

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

"THE WRONG LEVER."

BY A TRACK HAND. This is what the pointman said, With both hands at his throbbing head: "I drew the wrong lever standing here And the danger signals stood out clear; "But before I could draw it back again On came the fast express, and then— "Then came a roar and a crash that shook This cabin floor, but I could not look "At the wreck, for I knew the dead would peer With strange, dull eyes at their murderer here. "Drew the wrong lever!" "Yes I say! Go, tell my wife, and—take me away!" That was what the pointman said, With both hands at his throbbing head. O ye of this nineteenth century time, Who hold low dividends as a crime, Listen. So long as a twelve-hour's strain Rests like a load of lead on the brain, With its ringing of bells and rolling of wheels, Drawing of levers until one feels "The hands grow numb with a nerveless touch, And the handles shake and slip in the clutch, "So long will we have pointmen to say— "Drew the wrong lever!" take me away!" —Good Words.

A BEAUTIFUL LIFE.

Only five years since, from the Normal school of a neighboring State, was graduated an earnest, thoughtful girl. She had acquitted herself honorably, and now that school days were ended, she carried with her the regrets and commendations of teachers and companions. Teachers regretted the departure of an enthusiastic and industrious pupil, while school-mates mourned the loss of an ever helpful and sympathizing friend. Thoroughly conscious, yet never vain of her energetic nature, feeling that there was much work to do in this world, and that God had given her ability to do her share of it, she thought seriously and often, "What shall I do with my life?"

In a kindly home she was loved and appreciated, yet mother and sister were compassing those duties, and so, quietly yet decidedly, she gave herself to the arduous yet powerful work of a teacher's life. To the delightful country town where her duties began and ended, she came a stranger, yet, when she died, around her coffin stood a group of sorrowing friends, who had learned to know and love her first, from her influence on her pupils. Heartily she believed that "good the more communicated, more abundant grows;" and always caring for her scholars with the largeness of an earnest Christian soul, she unconsciously became to them one of those "Meditative authors of delight And happiness, when to the end of time, Will live and spread and flourish."

Unruly boys and foolish girls always came to a fair adjustment of their natures under her firm but gentle guidance, while she gathered into her Sabbath-school class boys who often had no other influence in the right way. Most thoughtfully would they listen as she labored faithfully for their souls, and though she sowed seed of which the full harvest is not yet, the regularity of attendance and the constant kindness of this band of boys, who kept themselves always at her service, eager to do any and everything to give her pleasure, spoke eloquently of her power.

Activity, unselfishness and charity made her life beautiful; yet it was so simple, so natural, and withal had been so short, that those who loved her never realized that its earthward side was closing. But her work had been well done and the Master had need of her in His heavenly land. It matters little how the call comes; there are many ways of slipping off this mortal coil. She seemed to suffer only from a cold, but at last one day there followed that terrible sight of the life-blood.

Rest, remedies, and change, were abundant, and better things were hoped. Sorrow had come to the family in the unexpected death of a dearly-loved niece called Bessie, knowledge of which had been kept from the invalid as she waited for health under the Southern skies. Suddenly, one day, as if a vision of her swiftly-approaching end had come to her, she cried, "Take me home; take me home!" Once more safely in her mother's arms she simply said: "Don't be vexed, mother, that I could not stay; I wanted to come home and bid you a decent good-bye."

Two weeks more, and the physician gave warning that the end was near. The mother, stooping over her said: "Daughter, if the dear Saviour should call you to Himself, are you willing to go?" "Yes, mother," was the gentle answer. "But if he should be calling you now, darling?" "Oh yes, mother, I am ready," she said, and, resting her face upon her hand, seemed to sleep.

Kneeling by the bedside, the mother, with a strength which could only have been given her from above, prayed that the good Lord, who had already taken from her two dear children, yet who had graciously made them all ready to go, would grant to this one also a peaceful crossing over. Then, quickly, as if in immediate answer to the prayer, and as if her feet had touched the golden streets, the dying girl looked upward, and, with glad surprise, exclaimed, "Way, Bess, Bessie!"—then fell asleep in Jesus! Who shall say that the child just gone before had not given her welcome at the gates of the Celestial City, and in the knowledge of so short yet so beautiful a life with its calm and blessed ending, who could not sing as Faber did:

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death, Thither, when sorrows cease, To a new life, to an old past, Softly and silently we haste Into a land of peace. N. Y. Oberverer.

CHRISTIAN AMUSEMENTS.

To many young Christians who earnestly desire to know the right way, the question of amusement is one of deep interest. For amusements cannot be, and ought not to be, entirely discarded in the formation of a beautiful, symmetrical Christian character, such a character as any and every young disciple can and ought to build.

If then, some amusements are lawful and commendable, what are they, and how shall we distinguish between the good and the harmful? Perhaps no better rule can be laid down than that given by the great apostle: "Whatsoever things are pure," "whatsoever things are of good report," think on these things. Among fashionable amusements we are aware that the "poetry of motion" holds a conspicuous place. How does St. Paul's rule apply to this? Is it "pure?"

A company composed solely of ladies never spends the night in this amusement. Why is the presence of gentlemen indispensable? Does it elevate and refine the character, and are eminent Christians unanimous in its favor? Think of Wesley, Fletcher, Mrs. Fletcher, or our revered bishops, engaged in this diversion. If it is pure and right, why need such a thought startle us? Is it "lovely?" We never heard of one soul won to Christ through the allurements of the dance; we have known many lost to hope and heaven through this instrumentality.

Is it "of good report?" Notwithstanding the verdict of some professing Christians in its favor, the worldling never goes to such Christians for help or counsel, if he desires to come to Jesus. When he tears that death is near, he does not send for the dance-loving professor to plead with God in his behalf. In a late police report from New York city, it is stated that a great majority of the fallen women were lost to virtue through the influence of this "harmless (?) amusement." If the young disciple will examine his own heart as he comes from a place where pleasure has been sought in the dance, we think he would never ask the question, "Is dancing a Christian amusement?"

Each playing is another of these "harmless amusements," though more than one ruined gambler, dying in prison, has said: "I first learned to play cards in the parlor of professing Christians."

In this beautiful world where music, literature and a thousand other avenues are open to all, why need young disciples venture on the debatable ground? We have seen many thoughtlessly indulge in these pastimes, and ere many months had elapsed heard them say: "I do not believe I am a Christian. I have no assurance that I am." Casting away their confidence because conscience condemns! Surely the pleasure is not worth the fearful risk, and each young disciple's influence should be in favor of that only which is "pure," "lovely" and "of good report."—Mrs. E. J. Richmond in Northern Christian Advocate.

MIGRATION OF BIRDS.

The London Standard in a recent issue says: "Familiar as the migration of birds is to us, there is, perhaps no question in zoology more obscure. The long flights they take and the unerring certainty with which they wing their way between the most distant places, arriving and departing at the same period year after year, are points in the history of birds of passage as mysterious as they are interesting. We know that most migrants fly after sundown, though many of them select a moonlight night to cross the Mediterranean. But that their meteorological instinct is not unerring is proved by the fact that thousands are every year drowned in their flight over the Atlantic and other

oceans. Northern Africa and Western Asia are selected as winter quarters by most of them, and they may be often noticed on their way thither to hang over towns at night, puzzled in spite of their experience, by the shifting lights and houses. The swallow or the nightingale may sometimes be delayed by unexpected circumstances. Yet it is rarely that they arrive and depart many days sooner or later, one year with another. Professor Newton considered that were sea fowl satellites revolving round the earth their arrival could hardly be more surely calculated by an astronomer. Foul weather or fair, heat or cold, the puffins repair to some of their stations punctually on a given day, as if their movements were regulated by clock-work. The swiftness of flight which characterizes most birds enables them to cover a vast space in a brief time.

The common black swift can fly two hundred and seventy-six miles an hour, a speed which, if maintained for less than half a day would carry the bird from its winter to its summer quarters. The large purple swift of America is capable of even greater feats on the wing. The chimney swallow is slower—ninety miles per hour being about the limit of its powers; but the passenger pigeon of the United States can accomplish a journey of one thousand miles between sunrise and sunset. It is also true, as the ingenious Herr Palmen has attempted to show, that migrants during their long flights may be directed by an experience partly acquired by the individual bird. They often follow the coast-lines of continents, and invariably take, on their passage over the Mediterranean, one of three routes. But this theory will not explain how they pilot themselves across broad oceans, and is invalidated by the fact, familiar to every ornithologist, that old and young birds do not journey in company. Invariably the young broods travel together; then come, after an interval, the parents; and finally, the rear is brought up by the weakly, infirm, mottled and broken winged. This is the rule in autumn. The return journey is accomplished in the reverse order. The distance travelled seems, moreover, to have no relation to the size of the traveller. The Swedish blue-throat performs maternal flights among the Laps and enjoys its winter holiday among the negroes of the Soudan, while the tiny, ruby-throated humming bird proceeds annually from New Mexico to Newfoundland and back again, though one would imagine that so delicate a little fairy would be more at home among the cacti agaves of the Tierra Caliente than among the firs and fogs of the North.

THE LAST SUNDAY.

The correspondent of the N. Y. Tribune tells how the new President and his family spent their last Sabbath at their old home:

To-day was a day which doubtless General Garfield and the people of Mentor will alike long remember. He attended service in the little Disciples' Church here for the last time before entering upon his new sphere of life. The church is a simple white frame building, with cupola—plain to utter bareness, both on the inside and outside, with a broad expanse of whitewashed wall inside and hard-backed seats. The church was filled with what must have appeared like a great crowd, about 200 people, inasmuch as the attendance often numbers only thirty or forty. The preacher was the Rev. Harrison Jones, of Union, Ohio, who was a former pastor of this church, and also chaplain of General Garfield's regiment, the 42nd Ohio, and so has special relations with the next President.

General Garfield was present with his wife, Mrs. Larabee, and Miss Larabee, Gen. Garfield's sister and niece, and Captain Randolph and Mrs. Randolph, the former Mrs. Garfield's brother, who will manage the farm in the President's absence. The family sat in their accustomed pew. There was no allusion in the sermon to the fact that the President elect was present. It was an old-fashioned discourse upon the atonement and the literal resurrection of the dead. At the close, according to the Christian custom, penitents were invited to come forward. General Garfield always takes part in the singing with zest, and his voice could be heard in the invitation hymn beginning, "All you that are weary and sad." The Lord's Supper was celebrated after the sermon, in accordance with the church custom. The final hymn, "All hail the power of Jesus' name," was followed with a prayer, in which the preacher who was visibly affected, invoked the Divine blessing upon "our dear brother and sister Garfield," and prayed that the hand of God might sustain them at all times and bring them safely back to their home.

When the service had ended all the congregation gathered about General and Mrs. Garfield, and began their farewells. There were many old friends in the number, and there were many hearty handshakes and kind words on both sides, with some tears following upon the simple and earnest service. It was an impressive and touching scene and will not soon be forgotten by those who witnessed it.

Perhaps it might be mentioned here as an instance of the errands on which people come to Mentor, that one person visited General Garfield whose main object seemed to be to persuade him to walk when he goes to church in Washington. As this is just what General Garfield is in the habit of doing the mission did not seem important.

A LESSON.

Recently Andrew H. Reeves, assistant superintendent of the Michigan Avenue Sabbath-school, Chicago, gave the children of that school one of the most practical and instructive object-lessons. Mr. Reeves is a gold-beater. He brought before the school a handful of white rags, which were clean and bright, also a handful of old oily, dirty rags, and asked the children which they would prefer. Of course the white rags were preferred. "Which of the two do you think most valuable?" asked Mr. Reeves. Again the white ones were chosen. Then the speaker went on to show how wrong it was to judge from appearances; that while the white rags seemed to be the most valuable, they were almost worthless, while the dirty rags were worth a great deal, but in their present state could not be used to advantage. He next showed that these dirty rags might represent the unrenewed heart; it had good qualities, was of great price, but corrupt, and it must be purified and cleansed to be of service to the Master. He had the school read various passages from the Scriptures to prove his statements. He then promised the children that on the following Sunday he would bring these identical rags, and exhibit them, after they had gone through the crucible and refining fire. And he would then show them how much the dirty rags were worth, and how little value there was in the white rags. On Jan. 9, Mr. Reeves completed his object-lesson. He first showed them a large diagram of a furnace. Then he showed them the refining pots in which he melts his gold—like those in which he had refined the rags. He then unrolled a ribbon of gold nearly twenty feet long and about an inch wide, and suspended it where the whole school could see it. A little lump of ashes was all that was left after refining the white rags. This ribbon of gold was the product of the dirty rags. The gold was worth twenty-eight dollars, and would make twelve thousand gold leaves four inches square. The old rags were such as book-binders use in removing the surplus gilding.

Mr. Reeves had more Scripture read to show how God refines us in the furnace of affliction and trial, and the hotter the fire the brighter the luster of the character that is refined; and that unless we were refined by the fires of the Holy Spirit, and the dross separated from us, we could not enter heaven. The object-lesson made a profound impression on the entire school.—Northern Christian Advocate.

BROTHER MACKIRK'S NOTIONS.

ABOUT SECOND HAND PROFANITY.

The old gentleman fingered his chin in a meditative way and then suggested that as he was going to town he had better "scrape his face." Standing before a small looking-glass, which he had carefully balanced upon the window-sash, he proceeded to the details of the business in view. His razor rattled along until he had succeeded in clearing a patch, about the size of a ragged shin-plaster, just below the ear. Mumbling of a "wire-edge," he reached for Watson's "Instittutes," on the sheep-skin binding whereof he began strapping the offending implement with a twist of the wrist that indicated off-repent and long continued practice. Blowing the surplus lather out of the way, he looked up with a tear in his eye—and remarked:

"Brother Tours, do you ever have any trouble finding texts to preach from?"

"Yes—once in a while that is the case," said I, guardedly.

"Well, look-a-here, I'll give you one that's just to the pint: 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.' I've been thinkin' about it a long time, and a wond'rin' why somebody don't preach a sermon on it. My notion is, a sermon's needed on that particuler subject."

"Why, Brother Mac, I just skin sinners for their profanity."

"You do, hey? Well, you see I want the saints skinned a little. You talk about cussin' and swearin'; that's all well enough as far as it goes, but don't you know that people can take the name of the Lord in vain and not cuss nor swear nuther? There's lot of folks that do that very thing, and my notion is half 'em don't know it's any harm. They think it's all right to use the name of God any way, just so they don't use a cuss word along with it. The fact in the case is, plenty of people, good church members, once in awhile a preacher, even, does a good deal of second-hand cussin' in tellin' of a joke and such like, and laugh over it, and have crowds around 'em a laughin', when mebbe the pint of the joke's in tellin' how some other man cussed like a sailor about some triffin' matter. I tell you it's a powerful example. Wicked young men take notice of such things and make 'em in.' A man professin' religion, and especially a preacher, ought to be mighty keeful of his tongue and lose his religion when he's leavin' expectin' it. It's the little foam that spile the grapes. My notion is ef we'd trap and still hunt around the vineyard of the Lord a little closer we'd raise better crops and have better luck than to be always beatin' the brush for big game."

A fresh application of lather put a seal of silence upon the speaker's lips. I rubbed my chin and ruminated. The old razor reported progress with subdued emphasis. Before the job was finished I had formed a new resolution.—Nashville Christian Advocate.

SO EASILY FRIGHTENED.

Mrs. Bottoms is quoted in the Guide to Holiness as saying in one of Dr. Palmer's Tuesday meetings. As we were coming to the meeting this afternoon, I saw a large albatross of bread covered with butter in the street, and five little sparrows were enjoying a good meeting. But, as we approached, the little birds were frightened and flew away. There was no danger—we would not have harmed them. I thought, how like many of the dear children of God. A rich spiritual feast is set before them, and yet like the little sparrows they are so easily frightened away. Instead of coming to the point of full surrender, and being partakers of the rich promise of grace, some trifling consideration turns them away. While Mrs. Palmer was reading the Scripture lesson, I said, "Lord, let me have something from thy Word which shall be food to my soul!" and he gave it to me in these precious words: "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." It was a full meal. My heart went out in praise. Obeloved, let us not be like the trembling sparrows, so easily frightened. Let us hear the gracious invitation, "Come, for all things are now ready!" The door of the entrance to the banquet of love is wide open, but not "ajar"—let us not be robbed of a full repast.

THE HIDDEN WISDOM.

The mind of a pious workman, named Thierny, was much occupied with the ways of God, which appeared to him full of inscrutable mysteries. The two questions, "How?" and "Why?" were constantly in his thoughts—whether he considered his own life, or the dispensations of Providence in the world. One day in visiting a ribbon manufactory, his attention was attracted by an extraordinary piece of machinery. Countless wheels and thousands of threads were twirling in all directions; he could understand nothing of its movements. He was informed, that all this motion was connected with the centre, where there was a chest which was kept shut. Anxious to understand the principle of the machine, he asked permission to see the interior. "The master has the key," was the reply. The words were like a flash of light. Here was the answer to all his perplexed thoughts. Yes, the Master has the key. He governs and directs all. It is enough. What need I know more? He hath also established them forever, and ever; he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

A CHILD'S LIBRARY.

Our own experience has convinced us that, for the average child, the element of possession of a book is of great importance. The borrowed book, however attractive, is never read with the loving enthusiasm with which the child devours the volume that is his own. Try the experiment of loaning to your pupil Scott's "Lady of the Lake," "Robinson Crusoe," or "Arabian Nights." Give to another pupil the same books as his own property; in nine cases out of ten, the borrowed book will be read on a gallop, hastily taken in and forgotten. The book owned by the child will be read leisurely, returned to, and lingered over with loving fondness; taken out under the trees in summer; taken down from the shelf for consultation; really assimilated into the mental and moral being. It is the most common-place truism that the value of reading does not depend half as much upon the quantity gone over as the quality of the book and the deliberate or thoughtful method of using it.

Now the natural way to interest a child in reading is to give it a book, suitable to its years and mental condition, and leave it to its own way of appropriating its contents. Every child now-a-days, even the poorest in the public schools, should be encouraged to find a library. The boy who sees a growing book shelf, every morning, when he gets out of bed, will have a constant reminder to save his pennies to buy some favorite book, rather than spoil his stomach with candy or buy a ticket to the "Black Crook." Now-a-days, when realizable editions of the English classics can be bought for fifty cents a volume, almost every child is able to buy a few books every year. It is surprising how soon such a library assumes respectable dimensions, and amazing how many beautiful books and valuable magazines are destroyed by children now-a-days, for want of some definite plan of keeping them together. And anybody who knows child nature can understand how much more thoroughly the books of that home-library will be read than the volume borrowed from any source.

Teachers and parents, set your children to this good work of founding a child's library, and keep them at it till they need no pushing from you. And it may turn out that a few shelves of good books will educate your child more than all the schools and universities.—N. E. Journal of Education.

"SABBATH" In this science, literature are running velocity. Is into error? The Sabbath of the grand times, if the variation of the may, like the prove a curse consuming fire. Sunday School blessing if in view. But coming too seducted on the my desk a school Concer A. M. With s I must offer a Christian man the spirit giv kind feelings.

I find in and composed of religion and school of school the intricate sprinkling of Sabbath-school know what thought? our concerts, be not only undivided pr ther on, he Sabbath school please you; but only a greater good ideal." Ar tending to a house of an the world of must adopt Is it not a child would ment proph from Shakesp me children they draw fr a married br ing the "Br what lesson poem. "I means, and did." Her Yet this is a dialogue app an occasi- ment but "Hypocri cy, spoken by at age." Our more appro concern" that not "ajar"—let us not be robbed of a full repast.

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Essential Com- took in the Rev. He in Boston. man, a man trained a moral ser- turn, been his inspiri Of the more Boston, names, they obtained, a deous liver under cover of crime w sometimes floors and drawers! boy, hami keepers and ble houses, which Mr. names of buildings, the real is. The same a ad let the two banks pieces and ture, rally selling—a objects of searching agents, on expense, a of all the witnesses, numerous fill a you been d and moral will acknowledge of Method and meet pres should be of g receives his own charges.

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