

The Fireside.

A LATENT APPRECIATION.

BY MRS. MARIE SPEARS KING.

"Well, Lucinda, we'll give it up. I don't see how we can send Clare to college this year."

"Why, John, can't you borrow the money you need till the church pays you up?"

Mrs. Reynolds asked this rather doubtfully, for she didn't relish the idea of debts. "You know Clare is so anxious to go, and we'll be so disappointed."

"No; I don't see how I can. The church is already a quarter behind with my salary, and the rent must be paid. We're getting behind with it, and there are the children's shoes I haven't paid for yet. I've done the best I can, but it seems we can't make ends meet."

"Never mind, John; don't worry. It's all for the best somehow, and it'll be good when it does come."

With this comforting assurance Mrs. Reynolds went into the kitchen to prepare supper. She knew the children would be hungry when they came home.

Mr. Reynolds had a genuine case of the blues. He had worked hard. His salary was small, and it took a good deal to keep five growing children clothed and fed. Clare was the oldest. She had finished the public school course, and was ready for college. Really, she ought to have gone off to school last year, but they were not able to send her. They had prayed about it, saved in every possible way, but still the way was not open. He had hoped and trusted, but now the path seemed dark.

Very soon he heard Clare come in, and go bounding to the kitchen to her mother. Mother was her confidante and intercessor.

"Well, mother, what did father say? They had a session meeting today, didn't they? Did he say I could go?"

Bright, ambitious, cheery Clare, with her whole heart set on having an education! Mrs. Reynolds wondered how she could tell her of another disappointment.

"No, Clare, dear; father has done the best he could, but he doesn't see how he can send you this year. You know how it hurts him to disappoint us?"

Mrs. Reynolds was busy peeling potatoes, and did not look up.

"Well, never mind, mother," Clare answered, cheerily; "I can stay at home and help father this year. You know he needs help. Mr. Gray wants me to help with the primary pupils, anyhow."

She turned to wipe away a tear that her mother might not know what a disappointment it was to her.

One night the pastor and his wife sat reading. Clare was helping Edith and Raymond with their lessons. John had not come home from the store, and little Ned sat on the floor, amusing himself by tying paper boots on the cat to see her shake her feet.

Mrs. Reynolds looked up from the paper she was reading: "I heard some one come in the gate."

Reynolds went to the door, and came a crowd of people, each bearing a mysterious bundle of some kind.

Mrs. Reynolds felt embarrassed, but she was equal to the occasion, as she usually was, and welcomed her guests. "Raymond, you and Edith bring in chairs, while Clare and I clear the table."

Little Ned was all excitement. He tottered close to his mother's heels. As soon as he got a chance he pulled her dress and whispered: "Mother, are the people going to move in here, 'cause the rent ain't paid?" And the little fellow was very much distressed.

Mrs. Reynolds laughed and explained to him that it was only a donation party, and they were bringing them lots of nice things. Little Ned's eyes grew bigger and bigger as load after load of good things were deposited on the table. Every one seemed to be in a happy frame of mind.

Mr. Bentley was spokesman for the evening. In a few words he expressed the gratitude of the church for their pastor's faithful service. "We feel ashamed of ourselves for getting so far behind. We've collected all the back salary, and some over, and received pledges enough to raise your salary a hundred dollars next year."

There was no need for entertainment. Happy hearts set their tongues to wagging, and every one had a good time.

The church seemed to take on new life in all departments. The pastor preached with a new enthusiasm. And Clare, radiant and happy, but not without a suspicion of sadness as she kissed the dear homefolks goodbye, boarded the southbound train to enter upon her new boarding school life in a little Tennessee town.—*Cumberland Presbyterian.*

HOW ABOUT YOUR CHILDREN?

HILDA RICHMOND.

A number of Christian parents in a certain town were horrified, some months ago, to discover the existence of a secret agreement—it could hardly be called a club—by which twenty boys each bought a dime or nickel novel every two weeks and then they were passed around among the members. It is no certain that any boy read the whole twenty in two weeks, but they did spend most of their leisure time absorbing the poison found in the pages of the trashy books. The wrath of the parents was vented on the dealer who, as they thought, sold the stuff, but he soon convinced them that the boys were not patrons of his. They had been sending to the city for the "yellow literature," for fear of being discovered, and the people, who never dreamed their children did sneaking things, suddenly had their faith shaken.

Are your children safe? Do they enjoy reading pure, wholesome literature? Are they always hunting a secluded spot to read, or can they sit in the family sitting-room and enjoy the best papers and magazines? Many a boy hides his cheap novel in his text-book at school, and neglects his work, secure in the thought that no boy will tell on him; and more than one girl has stored away in her desk little pamphlets and books not fit for girlish eyes. Eternal vigilance is necessary if you hope to keep your sons and daughters undefiled, and it must be the vigilance that is not apparent. Preaching against impure books only advertises them, and the curious young minds will never be satisfied without investigating the forbidden fruit.

The best way to keep out the cheap novel is to teach the children in early youth to love only good reading. The

boys and girls who love "Tom Brown at Rugby," "Little Women," "Robinson Crusoe," and books of that type, will hardly become infatuated with blood and thunder tales later in life. I know one boy who has never read a yellow-backed book, though they have been offered to him again and again, simply because they are disgusting to him. Imagine a refined Christian woman or man sitting down to while away the hours with a story in which tragedy, bad English, the baldest kind of plot, and an utter lack of common sense, are hopelessly mixed and served to the open mouthed reader! With just such feelings can young people be taught to look upon the stuff if the right methods are pursued.

Encourage the little folks to read Bible stories, history tales, and the literature provided by the best book-dealers as soon as they master simple lessons at school. If you love your church paper, your children will not have to be forced to look at its pages, and if you enjoy the Sunday-school papers, be sure they will too. It is worth everything to a little child to "talk over" the things it reads and hears with father and mother, and how can that be done unless the parents are interested in the stories, too? It is the old story, "Train up a child in the way he should go," over again. It is so easy to say, "You ought to read your Bible and Sunday-school papers," and let it go at that, where if father and mother says, casually, "Did any of you notice that picture in the paper this morning, and the sketch that goes with it?" attention is attracted at once.

If you are not posted in what are the best books for children, get some information at once. In these days all children read, and it is well to keep a little in advance of them. Consult your church publishing house, or a reliable book-dealer, or the school teacher, or the minister, or some one versed in such things, before it is too late. Subscribe to some good juvenile papers whose clean pages can be profitably read by every member of the family, and it will prove a paying investment. Don't put off buying a few really good books till you get rich, for the children will be grown by that time, maybe; and, above all things, know what your boys and girls are doing. Give them ample time for play and healthful exercise, but no time to steal away in barns and out-of-the-way places to read low, vulgar stories. Ruskin speaks of the mind as a treasure house of thought, but sometimes our treasures are only

"False, fairy gold,  
That leaves in the hand  
Only moss, leaves and mold."

Let us help the boys and girls to choose whatsoever things are pure and lovely and of good report, knowing that then the corrupting trash, falsely called literature, will find no lodgment in their minds and heart. It will take time and patience and prayer, but the reward is sure and great.—*The Telescope.*

A QUARREL ON PAPER.

They were sitting at the tea table, and were on the very verge of that dreadful first quarrel, which the young wife had prayed might never come. The husband had uttered a criticism that she thought unkind and undeserved.

"I can find fault with many things, too," she flashed out.

"Oh, indeed," he said coolly; "and what are they, pray?"

She paused a moment. If she gave utterance to the sharp words trembling on her lips, she knew that the opening

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wedge of discord would have entered. On the other hand, it was a severe trial to curb her impetuous spirit and receive the husband's rebuke meekly. But her good angel triumphed. After a short silence she said, frankly,

"I'm not so sure that I ought to say what I thought. I believe I'll keep it till tomorrow, and see how it looks by the light of day. Then, if I think it worth while, I'll write it and leave the note on your plate."

He smiled at her whimsical answer, and the cloud disappeared. After tea she said, "I have a proposition to make."

"What is it?" he asked gaily.

"We nearly had a quarrel, and, of course, it must not happen again. Hereafter, if either has any criticism to make on the other, let us wait a day and then, if we still wish to make it, write it out instead of saying it. I believe petty anger would evaporate in

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