

Family Department.

IN GOD'S HOUSE.

BY MISS F. H. MARR.

It matters little where I'm led,
Placed by the usher's hand;
Whether I sit in cushioned pew
Or with the paupers stand;
It is God's house, and He will be
Surely a gracious host to me.

It matters little what my garb,
If it be plain or fine;
Whether rich silks and jewels bright
Or threadbare robes be mine;
But God will see if my soul's dress
Is made of Christ's pure righteousness.

It matters little who shall greet
Or who shall shun me there;
God knows if my heart speaks to Him
In anthem and in prayer;
And I shall surely know if He
Hath spoken gracious words to me.

It matters little what I drop
Into the passing plate;
'Tis God's acceptance that doth make
The smallest offering great;
And well He knows my scanty store
That e'en to Him can give no more.

In many homes no word, no smile,
No greeting waits for me;
But here the Father's every child
Must always welcome be;
O house, to weary spirit dear,
I cannot come too often here.

—Parish Visitor, N. Y.

THE LORD'S PURSEBEARERS.

CHAPTER V. (CONTINUED.)

'Oh! ay! they're all here,' she answered gaily; 'all as have been hanged for the last thirty years. They're pretty company for me when Joan's away. I could tell you all their names; but bless you! I don't tell the city missioner or the Bible women what they are. I'm just a finishin' the last and Joan'll hang him up afore she comes to bed. That's what makes us so late to-night.'

'It's almost as good as Madame Tussaud's,' remarked Isaac.

'Ay! I believe you,' she replied; 'I went there once, when I was a gal, and lor! dressed up like any lady I was; and I were treated into the 'Chamber o' Horrors.' That gave me the idear; that, an' the hangings when they are done out o' doors; both on em sight's o' London town.'

'Joan's a good girl?' asked Isaac, turning away from the dolls.

'Ay! she's a good gel, she is,' answered the old woman; 'I got her to sing her pretty hymns to me o' Sunday nights when she's not been out so long in the streets. I'd be loath to loose her, though I could get money for her share o' my bed. But there now! she loves my little mannikins almost as much as much as I do; don't you, Joan?'

'To be sure I do,' answered Joan cordially. 'Who begs bits o' cloth and things for you? You couldn't make them without me.'

At a quiet signal from Isaac she put down her supper on the chimney piece, and followed him on to the dark staircase. He had so great a trust in his grandchild that it was his custom to leave in her hands all his spare money, which he knew to be safer in her possession than his own, frequenting as he did the lodging-houses, where no property was secure excepting the

clothes he actually wore. It was never more than a few shillings, and when the craving for drink was strongest in him, he would demand every farthing from her.

He was hoping now that she had contrived in some way to save a little from his reckless importunities.

'No, grandfather,' she answered to his whispered inquiries, nothing save the sixpence Mrs. Moss paid back.'

'Well,' he said, 'I've got eight shillings and some coppers, and you must take care of them to-night, Joan; for the vaults aren't closed yet, and I shall want them in the morning. Don't let out a word to old Dolly younder. And hush! Joan, my dear, not a word about it! you and I'll leave London to-morrow.'

'Leave London!' she exclaimed almost aloud in her great surprise.

'Ay! I'm feeling poorly, my love,' he said, 'and we'll try change of air; you and me. Only don't you let out a syllable to anybody, specially Tatters, if she comes in just now. You'd like to quit London I know, Joan.'

'O grandfather she cried in an agitated voice, though she spoke low. 'Oh! I shall be so happy! Me and little Lucky were talkin' o' the country as we came home. Will Tatters go too?'

'No; curse Tatters!' he said, uttering a vehement oath or two, 'she's such a flaming vixen! We'll be happier by ourselves, you and me, and we'll see what luck we have alone. We must start at seven in the morning, and you'll be quite ready, Joan, when I whistle down the stairs? There'll not be much luggage between us.'

Joan finished her supper silently and thoughtfully, and hung up the new rag doll almost without a word. It was a strange sight to see the young girl kneel down beside the bed, from which the ugly little effigies were hanging and utter half aloud a few brief words of prayer. It was the simple prayer of a child of five or six years of age, and must have been taught her years ago by the mother whom she dimly remembered. A broken and troubled sleep was all the rest she got that night, as she lay beside the bedridden old woman, with the infamous dolls dangling above and around her, and she was up long before the factory bells rang six o'clock, in spite of old Dolly's remonstrances. It was very hard to keep her tongue still, and not speak of the brilliant expectations that were astir in her brain. The long hour seemed as if it would never pass away; but at length she heard her grandfather's whistle out of doors, and, with a sudden feeling of tenderness, she stooped down over the old woman, who had been the nearest approach to a friend she had had for many a year, and kissed her yellow and wrinkled cheek.

There was only one drawback to the perfect joys she felt in getting out of London; she was leaving little Lucky behind her.

But even Lucky was forgotten for a while when she found herself at the London Bridge Railway Station, amid a crowd of third class travellers thronging the ticket-office. Isaac bade her look as small and young as she could; for unless she could go for half-price, they had not money enough to take them as far as he wished into the country. The ticket clerk eyed her doubtfully, but he was busy, and Isaac's manner was deferential as he earnestly assured him the girl was just under twelve, though she was well grown for her age. It was still dark when they entered the train; and the late dawn was breaking in the gray light while they were yet in the suburbs of London. Joan watched the slow, sullen waking of the November day; but as they travelled farther into the country, the low clouds lifted themselves and the wintry sun shone out upon fields lying fallow, and hedgerows red with berries, and trees tossing their bare branches in the wind.

A keen thrill of rapture ran through all her veins, for every sight seemed familiar and home-like to her. Her eyes followed the flight of some rooks across the sky, and she felt as if she had watched them hundreds of time before. She forgot that she had tasted no food that morning; and now and then the tears stood in her eyes for very joy, but she wiped them away furtively. No, she would never, never go back to London!

It was midday before they reached Brighton, and for the first time in her life Joan saw the sea, gleaming and shimmering in the low light of the November sun. It was as if she found herself in another world. Yesterday her world had been London, with its yellow and clinging fog, and slippery pavements, and noisy crowds. To-day the sun shone brilliantly, and all over the vast plain of the sea the little ripples danced in the sunlight, and the sweet, fresh air played about her face, and the sky above her was blue, with glittering, white clouds chasing one another across it. It seemed to Joan as if a heavy burden rolled suddenly away from her spirits. As she paced the streets at her grandfather's side she sang as she had never sung before; and many a passer-by, not so busy here as in London, paused to look at the girls beaming face, and listen to her sweet young voice, and many a penny was dropped into Isaac's battered hat.

'If only little Lucky was here!' said Joan to herself.

CHAPTER. VI.

A SHAME AND A SIN.

If Joan had not slept well that night, neither did Roger Chippendell in the grand spare bedroom and soft bed of his daughter Joanna's new house. He had been too deeply agitated by his brief interview with his lost brother, and by his failure in finding him again at the address he had given, to be able to sleep. Half the night he spent in going over and over again the happy days when Isaac and he wore boys together. Now that Roger had once more clasped his brother's hand, and gazed into his brother's face, it seemed more than he could bear to lose sight of him again.

He was up early the next morning; and as he went out of his daughter's house to pace up and down Silverdale Road, in the hope that Isaac would not have the heart to break his promise He had given him all the money he had about him the day before, not as alms, but with a generous impulse from his very heart. Yet as he sauntered about the road, watching wistfully for Isaac, he thought regretfully that he had put it into his power to plunge again into the deep pit of his besetting sin. At this moment his brother might be too drunk to have any recollection of his promise.

At last, when his patience and hope were exhausted, he resolved to visit the taverns and spirit-vaults in the neighborhood. Roger Chippendell paused at the first crossing with a strange and painful contraction of the heart. A bareheaded and barefooted child, nearly naked and scarcely bigger than a baby, with a broom taller than himself, was sweeping the muddy crossing, and running beside the passers by, with a dirty little hand stretched out, and a pale face lifted up beseechingly. Roger laid his large, rough hand pitifully on his small head.

'Why, thou poor little lost lamb!' he said, 'I thought that all you London children were forced to go to school.'

'Gi'e me a copper!' pleaded the little urchin. 'And what will you do with it?' asked the old man.

'Gi'e it to father,' he answered.

'If you'll show me where father is,' said Roger in his kindest tones, 'I'll buy you a nice big cake.'