

Family Reading.

Our Own.

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

If I had known in the morning, How wearily all the day The words unkind Would trouble my mind I said when you went away, I had been more careful, darling, Nor given you needless pain; But we vex "our own" With look and tone We may never take back again. For though, in the quiet evening, You may give us the kiss of peace; Yet it might be, That never for me The pain of the heart should cease. How many go forth in the morning That never come home at night! And hearts have broken For harsh words spoken, That sorrow can ne'er set right. We have careful thoughts for the stranger, And smiles for the sometime guest; But off for "our own" The bitter tone, Though we love "our own" the best. Ah! lips with the curve impatient! Ah! brow with that look of scorn! 'Twere a cruel fate Were the night too late To undo the work of the morn.

Select Serial.

COMING TO THE LIGHT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BABES IN THE BASKET."

CHAPTER XV.—TRUE FORGIVENESS.

Italia had risen early the following morning to make up for time taken from her lessons, the day before, in assisting Sidney to learn a difficult piece of music, which she was practicing for her teacher.

Italia had prepared for the day, by the performances of those religious duties which devote the new time granted to the earthly pilgrim, to its great Giver. In her Bible she had read fresh words of counsel and comfort, and in prayer she had drawn nigh to the God who is never far from any one of us. Thus tranquilized, she found it easy to fix her attention, and the lessons were soon learned. After putting her books aside, Italia sat for a few moments with her pencil in her hand, tracing lines on a bit of blank paper beside her. Her mind wandered back over the last happy months, while her fingers were unconsciously busy. Mrs. Clinton suddenly stirred and seemed waking. Italia was roused from her reverie. She glanced at the paper on which she had been scribbling. There were profiles hastily sketched—capital letters skillfully "cut," but amid the confusion one name stood out to her eyes, as if written in letters of gold. There it was, "Italia Murray!" She paused, lifted her eyes, and exclaimed: "Thank God! thank God!" That was no dim, deceiving remembrance; it was the name that had been hers long ago. Murray her mother's—her father's name!

Mrs. Clinton raised her head, and saw with astonishment the grateful joy that was beaming from Italia's face, and that joy was soon reflected in her own, when she heard its explanation. To what might not that name be the key? The locked past might yet yield up its story. Sidney and Italia were among the last to enter the school-room that day. Mrs. Lightfoot was preparing for morning prayers, and Italia became quiet in her seat as soon as possible, and made ready to join in the devotional exercise. Her heart was full of gratitude to her dear heavenly Father, and it was a pleasure to draw nigh to Him again in true communion.

When Italia rose from her knees, it was with a face bright with the pure feelings that were filling her heart—not so Sidney. She was flushed, agitated, and tearful. "Look! look! Italia!" she said. "Look at the blackboard! It is a burning shame!" Italia's name still stood in its place of honor; but after it was written in a feigned hand, "alias Fidgetty Skeert." Italia started as she saw it, and for a moment her face was suffused with a flush—half anger half shame. Then followed the thought of true humility, God had afflicted her and allowed her

to bear that name of reproach. He had remembered her orphaned condition, and sent her a friend to give her a home, and train her with patient care. She had learned to know herself as sinful, unworthy, lost but for a bleeding Savior. Through that Savior's perfect sacrifice she had been freely forgiven, and enabled to walk as the happy servant of God. Every stain had been taken from her: that very day she had been rejoicing in the remembrance of the name her parents had given her, and for that mercy she had been thanking him through whom she should receive "the new name" that was to be hers forever and ever.

Such remembrances had their fair and natural results. Italia felt herself lowly indeed, but richly blessed through the forgiving love of an Almighty Savior. In that moment, which might have been to many one of bitter trial, she had that blessedness which is the constant portion of the "poor in spirit." Mrs. Lightfoot's quick eye soon detected what she considered the wilful insult offered to one of the noblest and best of her pupils. Full of righteous indignation, she gave her opinion of the person who could perpetrate such a silly, meaningless attack upon a school-mate, prompted only by that envy which must make miserable its possessor.

"Can anyone explain this matter?" asked the teacher in a stern voice. There was perfect silence through the room, Sidney's face glowed with anger, but Mary Jane was pale and immobile.

"Can any one explain this matter?" repeated Mrs. Lightfoot, more searchingly than before.

Italia rose, paused, then stepped forward, and stood facing the school. That was not a pause from hesitation or diffidence; it was but the gathering of strength by an appeal to Almighty power, before speaking words that might come slowly even from the lips of one schooled to humility.

Italia looked around on her school-mates, and then said calmly: "I did not know that I had an enemy among you. If I have wronged any by a thoughtless word, or an unkind look, I am truly sorry, and ask forgiveness. I know that the name written there, was meant as a taunt and an insult. To most of you it has no meaning, yet it was once my name—the only name by which I was known."

There was a murmur of astonishment through the room, and as it ceased Italia went on:

"God deprived me of my parents, and left me a friendless orphan, without even the remembrance of those who had loved me, to cheer my loneliness. I was afflicted with a restless nervousness that made me wish to be ever in motion, and made it seem impossible to others that I should ever learn to labor with my hands, or acquire even the beginning of an education. The poor, afflicted child of the Orphan Asylum was called Fidgetty Skeert, a name that became her well. She, too, thought Fidgetty Skeert could never learn anything, or be any thing but a burden to the world.

"God sent a friend to Fidgetty Skeert; a loving lady, who patiently bore with her restlessness, and slowly taught her to rule her troublesome body, and fix her wandering attention. That lady has cared for the orphan, and given her this world's greatest blessing—the knowledge of a Savior—through whom the humblest may enter heaven. Yes, girls, I was Fidgetty Skeert. I ought not to be ashamed of the past; I should rather be deeply grateful to the friend who has been to me like a mother, and given me the shelter of her home, and her own beloved name. I should rather thank God who has been pleased to send me such knowledge of Himself and His mercy that I may hope to forget all the trials of this world in a blessed eternity."

Italia turned to resume her seat among the scholars, but Sidney had darted to her side, and now threw her arms round her neck, weeping as if her heart would break.

It was as if she wished to acknowledge thus publicly that Italia Clinton and Fidgetty Skeert were equally her friend, her dearly-loved friend, for whom she felt what only tears could speak.

"Dear Italia," said Mrs. Lightfoot,

moved, "God has indeed blessed you and given you that which this world can neither give nor take away. May he forgive the unknown enemy who would have pained you cruelly, and make this day to her a day of deep repentance and self-abasement."

Italia modestly took her seat, unconscious that she had that morning done a work for her heavenly Master, over which there was rejoicing in heaven.

Italia did not look at Mary Jane. She had not even hinted at the presence of the only one of her school-mates who had known her in her time of humiliation. She had kept her promise. Not even by a glance would she now betray the author of the offense.

The lessons went regularly on. In spite of her agitation, Sidney did herself full justice. Her anxieties were for her friend, and that day she did not think of herself.

On the following morning, Mary Jane was not at school; a servant came for her books, giving a violent headache as an excuse for her remaining at home. The messenger brought a note for Italia, which she did not open until she was in the retirement of her own room.

The vain envious girl had been touched at last, yet she had not the courage publicly to confess her fault.

In a few hasty lines she owned the evil feelings that had long rankled in her proud heart, and had at length found vent in that act of spite, hastily perpetrated. She begged forgiveness for all the past, and said she hoped Italia's generous conduct would be a lesson to her, never to be forgotten. Italia wiped away the tears that filled her eyes as she read the expressions of real regret the letter contained. Then, kneeling down, she asked the blessing of heaven on one who, like herself, was an orphan, and whom no kind friend had yet led in the way of life.

If Mary Jane had appeared before Italia at that moment, she would have been met with affectionate kindness. It is easy for those to forgive who feel their own need of forgiveness in the sight of God, and know that they are alone clean through the blood of Jesus.

CHAPTER XVI.—THE PAST.

Italia Murray! That name was so often in Mrs. Clinton's mind. The hope that she had so long cherished might soon be realized, and her adopted daughter might be able not only to recall her true name, but also her true history. Strange as it may seem, this thought had ceased to be a pleasant one to Mrs. Clinton. Much as she still wished to see Italia restored to the full possession of her memory, she dreaded the revelation that might force her to yield up one who had become so dear to the higher claim of relationship. Dr. Aulick was convinced that Italia's remarkable talent for music had been early cultivated, and she herself no longer doubted that it was memory that prompted her fingers from time to time to bring forth some sweet tune which fell upon her ears with a peculiar stirring melody.

Italia's health was now fully restored and to an ordinary observer she appeared merely as an uncommonly interesting young girl; but to those who knew her well, she had a charm which only clings to them who in sincerity and truth are followers of the meek and lowly Jesus.

Dr. Aulick left no means untried to render agreeable the spare hours of the young people whom he had collected about him. Day after day he had some plan to propose, where pleasure and improvement were combined.

"Now, girls," he said one evening, after supper, "I have something pleasant that will interest you in the parlor. Come and see!"

The chandelier was brilliantly lighted, and beneath it stood a table strewn with a variety of photographs of places of interest on the European Continent. Before they were even peeped at the doctor claimed the privilege of explaining the process by which they were taken, and pointing out its superiority over the ordinary methods of engraving.

"Here," said he, "we have ruins as they are, not touched up to please the lovers of the picturesque. We see things as travellers see them, the ugly with the beautiful. Even the inscriptions and minute carvings are legible

with the aid of the microscope. We will begin at Paris."

"Here is the column in the Place Vendome!" said John, proud to show his knowledge, as the photographs had no names upon them. "And here is Versailles, Versailles with its fountains leaping to the sun."

Mrs. Clinton and Sidney and her brother were delighted with the views in Paris, and John took every opportunity to bring forth his stores of associations, poetic and historical, to which his auditors politely listened.

From another part of the table Italia had drawn a photograph over which she bent with strange delight. She looked at it, then closed her eyes dreamily; looked at it again, and again was lost in thought. Another and another photograph from the same set she examined, and as her eyes eagerly scanned them, as in the scenes of a panorama, pictures after pictures passed through her mind. Those pictures were shadowy as seen in the dim twilight, but they were real images of things that once had existence. Italia felt herself once more a child, led by a mother's hand. By those old ruins she had stood with a tall gentleman, bowed with weakness, but bright with intelligence and full of tender love for her. That face was her father's and even now she grieved as it seemed to grow paler and paler, as scene after scene rose to her mind. At last she stood by his dying bed, receiving his blessing, while a saintly mother smiled a holy smile in that hour of trial. Then Italia's tears burst forth, and Mrs. Clinton turned suddenly towards her. Dr. Aulick had been carefully watching every change of expression that had passed over Italia's face. He felt that she was reading the past, and he would not have her interrupted. On Mrs. Clinton's arm the doctor laid his hand to restrain her, and she paused.

John Carr was not to be so checked. He stepped to Italia's side, and looking at the photograph of St. Peter's that had dropped in her hand, exclaimed: "See Rome, then die! Rome! Rome! Thou art no more, as thou has been, on thy seven hills of yore!" What ails you Italia? You make me think of Marius weeping over the ruins of Carthage.

"Rome, yes, Rome!" exclaimed Italia, throwing herself into Mrs. Clinton's arms. "I know it all now!" Mrs. Clinton trembled violently. The hour she had so much wished for had arrived, and yet it might be full of sorrow and sad whispers of a coming separation.

"Not to-night, do not tell us to-night!" said the doctor, as Italia, with a great effort, was preparing to speak. "It will all come back to you, clear and perfect now. Be calm. We will wait until these new remembrances have become familiar to your mind. Now I think we must bid you good night, and finish our evening without you; you are excited and need rest."

There was no humiliation to Italia in prompt and perfect obedience. She did not feel that because she was now at least fourteen, she should resist the control of those who were older and wiser, and to whom she was bound by ties of grateful affection. She longed to pour out her heart to Mrs. Clinton, but she forbore, and strove to say good night to all, with calmness.

When alone in her room, her excited feelings found vent. There was one Being in whose presence she might give herself the full expression of feeling that is ever a relief. Devoutly she thanked God for the precious remembrances that had flooded her mind like light. Remembrances of a childhood passed with lovers of God, who now were doubtless enjoying the full glory of His presence. Italia felt orphaned no more, she had a living father and mother. Living in her memory, and living in the eternal life that knows no death.

Sleep came to Italia that night, as it falls on the eyelids of a child, resting on its mother's bosom. Blessed beyond what she ever dared to hope or pray, she felt new love for her merciful heavenly Friend, new peace in leaving herself and her future in his providential care.

The hand that had removed from Italia's eyes the veil that had hitherto covered the past, had yet left one blank in her memory. The terrible scene

through which the mother had smilingly gone to her reward was not remembered by the child. We will not dwell on the many recollections of which each trifling circumstance was precious to Italia. No other heart could share the joy that was hers, as she seemed to feel again her father's hand smoothing her brown curls, and hear his voice calling her his little southern child, his Italia. She only could know what it was to have her mother's arm seem once more around her, and her mother's face pressed close to hers. On such memories as these she dwelt in silence.

The simple facts of her history were soon known to Mrs. Clinton, and by her communicated to the interested family circle. Italy was the native country of poor Fidgetty Skeert. There her father, an English clergyman, after long years of sickness at home, had found comparative health. There he had gathered around him a circle of true christians to whom he could speak from time to time of the Lord Jesus, when public services were out of his power. There the Christian mother had trained her child to the love and practise of holiness. There the father's step had grown feeble for earth, as his soul made great strides toward the peace and purity of heaven. To that blessed world he had passed, leaving his wife, a chastened woman, and his little one full of glad dreams of the near and glorious dwelling-place into which her father had been received. For her English home the widow set sail, but her journey ended in that far country, whither she had so often turned her longing eyes, and the daughter was saved from a watery death to live and love, and labor on earth.

Kissing Mother.

A father talking to his careless daughter said: I want to speak of your mother. It may be that you have noticed a careworn look upon her face lately. Of course it has not been brought there by any act of yours, still it is your duty to chase it away. I want you to get up to-morrow morning and get breakfast, and when your mother comes and begins to express her surprise, go right up to her and kiss her on the mouth. You can't imagine how it will brighten her dear face. Besides you owe her a kiss or two. Away back when you were a little girl she kissed you when no one else was tempted by your fever-tainted breath and swollen face. You were not as attractive then as you are now. And through those years of childish sunshine and shadows she was always ready to cure by the magic of a mother's kiss, the little dirty chubby hands whenever they were injured in those first skirmishes with this rough old world. And then the midnight kiss with which she routed so many bad dreams as she leaned above your restless pillow; have all been on interest these long, long years. Of course she is not so pretty and kissable as you are, but if you had done your share of the work during the last ten years the contrast would not be so marked. Her face has more wrinkles than yours, far more, and yet if you were sick that face would appear more beautiful than an angel's as it hovered over you watching every opportunity to minister to your comfort, and every one of those wrinkles would seem to be bright wavelets of sunshine chasing each other over the dear face. She will leave you one of these days. These burdens, if not lifted from her shoulders will break her down. Those rough, hard hands that have done so many necessary things for you will be crossed upon her lifeless breast. Those neglected lips that gave you your first baby kiss will be forever closed, and those sad, tired eyes will have opened in eternity, and then you will appreciate your mother, but it will be too late.

Pride is the worst viper in the human heart, the greatest disturber of the soul's peace, and of sweet communion with Christ; it was the first sin committed, and lies the lowest in the foundation of Satan's whole building, and is with the greatest difficulty rooted out, and is the most hidden, secret, and deceitful of all lusts, and often creeps insensibly into the midst of religion, even, sometimes, under the disguise of humility itself.—John Angell James.

A Bag of Sovereigns.

First William the Norman, then William his son, Henry, Stephen, and Henry, then Richard and John; Next Henry the Third; Edwards, one, two, and three. And again, after Richard, three Henrys we see. Two Edwards, third Richard, if rightly I guess, Two Henrys, sixth Edward, Queens Mary and Bess; Then Jamie, the Scot: then Charles whom they slew, Then followed Cromwell, another Charles too; Next James, called the Second, ascended the throne; Then William and Mary together come on; Till Anne, Georges four, and fourth William, all past, God sent them Victoria, the youngest and last.

Guides to Prosperity.

In the first place, make up your mind to accomplish whatever you undertake; decide upon some particular employment and persevere in it. All difficulties are overcome by diligence and assiduity.

Be not afraid to work with your own hands, and diligently, too. "A cat in gloves catches no mice." "He who remains in the mill grinds, not he who goes and comes."

Attend to your business, never trust to another. "A pot that belongs to many is ill stired and worse boiled."

Be frugal. "That which will not make a pot will make a pot-lid." "Save the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves."

Be abstemious. "Who dainties love shall beggars prove."

Rise early. "Plough deep while sluggards sleep, and you will have corn to sell and keep."

Treat every one with respect and civility. "Everything is gained and nothing lost by courtesy." Good manners insure success.

Never anticipate wealth from any other source than labor; especially never place dependence upon becoming the possessor of an inheritance. "He who runs after a shadow has a wearisome race."

Above all things, never despair.

Mrs. Hubbard.

A DECLARATION.

Old Mother Hubbard, she went to the cupboard, To get her poor dog a bone; But when she got there the cupboard was bare, And so the poor dog got none.

"Mother Hubbard, you see, was old, yet did she despair? Did she sit down and weep, or read a novel, or wring her hands? No! she went to the cupboard. Was it to bring forth golden goblets, or glittering precious stones, or costly apparel, or any other attributes of wealth? It was to get her poor dog a bone! Not only was the widow poor but her dog, the sole prop of her age, was poor too. We can imagine the scene. The poor dog crouching in the corner, looking wistfully at the solitary cupboard, and the widow going to that cupboard—in hope, and in expectation.

"And how was the noble effort rewarded? 'The cupboard was bare!' Yes, it was bare! There were to be found neither oranges, cheese cakes, nor penny buns, nor gingerbread, nor crackers, nor nuts, nor licifer matches. The cupboard was bare! Had there been a leg of mutton, a loin of lamb, a fillet of veal, the case would have been different.

"Many of you will probably say, that 'the widow should have gone out and bought her dog a biscuit.' Others would suggest other eatables, doubtless. Suffice it for us to glean from this beautiful story its many lessons. One of which I will bring before you; it is this: We must avoid keeping dogs unless we have bones to give them."

The street-car companies of Paris, after repeated trials for several years of every form of steam power, have decided to return to horses as the safest, most economical and most satisfactory. The Scientific American thinks, however that inventors will still overcome every difficulty, and asks, "who will win the prize by the invention of a steam street-car that will successfully compete with animals?"