

## THE HOME CIRCLE.

## THE TWO BELLS.

Long years ago, so runs the ancient story,  
Two bells were sent from Spain to that far clime,  
Now found, beyond the sea, that to God's glory  
And in His house together they might chime.

And to this day one bell is safely swinging  
Within its shelt'ring tower, where, clear and free,  
It hallows each day with its mellow ringing,—  
The other bell, the mate, was lost at sea.

And when in gentle chimes the bell is pealing,  
The people listen; for they say they hear  
An echo from the distant ocean stealing—  
It is the lost one's answer, faint yet clear.

Oh, love, like those two bells we sailed together,  
And you have reached your holy work and rest,  
But stormy was the way and rude the weather,  
And I was lost beneath the wave's white crest.

O'er my buried heart the waters glisten,  
Across my breast the sea-weeds weave and twine,  
Dead is my soul's best life, save when I listen  
And hear your spirit calling unto mine.

Then the old longing awakes; I start, I shiver,  
I try to break the bonds which hold me dumb,  
I turn, I strive with many a throes and quiver,  
I feebly answer, but I cannot come.

## TEACHING HIS BOY TO DRINK.

BY JOHN R. CLEMENTS.

In the early hours of a spring morning, while journeying on a railway train to an appointed service for the Master, I found, as fellow travellers in the two seats in front of the one I occupied, an elderly woman, presumably the grandmother of a little fellow of not more than two summers, who sat with her, while behind them were the parents of the boy.

We were nearing the end of the journey as the man took a flask from his pocket, drank from it, and passed it to the old woman, who drank, too. Then the father, taking the flask again, offered it to the little lad who was urged to "have a nip" with the rest, which he did.

I quailed at the sight, and then my blood grew warm with indignation as I thought of what the father had deliberately done—pressed the "cup of death" to the lips of his first-born, and he so young!

How my inmost being cried out for some restraining hand to make forever impossible the repetition of an offence like this, and I thought of Lincoln's resolve when he first saw the slave trade in all its iniquity: "If ever I get a chance to hit that thing, I'll hit it, and hit it hard."

May you do likewise, my hearer.

## MOTHER'S INFLUENCE.

Amid the daily cares and trials and besetments of life, when pressed by its varied responsibilities, and driven almost to distraction by the multiplicity of duties devolving upon us, let us pause for a moment and consider some of the compensations of motherhood. You are worn and weary with the care of that helpless infant upon your knee, and almost too tired to think of the other children who besiege you with their eager questionings.

And beside all this, perhaps the loving husband or some other member of the family falls ill, requiring your anxious care. If you could stop long enough to survey the almost boundless extent of your duties, you might well enquire "Who is sufficient for these things?" You are sometimes even tempted to ask if life is worth living, with so much to contend with; and you become almost weary of the struggle.

But when you look at the helpless babe in your arms and think how dependent it is upon you, is not one clasp of the tiny fingers about your own worth all the self-sacrificing care you have given it? And do not the pleasant, thoughtful "Good-bye, mamma," of your girl, and the merry smile and hearty kiss of your boy, to mother and babe on leaving for school, more than repay for all your morning's thought of them?

If we do not reap these rewards, it is because we have not sown for them; for our children can be trained to be tender and thoughtful of parents, and it is our duty to so train them. "Honor thy father and thy

mother" is the first commandment with promise, and we fail in our duty if we do not train them from infancy to habits of kind thoughtfulness for their parents. There is no more painful picture than to see a child growing up thoughtless, selfish, disrespectful, and tyrannical, disregarding the wishes and feelings of his parents; and there is no sadder life than such a one can make for his mother.

On the other hand, nothing is sweeter than filial devotion, be it from a son or a daughter; but no child is likely to be considerate of others if not trained to habits of obedience and courtesy. And just here a mother's daily example is worth more than volumes to the growing child. Consider that these children under your care are looking to you for guidance, and are to carry through life the influence of your sunny smile, your cherry greeting, your noble Christian character, your patient resignation, and see how immeasurable is the circle of your power. And do not forget that in the daily routine you are silently but surely moulding lives for eternity.

Who knows but your child may, from the very strength of the influence you shed upon him, be led to a greater work for God than you had ever dreamed of?

Oh, burdened mothers, striving to do your whole duty, appreciate your "high and holy calling," and take courage! Learn to sacrifice the lower to the higher needs, and husband your strength for the greater demands of later years.

A stranger's hand might, if necessary, minister to the wants of your helpless infant and the child be none the wiser; but no one else could take your place to your daughter at the budding of womanhood, or to your son in the hour of temptation when he looks to your strength of character for help and encouragement, and to a mother's tender heart for sympathy.

Dear, overburdened mothers, don't lose heart or hope! Take courage and comfort from the lives of your children. That helpless infant may some time be given the opportunity to do a greater work than you ever could, even if your hands were free. Let us be content to live in the lives of our children, not forgetting that our highest duty is to train these little ones for God and eternity.

## FOR HIS MOTHER'S SAKE.

The florist's boy had just swept some broken and withered flowers into the gutter, when a ragged urchin darted across the street. He stooped over the pile of mangled flowers, came at last upon a rose seemingly in better condition than the rest. But as he tenderly picked it up the petals fluttered to the ground, leaving only the bare stalk in his hand.

He stood quite still, and his lips quivered perceptibly. The florist's boy, who had been looking at him severely, felt that his face was softening. "What's the matter with you, anyway?" he asked.

The ragged little fellow choked as he answered: "It's for my mother. She's sick, and can't eat nothin', an' I thought if she'd a flower to smell it might make her feel better."

"Just you wait a minute," said the florist's boy, as he disappeared. When he came out upon the sidewalk, he held in his hand a beautiful, half-opened rose, which he carefully wrapped in tissue paper. "There," he said, "take that to your mother."

He had meant to put that rosebud on his mother's grave, and yet he knew he had done the best thing. "She'll understand," he said to himself, "and I know this will please her most."

## FORGETTING PROMISES.

A promise made to a child or to the lowliest, most unworthy person should be kept, no matter how hard it may be to keep it. "I entirely forgot my promise," one says, as if forgetting it were much less a sin than deliberately breaking it. We have no right to forget any promise we make to another. If we cannot trust our memory, we should make note of our promises and engagements on paper, and then keep them scrupulously, on the very minute. To break even the slightest promise is grievously to wrong and hurt another life.—  
J. R. Miller.