

Family Reading.

Mother's Boys.

Yes, I know there are stains on my carpet, The traces of small muddy boots; And I see your fair tapestry glowing, All spotted with blossoms and fruits.

Be in Time.

Be in time for every call; If you can, be first of all: Be in time. If your teachers only find You are never once behind, But are like the dial, true, They will always trust to you;

NOTICE.

We purpose commencing a highly interesting NEW SERIAL, the second week in May, and as inducement for

NEW SUBSCRIBERS

to commence at that date, we will send the CHRISTIAN MESSENGER from that date to JANUARY 1st, 1884, for

ONE DOLLAR,

to all who send on their Subscription previous to that date.

Will each KIND READER try and send us on at least One New Subscriber, or induce one such to send; and as a Reward for such effort, we may assure each person making it, of the enjoyment of a consciousness of having done good to the family into which it may come, and also of materially aiding us in our work of faith and labor of love.

The Battle Lily and the Peace Lily.

Donald, the Scotch gardener, had been at work all the morning getting the lily bulbs ready for planting; as he rose, after he had finished assorting and selecting, he glanced around at his orderly green-house, and a look of satisfaction grew upon his honest face.

He crossed the lawn, and reached the iron fence that separated the gentleman's grounds from the highway. He looked across the road towards a little cottage that stood in humble contrast to the stately house in the gentleman's yard.

wife and children, that, like the leaves, had fallen at his side. Then the sadness was chased away, and he smiled as he whispered, "They will be raised in glory!"

Just then there was a rustling among the leaves on the other side of the fence, and looking that way he saw a child with her face pressed to the iron bars.

"You've come, I see, my bairn," he said as he rose. "Come around to the gate, Maggie," he cried in an almost gleeful way. "I've got something, I've been saving something for you."

"Come my girl," he urged as he saw she hesitated and looked back at the brown cottage, with an expression of half fear and half doubt upon her face. "I want to take you into the flower-house, and I will give you something you may take to your grandmother."

This seemed to decide the matter for her, and she ran to the gate, which Donald opened, and then entered the gentleman's yard for the first time. The graveled walk of the rich man seemed like a king's road to her, and, as she looked up at the tall brick house, she imagined how a palace would seem.

Donald turned now and then to look at her; but she did not notice him; her gaze seemed riveted to the beauties about her; on he walked up and down and across, until the flower aisles had been trod several times; and then he stopped at the farther end of the house and said:

"Do you see the two lilies yonder, bairn? One is white, the other red, now I've saved the bulbs; here they are; and they'll make flowers like the two over there. I've saved these for you to take over to the cottage." Maggie looked down at the pile of bulbs that reminded her of the artichokes that grew in her grandmother's yard, and then up at the face of the gardener.

Donald understood the expression of disappointment, and was ready to meet it. "I want to tell you about these things," he began; "each one of these homely bulbs owns a flower life! Each one has got a glory inside of it,—a glory that has got to come out! You can't see, bairn, how it will come out, and I can't tell you, any better than I can tell how this old body of mine will sometime be raised in glory. That is one of the things that never can be shown us here, and I don't know as we ought to want to be shown how it comes about; it's for us to wait and watch for the glory. Now I like to wait and wait for the life to show itself, the life that all the while is stirring in the darkness, and keeping its secret, until it bursts out to surprise young eyes like yours, and old eyes like mine."

The gardener then told the child how to put the bulbs into the earth, and how to care for them, in the hope of seeing the little green blade shoot above the ground,—which would grow until at last she might expect a flower for Easter.

"I can't tell you," he continued, "which will be red, and which will be white, among these. The red lily seems a flame of glory. I call it the battle lily; it is full of the joy color, but it is battle joy; then there's the white lily. I call that the peace lily. One is a glory as much as the other; but the glories are different. Up at the big house they want the white lilies for Easter. You know what Easter means, bairn; though perhaps, you don't; I'll tell you. The dear Christ went down into the dark grave, you know that?" Maggie nodded.

"Well, the people who murdered him, and some of his friends, too, thought he never could come up again,—just as we can't see how a buried thing can spring up; but he did come forth out of the darkness of the grave to make sure of life and peace for us, poor sinners; and that is why some people keep this for his rising day, and want flowers, white flowers mostly. Perhaps I ought to like the white lily better, there's no spot to it, it's pure and it seems full of peace, in its meaning; but I don't, I can't make

myself. I love the battle color. I believe I was born to fight. I want to fight while there's a bit of fighting to be done; but when I get through, then at last I'll take the white lily. It may seem a strange notion, others might say it is nonsense; but it's an old man's way of thinking, who's been watching the flower colors and the coming and going of flower life all his days."

Maggie had been listening with an awed interest to the gardener's words, and when he finished and asked, "Do you know what I mean?" she nodded assent. Then he gave directions for the care of the bulbs a second time, and went with the child as far as the gate. She ran home, and bursting into the room where her grandmother sat knitting, cried, "O grandmother! I've brought such strange things! They look like our artichokes; but they will turn out flowers!" Then the grandmother questioned her, and said:

"The people over at the grand house are no friends of ours; haven't I told you that many and many a time?" "O grandmother!" and here the child began to sob. "It was the man who stays in the flower-house who gave them to me, and he said that they would come out beautiful lilies, like the ones in the flower-house; some would be red, and others white, he said. And he said that the red lily was the battle lily, and that the white one was the peace lily, for the time when the battles were all done. He says the grand ladies in the big house like the white lilies for Easter; but he says he likes the flaming ones. A flaming glory, he called them, and he says when he's done fighting he'll like the peace lily, he thinks."

Grandmother rose, "And what do the grand ladies know of battles, or peace after battles, I should like to know?" she asked, and her cap border shook with the trembling of her old body.

"If they had the aches and the troubles that I have, they might talk of battles; it's only play talk, as it is!" But after an hour grandmother remarked, in a different tone:

"I don't think, after all, that the flower-house keeper can be to blame for anything that has happened about the grand folks' trying to get my home away from me." The old lady was the sole guardian of her grandchild, who had been an orphan from almost the beginning of her young life. The dislike for the "grand folks" dated from the hour when the gentleman came to buy her cottage with the ground around it.

Grandmother had answered, "Do you think I could have a heart to sell the ground where the children once walked? Why, I think the trees and bushes which I have watched as they grew through the years, would sigh themselves to death for me. Do you think my place is a disgrace to your fine one? Well, it may be, but I wouldn't give one inch of the ground that has been made sacred by the steps of the ones that are gone, for your whole place! Every room tells a story of the old, happy days, and the walls sometimes seem to send back the sound of a baby laugh or a baby cry. Never ask me again for an inch of ground!"

But grandmother helped to plant the bulbs, in spite of her prejudices; and as the days passed, the autumn days, when the green beauty of the yard withered, she began to sympathize in the watchful interests of Maggie, and hailed with her each coming blade from the bulbs. The long winter days came and the snow blew against the cottage windows; but the green shoots inside upon the ledge grew tall, and people stopped to notice the display; for such a show of plant life in the cottage windows had not been seen for years before. The winter passed; and the spring came; and the flower stalks grew; and the buds swelled; and one morning Maggie cried:

"O grandmother! The glory flame! The battle red! It is just as he said—they have come out! O grandmother! grandmother!" At last a row of battle lilies stood in the window; Donald saw them and whispered, "Battle lilies—all of them!" One day, as the gardener was at work in the gentleman's yard, he looked up to see the flying figure of Maggie, and as she came up to him she cried: "O sir! grandmother is sick, and don't know me!" Grand-

mother did not recognize the ladies from the grand house, who came to take care of her.

At last there came a night when these watchers felt that death's messenger was near; but the night passed, and the sun of Easter morning rose. Maggie with tear-blurred vision saw long rows of flaming lilies,—and at the end, What is that? she questioned silently and brushed away the tears. She went to the window. A white lily had burst into bloom—a peace lily. She glanced towards grandmother's bed; the sick woman's eyes wore a new expression. The girl took the lily from its place, carried it to the bedside, and said, in sweet, confident tones:

"See, grandmother, it is a peace lily; you know Donald says it means peace after a battle; now you will get well I think!" Grandmother lifted her sunken eyes from which the flame of the battle passion had gone out, and said, "Yes child, it was—a battle,—it is—pe-a-ce;" and peace was her last word.

When Donald brought the white lilies for the form from which the battle-worn soul had gone to its peace, Maggie with quivering lips asked:

"Did the coming of the peace-lily give grandmother the peace?"

"No," answered Donald, "the risen Christ gave her the peace."—Christian Intelligencer.

The Song of Songs.

Most of us, I suppose, have, from time to time, perused "the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's," as it stands in the authorized version, with a perplexed feeling as to what it all means.

Perhaps, if we were honest enough, we should confess also to some feeling of violated good taste and delicacy. Should we have turned in our perplexity to an orthodox commentator, these feelings would scarcely have been relieved by finding language of a confessedly erotic character and of doubtful propriety—some of it addressed by a voluptuous king to an inmate of his harem—transferred entire to the mouth of Christ as his language in addressing his Church.

It has, however, been reserved for modern Hebraists to restore this lovely little epithalamium to its proper place, and, scraping away the accumulated whitewash and plaster of ages,—the mistranslations and misunderstandings of centuries,—to reveal it as it is, an exquisite little shrine of the affections, embedded in the very heart of our Bibles, afresh with passionate color, but pure and chaste and enduring as sculptured marble.

The plot or argument of the poem is this: King Solomon, on one of his numerous pleasure excursions, accompanied, as usual, by his court, is passing through the north of his kingdom,—a land rich in vineyards, and fair pastoral beauty,—when they perceive, in a neighboring nut-garden, a beautiful girl, singing and dancing to herself in the joy of the spring. She has come down to the garden to look at the tender opening buds, and in the gladness of her own opening life and the happiness of first love she has thrown aside her veil, and is singing with the birds and dancing with the dancing lights. They watch her lost in admiration, when, suddenly perceiving she is observed, she makes a shy movement of flight, arrested for a moment by the entreating voices with which they call her back. The king, at once deeply enamored of the beautiful stranger, leaves orders that she shall be transferred to his harem, her dress denoting that she was unmarried and unplighted. On inquiry it is found that the maiden—the Sulamite, as she is called throughout the poem, from her native village, Sulem—is the only daughter of her mother. Her father is dead, and her step-brothers, the sons of a former marriage, exercise his authority in his stead. They treat her with great harshness and make her the keeper of one of their vineyards. There she meets with a young shepherd and keeper of gardens like herself, on whom she pours out her "forgotten heart,"—a love which he returns, but without having gained the consent of the brothers to their betrothal. They, on the contrary, very much prefer the advantageous offers of the king, and she is at once transferred to the harem at

Jerusalem. There the great king wooed the simple village maiden, and she has to endure every seduction that wealth and luxury and rank can bring to bear upon her. But she remains faithful to her shepherd-lover, preferring true love to worldly advancement. Finding her obdurate, the king at last resolves to pay her the highest honor of all. He resolves to marry her and make her one of his queens; but with no better result. His advances are always stopped by her, fainting away with the despairing cry on her lips: "My beloved is mine, and I am his." Till at length, since the worship of Jehovah puts bounds to even the passions of a king and forbids the use of violence, he suffers her to depart to her shepherd-lover. The poem ends in the gardens of the north, with the reunion of the lovers and their approaching marriage, and with the great unveiled utterance and key-note of the poem, "Love is as strong as death" and "many waters" (even the deep waters of trial through which the Sulamite had passed) "cannot drown it," followed by a little mirthful song of triumph on her part, and a mocking allusion to the failure of the great king to bribe her from her faithfulness.

With regard to the approximate age of the poem, the data are more satisfactory. The poem itself is sufficient to prove that it was not written by Solomon. The great king would certainly not have satirized himself so severely.—Century (April)

The Beauties of Church-and-State in England.

ANGLO-CATHOLIC THEATRICALS.

It grieves us to remark that the Church of England is developing its heretofore latent Romanism at a rapid rate. Not only do church journals speak of the "Mass," and openly advocate it; not only do priests invite to the confession and promise penitents absolution; not only are services made so much like those conducted by Roman priests that those who attend them can scarcely tell wherein they differ; but theatricals, after the fashion of Continental Romanists, are diligently cultivated. "The Church and Stage Guild," which enjoys the patronage of the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, is a case in point, and illustrates this phase of the Ritualistic movement.

"Beer and the Bible" was an election cry in 1874. "The Church and the Stage" is an alliance scarcely less questionable, and as discreditably to those who sanction it. Last week's *Rock* calls attention to the Rev. W. K. W. Chafy-Chafy, vicar of Rous Lench, in the diocese of Worcester, who last year catered for his parishioners by providing for their entertainment the performance of a Passion play. This cleric last week obtained from the Evesham magistrates a theatrical licence, sufficiently wide to cover any kind of stage play, though granted on the condition that no religious plays should be acted. It is gratifying to know that the lay magistrates are more concerned for the honour of religion than is the vicar, and that they prohibit the parodying of the sufferings of the Saviour. For the rest, it is pre-eminently unsatisfactory to observe this alliance between the priest and the playwright, the clergyman and the actor, the church and the stage. Whereunto will this go? Perhaps to something like Italian carnivals, in time, except Disestablishment arrest the progress towards Rome. And where carnivals have a place, cardinals are not far off.—London Freeman.

THE ROWDYISM OF RITUALISTS.

We cannot congratulate the Rev. R. W. Enraght, priest, on the effect of his ministrations on his friendly and sympathetic parishioners at Bordesley. It may be within the recollection of our readers that this gentleman was "deprived" of his incumbency some months ago as a punishment for his contumacious disobedience to the law. But, notwithstanding the deprivation, Mr. Enraght continued his ministry in the parish church, we believe, till last Sunday week. The Bishop of Worcester was not without fault in this matter. It was his duty to appoint a clergyman, as Bishop Fraser had done in the case of Miles Plating, to officiate till the patron should present another

clergyman for institution. At last the sentence has taken effect. The late vicar a week or so since was prohibited from further ministrations, and on Sunday the new vicar—the Rev. H. Allan Watts, from Sunderland—"read himself in." This clergyman appears to be an Evangelical, and has the reputation of being Low Church in his views. It was not to be expected that he would, under the circumstances receive a cordial welcome from the friends, and disciples of the former incumbent. Nor did he. Ritualists gathered in the church in large numbers, and behaved themselves as though they had been prematurely dismissed from a lunatic asylum, or had adjourned from deep potations at public-houses to a place of worship. When Mr. Watts entered the church he was received with "a storm of hisses, and loud cries of 'Traitor!'" The old choir had unanimously resigned. Other singers were obtained. No sooner had these commenced to sing the Litany than their voices were drowned by counter-voices made by their predecessors and Ritualists. On the clergyman appearing in the pulpit to read the Articles, there was such a babel of discordant sounds that he could not be heard. Derisive laughter and shouts of defiance filled the church, while loud coughing mingled with such cries as "Gag,"—a reference to some pantomime that had been performed in the neighborhood,—"Shut up!" "Go to blazes!" The mob attempted to assail Mr. Watts on his passage from the church to his residence, and it would have fared badly with him if he had not been protected by a large body of police. At the evening service there was greater disorder still. Free fights took place within the church. And this is the outcome of Acts of Uniformity! of State establishment of Religion! of Ritualism! Ritualists show their belief in Episcopacy by defying bishops! their faith in consecration by brawling and fighting in a consecrated building! their reverence in worship by responding to the Litany sung in a church in mocking and derisive sounds! their regard for the Sabbath and for priests by a rowdiness of which the disciples of Mr. Bradlaugh would be ashamed? The scene at Bordesley will not soon be forgotten. It hints what England may become if its Established Church is permitted to develop its latent and to practice its blatant, Ritualism.

An Alabaster Cave.

One of the greatest wonders in the world, yet but little known, is an alabaster cave, situated in the town of Auburn, a pretty little place of a thousand inhabitants, not far from the American River, California.

A party, in quarrying rock a few years since, made an opening to this beautiful cave, the honor of finding it being given to a Mr. Gwyn. All who have beheld this magnificent wonder speak of it in the most rapturous terms.

A gradual descent of about fifteen feet brings one to the centre of the first room, which is 30x100 feet. At the north end there is a most magnificent pulpit, in the Episcopal church style that man has ever seen. It seems that it is, and should be, called the "Holy of Holies." It is completed with the most beautiful drapery of alabaster stalactites, of all colours, varying from white to pink-red, overhanging the beholder.

Immediately under the pulpit there is a beautiful lake of water, extending to an unknown distance. To the great admiration of the tourist, on arriving at the centre of the first room, he sees an entrance to an inner chamber, still more splendid, 100x200 feet, with most beautiful alabaster overhanging in every possible shape of drapery.

There stands magnitude, giving the instant impression of a power above man; grandeur, that defies decay; antiquity, that tells of ages unnumbered; beauty, which the touch of time makes more beautiful; use, exhaustless for the service of man; strength, imperishable as the globe—the monument of eternity, the truest emblem of that everlasting and unchangeable, irresistible Majesty, by whom and for whom all things were made.

Advice is seldom welcome. Those who need it most take it least.