

## Family Circle.

## The Old School Books.

What pleasant memories cluster round  
Those volumes old and worn,  
With covers smirched and bindings  
crased  
And pages thumbed and torn!  
These are the books we used to con,  
I and my brother Will,  
When we were boys together  
In the school-house on the hill.  
Well I recall the nights at home,  
When side by side we sat  
Beside the fire and o'er those books  
Indulged in whispered chat.  
And how, when father chided us  
For idling time away,  
Our eyes bent to the task as though  
They'd never been astray.  
The old-time proverb scribbled here,  
The caution to beware,  
"Steal not this book, my honest friend."  
Scrawled roughly here and there;  
The blurs, the blots, the luncheon spots,  
The numberless dog's ears,  
The faded names, the pictures,  
And, alas! the stains of tears,  
All take me back in mind to days  
When cloudless was the sky,  
When grief was so short lived, I smiled  
Before my tears were dry;  
When next to father's angry frown  
I feared the awful nod  
That doomed me, trembling, to advance,  
And bow beneath the rod.  
How bright those days! Our little cares  
Our momentary fears,  
And e'en our pains, they vanished  
With a burst of sobs and tears!  
And every joy seemed great enough  
To balance all our woe—  
What pity that when griefs are real  
They can't be balanced so!  
The school-house stands in ruins now,  
The boys have scattered wide;  
A few are old and gray like me,  
But nearly all have died;  
And brother Will is one of these;  
His curly head was laid  
Down by the brook, at father's side,  
Beneath the willow's shade.  
These books, so quaint and queer to you,  
To me are living things;  
Each has its story of the past,  
And each a message brings.  
Whene'er I sit at eventide  
And turn their pages o'er,  
They seemed to speak in toles that  
thrilled  
My heart in days of yore.

—Sel.

## An Echo of Bygone Years.

Asong comes back from the bygone years  
Whose melody never grows old,  
And I listen again, through my smiles  
and tears,  
Though the singer lay dead and cold.  
'Tis a song so sweet, by a voice so rare,  
Far purer than any other,  
And I hear it again, though troubled by  
care,  
The lullaby sung me by mother.  
There are times, it seems, when all alone,  
The singer is by my side,  
And I hear her voice in a monotone,  
Like the rise and fall of the tide,  
While the days go by till the end of  
time,  
And the struggle of life is ended,  
May the singer never forget her rhyme  
Till her bliss and mine are blended.

—Sel.

Why Don't the Children Join  
The Church?

BY EGBERT L. BANGS.

One of them did join the church  
not long ago, and a friend, meeting  
her mother soon after, said to her:

"I was surprised to hear that M.  
had joined the church."

This woman believed in God's  
covenant promises. She believed  
that he would hear and answer the  
prayers of pious parents for the  
conversion of their children, and  
when she saw that God had kept  
his word she was astonished.  
Doubtless others were astonished,  
too. But to the mother the fact  
that her child had joined the church  
seemed a strange matter for sur-  
prise. The only wonder she felt  
was that her child had not joined  
the church sooner.

And that passing remark of her  
friend upon what seemed to the  
mother one of the most natural  
events in the world, raised this  
question: Ought we to be taken by  
surprise when a child joins the  
church, or ought we not rather to  
wonder that so few children join it?

As we talked on there came up an-  
other question: Why don't the  
children join the church? Some of  
them do, but why don't more?  
The Christian home and the Sun-  
day-school ought to be nurseries,  
from which the church should con-  
stantly receive additions. One  
reason why the children do not join  
in greater numbers, is that we do  
not really expect it of them, and  
few children do better things than  
good parents expect them to do.  
Not really expecting it of them, we  
do not work in the direction that  
will secure such a result.

Children, for some reason, have  
the idea that the church is no place  
for the young. When Sunday  
comes they are reluctant to go to  
church. They would rather stay at  
home and read stories. So, quite  
often the matter is compromised,  
and they are excused from the  
morning service if they will only  
attend the Sunday-school.

Rarely is the face of a child to be  
seen in the Thursday evening  
prayer-meeting. The children  
ought to be there. Do they see re-  
flected in the lives of Christians  
that cheerfulness that shall make  
them think the church an attractive  
place? How few churches there are  
without some root of bitterness!  
Children hear the difficulties of the  
church talked over the family, and  
they wonder how it can be that

people who seem to dislike each  
other so heartily can find any satis-  
faction in working together. They  
are sometimes taught that purely  
innocent pleasures are incompatible  
with church membership, and are  
thus repelled from the church.  
There is need of a great awakening  
on this subject, especially in those  
two places where children receive  
their best influences, namely, in the  
home and the Sunday-school. We  
teach the truths of the Bible there,  
and we expect these at some time  
to influence young lives. But we  
are ever putting the time farther  
along. Now, if the parents, the  
Sunday-school teacher, and the  
minister will only appreciate the  
importance of this question, and  
not only ask each other, "Why  
don't the children join the church?"  
but ask the children themselves—  
in fact, be always asking some of  
them—if they are not ready and  
willing to join the church, more of  
them will do it. And when such  
come in, they can often do more to  
influence their companions than  
anybody else can.—*Church and  
Home.*

## Gleam Across the Wave.

Rev. Spencer Compton, the earn-  
est evangelical minister at Boulogne,  
France relates the following inci-  
dent:

"During a voyage to India, I sat  
one dark evening in my cabin, feel-  
ing thoroughly unwell, as the sea  
was rising fast, and I was but a  
poor sailor. Suddenly the cry of  
'Man overboard!' made me spring  
to my feet. I heard a trampling  
overhead, but resolved not to go on  
deck, lest I should interfere with  
the crew in their efforts to save the  
poor man. 'What can I do?' I  
asked myself, and instantly unhook-  
ing my lamp, I held it near the top  
of my cabin and close to my bull's  
eye window, that its light might  
shine on the sea, and as near the  
ship as possible. In half a minute's  
time I heard the joyful cry, 'It's all  
right, he's safe,' upon which I put  
my lamp in its place.

"The next day, however I was  
told that my little lamp was the  
sole means of saving the man's life;  
it was only by the timely light that  
shone upon him that the knotted  
rope could be thrown so as to reach  
him."

Christian worker, never despond,  
or think there is nothing for you  
to do even in the dark and weary  
days. Looking unto Jesus, lift up  
your light; let it so shine that men

may see; and in the bright resur-  
rection morning, what joy to hear  
the "Well Done" and to know that  
you have unawares saved some soul  
from death.—*Es.*

The Survivors of the "Jean-  
ette."

Nearly three years absence, twen-  
ty-one months' imprisonment in the  
frozen seas, are calculated to make  
the blessings of home very real to  
Lieutenant Danenhower. The  
world is already familiar with his  
wonderful experiences in the long  
Arctic voyage so tragically closed,  
and yet the readers of the newspa-  
pers eagerly scanned the details of  
his reception in the port of New  
York. He arrived with Mr. New-  
comb, the naturalist, Long Sing, the  
tough chinamen, and poor Jack  
Cole, the insane boatswain, on the  
White Star steamer, the *Celtic*.

Young Danenhower—for the hero  
is only thirty-one—is described as a  
tall, well-built man, with dark hair  
and eyes, a close brown beard and a  
face completely browned by long  
exposure. He speaks in glowing  
terms of the regiment under which  
the company of the unfortunate  
*Jeanette* were kept, and says that  
their health generally was excel-  
lent. This was due to a good pro-  
vision of canned vegetables, to the  
close regulation of the exercise and  
clothing of the men and to the  
strict temperance enforced as to all  
alcoholic stimulents. The men  
were obliged to take active exercise  
two hours every day. Games of  
foot-ball on the ice, races on foot or  
skates and in sledges, hunting ex-  
cursions, everything, were resorted  
to to keep up their spirits, and vary  
the terrible monotony of the life  
they were condemned to.

On the whole, the company  
showed marvelous mental elasticity  
as well as physical endurance.  
Shut in the locked sea of broken  
ice they literally laughed at death.  
Poor DeLong was always sanguine,  
always cheerful, never ceasing his  
efforts to keep the men in his charge  
up to the trial they were passing  
through, and never relaxing the  
vigilance with which he watched  
over every detail of their conduct.

It is one of the most curious inci-  
dents in this whole strange story  
that the men who have returned to  
us from tortures such as Dante  
hardly dreamed of for his frozen In-  
ferno, seem to regard their experi-  
ence with great equanimity. What  
we read of in a connected tale, they  
have borne through a long series of