

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

THE COMFORTER.

The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, who is the Father will send in My Name.—St. John xiv. 26.

O Holy Comforter, I hear Thy blessed Name with throbbing heart, Pressed oft with sorrow, sin, and fear, And pierced with many a venomous dart; Come, Messenger Divine, Come cheer this heart of mine!

O Holy Comforter, I know Thou art not to dull sense revealed; Tho' I count mine as the sweetest flow, O! the soft wind that wooes the field; Breathe, Messenger Divine, Breathe on this soul of mine!

O Holy Comforter, Thy light Is light eternal and serene; Shine Thou, and on my ravished sight Vision shall break of things unseen; Come, Messenger Divine, Make these bright glimpses mine!

O Holy Comforter, Thy love O'erfloweth as the flooding sea; Give me its calmness, its repose; Then shall my heart o'erflow to Thee; Come, Messenger Divine, Fill Thou this breast of mine!

O Holy Comforter, Thy grace Is life and health, and hope and power; By His I can reach cross and sea; Can triumph in the darkest hour; Come, Messenger Divine, The strength of grace be mine!

O Holy Comforter, Thy peace, The peace of God, impart and keep Unruffled till life's tumult cease; And all its angry tempests sleep; Come, Messenger Divine, Thy perfect peace be mine! —Ray Palmer.

THE BIBLE IN MY TRUNK.

Conversation at the tea-table turned upon the propriety of praying before other persons; and some contended it was pharisaical to kneel down and say your prayers while others were in the room. A minister who was present, related the following:

When I was a young man, said he, I was a clerk at Boston. Two of my room-mates in my boarding house were also clerks, about my own age, which was eighteen. The first Sunday morning during the three or four hours that elapsed from getting up to bell-ringing for church, I felt a secret desire to get a Bible which my mother had given me out of my trunk, and read it in it; but I was afraid to do so before my messmates, who were reading miscellaneous books. At last my conscience got the mastery and I rose up and went to my trunk. I had half raised it when the thought occurred to me that it might look like over-sanctity and pharisaical, so I shut my trunk and returned to the window. For twenty minutes I was miserably ill at ease. I felt I was doing wrong. I started a second time for my trunk, and had my hand on my Bible, when the fear of being laughed at conquered the better emotions, and I again dropped the top of my trunk. As I turned away from it, one of my room-mates, who observed my irreligious movements said laughingly:

"I say, what's the matter? You seem as restless as a weather-cock!"

I replied by laughing in my turn; and then conceiving the truth to be the best, frankly told him what was the matter. To my surprise and delight, they both spoke up, and avowed that they had Bibles in their trunks, and had been secretly wishing to read them, but were afraid to take them out lest I should laugh at them. "Then," said I, "let us agree to read them every Sunday, and we shall have the laugh on our side."

To this there was a hearty response and the next moment the three Bibles were out; and I assure you we felt happier all that day, for reading in them in the morning.

The following Sunday, about ten o'clock while we were reading our chapters, two of our fellow boarders from another room came in. When they saw how we were engaged, they stared, and then exclaimed:

"What is all this? A conventicle?"

In reply, I stated exactly how the matter stood; my struggle to get my Bible from my trunk, and how we three having found we had all been afraid of each other without cause had now agreed to read every Sunday. "Not a bad idea," answered one of them. "You have more courage than I have. I have a Bible, too, but have not looked into it since I have been in Boston. But I will read it after this, since you've broken the ice."

The other then asked one of us to read aloud, and both sat and listened quietly till the bell rang out for church.

That evening we three in the same room agreed to have a chapter read every night by one of us, at nine o'clock; and we religiously adhered to our purpose.

A few evenings after this resolution, four or five of the boarders (for there were sixteen clerks boarding in the house) happened to be in our room talking when the nine o'clock bell rang. One of my room-mates, looking at me, opened the Bible. The others looked inquiringly. I then explained our custom.

"We'll all stay and listen," they said, almost unanimously.

The result was, that without an exception, every one of the sixteen clerks spent his Sunday morning in reading the Bible; and the moral effect upon the household was of the highest character. I relate this incident, continued the minister, to show what one person, even a youth, may exert, for good or evil. No man should be afraid to do his duty. A hundred hearts may throbb to act right, but only await a leader. I forgot to add that we were all called the "Bible clerks." All these youths are now useful Christian men, and more than one is laboring in the ministry.—Church and State.

UNFAITHFUL SHEPHERDS.

The Church of England, before the Reformation which John Wesley began, was in a low religious condition. Clergymen, who had the necessary influence, often held several livings and resided in none of them.

The services of the Church were performed in a slovenly manner, and pastoral visitation was neglected. The following anecdotes, related by an Anglican clergyman, indicate the state of affairs which moved the great soul of the founder of Methodism.

Mr. Radcliffe, a fox-hunting parson in the north of Devon, was fond of having convivial evenings in his parsonage, often ending uproariously. Bishop Philpotts sent for him and said, "Mr. Radcliffe, I hear, but I can hardly believe it, that men fight in your house."

"Lor, my dear," answered the parson, in broad Devonshire, "doan't believe it. When they begin fighting I take and turn them out into the churchyard."

A certain Parson Winterton was rector of four parishes and vicar of one. When he lay on his death-bed, a neighboring clergyman visited him. "What account can you render for the talents committed to your charge?" asked the pious neighbor, anxious to awaken penitence in the dying man. "What use have you made of them he continued. "Use of my talents," repeated the dying man, thrusting his hands out from under the bed clothes. "I came into this diocese with nothing—yes, with nothing—and now he began to check off the names on the fingers of the left hand with the fore-finger of the right hand—" now I am rector of Eigncombe, worth eighty pounds; rector of Marwood, worth four hundred and fifty pounds; rector of Westcote, worth five hundred and sixty pounds; and rector of Eastcote, worth a thousand pounds. If that is not making use of one's talents, I do not know what it is."

The Wesleyan reformation ended forever this state of things in the English Church.

THE SWEETEST JOYS.

Very many of the sweetest joys of Christian hearts are songs which have been learned in the bitterness of trial. It is said of a little bird that he will never learn to sing the song his master will have him sing while it is light in his cage. He learns a snatch of every song he hears, but will not learn a full separate melody of his own. And the master covers the cage and makes it dark all about the bird, and then he listens and learns the one song that is taught to him, until his heart is full of it. Then, ever after, he sings that song in the light. With many of us it is as with the bird. The Master has a song he wants to teach us, but we learn only a strain of it, a note here and there, while we catch up snatches of the world's song and sing them with it. Then he comes and makes it dark about us till we learn the sweet melody he would teach us. Many of the loveliest songs of peace and trust sung by God's children in this world, they have been taught in the darkened chamber of sorrow.—Christian Weekly.

BOTH SIDES.

A man in a carriage was riding along. A gaily dressed wife by his side; In satin and laces she looked like a queen, And he like a king in his pride.

A wood sawyer stood on the street as they passed; The carriage and couple he eyed; And said as he worked with his saw on a log, "I wish I was rich and could ride."

The man in the carriage remarked to his wife, "One thing I would give if I could—I'd give my wealth for the strength and the health Of the man who sawed the wood."

A pretty young maid, with a bundle of work, Whose face, like the morning, was fair, Went tripping along with a smile of delight, While humming a love-breathing air.

She looked on the carriage: the lady she saw, Arrived in apparel so fine, And said in a whisper, "I wish from my heart Those satins and laces were mine."

The lady looked out on the maid with her work, And said in a whisper, "I wish from my heart Her beauty and youth to possess."

Thus it is in the world, whatever our lot, Our minds and our time we employ In longing and sighing for what we have not, Ungrateful for what we enjoy.

HYGIENE AND BEAUTY.

Beauty is superior fitness, as a Darwinian would say, and in this respect, too, the preeminence of the ancient Greeks was probably the outcome of their general physical and mental superiority to their fellow men, though they themselves believed in the existence of a chemical pan-cosmetic. In the trial of the arch-quaack Cagliostro, it came out that, during the twelve years from 1765-1777, he had realized three million francs from the sale of his "Recipe for Beauty," a recipe which had been more eagerly sought for than the philosopher's stone, or the secret of longevity. Andreas Csalpinus made the notable discovery that an ointment of crushed locusts and mistletoe juice would treble the charms of the fairest woman. "What must I do to become very beautiful?" the damsel in "Don Quixote" asks the enchanted Moor's head. "Que seas muy honrada," (be very continent), replies the head. Paracelsus recommends meadow dew gathered in the morning while the May moon is on the increase; and Montaigne inquires into the habits of the most well favored tribes of every country, but confesses that the problem is rather an evasive one, the coast-dwellers of Sweden being as distinguished for their comeliness as the Highlanders of Aragon, and the Normandy cider drinkers not less than the Tuscan wine drinkers. His only general rule, however, still holds good—that out-door dwellers are never wholly ill-favored, nor in-door workers altogether lovely; and we might say the same of alcohol drinkers and total abstinents—the schnapps-worshipping natives of the Tyrolese highlands make amends by their active out-door life, as Lowell factory-girls by their teetotalism. There is a good deal in race, though. "Angeli sunt; non Angli," Pope Stephen III wrote more than a thousand years ago to Archbishop Cuthbert, who had sent him a batch of Anglo-Saxon neophytes, and a trace of the same angelic features may still be recognized among the little ragamuffins of many a Schleswig-Holstein coast-village where men subsist on brandy, cheese, and sour rye-bread. Their neighbors, the Pomeranians, are a manifold if not celestial generation, and, in spite of their dreary moorlands, very fond of out-door sports. But farther east, northern succumbs to art, and the northern Russians are about as outrageously unprepossessing as in-door life and a combination of all vices could make the image of the Creator. Empires meet, though, and their Emperor has the honor of commanding twelve regiments of the most godlike men of the present world—the lance-ecrassiers of the body-guard, recruited in the highlands of Lezhgia and Daghestan. Nearly all the natives of the Caucasus have that fatal gift of beauty which made their land the favorite hunting-ground of the harem agents, and this gave the Czar a pretext for treating it as a Turkish dependency. But no social degradation could counteract the combined influence of the Caucasian climate, hardy habits, temperance, and frugality, for the Circassian mountaineers are teetotalers by religion and vegetarians by preference—figs, honey, barley-cakes, and milk being the staples of their diet. They are physically self-made men, for their language proves that their ancestors were Turanians—first-cousins of the owl-faced nomads of the Mongolian steppe.—Dr. F. L. Oscald.

WELL DRESSED.

The best-dressed people are those who covet the least notice. The art of dressing well is to yield a pleasing and unobtrusive impression; so that one of the lower lords of creation may be able to say:

"There was something about that lady's dress which charmed me. It was not the duck of a bonnet, or the lawn-tennis boot, or the arabesque on the skirt; but it was the whole thing. No part was striking, but every part told upon my sense of harmony and propriety."

Do not think that everything fashionable is becoming; it is often the essence of vulgarity. Fashion thrives upon extravagance; and a garment is admired, not for its suitability; but for cost. Yet, after all, fine feathers do not make fine birds; for the birds which have the fairest plumage are in themselves the least valued; they rarely or never sing.

The parrot, the peacock and the king-fisher are beautiful to look upon; but their melody is worse than the bark of a pet-dog which the ladies of a certain uncertain age are apt to prefer to the conversation of their callers. Such birds may think with Artemus Ward:

"I am sorry when I cannot sing, and my friends are sorry when I can."

Fine feathers do not make fine birds, any more than the cosmetics of the famous Madame Bouché made her ladies beautiful forever, or the late queen of Naples was made virtuous by her habit of sticking pious ejaculations inside of her stays.

A true artist will always take care that the frame shall not interfere with the picture; but what if the frame be all glitter and gold, and the picture "a thing of shreds and patches," as it too often is?

THE ST. GOTHARD TUNNEL.

A correspondent of the Engineer writes as follows:

At 10 a. m. we steamed out of the station at Goschenen; at ten hours two minutes we passed under the arch of the tunnel, and at 10 hours 28 minutes we emerged from the corresponding arch into the daylight at Airola. We were thus twenty-six minutes in traversing the tunnel; and as the length is about nine and a quarter miles, this gives an average speed of about twenty-one miles an hour. As a matter of fact, however, the first part of our journey was performed at a considerably higher and the latter at a considerably lower speed, and that for a somewhat curious reason. It was due to the particular state of ventilation of the tunnel at that particular time. My readers will probably remember the immense difficulties which were encountered in maintaining proper ventilation in the tunnel during its construction, and the many prophecies of equal difficulty to be experienced whenever it became the channel of any considerable traffic. So much did these fears weigh even on the managers of the undertaking, that schemes were mooted for carrying bags of oxygen to supply the drivers with the means of respiration, and designs for working by electric locomotives were seriously entertained. When, however, the matter was put to the test, the difficulty vanished. It was found that at all times there is a difference in the height of the barometer at one side and the other of the great chain of the Alps; the corresponding difference in pressure forms a head of air always acting on the one end or other, exactly as there would always be a current of water through a pipe connecting two reservoirs with unequal head. This natural ventilation is found more than sufficient for the present traffic of between twenty and thirty trains per day, and there seems no fear that it will ever need to be supplemented. On the particular occasion of my visit the barometer apparently stood higher at the north, or Swiss portal, by which we entered. Consequently we were bringing as it were, the fresh air with us; and certainly for the first half of our journey it was to us on the engine not perceptibly fouler, though somewhat warmer than the damp and chilly air of a wet morning at Goschenen. Those in the train had, of course, the benefit of the smoke and gases from our engine, but this was not so bad but that windows could be kept open without special annoyance. The tunnel is guarded by means of brilliant lamps placed at each kilometer, and signal-

ing white for safety and green for danger; and during this first half of the journey I was able, after passing each of them, not only to see the next, but also the next but one, shining like a star of the first magnitude just above one of the first. It is obvious that if a light can be seen at 2,000 yards distance, the atmosphere must be more than moderately clear. But after we had reached the summit level, and began to descend toward Airola, things became different. The atmosphere got thicker and thicker, and soon assumed the character of a white mist, which was vaguely lighted up by the head lamp, and through which the signal lights only became visible when some 200 yards away. At the same time it must be observed that the air, though warm and heavy, was in no appreciable degree sulphurous or choking. In fact to a Londoner, accustomed to face without shrinking the passage of the "Underground" from Westminster to the City, or from King's Cross to Paddington, the idea of any unpleasantness in the St. Gothard tunnel would have rather the appearance of a joke.

The thickness of the mist is, however, somewhat more serious, and it seems open to question whether some species of audible signal might not be substituted with advantage for the lamp. As it was, our driver shut off steam, screwed the brakes on slightly, and went cautiously down the gentle incline at about ten miles an hour. It was well that he did so, for one of the lamps, when at last we did see it, proved to show green; the brakes were applied and the train nearly pulled up, and we crept at a foot's pace past a gang of laborers engaged apparently in plate-laying. It is in this way that the mean speed of twenty-one miles an hour, at which we traversed the tunnel, is accounted for. If a different system of signaling could be devised there seems no reason why the speed should not be at least thirty miles an hour, and the transit would then occupy from fifteen to twenty minutes only.

The Continental Gazette says that the opening up of the St. Gothard route is changing the commercial relations of the countries north and south of the mountains with almost revolutionary rapidity. So long as the formidable Alps remained unpierced, Italy was cut off from direct overland communication with Central and Northern Europe, and its commerce was very largely limited to transactions with Great Britain and France. The Gothard Railway is changing that state of things with unexpected rapidity, and is throwing the Italian trade into the hands of Germany, Belgium and Holland. The through railway service brings early fruit and vegetables without transhipment from all parts of Italy to Ostend, Antwerp and Rotterdam, whence they are conveyed by fast steamers to London and other English ports. The Great Eastern Railway Company alone is stated to have carried over 6,000 tons of these goods via Antwerp and Harwich in a few months. Malta is thus brought nearer, and Algerian produce, such as green peas and early potatoes, is made more available.

In the other direction, Italy is receiving an unprecedented, not to say an overwhelming, amount of attention from Germany. In the first two months after the opening of the Gothard route the Germans dispatched 40,000 tons of coal, 107 tons of unmanufactured iron and hardware, 14,000 tons of machinery; 493 tons of copper, 17,409 tons of spirits, 1,446 tons of paper, and 76 railway waggons—of all which articles the previous exports had been either nil or quite nominal.

To most waiting is harder than working. Patience is a difficult virtue, and in this busy, overstrained age it is becoming somewhat scarce. Oftentimes it is the best service that can be rendered. "For they also serve who only stand and wait." Away from the glare of the world in the privacy of home, waiting, not in idleness, nor in disappointed pride, but in faithful performance of the small duties, which come hour by hour, the soul's devotion to God is proved, its strength is nourished, and if a call comes to higher work it is not found wanting. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much."

Happiness is a great power of holiness. Thus, kind words, by their power of producing happiness, have also a power of producing holiness, and so of winning men to God.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

COMING TO JESUS.

When I was a child, if our minister finished his sermon by telling us to come to the Saviour, I used to think, he has left off just where I want him to begin.

What is coming to Christ? and how am I to tell it I have come? Have you ever felt puzzled with thoughts of this kind? Well, let me try to make it plain, though it really is so plain it is hard to make it plainer. Suppose a person is suffering from a painful disease, and I say to him, "You have only to go to such a physician and you will certainly be cured." Next time I meet my poor neighbor I ask, "Are you better?" "No, worse." "Did you go to the physician?" "Yes." "Have you taken his remedy?" "He gave me none." "Why, how was that? What did you tell him?" "O, nothing! I went and sat in his hall among the other patients, and saw him talking to them; and when they came away, I came too. "Why, when I told you to go to him, of course I meant you to tell him all about yourself, and answer all his questions, and carefully follow his advice. You will get no good by only seeing him cure others, if you went to his house for twenty years. But if he undertakes your case and promises to cure you, then you may trust yourself completely in his hands, and expect to be cured."

Now, in this simple way you are to come to the Lord Jesus. Tell Him what you want Him to do for you. Tell him all your troubles and hindrances. Trust yourself in his hands to be saved. "Him that cometh to me," He says, "I will in no wise cast out." Ah, say you, that would have been easy when he was here on earth. Not easier than now, perhaps not so easy, for Jesus was a "man of sorrows," walking about and talking, eating and drinking, like other people, only different from them in His look and voice and manner, and wonderful works and words. Surely it must have been harder then to believe that he was the Son of God and Saviour of men, than now when he is reigning as the Lord of glory in heaven! You know that merely going to the place where Jesus was, to see and hear him was not coming to Him, for the unbelieving Pharisees and Scribes sometimes came many miles to see and hear him; but yet he said to them, "Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life." They did not believe what he told them, nor that they needed the salvation He offered, and so did not trust Him.

So, you see, to think it would have been easier to be a real disciple of Christ if one could have seen and heard Him when he was here on earth, is a great mistake.

"I WAS GOING TO."

Children are very fond of saying, "I was going to." The boy lets the rats catch his chickens. He was going to fill up the hole with glass, and set traps for the rats; but he did not do it in time, and the chickens were eaten. He consoles himself for the loss and excuses his carelessness by saying, "I was going to attend to that." A horse falls through a broken plank in the stable and breaks his leg, and is killed to put him out of his suffering. The owner was going to fix that weak plank, and so excuses himself. A boy wets his feet and sits for hours without changing his shoes, catches a severe cold, and is obliged to have a doctor for a week. His mother told him to change his wet shoes when he came in, and he was going to do it, but did not. A girl tears her new dress so badly that all her mending can not make it look well again. There was a little rent before, and she was going to mend it, but she forgot. And so we might go on giving instance after instance, such as happens in every home with almost every man and woman, boy and girl. "Procrastination is" not only "the thief of time," but it is the worker of vast mischiefs. If a Mister "I-was-going-to" lives in your house, just give him warning to leave. He is a lonnger and a nuisance. He never did any good. He has wrought unnumbered mischiefs. The girl or boy who begins to live with him will have a very unhappy time of it, and life will not be successful. Put Mister "I-was-going-to" out of your house, and keep him out. Always do things which you are going to do.—Youth's World.