

Christian Family.

Nothing.

"Blessed be nothing!" an old woman said.
As she scrubbed away for her daily bread.
"I'm better off than my neighbor the squire;
He's afraid of robbers, afraid of fire,
Afraid of flood to wreck his mill,
Afraid of something to cross his will.
I've nothing to burn, and nothing to steal
But a bit of pork and a barrel of meal.
A house that only keeps off the rain
Is easy burnt up and built again.
Blessed be nothing! My heart is light;
I sing at my washing, and sleep all night.
"Blessed be nothing!" the young man cried,
As he turned with a smile to his smiling bride.
"Banks are breaking and stocks are down;
There's dread and bitterness all over town
There are brokers groaning and bankers sad,
And men whose losses have made them mad.
There's silk and satin, but want of bread,
And many a woman would fain be dead.
These little children sob and cling
For the daily joy she cannot bring.
Blessed be nothing, for you and me!
We have no riches on wings to flee."

Blessed be nothing! if man might choose,
For he who hath it hath naught to loose;
Nothing to fear from flood or fire,
All things to hope for and desire.
The dream that is better than waking days
The future that feeds the longing gaze—
Better, far better, than aught we hold,
As far as mining excels gold,
Or hope of fruition in earth below,
Or peace that is in us outward show.

Almost, when worn by weary years,
Tired with a pathway of thorns and tears,
When kindred fail us, and love has fled,
And we know the living less than the dead.

We think the best of mortal good
Is a painless, friendless solitude.
For the pangs are more than the peace
they give.

Who make our lives so sad to live,
Blessed be nothing! it knows no loss,
Nor the sharpest nail of the Master's cross;
No friend to deny us, of none bereft,
And though we have no one, yet God is left.

Yet, have nothing, the whole is ours.
No thorns can pierce us who have no flowers.

And sure is the promise of His Word,
Thy poor are blessed in spirit, Lord!
Whatever we lose of wealth or care,
Still there is left us the breath of prayer—
That heavenly breath of a world so high,
Sorrow and sinning come not nigh;
The sure and certain mercy of Him
Who sitteth between the cherubim.
Yet eases for the lonely sparrow's fall,
And is ready and eager to help us all.
Rich is his bounty to all beneath;
To the poorest and saddest He giveth death.

—Harper's Bazar.

A Little Girl's Wonder.

What do the birds say, I wonder, I wonder,
With their chitter chatter? It is n't play.
Do they scold, do they fret at some boggle
or blunder,
As we fret, as we scold, day after day?
Do their hearts ever ache, I wonder I wonder,
At anything else than the danger that comes
When some enemy threatens them over
or under.
The great, leafy boughs of their great,
leafy homes?
Do they vow to be friends, I wonder I wonder,
With promises fair and promises sweet.
Then, quick as a wink, at a word fall
asunder,
As human friends do, in a moment of
heat?

But day after day I may wonder and wonder,
And ask them no end of such questions
as these—
With chitter, and chatter, now over, now
under,
The big, leafy boughs of the big, leafy
trees.
They dart and they skim, with their bills
full of plunder,
But never a word of an answer they
give.
And never a word shall I get, though I
wonder
From morning till night, as long as I
live.

—St Nicholas.

Woman.

"Said a man, once contending how high
in the scale
Stood man above woman so tender and
frail;
When the trial of virtue and time first be-
gan,
Satan dared not present his temptations
to man;
Nay, answered a fair one, say not what he
dared,
The old Serpent knew well that some
pains might be spared,
For, thought he, if I once get the man in
my chains,
The most difficult part of my task yet re-
mains;
But, if I succeed the fair Eve to allure
Adam follows of course, and both are se-
cure.
So sir, cease your proud boast of man's
firmness and own
If superior either, woman's the one,
Since woman could overcome Adam her-
self.
But to overcome woman took Satan him-
self."

Ned's Corn-Roast.

It was a big, old-fashioned country hotel, at the head of one of the prettiest inland lakes that ever artist painted; just one of those lovely, quiet retreats where worn-out business men love to go, with their wives and families, there to find rest and strength.

In this particular summer, several years ago, the house was full; and among the guests, children bore a prominent part.

It was a bright, sunny morning in the latter part of August, when some five or six boys, of ten years or thereabouts, might have been seen congregated in one corner of the broad old piazza, deep in some mysterious consultation.

"I'll tell you what it is, fellows!" said bright, happy little Ned Sandford. "Let's have a corn-roast to-night!"

"What's a corn-roast?" demanded Clarence Brown, who, being a city-bred boy wasn't posted in country frolics.

"Why, you know. You get a whole lot of corn first; then you go out in the wood and build a rousing old fire; and then—why then you roast the corn and eat it. Don't you see?"

"Oh! jolly! Let's do it!" was the universal cry of the favored few to whom the plan had been communicated.

"A'l' right. But first we must ask John if we may have some corn. Held on a minute, and I'll ask," said Ned. And off he went; but soon returned, triumphant. "John says we can have all we want; and now, boys, let's keep still about this and not let the others know."

So, with an air of grave and important secrecy, the happy six passed the morning in pulling corn, and storing it away in a place safe from curious eyes.

But alas! about five o'clock, just as their anticipations were the brightest, came a heavy black cloud from the north, and then a storm of wind and rain, which drove all pleasure-seekers within the friendly doors of the hotel.

Six downcast, disappointed boys met in the self-same corner that had that very morning witnessed their bright plan.

"Must we give it up?" sighed Clare.

"Of course," said Joe, in a discontented tone. "We'd have soaked corn if we tried it to-night!"

"Boys!" suddenly spoke up Ned Sandford. "I've thought of something! Come close, so I can whisper." And the heads, brown, black, and tow, met in an excited consultation.

It was after eleven o'clock. The rain still came down in torrents. The wind blew drearily and the night was cold and dark. The guests seeing nothing inviting without, had yawned through a rather stupid evening in the music room and one by one gone off to their rooms; so that before the great hall-clock tolled its eleven strokes the hotel was quiet and nearly as dark as the night itself.

Had you, for any unknown reason, been in the big, deserted hotel-kitchen just then, you would have seen a strange sight. Softly the back door, leading into a small hall, opened; and there entered with velvet tread six stocking-footed boys, the foremost bearing a candle. "Now, boys," said Ned, in an excitedly quiet tone—for, of course, it is Ned who is leader—"this is going to be just the biggest kind of fun!"

Nobody assents very enthusiastically. Ned sets down his one small candle and turns to the stove. The fire is still good, and, with impatient hands, he lifts off the griddles and peers in at the bright red coals.

"This is the very place!" he cries. "Clare, Joe, Jamie, bring on the corn! Now just throw five or six

ears right in on top these coals, and it'll roast bully!"

In goes the corn, and all the faces grow more anxious as a peculiar odor rises from the stove.

"It's burning!" cried Joe. "Quick! Turn it over! It—"

"Oh, goodness! I hear somebody a-comin'!" interrupts Jamie.

Quick as a flash, and falling over each other in their haste, Ned and his compatriots are stowed away in the coal-closet. But the alarm was a false one, and, after a few moments of absolute stillness, the six small culprits, much the worse for coal-dust, steal forth, to find their beloved corn burnt to a cinder. "I think," remarks Joe, sententiously, "that this corn is too green. We oughter picked it bigger."

"Humph! It's big enough!" sneers Clare, who knows absolutely nothing about it.

"Mine's nearly a foot long!"

This argument was conclusive, and Ned said: "Boys, the trouble is, the top of the stove is too hot. The way to roast corn is to pull out the front, and lay the corn down in the ashes."

"Pooh! I don't believe that," said Tom, upon whose temper the lateness of the hour had a bad effect.

"I know its so!" stoutly replied Ned; "for I've seen our cook do it."

This silenced all objections, and Ned and Clare immediately fell to work to pull out the front of the stove. But this proved to be easier said than done. They pried and pulled and pushed. Ned burnt his hand and Clare his coat-sleeve; but this obstinate stove was immovable.

At last a bright thought came to their relief. "Let's pry it out with the tongs!"

So the end of the tongs was inserted in a small crevice, and Ned, Tommie, Clare pushed, while Joe, Jamie, and Will watched anxiously for the result. It came, with confounding swiftness.

The entire front of this very unruly and obstinate stove flew out on the floor, with a clatter and clang that would have awakened the seven sleepers, had those much-enduring men been on hand.

But, instead, it brought, in all stages of anger and alarm, Chloe, the cook, John, the gardener, and Mr. E., the hotel clerk. Imagine their surprise to find six very frightened boys sinking toward the back door; corn in all degrees of roasting strewn floor and tables; and the stove—an utter ruin!

The next morning six unusually noisy boys were very quiet. Vainly the respective mammas asked for an explanation of this.

"Headache" or "Tired" proved the unsatisfactory replies.

Soon after breakfast, Mr. L., the proprietor of the house, received a call from a small boy, who owned the name of Ned Sandford; and a very noble, manly little fellow he proved himself to be. He told the whole story from beginning to end; and then added: "So, you see, sir, we're sorry we touched what didn't belong to us; though we didn't mean any harm. And I've brought you three dollars and sixty cents, sir, which is all the six of us can scrape; and we hope you can get the stove mended, and—and—well, I guess that's all."

A smile lurked about the corners of the gentleman's mouth as he said: "Well, Ned, I'll keep your money, because in all fairness it's mine; but where did you get it?"

"Why, you see, sir, we'd been saving it for a good while—the whole of us boys; and when we'd got five dollars we were a-going to have some splendid fireworks. But"—here a tear or two rose in the eyes of the small speaker—"we can't do it now; and, of course, we know it's our own fault, and we're glad to give you the money, sir."

And, suppressing a disappointed little sigh, he walked away.

All this happened some years ago.

The six little culprits are now six very fine young men; but they love to meet at the pretty, quaint old watering-place and talk over their boyhood's pranks, and not one of them has forgotten the very useful lesson he learned on the memorable night of Ned's Corn-Roast.—Independent.

Knowing God.

As we sit in the twilight, a solemn silence falls upon us all.

"Be still, and know that I am God!" Ruth by-and-by quotes. And then she adds:

"Is silence just another name for submission, I wonder? Last evening Mrs. Bird came in, and we talked of her great loss. The dear boy she buried a year ago lives freshly yet, in her grief. She can not give him up. She will not believe that the Lord did well in taking him away. It grieved me to hear her talk, and I have been troubled about it all day."

"She is not an obedient scholar in the school of sorrow," one of us makes reply. "'Be still and learn,' might be said wisely to her. We hear many things in our moments of quiet, which miss us in the hours of our speech. We can not both speak and hear at once."

"True," answers Ruth, "but have you quite caught the meaning of those words I quoted? As I see it, we are not left to learn that God is God; we are simply to be still and know. There is something fairly divine in the assumption which this command implies. In twilight times, or times of darkness coming over the soul, we may just keep silent and rest in a sure knowledge. In our submissive stillness we shall know what by no common process of acquirement could we learn. To be restful before God, as I take the thought into my heart, is absolutely to know Him."

"And the knowledge will never make us glad, I fear," she continues, "if we do not feel subdued to perfect peace. Nobody can find out God by searching, or by scientific investigation, or by noisy discussion. He is not revealed to men through visible demonstrations. It is only in soul-quiet that the soul, looking upward, grows wise. We have so much turmoil in life, and we spend so many days and years in perpetual unrest, no wonder we fail to know God as we ought. I prize the twilight hours more than once I did, for their quietude, and their holy intimacies. God does come near to quiet souls, I am certain. We can know Him if we will but be still, and let Him visit us in blessed recognition."

"You hold, then, by your personal relation to Him?"

"Why not? If I am to know Him, it must be a personal knowledge, made possible through a personal intimacy. For me to know God is to know Him for myself, and of myself, and not to become a mere partaker of another's knowledge. I may not profit by another's obedient silence, while my own soul cries out in doubting complaint. I could not teach Mrs. Bird of my happy knowledge, when she cherished the turmoil of her grief, and would not be still that she might know. Whoever believes may enjoy the blessed certainty of knowing, but before knowing, in the truest, sweetest sense, he must hush all his strivings of soul, quiet all his troubling fears, and come, so, before knowledge, into peace. And the best of it is that God will help him to do this, that so doing he may know!"—Ex.

—Dr. B. Joy Jefferies has applied the test for color blindness to 14,732 children in the Boston public schools. Of 9,303 boys examined, 361 were found to be color blind, while of 5,429 girls only two suffered from this curious affliction.

—God gave us two ears, two eyes and one tongue, that we might hear and see just twice as much as we say.

Praying Always.

If you can pray aright, you have mastered the great secret of the spiritual life.—Bishop Wilson.

Blessed be God, I not only begin to pray when I kneel down, but I do not leave off praying when I rise up.—T. Adams.

Evening, morning, and at noon will I pray.—David.

For once I sought a time and place
For solitude and prayer;
But now where'er I find thy face,
I find a closet there.

—Kemble.

As very often, in the intervals of our business, our thoughts fly off to our homes and the loved ones there, so our thoughts, desires, and aspirations should constantly be going up in prayer to heaven. This is it to be "praying always." This is the true spirit of communion with God.

The Christian will find his parentheses for prayer, even in the busiest hours of the day.—Cecil.

They that seek the throne of grace,
Find thy throne in every place;
If we live a life of prayer,
God is present everywhere.

Prayer will make us leave off sinning, or sinning will make us leave off praying.—A. Fuller.

Pray to God at the beginning of all thy works, that so thou mayest bring them all to a right ending.—Xenophon.

The body of our prayer is the sum of our duty; and as we must ask of God whatsoever we need, so we must labor for all that we ask.—Jeremy Taylor.

Pray, though the gift you ask for
May not comfort your fears,
May never repay your pleading,
Yet pray, and with hopeful tears.
An answer, if not that asked for,
Yet diviner, will come some day,
Though your eyes are too dim to see it,
Then strive, and watch, and pray.

—Procter.

Prayer is the pulse of the renewed soul; and the constancy of its beat is the test and measure of the spiritual life.—O. Winslow.

Lake Tahoe.

Of this remarkable body of fresh water, twelve miles south of Truckee, a writer in the Press says:

It lies in two States, California and Nevada; three quarters in California and the remainder in Nevada. Tahoe is an Indian name, meaning big water or deep water. Here, at an elevation of a mile and a quarter above the ocean, sheltered in its rock-bound basin, rests this Island sea, twenty-five miles long and ten wide. Its blue waters are encircled by hills mosaiced with trees of evergreen and patches of pure white snow. Pebbles may be counted, and trout may be seen sporting at a depth of eighty feet, so clear and smooth is the water. It changes color according to the depth, from a beautiful pea-green at the shore to an indigo blue.

It has been sounded to a depth of 3,000 feet, and is so cold, even in summer, that the water, when taken from below the surface, is near to the freezing point, although it never freezes in the coldest weather. Fish abound in the waters near the shore, among which are four varieties of trout. The silver trout is considered the finest, and is always taken in deep water, sometimes weighing thirty-two pounds.

On account of the variety of the atmosphere, the waters are not very buoyant, objects sinking like lead. Nothing ever floats on the surface. Great logs which have escaped from the hands of the loggers, soon sink and are seen no more. At times the lake is calm and peaceful as a smiling babe, again it is in a moment lashed to fury and beaten to foam by the winds that spring up in the canons and sweep across its waters. But look at the lake when and where you will it is a scene of beautiful grandeur which pen and pencil have striven in vain to portray. You must see it to be satisfied.