

He rubbed his eyes as he laid down the flowers and went away.

"Mamma," said Elsie, "I'm good for more than a flower, ain't I?"

"What a question for the child to ask!" said mamma, kissing her.—*Selected.*

GENEROUS OF PRAISE.

HOW much better the world would be if only people were a little more generous of praise! Let no one suppose that we are speaking of flattery; we mean simply praise, or, as Webster gives it, "Honor rendered because of excellence or merit." How easy it is to find fault when everything does not run smoothly!—when anything is omitted which ought to have been done! Why should it not be just as easy to give commendation for the right done?

The day is drawing to its close, and the wife and mother, weary with household care, sits for a moment waiting the sound of the home-coming feet. The door opens quickly, and they have come. "How bright and cheery you look here! But you always make home look that!" and the husband's kiss on her cheek brings back the care-less girlhood days, and the life looks suddenly bright again.

"The boys wanted me to stay all night, mother, it was so stormy; but I thought I would rather come home, and I'm glad now I did!" and the boy glanced around the pleasant sitting-room with a look that told plainer than words how attractive a spot it was to him. The mother's weariness had gone, like the shadows before the light.

How many homes are rendered unhappy by too much fault-finding, and too little just praise! "And if one cannot praise—what then? Whittier in his beautiful poem—'My Birthday,' says,—

Love watches o'er my quiet ways,
Kind voices speak my name,
And lips that find it hard to praise,
Are slow, at least, to blame."

Yes, one can always be "slow, at least, to blame." The fact that little faults try and vex us, in those dear to our hearts, only goes to prove that the general character is good, and there is much to praise. The whiter the snow, the darker look all objects against it. Why not admire the whiteness which forms the background?

Then, if we look within, if we see with impartial eyes the short-comings of our own lives, will we not be slower to notice flaws in others? Shall we not say, in the words of Shakespeare: "I will chide no breather in the world but myself, against whom I know most faults"? If then we are so frail, so weak ourselves, so dependent on the kindness and forbearance of others, shall we not do the little we can to make the world brighter in turn for them?

If there is anything to admire or praise—and

there is always something—speak the word now; it will brighten the weary hours, it will prevent the bitter regret that comes too late when mother's tired hands are folded, the hands that were never slow in their loving service for us, the loving face that was so often shadowed by our failing to give a word or two of well-earned praise, or saddened by our ready fault-finding, is hidden from our sight. Boys or girls who can so readily make or mar the happiness of home and mother, think of this before it is too late. Save yourselves from that which will sadden the happiest hours of your life, when many miles of land or sea, or perhaps the River of death may have parted you from those who were nearest and dearest to you. The thought that will always come when the mind goes back to early life, that we might have done *so much* while they were with us, to make them happy but didn't.

A. F. B.

THE TELEGRAPH.

Suppose that you possessed a magnetic telegraph for your exclusive use, by which you could send messages to distant friends in any part of the world. "What an invaluable treasure!" you might exclaim.

But have you not one *far more valuable*?—one operating room of which is your own heart, the other your heavenly Father's audience-chamber. And if it be needful for your happiness, and does not interfere with your best good, the answer to your communication will be instantaneous.

What a thrill of emotion was experienced at the first successful result (as was thought) of the Atlantic Cable! And what Christian does not remember the *first direct answer* to prayer—perhaps immediate—which he ever received?

How vividly comes up to memory's eye the scene of sorrow or disaster, perplexity or anxiety; his silent closet; that hour alone with God; that weight of care or grief; the entire unburdening of the soul into a Father's bosom,—perhaps a voiceless one!—

"The burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near."

Unlike human machinery, those irregular motions cause no interruption to the flow of the electric current of that spiritual battery. They are all under the influence of one great controlling agent—*faith*. It performs its office well. The work is done. The answer will be given.

How sweet the rest of soul which follows, even willing that the answer be a while delayed! But He who doeth "above all that we ask or think," even "*exceeding abundantly*," has vouchsafed a speedy one: "How great is his loving-kindness to them that fear him!"—Eph. iii., 20. M. P. H.

Oh! how good it is to work for God in the day time, and at night to lie down under his smiles.