

rough world, and I have often thought it a blessing, that she passed out of it so soon. But of that I will tell you more hereafter. I was the first to leave the nest. Hopping from limb to limb I was at length able to gain the top of the tree. I seemed to have found a new world for I could see about me for several miles, and even caught a glimpse of a distant city. How I envied the great hawk who soared in great circles high above me! But never mind; some day I should float up there too. In another week's time we had all learned to fly. The days passed quickly and soon we were almost able to take care of ourselves. Father and mother had taught us all the wonderful wood secrets: how to count; where to find our food; how to avoid traps and guns, and in short, all the hundreds of things that we birds are not allowed to tell. One day father took me with him to a small cave and showed me his many pretty treasures. What a strange collection that was; a pair of spectacles, broken bits of china, many pieces of tinsel and a small bit of looking-glass. I always laugh when I think of the looking-glass, for when I looked into it—I saw a little bird who mocked my every action. How father gurgled as he saw my puzzled look! You may wonder why a magpie should take pleasure in gathering such a motley collection. I do not think it at all strange. It is like all forms of collecting, a harmless hobby, that is all. As summer passed, we each day took longer flights, but always returned at night to sleep among the branches of the old oak tree. But one night two of my little brothers were missing. We searched for them all next day but they could no where be found. A week later we came upon a few scattered feathers under the thick hedge, and felt that our fears had proved only too well-grounded—our little companions had been killed by the fierce weasel that mother had taught us to dread. A few days after, another was captured by a hungry sparrow-hawk, so that now but three remained of the merry little band of six. Some time after this sad event we were greatly frightened by a strange animal, half-bird and half mouse, which flew one evening in an odd zig-zag fashion about our resting place. Mother calmed our fears by telling us not to be afraid as it was only a bat, and before we went to sleep she told us a quaint story about this peculiar creature. Once upon a time a great battle took place between the birds and the beasts. At first the bat fought on the side of the birds but finding his allies getting worsted in the conflict, he turned traitor and went over to the enemy. But the birds were victorious after all, and the renegade felt so ashamed of his conduct, that he and his family have ever since hidden in dark caves and clefts in the rocks, and never venture to come out except at night-time. I received the greatest fright of my life however, on the afternoon of the next day whilst hunting for snails at the foot of an old tree. After burrowing in the rotten wood for some time, I looked up to find two wicked lidless eyes fixed upon me while the narrow head with its forked tongue swung slowly to and fro. I tried to fly away but was powerless to move: my wings were completely paralyzed. Closer and even closer to me crept the loathsome creature, which I now recognized as our most dreaded enemy, the snake. How those evil eyes glittered as the great jaws opened to receive me! Slowly the reptile glided toward me as if enjoying the sight of my helpless terror. Closer still it came until by another wriggle the horrid jaws would engulf me. At that instant something swooped past me like a streak of lightning, and the next moment my enemy swung in the air, firmly clutched in the talons of the great hawk I had envied on that first day in the tree top. It was some time before I could move from the spot, but at last I found strength to make my way back to the grove where the others listened breathlessly to the story of my narrow escape. A week passed happily by and then came the saddest event of all. One bright sunny afternoon, sister Maggie, little brother Tim and I, were playing at hide-and-seek in the lofty tree-tops, when we saw some boys approaching. They had no gun, so we took no further notice but went on with our merry game. Suddenly one of the boys drew from his pocket an odd-shaped stick with a rubber band. Twang went the rubber, and little Tim, brim full of liveliness and fun but a moment before, fell from the tree-top to the hard ground beneath. With an exultant laugh the boy and his companions then passed on. When they were gone, Maggie and I dreading we knew not what, flew down to the side of our little brother. He lay quite motionless and still. We chirped and called him tenderly by name, but he did not answer, the loving voice was silent, the bright eyes were glazed and sightless. "He is asleep," said Maggie. Alas! I knew what that sleep meant, for never again would he awake to see the sun

rise o'er the dewy eastern hill. Yes, he was asleep, little Tim was dead.  
(To be Continued.)

### THE REWARD OF FAITH.

Lame from his birth, he was carried and laid daily at "the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful," to beg of the passers by. They had to do something with him. For he was poor; and helpless; and a beggar; a great burden to the community; a greater burden to his friends; and the greatest burden to himself. And he had been a burden ever since the hour he was born. But helplessness and poverty are not burdensome to Love. This cripple-beggar came into the world a living, daily, hourly joy. His very weakness and dependence made him dear—oh, so dear. How dear, only a mother can know. When they laid him in his mother's arms, a tiny bundle of helplessness, warm and soft and sweet, snuggling with feeble strength into her arms, how she smiled to hear him cry! With her own weak arms, how closely she drew him into her caresses, held him close to her warm breast, and smiled again and thanked God, and wept for love and joy as he fell asleep at the dear fount of life. Her baby boy! He was helpless, and naked, and penniless, and had to be held, and carried, and fed and clothed. But he wasn't a burden. No more than a strong, rich, able-bodied man of forty-five years is a burden to God. He may be just as poor and helpless and weak—he may be blind, in addition—but he isn't a burden to the Heavenly Father. No one is a burden to Almighty Love. The baby grew. And one day the mother, stooping to the floor with the little burdenless burden in her arms, stood him on his feet, and cooed in mother fashion to her nestling dove that it was time for him to learn to walk. But the weak little legs doubled under his tiny weight. He could not stand. It was so much sweeter to be picked up and carried. "He is too little," cooed the mother, and picked him up and carried him on her heart as before. Then one other day she tried again. And again she said, "My baby is too little; he musn't try to walk yet." And another day, and yet another time, she tried. Until at last, one bitter day, she tried just once more. And then she laid him on his little bed, and bowed her white, frightened face upon him, and tried to pray. But the broken heart could only sob—for it knew at last the truth it had feared. The sweetness of the gift of God had turned to worm-wood. Her soul cried out for help and sympathy—for pity and love. Nay, it cried out in rebellion. Why had God forgotten her baby, after He had given the little son to her? How could He forget her little one—how could He? How could He? Ah, but God never forgets. When we can't walk, He stoops down, lifts us up into the Everlasting Arms, and carries us. I've seen Him carrying men fifty and seventy and ninety years old. This man—forty years they carried him in their arms—friends whom God made tender-hearted and strong-armed with love. Through childhood, and youth, and young manhood, and into middle life. He didn't want to be carried, now that he was a man. He wanted to walk, to work, to grow weary; to see his hands callous, to feel his back ache with a burden; to eat bitter bread in the salt sweat of his face, to toil early and late to feed other helpless mouths; he wanted some one to be dependent upon him. And he wanted to die. God knows how many times he prayed for death. But God, sitting beside him there at the Beautiful Gate, was warding death away from him. For He was keeping him for strength, and life, and joy. And when the day came that the man had faith in the name of Jesus Christ, all these things came to him as the sunrise comes to the longest night. When they carried this man out of the house in the morning, where could they carry him? What was there for the poor and the helpless, the blind and the wretched; the weak and the sinful? There was the street, the highway, among the dogs and the vermin. In the storm, and the cold. And there were prisons—thousands of them. And dungeons; dark and cold and loathsome, for the unfortunates. And there were gallows, scaffolds, torture chambers; stakes, and fagots, for the burning of men and women and little children. Where could they carry this afflicted man? Where was there any place for the wretched, the unfortunate, the suffering? In all this world of wealth and beauty there was but one place for him. The "Gate Beautiful." Where was that? There was but one in all the world of wisdom and statecraft and strength and compassion. That was at the house of God, opening inward into the church—"My Father's House," Jesus loved to call it. And when they laid the cripple

there, they laid him at the feet of Jesus. And all the long-deferred joy and sweetness and strength of his life came to him there. And from that day the world—the world that tolerates the Church, the world that despises it, the world that hates it, the world that persecuted it—learned to bring its poor and helpless and suffering to the doors of the Church. The only place in the world for hunger and neglect, for sorrow and sin, for heart-ache and love-hunger, for weariness and despair. "I am the door," said Jesus. That is the Gate which is called Beautiful. Robert J. Burdette, D.D., in "Sunday School Times."

### WORSHIP.

I said our outward habits react upon our inward character. This is true not only of our postures, such as kneeling in worship and prayer, but is true in still greater degree with reference to our observance of the Lord's Day, and our attendance upon the public services of His Church. The man who neglects observance of Sunday by worship in Church not only neglects the outward witness before the world of his own belief in God, but neglects God's provision for keeping alive in heart and mind the love and true knowledge of God. The man who gives up habitually and deliberately these elements of religion for either work or recreation will, beyond all doubt, ultimately give up religion itself. He who neglects the public worship of God on the Lord's Day, especially the Holy Communion, may retain outward respectability, may retain his place in social life but there is nothing in God's Word to indicate that he will escape the condemnation of an unfaithful and disobedient servant. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood ye have no life in you." It is so easy, when one begins to relax his reverence for the Lord's Day, to pass from one thing to another, until the final result is far beyond what one would have thought possible in the beginning. This is why we should watch so carefully how far we allow ourselves to go in relaxing the rule of Sunday observance. The danger is that the habit grows stronger or weaker as we cultivate or neglect it. It is like the drink habit in reverse order. Begin to grow careless and you can never tell where you will end. I have known men and some women who began with what would be a quiet game of tennis in their own grounds at home who have gone on, step by step, until now they have no more reverence for Sunday than the most benighted heathen in darkest Africa. The thought of going to church on Sunday never enters their mind. It has no place at all in their plans or engagements for the day. They have practically given up their religion and in many cases their sense of moral responsibility as well. And yet they were once communicants of the Church, sons or daughters of God-fearing mothers, if not of pious fathers. One does not need to be a Puritan to recognize the great moral and religious decadence which threatens our communities from this source. Our country homes, with the "week-end" house parties, have had not a little to do in starting this growing habit of indifference. First the bicycle, then golf and the automobile have played their part. Beloved, let us do what lies in our power to keep alive in our own hearts and to rekindle in others the principle so beautifully set forth in the words of the psalmist which we have chosen as our text, "O come, let us worship and fall down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker."—Dean Craik.

### CAIN THROUGH LOSS.

By Henry Henton.

Philip Knott, farmer, was known to his neighbours as an obstinate man. Even in a slight matter of opinion—about the weather, say, or the correct road somewhere—Philip Knott would not brook contradiction. None knew this better than Mrs. Palmer and her daughter Mary, who kept house for the farmer. However, except small every-day eruptions, nothing serious happened until his nephew and heir refused to cease attending church because Philip Knott had had some difference of opinion with the Vicar. He forbade Evan to enter the church again, and expected him to obey, and thought he had done so, until one Sunday night he saw him leaving the church after evening service. He hurried home, opened the door, and came up to the table where Mary and her mother sat. He brought down his first on the table with such force that the lamp nearly fell over, then shook his fist and muttered:

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"My nephew from this n Evan's retur fact, old Ph ended by or house for ev alone, and s keeper. The when he can to live. He a good girl he said. "my precious in your life. thank me. find that I'll yours. Now the will in side." The uttered. A weeping for his way—and of Evan. the funeral, house, a ma led by a dog! She went to hand, while blindness. will you will swered, "bi speak of it, yourself." felt in her p went to the The will la went softly The flames: not be so h will find you had a long the funeral, him. Her t his comfort. if he had s kindly ones bitter. Soor It was "to was the gen Mary, and: the living a only Mary seemed cert as the dea everything. "for poor l —she had f was packing —very hard, knew nothin stay now," ing." "Go home! Oh, days, I wou think I will am rich." he went on thing now, and I love y my brighte Mary, Mary down to he sightless ey leave you, stay."

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