

Family Reading.

God's World of Leisure.

It is not near the dusty street, Where men march on with weary feet; It lies across the breezy down, Outside the houses and the towns, And is not vexed by all the strife And strain that make our modern life.

This world is still, but is not slow, And nothing fails to thrive and grow; The grasses eye to heaven aspire, And each day rise a little higher, And all glad things the hours employ, In getting full of peace and joy.

In our fast world a snatch of song Is made to last a whole day long; But in God's other world His praise Fills all the hours of all the days; The busy bees and birds on wing Have always time enough to sing.

There is no need of haste and rush, The world of leisure has its hush; Things work reposefully; the rill Trickles in music down the hill, The shadows up the mountains creep, And there is time for rest and sleep.

And there is time for joy and love! The clouds float tenderly above Leaves press together as they dance, And seek the sun with flash and glance, The butterflies the flowers caress, And everywhere is happiness!

"There is no hurry," say the trees; "Take time for gladness," says the breeze, "Plenty of time," respond the hours; "No need for worry," add the flowers; "Rest and be thankful," say the skies; "Do not make haste," the sun replies; "No hard task-master is our God," Says, every plant and leaf and sod.

Oh, it is good to come away And hear what these our teachers say; In God's fair-world of leisure rest, And not be hurried or distressed; Tired eyes look out on beautiful things, Thoughts rise as on angel-wings, And earth lies close to Heaven above, While the glad heart owns God is love.

New Select Serial.

A DEACON'S DAUGHTER.

BY MISS LILIAN F. WELLS.

CHAPTER III.

MARTHA PLANS TO LEAVE HOME. Martha wept until the tears refused to flow any longer. Then, rising, she removed her hat and shawl, bathed her face, smoothed her hair and sat down by the window.

The 'deep, intense and wondrous blue' of the sky stretched away in perfect, limitless peace, for every cloud had disappeared. Martha let her eyes gaze up and up into its tender depths till it almost seemed as if the sky came down and folded itself around her heart. There was nothing in all nature that Martha loved so much as a sky like that—its wide, glorious expanse unbroken by a single cloud. 'A still sky,' she called it.

'What shall I do with myself?' thought she. 'I must do something. I'm growing more sick of my life every day. Going to Julia Gleason's was almost the only change I had, and now I can never go there again—never! Her heart began to throb again as the scene in the Gleasons' parlor came vividly back to her. 'I wish there was someone who understood me. Huldah loves me, I know; but she does not understand me—she cannot, we are so different. She looks at me sometimes as if I had given her the hardest problem in Algebra to solve, when I have said something that seemed perfectly natural to say. I feel as if part of me was all wrapped up in some sort of an invisible cloak, and people only saw a very little of me.'

'I wonder if I shall just go on living as I do now, and as just of the girls about here do—Monday; wash, scrub floors, clean windows and woodwork; Tuesday: iron and mend; Wednesday: bake, and sew carpet-rags after the baking is done, or do something just as disagreeable; Thursday: churn, and make butter and cheese; Friday: sweep, and do all sorts of detestable things; Saturday bake again, churn again, and clean up for Sunday; Sunday: go to church, hear two long, dry sermons, see all the stupid people I have always seen, and who are doing just the same things I do week in, week out; come home; read a book of sermons longer and dryer than the ones I heard in the church; sit and think till I am nearly distracted; and go to bed perfectly miserable. Anybody

would be charmed with such a life. I am sure. Oh dear!—and she heaved a very long, despairing sigh.

'What if I should run away?' Her eyes brightened for a moment, then she shook her head. 'No, I would not be such a coward. Besides, I do not believe it is necessary. I imagine father would not object to my going away to earn my own living. But what could I do? Let me see. I can sew very well, indeed—thanks to mother; I can cook, make good bread and pies and cake, and—but, dear me, I do not want to do such things; have not I just been grumbling because I had to do them? Well, let me think again. I know enough to teach a district school, but I should have to wait till next spring for that—I do not believe they would hire a lady teacher for the winter term, and I do not want to wait till spring—seven months! What can I do, then?'

She leaned her head on her hand and thought very busily for fully ten minutes. Suddenly she lifted her head, with flushed cheeks and shining eyes. 'I'll write to Aunt Charlotte—yes, I will—and see if she cannot find something for me to do in New York.'

The next thing was to obtain the materials for carrying out her decision. It was a rare thing for her to write a letter; and though she had some paper and envelopes in her drawer, the pen and ink were down-stairs on the kitchen shelf. But the letter must and should be written; what was more, it should be kept a secret, unless something favorable resulted from it.

While she was considering how to accomplish her object, her mother came to the foot of the stairs, and called:

'Marthy, come down an' set the table, quick!'

Martha saw her way clear at once, and went down to the kitchen with a very different expression from the one she had worn an hour before.

'Mr. Hulbert's jes' drove into the yard and hitched his horse; so I s'pose he's goin' to stay to supper,' announced Mrs. Stirling, bustling about to make some biscuit in honor of the guest. 'Be s'ry, now, Marthy, an' put on all the best things.'

Mr. Hulbert was pastor of the church in which Deacon Stirling officiated, and his coming was quite an event to Mrs. Stirling. She always riled her 'preserve shell' of its choicest sweets, made a tin of her feathery-light biscuit, and adorned the table with the real damask table-cloth and the few pieces of china and silver that had come to her from her mother.

Martha was usually as much displeased at his coming as her mother was pleased; but this afternoon she felt that she could give the old gentleman a hearty welcome. She knew that he and her father would be so absorbed in discussing theology and the affairs of the church, that the latter's attention would be entirely diverted from herself. Whereas, if Mr. Hulbert had not come, she must have undergone a cross-examination as to her motive in leaving Mrs. Gleason's so hastily. To add to her relief, Mrs. Stirling was so busy with her preparations for tea, that she forgot to ask Martha about her odd behavior on reaching home.

As Martha had expected, Mr. Hulbert and the deacon talked very busily during the former's stay. The pastor was in the habit of questioning his parishioners' children in regard to their knowledge of the Bible and the doctrines of the church. Many an ordeal of this kind Martha had passed through, but to night he was full of a very serious subject—the questionable views of one of his deacons—and entirely forgot his usual custom.

When supper was over, Martha told her mother to go into the parlor, and let her wash the dishes. Tired as she was with her Saturday's work, Mrs. Stirling was easily persuaded. Then how Martha did 'fly around!' Mrs. Stirling would have trembled for her cherished china had she seen how swiftly it was washed and wiped. But every piece went safely into its place, the kitchen was made tidy, and Martha seized pen and ink and hurried up-stairs to write her letter.

She was a long while composing it—both from want of practice, and from not knowing exactly what she wanted to say. At last, just as it grew too

dark for her to see the lines upon the paper, she folded her finished letter and put it in the envelope. Then she sat back in her chair, leaned her flushed cheek against the cool window-pane, and thought over what she had written. She knew it word for word.

SHERWOOD, VT., Sept. 6, 18—

DEAR AUNT CHARLOTTE:—

I believe I have not written to you since the summer I was twelve years old just after you had been to visit us. That was five years ago, you know; but I can think just how you look—that is, unless you have changed.

I suppose you will wonder what I am writing to you for. Perhaps you will think I want something of you. If you do, you will guess right: for I do want something very much, indeed. So I will come to the point at once, and say that I want to find something to do to earn my own living.

Father has not lost any money, and he has not said anything to me about supporting myself; but I want to do it. And now I want to know if you do not know of something in New York that I could do. Of course, I do not know very much, for I have not had any advantages, and I never was away from home in my life; but I am anxious—desperate—to know more. I thought you could help me if any one could; and at least, my writing will not do any harm. It could get something to do, the sooner I began it, the better I should be pleased. I hope you will write to me, even if you know of nothing for me.

Your affectionate niece,

MARTHA STIRLING.

Oh, dear! sighed Martha, 'she will think that I am a silly, ignorant little girl; it sounds all so childish. But I do not care; I will send it now that it is written, and give her the chance of throwing it in the fire, anyway if nothing more.'

The letter lay in her drawer all day Sunday, and until Monday afternoon. Martha was unusually cheerful during the time, for she could not help hoping that there might be a change at hand—that life might grow bright and interesting to her ere long. She kept trying to stop building delightful air-castles—kept telling herself that it would amount to nothing, after all, and she should find the old life more wretched than ever. But it was of no use. Hope persisted in keeping itself uppermost, and Martha's face had not been so bright for months.

'Ye see, Nancy,' said the deacon, after Martha had gone up stairs Sunday night, 'my laborin' has begun to take effect at last. Did ye notice how different Marthy looked to-day? She's beginnin' to see the error of her ways now, an' is takin' this way o' showin' it. We've held a tight rein on her always, but we never could make her keep the road afore. I've insisted all along that that was the only way to train her, an' ye see I was right.'

Ah, Deacon, Deacon, don't be too confident yet. The wisest of us make mistakes sometimes.

Just after dinner, on Monday, Mrs. Morgan, a woman living half a mile away, came in in great distress, saying:

'My little Jimmy has been took sick very sudden this mornin', an' nothin' I could do for him seemed to do a mite o' good. Wouldn't you please come over, Mis' Stirling, an' see if you can tell what is the matter with him?'

Mrs. Stirling went at once; for she never refused a call of this kind. Martha, knowing that her mother would probably be gone all the afternoon, went up-stairs for her letter, intending to send it to the post-office by some one who should be going to Sherwood. Her father was off at the other end of the farm, so there was no danger of being seen by him.

It was a beautiful day, as warm as June; so she took her sewing and sat down on the grass in the shade of the walnut tree. She had not been sitting there more than ten minutes before she heard the rumbling of a farm-waggon. As soon as it came in sight over the hill, she saw that the driver was Amos: Snatching the letter from her pocket, she ran out to the gate. Amos stopped.

'Are you going to town, Amos?' asked Martha eagerly. 'Yes,' said Amos. 'Got some butter an' eggs to sell; an' Huldah wants sugar an' things. Why? Want to go along?'

'No; but I want you to please take this letter to the post-office for me. Will you?'

'Oh yes; of course I will.'

'But, Amos, I do not want you to

say anything about my sending it to anybody, not even to Huldah. It is all right, really, only it is a secret, and I do not want to be bothered with questions yet. You will not say anything about it, will you? And when the answer comes, please give it to me privately, will you?'

'Wall—but seems to me, Marthy—'

Now, Amos, cannot you believe me when I say it is all right? I am going to tell all about it if it comes to anything; but I want to see if it does first. I know I can trust you to keep a secret if you once promise to.'

'Wall, I'll do it for ye, Marthy; and I won't say nothin' about it,' said Amos, carefully stowing the letter away in his breast pocket.

And now there was nothing for Martha but to wait. It might be a week, a month, or only a few days, before the answer came. There might be no answer at all. She sat herself to her task as bravely and patiently as she could, and her reward was not long in coming.

Sunburned in the Arctic Regions.

'The worst trouble that I had in my first voyage north,' said a Maine sailor, 'was from sunburn. Yes, sir—from sunburn. I could stand the cold when she was forty degrees below zero; I could stand frozen noses and ears, but bust my toprails if I didn't suffer the torments of death the first time I got sun burnt in the Arctic Regions. You see it was this way: We were laid up a few days before the close of the summer making repairs, in about seventy-four degrees north latitude, and right early in the morning a party of us went ashore to look around. It was pretty cold, and the consequence was we were bundled up in half a dozen thicknesses of under-clothes, with fur hoods over our heads, and looked like fleas in a buffalo robe.

'Well, sir, along about noon time what, with the heat of the sun, and the hard exercise that we were taking to getting over the snow and ice-hummocks I was hot as tarnation, and I just slipped the hood off my head and went along for a while with nothing on it.

'Put on that hood, you fool,' hollered one of the men. 'Do you want to go sunburnt? A few freckles won't hurt me,' says I. 'I never was much of a beauty. But you're a fool to talk about sunburn in such a country as this.'

'I thought that settled the whole business; so I kept right along with a bare head, while the other boys, who were old hands at travelling in the north, kept covered up. The side of my face that was next to the sun was as hot as fire, while the side that was in the shade was frozen pretty stiff; but as we kept tacking around in going from place to place, I showed first one side and then the other to the sun, and the freezing and cooking was pretty evenly divided.

'You take and stick your head clear down to the chin in a bucket of scalding water, and keep it there for five minutes, and you'll know what I felt like when I got back to the ship that night. My face was swelled up so that I couldn't see out of my eyes, and one of the boys had to lead me around for three days. My head under my hair was so tender, that I couldn't touch it to a piller, and I took my sleep like I take my whiskey—standing.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Just the Time to be Pleasant.

'Mother's cross!' said Maggie, coming out into the kitchen with a pout on her lips.

Her aunt was busy ironing, but she looked and answered Maggie: 'Then it is the very time for you to be pleasant and helpful. Mother was awake a great deal in the night with the poor baby.'

Maggie made no reply. She put on her hat and walked off into the garden. But a new idea went with her.

'The very time to be helpful and pleasant is when other people are cross. 'Sure enough,' thought she, 'that would be the time when it would do the most good.'

'I remember when I was sick last year I was so nervous that if any one spoke to me, I could hardly help being

cross; and mother never got angry nor out of patience, but was just as gentle with me. I ought to pay it back now, and I will.'

And she sprang up from the grass where she had thrown herself, and turned a face full of cheerful resolution toward the room where her mother sat soothing and tending a fretful, teething boy.

Maggie brought out the pretty ivory balls, and began to jingle them for the little one.

He stopped fretting, and smiles dimpled on the corners of his lips.

'Couldn't I take him out in his carriage, mother? It's such a nice morning,' she asked.

'I should be glad if you would,' said her mother.

The little hat and sack were brought, and the baby was soon ready for his ride.

'I'll keep him as long as he is good,' said Maggie, 'and you must lie on the sofa and get a nap while I am gone. You are looking dreadfully tired.'

The kind words and the kiss that accompanied them were almost too much for the mother.

The tears rose to her eyes, and her voice trembled, as she answered:

'Thank you, dearie, it will do me a world of good if you can keep him out an hour; and the air will do him good, too. My head aches badly this morning.'

What a happy heart beat in Maggie's bosom, as she trundled the little carriage up and down on the walk!

She had done real good. She had given back a little of the help and forbearance that had so often been bestowed upon her. She had made her mother happier, and given her time to rest.

She resolved to remember and act upon her aunt's good word: 'The very time to be helpful and pleasant is when everybody is tired and cross.'

A Russian Fable.

A peasant was one day driving some geese to a neighboring town where he hoped to sell them. He had a long stick in his hand, and to tell the truth he did not treat his flock of geese with much consideration. I do not blame him, however; he was anxious to get to the market in time to make a profit, and not only geese but men must expect to suffer if they hinder gain.

The geese, however, did not look on the matter in this light, and happening to meet a traveller walking along the road, they poured forth their complaints against the peasant who was driving them.

'Where can you find geese more unhappy than we are! See how this peasant is hurrying on this way and that, and driving us just as though we were only common geese. Ignorant fellow as he is, he never thinks how he is bound to honor and respect us; for we are the distinguished descendants of those very geese to whom Rome once owed its salvation, so that a festival was established in their honor.'

'But for what do you expect to be distinguished yourselves?' asked the traveller.

'Because our ancestors—'

'Yes, I know; I have read all about it. What I want to know is what good have you yourself done?'

'Why, our ancestors saved Rome.'

'Yes, yes; but what have you done of the kind?'

'We? Nothing.'

'Of what good are you, then? Do leave your ancestors at peace? They were honored for their deeds; but you, my friends, are only fit for roasting.'

Prepared for a Whipping.

When Rev. Dr. Fisk was the presiding officer at Wilbraham Seminary, there was one boy who was as full of mischief as a boy only could be. He taxed the well-known elastic patience of Dr. Fisk to the last degree. Finally the Doctor said to him, after a capital act of misconduct, 'You must prepare yourself for a severe whipping. When the appointed time came the Doctor was on hand, very much more affected, apparently, than the irrepressible mischief-maker. After a solemn discourse in that most melting tone of voice that no one can forget who ever heard it, the Doctor drew his rattan

and laid it with considerable unction upon the boy's back. Nothing but dust followed the blow. The subject of the discipline was entirely at his ease, and evidently quite unconscious of the stroke.

'Take off your coat, sir!' was the next command—for the Doctor was a little roused. Again whistled the rattan around the boy's shoulders, but with no more effect. 'Take off your vest, sir shouted the Doctor. Off went the vest, but there was another under it. 'Off with the other!' and then to the astonishment of the administrator of justice, he exposed a dry codfish defending the back of the culprit like a shield, while below there was evidently stretching over other portions of the body a stout leather apron.

'What does this mean?' said the Doctor.

'Why,' said the great rogue, in a particularly humble and persuasive tone, 'you told me, Doctor, to prepare myself for punishment, and I have done the best I could.'

It was out of the question to pursue the act of discipline any farther at that time. And it is doubtful whether it was resumed again.—Christian Weekly.

Readings.

'When I am reading a good book,' says Hamerton, 'the only Cæsar that I envy is he who is reading a better book. In some schools the attention of the pupil is confined to 'doing sums,' 'parsing,' and other routine work. The atmosphere of such schools is deficient in the essential elements of intellectual stimulus. To read well is to think well. A thinker excites thought in others, and purifies the educational atmosphere about him. One of the best services a teacher can do for a pupil is to lead him to think more, by inducing him to read more and to read more judiciously. This all teachers can do. The teachers may inquire of pupils what they have read or are reading, how they enjoy it. He may in turn tell what he himself is reading, and propose to bring his book and read a little to them, asking them to bring theirs and read to each other. Books, magazines, and newspapers will thus be brought to schools, and interesting selections be read from them. The children will experience the delight of reading good stories, and of hearing good stories read by others. The teacher can mention some good books which contain delightful reading, naming such as are known to be in the district or can be easily secured.

Several of the pupils might be led to read the same book, and compare views upon it. Such an exercise is most valuable in cultivating the taste and judgment. To be useful in this work, the teacher must look over the family libraries in the district, and learn something of their contents. This will make him acquainted with the people, will make him know the homelife of the children better, and will thus prepare him to reach the hearts and minds of the pupils. By associating with the parents and talking over the contents of their libraries, the teacher will become an instructor and adviser of the parents, and will be consulted about papers, magazines and books or the family. If he is competent to advise, he may do great good by his suggestions. In many families, new books are a rarity. In most cases, book purchases are accidental. A teacher acquainted with books, and familiar with the cheap editions, can do much to increase the reading facilities and reading habits of the young. Some of the best works in science, biography, history, and travel can now be had for ten or twenty cents.

Five dollars would buy forty instructive and readable works in cheap form, and furnish a winter's reading for the whole district. Nearly every teacher if he knew the books well, could induce the parents to spend the five dollars.—Prof. J. A. Cooper, Principal Edinboro' Normal School.

A certain amount of distrust is wholesome, but not so much of others as ourselves.

Dean Stanley once remarked that Christianity is better expressed by the word "Christendom" than by the church "Church."