

Christian Family.

Life's Changes.

Shut in by the prison walls
So gloomy, so dreary and gray,
Through whose iron window still falls
The worn out and struggling ray.

Shut in,—with no cheering mate
To move with friendly sound,
To feel that the world's hard hate
Is harder than walls around.

Out 'neath the smiling sun,
The sky with its bending blue,
Out on the mountains dun,
In the morning's dampening dew.

Rolling along o'er the plains,
Mountains away on each side,
Through fields of life giving grain
And forests of pine—the world's pride.

Out on the ocean's waste,
Hand in hand with the breezes free,
Where though travellers in thousands
haste
No track on its surface you'll see.

Ever, forever the wheels
May dash into foam its bright face,
Neither these nor the storm's loudest
peals
Can leave on its expanse a trace.

Home again, home in the bower
Where fondest hearts lavish their
love,
Home again! home! how this hour
Seems like a light sent from above!

O God, tho' we walk in the shade
Of wickedness, darkness and death,
Thou still givest to us thy aid,
And breathest into us life's breath.

R. C. PERCIVAL.

Out of the Silence.

MIRA BELL.

Out of the silence and beauty of even
Make for my sadness a song.
Out of the fleecy clouds, misty and golden,
Make for my bosom a balm;
For oft I grow weary of this endless waiting,
And sigh for bright summers long gone.
So out of the mystic-like beauty of even,
Make me a poem and song.

Hearts that loved me,—Oh love me forever!
And heed not this sadness of years.
For life has its sorrows as also its sunlight
And eyes growing heavy with tears;
Yet if gold-tinted grottoes, and coral-lined caverns
Are hidden deep under the sea,
Then up thro' the azure of yon starry heaven,
Beauties are waiting for me.

So when in a glow of a purple-tinged sunset,
Or down by the star-mirrored sea,
Out of the silence and beauty of even,
Weave a bright poem for me.

Echoes.

Who does not love to listen to these never-braiding sounds, which float through the atmosphere in certain localities.

I confess, that I have almost a passion for echoes. There is something so wild and weird like in the tones thus sent back, and although philosophy has long since explained away all mystery relating to echo, and thereby divested it of half its charm, yet, I love to return to the first early impressions of childhood, and with its simple faith, clothe echo with an individuality. Oftimes this childish fancy is indulged, and on the early twilight picture this "old man of the mountain," looking out from some loophole in his craggy dwelling, and taking cognizance of worldly sights and sounds.

The fragment of a song from some dwelling, of which the singer is hardly conscious, the refrain is quickly caught up, and how like a benison the echoes are sent back through the evening air.

The singing of birds, the lowing of herds, and the murmuring of voices, and indeed every sound of the busy world is doubled by his vigilance, and sent back as if in mockery. Not a sound goes by unheeded. The joyful tone of happiness, and the wailing cry of distress are equally reiterated and given with an intonation creditable to the most experienced ventriloquist.

Yet there is another, equally true and as precise in its reflective powers,

yet it is voiceless. Away down in every human heart it exists, unheard, unseen, but yet perceived. We all feel this echo when some kind word or action touches a revivatory chord in our hearts.

Sometimes we seem to forget that it lives in every human heart. Sometimes forget? Ah! do we not often? Do we always let our words and deeds drop softly into the hearts of those around us? Do their echoes come back to us sweetly? Instead, does not these heart-echoes sometimes float back and fall discordantly upon our spirits just as unpleasant echoes fall upon our ears?

Yes, just as true as real echoes return their tone, so do these voiceless ones, and if on our life journey, we wish to hear sweet echoes floating up from hearts around us, then must we send soft words and beautiful deeds from our lips and lives, that our spirits may never feel aught but the reflection of the sweetest music from these voiceless echoes.

ERNESTINE.

Salem, April 15, 1879

King Alfred's Lantern.

A STORY FOR THE YOUNG.

Did you ever try to imagine, when you were studying the beginning of old English history, what kind of people those old Anglo-Saxons were, and how they lived? They were our far-off ancestors, and our language for the most part was made from theirs; in fact, we are called Anglo-Saxons ourselves; so we ought to be interested in them.

They were a rude people in many respects, and lived in a rude way, compared with ours. How would you like windows which had no glass in them—very small windows, too—but had oiled paper or sheets of horn instead? Of course, the rooms must have been dark and dismal, you will say. And what would you think of houses without chimneys? But matters were really not much better, even in kings' houses, about ten hundred years ago.

The most important room in those days was called the hall; and it was large enough to accommodate the family, the great company of servants, and all the guests who chose to come. They ate there, sat there, and most of them slept there, on rough benches, or rolled up in skins on the floor. It was open to every chance traveler, to the wandering harper, to beggars, and everybody else.

The fire was built against a clay or stone arrangement, answering for a fireplace, at one end, or an immense stone hearth in the middle; and the smoke, after floating up overhead, found its way out through an opening or a kind of turret in the roof. At dark they heaped high the logs and faggots; and happy was he who, on a stormy night, could get near the blaze. When supper-time came, servants stood behind those at table, and held torches over their heads till the meal was over; and when bedtime came, the guests who had any other place than the hall to sleep in were lighted to it in the same way.

As for the king he was more privileged than that; though just what was first used for lights, and just when lamps became common among the Anglo-Saxons, it is not easy to find out. We see in some very old pictures, a single little lamp, shaped perhaps like a saucer, hung by chains at the side of the room, and holding, no doubt, a piece of wax or some kind of oil, with a strip of cloth in it for a wick. Sometimes, in the royal chambers, for a very long time after King Alfred's day, a light was kept by means of a cake of wax in a silver basin.

They knew how to make candles, however; but, instead of putting one in a candlestick, it was put on it. The candlestick had a point at the top, called a spike, and the candle

was made hollow at the bottom and slipped down over the spike; and so fixed was called a "prickett."

There is, among some illustrations of old customs, a picture of a candlestick, which is very queer, though very elegant, and looks like a little piece of furniture. It is a tall stem rising from a three-footed three-corner stand, very much ornamented; it came to the point at the top, and a little way below is a plate to hold the tallow or wax that might run down. We do not know that King Alfred had anything like this; but he had what nobody had ever seen before in that country, for he invented it himself, and that was a lantern.

The good king was a very busy man; the people around him might be willing to idle away their days around the fire listening to the harpers, telling stories, and playing with the hounds; but he felt that he had a great work to do. He wanted to make his subjects more civilized, to teach them useful arts, and he had not an hour to waste. He built towns, he built ships, he read and studied and wrote—and that was wonderful, indeed, in those days, when there were but few books, and when even princes could not write their own names. He was the best, the wisest, and most learned king that the Saxons had ever had.

He used to carry in his bosom "memorandum leaves, in which he made collections from his studies," and this journal he was in the habit of examining so much that "he called it his hand-book." And, perhaps, that is where the word "hand-book" came from. Of course, he read far into the night, but he soon found two troubles—there was no way to mark the time, for there were no clocks nor watches then, and he could not keep a steady light, because the houses were so open that the wind came in from every quarter. He had, noon-marks, but these amounted to nothing on rainy days, and everybody knows what a country England is for rain.

However, when such a man as Alfred makes up his mind to do a thing he is almost sure to find the way. So he had a quantity of wax prepared, took enough of it to weigh down seventy-two silver pennies, and of it had six candles made, all weighing the same, and each twelve inches long, and marked in twelve divisions. He planned so nicely that these six would burn twenty-four hours; and he always kept one lighted day and night before some holy relics and images of saints which he had, and which, being a very pious man, he carried about with his luggage wherever he went.

He would now have had not only a tolerable light, but a good way of marking the hours, if the candles had always been sure of burning a given time. But if the wind blew, the flames would flare, and perhaps would go out; and the king made up his mind that there could be something done to remedy this—and he did it. He made a frame-work, and fixed into it little plates or windows of horn, scraped so thin that the light could shine through, set his candle inside, and shut it in—and the thing was done. He had a lantern sure in all weathers. A very small affair it may seem to you; but it was a great one to him.

I once saw a picture of a rude Saxon lantern somewhat like his, perhaps, though it was probably an improvement on it; for no sooner does one man invent a thing than another finds a way to make it better. This, in shape, made me think of a bird-cage without the tray or railing. It had a kind of cupola-like top, and was much ornamented; there were bands with bosses on them, looking like metal, around the middle and next to the roof; and there was a pretty arched door. Altogether, it was a very curious, but a rather clumsy and rather dark lantern.—St. Nicholas.

Words of the Wise.

Whosoever would be sustained by the hand of God, let him constantly lean upon it; whosoever would be defended by it, let him patiently repose himself under it.—Calvin.

No one can over-estimate his own weakness, or the dangers to which he is continually exposed; no one can overstate the strength, and, safety, and comfort, of constantly abiding in Christ.

Grief should be
Like joy, majestic, equitable, sedate;
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free;
Strong to consume small troubles; to commend
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to the end.

When a man pulls out his sixpence and gives that when he is laying by thousands of pounds, I can only consider that he forms a pretty accurate measurement of the value of his religion.—Spurgeon.

Wilmot, the infidel, when dying, laid his trembling, emaciated hands upon the Sacred Volume, and exclaimed, solemnly and with unwonted energy, "The only objection against this Book is a bad life!"

A dear old friend of mine used to say, with the truest Christian charity, when he heard any one being loudly condemned for some fault: "Ah! well, yes, it seems very bad to me, because that's not my way of sinning."

Greatness and goodness are not means, but ends,
Hath he not always treasures, always friends,
The good, great man? Three treasures,
Love and Light,
And Calm Thoughts, regular as infants' breath;
And three firm friends, more sure than day and night;
Himself, his Maker, and the angel Death.

—Coleridge.

Human happiness has no perfect security but freedom; freedom none but virtue; virtue none but knowledge; and neither freedom nor virtue has any vigor or immortal hope except in the principles of the Christian religion.—President Quincy.

If any speak ill of thee, flee home to thine own conscience, and examine thine heart; if thou be guilty it is a just correction; if not guilty it is a fair instruction; make use of both; so shalt thou distil honey out of gall, and out of an open enemy a secret friend.—Quarles.

Thou hast a double nature. Choose between the worse and the better that is within thee. Thou hast it in thy power to become the slave of passion, the slave of luxury, the slave of sensual power, the slave of corruption. Thou hast it in thy power to become the free master of thyself, to become the everlasting benefactor of thy country, and the unfailing champion of thy God.—Dean Stanley.

Friendship.

What is it? Do smiles, words of cheer and kind actions constitute it? Are those who never upbraid, but meet all their deeds with words of praise, who flatter us on every possible occasion, to be considered true friends? Their attentions may be pleasant to our vanity and conceit, and keep us in the best of humor with ourselves, and we may think their company very desirable, yet they will not do to put faith in, for their amiable behavior is often the cloak of self-interest.

The person who will tell us of our faults—kindly of course—who will try to teach us to see ourselves as others see us, who will show by acts rather than words that he kindly regards us, is more worthy of trust than one who agrees with us in all our sentiments, right or wrong, and who is equally ready to coincide with some one else, even if the subject should happen to be our short-com-

ings.

Give me the friend who has the same love for me always, who is ready to "speak up" for me in the midst of enemies, and repeat what he considers my virtues as an offset to the failings they may rehearse, and who will hold fast to his faith in my truth and goodness in spite of defamation. Such friends may be scarce, but when found are priceless treasures.

A Precious Remedy for an Old Disease.

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." This verse is rich in precious truth. For eighteen centuries it has been peculiarly dear to Christ's believing servants in every part of the world. Many are the sick rooms which it has lightened. Many are the dying hearts which it has cheered.

We have here a precious remedy against an old disease. That disease is trouble of heart. That remedy is faith.

Heart-trouble is the commonest thing in the world. No class, or condition, is exempt from it. No bars, or bolts, can keep it out. Partly from inward causes and partly from outward, partly from the body and partly from the mind, partly from what we love and partly what we fear, the journey of life is full of trouble. Even the best of Christians have many bitter cups to drink between grace and glory. Even the holiest saints find the world a vale of tears.

Faith in the Lord Jesus is the only sure medicine for troubled hearts. To believe more thoroughly, lay hold more firmly, lean back more completely—this is the prescription which our Master urges on the attention of all his disciples. No doubt the members of that little band which sat round the table at the last supper, had believed already. They had proved the reality of their faith by giving up everything for Christ sake. Yet what does their Lord say to them here? Once more he presses on them the old lesson—the lesson with which they first began: "Believe! believe more! believe on me!"

Never let us forget that there are degrees in faith, and that there is a wide difference between weak and strong believers. The weakest faith is enough to give a man a saving interest in Christ, and ought not to be despised; but if it will not give a man such inward comfort as a strong faith. They do not see clearly what they believe and why they believe. In such cases more faith is the one thing needed. Like Peter on the water, they need to look more steadily at Jesus, and less at the wind and waves. Is it not written, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee?"

Good Advice and Good Manners.

Much jewelry is vulgar.
Do not cut your nails in public.
Do not run after famous people.
Do not breath hard while eating.
Unsweetened coffee cures bad breath.

A man's dress should not be remarkable.

Do not give mere friends costly presents.

Girls who part their hair on the side look fast.

In going up and down stairs precede the lady.

A formal call is long if it lasts over half an hour.

Never take bits out of your mouth with your hands.

There is too much promiscuous kissing in this country.

A young lady should never stretch her feet out in company.

Some men unpleasantly comb their mustaches at the table.

A pink ribbon under the chin makes a pale woman look brighter.

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