

Cruelty to Fathers.

A. T. TROWBRIDGE.

Protect the children, horses, dogs,
And don't neglect the donkeys;
Avenge the wrongs of petted frogs,
Maintain the rights of monkeys!
Prevent even cruelty to flies;
And then, just for variety,
O wise reformer! organize
Another new society.

When baby-shows are on the wane,
And fighting-cocks are parted,
And drivers all have grown humane,
And drovers tender-hearted;
When birds are safe, and babies free
From all their needless bothers,
'Tis time to think, it seems to me,
Of cruelty to fathers.

Enlisted once as parents, we
Soon yield to the aggression
Of rosy-fisted Tyranny
And curly haired Oppression.
All unawares upon us dart
Without remorse or pity,
These small invaders of the heart,
These dimpled, gay banditti.

I cannot pass my door, but one
Is at my coat-tail tagging;
They're often up before the sun,—
They wake me with their hugging.
No work is so important quite
As their delicious fooling;
At home, abroad, by day, by night,
They're at my heart-strings pulling.

When I sit lonely, sad or dumb,
They storm my Doubting Castle;
They rout my troubles; I become
Their unresisting vassal.
They witch my ears with countless charms,
A thousand artifices;
They bar, they chain me in their arms,
They rob me of my kisses.

No frowns repel their mad attack,
But these audacious friars
Still climb my knee, and ride my back,
And tweak my hair and whiskers.
You'd see, if you should catch us then,
How little it has signified
That I, the most oppressed of men,
Was ever the most dignified!

Therefore, I humbly touch again
The point from which I started,—
For drivers now are all humane,
And drovers tender-hearted;
You've freed the young and innocent
From all their needless bothers,
So now do something to prevent
This cruelty to fathers.

A Morning's Lesson.

BY MRS. CARRIE A. GRIFFIN.

"AUNTY BARSTOW, do you know I am half inclined to ask, with Mr. Mallock, if life is worth living?"

"Helen Willoughby!"

"There, Aunty, don't look at me over your glasses in that way, as if I had broken the Ten Commandments in one breath. I mean it. Is life worth living? My life, at any rate! What does it amount to? It's the same old story, day after day: Calling and receiving calls; going to parties, and getting home late; getting up in the morning with a wretched headache, just to go through the same old routine. Truly, I'm sick of it!"

"But your music and your painting, dear?"

"Oh, yes, they are all very well, in their way, but neither amounts to anything. I shall never be an artist or a musician, and I am tired of them both. In fact, I'm tired of everything! And I have just received a note from our Mission Circle—which I seldom attend, you know—asking me

for a thank-offering. Ugh! I don't feel very thankful for anything."

Mrs. Barstow worked on in silence for some time upon the small garment she was fashioning, then carefully folding it up, she said, rather perceptually:—

"Helen, I want you to put on your jacket and hat, and come with me for a short walk."

On, Aunty, not this cold morning! We should surely freeze!"

"Stuff and nonsense!" retorted her aunt, bluntly. "It will do you good. Come, Helen, I am going to take you to see a young woman, just about your age, who will perhaps show you what you have to be thankful for, as well as answer your question, 'Is life worth living?' for you."

"Oh, Aunty, some of your poor folks?"

"No, child, not some of my 'poor folks,' but one of God's rich folks. In ten minutes I shall be ready."

Helen Willoughby knew her aunt too well to oppose her, so she very reluctantly donned her pretty street suit, wishing all the while that she had held her peace about Mr. Mallock and thank-offerings, and all connected with them, if this was the outcome."

They were soon walking briskly down the broad avenue, and the younger lady's face did not lose its look of dissatisfaction until, after several turns, a narrow street was reached, and Mrs. Barstow was ringing at the narrow door of a narrow house. Then something like interest, or curiosity, came into the girl's face as the bell was answered by a pleasant-faced lady, who smiled a welcome at them both as she exclaimed:

"Oh, Mrs. Barstow, how glad I am to see you! Edwina has been so lonely the last few days! No one has been in, and she calls you one of her 'stars,' you know."

"One of her 'stars?'" almost unconsciously asked Helen, just as Mrs. Barstow was making her known as "my niece" to Mrs. Lowe.

"Yes, dear, because she's always so bright. Edwina has a name of her own for everybody and everything. But here we are. Edwina! who do you think has come?"

They had come through a narrow hall and up a short flight of stairs, and were now at the door of a small room, where, on the bed, lay a young girl, whose expectant eyes were turned toward her approaching visitors.

She held out her arms, without a word; and as Mrs. Barstow stepped quickly to the bedside, she drew her face down to hers, and softly kissed each cheek. Then she looked past her at Helen, who was standing rather hesitatingly at the door, and said:—

"Do come in! I'll promise not to bite you. You're Helen, I know—I've heard your aunt so often speak of you. Excuse me for not rising, won't you?" with a gleeful little laugh. "The only reason I don't is because I'm afraid there wouldn't be chairs enough for us all."

Helen took the thin hand held out to her, and then seated herself very near the bright creature, who seemed bubbling over with life.

"That's right—sit there where I can look at you. It's such a comfort just to have some one to look at—the last few days have been so long."

"Have you been having one of your 'heads,' dear?" asked Mrs. Barstow, sympathetically.

"Yes. For a week I have not been able to use my eyes at all; and my bed has been behaving badly."

"Your bed?" questioned Helen, wonderingly.

The sick girl laughed. "Yes, I call it the 'bed' when I suffer more than usual. To tell the truth, I am so attached to this bed, that it really seems a

part of myself. When we took each other, it was 'for better and for worse.'"

"Why, how long have you been confined to it?" asked Helen, with interest.

"It will be thirteen years next May since we first plighted our troth," answered Edwina, gaily; "and since then we've never had a 'falling out.'"

"Thirteen years!" echoed Helen Willoughby, in amazement. "And you so bright and cheerful! I cannot understand it. Isn't it hard for you?"

The sweet face on the pillows grew serious.

"My dear," she said, after a little, "it is hard, often, but there is so much blessedness in it that it makes me forget much of the pain and the suffering."

"But what 'blessedness' can there be in lying here, day after day and year after year?" asked Helen, doubtfully.

"Oh, my dear, so much that I could not begin to tell you all. The many, many kind friends I have, who are more like angels; the tender ministrations I receive from so many, which I would not otherwise receive. Oh! it seems to me that every year I have a little 'more blessedness.' The dear Lord is so good to me!" and the tears gathered quickly in her eyes.

"Dear," said Mrs. Barstow, presently, "don't you want to show my niece some of your handiwork, and let her see some of this 'blessedness' of yours?"

"Dear me! I don't call that a part of it," the sick girl laughed; "only so far as it enables me to keep my mind and fingers busy. Mother, dear, will you show my last Afghan?"

Mrs. Lowe left the room for a moment, and returned with a handsome robe, knit in bright stripes which she spread over the bed for the visitors' inspection.

"This is my tenth," said Edwina, passing her hands caressingly over its folds. "Do you know, I almost hate to part with one after it is finished, each part brings to mind so much that took place while I was at work upon it. This red stripe I made during the visit of a dear friend, and all the sweetness of that visit comes back to me as I look at it. This shaded strip is typical of the many days, full of light and shade, that I was working on it. The dark strip I knit when all was silent still in the house—nights when sleep would not visit my eyelids. How often have I been thankful for work of this kind that I could do in the dark! While I was putting in the fringe, a few violets in a dish at my bedside were just filling the room with their fragrance. Oh, how sweet they were! Yes! every stitch, almost, speaks of some pleasure or pain."

"Tell Miss Willoughby whom this is for, and about the others," suggested Mrs. Barstow, in an undertone.

"Oh, yes! Well, you know, I belong to 'The Shut-in-Society,' composed of a thousand or more members—and how often have I thanked God for this blessed union of sufferers! Of course there are many among them who haven't the many blessings which I have, and so I try to send a bit of sunshine into their lives, and comfort as well, by means of an Afghan. This one goes to a poor girl in Maine. Oh, you don't know how thankful I am every day of my life, that if I cannot use my feet I can use my hands. Indeed, I have so much to be thankful for!"

The colour came quickly into Helen's face as she caught her aunt's eye just then, and turning hastily to the girl at her side, seemingly catching some of her spirit, she said, playfully:

"And may I ask if you are in league with some wholesale dealer in yarns and worsteds?"

The sick girl laughed. "Not exactly. Will you