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'Tis Coming.

'Tis coming up the steep of Time,
 And this old world is growing brighter !
 We may not see its dawn sublime,
 Yet high hopes make the heart throb lighter.
 We may be sleeping in the ground,
 When it awakes the world in wonder ;
 But we have felt it gathering round,
 And heard its voice of living thunder.
 'Tis coming ! Yes, 'tis coming !

There's a Divinity within
 That makes men great, whene'er they will it.
 God works with all who dare to win,
 And the time cometh to reveal it.
 The world shall not for ever bow
 To things which mock God's own endeavour ;
 'Tis nearer than they wot of now ;
 When flowers shall wreath the sword for ever.
 'Tis coming ! Yes, 'tis coming

GERALD MASSEY.

A Friendly Touch.

DR. THISTLETON MARK, in his book about Sunday-schools, tells the story of an old worker in a slum who noticed a girl every morning, one of hundreds of workgirls, waiting about until presently she was joined by an older woman with whom she went along. At last the worker asked the girl who it was for whom she waited every morning. "It is my Sunday-school teacher," was the answer, as her face lighted up. "What do you find to talk about every

morning?" the worker persisted. "You see her in Sunday-school. Do you want to talk to her every morning?" "We do not always talk," was the girl's reply, "but she puts her hand on my shoulder or my arm, and touches me as we walk along." It is the touch of a friendly hand that young people want.

Trusted.

NOTHING is more likely to give hope and courage to the despairing than the thought that there are people who still believe in them.

A young man for persistent wrong-doing was convicted of felony and sent to the penitentiary. He came out at the end of two years more hardened than ever, an object of shame, distrust, and suspicion. He was brazen enough to return to his native town, where everybody gave him the cold shoulder save a poor old woman who had known him from a child. She met him near her little home on the day of his return.

"Why, Harry," she said, as if nothing had happened, "I'm glad to see you. I didn't know you'd come back."

"Well, I have," he said, gruffly.

"Yes, I see ; where are you staying ?"

"On the street."

"Dear me ! That's no place for anyone to stay. Come home with me and stay to supper. I can't give you anything very choice, but you're welcome to what I have."

"Aren't you afraid I'll rob and murder you ?"

"Why, Harry, I'm no more afraid of you than when you used to sit in my lap in your baby dresses. Come straight along."

"I will," he answered, "for I'm half-starved."

After supper she said, "Now, Harry, you must stay here to-night and sleep in the little room my own boy slept in before he died."

In the morning she said, "You'd better stay here till you find something to do."

"Do you suppose anyone would give me anything to do?"

"No, I don't. I thought about that while you slept, and tell you what you'd better do."

She went to her bureau, took from it something in an old silk handkerchief containing a roll of notes.

"Now, Harry, here's twenty pounds which I've saved penny by penny, as the saving of my life. I've been saving it up to be used in my last illness and give me a decent burial. I didn't want the parish to bury me. I want you to take this money, go away off where you're not known and begin life over again. I can trust you to pay me back if able, and if not, all right. I ain't afeared to trust you."

She could say no more, for Harry was on his knees, his face in her lap, crying as he had not since the days of his childhood.

"Say it again."

"Say what?"

"That you're not afraid to trust me."

"Why, I'm not."

"Then I'll take the money and do as you say, bad as I've been, to prove to you that I'm worthy of your trust."

Her confidence proved to be his salvation. He put hundreds of miles between him and his old haunts, and began life anew with hope and courage, because some one trusted him. In a few months the old woman's money was returned with more than compound interest. In the letter sent her with the money was: "I owe my salvation to the three words you spoke when all the world was against me, 'I trust you.' They led me to the belief and trust I now have in the God I am trying to serve."—*Selected.*



A Hero.

A FEW years ago the traveller through Switzerland might have seen a charming little village, now, alas! no longer in existence. A fire broke out one day, and in a few hours the quaint little frame houses were entirely destroyed. The poor

peasants ran around wringing their hands and weeping over their lost homes and the bones of the burned cattle. One poor man was in greater trouble than his neighbours even. True, his home and cows were gone, but so also was his son, a bright boy of six or seven years. He wept, and refused to hear any words of comfort. He spent the night wandering sorrowfully among the ruins, while his acquaintances had taken refuge in the neighbouring villages. Just as daylight came, however, he heard a well-known sound, and looking up he saw his favourite cow leading the herd, and coming directly after them was his bright-eyed little boy.

"Oh, my son, my son!" he cried, "are you really alive?"

"Why, yes, father. When I saw the fire I ran to get our cows away to the pasture lands."

"You are a hero, my boy!" the father exclaimed.

But the boy said, "Oh, no! A hero is one who does some wonderful deed. I led the cows away because they were in danger, and I knew it was the right thing to do."

"Ah!" cried the father; "he who does the right thing at the right time is a hero."



Boating.

IN our little boat we glide,
Softly o'er the rippling tide;
Irma Mary plies the oar,
What a jolly cruise we four
Have this summer eve.

See! a chase! where close beside
Cutter, lugger, swiftly glide;
Dash is umpire in the bow,
Tiny makes a doggy row
As you may believe.

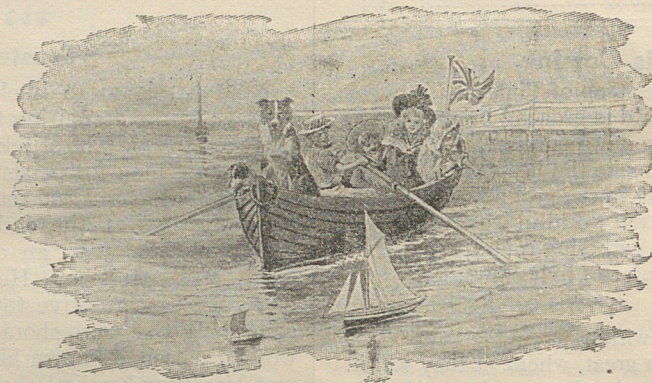
What a time of pure delight!
We forget 'tis close to-night;
Calm and bright the evening sky,
Bob and Enid, May and I
Do not like to leave.

w. o. c.



The Smiling Face.

If you have ever watched the faces of people in a busy thoroughfare, the probabilities are that



you have come to the conclusion that mankind as a whole is far from being happy. The man with a bored expression is enough to blot out all the sunshine of the most glorious day. It almost makes one ashamed of his enthusiasm. The dissatisfied face is not pleasant, to say the least. The wearer of it may be only dyspeptic, but the effect is the same as though he had found the whole world tedious and tasteless. Once in a while you will see a face of radiant good humour, and you mentally take off your hat to it. These faces are not always actually smiling—the street would look like a lunatic asylum on parade if solitary pedestrians went along with a broad grin all the time—but they wear the suggestion of smiles in the corners of the mouth and eyes, and you feel that there are fountains of hidden laughter just ready to flow. Such a face bears the marks of all its past smiles subtly traced in curves and character lines, and whether it belongs to someone you know or to a total stranger, you feel like saying, "Thank you" to it for making the street pageant, after all, a pleasant and wholesome one.



National Registration.

WHAT can a little chap do
For his country and for you?

What can a little chap do?
He can fight like a Knight
For the Truth and the Right—

That's one good thing he
can do.

He can shun all that's mean,
He can keep himself clean,
Both without and within—

That's another good thing he can do.

His soul he can brace
Against everything base,
And the trace will be seen
All his life in his face;

That's a very fine thing he can do.

He can look to the Light,
He can keep his thoughts white;
He can fight the great fight;
He can do with his might
What is good in God's sight—

Those are excellent things he can do.



Though his years be but few,
He can march in the queue
Of the Good and the Great
Who battled with fate,
And won through—
That's a wonderful thing he can do.

And—in each little thing
He can follow the King,
Yes, in each smallest thing
He can follow the King—
He can follow the Christ,
the King.

JOHN OXENHAM.



Suppose

If all that we say
In a single day
With never a word left out
Were printed each night
In clear black and white,
'T would prove queer reading,
no doubt.

And then just suppose,
Ere one's eyes he could
close,
He must read the day's record
through,
Then wouldn't one sigh,
And wouldn't he try
A great deal less talking to
do?

And I more than half think
Tha many a kink
Would be smoothed in life's
tangled thread,
If one half that we say
In a single day
Were left for ever unsaid.

GRACE W. CASTLE.



His Spirit.

COULD I but see with His pure eyes—
Into the hearts of men,
The willingness in me would rise—
To die for them again!

Could I but see with His own love,
What I mankind might give,
What faith of service would I prove—
And dare for men to live!

WILLIAM BRUNTON.

The Bible Class.

THE SONG OF THE SWORD.

"AND the Lord set a mark upon Cain lest any finding him should kill him" (Genesis iv. 15). By this sign given to Cain to preserve him, God proclaimed the sanctity of human life. This is repeated in the story of the Flood (Genesis ix. 6), where the shedding of man's blood is prohibited, "for in the image of God made He man." Smitten with fear and alarm at the Divine sentence upon his murder, Cain, after wailing, "My punishment is greater than I can bear," is represented as replying, "Behold, Thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the ground; and from Thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that whosoever findeth me shall slay me." So, as Shakespeare says, "Conscience makes cowards of us all"; but it seems to have been more the cowardice, the fear of punishment, than the sense of wrong, that moved the criminal. Still, for even the vilest animal is a man, and man's life is sacred, "the Lord said unto him, therefore, whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." Then it was that "the Lord appointed a sign for Cain," that he should not be smitten.

Time passed. The descendants of Cain flourished; and the spirit of Cain spread, for after he had "been branded and banished" for his sin his posterity followed his ways. Seth, on the contrary, who succeeded the murdered Abel, appears to have had more of his father's disposition, for of him it is written, "And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth." His character, too, was transmitted to his descendants. So the world of men were divided into two classes, the Cainites and the Sethites, very distinct in their moral character. This distinction comes out clearly in the same generation, and in two persons, Enoch and Lamech—the goodness of the former is proverbial. Cain's tendency to trust to his own wit and strength, rather than in the Divine goodness, which even his sin could not alienate, rose to its full height in Lamech and his family; the intermediate steps of the progress being passed over by the sacred historian in the case of the Cainites, as in that of the others. Lamech is the seventh from Adam through Cain, just as Enoch is seventh from Adam through Seth; and as the characteristics of the line of Seth came to a head in Enoch, so those of one line of Cain came to a head in Lamech and his children. They invent the arts, but they also serve the lusts of the flesh. While the Sethites rise into "sons of God," the Cainites, despite their great gifts, sink into mere "children of men."

For the family of Lamech was gifted but godless. Of his children, Jubal ("increase") was the inventor of the nomadic pastoral life; while Jubal ("sound") was the inventor of the lyre and the pipe, the first rude forms of musical instruments being made by his skilful hands. His half-brother, Tubal-Cain (probably "coppersmith"), "a mighty man was he," and hammered out the edge-tools of the ancient world; while Naamah, his sister, is said by the Rabbis to have been "the mistress of sounds and songs," that is, a poetess and a musician: the first of *singers* in a double sense. A rarely gifted family this, a family to which

all the world owes an enormous debt to this very day; and yet a wicked family—forgetting God, and like their ancestor, relying on their own great wit and strength. Yes, a wicked family; we need to remember that, and to learn from it that there is no necessary connection between gifts and goodness. We should also mark how frank and honest a book the Bible is. It brands the children of Cain as the ungodly race; but it does not omit to mention the gifts they had: the service they did. It tells how splendidly they were endowed: how much we owe them. Even ungodly men may serve their race and be God's instruments for good, inventing arts which in purer hands become most helpful and ennobling. Nor let us shrink from saying that the inventors of song and poetry, of edge-tools and instruments of music, must have had much good in them, even if they had more evil. It was not their fault that they were born in Nod—"the land of banishment"—or that their blood was tainted by the crime of Cain; but it is to their credit that, even in the land of banishment, they invented arts, which, for many of us, have re-opened the gates of Paradise and brought heaven nearer to our hearts.

But now to our song: a song, says one writer, which was first sung to the accompaniment of Jubal's lyre, the melody of which Jubal piped to his flocks, and which Tubal-Cain, the mighty smith, shouted to the rhythm of his clanging anvil. It may be translated thus:—

Adah and Zillah, hear my voice:
Wives of Lamech, give ear to my speech:
I will slay a man for wounding me
And a boy for a blow given me.
If Cain was avenged sevenfold,
Lamech shall be seventy and seven.

The meaning is very clear. Just before we have the verse which tells that Tubal-Cain had learned to hammer out edge-tools in brass and iron. Suppose this great smith to have invented a sword or spear, and to have shown his father how effective and deadly a weapon it was, would not that have put Lamech into the vainglorious mood which inspires his poem? It is the same thing still. The most learned scholars and the most competent critics think we may so conclude. They hold that this ancient song expresses "that Titanic arrogance of which the Bible says that force is its god" (Habakkuk i. 2), "and it carries its god (i.e., its sword) in its hand" (Job xii. 6).

How simple and natural! and how universal it is to-day! God gave Cain a mark for protection, and he was safe. But Lamech will have none of that. He will *protect himself* with his new weapon of defence, which, he announces, as he struts before his wives, brandishing the new terrible weapon, will be seventy and seven times more effective than the protection afforded to Cain. What came of this spirit we shall see in our next lesson. Meanwhile we may note how the world to-day is exulting in this song of the sword. Munitions! munitions! is the cry. Victory if we have only weapons enough, defeat if munitions fail us: this is the universal cry.

We have only to put the two men, Enoch and Lamech, side by side in order to bring into the most striking contrast the characteristic differences of the two antediluvian races, and the two sections of present society: the boastful arrogance and violence, the jubilant trust in weapons of force of Lamech's song, is the true foil to the sacred and divine composure of the man who "walked with God, and was not because God took him."