

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

GOOD FRIDAY.

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.—Lamentations 1: 12. I dream that all the world made holiday; The Spring had come, and every hill was fair; Upon the grass the folk had met to play; I, too, methought was there. But as the day wore onward, fierce and loud Their mirth became; and I, in heart oppress'd Halted upon the outskirts of a crowd, And turned aside to rest. I looked around me: know you what was there? A rounded hill, a rugged cross of wood; A man was nailed thereon; his wounds were bare, And slowly trickled blood. As I crept near I heard him speak and sigh (His patient eyes were sad with love divine): "Behold and see, all ye that pass me by, What sorrow is like mine?" What have I done, my people, unto thee? And wherein have I wearied thee? O, stay! Turn for a moment's space and look at me, Before the close of day." Where'er he spake, the soldiers mocked afresh; Here had he hung thro' all the heat of noon, Thorns pressed his forehead; rods had torn his flesh; All would be over soon. "This is for you, my people: look for I, Because I love you, did my heaven resign; Behold and see, all ye that pass me by, What sorrow is like mine?" Then I with tears, and head bowed low, and hand Stretched out with reverent haste, bewailed their loss, And cried: "They see thee not, or they would stand With thee beside thy cross. Forgive us, that we saw not." Then said he: "Child, they have passed me oft, upon this hill. Are their eyes holden? will they never see? Yet do I love them still." The earth grew dark, as though the sun had set; I saw no more the nails, the thorn-crowned head; And then I woke—and found my pillow wet With tears that I had shed. I woke, but found my dream was truth in fact; The Spring was here; the folks kept holiday; I passed through crowded streets and busy mart, Where every face was gay. Till, in the throng, one raised his voice, and said: "Behold ye, careless people, what ye do: This is the day whereon Christ's blood was shed; To-day Christ died for you." As in my dream then, some passed scornfully, But others said: "Yes, we will turn aside Upon this day, dear Lord, to look on thee, How thou wast crucified!" Bend from the cross thy patient face of woe: Teach us the triumph of thy Calvary! Beneath this hill the crowd may come and go, But we will stay with thee."—Wesleyan Methodist Magazine.

CARRIE'S DECISION.

"Oh, dear, it's pleasant, and it will be just perfectly elegant this evening," said Carrie Leonard, turning away from her window with a sigh and a very, very long face. There was to be a concert in Madison that evening, a remarkably fine one by the best talent, and Ned Wilmer had invited her to go. Given—the prospect of a "perfectly elegant evening, full moon, capital sleighing, a four-mile ride in excellent company, with a rare musical treat at the end of it—and can you possibly imagine what one could find to sigh and look doleful about? But you see it was Thursday. "Prayer and conference meeting as usual on Thursday evening at 7.30 o'clock." That was the notice read on Sunday, and therein lay the secret of Carrie's sigh. It was only a few weeks before that she had publicly confessed her love for Christ, and her earnest desire and purpose to please Him in all things. It had slipped her mind what evening it was when she had accepted the invitation. And now, what should she do? She knew just how Ned would look, how sarcastically he would smile when she told him why she could not go. And yet how many, many times in the olden days they two had commented on the inconsistencies of Christians. Ned had been away; she did not know whether he had been told of her change or not. Somehow she had not had courage to speak of it herself, though they had compared notes on all other topics. Oh, dear, what should she do? "If Ned knows I profess to be a Christian, I'm very sure that though he may be vexed, still, after all, clear down in his heart, he will think I ought to stay at home and be in my place." But how could she give up the treat? And how could she tell him? Her face grew hot at the very thought of his mocking smile. She had hoped it would be stormy, so that it would be impossible to go. She had felt that she should look upon her sick-sick-headache as a positive god-send; anything, in fact, she thought, would be welcome that would decide the question for her. But never had she felt better in her life, and not a cloud was to be seen. She must

decide herself whether she would confess her Saviour, or deny Him. "But," she thought, brightening up, "I do not see why I need worry and fret so. It cannot be wrong, after all, to go; for Deacon Smith and his wife are going, and Mame Trask, Will Sheldon, and Mr. and Mrs. Fisk, too, and every one of them church members. The idea of my being so foolish as to think it wrong." And banishing all her scruples, she went about setting her room to rights—her face bright with pleasant anticipations for the evening's enjoyment. But when she came to sit down to her morning's reading, her expression changed; for this was the very first verse her eyes rested upon: "What is that to thee? Follow thou Me." After all, what was it to her whether every one else went or not—she was to follow Him, not others. But how she did hate to give it up! Then, too, there was Ned. If he was not a Christian—she pleaded—she wanted to influence him to be. Would it not prejudice him against religion, if she should excuse herself from going on account of prayer-meeting? "What is that to thee? Follow thou Me!" The words fairly rang in her ears. It was not anything to her, her part was to follow Christ. He would take care of the rest. "The—dickens!" exclaimed Ned Wilmer, in surprise, as he let fall a dainty little note from his hands that noon. "Plague take it!" he said, impatiently, as he picked it up again. An hour afterwards, he added to himself, over his books and papers: "But it was plucky in her, after all, and I respect her for it. I always said, if I was a Christian, I would be up to the mark. I hate half-way work—but I wish she'd let me alone!" And then Ned tried to put all his thoughts upon his work. But there was an earnest little plea in the note he had thrown so impatiently aside, that would not be forgotten. In fact, the harder he tried to forget about it, the more persistently he remembered; and at last he gave it up in despair. "And only to think," said Carrie afterwards, "the very thing I was afraid would prejudice him, influenced him most of all, he says. I believe, after all, it was Satan put that thought into my head; for I do believe if only I follow Christ closely, everything will end right."—Christian Intelligencer.

THE SECRET OF THE FLOWER.

What signifies the existence of the plant? In it we contemplate the pleasant sight of a being opening without resistance, and yielding without mistrust, to the mysterious power of nature. Whilst the latter, as a fond mother, generously instils into this delicate and fragile being a sap which will display its strength in a profusion of perfume, savor, form and color, the latter receives it all silently and without effort, and claims to be nothing less and nothing more than what this abundant communication of the infinite will make it. Do you recognize in this the emblem, and, so to speak, the parable of the relation between man and the Infinite Being who has given him life? Man giving himself up to God with unreserved confidence, God communicating himself to man in the fullness of his infinite munificence. What is the signification of the flower? It is the image of our destination fulfilled. The world of plants is a book of prints, containing hundreds and thousands of pictures, by every one of which the Creator tells us in gentle accents, "Act freely and unreservedly towards me, O man, as this creature acts unconsciously towards nature! Open thy heart to the action of my Spirit, and I will display in thee such perfections of wisdom, beauty, power and love as will be far superior to those thou admires in these beings." He had understood the language which the world of flowers speaks to the human heart, that prince of modern poets, Ruckert, who in a distich we can but imperfectly translate said: "The flower has divine secret to reveal to thee, O man! It showeth thee how a thing which is but humid dust may wear celestial splendor!" That is, perhaps, what explains the charm which the world of plants exercises over the soul wearied by the strife of life, and the calm and peaceful influence which so naturally flows from it. The flower is the emblem of our destination fulfilled, of our ideal realized. Realized? Yes; but only in figure. For there is wanting in the plant what is wanting in Nature herself, its mother—liberty. It fulfils its destination, but passively.

What a contrast between the sphere of the plant and the animal! Here we find, if not liberty, at least spontaneous motion, which is its spontaneity. In passing from the plant to the animal we enter into the labor of life, with its emotions, passions, dangers, struggles and sorrows. We are in the sphere of a serious and fearful reality. The bloody struggle for existence has begun, and is preparing the way for the apparition of the being in whom the ideal is finally to be realized, not only under the form of a graceful emblem, but under that of a real life. We are visibly approaching the being in whom the free surrender of the finite mind will, at length, meet the generous love of the Infinite. The fact is obvious: the plant speaks the graceful language of poetry; the animal, that of stern history. Man is the crown of the arch towards which both these inferior domains of nature converge; he is the crowning of history and the realization of poetry, the free and living bond which unites all nature to that God who created it for himself.—Prof. Godet.

LESSONS OF EASTER.

Say, my soul, what preparation Maketh thee for this high day, When the God of thy salvation Opened through the tomb a way? Dwellst thou with pure affection On this proof of power and love? Doth thy Saviour's resurrection Ease thy thoughts to things above? Hast thou, borne on Faith's strong pinion, Risen with thy risen Lord? And, released from sin's dominion, Tho' purer regions soar? O, art thou, in spirit of warning, Dead in trespasses and sin? Hark to thee the purple morning No true Easter ushered in? O, then, let not death's o'ertake thee, By the shades of night's oppress; See! thy Lord is come to wake thee, He is risen from the dead. While the time is yet allow thee, Hear, the gracious Saviour cries: "Sleepers, from thy slumbers arise, To new life at once arise." See, with looks of tender pity, He extends his wounded hands, Bidding thee, with fond entreaty, Shake off sin's entrangling bands: "Wait not for some future meeting, Dread no punishment from me; Rose thyself and taste the sweetness Of the new life offered thee." Let no precious time be wasted, To new life arise at length; He who death hath for thee tested, For new life will give thee strength. Try to rise, at once bestir thee, Gild thy soul and open thine eyes; Let weariness deter thee, He who woke thee still is near. Waste not so much time in weighing When and where thou shalt begin, Too much thinking is delaying, Riveb the chain of sin; He will help thee and provide thee With a courage not thy own, Bear thee in his arms and guide thee Till thou learn'st to walk alone. See! thy Lord himself is risen, That thou mightest also rise To emerge from sin's dark prison To new life and open skies; Come to him who can unbind thee, And reverse thy awful doom; Come to him, and leave behind thee Thy old life—an empty tomb!—Spitta, trans. by E. Massie.

A PERILOUS POSITION.

Those who work among the oil wells are often exposed to dangers. One of these oilmen, whose hair turned white during a night of terror, related his experience to a correspondent of the Philadelphia Times. He said there had been a heavy storm one night at about midnight, and, as usual with the oil-country residents, he arose and looked out from the window to see if any tanks had been struck by lightning. A bright glare in the sky convinced him that a large tank of oil was on fire a few miles distant, and he went back to sleep, determined to go to the fire at noon and see the first overthrow. You know that when a twenty-five thousand barrel iron tank of oil has been on fire for twelve or fourteen hours, the burning oil will boil up and flow over the sides just like a kettle of soap. At two o'clock the first grand overflow occurred. As I stood on the hillside, I heard a man shout, "She's coming," and I saw pipe-line men running away from the tank for their lives. I heard a rumbling sound inside the tank and didn't know what it meant, but a few seconds after I saw fully five hundred barrels of burning oil shoot up from the tank and boil over the sides. It was grand beyond description, and I stood and watched it in silence. The burning oil floated down a creek for a mile, burning a saw mill, numerous oil-wells and tanks, buildings and everything within reach of its devastating breath. When the flow had partly subsided, it was found that a second twenty five thousand barrel iron tank had been set on fire by the overflow of burning oil. I ventured down behind the burning tanks to get a better view from the lower side. While trying to avoid a pool of burning oil, I fell into a mud-hole or sort of quicksand, and stuck fast. My utmost endeavors were of no avail in extricating myself from the hold. I yelled at the

top of my voice, but so great was the roar of the burning tanks that my voice sounded weak and far away. I struggled until exhausted, and then lay back and rested. How beautiful the great pillar of black seemed in the clear blue sky! Great billows of smoke would go surging upward hundreds of feet, and float away into space, their sombre hues turned to snowy white-ness. I thought the boys would miss me and search for me. Suddenly I heard the sound of a cannon, and saw a column of flame and smoke shoot up from one of the tanks. The truth came upon me like a bolt of lightning, and I was stricken senseless by the thought. The United Pipe Line men were firing cannon balls through the first tank to draw off the oil and prevent a second overthrow.

What a conviction came upon me! It was a matter of seconds. I tried to shout, but the words would not come. With the strength of despair I struggled to get free. The quicksand held me with the grip of death. All at once I saw a little stream of burning oil running slowly down toward me. My time had come, I thought, and I must be burned to death by inches. The earth was dear to me then—dearer than ever before—and I turned to get a look at the sunlight and the bright world once more. The stream of burning oil, now grown larger, was almost upon me. The earth and all things earthly faded away, and all was dark. When I came back to consciousness, I was lying in my own room with my friends around me. The boys said that in following the supposed course of the overflowed oil they came upon me and rescued me just as the burning stream was about to dash upon me. I was sick a long while, and when I got well I found my hair as white as you see it now.

"JUST ONE GLASS."

The New York papers lately contained hints of a tragedy which had its wretched ending in that city; a tragedy no less terrible because the same has occurred in thousands of American homes. Here are the facts in detail; A young man, a clever, generous lad, the son of an influential and pious family in Scotland, two years ago fell into dissolute habits. Every means was tried to bring him back to his better self, with little effect, until he saw and loved a young girl of his own rank in life. The hope of marrying her, of regaining his self-control and self-respect, nerved him again with the strength of his boyhood. He asked his father for the means to bring him to this country, resolving to begin life anew, where no one knew his shame. The money for his outfit was given him, and with tears and prayers his old father and mother saw him depart. The day before he sailed he went to the woman he hoped some day to call his wife, told her he loved her and asked her to wait for him until he returned to claim her. The promise was given and the young fellow set sail, his heart elated with hope and triumph. In this new world a happy home, a noble life might yet be his! On his passage he was observed again and again to take out two letters from his pocket and pore over them. They had been handed to him as he came on board the ship. One was from his father, a passionate, almost breathless prayer for his safe delivery from the old temptation, the other from his betrothed wife, happy, hopeful and loving.

When within two days sail of New York, a friend whom he had made on the steamer ordered wine at the dinner-table, and filled the young man's glass. The smell and sight of it maddened him. His head reeled. One glass? One little glass? There could surely be no danger in that! He raised it to his lips and drank. Two days later he landed in New York in a state of intoxication; was driven to a hotel where he continued to drink heavily for a week, until he was seized with delirium, and placed under a physician's care. When he recovered, his money was all spent, and he was ordered to leave the house. He was sober now, and understood fully what he had done. He looked at the landlord steadily. "Go? Yes, I will go. That is all that is left for me to do," he said. "The bus will be ready to take you away in five minutes," the man called after him, as he went up stairs. But the next moment his bell rang and when they went up they found him dead upon the floor—his life taken by his own hand. The

letters he had read so often, and that had seemed to promise hope and brightness for the future, lay beside him. Thus he left the world without one word of farewell to anybody in it—the victim of just one glass."—Youth's Companion.

WONDERFUL TREES.

To offset the healing balms which nature has instilled in so many of her productions, she has also given us a cohort of deadly plants, among which stands prominently the famous upas tree of Java. Though much of the romantic horror formerly associated with it has been dissipated, it is known that its juices are very deadly. Its action is such that a weapon dipped in its juice at once kills any animal it strikes. Travellers relate having seen several women guilty of adultery die in six minutes after being pricked below the bosom with a lancet dipped in the juice of this tree. No tree has been the subject of so many ridiculous fables as the upas, and till quite lately they were popularly believed. On the faith of a Dutch surgeon named Foersche, it was related that the upas flowed from a unique and singular tree, which vegetated in the midst of a frightful solitude in Java, "the valley of death." According to this traveller, no living creature could resist the poisonous vapors which it exhaled, and for three or four leagues around dead bodies and skeletons of men and animals were to be met with. The birds themselves which ventured into the surrounding air fell to the ground as if struck by lightning. Criminals consigned to capital punishment alone assayed the task of wrestling its infernal produce from the tree. Many tried the perilous journey, but few returned from it. We owe the refutation of this fabulous narrative to Leshenault, a recent French traveller. This traveller noticed that the famous poison is furnished by two species of trees which grow amid the forests of Java. So far from exercising a deleterious influence upon all that surrounds them, they are encompassed by a luxuriant vegetation, while birds, lizards and insects lend animation to their boughs and foliage. The learned Frenchman, while examining one of these trees, which he had cut down, had his face and hands covered with exudation flowing from the broken branches, yet he experienced no bad effects. But when the upas juice is introduced by means of a puncture, the effect is rapidly fatal. Eight drops injected into the veins of a horse will kill it directly. The story of the "valley of death" probably had its origin in the fact that there was some locality in this volcanic country where carbonic acid gas poured out from a crack in the earth in such quantities as to produce the fatal effects attributed to the tree. The native Javans use the juice as an arrow poison, prepared much the same as the South Americans make their *woorara*, with which their blow-gun arrows are envenomed. The upas-tree belongs to the bread-fruit family and grows in a beautiful symmetrical shape, to the height of a hundred feet or more.

It is a peculiar kind of expression where the apostle prays that they might "know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." We may know that experimentally which we can not know comprehensively; we may know that in its power and effects which we can not comprehend in its nature and depths. A weary person may receive refreshment from a spring who can not fathom the depths from whence it proceeds.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

DO WHAT YOU CAN. Don't think there is nothing For children to do, Because it can't work like a man; The harvest is great, And the laborers are few; Then, children, do all that you can. You think, if great riches You had at command; Your zeal should no weariness know; You'd scatter your wealth With a liberal hand, And succor the children of woe. But what if you've nought But a penny to give? Then give it though scanty your store, For those who give nothing When little they have, When wealthy will do little more. It was not the offering Of pomp and of power It was not the golden bequest— Ah, no! 'twas the mite From the hand of the poor That Jesus applauded and blessed. —Exchange. JAPANESE CHILDREN. The Japanese children have to endure hardships from their birth. In their tiny houses there are no bright cheerful fires, no easy-chairs

no well-spread tables round which the family gather and hold sweet converse. You must stoop to enter the ordinary houses, and their rooms are not much larger than closets. A part of the floor is covered with mats on which they sit and sleep. A block of wood four inches high, hollowed a little at the top serves as a pillow. Sometimes it has stuffing on the top an inch thick, over which a clean piece of paper is spread each time it is used to save any needful washing. The head poised on the pillow prevents the disarrangement of the hair, so that it need not be combed more than once or twice in a week. But the poor babies and the little children's heads are shaved entirely, or have from one to five tufts of hair left on the top, over each ear, and on the back. I have seen the little babies with heads entirely shaved and uncovered on the coldest day, while the mother or person on whose back it was carried, had the face and head covered, only the eyes and nose visible. Dr. Hepburn says: "Only very strong babies survive their infancy." Japanese houses have only paper windows; they have no stores or grates, but a little box from one to two feet square, with some coals in the centre, is all they have for warmth or cooking. Two or three cups, as many plates, a kettle, a tea-pot, and some boxes to hold their clothing complete their furniture. All the houses I have seen are very clean, which is their only appearance of comfort. Little children are often made to take care of the baby. A very common sight is to see a little boy or girl from five to twelve years old, playing with a kite, with a baby strapped on their backs, fast asleep but sometimes crying. In the latter case they only say "Be quiet," and go on with their play. But Japanese children seldom cry or quarrel, and they are very obedient to parents and teachers whom they venerate.—Missionary Link.

HOW TO INTRODUCE PEOPLE.

"I do dislike to introduce people to each other," said Eva to me one day last week. "Why, pray?" "It seems to me a very simple thing." "Well, when I have it to do, I stammer and blush, and feel so awkward, I never know who should be mentioned first, and I wish myself out of the room." "I think I can make it plain to you," I said. "You invite Mabel Tompkins to spend an afternoon with you. She has never been at your home before, and your mother has never met her. When you enter the sitting room, all you have to do is to say, 'Mother, this is my friend Mabel; Mabel, my mother.' If you wish to be more elaborate, you may say to your Aunt Lucy, 'Aunt Lucy, permit me to present Miss Mabel Tompkins; Miss Tompkins, Mrs. Templeton.' But while you introduce Mabel to your father or the minister, or an elderly gentleman, naming the most distinguished personage first, you present your brother, his chum and your cousin Fred to the young lady, naming her first. Fix it in your mind that among persons of equal station the younger are introduced to the older, and that inferiors in age, position, or influence are presented to superiors. Be very cordial when, in your own house, you are introduced to a guest, and offer your hand. If away from home, a bow is commonly sufficient recognition of an introduction. In performing an introduction, speak both names with perfect distinctness.—Harper's Young People.

HOLD ON BOYS.

Hold on to your tongue when you are ready to swear, lie or speak harshly. Hold on to your hat when you are about to punch, scratch, steal, or do any improper act. Hold on to your foot when you are on the point of kicking, running off from study, or pursuing the path of error, shame or crime. Hold on to your temper when you are angry, excited or imposed upon, or others are angry with you. Hold on to your heart when evil associates seek your company, and invite you to join in their mirth, games and revelry. Hold on to your good name at all times, for it is of more value than gold, high places or fashionable attire. Hold on to truth for it will serve you well, and do you good throughout eternity. Hold on to virtue—it is above all price to you at all times and places. Hold on to your good character, for it is, and ever will be your best wealth.