

The Mother's Solace.

A sweet baby head had forgotten life's way,
Asleep on her pillow of roses;
Wee hands shutting close, as if tired of day,
Like buds which the spring-time discloses.
But the beautiful form of my baby was still,
And over the lips of my blossom
The dimples lay soft as the frost o'er the hill,
When a spirit sung low to my spirit at will:
"Christ carries your lamb in his bosom."

There is never a lamb from life's sorrowful fold
But wanders in fields that are vernal;
And never a babe shut away in the cold,
But blooms in the spring-time eternal.

When storms sweep the hills and the night
gathers cold,
I'll think of my paradise blossom,
And breathe the same song 'or the weary
that weep;

The weakest are safest; far over the steep
Christ carries my lamb in his bosom.
—Selected.

Mrs. "But."

Mrs. But is our next door neighbor. Her real name is Green; but Jonas, whenever he sees her marching up the walk, remarks, "My dear, here comes Mrs. But."

He is not given to calling people names—he says it merely to put me on my guard; for he knows our neighbor's failing. She is a bright, breezy little woman; and as long as the conversation is confined to the weather and household affairs I quite enjoy chatting with her, but the moment that a human being, living or dead, chances to be mentioned, I begin to quake.

The first time she called—it was soon after we moved into the neighborhood—I happened to say that Mrs. Goodwin, from the opposite side of the street, had been in to see me, and that she impressed me as a very lovely character.

"Oh, she is, indeed," said Mrs. But, heartily; "she is such a devoted wife, and so good to the poor. But, she went on, lowering her voice, "there used to be a great deal of talk about her when she was a girl; and though I don't suppose half the things were true, people don't seem to forget it."

What necessity there was for this drop of poison to be instilled into my mind I could not see. Mrs. Goodwin's youth was in the far past, and in the gossip concerning her in that remote period I had no interest whatever. I was quite willing to take her as she was in her sweet, ripe womanhood.

One day when Mrs. But dropped in she found my little friend, Nellie Gray, at the piano. Nellie is a shy, brown-eyed girl of fifteen, gifted with a wonderful ear for melody; and as the Grays had no piano, I had offered her the use of mine. "I can't help loving the child, she is such a warm-hearted little creature, and so eager for music," I said, as the door closed behind her.

My visitor gave a scarcely perceptible shrug. "Yes, Nellie seems to be a very nice girl," she admitted; "but I suppose you know she is a poor-house waif."

No, I said, I knew nothing of the kind. Mrs. Gray had introduced Nellie to me as her eldest daughter, and the information volunteered by Mrs. But was utterly uncalculated.

One evening, on our way home from prayer-meeting, Jonas remarked that he always enjoyed listening to young Spaulding, he was so devout and earnest.

"Yes, he is a very interesting speaker," said our neighbor, who had joined us as we came out of the lecture-room, "and he seems to be very sincere, but I can't help feeling a little suspicious. I knew him when he was a boy."

Jonas made haste to change the subject; a word of encouragement would have resulted in our hearing the whole history of the young man's boyhood.

"I've no patience," he exclaimed, the moment we were by ourselves, "with people who are always bringing up the past. Just imagine what heaven would be if the inhabitants were disposed to indulge in that sort of retrospection! The angel Gabriel himself could hardly be safe from their disparaging 'buts,' and the whitest robe in all the white-robed throng, would be in danger of being smutted."

"And yet," I said, "Mrs. But evidently considers herself a Christian."

"Oh, I don't dispute her title," said Jonas, "but I can't help thinking that she might be able to read it clearer if she would rub up her glasses with the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians."—*Christian Intelligencer*.

Only a Baby Died.

Only a baby, did you say? Then why this saddened, sorrowful family, this darkened, somber-looking house, the crape on the door-knob, and the subdued, thoughtful faces of friends who have come to offer what meager consolation lies in their power? The father, whose proud spirit has been humbled by this blow; the mother, whose heart is well-nigh breaking; the brothers and sisters, who have not yet learned submission to His chastening hand,—all feel that the

house has been robbed of its chief treasure. Not yet can they say, "Thy will, O Lord, not mine, be done."

Only a baby died. Only an empty cradle, only a little shoe not needed now, only a snowy white sack to be carefully folded and placed where no prying eyes may gaze upon it. Only a jingle whose rattling sound can never again call forth baby's laughter. Only a wild longing to hear his voice once more. Only a passionate desire to rock him to sleep with soft lullabies. Only a heart desolate and empty now.

Baby had been with them just long enough to entwine himself around their hearts when the Master called him away. He had been less than a short while, only ten months. Like a messenger of peace he had come to bring comfort to their troubled hearts and console them for the loss of little Willie. The wound had just begun to heal when again it was opened and bled anew. Just about five months before Nellie, aged ten years, had rushed breathlessly into mamma's room with the news that baby could sit alone. She had placed him on the bed and he never moved for a whole minute. Mamma, sisters, and brothers must go see him. When all were in the room what a happy time they had, all laughing and talking at the same time. Each one wanted to make baby sit alone for him, and none would give up to the other.

Baby behaved like a little man and did not cry at all, but laughed and cooed till he was nearly smothered with kisses. When papa came there was the joy of showing him. Although he protested against it, declaring he was hungry and would see baby after dinner, nothing would do but that he must go immediately. Once there papa, like all the rest of the family, was conquered. He even said that the sight of baby gave him a keener relish for his dinner. From that day baby became an exacting tyrant, and if everything did not please his majesty he cried out so loudly that the entire family ran to his aid. He had stentorian lungs, and constant practice served to increase rather than diminish their power.

The crowning feat of baby's life was his standing alone and taking two steps by himself. Then all the family knew there never was such a baby before. Only ten months old and trying to walk. When this fact became known, was it any wonder that mamma's air castles concerning baby's future assumed enlarged proportions? She saw her son no longer a baby but a handsome man, loved and honored by all, wielding a great influence. If she made him the first man in the land, the president whose wise laws lightened the burdens of the poor, who shall blame her? It was only natural. That was only four days ago. Baby had been sick such a short time. No one had ever thought of his dying, but each day said, "He will be better tomorrow." So when they were called so give him his last kiss the shock nearly crushed them. Just as the sun was sending his first rays "to kiss the beautiful vales" baby's spirit winged its flight. The King had sent for his treasure, and pure as when he lent it, it was returned to him.

Only a baby died. Only the light had gone from the home, and for many weary days the family groped in darkness, heeding not the gentle voice which said:

For so 'tis my will,
I'd have thee to suffer and be still;
And in all thy sorrows to know in thy God
I love thee, I love thee; pass under the rod.
—Selected.

Manners in Visiting.

1. Do not stay too long. The old adage that "short visits make long friends" is generally a true one. Too often, long visits are made as a matter of convenience. I have seen city visitors in the country, saving hotel bills, and greatly enjoying themselves, while the hostess was worn out by cooking dinners, and ironing dainty white skirts for thoughtless company. It is unfortunate for some people that they live at the seashore, for all their cousins will desire to visit them.

Bishop Jeremy Taylor said, "Men will find it impossible to do anything greatly good, unless they cut off all superfluous company and visits." While it is delightful to have friends and to see them, much time is wasted, especially among women, by frequent and long visits. One occasion only hears a remark like this, "I hadn't anything to do, so I thought I would come to see you."

2. Do not be careless. I have seen the marks of matches on the walls in best chambers, gas turned on, and left burning for a whole evening when the visitor was out, or window blinds left wide open so that the sun might fade a new carpet. I have seen gentlemen (!) lean their heads against delicate walls and leave the walls soiled and blackened. I have seen persons smell of a bouquet, putting their noses against the white petals, or turn the leaves of nice

books wetting their fingers, and leaving a mark on each page. It is said that the aristocracy of a European court were much horrified by this latter habit in an American ambassador, and well they might be. I know a prominent Christian worker who when a guest always turns back the bed-clothes and leaves his room in order, that the servants may feel that he is a Christian. A good example for others!

3. Do not delay in leaving a house after a call is made. Many keep the hostess standing nearly a half hour while saying their last words. Let last words be said before you arise. To avoid awkwardness, adopt Sydney Smith's rule, "Think of others, and not of yourself." Never lie by saying that you are "not at home," say that you are busy and must be excused. Select one day in the week to receive calls, if possible. Do not keep people waiting to see you, if it can be avoided. Be sympathetic.—*Golden Rule*.

Never Shirk A Responsibility.

There is often a disposition on the part of young people to shirk the responsibility of leading in Christian work, and sometimes, if not always, they are the losers on account of failing to go forward in the plain path of duty.

There is a natural diffidence among young Christians which bids them follow where those who are older lead. I would not wish them to "run before they are sent," but simply go steadily forward when God calls. Not infrequently those who are qualified by education and natural gifts to occupy positions of responsibility and usefulness are disposed to say: "I pray thee have me excused."

A case of this kind came under my personal observation several years ago. A young man, who received a liberal education and was a consistent member of the church in his native town, and also qualified to lead in the service of song, was unanimously elected superintendent of the Sabbath-school, because the people thought he was fitted for the position and could do better work than any of those who were older. He was naturally very diffident, and said, "I cannot take the responsibility," and when the church officers kindly pressed the duty upon him, he stubbornly refused to act.

In after years he acknowledged his mistake and felt that he did wrong in refusing to do what he could then see was his plain duty. That door of Christian work was never opened to him again, although he would gladly have taken the labor and responsibility if he had been given the opportunity. To him it was one of the mistakes of his life which he could not correct.

In such cases Christians should not consult their own timidity, or their own personal wishes, but simply ask whether God has opened the door and bids them walk in that path. If he leads, they should go forward without hesitation, for he has said: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."—*Journal and Messenger*.

"Don't You Love Him For That?"—One Sabbath evening a father called his children around him, and asked them what they had learned at the school that day. He was not a Christian man himself, but he had a pious wife, and the children always went regularly to the Sunday-school.

In their own simple way the little ones began to tell what the teacher had been saying of the beautiful home in heaven that Jesus had left because of His love for sinners. Nellie, the youngest, had crept upon her father's knee, and looking full in his face, she said, "Jesus must have loved us very much to do that, don't you love Him for it, father?" Then they went on to describe the Saviour, how He was betrayed by Judas, and led before the high priest and Pilate; how the Jews called out "Crucify Him," and how the wicked soldiers crowned Him with thorns and mocked and scourged and buffeted Him, and again the little one looked up, and said, with tears in her eyes, "Don't you love Him for that father?" At last the children came to tell of the dreadful death of Jesus on the cross, and once more little Nellie looked up in her father's face, and said the third time, "Now, don't you love Him, father?"

The father could not bear any more; he put his little girl down, and went away to hide his tears, for the words had gone home to his heart. Soon after he became a true Christian, and he said that Nellie's questions had had more effect upon him than the most powerful preaching he had ever heard in his life.

RINGS AND TRINKETS.—Dr. Dio Lewis in *Our Girls* says, "What a barbarism to bore a hole through flesh and stick a trinket in it. Men have fallen into this vulgar barbarism. American savages offer many instances of men with gold and silver trinkets in their ears. My dear girls, leave this trinket show

to the Indians, and use no other jewelry than a neat, small pin to hold the collar, and a delicate, small chain to guard the watch. The watch should be in a pocket, and not slipped under the belt. The belt must be mischievously tight to hold the watch. To wear a watch pushed half way under the belt is, at best, to make a vain announcement of the fact that you have one." If the ladies of the churches would take the good doctor's sensible advice and convert all their earrings, finger-rings, and bracelets into money, and turn it over to the missionary societies, the means to send the gospel to the heathen would be far more abundant than they are.

EFFECTS OF EXAMPLE.—A child coming from a filthy home was taught at school to wash its face. It went home so much improved in appearance that its mother washed her face. And when the father of the household came home and saw the improvement in domestic appearance, he washed his face. The neighbors, happening in, saw the change and tried the same experiment, until all that street was purified, and the next street copied its example, and the whole city felt the result of one schoolboy washing his face. That is a fable, by which we set forth that the best way to get the world washed of its sins and pollution is to have our own heart and life cleansed and purified. A man with grace in his heart, and Christian cheerfulness in his face, and holy consistency in his behavior is a perpetual sermon, and the sermon differs from others in that it has but one head, and the longer it continues the better.—*Talmage*.

"MAMMA, ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN?"—An influential lady, the wife of a promising lawyer, who had been under deep conviction for several days, gave the following account at our prayer meeting of her conversion:

"Last evening, my little girl came to me and said, Mamma, are you a Christian?"

"No, Fanny, I am not." "She turned and went away, and as she walked off, I heard her say, 'Well, if mamma isn't a Christian, I don't want to be one. And I tell you, my dear friends, it went right to my heart, and then and there I gave myself up to Christ.'"

"In the language of that little child, Mamma, are you a Christian?"

FAULT FINDING.—I recall a school-mate who began by finding fault with his fellow students. He was ever on the lookout for occasions for exercising his faculty of satirical criticism. He who looks for such occasions finds them, and my long-ago friend developed a faculty for discovering and denouncing faults that was preternatural. It became not only a habit, but a passion, with him. When he was forty, the faculty of fair judgment was dead in him; he had become incapable of justice.—*Bishop Haygood*.

WOMANLINESS FIRST.—Miss Frances E. Willard says, concerning the higher education of woman: "If, to take up the classics, she must lay down the dust-brush and broom; if, while her mind brightens, her manners rust; if a taste for Homer is incompatible with a taste for home; if, in fine, she must put off the crown of womanliness ere she can breathe her brow with laurels of scholarship—then, for the sake of dear humanity, let her fling away the laurels that she may keep the crown. She must gain without losing, or all is lost. Be this her motto: Womanliness first—afterward what you will."

Give not thy tongue too great liberty lest it take thee prisoner. A word unspoken is like the sword in the scabbard, thine. If vented, thy sword is in another's hand. If thou desire to be held wise, be so wise as to hold thy tongue.—*Quarles*.

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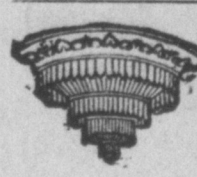
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