

man who seemed to be so interested in the good of her fellow creatures an invalid? Her hostess supplied the word for her, "One of the shut-ins, I used to be," she said, "but now sometimes I am taken out and enjoy the society of people. There were many years that I could not, but I am so thankful that my bad days come only once in a while. I do not often speak of myself, but your sympathy has moved me to do so. There are days when I can only lie in a darkened room and pray for strength to endure; I do not think we know what a boon health and freedom from pain are until they are taken from us. Do you know, Mrs. Simonds, I have sometimes felt as if I would give anything if I could just once walk across the room. I am wicked enough to long to do it, as I used to long to hold my little daughter on my lap; she is ten years old now and I have never in all her life held her on my lap. I have never been able to have her at home even, she has always lived with my mother, and comes to me for her vacations. But I have so much to be thankful for! I told my husband this morning if our means only equalled our causes for thanksgiving, my little envelope would be full to bursting."

As Mrs. Simonds walked down the street she said to herself, "I am ashamed of myself to think how I have enjoyed my babies as a matter of course and often fretted because they were a care." Passing through the five cent store she thought of something she wanted; while waiting for her change she noticed a little old woman in very rusty mourning, who was not ragged or dirty, but so neat that even her black gloves were a mass of darts. "I wish I could afford them," she was saying to the clerk, as she wistfully fingered two little pictures. "I'm sure they are cheap enough, ten cents for the two," said the girl. "Yes, it isn't that; may be next week or the week after I may have a little money to spare." "What do you do with them?" asked Mrs. Simonds, struck by the incongruity between the old woman and the blue eyes, blonde tresses and gay attire in the picture. "Why you see," and the old face turned confidently towards her, "I take a few things around to sell—that's the way I make a little—and I thought perhaps the children would be pleased with these pictures; which do you think is the prettiest?" She held up a dark-haired maiden with very pink cheeks, "but my change is scarce to-day." "Let me make you a little New Year's present," said Mrs. Simonds; "that will buy two," and she turned to leave. Before she had reached the door the little bent form was beside her, and the old hand with the ten cents carefully held in its gathered palm was held out. "Now that's kind of you; but are you sure you can spare so much? I would rather not take it if you are not sure you can spare it. Mebby it will cramp you. Well, it's just as good of you as can be; God bless you for thinking of an old lady like me."

Mrs. Simonds halted a moment at her next stopping place before ringing the bell. She dreaded to be admitted, yet felt it to be her duty to call. One who had been her friend since her childhood, had lived here in wealth and pride until within a few short weeks; now the name she bore was covered with disgrace, her husband was a convicted forger, and had been shut up for a term of years within prison walls. The interview between the two friends was too painful to be narrated, but that night Mrs. Simonds laid her head on her husband's shoulder and said with sobs breaking her voice at the remembrance of the misery she could not mitigate, "John, I always thought that death was the most dreadful thing that could enter our home, but it seems almost nothing in comparison with such trouble. I never thought to thank God every day of my life that my husband is an honest man, somehow it never occurred to me that he could be anything else. What a legacy it is to give to one's children and children's children, a fair and untarnished name!" "And let us thank Him," John answered gently, "that He keeps us from so temptation."

It was nearly five o'clock when Mrs. Simonds stepped into the car to return home. She glanced at the lady beside

whom she sat, noting only that she was a stranger who was dressed in deep mourning. She settled down and became absorbed in looking back over the events of the day, until she was startled by the sound of a repressed sob from the stranger. Instinctively she reached out her hand and laid it on her neighbor, who shook with the effort to keep back her sobs. As they neared the top of the hill the lady became quieter and leaned forward, saying through her heavy veil, "Thank you so much for your unspoken sympathy. My heart is breaking; I am taking my only child, my son, to the Sanitarium, and I have been a widow only six months."

"What can I say to this poor mother?" thought Mrs. Simonds, despairingly. "He may get better," she ventured. "No, the doctors give me no hope, it is softening of the brain." As the mother with her son and attendant got off on one side of the car, Mrs. Simonds stepped from the other, to be taken possession of by four little hands. Oh, how sweet, how infinitely sweet to that mother were the eager kisses, how precious the clasp of the little fingers around her own! "Mamma, you never can guess what Ruth has made for supper—it's a beautiful ginger-bread, 'cause she said you'd be so tired and it would smell so good." "And, mamma, you looked so bothered this morning, I worked hard at my problems and got a hundred," added Robbie. As the light and comfort and happiness of her own home revealed themselves at the opening door, a verse from an old poem mingled itself with the home-coming:

"Tis not by guilt the onward sweep
Of truth and right, O Lord, we stay;
'Tis by our blindness that so long
We hold the earth from heaven away."

WOMAN'S WORK, DOES IT PAY?

BY MRS. ARNOLD MOSER, HIAWATHA, KANSAS.

We are living in an intensely practical age, and a desire for the best of everything has reached its climax. How often we hear these trite expressions: "What good can I get from it?" "I have no time for that!" "Does it pay?" A majority of us are prone to measure whatever is presented to our consideration by one standard—its utility. A great many consider no undertaking practical unless it will bring in a generous supply of dollars and cents. (Others estimate its value in proportion to the fame, position or influence it will bring them.)

We are glad that this element of selfishness does not permeate all undertakings, but that there are some who consider that undertaking the most practical that will the most benefit humanity. Life is full of possibilities, and it is a culpable weakness that prevents us from battling with adversity, and seeking to attain a higher vantage ground. Exemplary lives are every day shedding their influence around us, and we see to what a high standard of spiritual excellence such lives have attained. What is possible for one, is usually possible for us all, and we, too, by the grace of God may attain that excellence if we will.

What glory was there on the brow of Mary of Scotland, or Elizabeth of England, or Margaret of France, or Catherine of Russia, compared with the worth of our dear sisters, who are devoting all their consecrated energies to the work of "Rescuing the perishing, caring for the dying. For Jesus is merciful, Jesus will save," or of that woman mentioned in the Scriptures who put her all into the Lord's treasury, or of Jephthah's daughter, who made a demonstration of unselfish patriotism, or of Abigail, who rescued the herds and flocks of her husband, or of Ruth, who toiled under a tropical sun for poor old, helpless Naomi, or of Florence Nightingale, who went at midnight to staunch the battle-wounds of the Crimea, or of Mrs. Adoniram Judson, who kindled