

## Family Reading.

For the Christian Messenger.  
To my Lady at Rest.

The moonbeams glint upon the quiet stream  
That wanders gently by my lady's bower;  
Their softly falling light doth brightly gleam,  
O'er hill and tower.

Calm is the night! all things of peace partake  
So deeply that the brooklets' murmuring  
sound,  
Disturbeth not the quiet, but doth make  
Peace more profound.

The nightingale's sweet song no sadness hath,  
Peacefully singeth she of love and rest,  
The spirit of the night has found a path,  
Into her breast.

The bird sings on, the streamlet gently flows,  
And while the moon her quiet vigil keeps  
Harmonious with the evening's calm repose,  
My lady sleeps.

THOS. JAMES.  
Huddersfield, England.

## New Select Serial.

## MRS. HURD'S NIECE:

Six Months of a Girl's Life.

## CHAPTER II.

## THEO.

Along the chilly mosaic floor of the hall, up the broad staircase, down a wide heavily-paneled corridor, past open doors which reveal luxurious apartments bathed in the soft light of waxen tapers, but without occupants, Mrs. Hurd's niece follows Mrs. Hurd's servant.

It is to her as a page out of the Arabian Nights; yet step by step she shrinks into herself. She is oppressed by these mute suggestions of an elegant and luxurious daily life. She has been accustomed to simple, homely, cordial ways. She knows nothing of this taking guests in state to their apartments upon arrival. This in itself is sufficient to chill her.

Her mother and she have lived in such a small cozy bird's-nest way she feels she shall not know at all what is expected of her here, and she dreads her relatives with a fresh dread. She does venture, however, upon the independence of hoping that it is the custom of such stately houses to duly provide the furnished guest with supper.

Homesick, tired and hungry, she thus silently follows on, when her eye and step are both arrested at the open door of a room fitted up in the most exquisite of blue and white.

'Oh, beauty, beauty! here is the blue heaven of summer time with all the fleecy clouds!' Lois murmurs to herself. She involuntarily steps upon the threshold to look in. She sees a child's tiny couch standing under a fanciful canopy of lace. It stands quite in the centre of the daintily frescoed room, upon a carpet of pale azure strewn with lilies and purple black pansies; and she divines that the occupant must lately have been there, for the laced pillows show the print of a small head, and the blue silken coverlet with its embroidered white lilies is tossed carelessly aside.

The toilette and the windows are draped with the same snowy lace over blue satin, the golden cornices are wrought and enamelled with lilies and violets, even the little fanciful blue chairs are decorated with the same exquisite semblance of flowers; and—ah, here is somebody at last—a tiny princess left behind in the deserted palace.

Lois' eyes light at the sight of anything so natural and so simple here—for it is a live little girl, so naughty as to be, in her night-dress, out of bed and running about with bare feet. She has come round from a corner where a light is burning on a bracket, and the tumbled picture book in her hand betrays her stolen occupation. The little face set in the fussy curls is a rosy one, her eyes are bluest blue as becomes the mistress of such a room, and the small parted lips disclose dainty white teeth, as in great surprise she comes toward the stranger, dropping her picture book to hold up her trailing robe.

'Why, Miss Theo?' says the servant, 'when I go down I must sure tell Sampson that you have never been to sleep yet.'

The little hand waves her away, the blue eyes never moving from Lois

'Old Sampson don't care; she asked me could I see to myself and let her go down.'

Lois divines easily that this is a little cousin. She presumes to stoop and kiss the tiny representative of her kindred. The child quietly puts up her jeweled hand and rubs off the kiss.

'I fink you ith the couthin!'  
'Yes, little Floss, I fink I am, And who are you?'

'Name ithn't Floth—name Mith Theo.'

She looks her new relative over with quite a grown up stare of curiosity. But the 'new relative' feels a warm thrill from head to foot; for surely 'Theo' must be the diminutive of Theodosia, and that is the beloved name of her own dear mother. Aunt Alice must have bestowed the quaint old-fashioned appellation upon her lovely little girl out of pure sisterly affection—it gives her, for the moment, a warm feeling toward Aunt Alice.

The servant shuts Miss Theo within her violet bower, and going up a short stair at the end of the corridor, she throws open a door, enters and lights the gas. This, by contrast, is a plain room. The carpet of oak-and-green is only an ingrain, and the furniture bamboo. But it is like a parlor in comparison with any apartment this hamlet-born Lois has ever occupied; and she gratefully wonders if so pretty a place has really been allotted her as her own. It is so nice to know that some tender provision has been made for her coming; her heart rises like a feather, when presently the maid spoils it all.

'This be the room, Miss, which Miss Theo's maid has; and bein' Sampson is to go Saturday, the missus said that you might as well 'ave the room' at onct, and Sampson go down-stairs with us while she staid. You'll hear the rising bells all over the 'ouse, and you needn't feel to disturb yourself till you 'ears 'em. I could wish, Miss, as some of the family were 'ere to meet you, but master and missus and the young ladies be all out to a-wedding, and I dare say, won't be 'ome till midnight, so you'd better not wait up.'

Lois has stood somewhat bewildered as the talkative yet respectful servant thus lifts a corner of the curtain of her future; but before she can make any reply the door is pushed open, and her tiny relative appears.

'You naughty Miss! in your bare feet, too!' The maid takes her by the arm. But the child draws away with a sharp blow and a rebellious cry, and then, finding herself still borne along, she stretches a little hand back to Lois.

'I had things to thay to you, couthin,' she sobbingly lisps, all the while with the hand pounding the arm that she swiftly conveys her.

Lois presumes upon the cousinship acknowledged by the little creature. Besides, she likes children, and dearly enjoys the 'things' they have to say. 'I think you may leave her,' she says. 'I will see that she is put safely back in bed.'

The girl, after a little hesitation, leaves them; and Lois is glad to shut the door, and drop down in Sampson's low, cozy, pink chintz chair that stands by the pretty pink toilette. Her head is beginning to ache, yet the room is so dainty, even if it be only an upper servant's, that she eagerly looks about and delights herself with the thought that it is to be her own! If the world should go wrong in every direction, she can steal up here and forget it all; and that the world will be quite likely to go wrong she forebodes as she falls to pondering the servant's revelations of the 'Missus' plans.

But finally she realizes that her kinswoman is standing at her knees, studying her face. She rouses, takes off her gloves, and unties her hat. 'Well, of what are you thinking, little one?' she says.

'Little one' shakes her curly head. 'I fink—I fink 'ittle bits of so many fings.'

Lois smiles, and lifts the small metaphysician upon her lap. 'You pretty baby, am I really to have the care of you?'

The pretty baby knows all about it, it appears; and she bestows her information freely. 'Yeth, you be,' she says. 'Mamma thaid you could, and then she could thave Sampson' wagheth.'

Poor Lois had not wished to elicit

anything quite like this. She has no desire to 'know the worst.' But Theo is so pretty—the little pearly teeth, and the pink shell-like ears, and the dimpled chin—she laughs merrily and catches the child close. 'And my pay—wonder whether I shall have to take it in blue-eyed kisses!'

'Mamma thaid you would have your board and clothe.'

'What, no kisses? Shall I be forced to steal what kisses I want? for I can't possibly live without them. Do you know, mousie, that poor 'couthin' has no papa, nor mamma, nor any little sister!'

But 'Mousie' does not seem to care for that, and presently slides down from her lap. Lois fancies she ponders it, however. And when she turns to her basket, and is unlading it, the child returns, leans upon her lap and quietly regards her while she eats what remains of her traveling lunch,—looks at her as at some strange being that appears to eat with a relish cake that is made with brown sugar and destitute of frosting. Lois finishes her meal. Then she turns to her little cousin again. 'So your name is Theo,—just like you, short and pretty.'

'Theodosia Lee Hurd,' lisps the baby statelyly. Ah, the family name entire! Lois thinks of it tenderly. Her own dear mother always wrote her name 'Theodosia Lee Gladstone,' and grandmother was 'Mrs. Theodosia Lee,' and her own name is Lois Theodosia. Aunt Alice's heart must be tender toward homely memories and family traditions. She cannot refrain from kissing the little wearer of the stately family name, who this time slyly presses her rosy cheek against her cousin's. 'I fink you will be nifer than Sampson. How do you punish 'ittle girlth?' she adds.

Lois smiles, but does not disclose the terrible secret. 'That can make no possible difference to a good little girl who ought this moment to be cuddled in her own pretty nest fast asleep with her head under her wing,' she says; and much against her will that 'good little girl' presently finds herself deposited under her own lace tent. The delicate coverlet is tucked about her, she is kissed and left.

'I shall never dislike the care of the pretty creature,' Lois thinks, as she closes her own door. 'What a bad ungrateful girl I was for a moment? I dare say aunt considered that I should be happier with some employment, and so, indeed I shall.'

She bustles about cheerfully, as she takes this view of things, and is just ready to extinguish the light, and go to bed with a heart at peace with everybody, when she hears her door softly unclosing, and that baby appears once more upon the threshold. 'Theo will pleathe thee in your bed.'

While Lois hesitates, the little creature runs and clasps both arms around her knees. 'I love you, couthin, ever and ever the more!' and up she clambers, disclosing little pink feet, into the bed, and down under the clothes, and completely out of sight—all in a wink. The tiny hands hold sheet and coverlet fast, and fleetly Lois laughingly desists. 'Why not?' she says. 'It could do no harm, only some one ought to know where she is.'

She reasons thus aloud. Thereupon. Theo emerges, red, puffing, panting, half-suffocated, and eagerly suggests the bell-ropes. After vigorous pulls, at intervals, some one is heard coming up the back stairs. It proves to be Sampson. Sampson is a large red-faced woman, highly dressed. She looks altogether capable of being disagreeable, and without hesitation she proceeds to be so. She quite scorns Lois' greeting but pounces upon Theo, amid deafening cries of 'couthin! couthin!' Lois tries to explain, and finally does make herself heard, by instinctively using some show of authority.

Sampson's cheeks swell with inward insolence. She knows very well what this pale brown-eyed girl's position is to be in the household; she is not at all afraid of her. 'Hoity-toity!' she cries. 'What is it my ears hear—Miss Theo Hurd to sleep in this room? But, it is naught to me. You may answer to Mrs. Hurd—I wash my hands of it!' and out she flounces.

Lois wonders some at the storm she has raised, and then softly closes the door, hushes the baby who is muttering

about 'old Samthou,' turns down the light, kneels by the bedside. When she rises she finds Theo sitting up in bed, looking at her with big eyes. When she has laid down by her side, the little hand comes feeling through the dark for her cheek. 'Couthin,' the lisping baby voice says, 'papas and minithertth pray, but ladieth don't.'

'Oh, darling, yes they do. Mamma and your sisters do. Theo herself surely has some little prayer to say when she goes to bed?'

The little one does not seem to know very well what the cousin means by this; and it gives Lois a strange feeling to come across a child that does not even know 'Now I lay me down to sleep.' She has noticed that the marble table in the blue chamber is strewn with picture-books and costly playthings, scientific toys and rare pictures, everything to develop the baby intellect and waken the baby fancy. Doubtless the wee creature would babble charmingly of fairies and brownies should she be questioned; but of the dear Father in Heaven, as ignorant as a pagan child! And did not Mr. Nelson say that Mr. and Mrs. Hurd were among the pillars of Dr. Guthrie's church?

Theo herself resumes the conversation. 'I want to athk you thingth. Couthin. What makth folkth pray?'

'Did mamma never tell you about God?' Lois inquires quietly.

Mamma never had.

'Oh Theo, Theo! don't you know anything about him at all?'

Theo answers promptly, 'Yeth, at the church. Doctor Guthrie talkth about him every Thunday.'

'But I know him, too,' Lois interrupts softly. 'He is my friend—and when I knelt, Theo, I was telling him what I wished for, and thanking him for what he has already done for me.'

'Why, couthin—do you know God?' the child exclaims in surprise and wonder. 'But,' she reasons presently, 'he wathn't here—he couldn't hear you.'

'Yes, he was here, Theo. We cannot see him, that is all. But he sees us, and he hears all the while, what we say aloud and what we think to ourselves.'

'He *isn't* here. I guesh you tell thories, couthin,' like Sampthou.'

Lois tried a long time to think how she may present the idea of Spirit to the baby-mind.

'Well, Theo,' she says at last, putting up her hand and touching the carved head-board, 'there *isn't* anything in this room except the bedstead.'

'Oh, yeth there ith,' quickly replies the child. 'There ith a table, there ith chairth, there ith a mirror.'

'No,' says Lois, obstinately. 'My eyes are wide open. I look, but I don't see one of those things you said were here—so they can't be here.'

'Yeth they be,' says the baby. 'The dark ith all over them now, but in the morning you'll thee 'em.'

'Why, yes, so I shall,' says Lois. 'Of course I couldn't see them when the dark was over them—I will take little Theo's word that they are here. Now do you take cousin's word. God is here, only we can't see him by any light which we have now. There is something between us and God—just like the dark—and it hides him just as the dark hides chairs and tables. But still he is here. There will come a beautiful shining morning to us by-and-by, when the light we have now will be changed into another light so bright and clear that we can see him plainly,—see this God whom I pray to, to whom I go for the things I need. I love him, Theo; he is my best friend.'

'Ih he papath beth friend too, and Doctor Guthrie beth friend?'

'Yes.'

The little one muses. Then says she, with childish logic. 'What good timeth you and papa will have talking about him, and Doctor Guthrie when he comth—he comth moth every day.'

Lois does not answer. She falls to thinking of 'papa and Doctor Guthrie,' and wonders whether she and they ever will talk about him. She becomes conscious at last that the child's eyes are wide open, and that she is probably thinking as busily as herself. She asks her if she likes to hear stories; and of course Theo does.

So the older girl puts in words sufficiently vivid and simple for baby-ears the ancient story of another baby—of the

fair little Moses in the boat of rushes floating safely so many days upon the log mysterious Egyptian river. She tells Theo how this same Best Friend had heard the little boy's mother and sister when they prayed to him about their baby and took such care of their darling, that, at last, he was found by a beautiful lady and taken into a palace to live, and was brought up as a prince.

The child remains wide awake to the end. 'The beth friend' she says, 'ith ath nith, and ath powerful, ath any fairy Sampthou ever told me of.'

Presently she nestles nearer still to Lois; with a long sleepy sigh, she lisps out her last remark for the night.—'But a couthin, I fink, ith the nitheth fng in the—'

'In the world' Lois dreamily presumes she meant to say; and then in another moment she, too, is fast asleep.

## Father and Son.

WHAT A YOUNG MAN SAID TO HIS FATHER.

'A man,' said the son, 'came into the office a few days ago with the last one of two or three hundred tickets, and offered it to me for a dollar. I declined to buy it. He then went outside and sold it to a laboring man. That ticket drew a gold watch worth one hundred and fifty dollars.'

WHAT THE FATHER SAID TO THE SON.

'If you had bought that ticket you would have possessed a watch paid for by three hundred people giving a dollar each. You would have been but one of that number. Would you like to wear a watch paid for by two hundred and ninety-nine of your neighbors? Would you enjoy a watch worth one hundred and fifty dollars which cost you but one dollar? Would that make you feel manly? Would that inspire in you honesty and noble sentiments? Would the wearing of a valuable watch obtained in that way give solidity and fine proportions to your manhood? No, my son, such transactions, by laws, as unyielding as the pillars of heaven, will blunt honesty, blight virtue and blacken character.'

An intelligent Baptist gives the following true inwardness of a thriving Church: 'I verily believe our churches thrive according to the way that they support their own schools, their own pastors and their own paper.'

If it is a strange fact that wise men learn more from fools than fools do from wise men.

## MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

## China.

BAPTISM.—A letter from Dr. Ashmore, at Swatow, dated July 7th, 1884, says: 'Yesterday twelve converts were baptized here. Elder Po San administered the ordinance, and did it, as he usually does, in a solemn and impressive way. About three hundred people were gathered around the pool, one third of whom were strangers, who witnessed the ceremony, and listened to the service, in profound silence.'

## Africa.

The English Baptist Missionary Committee has approved the establishment of ten stations on the Upper Congo, between Stanley Pool and Stanley Falls, to be about 100 miles apart, and each to be manned by two missionaries. Three of these stations to be begun the present year, one of which is to be at Lukolela, where a site has already been secured. Six new missionaries are also to be sent out before the close of the year, if they can be obtained. The estimated yearly expense of the stations on the Upper Congo is from £4,000 to £5,000, considerably less than stations nearer the coast, on account of the abundant supply of food and building-materials. The stations in the interior will be much more healthy than on the Lower Congo. No European has yet died on the Upper Congo except from accident. In his journey up the river, Mr. Grenfell found that, the farther he went, the more populous the country became.

In Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar, there are 26 Christian churches, all connected with the London Missionary Society. The population of the city is about 100,000.

A hundred and nine natives of New Guinea are now members of Christian churches, all in the London Society Missions.—The total income of the Society for the past year was £102,563. 4s. 4d. (about \$510,000), and the debt at the close of the year was £3,749 3s. 6d.

self. Better work on such occasions is not done by the average pastor at home than is done by Elder Po San. He is the only ordained man we have left, the others having died.

Of ordained Preachers our experience is satisfactory. They have been good and true men; and we think that in every case the "laying on of hands," and the prayer offered over them, has brought with it some spiritual gift. They seem to have had a new sense of responsibility, and a spirit of increased faithfulness to Christ. We informed the church at one of these meetings, that they needed more ordained helpers. Elder Po San himself addressed the brethren, calling upon them to take the matter into consideration, and begin to look out from among themselves men of faith and earnest purpose to be ordained at no distant date.

THE DISCIPLINE.—One was the case of a man at Jio Peng, who had been a gambler, and who had fallen into his old vice. On being exhorted he showed no signs of repentance, and arrogantly told the preacher to tell the church to exclude him. This was done and notice will be posted at the chapel. Two other members at the same place had been guilty of drawing up a petition to the district magistrate, in which the name of the church was used to induce leniency towards an evil-doer,—a friend of the parties but not a member of the church. These were suspended from communion, and a sharp letter of rebuke was sent by the church-clerk. The petition was not sent in.—Had it been the consequences to them would have been much more serious. Then again a woman at Kit-ee was found guilty of unwomanly conduct and was excluded.

IDOLATRY IS EXPENSIVE, for nearly all the amusements of the people are connected with it; and thus is idolatry doubly strong. The theatre, Punch-and-Judy shows, fireworks, racing, and even gambling, are all more or less adjuncts of their religious worship, and practically are parts of it. These are all the great and most absorbing interests of idolatrous feasts. The thousands of temples many of them richly endowed; the manufactories of idols and paper and fireworks, and the thousand and one things used in worship; and all the varied interests involved,—present obstacles, simply from a monetary point of view, of no mean importance in estimating the success of missions in China. It is very difficult to reach any average estimate. I have frequently estimated with the Chinese the average expenditure of the families upon idolatry and they have set it at from \$75 to \$100 annually. Putting it at \$50 per family would make a yearly expenditure of \$350,000,000 upon idolatrous rites.—Rev. F. K. JUNOR, in *The Christian at Work*.