

The Fireside.

WHEN THEY FOUND TIME.

When Charles Holden, a shrewd, thrifty young farmer was married and left his Connecticut birth-place for Colorado, he and his wife purposed to start right in their new home—to live as Christians and to found a Christian family. But being ambitious to get on in life and to be independently prosperous in the shortest possible time, they set aside their good resolutions and crowded all the odd jobs possible into the Sabbath. They had no time to be religious or to be social, lived entirely within themselves, gave not a penny towards any moral, religious or educational work, and did not even take a newspaper. Their only recreation was at long intervals, an exchange of Sunday visits within neighbors as selfish, narrow-minded and godless as were they themselves.

One Sunday when Charles Holden was making repairs in his barn, the ladder slipped and fell, breaking his leg.

His wife hearing the unusual noise, ran out, when he exclaimed:

"I never had time to keep Sunday, now I shall have to take time."

He spoke the truth, for business and labor as far as he was concerned now came to a standstill, and he was exceedingly restless, under the enforced confinement, and at the thinking he was compelled to do when left to himself. He taxed to the utmost even his loving, patient wife's ingenuity in devising means to pacify and amuse him. One day he called out impatiently:

"Mary, I shall certainly go crazy unless I have something to read. Where is that little old trunk that contained all my worldly goods when I left home as a small boy? There are old papers and letters stowed away in it, that I have time now to look over."

Away sped Mrs. Holden to the attic, soon returning with the trunk in her arms, and while she was dusting it and placing it upon a small table within easy reach to the invalid, he said:

"How natural it looks, even to the brass-headed nails, that make my father's initials, which are also mine. Father had died, and our family was broken up when mother packed this trunk and sent me away to Uncle Lemuel's, and I never saw her again, for she died a few weeks later. She was a good woman, Mary, and she used to pray with her children. In those days I had great faith in mother's prayers; I remember that day how she prayed that we might meet an unbroken family in Heaven, and for a long time that thought was a great comfort to me, poor little homesick fellow that I was.

The trunk with its lifted cover was within Charles Holden's reach by this time, and he began to take out the contents. Presently he called to his wife, who had gone back to her housework: "Look here, Mary!" and as she tripped from the milk pantry and showed her trim, neat, gingham-arrayed figure framed in the oak-grained doorway, he looked up at her and said with a tremor in his voice:

"I have something to read now for sure. I have found my mother's Bible. I remember how she took it down from the shelf and told me to read it and to make it my guide, and I meant to, but

I haven't found the time. And see, here is her name in her own dear handwriting and that same prayer that we might be taught by this book and live for Christ, meeting at last an unbroken family in Heaven. And you are one of us now, Mary, and the children belong too!

"Oh, how much this book brings to mind. Mother used to carry it to meeting with her on Sundays. See the leaves turned down at her favorite passages. Poor mother. Poor, faithful, pretty, little mother. She was a young woman when she died, younger than you are now, Mary," and the sturdy young farmer's lip trembled, and his eyes grew moist, as he tenderly turned the thin leaves of the worn little leather-bound Bible.

Presently he said: "Here is the passage enclosed in pencil marks," and he read it aloud: "What does it mean?" he asked.

"At one time I felt that I knew," said his wife, hesitatingly, "but we haven't had time to think of such things. And she turned back to the multitude of irons that, as usual, she had in the fire.

"Time, time, time!" he said aloud.

"How many changes we have rung upon that word, and now, poor thing, she hasn't even time to sympathize with me in finding this treasure, but I have got plenty of time, yes, plenty." And turning to Matthew's Gospel he began to read.

It was so long since Charles Holden had read anything in particular, that all his intellectual powers seemed hungering and alert for nourishment. He became interested and then absorbed. He read on and on. While his wife flitted noiselessly within sound of his voice, he read aloud, and when she found time to sit with him awhile she would take the book from his hand, and in her turn read aloud with a soft clear voice that took on additional sweetness from the significance and pathos of the words of life.

When their spiritual birth came neither could quite tell, but they came at last to the point where they could freely speak on religion one to another, and then both confessed that they had been born to newness of life. The old, sordid, selfish interests were gone, and they asked God for Christ's sake to lead them so that the mother's prayer might be answered. They have never been tempted to return to the old life, and Charles Holden often says: "Do not forget God. If you do He will find a way to remind you."—*N. Y. Observer.*

ABOUT BEAVERS.

In his habits the beaver resembles the muskrat; he likes to live along the bank of a stream, not too swift. He is decidedly herbivorous in his tastes, using for food green cornstalks, grass, weeds, and the bark of trees, such as the quaking asp, willow, cottonwood, etc.

The only entrance to his nest is from the bottom of the stream; it is often to be found under a clump of overhanging willows, the roots of which help to keep the dirt from caving in. He digs upward, plastering his hole with mud, and bracing it with sticks, until he gets high enough above water level to make his nest. These animals are wonderful

workers. I have known them to stop up a two-inch pipe with grass, mud, and moss. It had been laid to the centre of their pond, in perhaps four feet of water. The pipe at the end had a strainer placed over it. The pump-house was about one hundred yards away. How they discovered the water was escaping from the bottom of the pond, I do not know; but every morning, and sometimes in the night, the workmen had to go to the pond, wade out, and clean off the end of the pipe.

Besides being the most patient of all animals, the beaver is a model house-keeper. "As neat as a beaver" should be considered by all housewives as a high compliment. Every stick is carried out of the nest after the bark has been peeled off for food, and thrown into the stream.

He sometimes builds a "house," but he prefers a stream deep enough to allow him to lay down his food for the winter in its bed, for if shallow it is quite likely to freeze up and cut him off from his winter's supply. He lays down his fresh-cut poles close to the bank, with the butt ends up-stream to prevent their floating down and away from his hole.

Almost helpless on land, he is perfectly at home in the water, his broad, paddle-shaped tail and his large webbed hind feet making excellent "oars." His front feet, strange to say, are laid close to his belly in swimming. Like men (with the exception of some Oriental races, who use their toes about their daily work quite cleverly as their hands) the beaver uses his "hands" in doing his work. The old story about him using his tail for a trowel is not reliable to any extent.

These animals usually herd together in small families, go up stream during the spring freshets, and remain there. If their dams are cut out, a dog can be sent into the hole, and the occupants driven out. They are then easily caught and killed, as they are so clumsy on land, and see but little. They have a wonderful scent, which makes it impossible to trap them on land. To trap them even in water requires more or less practice on the part of the trapper. He has a cunning creature to deal with, and he must proceed carefully.

Like the muskrat, the beaver can swim a long distance under the ice by breathing upward and inhaling again as he swims across. This breath is seen to collect in bubbles under the ice. An occasional "air-hole" also serves him, so that I have known him to cross under ice a lake a mile and a half wide.—*Forest and Stream.*

UNPLEASANT HABITS.

It is said a quiet bearing and repose of manner is an index to the true lady, says a writer in the *Indiana Farmer*, and I have heard that some women apply the test to their new acquaintances by seating them in rocking chairs when they make their first calls. If the chair is kept in perpetual motion, the occupant is black-listed.

Restlessness and boisterousness are more often the result of thoughtlessness than of ignorance.

I know a sweet young girl who moves through the house like a cyclone, runs up or down stairs with a clatter, and slams the doors with a bang. She is always ready to do a kindness, but this noisy habit spoils her.

I know another young girl who is partial to a rocking chair. This would not be objectionable, did she not make everyone else frantic by her vigorous

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vibrations. She rocks back, springing her feet up on the toes, then forward, bringing the heels down with a stamp. She never seems to tire of the exercise, though all the other members of the household grow exhausted with her labors. She, too, is a sweet young girl, but has a bad habit.

I know a woman who is old enough to know better, who does not keep her fingers quiet five minutes at a time. If at the table she plays with her teaspoon, knife, fork or napkin ring, or rolls up bread pills. If in the sitting room her spectacles, thimble or scissors become her playthings; if there is no small plaything within reach she drums on the arm of her chair with her finger tips or twiddles her fingers.

Sometimes this restlessness is the result of disordered nerves, but more frequently it is traceable to a thoughtless habit.

I once had a good neighbor who could not enter your kitchen without a sniff, followed by the query—"What are you cooking?" at the same time lifting the pot lid to see for herself.

Another young girl is fond of hearing her own voice; she out-talks all competitors. Her friends rarely have a chance to say their say, she talks so loud and fast.

Don't imagine, brother, that we have never seen any shortcomings in you. Men and boys have as many and as offensive habits as their sisters.

Let's all try to reform.

THE SECRET OF HEALTH.

Don't worry. Don't hurry. "Too swift arrived as tardy as too slow." "Simplify! simplify! simplify!" your diet! Don't overeat! Don't starve. "Let your moderation be known unto all men." Court the fresh air day and night. "Oh, if you knew what was in the air." Sleep and rest abundantly. Spend less nervous energy each day than you make. Be cheerful. "A light heart lives long." Think only healthful thoughts. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." "Seek peace, and pursue it." "Work like a man, but don't be worked to death. Avoid passion and excitement. A moment's anger may be fatal." Associate with healthy people. Health is contagious as well as disease. "Don't carry the whole world on your shoulders, far less the universe. Trust the Eternal." Never despair. "Lost hope is a fatal disease." "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."—*Journal and Messenger.*

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