nature in her outward garniture of leaves and flowers grows poor.

All things are ready; but the mother lingers still, shrouding herself within the deepening shadows of her silent chamber, where she hears but answers not, for busy feet are hurrying to and fro; yet she would fain be still, communing with her heart. She has a question of great import to decide, and none can help her in it. None! Yes, there is one to whom she brings her trials every day; and now, in this gay joyous festival, her soul is tried indeed. All things are ready—fruits and flowers, and all delicious things, but