

## The Fireside.

### THE UNFORGOTTEN NAME.

BY MRS. HELENA H. THOMAS.

"Yes, I know you, but I cannot recall your name," said grandma, as she warmly greeted her daughter's friend. "Oh, that is not strange," was the tactful rejoinder, "for even young people forget names," and then the guest went on to tell some funny experiences along that line, at her own expense, until I even forgot now, grandma, when I am old I will not be able to recall my own name, surely."

Grandma listened, with face serene, to what the impulsive speaker had to say, and then in a cheery tone made the following comment:

"Well, it doesn't really matter, after all, my young friend, so long as there will be always the one forgotten name."

"Why, I don't understand you, grandma."

"I mean, dear, that it is a great comfort to me to think that if my memory continues to fail, until I even forget the names of my own children, that the blessed name of Jesus will be forgotten."

"I don't see how that can be," was the puzzled comment of the one whose ears were still deaf to the charm of that name.

"It is so, nevertheless," said the octogenarian, with emphasis, "for during my long lifetime, I have known many who were lost to all else but the name of Jesus." Then turning to her daughter she put this query:

"Do you remember Father Wright?"

"Indeed I do," was the laughing reply; "I can see the droll figure he used to cut, after all these years, as plainly as if I saw him but yesterday." Then turning to her, she continued:

"He was an old man who lived in the village where I was born, and he furnished the children of the place continual amusement, for he had lost his reason, and would do such queer things. I know it was thoughtless of us to laugh at the poor old man, but I smile, even now, when I recall his coming into church, after the sermon had commenced, with his wig in his hand, instead of covering his poor bald head—he having stolen away from the one who had him in charge."

"Yes, he often did something of the sort," grandma made haste to say, "but we older ones never felt like laughing, for we had known him when he was the reverse of the mental wreck you have in mind, daughter. If his wife was out of his sight he was always restless until he found her, but even after he had followed her to church, he could not distinguish her, but would look about so vacantly, that it always brought the tears to my eyes, and just say 'She! She!' until he was led to his wife, who usually returned home with him at once. For she was a proud woman, as well as much younger than Father Wright, and her cross was not a light one."

"I remember, now that you recall it," said the daughter, "that from my earliest recollection 'Grandpa Wright,' as we children always called him, invariably spoke of his wife as 'she.' You used often to send me with some delicacy for the old couple, mother, and the old man always seemed as pleased to see me as a

little child, but would always shake his head when I asked if he knew my name.

"If his wife was out of sight, he seemed to understand that I wished to see her, and would go from room to room saying 'She! She!' This to the child seemed very amusing, but it looks the reverse now."

"It never seemed anything but sad to me," said grandma, in a rueful tone, "for I had fresh in my mind the loving way in which he would, when himself, say, 'Elizabeth!' for she was his pride. Then, when speaking of her, he would say 'Mrs. Wright!' in so pronounced a way that all who heard him understood that the speaker felt honored in having her bear his name. And yet the time came when the name of every friend faded away, even to that of his wife."

"Oh, that seems almost cruel!" here exclaimed one listener; "it makes me heart sick to think of a life going out under such a cloud."

"Yes, but the picture isn't all dark, dear," said the aged one, sweetly, "and now I will tell you what led me to speak of Father Wright. He early began to serve his Master, and, as he used often to say, 'never took any back steps,' so it is easy to understand that the name of Jesus became a part of his very being. So much so that his face would light up at the mention of it, even after the memory of his once idolized wife had so faded away that he did not even refer to her as 'she.'"

"In those days we used to hold the prayer-meetings from house to house. Father Wright had always been a faithful attendant until he lost his reason, and then his wife remained, at home with him. But, after a time, Mrs. Wright suggested that a meeting be appointed there. I confess that I went to that meeting with fear and trembling, for he was usually at his worst in the evening. But, greatly to the surprise of all, the opening hymn had such a soothing effect upon the discolored brain, that the old man both looked and appeared sane."

"He had always taken an active part in such meetings, and, it was evident that he wanted to testify, as of old, and so, as the minister said for the last time, 'Let us hear from all,' Father Wright stood up and said, 'Jesus! Jesus!' and then resumed his seat."

"Ah, how fresh it appears to me now," continued grandma, with a far-off look in her eyes, "I can seem to see how overcome our minister was by it all, and how, when the old man sat down, he covered his face with his hand for a moment, and then softly began to sing:

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds  
In a believer's ear!  
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,  
And drives away his fear."

The silence was unbroken for a little space after the foregoing had slipped from the tremulous lips, and then the youthful guest put the query:

"Was his mind blank, clear to the last?"

"Yes, dear; he continued to grow weaker mentally, as well as physically, until he went home."

"Oh, but it seems dreadful to think of being addressed as 'She,' by one who had promised to 'love and protect,' said the wife of but one short year. It

breaks my heart to think of such a possibility."

"Yes, dear, it was sad, but his wife had the satisfaction of knowing that her husband loved her while reason lasted. True, she craved one look of recognition before the spirit left the body, but even this was not to be. I chanced to be in the room when Father Wright died, and it was a glorious sight. We thought he had slipped away when he opened wide his eyes, which shone with old time brilliancy, and reaching out his hands cried out, in joyous tone, 'Jesus! Jesus!'"

"Yes," added the saintly one, "there is one name we never forget, 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus.'—N. Y. Observer.

### A RUDE AWAKENING.

No, I never had any leanings toward spiritualism myself, but I think my wife once came very near being a spiritualist, and only a very little thing turning her from it.

I will tell you about it.

It was in the early days of our married life, and we had just buried our first baby, a sweet blue-eyed girl of four months old. My heart aches even now after all these years, at the memory of our terrible loneliness after she was gone, but if it was hard for me to endure, it was trebly so for my wife. I was around in the world of men, meeting much to take the keen edge off my sorrow, though it was continually present with me. But poor Annie, with her empty arms and aching heart, was right there in the room still haunted with the baby's presence, seeing the little toys and clothing, the empty high chair and crib—wherever she looked there was something to remind her of the lost darling. It was not at all strange that, like thousands in similar circumstances, she grasped at comfort from whatever direction it came.

Our next door neighbor was a spiritualist, but a very kind-hearted woman; and she had been extremely good and helpful to us all through little Margie's illness and death. In the dreary days that followed she often came in to cheer up Annie, and one day proposed that she attend a spiritualist meeting with her that afternoon.

"I do not ask you to believe as we do," she said, "but I am sure that you will hear things that will comfort you and put your loss in a different light. I have just been right there myself, and know just how you feel, and I know how much comfort I got from these meetings; that is why I want you to go."

More to gratify Mrs. Kimball than with any expectation of receiving help, Annie went with her that day. At night she gave me impressions of the meeting.

"It wasn't at all bad," she said; "nothing shocking, as I expected I might hear. Of course, a great deal that was said I could not understand, it was so deep and mystical, but there were ideas advanced concerning the spiritual life that were entirely new to me, and that may have something in them, after all. And, strange as it may seem to you, I somehow feel nearer to little Margie to-night than I have since she left us, and that speaker to-day gave me more real comfort than our minister has been able to do at all, for all his efforts."

"Take care, Annie!" I said: "I fear you are treading on dangerous ground."

"Oh, I'm not a spiritualist yet," said she, "by any means, but I believe in accepting the good wherever you find it; don't you?"

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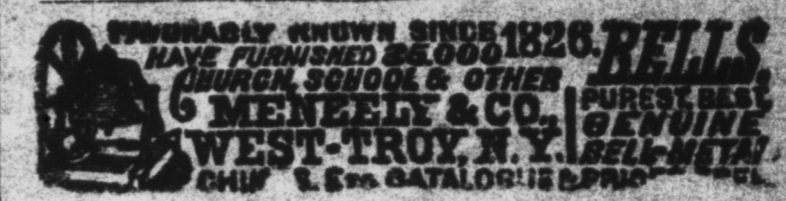
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"Yes," I replied, "only be sure it is genuine good."

She went to the meetings again and again, each time finding some new attraction. One night she came home fairly radiant. "Oh, Henry!" she exclaimed, "only think!" To-day I saw Margie's dear little hand, and even held it for an instant."

"Annie," I cried, "that is too much."

"You can't think how happy it made me," she said, her eyes shining with tears.

"It wasn't her own little soft, warm hand!" I said incredulously.

"No, not warm, but in the dim light it looked exactly like hers, and it was soft, and lay in mine so confidently. I was warned in advance not to clasp it, you know. You must go, too, next time, Henry."

"Certainly I will, said I. And I did."

It was a regular spiritualistic seance, with a darkened room and a mysterious cabinet, whence came weird music at times; there were soft rustlings, as if of angels' wings, and we sometimes heard indistinct sounds that might be imagined a baby's cooing. The speaker's remarks were punctuated with sighs and sobs from the people around us, and I seemed to be the only unmoved one in the crowd, for I could feel that Annie was in a continuous nervous tremor.

The angels' wings seemed to rustle very near us, then that little hand came along, only dimly seen, but I heard Annie bend over and kiss it, amid her sobs. As it passed by me I seized and held on. It pulled with a marvellous amount