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The Eastern Mail (Vol. 16, No. 18): November 6, 1862

Ephraim Maxham

Daniel Ripley Wing

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BY J. G. WHITTIER.

Once more, oh God, before our eyes
The fittest of Thy bounty lies,
And, shaming all our doubt and fear,
Again Thy goodness crown the year.

On loyal homes, on rebel soil,
On slavery's task, on freedom's toil,
On good and ill Thy mercies fall;
For lo, on Father, midst all ill,
Yet must the debt of sin be paid,
And justice come though long delayed;
The wrong must die, the good must live,
Joint heir of Thy eternity!

Oh, hearts must break with pain and loss,
And mourners bow beneath the cross,
But well we know, what'er our befall,
Thy love keeps watch above us all!

From the Student and Schoolmate.

The First Commandment with Promise.

BY E. M. AUB.

Don't go on the river to-night, Harry, said
widow Bright to her son, a few weeks ago.
"Why not?"

"Because it is unsafe. The weather has
been mild for several days; and I have myself
heard the ice crack two or three times, al-
though it is half a mile away."

"Pooh, mother, you women are such scary
creatures. Why Dick Colton and I skated
there all the afternoon; and the ice was as
strong as a bridge."

"But, my son, it has been growing tender
all the while, under the warm wind; and you
cannot see, this dark evening, to avoid the
thin places."

"Just one hour, mother."

"Not one moment, my son."

"Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle
— tied to my mother's apron strings," shouted
Harry, very red in the face, and he had out
of the room, leaving the door ajar.

"O dear," sighed good Mrs. Bright, as she
watched her head thoughtfully upon her hands.
A tear or two trickled through her clasped
fingers, and she looked, as she sat there, like
a very care-worn, anxious mother. And so
she was. She was a widow, and Harry her
only child. He was a bright-faced boy of
thirteen, quick-witted, impulsive, and kind-
hearted. But oh, he was so daring, so impet-
uous, so self-willed. He loved his mother
dearly; but he loved his own way better. He
would do much, very much for her com-
fort; but he would do a great deal more for
the carrying out of any wild plan of his own.

His mother saw his faults. She reasoned
with him, and what was far
better, prayed for him. She was cheered too
by a firm hope; for bright, from out the mire
and dirt of the boy's nature, shone that purest
of gems, Truth.

There are a great many boys like Harry
Bright. Perhaps one of them is just now
reading this story. Well, I do not care how
sparkling your face is, how quick your brain
is; if you are ever unkind to your gentle
mother, if you ever give her sad moments, or
bring tears of sorrow to her eyes, you have a
bad spot in your heart; and every time you
grieve her you forfeit one more claim to God's
glorious promise.

Harry did not feel just right, when he got
out of doors. The evening was quite dark;
but the sky was thickly studded with stars, and
the air was soft and balmy. It was indeed just
such an evening as would ordinarily have set
Harry's brain all aglow with bright dreams.
But on this evening it was altogether other-
wise. He stole up to the window and peeped
in; then sat down on the end of the doorstone,
leaned his head on his hands, just as his moth-
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He was listening to his good angel then;
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once more; and then came to the corner of
the house and peeped round. "Halloa, there,"
he shouted, "are you asleep or dead? Come,
there are half a dozen more boys going on to
the river, and we shall have capital fun."

"Can't," said Harry, faintly. "Can't," re-
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what people always do; who parley with sin;
he made a compromise with Dick, and con-
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breach of God's command, another forfeiture
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A very pleasant river bank they had always
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"Stop, stop," screamed the boy behind him,
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so he might, had not the stalwart fellow caught
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upon the ice. The thin crust cracked beneath
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Yet Providence had given him a fragile hold
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There was no more skating that night.
Dick's little dog clapped his tail between his
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