Christian Family.

MISS MARY STUMP, EDITOR.

Better in the Morning.

"You can't help the baby, parson,
But still I want ye to go
Down an' look in upon her,
An' read an' pray, you know.
Only last week she was skippin' round
A pullin' my whiskers and hair,
A climbin' up to the table
Into her little high chair.

"The first night that she took it,
When her little cheeks grew red,
When she kissed good night to papa,
And went away to bed—
Sez she, 'Tis headache, papa,
Be better in mornin'—bye;
An' somethin' in how she said it
Just made me want to cry.

"But the mornin' brought the fever,
And her little hands were hot,
An' the pretty red uv her little cheeks
—Grew into a crimson spot.
But she laid there jest ez patient
Ez ever a woman could,
Takin' whatever we give her
Better'n a grown woman would.

"The days are terrible long an' slow,
An' she's growin' wus in each;
An' now she's jest a slippin'
Clear away out uv our reach:
Every night when I kiss her,
Tryin' hard not to cry,
She says in a way that kills me—
'Be better in mornin'—bye!'

"She can't get thro' the night, parson,
So I want ye to come an' pray,
And talk with mother a little—
You'll know jest what to say.
Not that the baby needs it,
Nor that we make any complaint
That God seems to think he's needin'
The smile uv the little saint."

I walked along with the corporal,
To the door of his humble home,
To which the silent messenger
Before me had already come;
And if he had been a titled prince,
I would not have been honored more,
Than I was with his heartfelt welcome
To his lowly cottage door.

Night falls again in the cottage;
They move in silence and dread
Around the room where the baby
Lies panting upon her bed
"Does baby know papa, darling?"
And she moves her little face,
With answer that shows she knows him;
But scarcely a visible trace.

Of her wodderful infantile beauty
Remains as it was before
The unseen, silent messenger
Had waited at the door.
"Papa—kiss—baby;—I's—so—tired."
The man bows low his face,
And two swollen hands are lifted
In baby's last embrace.

And into her father's grizzled beard
The little red fingers cling,
While her husky whispered tenderness
Tears from a rock would wring.
"Baby——is——so——sick——papa—
But—don't—want—you—to—cry?"
The little hands fall on the coverlet—
"Be—better—in—mornin'—bye!"

And night around baby is falling,
Settling down dark and dense;
Does God need their darling in heaven
That he must carry her hence?
I prayed, with tears in my voice,
As the corporal solemnly knelt,
With such grief as never before
His great warm heart had felt.

Oh! frivolous men and women!
Do you know that around you, and nigh—
Alike from the humble and haughty
Goeth up evermore the cry:
"My child, my precious, my darling,
How can I let you die?"
Oh! hear ye the white lips whisper—
"Be—better—in—mornin'—bye!"

—LEANDER S. COAN.

Gussie's Trials.

Wiping the dishes is one of them, and there is always a look of dismay chasing the sunshine out of the blue eyes and drawing down the rosebud mouth when aunty gives her the towel to dry the great pile of wet plates and cups just out of the dishwater.

But on this particular morning everything had gone wrong, for Gussie did not get up when called but just opened her sleepy eyes to shut them again for a second nap, so when she at last made her appearance in the kitchen, all had eaten breakfast, and she was obliged to content herself with cold egg and scraps, just for the world, like old Punch and Carlo did.

No wonder she was all out of sorts and wished people could eat without dishes, as they did in the days aunty told her about sometimes; but there they were waiting to be put in their places on the cupboard, and the clock almost ready to strike eight, but still Gussie frowned, while aunty said never a word, till at last there came an, O my! which sounded like tears were not far off, and which caused aunty to look quickly at the gloomy little face on the other side of the table. "I never can do it all, I know I can't," she jirked out, "and I wouldn't mind only if will be to do again at dinner, and after supper too, and I never will get through, and the knives and forks are to scour this morning, and they never do stay scoured, O dear!

Then, there child, begin once, for work well begun is already half done, the knives won't be hard to brighten this time if a quick bright girl does it, and you'll not be too late for school yet if you hurry, and aunty wiped some of the dishes herself, while Gussie catching the infection of aunty's cheerfulness worked away willingly enough, till she came to the knives, when she couldn't find the pan with the polish, nor she couldn't find a hammer to pound up the big piece of brick, nor she couldn't find a rag, but as everything at last finds an end, so Gussie's knives with a little of aunty's help lay there before her, thanking her with their bright blades.

She stopped to count them once more, to be sure they were all there, and at last put them side by side in the knife box, naming them, and laughing to herself as she did so, first old white handle, then broken end, then old nick in the side, that looked like John had taken a bite out of it, and thus through the whole eight of them.

By the time she was ready for aunty to braid her hair her troubles had fled and she was in a merry humor.

Don't you see how easy it was after all, said aunty, as she combed out the tangled flaxen tresses, but the hair pulled and the old cloud crept over the face again.

"I don't want to go to school every day, why wont one day do?"

Many a girl bigger than you asks the same question, but by and by you will better understand the meaning of the verses you spoke last Friday. Can't you say them for me again, said aunty?

O, yes.

Her trials gone again like bubbles,

"Over and over again
Whichever way I turn,
I always find in the Book of life
Some lesson which I must learn,
I must take my turn at the wheel,
I must grind out the golden grain,
I must work at my task with resolute will
Over and over again."

ANON.

The Old Man.

Bow low the head, boy; do reverence to the old man. Once like you, the vicissitudes of life have silvered the hair, and changed the round, merry face to the worn visage before you. Once that heart beat with aspirations coëqual to any that you have felt—aspirations crushed by disappointment, as yours are, perhaps, destined to be. Once that form stalked proudly through the gay scenes of pleasure, the beau ideal of grace; now the hand of Time, that withers the flower of yesterday, has warped that figure and destroyed the noble carriage. Once, at your age, he possessed the thousand thoughts that pass through your brain—now wishing to accomplish deeds worthy of a nook in fame, anon imagining life a dream that the sooner he awoke from the better. But he has lived the dream very near through. The time to awake is very near at hand; yet his eye ever kindles at old deeds of daring, and the hand takes a firmer grasp at the staff. Bow low the head, boy, as you would in your old age be reverenced.—*Christian.*

John Ploughman on Perfection.

Mr. Spurgeon, writing under his signature of John Ploughman, expresses the following terse and homely views on the subject of human perfection:

"He who boasts of being perfect is perfect in folly. I have been a good deal up and down in the world, and I neither did see a perfect horse or a perfect man, and I never shall until two Sundays come together. You cannot get white flour out of a coal sack, nor perfection out of human nature; he who looks for it had better look for sugar in the sea. The old saying is, 'Lifeless, faultless.' Of dead men we should say nothing but good, but as for the living, they are all tarred, more or less, with the black brush, and half an eye can see it. Every head has a soft place in it, and every heart has its black drop. Every rose has its prickles, and every day its night. Even the sun shows spots, and the skies are darkened with clouds. Nobody is so wise but he has folly enough to stock a stall at Vanity Fair. Where I could not see the fool's-cap I have, nevertheless, heard the bells jingle. As there is no sunshine without some shadow, so is all human good mixed up with more or less evil; even poor law guardians have their little failings, and parish beadles are not wholly of heavenly nature. The best wine has its lees. All men's faults are not written on their foreheads, and it's quite as well they are not, or hats would need wide brims; yet as sure as eggs are eggs, faults of some sort nestle in every man's bosom. There is no telling when a man's sins may show themselves, for hares pop out of a ditch just when you are not looking for them. A horse that is weak in the legs may not stumble for a mile or two, but it's in him, and the rider had better hold him up well. The tabby cat is not lapping milk just now, but leave the dairy door open, and we will see if she is not as bad a thief as the kitten. There's fire in the flint, cool as it looks; wait till the steel gets a knock at, and you will see. Everybody can read that riddle, but it is not everybody that will remember to keep his gunpowder out out of the way of the candle."—*N. Y. Observer.*

Serves him Right.

"Single or double, life's full of trouble," hath an ancient proverb well said. No matter what a man's talent, or education, or experience may be, it is impossible for him to struggle successfully with a hole in a stocking. There are difficulties connected with it which feminine genius alone can combat.

It has peculiarities unshared by any rent or aperture that ever appears in any other description of garment. If any other part of the attire meets with misfortune, and requires to be reconstructed by the aid of needle and thread, the materials are all there. If the disaster takes the shape of a plain slit, if its edges are as jagged as a streak of lightening, or if it appears in the form of an old-fashioned winklehawk, it is nevertheless only an affair of a simple seam, and no very great talent for sewing is required. But a hole in a stocking is an entirely different matter. Here there are no two areas of material with sharply marked shore lines, distinct capes and bays and peninsulas nicely fitting into each other, to guide the mender and show him where and how to put them together.

In the stocking a single thread breaks. Nothing is lost, nothing is gone, and yet instantly there is vacancy, vacuum. Not a shred of cotton, not a filament of wool, has disappeared, yet there is the hole, round as a circle, empty as space, enigmatical, bewildering, disheartening.

The question is now, how it can be filled up. It is one with which no masculine intellect should attempt to grapple. The mind of man may be equal to the invention of the electric telegraph, he may build great cities, and measure the distance to the sun, but the intricacies of darning a hole in a stocking are beyond the uttermost limits of his genius.

He is more helpless than a spider. The latter could go to work and spin a web over the orifice, and thus repair it neatly if not substantially. But only the deft fingers of a woman can really do the work as it ought to be done. She alone knows how to gather up those recalcitrant stitches, how to wiggle and twist and coax a needle in and out until every one is caught, and then how to weave the thread backward and forward, in, across, and around, until the offending hole has disappeared, and the stocking is once more in condition to be worn. It may have been that women were expressly created for the purpose of contending with this stocking difficulty. But the discussion of this question would carry us away from the purpose of our article.

She is, however, the only means so far discovered of getting the thing done properly; and will also remain so, notwithstanding the fact some would-be benefactor of the human race has recently invented a darning machine. But its operation is so tedious and the work so clumsy that women can well afford to sneer at so contemptible a rival.

Man, being a stocking-wearing animal, can not afford to be a misogamist. The unanimous sentiment must be, "Serves him right."—*Harper's Weekly.*

Mother Love.

Ah, reader, there is a love that hath no tinge of selfishness. A love that never dieth; that elingeth when hope is dead and joy hath fled; a love that never faileth, but is always burning brightest when you need it most. But it is not conjugal love; it is not paternal affection; it is mother love, and it sustaineth you when all else fails. Cherish it tenderly, nourish it constantly, consider it well.

Other loves will fail you, but this will not. Other loves have selfish motives, this has none. Let your right hand forget its cunning and your tongue cleave to the roof of your mouth ere you trample upon or in any way wound this holy passion that hath naught of self in it.—MRS. DUNIWAY, in "Ddna and John."

Aunt Polloy's Bread.

I always make my bread with rich, sweet milk, for you can't make good things out of poor ones; don't economize on the necessaries of life, I spy. If you must have economy, do without cake, but make your bread of good materials. Let the milk boil—I generally allow a pint for a loaf—and while it is cooling throw in a lump of butter as large as a walnut, and a teaspoonful of salt. When it is nearly cold, pour in your bread-tray and add a small teacup of baker's yeast and a tablespoonful of sugar. Work in flour enough to enable you to mould it up into loaves, after it is raised, but do not have it too stiff. Then set it aside, covered with a clean towel, to rise. It is better to make your bread at night, for if you hurry it by putting it too near the fire it will be sour. I tell the children sometimes that bread is naturally lazy; you can't hurry it; it must have its time.

The next morning mould the dough into a nice loaf and put it in the pan to rise. Be sure that you give it time enough; don't hurry it.

While the bread is rising, keep your eye on the oven. Don't let it be too hot. It takes nearly three quarters of an hour to bake a loaf of this size, made with a pint of milk, and when it comes out of the oven it should be a light chestnut brown.

Mrs. Gay said the crust of my loaves are like the Vienna baking; but for my part, I don't see why American bread shouldn't be just as good as Vienna bread. If you want a pan of nice buiscuit, set aside some of the dough before you add all the flour that is necessary for your bread; add to this three or four eggs and a little more butter. Knead with less flour than for bread. When it is light, knead it again; indeed you may knead it two or three times in the course of the day, but after it is moulded into buscuits and set aside to rise, give plenty of time, so as to be sure they are perfectly light before putting in the oven.

Try my receipt and when you have provided your family with good bread you will not need the doctor to cure them of dyspepsia.—*Christian Intelligencer.*

Sleep for Children.

Many farmers make a mistake in giving their children no more sleep than they allow to themselves. Childhood requires more sleep than maturity. The infant does well when it sleeps pretty much all the time. As years increase less sleep is demanded, till we arrive to second childhood, when sleep, as an old Greek philosopher expressed it, hands us over to his twin brother, death. Rousing up boys at four or five o'clock of a winter's morning and sending them out to do chores, or on the mountain for a load of wood, is a sin against humanity. It brings on disease and premature old age. We see many laboring men at forty or fifty years of age bent over and walking as though it was a tax on their energies to drag one foot after the other. One great reason is that they have discounted the hours that should have been allotted to sleep. If a farmer makes it a rule to get up in season to hear the matin song of birds he should also make it a rule to go to bed at the same time with the feathered bipeds. Every man should study his one constitution, and eat, sleep and work in such proportion as to make the most of life.—*The Household.*