

# Orange County Observer.

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### WHEN THE ANGELS CAME.

People tell the story yet,  
With the paths of regret,  
How along the streets one day,  
Unaware, from far away,  
Angels passed, with gifts for need,  
And no mortal gave them heed.  
They had cheer for those who weep,  
They had light for shadows deep;  
Balm for broken hearts they bore,  
Rest, deep rest, a boundless store.  
But the people, so they say,  
Went the old, blind, human way,—  
Not the quick and hailed the dawn  
When the angels came to town.

It has been and will be so:  
Angels come and angels go,—  
Opportunity and Light,  
Twixt the morning and the night,  
With their messages divine  
To your little world and mine,  
And we wonder why we heard  
Not a whisper of their word,  
Caught no glimpse of finer grace  
In the passing form and face;  
That our ears were dull as stones  
To the thrill of spirit tones,  
And we looked not up, but down,  
When the angels came to town.  
—Zion's Herald.

### THROUGH THE DARKNESS.

By MABEL NELSON THURSTON.



HE light from the little table-lamp on the table struck sharply across a corner of the box on the floor; it was a large box, and they had spent the evening unpacking it; but it was quite empty now.

The missionary and his wife did not look at each other; the man's hand rested tremulously on a little pile of children's toys; the woman held a long heavy overcoat with a fur collar; with studied carelessness she thrust her fingers into all the pockets, keeping her tell-tale face turned from the light.

"It was a fine box," said the missionary. His voice was husky; he struggled with it and added more firmly: "A generous box."

"Yes," answered the woman mechanically.

Suddenly she dropped the coat in a heap on the floor and buried her face in her hands; she made no sound, but her thin shoulders shook pitifully. The man crossed the room, stumbling over the piles of clothing on the floor, and caught her in his arms. His voice was broken with pity.

"Annie," he cried; "oh, you poor little girl!"

The woman did not lift her face; the words came choking from between her fingers; "I was so sure of the money," she sobbed. "They've always sent us money before, and they knew how much more we needed it this year. I thought that now we could pay the bills for all last summer's sickness, and you could have hot coffee when you came home these dreadful nights, and the children more meat. I never doubted it. I had been thanking God all these days that the box was on its way. And now—"

The man looked about him at the motley heap of old and new, poor and fine, with a pitiful appeal for comfort.

"And now you have a good new dress at last, dear; and that overcoat is just what I need; and there is much to give away." Then his eyes fell again upon the little pile of toys, and his face brightened; and he ended with cheerful confidence: "And we can have a Christmas for the children, Annie. They never sent toys in the box before."

The woman lifted her head eagerly. "I forgot the children," she said; "I was thinking of you and the dreadful winter. I am glad for the children—oh, I am! I can write—to-morrow—I am sure." She spoke with a pathetic eagerness and touched the toys lovingly, trying in her thought to override her disappointment with the children's joy.

Her husband stood looking at her; as she bent over the toys, he noticed how heavy were the blue veins on her temples and how thin the hand that set the doll's dress in order; and he felt a sudden tightening at his heart.

"Annie," he said, pleadingly, "take the children and go back to your mother's this winter. It is too hard for you here."

She looked up, startled and hurt and indignant all at once. "As if I would think of it!" she cried. "As if it is any harder for me than it is for you! I don't have to go out in all weathers. Besides," she added, with a laugh that disappointed her by struggling uncertainly with the sobs that choked her throat—"besides, I couldn't; the money didn't come, you know."

"Yes," answered her husband, heavily; "that is true. We haven't the money. But I wish you could go, Annie."

She dropped the toys and looked across at him, speaking with slow intensity. "I believe you're making me glad that the money didn't come," she said.

They folded the clothing and put it back in the box; there was much to spare, they planned; and the check the minister had received—it was for only half his quarter's salary, for the Board was in debt—would pay their debt and leave enough, with careful planning, to buy food for six weeks. Beyond that they would not let themselves look.

The winter settled down on them, hard and cold and pitiless. The children were warmly dressed, thanks to the box; but they needed better food, and their white, patient faces constantly appealed to the mother for

mother called her softly: "Come here, Ruth."

The child obeyed her wonderingly. She was a sensitive little thing, and the voice smote strangely upon her. Her mother leaned down and caught the child to her as if she could never let her go. Then she held her away and looked steadily into the little serious face.

"Ruth," she said, "you have always been Mamma's help, and now she wants you to do something hard for her. Will you do it and not be afraid?"

"I'll try," answered the child, with a quick breath.

Her mother, crushing back the fear in her own heart, spoke with quiet cheerfulness.

"It won't take long, dear," she said. "Little Mamie Cassock is very sick, and Papa was going to take her some medicine; but Papa is sick himself and cannot go. So you must carry the medicine to Deacon Garnett's and tell him about Papa, and ask him to send it to the Cassocks. Tell him that it must get there to-night or Mamie may not live. Can you remember? It must go to-night."

"Yes," answered the child. Her heart was beating painfully; but she said no word, and stood perfectly still while she was being wrapped up. Then her mother set the lamp in the window and went to the door with her, and held her for a moment so tightly that it hurt her.

"Now go, dear," she said—"go, and don't be afraid. Remember that you are not alone, and that Mother will be praying for you every minute till you get back."

As the door closed behind her mother the child ran back to the threshold with a cry of terror. She was a timid little thing, and she had never been alone before. Then she turned sharply. Her mother had told her to be brave—she must be brave. The tears rolled silently down her little white face and waves of fear beat up in her throat; but she did not falter, she went steadily on into the darkness and emptiness saying over and over her little prayer: "God, don't let anything hurt me—help me to be brave; don't let anything hurt me—help me to be brave." And gradually God's tender hand hushed the fear of the timid little child-heart, and she went quietly on under the golden stars.

In fifteen minutes she reached Deacon Garnett's and stood knocking at the door; there was no answer. She knocked again; then as the truth dawned upon her she beat at it in a fierce terror; but nobody came, and the sounds seemed to thunder mightily about her in the still, sharp air. She was very cold now; but she sat down on the step a moment to think. There was but one thing to do; her mother had said that the medicine must get to Cassock's that night; she must go to the town herself. Choking back her sobs she struggled to her feet; even the few minutes on the doorstep had made her stiff. She stood a moment looking pitifully back at the home light; then she turned away and ran, ran—into the shadows of the great night.

Nearly an hour later a man, hurrying from one of the saloons in the town, was stopped by a child's voice. "Please, sir, can you tell me where Mr. Cassock lives?"

The man had not been drinking much; he stared down at her in amazement. "If 'tain't the parson's kid!" he cried. "What are you doing here this time of night?"

The child's weary face looked whitely up at him from the old blue hood. "Papa's sick," she said; "and this medicine had to go to Mamie Cassock, else she'd die. I carried it to Deacon Garnett's; but nobody was there, so I had to come myself. Do you know where he lives?"

With a smothered exclamation the man stooped down and picked the child up. "I guess you've walked far enough," he exclaimed. "Tain't good for much in the way of meetings; but I can't let the parson's kid go round town alone. I'll take you to Cassock's, and I'll take you home!"

The child put her arms about his neck and leaned against him with a sight of content. He was a rough, bad man; but the child trusted him, and he knew it. He held her gently so that she was not shaken by his long strides. In five minutes he was knocking commandingly at the door of a shanty at the end of the street.

Jim Cassock opened the door himself. His eyes were red and swollen, but he had not been drinking; the door swinging back showed a bare room, and a worn, sickly woman holding a child who was moaning feebly.

"What's wanted?" said Jim, fiercely. "I can't see anybody; my child's dying."

"No thanks to you if she doesn't," retorted the other man. "The parson's sick and sent the medicine; this child came walking all the way to town with it." His tone was full of a fine contempt, keener than any rebuke, toward the miserable creature before him.

Jim stared at the man uncomprehendingly; but the woman started up with a little cry. She put the child down on the bed and ran across to her husband.

"Don't you understand, Jim?" she

sobbed. "The medicine's come—it's come, man!"

Jim rubbed his hand across his forehead and looked from Ruth's tired little face to his own baby. Then, suddenly he dashed into the other room. He came back in a moment with a pair of gloves which he thrust into the child's hands. "Tell the parson that I couldn't wear 'em, that I ain't touched 'em!" he said, eagerly. "Tell him to put 'em on himself; will you tell him? To put 'em on himself!"

"Yes," answered Ruth, wonderingly; "I'll tell him."

Jim stood at the door a moment; he tried to say something more, but the words stuck in his throat; then his wife called him, and he slammed the door, shutting them out into the night.

Ruth's friend grunted, but made no remark. He picked the child up again, and she nestled contentedly in his arms; she was half asleep from weariness and only had a hazy knowledge of it when he got a horse from somewhere and began riding across the prairie.

The minister had fallen into a troubled sleep; but his wife was walking the floor, beating desperately back the fears that stormed her heart. Nothing could have happened to the child; there was not far to go and she knew the way perfectly. Mrs. Garnett must have kept her until some one could bring her home. She would not worry—she would not. But as the moments lengthened into one hour, and then into another, she could fight her fears no longer. She knelt down by the bed where her husband was tossing and tried to pray; but only the child's name came to her lips.

Suddenly she started and listened. There was the beating of hoofs across the prairie, nearer—nearer; now they were stopping at the door. She rushed to it and threw it open. In the sudden blaze of light, horse and rider seemed to start up from the ground. She shrank back with a little cry as she saw who the man was. The next minute a child's face was lifted from his arm, and a child's voice filled her ears.

"Mamma, I was afraid; but I went, and he brought me home. Oh, mamma, it was so good of him!"

The woman caught the child passionately in her arms, and looked up at the man, her eyes full of the gratitude she could not speak.

The man's voice was gruff. "I wa'n't going to see the parson's kid wandering round alone if I knowed it," he said. Then he turned abruptly away and galloped into the darkness.

The sharp blast of cold air woke the minister. Through the doorway he could see into the other room; his wife was taking off the child's wraps, and both the child's face and the woman's were strangely moved. He called, weakly:

"Did Jim Cassock get the medicine, Annie?"

His wife ran to him, and she had something in her hands. "Yes, dear, he has it," she answered; "and—I wronged him, David. He sent the gloves back to you and wanted you to promise to wear them."

The minister's patient eyes brightened. "Did Jim do that?" he said, and there was a thrill of gladness in his tired voice. He took the gloves and absently began pulling them on. Suddenly his face changed.

"Annie," he cried, excitedly; "put your hand in here!"

She obeyed him wonderingly, slipping her hand in the warm fleece lining. Then a flash of great joy illumined her worn face. "David!" she cried.

"Take them out," he answered, breathlessly.

She slipped her fingers into one glove-finger after another and laid the pile of bills on the bed; there were ten in all, and each was for ten dollars.

The woman spoke first; the words were common, but it was none the less a thanksgiving. "And now you can have the coffee," she said, "and the children"—she broke off, but her eyes were shining through tears.

### LOVE'S PROMISE.

Across the main, and far away,  
Where the river joins the sea,  
Where blows the broom at break of day,  
My true love waits for me;  
His brow is sad, his eyes are sweet,  
And his heart both brave and true,  
O, when my love, shall we'er meet,  
My lonely self and you!

"Ah, maid most dear," his lips reply,  
In the north land far away,  
We ne'er shall meet till eternity  
Breaks through life's cloudy day;  
We ne'er may make love's last adieu,  
Ere Death begins his flight,  
But I, for aye, will still be true,  
And so, my love, good night."  
—Johnson McClune Belongs in the Ledger.

### HUMOR OF THE DAY.

"Were you born in a foreign country, Mr. Jones?" "No, I was born in my native land!"

"Yes; there is plenty of room at the top," 'tis true," said the parental fish to its offspring; "but I'd advise you to stay down where you are."

Willie—"Miss Dollie, you are looking like a fall-blown rose." Dollie Footlites—"Gowan! You're just blowing."—Cincinnati Inquirer.

"Fannie has such a sweet new bonnet." "Yes, Fannie has charming talent for making things over."—Browning, King & Co.'s Monthly.

Old Mr. Surplice—"I hope you object to dancing on religious grounds?" Young Miss Featherstitching—"Oh, no; only on unwaxed floors."—Roxbury Gazette.

"Poverty," said Uncle Eben, "am like riches in one respect. Whethuh it's any disgrace or not depends a heap on how you happens to git dar."—Washington Star.

Miss Gushington—"I, too, Herr Slevewski, should like to become a great violinist. What is the first thing to do?" Herr Slevewski—"Learn to play."—Harlem Life.

Owing to the death of my wife, a seat on my tandem is vacant. Candidates for the seat may send in their names to Scorchers, in care of this paper.—Fliegende Blaetter.

Teacher—"What do you know about the early Christians?" Tommy—"Our girl is one of 'em. She gets up in the morning and goes to church before breakfast."—Indianapolis Journal.

"Will I have to be identified when I come here next time?" inquired Mr. Jagway. "Not unless you swear off in the meantime. I should know that nose again among a million."—Chicago Tribune.

German Professor (in his lecture on water)—"And then, gentlemen, do not forget; if we had no water we could never learn to swim—and how many people would be drowned!"—Vienna Fremdenblatt.

Office Boy—"The editor wants the proof of his editorials." Proof Reader—"What for?" Office Boy—"He wants to read 'em." Proof Reader—"Humph! No accounting for tastes."—New York Weekly.

"I don't think the members of your church would be willing to sell all they have and give to the poor."

"Hardly. They might be persuaded to sell all they have and invest the proceeds in something else."—Puck.

"Ef de average young man," said Uncle Eben, "ud be willin' ter go froo as much hahdship ter git usefule knowledge as he did learnin' ter smoke his first cigar, dar wouldn't be nigh ez many regrets in dishere life."—Washington Star.

Mike—"How old are you, Pat?" Pat—"Thirty-sivin next mont'." Mike—"Ye'z must be older than that. When were ye'z born?" Pat—"In 1861." Mike—"I have ye'z now. Sure, ye'z told me the same date tin years ago!"—Tit-Bits.

"Oh, oh!" moaned Mrs. Weeks, who was suffering from a decayed molar, "why aren't people born without teeth, I'd like to know?" "Why, my dear," exclaimed the husband, "do you happen to know any one that was'n't?"—Chicago News.

"I'm afraid," remarked Farmer Cortossel, "that the period of usefulness for that politician is about to be drawn to a close." "What's the matter?" inquired his wife. "Is it a case of overwork?" "No," was the answer; "taint nothin' so onusual as overwork. It's a plain, old-fashioned case of overtalk."—Washington Star.

The garbage is collected every Monday on the street in which the D.'s live. One morning little Helen D. proposed discarding for good a rag doll of which she had grown tired. "I think, mamma," she said, "that I'll put it out for the garbage man to carry off. He can take it to the garbage woman, and she can fix it up for the little garbage children to play with."—Harper's Bazar.

Great Britain's Expenses. The expenses of Great Britain are now about \$500,000,000 yearly, or nearly \$1000 per minute, but every tick of the clock represents an inflow of a little over \$10 into the British Treasury, thus leaving an annual surplus of about \$20,000,000.

Law to Prevent Overwork. In Holland women and persons of either sex under the age of sixteen are now forbidden to begin work earlier than 5 a. m., or to continue after 7 p. m., nor may their work exceed eleven hours a day in all.

### SCIENTIFIC SCRAPS.

A small piece of cheese and an electric wire form the latest rat-trap. The cheese is fixed to the wire, and the instant the rat touches the cheese he receives a shock which kills him.

Very young children are not sensitive to pain to any great extent. Dr. Denger calculates that sensibility is seldom clearly shown in less than four or five weeks after birth, and before that time infants do not shed tears.

A Mr. Rous claims to have invented a powder which, used in the place of concrete, will have the effect of making buildings fireproof. It can also be used in the extinguishing of fires, and can even be swallowed without fear of consequences.

Boats are to be painted by machine hereafter at a West Superior (Wis.) shipyard. Pneumatic power is to be utilized, a pair of pains being attached to the machine, which deposits the paint in a fine spray on the ship, the operator merely working a sort of nozzle much as though he were sprinkling a flower garden with a watering pot.

The depth of the sea presents an interesting problem. If the Atlantic were lowered 6564 feet the distance from shore to shore would be half as great, or 1500 miles. If lowered a little more than three miles, say 19,680 feet, there would be a road of dry land from Newfoundland to Ireland. This is the plain on which the great Atlantic cables were laid.

The rapidity of thought is limited, and voluntary action of the muscles is slow in comparison with the involuntary movements of which they are capable. The researches of Messrs. Broca and Richet show that ten separate impressions is the average highest limit of brain perception. The experiments prove that each excitation of the nerves is followed by a brief period of inertia, and during this period no new or appreciable impression can be made. An individual's voluntary movements of any kind can not exceed ten or twelve per second, although to the muscles, acting independently of the will, as many as thirty or forty per second may be possible.

The Spaniards of Gibraltar. Your Spaniard born in Gibraltar is quick to call himself an Englishman, though his actions may belie his pretensions. Your true Briton, with a long line of cockney ancestors, looks down upon the whole Spanish nation as an inferior race.

The English soldier who conducted us through the Moorish galleries in the fortifications interspersed his local description with information regarding regimental regulations. He told of the schools where a man might learn everything, particularly the languages. "Of course nobody ever learns Spanish; it's no good after you leave here, and while you are here the Spaniards have to learn English if they expect us to have anything to do with them"—this in a tone of careless contempt, quite impossible to convey in words.

As another bit of interesting information, he told us one man out of every four was allowed a wife, "and very useful she is in making money for her husband; for she takes in officers' washing and does any other little thing that comes handy."

"I suppose you choose your wives among the pretty Andalusians," commented some one.

The fellow stiffened himself to his full height, thus emphasizing at once his scorn and the cut of his trim jacket: "Beg pardon, ma'am, but a British soldier wouldn't lower himself by marrying with a dirty, lazy Spaniard!"—New York Independent.

Where Stone Is Scarce. "When you consider," said a railroad man, "that when people in the extreme southern section of New Jersey have need of stone for building purposes they have to go a hundred or more miles for it, it is not surprising that the houses down there, and even the big hotels are invariably constructed of wood. Now, at Cape May, for instance, they have a seawall of stone, and every pound of rock in it had to be hauled from Trenton, 130 miles away. Just now the Reading railway is in a position to secure stone ballast for little more than the cost of transportation, because of the operations upon the Reading subway in this city. There are several big stretches of solid rock along the line of this work, and much of the stone is now being sent down to Atlantic City to be used for riprapping where the railroad company is raising its tracks across the meadows."—Philadelphia Record.

About the Funny Bone. That which is popularly known as the "funny bone," just at the point of the elbow, is in reality not a bone at all, but a nerve that lies near the surface and which, on getting a knock or blow, causes the well-known tingling sensation in the arms and fingers.

The first woman on record who held a medical diploma was Ann Moranda Mazzoni, who, in the middle of the last century, filled the chair of anatomy in the University of Bologna.