

Family Reading.

My Four Ships.

I stood and watched my ships go out, Each, one by one, unmooring free, What time the quiet harbor filled With flood-tide from the sea.

The first that sailed, her name was Joy, She spread a smooth white ample sail, And eastward drove with bending spars, Before the singing gale.

Another sailed, her name was Hope; No cargo in her hold she bore, Thinking to find in western lands Of merchandise a store.

The next that sailed, her name was Love; She showed a red flag at the mast, A flag as red as blood she showed, And towards the south sped fast.

The last that sailed, her name was Faith; Slowly she took the passage forth, Tacked and lay to, at last she steered A straight course for the north.

My gallant ships they sailed away Over the shimmering summer sea; I stood at watch for many a day, But only one came back to me.

For Joy was caught by Pirate Pain, Hope ran upon a hidden reef, And Love took fire and foundered fast 'Mid whelming seas of grief.

Faith came at last, storm-beat and torn, She recomposed me all my loss, For as a cargo safe she brought A crown linked to a cross.

Rest is not quitting, This busy career, Rest is the fitting Of self to its sphere.

'Tis the brook's motion Clear without strife, Fleeting to ocean After its life.

'Tis loving and serving The Highest and Best; 'Tis onward, unswerving! And that is true rest.

The Deacon's Dreams.

'Mary, look at the bread won't you? It's done, I guess.'

'In a minute, mother,' and the young girl bent still lower over the book she was reading. A footstep sounded upon the well-beaten yard, and both mother and daughter started nervously, the latter slipping her book hurriedly out of sight, and started toward the stove.

'It's only Willie,' and Mrs. Heyworth resumed her patching, with a sigh of relief.

The boy who entered threw himself dejectedly upon the long, high back settee, and buried his face for a moment in his hands, then, starting up, he exclaimed,—

'I might just as well give up first as last, I suppose.'

'O Willie, did father say you couldn't go?'

It was the girl who spoke, and her face flamed red and hot, as she turned to her brother.

'Of course he did! I might have known it,' he added, in a choked voice; 'but I did think that surely he would consent when he knew how much I wanted to go to college, and how hard I had tried to prepare for entering this fall.'

'Did you tell him about it, Willie?'

'Yes, but he only said I needn't say another word: he had set his foot down that his boys should be farmers, and farmers had no need of college; it only made them lazy and stuck-up! As if I wouldn't work my fingers to the bone, and study all night long, if only—and his voice broke away in a sob.

He was sixteen; a great, shy, awkward boy; with a promise of manly beauty on the smooth face and broad white brow; a prophesy of noble manhood in the clear eyes, the firmly set lips, and well-poised head.

This was his ambition; to go to college, to know the many things that students know; by day and by night it had been his one wild hope, sleeping or waking, ever present with him.

'I do think it's too bad, and father is just as mean as he can be! I don't care!' she exclaimed defiantly, turning determinedly away from her mother's admonitory 'Mary! Mary! child! I don't care! If father wanted us all to hate him, he couldn't try harder than he is doing all the time

to bring it about. There isn't a day that he doesn't set 'his foot down,' as he says, to something we all hate and protest against. You know as well as I do that if it hadn't been for some things, Lizabeth would never have left home, and if he don't mind, there'll be one or two others missing one of these mornings.'

And having said her say, she turned her flashing gray eyes, and flushed, burning face away from them toward the heated oven, where, after giving the nicely-baked bread a vigorous thump and shake, she deposited it again, instead of upon the table, as she should have done.

'Well, grieving won't do my work,' said the boy, with a pitiful attempt at cheerfulness. 'I'll just have to quit thinking about it, that is all!' And he walked slowly away from the house, and off over the meadow lot with a sad, hopeless air, that made the mother's heart ache. A whiter look came over the patient care-worn face, and the lines about her mouth settled into tense rigidity as Mrs. Heyworth's eyes followed her son. Was it right, was it just, that her children's lives should thus be cramped and narrowed?

So well she knew her children's troubles that she could not at heart blame her daughter for the sudden outburst that had just occurred—there was too much truth in the girl's rapid words. Poor Willie! How hard he had studied, every moment that he could snatch from work, preparing himself for examination, hoping although against hope, to enter college. How proudly he had exclaimed, dashing down his books gleefully,—

'There, mother, there's not an example in this I cannot solve, nor a proposition I cannot state; and as for these,' rapidly running over other text books, 'there's not a question here I cannot answer, from lid to lid; and now, mother, don't you think perhaps father will let me go?'

And then she thought, with a shiver, of the words of her restless, high-spirited daughter, 'If he don't mind, there'll be one or two others missing one of these mornings.' Would it end in this at last?

The corner clock struck nine, and the Deacon laid aside his paper. Mrs. Heyworth's opportunity had come at last, the moment she had waited for anxiously. 'Something must be done. Oh, if I only could say something to convince him! His heart is kind and good enough, if it only could be got at—like green moss and shining shells under the water when it's frozen over, easy enough to be got at when the ice breaks and floats away.'

'Father!' she commenced, desperately, 'college begins next week.'

'Yes, I know!' and the Deacon's voice expressed slight irritation.

'Willie does want to go so bad, it seems a shame for the boy to be disappointed.'

The Deacon's face became flint.

'I've explained to William my reasons for not letting him go, and when I say a thing I mean it; I've set my foot down—'

'Yes! Yes! but I do wish, Nathan, you wasn't quite so swift at setting your foot down,' as you always say.'

The Deacon gasped, and his wife, throwing away her last remnant of timidity, continued:—

'Now, I say let Willie go to college, and let Mary go to school, and Thomas to the singing school, if they want to go. It'll do you good, and there's none of our children going to be ignorant.'

'Of course you can't do the work; but you've got the money that'll hire it done, and it's a great deal better to be a few dollars out of pocket and have the love of your children, than to leave it all to them after a while, and perhaps have been feeling glad you are gone.'

'I think, sometimes, perhaps if you had been a little more kind and gentle to Elizabeth, she might 'a—'

'Mis' Heyworth! Hannah!' exclaimed the husband, with suddenly awakened dignity. 'I hope you'll not attempt to blame me for what that sinful girl may have done; me, a deacon! And he clasped the chair's arm firmly, while his feet took an amazed jump from the fender to the floor.

'Being a deacon doesn't help the matter a bit, and it won't help you, either, when it comes to the last; and

if you've not done anything to make any one else happy, I'm afraid there will not be much happiness for you.'

Deacon Heyworth could not sleep. He was, to say the least of it, surprised. This was not Hannah's usual way of talking, and he couldn't imagine what in the world possessed her now. If she had spoken angrily, he could have replied; but her language had been so calm, so dispassioned, so straightforward, that he had not the least opportunity for anger.

But he could not sleep; over and over again, he determined not to think any more about it, but over and over again would the words recur to him: 'If you've never done anything to make others happy, I'm afraid there'll not be much happiness for you when it comes to the last.'

He could not get rid of them, try as he would, until, in desperation, he determined to end them by self-examination. He ransacked his memory, first carelessly, then eagerly, then anxiously, and with a great wondering if it really could be, and if his children might not possibly be glad when he was dead. The thought was horrible, yet turn whichever way he would, it only grew more intensely certain; for from among all the years, the days, the hours, gathered from the past, he could only single out pitiful selfishness and greed.

Sleep came to him at length, not sweet and refreshing, but busy with dreamings that startled the man's soul like arrows of warning.

He dreamed it was the last great day; the millions on millions of people melted slowly away from before him, bring him nearer and nearer the Great Arbitrer of souls.

At last, nothing remained between him and the Searching Eye bent upon him. It was an expression of infinite mercy, loving compassion, and yearning tenderness, yet unswerving justice, that seemed to draw him nearer and nearer, as by some invisible chain.

'I am a deacon,' exclaimed our friend. There was no voice, no sound, yet deep down in his heart he seemed to hear in living thunders, 'I know thee not!' while the angels turned away in tears.

'Don't you know? Don't you remember? I am Deacon Heyworth,' he said, shivering and withering beneath the awful horror that grew upon him. But no 'Well done!' greeted him from the Presence there; all the glory faded away—only the cruel pierced side and hands and feet of the thorn crowned brow remained; a voice infinite in its sadness came from out the awful silence—'Ye have done this unto me!'

The angels sobbed, and still the horror grew; he seemed enfolded in a living breathing agony, with his conscience his accuser, 'You were a deacon with a deacon's work to do: it was yours to bind up the hearts of God's children, to make the widow's heart to sing with joy, to be a peace-maker among your brethren, and to advance God's cause and kingdom in the earth, but you have not given even 'a cup of cold water to one of these, his little ones!'

Fainter and fainter grew the voice, and the angels veiled their faces and turned away; waiting, listening for his fearful sentence; ages seemed to concentrate in that one instant of anguish, and he shrieked aloud.

'Nathan, what upon earth! what is the matter with you?' and Mrs. Heyworth shook her husband vigorously.

'O Hannah, I've had an awful dream, an awful dream!'

'Have you? Nightmare, I suppose!' and she turned over sleepily.

It was not the nightmare, Deacon Heyworth knew, but he did what many of us would not have done,—determined to accept its teaching.

'Who would ever have thought it?' he queried wonderingly to himself, scarcely able to deny the reality of it all. 'Who would ever have thought it of me, a deacon!'

Shivering, thinking, and resolving, he fell asleep again, and again he dreamed.

He was dead—lying still and pale and cold; and yet he stood watching his family as any curious bystander might have done. He thought he could read their hearts, and to his surprise there was not so much of sorrow as of

contentment, deep down beneath their mourning.

His wife's face seemed to grow brighter, as if a world of care had been removed from her life. He thought Willie was trying hard not to think how glad he was that he could go to college at last; while Mary and Thomas were saying over and over to themselves, 'No person will hinder me now from going to school when I want to go.' He saw another form bowed near; it was his long-absent daughter, and through her heart were wandering the words, 'Thank God, I can come home again!'

It was terrible. He tried to speak, to tell them he was not dead, that he loved them more than they ever knew; it was in vain, and he saw himself carried away and buried; but he thought he could see them still, with them all the while, yet immeasurably separated from them; through days and weeks, months and years, he followed them, all the time suffering a remorseful anguish that would have been insupportable but that he could not speak or weep. He thought it had been ten years since he died, and that he had long been forgotten by any but his family; his wife now looked restful, happy, and contented; and his children all occupied places of usefulness and honor in the world, and he dreamed, often and often, that their inmost thoughts were, 'We were never happy while father lived, and we would never have been happy had he not died!'

He tried to speak, to tell them he loved them; again and again he tried to do so, and awoke.

Long the Deacon pondered over his dreams, and in his heart he felt that they had been of God.

'They're warnings, Nathan Heyworth!' he decided at length, solemnly, 'and ye'll do well to abide by 'em.'

The ice was melting away, and already the green moss and shining shell were shimmering up from beneath.

It was breakfast time at Deacon Heyworth's, and the meal was being eaten, as usual, in almost perfect silence. Again and again had the husband and father been on the verge of speaking—his lips only opened to close again silently. No one knew of the previous night's experience—of the warnings he firmly believed he had received; he could remain forever dumb, and no one would ever be the wiser, but he had determined to right, if possible, the wrongs of years, and yet—it was not so easy as he had thought.

'William!' he exclaimed at length, suddenly, slowly breaking an egg into the glass beside him.

The boy looked up respectfully, but wearily; he, too, had spent an almost sleepless night—a night of tears, and disappointment. 'Well, father?' he said, questioning, for the Deacon had stopped to break another egg.

'When does the examination at the college begin?'

All the blood in the boy's body seemed rushing into his face, such a strange question for father to ask! He tried to quell his heart's sudden beating as he replied, 'This afternoon, sir,' but the mother could see how painful the suspense was to her son.

'If you can satisfy them that examine the students, you may start to college whenever you please!'

'Father!'

Tears came slowly into the father's eyes; how blind he had been! 'O father!' but the words only ended in a convulsive burst of tears, and the boy hurriedly left the room.

'And Mary and Thomas,' continued the Deacon, after a few preliminary coughs and throat-clearings, 'I believe school has been 'took up' just about a week, but maybe if you study hard and learn fast, you can catch up with the best of 'em; you'll have to fly around, daughter, and help mother all you can until I get some help; and you boys must give me a lift once in a while on the farm until we get things to work good. I want to say just here,' he said, falteringly and blunderingly, yet bravely, nevertheless, 'that you've all been powerful good children, notwithstanding you couldn't often get what you wanted, and you shan't lose anything by it from this on. Perhaps father thinks more of you, after all, than you'd think when he is cross and ugly like.'

'O father! you dear, dear father, you don't know how much we all love you!' and for almost the first time within her remembrance, the warm-hearted girl threw her arms about him and kissed him fondly.

'There, there, child, you'll spoil me!' exclaimed the delighted deacon, blowing his nose vigorously, and wiping a suspicious moisture from his eyes: 'you'll spoil me sure!'

'Nathan, husband!' Their children had left the room, and she came up to the window beside him. 'What does it mean, Nathan?'

'It means that God has been teaching me the error of my ways, Hannah, and I'm trying to take the lesson to heart.' And then laying his hand gently upon the hard, toil-worn one near his, Deacon Heyworth told his wife his dreams.

Years have passed over them all since then, and children's children play in the great old fashioned rooms. Often they meet together there, and even, 'Lizabeth, long ago welcomed home is with them. The mother with her soft, white hair, looks after them all with happy, peaceful eyes, as the father, 'almost home,' tells over and over again his dreams. 'I can see it all,' he says, 'just as plain as I could that night. But I'm not afraid now. I know the Pierced Hands will welcome me up there, and I can almost hear the angels sing again.'

'He will be no dream then, Nathan! Her eyes are dim, 'rest of brightness long ago, but their children think of the land of eternal youth as they look upon her, and hear the tremulous trusting answer,—

'No, Hannah, no dreams there!'

I feel it pull.

As a pastor called on one of his parishioners, just in the dusk of evening he found a little boy sitting in the doorway, holding firmly a string and looking up into the deep gloom. 'What are you doing here my little friend?' said the minister. 'I am flying my kite, sir,' replied the boy. 'Your kite?' said the minister. 'I see no kite, and you can see none.' 'I know it,' quickly answered the little fellow; 'but I am sure it is there, for I feel it pull.'

It is often thus with the Christian. He is interested in something above him. All is gloom; he can see nothing; but his affections are attached to heavenly things; and so long as he feels these heavenly things pulling upward he knows that the connection is not dissolved. One of the most difficult of Christian attainments is to trust God in the dark. What though we see him not? What though he is silent? Yet if our own hand is in his, if he holds us up, and leads us, and throws around us his paternal care, why should we not be assured of his love? We must not choose in disregard of his will; we must not dictate as to the manifestations with which we will be satisfied. 'Not as I will, but as thou wilt,' is the example set before us by Him who redeemed us.

Little Worries.

There is not a day in our lives that we are not distressed by some one of those numberless little worries that meet us at every step, and which are inevitable. The wound may not be deep, but the constant pricks, each day renewed, embitter the character, destroy peace, create anxiety, and make the family life, that otherwise would be so sweet and peaceful, almost unendurable. Life is full of these little miseries. Each hour brings with it its own trouble.

Here are some of the Little Worries: An impatient word escapes our lips in the presence of some one in whose estimation we would stand well.

A servant does her work badly, fidgets us by her slowness, irritates us by her thoughtlessness, and her awkward blunders makes us blush.

A giddy child in its clumsiness breaks something of value, or that we treasure on account of its association.

We are charged with a message of importance, and our forgetfulness makes us appear uncourteous, perhaps, ungrateful.

Some one we live with is constantly finding fault, nothing pleases them.

Each of these, and many more, are liable to befall us every day of our life.

If when the night comes, we find we have not experienced these Little Worries, then we ought to be grateful to God.

What the Clock says.

'Tick, tick, the clock says, 'tick, tick, tick; What you have to do, do quick; Time is gliding fast away; Let us act, and act to-day.'

'When your mother speaks, obey. Do not loiter, do not stay; Wait not for another tick, What you have to do, do quick.'

Strive to be rich in knowledge. A man gets more than the value of whatever he gives in exchange for learning.

Youths' Department.

Scripture Enigma.

No. 161.

If you should these initials place, A scripture text you then will trace; Which will remove all anxious fear, Teaching that God is ever near; And good from all things He will bring To those that love and serve their King.

- 1. He was the brother of our blessed Lord, And wrote a portion of his holy Word.
2. Where David o'er the tribe of Judah reigned, Before the holy city he obtained.
3. The honoured mother of the priestly line, Who in God's temple served in things divine.
4. A beast which typified a power of old, And thus, in type, its conquests swift foretold.
5. What mighty giant reigned o'er Babel's plain, The ruins of whose cities yet remain?
6. With this the earliest miracle was wrought, And thus to trust in God was Israel brought.
7. Where was a mighty image raised on high, And all were bid to worship it or die?
8. The town near which a wicked king was slain, As was foretold for his unrighteous gain.
9. What was the awful judgment that befell Those who against God's prophet did rebel?
10. What heavy metal on the water's brim Did at the prophet's word once lightly swim?
11. The spot where Israel dwelt in Egypt's land, And thence were brought by God's almighty hand.
12. What monarch had when sleep his eyes had sealed The history of the world to him revealed?
13. The land where God his mighty wonders wrought, And Israel's sons from cruel bondage brought.
14. Who, ere the flood, in brass and iron wrought, Which shows how soon the arts to man were taught?
15. A holy seer who urged the Jews to raise A tabernacle temple to their Maker's praise.

Selected.

CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

- 313. What Jewish priest was punished for not restraining his sons?
314. What were the names of the sons?
315. How did Solomon's son Absalom die?
316. Find two words having five letters each, and yet each having but three different letters, form them into two separate diamonds of words, the same from top to bottom, as from left to right.
317. Form a word square of (a) Grain. (b) One of the United States. (c) A Russian town. (d) The greatest ship builder.

Find answers to the above—write them down—and see how they agree with the answers to be given next week.

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

No. 160.

A Historical character. Daniel—Belle-shazzar, (607 B. C.)

ANSWERS TO CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

- 311. FIVE WORDS FORMED OF FOUR LETTERS. Spot, stop, post, pots, tops.
312. WORDS BY CHANGING A LETTER. Rose, hose, rise, rope, Rosa.
313. NINE HIDDEN TREES. Ash, oak, linden, pine, beech, maple, elm, cedar, date.