

FAMILY DEPARTMENT.

NEW YEAR'S HYMN.

Choose thou my lot for me,
My Father, God and King!
May I be still, and rest in Thee,
Nor ask what time shall bring!
Nor what the new-born year may show
Of grief or gladness, joy or woe.

Choose Thou, for I am weak:
Do Thou with me abide,
I need each hour Thy grace to seek
To keep me by Thy side,
That, leaning upon Thee alone
I may to Heaven journey on.

Choose Thou for me, O Lord—
So great Thy love has been,
So freely have Thy gifts been poured,
I well on Thee may lean!
And trust Thy love to choose for me
What here on earth my lot shall be.

Choose Thou my lot, my God,—
And choose me in Thy love,
That through the Saviour's precious blood
My hope may be above.
Be Thou the Portion of my lot!
The world must change—Thou changest not!

Choose Thou for me and mine!
Whate'er this year may show,
O may our faith more brightly shine,
Our love more warmly glow,
Till passing on from strength to strength
We all to Zion come at length!

—M. A. in *The Calendar.*

JOSEPHINE'S COURAGE.

(From the *Young Churchman.*)

Poor Josephine stood with meekly folded hands before her uncle and received his scolding in silence.

How very angry he was! He talked as volubly, and almost as shrilly as a woman. It was difficult to keep silence, and her patience seemed to exasperate him even more than when she had formerly given "railing for railing."

"Shoes!" he cried. "Have I not work when I must rest to keep them good for you? Have I not been father to you, and made a house for you? And you must give nothing back, but be idle always; and now this I will not permit, that you go out heir church! And you will not obey. You must find other place for you."

His fierce little eyes glared at her, and he wrought himself into such a rage that she feared he would throw the worn shoe at her head. Ah, it had been a hard struggle for the girl, in the few weeks past, with no one to help her, and every one in the house against her.

Sometimes she was ready to give up in despair, and to yield herself to her uncle's will, for the sake of peace and quiet.

Her dear friend and teacher, Mrs. Somers, pitied her extremely, and looked on in fear and trembling, for Josephine was a mild-tempered, gentle girl, naturally, and she feared for her courage in the perpetual battle that had been going on ever since she had been baptised.

She had not been confirmed when the Bishop made his visitation. The Rector had advised her to wait, hoping her uncle might be appeased sufficiently in time, to give his consent to her receiving the rite.

He was an irritable, violent-tempered little French Republican, who had come to America before Josephine was born. She was a niece of his wife and had been in his family since the death of her father and mother, three years before. Calling himself "Catholic," with fiercest emphasis, he was really an unbeliever, and tyrannical in the highest degree. His gentle, old wife never disputed his slightest word, and sat quiet and meek at home, seldom venturing beyond her own gate. Josephine had trembled at his frown, and listened to his fault-finding with terror. She feared him and avoided him as much as possible, and he generally ignored her, excepting when she needed clothing or boots for school. However, few were her needs—it was like facing a battery, to make them known, and the poor aunt only ventured, after many failures, while the young girl usually hid herself, covering her ears to avoid

hearing the storm that was sure to burst in violence.

Mrs. Somers had been her kind friend, and had called forth enthusiastic affection from the forlorn girl. She was rather troubled when she found that her few pleasant words and little occasional attentions, had led Josephine to follow her with almost passionate devotion to Sunday-school, to church, and, indeed, wherever she could do so.

The uncle did not oppose, at first. In fact they were not certain that he observed her movements at all. He never attended a service, and would not permit his wife to do so. The Priest was not allowed to darken his doors, and he never spoke to, or looked at Josephine if he could avoid doing so.

Never had Mrs. Somers, enthusiastic teacher, ardent Churchwoman, zealous, earnest Christian, found a scholar that touched her sympathetic heart as the little friendless French girl did. She looked at the girl's kindling eyes and flushing cheeks for interest and encouragement. No wonder that her affections warmed to a being that hung upon every word she uttered, while so many girls received her teaching with indifference. It was delightful to speak of God and the Church, of Holy Baptism and prayer, to a creature that thrilled at every word, and whose soul was stirred in a way that changed her whole character.

When Josephine had grown pale and thin with grieving at her unregenerate state, had lost her appetite, and mourned sore, Mrs. Somers had ventured to "beard the lion in his den," and to ask him to consent to Josephine's baptism.

The timid old aunt received her. Her husband was absent, but she ventured to give her consent, moved by her niece's distress, and a great weight was lifted from the girl's heart when she had been baptised.

She was so very happy and light-hearted that her teacher was infinitely moved and touched, and took courage to work against the many difficulties that met her, cheered by the thought of that one sweet soul saved.

Great was the wrath of the old shoemaker when he learned what had happened and poor Josephine was

"A martyr by the pang
Without the palm."

Incessant persecution in the ways that were torture to her, she had to bear. He burned her Bible, and her Prayer Book. He scoffed at the Church and derided her teaching, and when the patience of his victim exasperated him beyond reason, he even struck her.

"She ate his bread, and lived on his labor. She was idle and wasteful. Her boasted piety did not help her make her living," were a few of the angry accusations he hurled at her.

She had taken upon herself, with her Christian armor, all the battle, and would not let her aunt encounter the storm of her uncle's anger on her account. She made known her own needs to the old man.

"You must find other place for you," he had said, when she gave him her worn shoe, that morning. He had railed at her for not bringing it sooner, and had she done so would have been equally furious that she did not wait longer, so she could only keep silence, with bent head, feeling the burden of pain and misery to be almost more than she could bear.

Ah, if she could only find another place—and why not? She only waited to escape, and ran breathlessly to her friend's house for advice and comfort.

"Perhaps the time has come now, and I could go. Aunt is willing. She does not need me, and suffers when I suffer. I am sure she would be glad if I could go away and do well. Then I could go to Church and be happy. I think, dear Mrs. Somers, I will try, and God will show me if it is right. I asked uncle to let me leave a year ago, but he was very angry, and would not; so I thought God meant me to

bear it, and would help me, but now it tells me to go, and I think I ought."

"I think so, too, dear child," answered her kind friend. "At any rate we can do the one right thing at a time, as far as we can see, and He will lead you on, step by step. It is better that you should work, as you say your aunt does not need you, and you cannot help her—in fact, only make it rather worse for her."

It was a sad heart under the clean quiet dress that Josephine carried with her, the Summer morning, when she went on board the steamer, on her way to a northern lake post. Mrs. Somers had given her letters to two of her friends in A——, and hoped that some quiet place, where she could take service, would be found for her.

"In ways they have not known,
He leads His own,"

dear child," she whispered, as she kissed the girl, greatly yearning over her, and full of sorrow at the parting.

"Surely He will guard you. Your one wish is to do His will. You have suffered for Him. You are not forsaking a duty to follow your own will, and our prayers will be said daily for your guidance. Could you go forth better prepared?"

Her aunt dared not come to the boat, for farewell, but Josephine knew she watched her from the window, and her last words had been:—

"You are so brave, dear child, that I am ashamed of myself, and almost think I do wrong to fear your uncle so much. Why—" with a startled look, "it is fearing him more than God."

"Lowly in her own eyes," as she was, it had never occurred to Josephine that there was the bravery of a martyr in the spirit with which she had borne her pain, and in which she was going forth alone to an untried world.

She was very pale, trembling and shrinking, and sat in the stern of the steamer, the tears running down her cheeks, but with a quiet trustfulness and determination in her heart.

"The one thing to do now, is to keep brave till I get to A——," she said to herself. "I shall not worry about what is to come afterwards."

She made friends with two little friends on board, who came and sat by her, and amused her with their talk.

"We are going home," said the elder. "We have been away for weeks, ever so many—papa, mamma, we, two, Rob and Jamie—Nurse, too. We are so tired being away, for nothing is so nice as home."

"Are you going home?" asked the younger one, peering into her face.

"No, dear," answered the girl, choking back tears, while the children surveyed her pityingly and curiously.

"We went fishing, we did; and had picnics often, and found flowers, and lots of toads came out every night, and papa said it was to catch bugs and flies. Say, do you know if toads sit down?"

"I don't know. Why do you ask?"

"Because of toad-stools, you know. Don't they have 'em to sit on?"

Josephine laughed, and the trio became famous friends. They asked for stories, shared her lunch, and imparted their family history, so far as they knew it, till a stern looking nurse came in search of them, and scolded them for hunting up strangers "that nobody knew anything about."

Josephine flushed a little, and the little girls were led away very reluctant and rebellious, till she said to them:—

"You must be good and obey, you know." So they went off cheerfully.

(To be continued.)

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