

A CHEERING MESSAGE.

In the rush of work which seems to take up almost every available minute of the day, I often feel that the Quiet Hour does not get the attention it should receive. I too often write it in a great hurry, and see—when it appears in print—how far from what it ought to be it is. When it almost seems as though it ought to be put into the hands of someone who could devote more time to it, there comes some cheering message like the following letter, received to-day:

"My dear Hope,—I am again sending you some simple poems for the Quiet Hour, which you may use at any time in the future when it may seem convenient. Your talk on 'unconscious influence' is before me as I write. I want to thank you for the sweet inspiration it has given me. You can scarcely realize, dear Hope, how much your own 'unconscious influence' is doing through those beautiful talks in the Quiet Hour. A busy farmer said to me a short time ago, 'I cannot tell you how much the Quiet Hour in 'The Farmer's Advocate' has helped me. I always turn to that page the first thing, and often find there just what seems to meet my present needs.' This is the unsought testimony of one of earth's toilers—the busy farmer. May God continue in the future, as in the past, to bless you and make you a blessing.

"Yours very sincerely,

"CARRIE HAYWARD.

"P. S.—If you deem the poem, 'Only a Thought,' unsuitable for publishing, lay it aside; it is just a little bit of my own heart-experience, and may not appeal to others.—C. H."

Mrs. Hayward's poems are always welcomed by the readers of the Quiet Hour, and this one, "Only a Thought," will, I know, touch the right spot. As for your words of encouragement, dear Mrs. Hayward, you don't know how they have helped me. If God is still willing to send messages through me, He can easily do so, even though the words may be written in a hurry. I don't want to give up the work I love, either here—in the city—or there—in the country. I am certainly not tired of talking to you, and only fear that you may be very tired of hearing what I say. Here is Mrs. Hayward's poem:

ONLY A THOUGHT.

It came to me at the dawn of day,
Just a heaven-born, love-warm
thought,
And I gave it place in my inmost heart,
Blessed and cheered by the joy it
brought.

The busy day came on apace;
But through all its toil and care
My heart was glad, for my morning
guest
Still held possession there.

There were other thoughts—a motley
throng—
That came and went that day;
But only those that were sweet and
pure,
With my first glad guest could stay.

'Twas only a thought, but it sweetened
toil,
And my burdened heart grew light;
And I thanked my Father for His gift
When I laid me down that night.

And I wondered then if my wayward
heart,
Could ever give place again
To the gloomy and ill, which only
brought
Disappointment and doubt and pain.

When these beautiful, tender, heaven-
sent thoughts,
Would come to me day by day;
Did I not so often close the door,
And turn from the boon away,

Oh each beautiful thought that we
cherish and hold
Is a drop of Heaven's own joy;
A precious gift from our Father's love,
Unmixed with earth's vain alloy.

Then, dear one, if weary of inner strife,
If longing for rest and peace,
Make room in your heart for each
heaven-born thought,
And turmoil and strife must cease.

M. CARRIE HAYWARD.

Corinth, Ont.

THE QUIET HOUR

A PEEP INTO A SETTLEMENT HOUSE.

The dear lady with whom I live said to me just now: "What are you going to write about, this time?"

"I don't know," was my answer. "Would you like to spend the day with me?"

Let us begin at the very beginning. First comes, of course, our dear little prayer: "I praise my God this day, I give myself to God to-day, I ask God to help me to-day. Lord Jesus, I love Thee, and I want to love Thee more." With soul refreshed, and body all in a tingle from a cold splash, the work of the morning begins. Family prayer before breakfast, and a short service in the church round the corner, after breakfast. Then my assistant and I were busy in the office, making out lists of children and cards, etc., until it was time to get the rooms ready for the rush after school. Oh, yes, we did take half an hour for dinner—though we, both of us, rather grudged the time spent in that necessary duty. It is 3.30, pouring rain! Will any of the teachers come? They all live at a distance, and must come on the electric car. Yes, here comes the head sewing teacher, smiling and ready for the fray. Then comes the children—dear little tots of six, seven and eight, for one sewing class older ones for another class, and still older girls for the embroidery class. They are all dripping and eager. "Is

little girls. Woe betide anybody who tries to introduce a new member into this class. The Superintendent knows better than to try such a risky experiment. Clans must be respected in settlement work. As there is no one to take the class, and the rain is pouring down in a steady stream, the girls must be looked after in some way. They are put into the new library, a fascinating place, and spend an hour and a half dipping into their new treasure. "The new library!" shall I tell you where it came from? A month ago I told the congregation (through the church paper) that these children were eager for books. They are continually coming to me and saying: "Can you lend me a book?" and my stock was soon exhausted. Money is needed for so many necessities and books are things they can live without. I asked for books—books that had been read and were lying useless on the shelves. And books came—one friend sent thirty-six—soon there were 110, large and small, ready to be covered. Then I told the young people, or at least a few of our young people, that they might have the pleasure of covering them. You don't know how fine they look, now that they are all covered alike with brown paper. More are coming soon, for everybody is growing interested in our new lending library, and it is to be opened on Saturday to all our children. They are excited, and so am



"THERE IS A RAPTURE ON THE LONELY SHORE."—Byron.

Miss Williams here?" "Is our teacher coming?" Here comes another, another and another. Six teachers have braved the storm, and two are absent. The little ones are soon ranged in groups on the little kindergarten chairs, sewing away at cheesecloth dusters and chattering happily to their teachers and each other. The embroidery class is down stairs in a brightly-lighted basement making bags to hold the pretty work, and listening to an interesting fairy story. The "Little Mothers" are playing house with their dolls' furniture, dishes, etc. Learning to keep house in dainty fashion, as they have little opportunity of learning in their tiny flat-homes. They go home, wild with excitement to talk for hours about the tiny stove and sideboard and bed, the little chairs and tables, the tub and irons, with a real handle that can be taken off just like the big irons. The little mothers do not tire of toys that can only be played with for an hour or two once a week, and the pretty room in which they play is a very different place from the dull rooms where many of them live, crowded together.

What shall we do with the other class, the one that is without teachers? These are all Florence St. children—a clan of

I, for it was a castle in the air—I was nursing all last winter, and as soon as I told other people about it, my castle went up like Aladdin's palace.

But we wander from our subject, which was "a peep into a settlement house." Leaving the girls to revel in story books, I put on rubbers and dashed out in the rain to see how the carving class was getting on—this is carried on in a separate building. The boys were just beginning work, with a real carpenter to teach them. Finding that they knew more about the carving business than I did, I went back to send my little girls home—they were very unwilling to turn out of their comfortable quarters, but the teachers could not be kept too long. Then there was the evening cooking class to be looked after. Everybody wants to belong to a cooking class—even the boys are going to learn "camp cooking." See the bright-faced girls in their white caps, muslin sleeves and aprons, carrying out the order of the teacher. How she can find something for each one to do is a mystery, but she is smiling and serene, and knows her business perfectly. When the cooking is done, the girls set the table, which looks very nice indeed. First the "silence club" is put on, then

the white tablecloth; then the blue and white dishes and the shining knives and forks. The dainty paper napkins give just the finishing touch—no, I am wrong, the finishing touch is the sight of the fresh young faces around the table.

Classes every day, many of them, and the mornings spent in preparation for them, or in looking up absentees. The days just fly, and we get into friendly relations with so many people. Do you wonder that we find the work enjoyable? I have many willing assistants. To-day, I came home to find in the letter-box postals from two of these—ladies I only met a few weeks ago. The first said:

"Dear Lady,—Is there anything I can do? Haven't deserted you, but have been compelled to ease up on a lame foot."

She twisted her ankle the other day, but is still eager to look after our "orphans," as she will persist in calling the children.

The second postal was from another glad and willing helper—a young Swedish girl. She says: "I couldn't come in to-day as I hoped, will come in early to-morrow morning and stay until 3.30, so plan to make good use of me, please." She lives six or seven miles away, and teaches in a play-ground after school every day, and all day on Saturday, and yet is volunteering to help us every moment she can spare. I really am amazed at the number of friends who are interested in the work. And this is only a small settlement. Just thing how many must be working all around us. I think there are fourteen settlement houses in this neighborhood. I haven't done as much preaching as usual, have I? Have I not? Don't you feel inspired to start a settlement of your own? You can gather a few children about you once a week, and get into close touch with them. That is the chief business of a settlement worker. And children love to be organized into a club. One of our Jewish girls came in a few minutes ago for a friendly chat. She said: "My little sister came home so happy yesterday, because she was made vice-president of the knitting club. She was telling everybody." None of the children in the knitting club are over ten years old. We made the most troublesome child the secretary, and she gave up all her noisy ways, and became very grave and important, writing out the "minutes" with great care. Settlements grew from small beginnings. It is far better to begin in a small way and increase, than to begin with a great many children and find you can't manage them. Get some of the neighbors to help. Keep a careful record of attendance. A very good plan is to work towards an exhibition. The children think a great deal of having their things exhibited to parents and neighbors. Won't some of our readers make a beginning? Even if you only have six or seven children, you can win their friendship and help them to grow. Believe me, it is good for the teacher as well as for the pupil. Among the children, we grow young and keep on growing younger. Settlement work is simply reaching out in fellowship to those in the neighborhood, especially to the children and young people. You might try an evening club of boys or girls who are not children. They could play games or act charades, or perhaps sing choruses. The social element is the chief thing. Let them feel that you are their friend, and you can help them far more than you know without any actual preaching.

"Whatever in the world I am,
In whatsoever estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts
To keep and cultivate,
And a work of lowly love to do
For the Lord on whom I wait."
HOPE.

A Mexican paper, referring to the labor situation in Mexico, complains of the excessive number of holidays which the peon thinks he is entitled to. Out of 365 days of the year 131 are devoted to obligatory and traditional idleness, as follows: Sundays, 52; saint Mondays, 52; solemn feast days, 15; holy days, 3; national feasts, 3; family feasts, 6.