







The Family.

What is Life?

A little crib beside the bed,
A little face above the spread,
A little frock behind the door,
A little shoe upon the floor.

Home Influences.

'Who's that, I wonder?' said Mrs. Seaburn,
as she heard a ring at the basement door.

'Ah! it's Marshall,' returned her husband,
who had looked out at the window, and recog-

nized the grocer's cart.

'And what have you had sent home now, Hen-

ry?' But before Mr. Seaburn could answer, the

door of the sitting-room was opened, and one of

the domestics looked in and asked—

'What! I did the dem'jones, mum?'

'Dum'jones?' repeated Mrs. Seaburn.

'Put them in the hall, and I'll attend to them,

interposed the husband.

'Henry, what have you sent home now?' the

wife asked, after the domestics was gone.

'Some nice old brandy,' replied Henry.

Cora Seaburn glanced up at the clock, and

then looked down upon the floor. There was

nothing upon her fair brow, and it was very evi-

dent that something lay heavily upon her heart.

Presently she walked to the wall and pulled the

bell-cord, and the summons was answered by the

chambermaid.

'Are George and Charlie in their room?'

'Yes, ma'am.'

'Tell them it is school time.'

The girl went out, and in a little while two

boys entered the sitting room, with their books

under their arms and their caps in their hands.

They were bright, happy, healthy fellows, with

goodness and truth stamped upon their rosy

faces, and the light of free consciences gleaming

in their sparkling eyes. George was thirteen

years of age, and Charles eleven; and certainly

the two parents had reason to be proud of

them. The boys kissed their mother, gave a

happy 'good morning' to their father, and then

went away to school.

'Come, said Mr. Seaburn, some time after

the boys had gone, 'what makes you so sober?'

'Sober?' repeated the wife, looking at her

husband with a puzzled expression.

'Do you want me to tell you why?'

'Of course I do.'

'Well, Henry, I am sorry you have had that

spirit brought into the house.'

'Pook! what's the use in talking so, Cora? You

wouldn't have me to do without it, would you?'

'Yes.'

'What do you mean?'

'I mean that I would clear off the stuff, now

and forever.'

'But—Cora—you are wild. What should we

do our parties without wine?'

'Do as others do who have it not.'

'But—my wife! what would people say? Are

you afraid I—but no—I won't ask as foolish a

question.'

'Ask it, Henry. Let us speak plainly, now

'And now, Henry, pursued the wife, with in-

creased earnestness, 'I have a few more ques-

tions to ask: Do you believe that the drinking

of intoxicating beverages is an evil in this coun-

try?'

'Why, as it is now going on, I certainly do.'

'And isn't it an evil in society?'

'Yes.'

'Look over this city, and tell me if it is not a

terrible evil?'

'A terrible evil grows out of the abuse of it,

Cora.'

'And will you tell me what good grows out of

the use of it?'

'Really, love, when you come down to this

abstract point, you have the field. But people

should govern their appetites. All things may

be abused.'

But will you tell me the use—the real

good—to be derived from drinking wine and

brandy?'

'As I said before, it is a social custom, and

has its charms.'

'Ah! there you have it, Henry. It does have

its charms, as the deadly snake is said to have,

and also other vices have. But I see you are in

a hurry.'

'It is time I was at the store.'

'I will detain you but a moment longer, Hen-

ry. Just answer me a few questions. Now, you

call to mind all the families of your acquaint-

ance; think of all the domestic circles you have

known from your schoolboy days to the present;

run your thoughts through the various homes

where you have been intimate—do this, and tell

me, if in any one instance you ever knew a sin-

gle joy to be planted by the heart-stone by the

wine-cup? Did you ever know one item of

good to flow to a family from its use?'

'No; I cannot say that I ever did—not as you

mean.'

'And now answer me again. Think of those

homes more—all to memory the playmates

of your childhood—think of the homes

they have made—think of other homes—think

of the friends where all you have known dwell,

and tell me, if you have seen any sorrow flow

from the wine-cup? Have you seen any great

grief planted by the intoxicating bowl upon the

heart?'

Henry Seaburn did not answer, for he passed

before him such grim spectres of *Brow and*

*Orief*, that he shuddered at the mental vision.

He saw the youth cut down in the hour of pro-

mise; he saw the grey head fall in dissonance; he

saw hearts broken; he saw homes made desolate;

he saw affliction wither up and die; and

saw noble intellects stricken down! Good-bye,

as if what might be seen as he enrolled the cen-

sus of the memory.

Henry, whispered the wife removing to his

side and winding one arm gently about his

neck. We have two boys. They are growing

to men. They are noble, generous and ten-

der hearted. They love their home and honor

their parents. They are here to form those

characters—to receive those impressions which

shall be the basis upon which their future weal

or woe must rest. Look at them—oh! I think

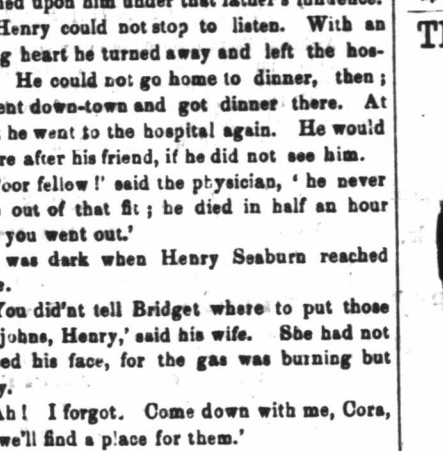
of them! Think of their doing battle in the

great struggle of life before them. Shall they

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Come unto Me, when Shadows Darkly Gather.

BY THE REV. J. WESLEYAN BOOK ROOM. See Notice in Provincial Wesleyan of Oct. 1867.

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