

OUR HOME CIRCLE.

THE LOOM OF LIFE. All day, all night, I can hear the jar of the loom of life, and near and far it thrills with its deep and muffled sound, As tireless the wheels go always round.

Busily, ceaselessly, goes the loom. In the light of day and the midnight's gloom, And the wheels are: turning early and late, And the wool is wound in the warp of fate.

Click, click! there's a thread of love woven in: Click, click!—another of wrong and sin; What a checkered thing this life will be When we see it unrolled in eternity!

When shall this wonderful web be done? In a thousand years, perhaps, or one; Or to-morrow! Who knoweth? Not thou nor I; But the wheels turn on and the shuttles fly.

Ah, sad-eyed weavers, the years are slow, But each one is nearer the end, I know; And soon the last thread shall be woven in— God grant it be love instead of sin.

Are we spinners of good in this life-wool—say? Do we furnish the weaver a thread each day? It were better far, O my friends, to spin A beautiful thread than a thread of sin.

"THAT OFF OX?"

Jesus Christ, the great model preacher, taught many things by parables. They represented actual or probable facts, which were forcibly illustrated and likely to be remembered by his numerous hearers. The following incidents, unimportant in themselves, suggest most useful lessons of instruction. In slavery times a gentleman and his family were sojourning at the well-known hotel at Old Point Comfort, rear of Fortress Monroe, Va. One morning, while walking on the shore, he met a tall, old colored man, whose hair, or wool, on his head was as white as time could well make it, when the following conversation took place: "Good morning, uncle; you look as if you had lived a long time in this world." "Yes, massa, I's been livin' here for about sixty years, and such a thing never happened to this old chile as happened this mornin'." "Why uncle, I hope nothing bad has happened to you."

"If you will go with me to the waf, you can see for yourself." A walk was accordingly taken to a small wharf, where a schooner was lying laden with fire wood. "Please come up on the waf. Massa sent old nigger this mornin' with a yoke of oxen and a waggon to haul wood to the hotel; I went to back my waggon up to the schooner, when the 'off ox' backed it over into the river, and he went over with it, leaving the tother ox standin firm and fast on the waf, with his neck likely to be broken by his yoke. I called to the captain of the schooner and axed him what I had better do? He said, Let us push the tother ox into the water. We both cotched hold and pitched the tother in. For what would old massa say if old nigger got his oxen kilt? I then went into the water, loosened the oxen and fetched them out. You can see the waggon for yourself." It was submerged in water about four feet deep. The old man continued: "Do you see the oxen standin on the sho? Do you see that 'off ox' he is the greatest backer in the world. When he begins to back he never knows when to stop." "Uncle, I am glad your accident was no worse." After some further conversation, the old man rallied and said, "I must now wade out and see if I can get my waggon."

The "off ox," who was the greatest backer in the world, is an apt illustration of many phases of human character. In the time of Jesus "many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him." Backing in religion was a subject of grave caution. "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God." Sometimes preachers and ministers, itinerant and local, become great backers. Their talents and claims are not properly appreciated; others are preferred before them for desirable positions; they become dissatisfied, sour in temper and complaining; while some have backed out of our ministry into the river, and have not found the bottom yet—nor much better places.

The board of stewards, who should be the right arm of the pastor, become dissatisfied; they do not like the services of the pastor or his family, and they are slow to provide for their comfortable support, forgetting that some stations require more than the patience and strength of the ox to serve them. Backing is official backsliding. Cess leaders, the sub-pastors of the church, once zealous and faithful, occasionally are found who lose proper interest in their duties, fail to second the stewards in their plans to support the station, back out themselves from liberal giving, and become a bad example for other backers. What is done among church officials reaches the members of the church likewise. From this loss of the fervor of early religion, or from some offence, real or imaginary, class-meetings, a tendancy on the house of God, Sabbath-schools,

and other wholesome religious exercises, become insipid, and all such persons are in danger of backing overboard, like the "off ox." Nor is that all. If they should back into the river, husbands may involve wives, parents their children, who are "standing firm and fast on the wharf," and to preserve the peace of the family, and to save the lives of the backers, the others are also forced overboard.

Certain ones of the ladies—so amiable, kind and full of good works—may not like the way the 'Ladies Aid Society' is conducted. Too much respect and influence are given to some, to the neglect of others. The arrangements for the exhibition, concert, lecture, festival, oyster supper, clambake or strawberry entertainments, are not in the hands of the right persons. Others could do much better. The objection is not so much against the moral character of some such entertainments, as it is against the prominence and usefulness of some of the managers. It would be almost uncivil to intimate that any Christian lady would back out from her sisters because she was not well pleased with their management. Rumors have, however, said that a few such backers have been known.

Two friends, who were almost as intimate as David and Jonathan, were members of the same church societies. Occasionally debates would occur on questions which were of no material importance. David—when he expressed his opinions—never yielded or changed, but insisted on their adoption. After one of such debates, Jonathan said kindly to David: "It is not stubbornness in me, but firmness." The good man, who is now with God, forgot that, sometimes, those two qualities are very nearly related to each other.

If all the moral backers in the church would only pull willingly in the gospel yoke, the waggon would soon move out of the ditch. The fabled Hercules would not help the lazy driver and his team out of the rut. "Once more," and our parable will be ended: "Doth God take care for oxen, or saith he it altogether for our sakes?" For our sakes no doubt, this is written, that "he that plougheth, should plough in hope; and he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope." There is no provision made for a drawback. On the contrary, God has said: "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Pass the watch words: "We are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." "Remember Lot's wife;" "Do not forget the 'off-ox.'"—N. Y. Methodist.

WHEN TO STOP.

Success depends as much on not doing as upon doing; in other words, "Stop before you begin," has saved many a boy from ruin. When quite a young lad I came very near losing my own life and that of my mother by the horse I was driving running violently down a steep hill and over a dilapidated bridge at its foot.

As the boards of the old bridge flew up behind us, it seemed almost miraculous that we were not precipitated into the stream beneath and drowned. Arriving home and narrating our narrow escape to my father, he sternly said to me: "Another time, hold in your horse before he starts."

How many young men would have been saved if in early life they had said, when invited to take the first step in wrong doing, "No, I thank you."

"If John, at that time a clerk in the store, had only said to one of the older clerks, when invited to spend an evening in a drinking saloon, "No, I thank you," he would not to-day be an inmate of an inebriate asylum.

"If James, a clerk in another store, when invited to spend his next Sabbath on a steamboat excursion, had said, "No, I thank you," he would to-day have been an honored officer in the church instead of occupying a cell in the State prison.

Had William, when at school, said when his comrade suggested to him that he write his own excuses for absence from school and sign his father's name, "No, I thank you; I will not add lying to wrong-doing," he would not to-day be serving out a term of years in prison for having committed forgery.

In my long and large experience as an educator of boys and young men, I have noticed this, that resisting the devil in whatever form he may suggest wrong-doing to us is one sure means of success in life. Tampering with evil is always dangerous.

"Avoid the beginnings of evil," is an excellent motto for every boy starting out in life.

Oh, how many young have endeavored, when half way down the hill of wrong-doing to stop, but have not been able! Their own passions, appetites, lusts and bad habits have driven them rapidly down the hill to swift and irremediable ruin.

My young friend, stop before you begin to go down hill; learn now to say to all invitations to wrong-doing, from whatever source they may come, "No, I thank you," and in your old age, glory crowned, you will thank me for this advice.

WORLDLY CONFORMITY.

Dr. James W. Alexander wrote to a friend:

"As I grow older as a parent, my views are changing fast as to the degree of conformity to the world which we should allow to our children. I am horror struck to count up the profligate children of pious persons and even ministers.

"The door at which these influences enter, which countervail parental instruction and example, I am persuaded is, yielding to the ways of good society. By dress, books, and amusements, an atmosphere is formed which is not that of Christianity. More than ever do I feel that our families must stand in a kind but determined opposition to the fashions of the world, breasting the waves like the Eddystone lighthouse. And I have found nothing yet which requires more courage and independence than to rise a little, but decidedly above, the par of the religious world around us.

"Surely, the way in which we commonly go on is not the self-denial and sacrifice and cross-bearing which the New Testament talks of. 'This is the offence of the cross ceased.' Our slender influence on the circle of our friends is often to be traced to our leaving so little difference between us and them."

It is sad indeed that the feebleness of our influence should be due to such a cause! Let all Christian parents think of this. In these days of worldly conformity it deserves to be thought of.

How little difference now between the church and the world! Not only do the children of church members, but many church members themselves, indulge in amusements, pleasures and extravagances too closely linked with worldliness and sin.

Let us heed the wise and affectionate counsel of the apostle Paul, who wrote: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service; and be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Rom. xii. 1-2. For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." I Cor. vi. 20. The apostle James says, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." James iv. 4. The "beloved disciple" said, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

ONE DAY AT A TIME.

Only one day To bear the strain Of living, and to battle with the pain. Only one day To study With food and covering, as the hours slip by. Only one day—To-morrow's care To-morrow, if it comes, itself shall bear. Only one day—Then waste it not In futile planning where the Lord is not. Only one day God gives to me At once. Oh, may I use it faithfully!

THE REVISION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

During the last ten years a work has been in progress among us which has an interest for all English-speaking people—the revision of the English New Testament. It began with resolutions of the Convocation of Canterbury at a session held on May 9, 1870. They were to the effect that it was desirable that a revision of the authorized version of Holy Scripture should be undertaken; that no changes should be made but such as faithfulness required; that the style of the language of the existing version should be closely followed, and that the co-operation of scholars of other nations and other religious bodies should be invited.

A committee of eight bishops and eight presbyters was appointed to carry out these resolutions, of whom three bishops (Winchester, Gloucester and Bristol, and Salisbury), together with the Prolocutor of the Lower House, now Dean of Lichfield, the Dean of Canterbury (Dr. Alford), the Dean of Westminster, and Canon Blakesley (now Dean of Lincoln), formed the original New Testament Company. The same

year companies were formed in America to co-operate with the English companies; the New Testament Company consisting of fifteen eminent American scholars. Both the English and the American Company contain members of the larger religious bodies in the two countries respectively. About half of the added members of the English companies were members of the English Church. In the American companies the various religious bodies are pretty equally represented.

The mode of working between the two companies is interesting. The Greek text and the translation, examining together every verse and every word. This was done at the rate of about forty verses a day, and it took six years to complete the first revision. As each portion was completed copies were sent to the American Company, who in due course sent back their criticisms and suggestions. These were carefully considered during the second revision which occupied two years and a half. As the various portions of the second revision were completed, they were sent to America and the Americans sent back further criticisms and suggestions, which were in turn carefully considered. At last the revised version was sent over to America in its final form, and the American brethren sent back in return a list of passages in which they record their preference for other renderings than those adopted by the English Company. These, it is understood, will be found at the end of the large edition of the revised New Testament to be issued by the University presses.

The meetings of the English Company began each day at 11 o'clock and closed at 6. After prayer, the minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed. A verse was then read from the authorized version. Any proposals for changes in the Greek text were made, discussed and voted upon; and then any changes in the renderings of the English translation. At the first revision a majority of the members present decided all changes. At the second revision all these changes were liable to be reconsidered, and then no disputed change, either in the Greek text or in the revised translation, was affirmed unless a majority of two-thirds of the members present approved it. This rule was laid down at the outset, and gave a great preponderance, not unreasonably, to the authorized version. At the same time it was likely to end in the retention of readings and renderings which a decided majority of the company deemed the less satisfactory. It is obvious to remark also that under such a rule many a rendering was likely to be retained, not because the authorized version is the best possible, but because it was not found practicable to hit upon expressions which were deemed by two-thirds of the company to be preferable to the authorized. Sometimes, too, as it may be supposed, the rhythm and sacred associations of the authorized version would be likely to carry the day against renderings that had possibly greater technical accuracy on their side.

Most readers will rejoice in the conservative influence of these rules, and they have certainly ended in the more careful examination of every word of the New Testament, whether in the English or in the Greek. The meetings of the English Company were generally held, by the courtesy of the Dean of Westminster, in the Jerusalem Chamber, a room belonging to the Deanery. Here met the Assembly of Divines in 1643; and, in 1689, the Commission to revise the Liturgy of the English Church. Some of the greatest English theologians of all schools have assembled within its walls; and many eminent men have here lain in state on their way to their final resting place in the adjoining Abbey. A room richer in appropriate historical memories is not to be found in England.

The New Testament Company has met ten times a year during the last ten years, for four days each time, and generally for seven hours each day. It may be said, therefore, that they have given 400 working days to these conferences, in addition to such individual previous preparation. And as this work has been done without fee or reward by busy men, they deserve on that account alone the hearty thanks of all the Churches.—Dr. Angus in Sunday Magazine.

A LESSON.

Many years ago I was living in Roxbury, Massachusetts, and I started to hear the Germanians render Beethoven's Fifth Symphony in Boston. As I came to the place where the omnibuses met (we had no tram cars then) I heard the sound of merriment and laughter—"such fun!" and as I am very fond of fun,

I thought I would go up and see what it was. I went, and found a group of young men, and in the centre of that group was a young girl seventeen years of age—as I found out afterwards—very drunk, and the young men were pushing her about. One would push her one way, and another the other. I came up and said, "Do you call it sport, to push a helpless girl about like that?" She was a nice child. Somebody said, "That's Gough." I said, "Yes, that is my name." They allowed me to come near. The girl was swaying to and fro—she could not stand still; and she was crying bitterly, giving utterance to that wail and moan so pitiful to hear from an animal, but infinitely more pitiful to hear from a woman. I said, "Where do you live?" It was some time before she could answer me. She stammered very badly. She was very drunk. At last by patience I ascertained the name and number of the street. Then I said to her, "Now, if you will trust me—if you will take my arm, I will see you home safely." She put her little hands to her white face, and looked at me, and swayed and swayed, and then with both hands grasped me as a drowning man would catch at a plank. I walked with her a mile and a half. It was hard work; but at length we reached the house, and I rang the bell. The servant came to the door; I said, "I found this young lady in the streets, and she says that she lives here." "Oh, my good gracious!" said the servant, and snatched the girl into the house and shut the door.

I went to the concert, and, going along, I said to myself, "People like to talk, especially about teetotallers. I have been seen walking through the streets to night with a drunken woman, arm in arm, and they will talk about it. Well, let them talk; I can talk too. I have a meeting to-morrow night; Mr. Grant is to preside, and at the close of my lecture I will tell the whole affair; and so I did. At the close of the meeting a lady and gentleman pushed up to me, holding up their hands, "God bless you!" "For what?" "For bringing our daughter home last night." "What, your daughter?" "Yes, poor child. She is lying ill in her bed, and we have left her to come to you, and say, 'God bless you!' Oh, if you had left her with those young men, what would have become of our child?—or if the policeman had taken her to the station-house? She would have never lifted up her head again. She was not to blame. There was a wedding at her aunt's last week. Not being very well, I thought she had better not go to the ceremony. But yesterday was a clear, cold day; and I said 'You had better call on your aunt. You can return by the omnibus by nightfall.' She went, and when she got into the house she said, 'I am feeling very cold,' and her aunt (one of those hospitable good-natured old idiots that we sometimes meet,) said, 'I will give you something to warm you, my dear, and gave her a glass of hot whiskey punch. Now, said the mother, 'my daughter had never tasted such stuff before. We are teetotallers, and never have a drop of the cursed thing in the house, and she did not know what it was. Her aunt gave it to her, and she drank it, and began to feel poorly; and she said, 'Aunt, I must go home.' 'Well, my dear,' said her aunt, 'you must take a piece of the wedding cake to your mama, and you must drink a glass of wine,' and she poured out a glass, and the child drank it. When she had come out and had reached the corner of the street, she became bewildered, and did not know what was the matter with her, and, said the mother, 'after that she had no recollection of anything, but a dim, indefinite, confused idea of something she knew not what.'

Twenty years after that a lady came to me in the Music Hall, Boston, and said, "I am a wife and mother, and a member of a Christian Church, and I am that girl you helped home when drunk." You may say, "That is a bad precedent." Bah! bah! for your precedent. There are some men and women who, for fear of establishing a precedent, cannot lift a poor human soul from perdition. They want a precedent. Perish precedents! If I see a woman in trouble, and I can consistently help her out of that trouble, I never ask who she is or what she is, or how she got into the trouble, until I have helped her out. That is my plan, and it should be yours. Help them out and then talk to them.—John B. Gough.

Dr. Dudley A. Sargent, the director of Harvard College gymnasium, says that at least half the students he has examined suffer from palpitation of the heart, caused by excessive cigarette smoking and drinking strong coffee.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

TWO AND ONE. Thou hast two ears, and but one mouth; Remember it, I pray; For much there is that thou must hear, And little say. Thou hast two eyes, and but one mouth; Ponder and reason well; Full many things thou art to see, And few things tell. Thou hast two hands, and but one mouth; Nature has rightly done, For she has given two for work, For eating, one.

THE FIRST WRONG BUTTON.

"Dear me!" said little Janet, "I buttoned just one button wrong," and that made all the rest go wrong, and Janet tugged away and fretted, as if the poor buttons were quite at fault for her trouble. "Patience! patience!" said mamma, smiling at the little fretful face, "and next time look out for the first wrong button; then you'll keep all the rest right. And," added mamma, as the last button was put in its place, and the scowling face was smooth once more, "look out for the first wrong deed of any kind; another and another is sure to follow."

Janet remembered how, one day not long ago, she struck baby Alice; that was the first wrong deed. Then she denied having done it; that was another. Then she was unhappy and cross all day because she had told a lie. What a long list of buttons fastened wrong just because one went wrong—because her naughty little hand struck baby! The best thing she could do to make it right again was to tell mamma how naughty she had been, and ask her to forgive her; but that was much harder than just to do the buttons again.

Janet thought it all over, and between the buttons and her very unhappy day, I think she learned never again to forget to look out for the first wrong deed.—The Watchman.

A BOY'S OPPORTUNITIES.

"Well, what is it my boy?" asked Mrs. Leonard, as Frank came in from school one Thursday afternoon and pettishly threw his books upon the table. Twirling his hat in his hands, Frank answered: "It's everything, mother. You know it's composition day. Well, the subject is 'My Opportunities.' I don't believe I have any opportunities. I think I might write about some other person's opportunities, though. Only think, the boys have all gone over to the cricket-ground this afternoon, and here I have to stay shut up in the house to write that miserable composition. The other boys can write theirs this evening, while I am tied up in that old story. That's just the way all my opportunities slip from me—my opportunities for sport at any rate."

"I am glad you added that last clause," said his mother; "but you know you could have gone with the boys." "Why, mother Leonard! Do you think I would give up my chance of going to college for an afternoon's fun? When I promised father I would save him the expense of hiring a clerk by helping in the store evenings and Saturdays, so he could better afford to send me to college, I meant to stick to it. But you see the fathers of the other fellows are able to send them to college without their having to pinch and dig for it."

"Frank, you are looking only at your opportunities for sport. Just think of some of your opportunities for making a noble, strong-minded, educated man of yourself. You forget how many boys there are who cannot possibly receive so good an education as you, because they haven't the advantages. There is Tom Howard. You have often told me what a desire that boy has for learning. And there's a whole family looking to him for support on account of the father's intemperance. But the boy is fast learning many things that neither books nor schools could teach him."

Frank lifted his face with a patient yet eager look, and said: "Mother, I had entirely forgotten that blessed Tom. I am afraid I have been—well, at least cracking away, marm!"

"I knew you would come round to the right view," she answered. "In missing the sport you are really gaining something better. By being obliged to depend on yourself in part for the expense of your education, you are learning self-reliance, which will be of inestimable value to you in your future life. I think, too, that you will improve—and be improving—your opportunities for learning better than if you were no trouble to obtain it. We always prize a thing that costs something." "Thanks for your sermon, mother," said Frank. "I believe 'My Opportunities' will make a fine subject for a composition."

SUNDAY SCHOOL.

MARCH. THE DAUGHTER OF I.—Jairus's

Jairus was a ruler probably in Capernaem been privileged with hearing Jesus, for he to teach in all the synagogues. He had opportunity. He been very familiar. Indeed it is not unlikely he may have been one of the disciples (chap. vi. 3). He not ventured to be a disciple, like Nicodemus, others, he was Jesus. Had he would not have liked in his hour of need, to have him as a Friend recognize his claims as our Saviour now—only daughter—no, her father's heart, a joy of his home, who point of death. He possible course, and ble to Jesus.

As they went about for years, and had to get cured, he crowded until she got to the border of the sea. What a mighty faith was honored.

Jesus knew what she was healed. He seriously intended to her faith known to her out from her father's house, and he asked who had disciples might well with surprise through him. By the distinction between the intentional not to understand report to apparition, in any magical sense power consciously gone out of him, persisted in drawing line, and making known in order to superstitious use of

The incident led must have been a anxious father. A time to resume their ger brought tidings been dreading to charge at home had only that he might that he might not ther. Very probably siderateness was re on their part; t thought that Jairus errand, and blank hearts for leaving

When they arrived would only permit disciples to go in were already too m are wont to be on cious intruders into sorrow. This is conduct. They with common dece of the dead, even lieve in Jesus of N not been dead to hy would rot h him when he said they thus unattent selves witnesses to miracle. They c question after laug for saying she wa that quiet authori ways exert when these scoffers on the manifestations

In the presence disciples and the maiden, Jesus hand, and simple arise!" and he and she arose s sublime in its is. As one writer raising the dead he were an ordi after feeling the gives instructions manifestation of filled those who great astonishme who wrought it a ordinary event."

We are natura and sins. No us from spiritual "He speaks, and his New life the dead

—Abridged from Magazine.

THE MA

In a recent po litian Tabernaer full thing to-night London at the hospital and the not say half a wherever it com you will mark, that while a few unavoidable of the large mass of the sheer result of forethought,