

## Christian Family.

## There Comes A Time.

There comes a time when we grow old,  
And like a sunset down the sea,  
Slope gradual and the night wind cold  
Comes whispering, sad and chillingly;  
And looks are gray  
As winter's day,  
And eyes of saddest blue behold  
The leaves all weary drift away,  
And lips of faded coral say,  
There comes a time when we grow old.

There comes a time when joyous hearts,  
Which leaped as leaped the laughing main,  
Are dead to all save memory,  
As prisoner in his dungeon chain.  
And dawn of day  
Hath passed away,  
The moon hath into darkness rolled;  
And by the embers warm and gray,  
I hear a voice in whisper say,  
There comes a time when we grow old.

There comes a time when manhood's prime  
Is shrouded in the mist of years,  
And beauty, fading like a dream,  
Hath passed away in silent tears;  
And then how dark!  
But oh! the spark  
That kindled youth to hues of gold,  
Still burns with clear and steady ray;  
And fond affections lingering say,  
There comes a time when we grow old.

There comes a time when laughing Spring  
As golden Summer cease to be,  
And we put on the Autumn robe,  
To tread the last deceivably;  
But now the slope,  
With rosy hope,  
Beyond the sunset we behold—  
Another dawn with fairer light;  
While watchers whisper through the night,  
There comes a time when we grow old.

## What a Sermon Should Be.

"It should be brief; if lengthy, it will sleep.  
Our hearts in apathy, our eyes in sleep;  
The dull will yawn, the chapel-lounger  
drowsy,  
Attention flag and memory's portal close.  
It should be warm; a living altar coal,  
To melt the icy heart and charm the soul,  
A sapless dull harangue, however read,  
Will never rouse a soul nor raise the dead.

It should be simple, practical and clear,  
No fine spun theory to please the ear,  
No curious lay to tickle lettered pride  
And leave the poor and plain unsatisfied.

It should be tender and affectionate  
As his warm theme, who wept lost Salem's  
fate,  
The fiery law with words of love allayed  
Would sweetly warn and awfully persuade.

It should possess a well adapted grace,  
To situation, audience, time and place;  
A sermon formed for scholars, women,  
lords,  
With peasants and mechanics ill accords.

It should with angelic beauties gleam,  
Like Paul's at Corinth, Athens or Rome;  
Let some Epictetus or Sterne esteem  
A bleeding Jesus as a Gospel theme!

It should be mixt with many an ardent  
prayer  
To reach the heart and fix and foster there  
When God and man are mutually address-  
ed,  
God grants a blessing—man is truly blest.

It should be closely well applied at last  
To make the moral nail securely fast;  
Thou art the man, and thou alone wilt  
make  
A Felix tremble and a Daniel quake."

## Little Feet.

In castle halls, or cottage homes,  
Wherever guileless childhood roams,  
O, there is nothing half so sweet  
As busy tread of little feet.

The sighing breeze, the ocean's roar,  
The purling rill, the organ's power,  
All stir the soul, but none so deep  
As tiny tread of little feet.

When forth we go at early morn,  
To meet the world and brave the scorn,  
Adown the garden walk so neat,  
We see the print of little feet.

The knives are lost, the dishes stray,  
The tools are spirited away,  
And when we go the lost to seek,  
We take the trail of little feet.

But when the angel Death hath come  
And called the flow'rets from our home,  
Oppressive silence reigns complete;  
We miss the sound of little feet.

Then tools are safe, no dishes stray,  
No doors go slamming all the day;  
But O, 'twould give us pleasure sweet  
To hear again those noisy feet.

Soft night hath come, all are asleep;  
Yes, all but me. I vigil keep.  
Hush! hush! my heart and cease to beat—  
Was that the step of little feet?

Yes, mother, 'tis the softened tread  
Of him you miss and mourn as dead,  
And often, in your sweetest sleep,  
You'll dream of hearing little feet.

And when this pilgrimage is o'er  
And you approach that blissful shore,  
The first to run your soul to greet,  
Will be your darling's little feet.

—He that learns to bear crosses  
and forgive injuries, has found the  
true way of defeating them.

—We should fear to think that be-  
fore God, which we are afraid to do  
before men, for God knows our hearts  
better than any man knows our  
faces.

## Carl's Security.

## A BOY'S STORY OF MARBLE TIME.

BY LILLIE E. BARR.

Marble time has come again. But what was the use of marble time, with out any marbles? and having no marbles would not be so bad if all the other fellows had none.

But there was the boy with the blue ribbon round his hat, who had just moved into the brown stone front next door; and he had a bag full of marbles. And such a bag! It was made of a fifteen United States flag, with the stars all down at the bottom and a red ribbon through the top. And such a show as he was making of it and the marbles!

Cal leaned his head against the iron railing of the fire-escape, and tried to count the agates, alleys, and common marbles; but it was of no use. There were too many. So he sighed disconsolately, and wished and wished that he was rich.

"For then he could—" But here his reflections were cut short by the boy below looking up at him. After a deliberate stare on the part of both boys, the boy with the marbles selected eight—all of them agates too—and began to arrange them for a game, glancing up at Cal occasionally as he did so.

This done, he walked all round them several times. Then stuffing the starspangled bag, with its wealth of marbles, into his pocket, and looked up and called:

"Helloa, there!"

"Helloa," answered Cal.

"Can you play marbles?"

What a question to ask a boy who was nine years old and had been to public school! At any other time Cal would have regarded it as a kind of insult and a challenge to fight. But just now he had the marble fever very badly, so he answered with alacrity:

"Of course, I can play marbles."

"Come down and have a game."

"I'll ask mother."

"All right! I'll go open the area-door," sang out the blue-ribbon boy, as he disappeared through the window.

The door was open as Cal reached the sidewalk; and, scorning the common way of entering a yard by the gate, he leaped the iron fence, and was soon standing beside the marble ring.

"What is your name?"

"Calvin Clinton. What's yours?"

"Walton Ray. Got any marbles?"

"Not one."

"Come ahead. It's your first."

"This yard is not quite even," said Cal, as his first shot missed. "Let us go on the sidewalk to play."

"All right. You pick up the marbles, while I get the bag out of my pocket."

"What a splendid bag that is!" said Cal. "Let me see it in my hands won't you?"

"My aunt made that for me."

"It's bully!"

"We have just moved here," remarked Walter, as he dropped the last agate in the bag.

"I know. Have you not got any sisters or brothers?"

"No; there's only me. But I have got an aunt, and my pa says she is the smartest woman in the United States."

"What can she do?"

"She can talk all the dead languages, and write and lecture, and play, and sing, and she is going to be married next month."

"I'll bet she isn't as smart as my sister Lena," said Cal, as he drew a ring on the sidewalk.

"Oh! now. What can she do?"

"She can knit a worsted ball, all kinds of colors, and it will bounce splendidly."

Walter was vanquished, and turned his attention upon a handful of marbles. Presently he said: "If you will get your sister to knit me a ball like

that, I'll give you three dozen marbles, and a large flag to make a bag like this."

"She'll do it. Lena will do anything for me. You just wait while I run and ask her."

In a few minutes Cal returned, his eyes sparkling with delight. "I told you Lena would. She is the very best sister in the whole world."

One afternoon about a week afterward, when Cal had got his marbles and Walter his worsted ball, Cal came in from play, tired and hungry, and found that there was no supper for him but two slices of dry bread and a cup of water.

Lena turned away her head, to hide her tears, and said: "Cal, try and save some for your breakfast, dear, for that is all there is in the house and we can get no more credit."

"Did mother and you have some, Lena?"

"Oh, yes! We had plenty."

But Cal could not eat the last bread there was in the house. He just took a bite out of one slice. "Lena, I will have to be a heap hungrier than I am now to eat dry bread," and he pushed away his plate with pretended indifference. "I guess I'll go out until I find my appetite."

"But, Cal, do try and eat."

"I'll come back, soon, Lena."

In a few minutes he was standing before a door with three gilt balls over it. He pushed it open and entered.

"Well now, little boy, what will you have?" said a woman, with a fat, good-natured face.

"Please ma'am, I want to pawn my marbles and my ball and my bag." And there was a big lump in Cal's throat, as he laid his beautiful United States-flag on the counter.

"We don't take things like this was," said the woman.

"Oh, yes, ma'am. Please ma'am do. It's all I've got, and Mother and Lena have not any bread for supper, or breakfast either. O! please take them ma'am!"

"I gives you twenty cents for them."

"Yes ma'am. Please ma'am," said Cal, his eyes full of joy.

The woman gave him the money, and a yellow slip of paper, muttering that it was "just twenty cents thrown away." But Cal did not wait to hear her remark. He was too eager to reach his home.

He found Lena and his mother busy with some store sewing, which they were trying to finish by the next morning. "Mother," said Cal, "may I have that twine in your work-basket?"

"To be sure you may, Cal."

So Cal took the twine, and carefully dropping the twenty cents in the basket, he ran down stairs.

When he came in again, Lena's first words were: "Cal, Mother has found twenty cents in her work basket. Was it not a God-send? Now we can, at least, have plenty of bread for all."

Cal did not see Walter again till quite late the following evening. Then it was with a tired, troubled look that he answered Walter's whistle for him.

"Where have you been, and what is the matter with you Cal?" said Walter, as he slipped his arm over Cal's shoulder.

"Why, you see, Walter, since Father went West we have not heard from him, and we have been getting poorer and poorer. There wasn't enough bread in the house last night, and I pawned my marbles; only you must not tell Mother and Lena, because I dropped the twenty cents into Mother's basket, and she thinks, you see, she had forgotten them there."

"Pshaw! Cal. That does not matter. I mean about the marbles. You can have just as many of mine as you want. Come, don't look like you were going to cry."

"That isn't all, Walter. I have been looking for work."

"And can't you find any?"

"Yes, that is, I can, if somebody

will go with me and say I am respectable, honest boy."

"Why, I'll go with you, Cal. Right now, if you want me to."

"The gentleman said I must come to-morrow morning, and either bring a note or somebody to speak for me."

"All right! Then we'll go first thing in the morning. Come on now, and let's have a game, Cal."

The game was cheerfully played; for Cal never doubted for an instant Walter's suitability as security for himself. So, the next morning, when the two boys entered Mr. John Rambur's private office, there was a bright, confident look on Cal's face; and it went a long way toward winning a favorable impression for him.

"Well, my lad, have you brought me the security for your good behavior?"

"There he is sir!" said Cal, proudly as he lay his hand upon Walter's shoulder.

"And who are you, may I ask?" said Mr. Rambur, wheeling his chair right round in front of Walter.

"I'm Walter Ray, sir. And I live next door to Cal, and I know he is the best fellow that ever lived sir."

"You do? Well how do you know it Mr. Walter Ray?"

"Because, when his mother and Lena did not have anything to eat he took the agates I gave him and pawned them, and when I asked him about them, he just up and told me the truth. And he did not go bragging to his mother and Lena about it either; but just put the twenty cents where his mother could find them. Now I count that being a square fellow?"

"Have you the pawn ticket now, Cal?" said Mr. Rambur, wiping his glasses carefully.

"Here it is sir."

Mr. Rambur took it, and placing it on his desk, said: "I will take Mr. Walter Ray's security. You can go to work at once. Your wages will be three dollars a week. Your business is to wait on my office. Good-morning, Mr. Walter Ray. I hope you will not have to repent going security for Calvin."

"I shall never give him cause to, sir," answered Cal.

That evening, when Cal went home he had three dollars, and his marbles and his bag, and his ball in his pocket; for the very first errand Mr. Rambur sent him was to redeem his pledged playthings.

Lena was watching for him, for she had good news also for him, and there was the nicest kind of dinner all ready and waiting his arrival.

"Why, mother, where did this fine dinner come from?"

Then Mrs. Clinton explained how Walter Ray had told his mother all about the pawning of his marbles and his going security for Cal; and Mrs. Ray had brought the festive dinner herself, and had, moreover, given Lena and her mother plenty of good work to do.

Then Cal produced his three dollars and put them in his mother's hand, with lots of loving kisses, and he ate a splendid dinner, and five minutes after it Walter and he were deep in the mysteries of a new game.

And I must say that, if Cal's marbles had any private feelings about being in pawn, they kept it to themselves, and rolled as smoothly and hit as truly as ever; and the United-States-flag bag looked as fresh and breezy as though it was quite ready to demand satisfaction from the first person who dared to question its right to go into a pawnshop, if it had a mind to.

P. S.—I must say to all that Cal kept his word loyally and never gave his friend Walter the least cause to regret having become security for his good behavior.

—The greatest provocations that men can give us would not hurt us if we did not by our own foolish conceit come to near them.

## The Star-Child.

There was once a little star who went to the great Star-Father, and said, "Father, I want to be an angel."

"My little one," said he, "it is right that you should ask this, and it makes me very glad, but do you know what one must do to become an angel?"

"One has to live a life on the earth down there, and still keep heaven in mind."

"Yes," said the Star-Father, "but that is not all. Do you know that as soon as you reach the earth you will forget all about your life here? I shall come to you as a new friend. You will know me only as one who loves you, and forget that I am the Star-Father who has always loved you. Do you think you will be sure to love and obey me in return? Upon this depends your becoming an angel. If you are true to the heaven-home; but if you are not true, then you can never return, not even as the little star you are now. Do you still wish to be an angel?"

"Yes," she cried, "I do. I will endure anything, but I must be an angel."

"Then," said the Star-Father, "go, and I and the angels will watch over you."

The bright heaven-star was not sent to a home of comfort and plenty. That night in a fisherman's cottage there was an anguish and a rejoicing. "A baby was born," the people said, but the angels, looking down from above, said tenderly, lovingly, "Another star-child is down there upon the earth."

Eighty years from that night, in a lonely hut far up on the hillside, lay an old woman alone, dying. Long ago the people said she had outlived her usefulness, and now they felt that their duty was done when they had taken care that she had enough to eat and wear. There she lay, sick and alone, peering through the darkness with her dim eyes at the storm that was raging over the waters. From far out on the angry waves came a low booming sound. Down on the shore below her, she could see one tiny glimmer of light after another. Then they disappeared. She well knew what this meant, that there was a ship in distress out beyond those rocks, and that there was no hope, unless a fire could be kindled to guide her safely into the harbor. The men down on the shore had tried to light fires, but had failed.

Slowly, thought by thought, almost word by word, this came to her mind.

The men in the ship were the men of her own little village; she must save them. She did not remember the neglect and loneliness that had been hers through the long nights and days. She only thought that she must save them. The one thing that she could do, she did. One thin, uncertain hand grasped for the candle that burned at her bedside. She held it to the wall with a sure though trembling grasp. It was no matter what became of her; those men must be saved. The dry wood caught fire, and soon there was a blaze that even the tempest could not extinguish. The ship was saved, but the fire burned on.

"Poor old woman, what a dreadful death!" said the people next morning, and somebody said, "Yes, but if the cottage must burn, it's well it caught fire just in time to save the ship."

So said the people on the earth, but the Star-Father said, "Come, angel-child, back to your home," and the angels said, "Another sister has come to us from the earth."—Ez.

—Let them talk of the pleasures of sin. There is no sin you can be tempted to commit, but that you will find more comfort in resisting than in indulging.