

SONG OF THE WIRES.

"TICK, tick! Tick, tick! Tick, tick!"
Hark to the voice of the telegraph wires
Ticking out every word!
A be-in-a-hurry, impatient voice,
That over all others is heard.
Now 'tis a message of sorrow and care,
And then of pleasure and song,
A tender thought, or a parting prayer,
Or a whisper of cruel wrong.

"Tick, tick! Tick, tick! Tick, tick!"
The wail of battle, the horror of fire,
The speed of a horse or ship;
The crash of markets, the flight of kings,
The word from baby's lip:
The flood, the plague, and the earthquake shock,
The sorrow that's on the sea,
Are met by mother's loving thought,
Or a lover's wedding glee.

"Tick, tick! Tick, tick! Tick, tick!"
And the winds blow through them day and night;
(Do the winds know what they say?)
And the sunshine glints, and the rain sweeps by,
And the white snows on them stay,
And the birds rest there and plume their wings,
(Do the birds their story know?)
Do they feel the thrill of the mighty things
That under their small feet go?

"Tick, tick! Tick, tick! Tick, tick!"
Above the snow of the cotton plant,
And above the Northern wheat,
And over the mighty mountain chain,
And the prairie fresh and sweet,
And over the thousand-streeted town,
And the desert wild and free;
And over the mighty forest trees,
And under the roaring sea.

"Tick, tick! Tick, tick! Tick, tick!"
They clasp all earth in a loving ring,
And they answer all desires,
For there isn't a language they cannot speak—
The wonderful Telegraph wires!
They will girdle the earth and cross the sea,
And the nations bind, until
The World shall answer in every tongue
Their messages of Good-will.
—*Lillie E. Barr.*

"HOW TO GET RELIGION."

THOSE who want religion get it; for those who really desire saving grace put themselves in a way to obtain it, and God meets all such. It is natural to seek the gratification of our desires. If a man wants money, he seeks it; if he wants political preferment, he seeks it. If a boy wants an education, he proceeds to meet the conditions of its attainment; if he wants social enjoyment, he adjusts himself to his social opportunities. So, if a man wants religion, he spontaneously puts himself in a way to get it; and if he wants it very much he will seek it first and more ardently than he seeks anything else. Then, as we have said, he gets it. We are positive on this point, because there are no contingencies between an earnest soul and God; nor is "God slack concerning his promises." We read: "All the promises of God in him (that is, in Christ) are yea, and in him amen," (2 Cor. i. 20). The moment we begin to "draw nigh to God," that moment he begins to "draw nigh to us." The movement is like that of two weights balanced on a pulley; the instant the lower weight begins to rise, the upper one begins to descend, and they are sure to meet in the centre.

The balance of power to determine personal salvation is in the hands of the unsaved. It is locked up in the will. The Creator put it there, and then threw away the key. Hence man's responsibility. It is left to him

to make his own character and fix his own destiny. Therefore, if a man wills to have religion, there is no possibility of failure on the side of God. He is committed to fill the man with righteousness who hungers and thirsts after it. And his promises are not like notes on time, but cash down the moment we make the transfer of ourselves and property to him. Show a clean title by cancelling all claims and mortgages of sin, Satan, and the world upon you, and execute a deed of consecration, and God will and must accept the tender and bestow the promised consideration. I reverently say must, for he has put himself under self-assumed obligations to meet you on terms of salvation at that point. He has established his own conditions, and the day you meet them with the deepest sincerity you can command he has bound himself, at the hazard of his own attributes, to fulfil his engagements. If, then, you confess your sin, he will and must prove himself "faithful and just to forgive your sin, and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness." "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." There is no assurance in any pursuit like that which we find in the pursuit of religion. We may desire wealth, civil distinction, or social relationships, but a thousand obstructions may come between us and the attainment of the coveted object. Not so with salvation. It is only look and live, thirst and drink. But one says, "I do not thirst, and, therefore, cannot drink, for appetite must precede eating and drinking." True; but you can beget desire. To start with, you have painful awakenings. "Every heart knows its own bitterness." In spite of itself, every unsaved soul is a troubled sea. Fear lurks in every mind to which Jesus does not say "Peace, be still." Doubt, unrest, and apprehension surge through the soul where sin reigns or keeps the least footing.

Sin is a hornet that constantly stings the feelings. Guilt is a burden hard to carry. It will bow and break at length the strongest nerve. Even a feeling of uncertainty as to our salvation is a canker that will eat the soul out of a man of ordinary sensibility. Now, to consider this state of things naturally begets desire to be at rest. Who can be in an earthquake or tempest and not desire its cessation? Again, compare your doubt and forebodings with the quiet and confidence of those who are consciously saved. The result will be a desire that will express itself in this wise, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." It was such comparison that created in John Wesley a desire to be consciously saved. In a storm at sea he saw the Moravian missionaries calm and resigned, while he was agitated with fear. Above all, give yourself to prayer and the reading of the Scriptures, and you will not only desire, but crave and pant for the water of life. Take the Bible and kneel down at your bedside, with the sacred pages open before you. Read and pray, and pray and read, repent and believe, confess and weep, and pour out your soul as it were in solution before God, and your indifference will turn to desire, and your desire to burning thirst. And then you will be "filled with the Spirit," and blessed with "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."—*A. Lowrey, in Divine Life.*

MATCHES.

WE do not refer to the kind of matches that are said to be made in heaven, but to the very earthly article which enables Bridget to start up the kitchen fire and Patrick to light his pipe. There is hardly any article in more common use, and in all our household economy not one the loss of which would be so constantly felt.

But how few people realize that this year is only the semi-centennial of the domestic match! The old way of striking fire was with the flint and steel. It is not known that any attempt was made to produce fire by chemical agency until the year 1805. But the matches then invented, as well as those which followed, until the year 1833, were clumsy and dangerous, and did not come into general use.

But from the year 1833 the growth of the business has been enormous. The number of matches made in the United States during the past year was about thirty-three thousand million. And yet the cost of this enormous number is a comparatively insignificant sum.

Matches can be made and sold for about fifty or sixty cents a gross of bunches, containing one hundred each, and yield a handsome profit. That is, the cost of nearly fifteen thousand matches is about fifty cents,—or three hundred for a cent. And as the average use of matches is about six hundred a year for each person of the population, the average expense should be about two cents for a person.

This cost has, however, been much increased in this country by a tax, during the last twenty years. Since the internal revenue system went into effect, during the war, the law has required a one-cent stamp to be placed upon every package of one hundred matches.

This tax, during the fiscal year just closed, yielded more than three and a quarter million dollars. It will be seen that it amounts to from two to three times the actual cost of the matches, so that the people have been paying three or four times as much as they otherwise need to have paid for this indispensable article.

It is a queer fact, as showing how the taste of the people of different countries, in respect to taxes, varies; that while Americans have borne this tax upon matches with perfect good-humor, Englishmen refuse to bear it at all.

When Mr. Lowe, now Viscount Sherbrooke, was Chancellor of the Exchequer in Mr. Gladstone's former administration, he proposed to raise money for the Government by a tax on matches. But a great crowd, numbering tens of thousands of persons, assembled near the Houses of Parliament to protest against the measure, and it was abandoned. In France there is such a tax.

The match manufacture in this country is what is called a "monopoly." But the term is misused, for the business is open to all competitors. The truth is, that the large manufacturers have consolidated their business, and therefore they are enabled to sell matches for less money than smaller factories would be obliged to charge. Of course, the moment they charge too much, new, independent factories will spring into operation, for the material

from which matches are made is cheap, and the machinery and the process of manufacture are simple.

Some people have feared that this "monopoly" would now be able to force its customers to pay the same price for matches that has been paid during the last twenty years, and that thus the benefit of the remission of taxes would go into the profits of the manufacturer.

The fear was an idle one, for not only could rival companies well afford to sell matches at one-half their former price, but matches can be imported from abroad, and yet be sold at one-half the price charged when they were stamped.

Although the tax averaged only about six cents a year for each person, the relief from it was a welcome one, and the people have already received the benefit of it; for since the first of July the price has been greatly reduced.

NEWTON'S CHILDHOOD.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON is the greatest of modern philosophers and mechanics. When he was born December 25, 1642, three months after his father's death, he was so small and feeble that no one supposed he would live a day; but the weak infant grew to be a healthy, robust man, who lived until he was eighty-four years old. He began to invent or contrive machines, and to show his taste for mechanics in early childhood. He inherited some property from his father, and his mother, who had married a second time, sent him to the best schools, and to the University of Cambridge. At school he soon showed his natural taste; he amused himself with little saws, hatchets, hammers, and different tools, and when his companions were at play spent his time in making machines and toys. He made a wooden clock when he was twelve years old, and the model of a wind-mill, and in his mill he put a mouse, which he called his miller, and which turned the wheels by running around its cage. He made a water clock four feet high, and a cart with four wheels, not unlike a velocipede, in which he could drive himself by turning a windlass.

His love of mechanics often interrupted his studies at school, and he was sometimes making clocks and carriages when he ought to have been constructing Latin and Greek. But his mind was so active that he easily caught up again with his fellow-scholars, and was always fond of every kind of knowledge. He taught the school-boys to make paper kites; he made paper lanterns by which to go to school in the dark winter mornings; and sometimes at night he would alarm the whole country round by raising his kites in the air with a paper lantern attached to the tail; they would shine like meteors in the distance, and the country people, at that time very ignorant, would fancy them omens of evil, and celestial lights.

He was never idle for a moment. He learned to draw and sketch; he made little tables and sideboards for the children to play with; he watched the motion of the sun by means of pegs he had fixed in the wall of the house where he lived, and marked every hour.