

himself. "I wonder if there's danger of my making such a mistake. I've been a member of the church these thirteen years. I keep up family prayers, when something doesn't prevent. I pay my pew-rent every quarter. I generally go to prayer-meeting, if I can get away from the store. I did my share on the building committee and in raising the church debt. I've never been deacon; no one ever voted for me. Now I think of it I should feel a little queer if they did. 'Deacon French,' how Stewart would laugh at the idea; I doubt if he knows that I belong to the church at all. And I suppose I have smoked up two or three boxes of cigars in his office, evenings, when we have been playing chess together. Have played there sometimes instead of going to prayer-meeting. There's nothing bad about chess, though. But there's the tobacco. I have had my doubts about that. It's a bad habit, and lately that text has kept coming to me, 'Happy is he that condemneth not himself in the thing which he alloweth.' Such self-indulgence seems too much like coming short.

"And it can't be quite the thing for a disciple of Christ to be so soaked with business all the time as I am. It's the last thing I think about before I go to sleep and the first thing when I wake up. I think about it when I am pretending to pray. I don't mean to cheat my customers. They'd generally find it out if I did, and I'd lose in the end. But I do persuade people to buy things, sometimes, when I don't really think it's the best thing for them to do. That certainly isn't doing as I would be done by. There's politics, too; since I've been on the county committee I've consented to some mean dodges to beat the other side. And I've knuckled to the saloon interest as no Christian man ought to.

"I haven't enjoyed the prayer-meetings, either. They're dry. But I never did my share to make them interesting. I come in late, and sit on the back seat, and never take part. I know what the trouble is, too; I have no relish for religious things. There's the Bible, I don't know as I open it from one Sunday to another except at family prayers. As for closet prayer I gave that up long ago. I'm afraid there's been no real Christian life in my soul. I haven't any claim on the blessing promised to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. I've been full of business, full of money-making, full of self-gratification, and empty of God. My example and my talk at home before my children have all been in the direction of this-worldness. Sunday has been a dull day to me. It's always a relief to me when Monday morning comes. Christ came to this world to save men from a life of sin. But I do nothing in the way of personal effort to lead men to Him from one year's end to another. I've felt no burden of souls. I've taken my ease. I've been content with just such a life as multitudes lead who do not profess to be Christian people at all. How I have 'come short' of the true Christian life, the Christ-like life! God help me to be a better man."

It was not a long sermon. It was a very plain one. But it dated for Watson French the beginning of a more consistent, fruitful life. His family saw it in the evident heartiness with which he conducted family worship; the church saw it in the cheerful, ready part he took in their social meetings; his customers saw it in the genuine care he showed for their interests; casual acquaintances saw it in the kindly, tender words he spoke to them, now and then, commending Christ's service; the poor, and sick and discouraged saw it in the many helpful ways in which his Christian sympathy found expression.—*N. Y. Christian Weekly.*

#### FIRST FAMILY PRAYER.

The late Rowland Hill was once driven by a storm into a village inn, and compelled to spend the night. When it grew late the landlord sent a request by the waiter that the guest would go to bed; Mr. Hill replied, "I have been waiting a long time, expecting to be called to family prayer." "Family prayer! I don't know what you mean, sir; we never have such things here." "Indeed! then tell your master I cannot go to bed until we have had family prayer." The waiter informed his master, who, in consternation, bounced into the room occupied by the faithful min-

ister, and said, "Sir, I wish you would go to bed. I cannot go till I have seen all the lights out; I am so afraid of fire." "So am I," was the reply; "but I have been expecting to be summoned to family prayer." "All very good, but it cannot be done in an inn." "Indeed! then pray get my horse. I cannot sleep in a house where there is no family prayer." The host preferred to dismiss his prejudice rather than his guest, and said, "I have no objection to have prayer, but I don't know how." "Well, then, summon your people and let us see what can be done." The landlord obeyed, and in a few minutes the astonished domestics were on their knees, and the landlord called upon to pray. "Sir, I never prayed in my life; I don't know how." "Ask God to teach you," was the gentle reply. The landlord said, folding his hands, "God teach us how to pray." "That is prayer, my friend," cried Mr. Hill, joyfully, "go on." "I am sure I don't know what to say now, sir." "Yes you do; God has taught you how to pray; now thank him for it." "Thank you, God Almighty, for letting us pray to you." "Amen! amen." exclaimed Mr. Hill, and then prayed himself. Two years afterward, Mr. Hill found in that same village a chapel and a school, as the result of the first effort of family prayer at the "Black Lion."—*N. Y. Observer.*

#### A HEBREW LEGEND.

From an ancient, learned Rabbi comes this legend full of grace,  
Floating down through countless ages, from a lost and scattered race.

Far away, where the horizon forms a line 'twixt earth and sky,  
There arose a glittering city, with its peaks and turrets high.

Flooded with a wondrous glory which in splendour downward rolled,  
Seeming like the way to Heaven, through a country paved with gold.

Sweet as odours from the tropics was the free, life-giving air,  
Fraught with the divine elixir—making all immortal there.

And the fame of that far city, seen above the sunset high—  
Pointing with its sparkling fingers, ever upward to the sky—

Went abroad to all earth's people, and they clasped their dear ones tight,  
And they journeyed from the valleys up towards the golden light.

And for long, long years they dwelt there, with life's goblet brimming o'er;  
Deep and deeper though they quaffed it, full it sparkled evermore.

But a strange and restless yearning woke at last, as years went by,  
And they stole away in silence, one by one—that they might die.

—*Boston Transcript.*

#### CARLYLE'S FATHER.

Thomas Carlyle thus describes his father: "I think of all the men I have ever known, my father was quite the remarkablest. Quite a farmer sort of person, using vigilant thrift and careful industry, abiding by veracity and faith, and with an extraordinary insight into the very heart of things and men. I can remember that, from my childhood, I was surprised at his using many words of which I knew not the meaning; and even as I grew to manhood I was not a little puzzled by them, and supposed that they must be of his own coinage. But later, in my black letter reading I discovered that every one of them I could recall was of the sound Saxon stock which had lain buried, yet fruitful withal, in the quick memory of the humbler sort of folk. He was an elder of the kirk, and it was very pleasant to see him in his daily and weekly relations with the minister of the parish. They had been friends from youth. That parish minister was the first person that ever taught me Latin. The last time I ever saw my father was on my journey from Craigenputtock to London. I was on my way to this modern Babylon, with a manuscript in my hand,

'Sartor Resartus' by name, which I wished to get into print. I came up on my fool's errand, and I saw my father no more, for I had not been in town many days when tidings came that he was dead. He had gone to bed at night, as well as usual, it seemed; but they found in the morning that he had passed from the realm of sleep to that of day. It was a fit end for such a life as his had been. He was a man into the four corners of whose house there had shined through the years of his pilgrimage, by day and by night, the light of the glory of God; and at the last he was not, for God took him."—*Hand and Heart.*

#### BOOKLESS HOMES.

A dreary place is a bookless house, my young friends; see that in founding a home for yourselves you do not neglect the household library. We rejoice in pretty furniture and artistic pictures; but we want to see a new book sandwiched between every two purchases, and newspapers and magazines drifting around so thickly that the very order of the sitting-room is imperilled. We never knew anything worse than intelligent sons and daughters grow out of such untidiness. To go to housekeeping without a family Bible and an unabridged dictionary ought to be elected a criminal offence. Here lies the beginning of wisdom. Then we should add modern history to ancient, poetry to science, Scott, Thackeray, Dickens, Hawthorne, and Holmes to theology. We should know the opinions of the best minds to-day upon all questions of social life, of philosophy, of agriculture. We have known famous business men, keen financiers, to grow out of bookless homes, but never the great-hearted and tender-souled. So, parents, remember this, glance over your libraries to see if there be not some vacancy to fill up with the volume which will add to the cheer of the windy wintry nights. Get for the boy a book of history or travels; for the girl a copy of Tennyson, or Longfellow, or Browning—some sweet poet who sings along the quiet vales of life in notes we all can understand! Win them to read aloud around the evening lamp, and most unconsciously their young souls will be drawn out to follow after those who call, to follow, and sing, and be glad—for great is the power of influence.

#### THOUGHTLESSNESS.

In general, I have no patience with people who talk about the "thoughtlessness of youth" indulgently. I had infinitely rather hear of thoughtless old age, and the indulgence due to that. When a man has done his work, and nothing can in any way be materially altered in his fate, let him forget his toil and jest with his fate, if he will; but what excuse can you find for wilfulness of thought, at the very time when every crisis of future fortune hangs on your decisions? A youth thoughtless! when the career of all his days depends on the opportunity of a moment! A youth thoughtless! when all the happiness of his home forever depends on the chances, or the passions of an hour! A youth thoughtless! when his every act is a foundation stone of future conduct, and every imagination a fountain of life or death! Be thoughtless in any after years rather than now—though indeed there is only one place where a man may be nobly thoughtless—his death-bed. No thinking should ever be left to be done there.—*Ruskin.*

How sometimes the practical moralities of men of the world rebuke the practices of professing Christians! Oftentimes a Christian man will follow the call and beck of party where a citizen of the world will assert his manhood and independence by resolutely refusing to be led. And which of the moralities is the greater? Five minutes for reflection.

THE Reformed Episcopal Church in the United Kingdom, otherwise known as the Reformed Church of England, have organized a Canadian Synod and made application to the General Synod to elect a Bishop for Canada. An ex-Vicar of the Church of England, who is a graduate of Oxford, is the one spoken of.