



THE HOME CIRCLE

NATURE'S MINISTRIES.

Oh, when the sunshine softens grief,
And light the foam along the reef,
Where, in the spray the rainbows slide,
And, like a wave that breaks and dies
Upon the edge of other skies,
The white sail flashes ere it hide
In mists beyond the azure tide,
Oh, then, how sweet it is to be
Beside the ever-murmuring sea!

And when within the sacred wood
Dawn steals along the solitude,
And through the lucent shadows there
The mighty oak, knee-deep in fern,
Feels all his tops in sunrise burn,
And solemn stillness soaks the air,
And makes the place a place of prayer,
Alone, how sweet it is, how good,
To linger in the ancient wood!

Oh, when the many-petalled flower
Breathes richer incense hour by hour,
When banded bees go blundering by,
And healing from the resinous pine
Makes every moment half divine,
And music brings the tender sigh,
How happy in the grass to lie,
Forget to grieve, forget to strive—
How beautiful to be alive!

—Harriet Prescott Spofford.

ONLY A LITTLE WAY.

By Mrs. Annie A. Preston.

"May I sit by you, please, the little way I have to go?" asked a plaintive voice, and Mrs. Perkins moved her suit case from the seat of the crowded car of an accommodation train to make room for a neatly-dressed, middle-aged woman, who said again, presently:

"Will it annoy you if I say something unusual?"

"Not if you have a good reason for the remark," was the somewhat surprised reply; and the woman continued:

"It is this way: I have lost my early faith, and I pray and pray for its return without receiving an answer. I have been away from home for a long time, but am on my way there now, but do not like to trouble my Christian mother with my deplorable state of mind; and I said to myself this morning, if I have to sit by any one on the train, I will ask if they have faith in God, and if they believe in heaven, hoping that I shall receive help."

"O, dear Lord, help me to help her!" Mrs. Perkins cried inwardly, but to the woman she remarked:

"What a very peculiar morning! Do you often have such dense fogs in Providence?"

"Rather often," was the reply, with an air that showed a consciousness that her question had been ignored, but Mrs. Perkins continued:

"President Taft was in the city last night, but I was not favored by a sight of him. I saw the decorations on Westminster Street, however, as I was being driven to the wonderful Roger Williams Park."

"I saw the decorations," said the woman, growing still more constrained, "and I, too, visited the park"; so for a few minutes and miles they exchanged experiences regarding the beauties of the wonderful four hundred acres of landscape gardening, and then Mrs. Perkins said, quite incidentally:

"How the fog deepens! Look, even near-by objects are distorted, if not quite invisible."

"Yes," said the woman, as if under compulsion to reply. "The park must look quite differently from yesterday."

"Do you believe it is there?"

"Where could it be? Of course I believe it."

"Yet you have lost your faith. Do you think the President was in the city last night?"

"I know he was."

"You have said that you did not see him. How do you know that the Nation has a President Taft? You have no longer any faith. You said a little while ago that you were on your way home, and mentioned your mother. How can a person without faith believe in a home and a mother?"

"I never have thought of it in that way."

"Why have you not? Are not all believers on their journey to heaven and to the loved ones there?"

The woman was too deeply moved to find her voice, and Mrs. Perkins went on: "Think of the fog as doubt. Just now that is the most real thing; yet we know that the clouds will break, that the sun will come again, and that in place of all this greyness there will be broad stretches of blue. So the fog of doubt is dispelled by the Sun of Righteousness. Although we cannot see Christ with our natural vision, He is the most real thing in our lives. Can you not understand it? You imagined you had lost your faith. You had not. You had simply neglected your obligations to God. Have you read your Bible?"

"No; I see now how I have been permitted to stray so far away. I have neglected prayer, church-going, Bible reading—I have been laughed out of the singing of hymns even. I have been with thoughtless people. Let me tell you. I have been at work in a private insane asylum where I have received good pay, but where everything is so depressing that anything solemn, so-called, is hooted at and discouraged. Some of the inmates rail continually against God."

"And you have sunk below the level of faith, yourself, instead of endeavoring to raise others into the true atmosphere of hope!"

"I thought God did not hear my prayer for help," said the woman, with tears, "and He answered by

sending me this little way with you. How can I thank you?"

"Do not try. Thank the Lord," said Mrs. Perkins.—Zion's Herald.

THE CRIPPLE LADY.

"Mother, may I spend to-morrow with Daisy Crawford?" Helen Cory asked. "Daisy wants me to help her make a play-house," writes Sarah N. McCreery, in *The Sunbeam*.

"Yes, I think you may go if it is a nice day," Mrs. Cory replied.

Helen clapped her hands. "I will go to bed right away so that I can get up real early. Daisy said for me to come as soon as I could in the morning," and she tripped upstairs.

The next morning Helen was up early and it was not quite 9 o'clock when she started for her little friend's house. Her face was shining with happiness at the thought of the good time she would have. It was striking six when she reached home again.

"Helen, how did you get your dress so soiled?" Mrs. Cory asked as her daughter came up on the porch. "Your hair is all rumpled, too; you and Daisy must have played very hard. Did you get the play-house finished?"

"Helen shook her head slowly. "I didn't go to Daisy's after all," she replied.

"Didn't go to Daisy's?" exclaimed Mrs. Cory. "Why, child, where have you been all day?"

"I have been helping a cripple lady. She was weeding her garden, and her hands were so bent with rheumatism"—Helen stumbled over the hard word—"that she could hardly pull a weed."

"How did you happen to help her?" questioned Mrs. Cory.

"I saw her as I was going past, and it looked as if it was hard for her to work, so I asked her if I could help her some. I felt sorry because she was crippled and an old lady."

"What did she say when you wanted to help?" asked her mother.

"She said she was afraid I wasn't big enough to help much, and that I would get my dress soiled. I said it didn't matter if my dress did get dirty, and that I helped my mother a lot, but I had never pulled any weeds. She showed me which were the vegetables, and I didn't pull a single thing that wasn't a weed. I worked until Mrs. Saunders—that was her name—said it was almost noon, and that I must rest while she got dinner. She didn't have as much to eat as we have because she is poor, but everything tasted so good, and she had the nicest cookies. She sent you some," Helen held up a bag. After dinner we pulled some more weeds, then she told me stories about things that happened when she was a little girl."

"I know of Mrs. Saunders; she is a nice old lady," Mrs. Cory remarked.

"Are you tired, dear?" she inquired gently.

"No, mother, and you know I wasn't a bit sorry that I didn't go to see Daisy? I just felt glad all day that I could help the cripple lady. She said it would have taken her a week to pull the weeds that I pulled to-day, for she can work only a little while at a time. And, mother," Helen came close to Mrs. Cory's chair in her enthusiasm, "I am going to help her with the garden once a week; I told her I would, and I will get Daisy to help, too."

"I think that is a beautiful plan," said her mother approvingly. "I am glad my little daughter wants to help the cripple lady."—New York Observer.

THE BOY JOHN MILTON.

John Milton was a blue-eyed, yellow-haired Saxon lad of the type of the English race; a healthy, hearty lad in his early youth, with bright, sparkling eyes giving no hint of the great weakness in them which he inherited from his mother. In a pleasant house in Bread Street, London, he was born, and his father having great love for music and learning, had his son carefully educated at St. Paul's school.

It was during these hours of study that sometimes lasted far into the night, that his head ached and his eyes grew dim.

He was then about twelve years of age, and one of the best known pupils of the school, loving study as most boys do play, and yet a thorough boy. He wanted to learn about the great men of the day; how people lived in other countries, and what they had discovered. He had a great love for poetry, and soon began to write fine verses, one of his earliest being the well-known "Ode on the Nativity."

His father leased a country place at Horton, near Windsor, and here Milton wandered when a young man, beside pleasant streams and over smooth, green lawns, filling his mind with knowledge and pictures of beautiful scenery. He was not fond of fishing or hunting, as was Shakespeare, nor was he a lover of the soil like Burns, and knew nothing of farming. He was a scholar in every sense, and when he became a student of Cambridge University, he was the most learned of all its scholars.

Because of this he had many enemies who circulated the false report that he was flogged for some breach of rules. He traveled, married, taught a school, was Cromwell's Latin secretary after he became blind, and published some poetry. He shared the unpopularity of Cromwell, and was in danger of his life. His enemies would gladly have ended his life, and the great "Paradise Lost" might never have been given to the world.

Then Milton, hid in obscurity, blind and forgotten, began on the wonderful work upon which his fame rests. He repeated the verses aloud to his daughter, or some friends, as they sat with him, and they wrote them down. In 1667 it was finished, and he received twenty-five dollars for the manuscript. It was long neglected, until the poet, Addison, gave it great fame. John Milton died in 1674.

Many of the world's greatest universities and colleges in England and America have had special exercises in honor of this man who did so much for the religious as well as the literary world.—Baptist Boys and Girls.

THE USE OF LEMONS.

It is well for people to know before typhoid fever comes walking into their homes that Dr. Asa Ferguson, of London, England, has discovered that lemon juice is a deadly foe to typhoid bacilli, and will cause the germs to shrivel up and die almost immediately.

A few drops of lemon juice in a glass of drinking water will kill any typhoid germs that may be in the water, and make the drinker immune from typhoid fever.

There are a great many things that lemons are good for besides making the refreshing lemonade.

Most everybody knows that to take hot lemonade when going to bed is good to break up a cold. Not so many may know that the juice of half a lemon in a cup of black coffee, without any sugar, will cure sick headache.

To take a strong, unsweetened lemonade before breakfast will also prevent and cure a bilious attack.

To take lemon juice mixed very thick with sugar will relieve that annoying, tickling cough.

If you drink a glass of water with lemon juice squeezed in it every morning it will keep your stomach in good order and prevent you from having dyspepsia.

When you have a bad headache rub slices of lemon along the temple, and it will soon give relief.

It is good if a bee or insect sting you to put a few drops of lemon juice on the spot.

To saturate a cloth with lemon juice and bind on a cut or wound will stop its bleeding.

If your fruit juices, such as cherry, strawberry, etc., do not jell readily add lemon juice to them, and it will cause them to jell.

Lemon juice and salt is good to remove iron rust.

If you have a corn that bothers you, rub it with lemon, after which a hot bath, and cut away the corn.

Now, if you want to have a beautiful complexion squeeze lemon juice into a quart of milk and rub it on your face night and morning.

There are many useful things that lemons will do for you if you only know what they are and try them. They should be used more freely than they are in most homes, and they might save you doctor bills.—Exchange.

A WORKMAN APPROVED.

"Now, boys," said father, "as soon as you have finished your breakfast I want you to get right at that weeding."

"All right, sir," answered Ralph pleasantly as he buttered a hot cake.

"The sun is so hot!" complained Albert as he squirmed on his chair.

"That is the reason I want you to get at it early," his father told him. "I have to drive over to Newton this morning, and want you to have it all finished by the time I get back."

Albert continued to frown as long as he was at the table, and followed Ralph to the garden with lagging steps. The latter generally did his own work and then helped his brother, but this morning their father had told them that each must do his own work without help from the other.

Whistling cheerfully, Ralph went at his task, neatly piling the weeds in little heaps so they could easily be gathered up and carried away; but Albert would weed for a minute or two and then stop to look down the row and wonder how much farther he had to go and how long it would take him, so he got on very slowly. And he was not very particular about getting all the weeds out, either. He grumbled about the dew making everything wet, and the sun made his back ache.

They had been working perhaps an hour or when they heard some one coming across the garden toward them.

"Uncle Ralph!" they exclaimed, eagerly springing up to greet the new-comer. An officer in the army, he was their hero. They never grew tired of listening to his stories of army life, and a visit from him was a great treat.

"Well! well!" he exclaimed, glancing over what the boys had been doing. "This reminds me of when I was a boy, only I had no brother, but had to work alone. Who did that?" he suddenly asked, pointing to what Ralph had done.

"I did," Ralph answered, and Albert's face grew red as his uncle glanced at his untidy row. He felt suddenly very much ashamed to have any one inspect what he had done, least of all Uncle Ralph. But "umph" was all his uncle said.

"Let me see if I have forgotten how to pull weeds." And off came Uncle Ralph's coat. He set to work on a particularly weedy spot, and the boys forgot to be tired or to think of the sun making them warm as they laughed at his jokes.

"Do you know," he said presently, "that when a man enlists in the army he has to learn to do many different kinds of work? No matter how dirty or disagreeable it is, that work has to be done the best he can do it. Long ago, when I enlisted in the army of Jesus, I took for my rule in life part of a Bible verse we had once memorized. 'A workman that needeth not be ashamed,' which means that I should do every task and duty as cheerfully and as well as I am able to, and it has been a big help to me in my army life. I wasn't much older than you boys when I became a Christian. I wonder if you wouldn't like to make that the desire of your lives?"

The boys were thoughtfully quiet, but Albert's face glowed with determination as he slipped back to the row he had been working on before Uncle Ralph came, and not a weed was left standing.

"There," exclaimed Uncle Ralph, when the last weed was pulled, "I call that a good job." And he looked over the clean rows with pride. "Now then, laddies," he said as he picked up his coat, "suppose we clean up a bit. I want to tell you about some things I have been doing lately. So we will scrub off some of this dirt, then go out on the porch, where we can rest and cool off while we talk."

And while he talked, the boys each resolved that he, too, would be "a workman that needeth not be ashamed."—Demarest Wentworth Rubins, in *Journal and Messenger*.

ERIC AND THE "COLONEL."

Eric went slowly out into the garden. For three long, creeping hours the sunshine and the birds and the smell of the clover had been calling, while he lay in bed and wished that mother would come and say the words which would show him that he was once more free and forgiven.

"When will my little son learn self-control?" mother said sorrowfully as she led him upstairs and began to unfasten the shoes from a pair of little feet that had taken him again out into the forbidden street and away from home. "What shall mother do to make him remember not to run away?"

"How would tying him up do?" came Uncle Ben's merry voice from the next room. "I'll drive a peg for him just as I have for the old rooster. He runs away, too, and gets into the next-door neighbor's garden, and makes no end of bother. But the queer thing is that all the little chicks love their mother so much that they won't run away. I'm glad; for I should hate to see the old mother hen wandering about, worried and anxious, looking for them. It must be terrible trouble."

Mother did not smile, as she often did, at what Uncle Ben said. There was a weary look in her face that went to Eric's heart. He hung his head in shame, and was glad when mother went out softly and left him alone "to think it over." He was really sorry. He had not meant to disobey; but it was so hard to keep just where he belonged, and such a little step over the forbidden boundary seemed to make him forget all about his promises.

One day it had been an organ grinder and a monkey—O, the cutest little monkey with a little red jacket; a dear little monkey that bowed, and held out his cap for pennies, and that cuddled right down in Eric's arms! Probably Eric walked miles that day through the hot, dusty

streets, and mother was almost sick with anxiety.

Another time it was an unbroken colt that went curvetting by, escaped from the stables; and every bound of its light hoofs and toss of its mane and glance of its eye was an irresistible call to Eric to follow.

Today it was a man who sold patent medicines. There was a chime of bells under his cart. His horses had red tassels on their heads, and he threw out little boxes of bonbons at beguiling intervals.

Now, any one can see that these were real temptations that Eric had to battle with. Eric knew this, and was thinking of it as he went slowly down into the garden and the sunshine and the smell of clover.

Suddenly he stopped; for there, within a few feet of him, was old Colonel, the rooster, tied to a stake and tugging to be freed at sight of Eric. Poor old Colonel! Then it flashed across to Eric what Uncle Ben had said: "The little chicks love their mother too much to run away from her but the old rooster has to be tied up."

Eric loved his mother so! He stood looking down at old Colonel. "Mamma," he cried, "Will you untie old Colonel, and let me have care of him from running away the rest of the day? I will take a stick to drive him and some corn to coax him back when I can. But I know that if I have to keep something from running away, it will help me to remember how you feel; and I do want to stay by you life the little chicks."

There was a soft light in mother's eyes as she untied old Colonel—a light which mothers know about. It is kindled in the heart. It shone all that long, hot afternoon as she watched a little figure trudging about after a big, white rooster coaxing, driving, feeding.

And glad indeed was Eric that chickens go early to roost. It was a tired but happy little boy that mother folded in her arms that night. The clock struck eight as mother bent over the flushing little face to give another good-night kiss to the brave little boy who had tried. He stirred in his sleep and said: "The little chickens love their mother."

—Kindergarten Review.

Life is fuller and sweeter for every fulness and sweetness that we take knowledge of. And to him that hath cannot help being given from everything.—Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney.

A DUMP BOY WHO SAVED MITSY.

Fred Evans was a boy who worked in the dump in an Illinois coal mine. One day there was a cave in, and the earth and coal in settling imprisoned sixty men. The foreman of the remaining party saw the small opening that the cave-in had left between the places where these men stood and the outer world, and he spoke to this boy to know if he would dare to help him. "The hole is just big enough for you to crawl through," he said, "and to drag a hollow pipe after you. You'll have to be mighty careful, for the coal will settle and crush your life out. But if you can get it through to them, then we can pump air enough in to keep them alive till we can dig them out. Are you willing to try it?"

All Fred answered was "I'll try my best."

It was a long crawl, and many a time it stopped, and those outside gave up hope, but at last there was a faint call through it that told them he was there; they began pumping air and water and milk through the pipe, and kept it up for a week, when Fred and the whole sixty were safely brought out and given back to their families. He was only a boy, but these true stories of plucky boys and their heroism and devotion show that not only a prophet, but common, every-day people may hear the Lord's call to needed work; and that the answer reveals the kind of boy or girl or man or woman it is that bears it.—The Heidelberg Teacher.

Every man ought to carry his boughs so full of fruits that, like the apples which drop from silent dew, they will fall by the weight of their own ripeness for whoever needs to be refreshed.—H. W. Beecher.

Shocking Sounds

In the earth are sometimes heard before a terrible earthquake, that warn of the coming peril. Nature's warnings are kind. That dull pain or ache in the back warns you the kidneys need attention if you would escape those dangerous maladies—Dropsy, Diabetes, or Bright's Disease. Take Electric Bitters at once and see backache fly and all your best feelings return. "My son received great benefit from their use for kidney and bladder trouble," writes Peter Bondy, South Rockwood, Mich. "It is certainly a great kidney medicine." Try it. Fifty cents at all druggists.

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