

# Keeping Grannie out of the Poor-house.

The other morning we were talking about the widow whose cruse of oil held out so wonderfully when she was required of the Lord to take an extra boarder; and Mrs. Mellows turned to her husband with a look in her kind, quick eyes, that betokened a good untold story.

"Say, pa," she said, "doesn't that make you think of us keeping Grannie out of the poor-house?"

"I reckon," he replied, cutting his beef-steak with evident relish.

"How was it?" we asked; "Tell us about it please."

"Well, there isn't much to tell," she said, the flush on her cheek contradicting her meek words. We hadn't much of this world's goods in them days, had we, pa?"

"Nothing to brag on," was the response.

"But, you see," Mrs. Mellows went on, "Grannie belonged to pa's class, and we knowed what a good soul she was; so that Sunday, when we came out o' meetin' after the sermon, there stood Grannie, the very picture of trouble."

"Why, Grannie," says I, 'what is the matter?"

"She pulled me one side and whispered it out, for she couldn't bear to speak agin' her own flesh an' blood, but bein' she was hard o' hearin', them that stood around heard every word she said. They are a-going to take me over to the poor-house this week, cose Ed'ard's wife, she's sick so much, and Carson's folks, they have got so many children, so many mouths to fill—an' they can't none of 'em be bothered with me around no more. Oh, if he'd only a-took me 'fore it had come to this! and the tears just more'n poured over poor old Grannie's face.

"I guess, if we hadn't had an extra good class-meetin' that mornin', I'd a let off a piece o' my mind about that time, but I swallowed it down, and says I to Grannie:

"No such a thing. We don't let none o' the Lord's children, go to that there old barn of a poor-house. Taint no place for 'em. Grannie, as long as we have a roof over our heads, there'll be room for you."

"By this time we were out on the steps, and old Nanny an' the buggy was up to the end of

'em, and pa'd stepped out to let me get in. He was allus quick to see through things, though he'd never waste no words. He know'd we was goin' to have all we could do to pull through that winter, but he wa'n't never afeared to trust the Lord. He puckered up his mouth like he was goin' to whistle, about half a minute. Then he laughed, tho' his eyes looked like a spring rain, with the fire showin' through the under side of the coals.

"Jump in, Grannie," says he, and he helped her into the old buggy like she was his own mother.

"One thing did stick in my crop, though. Dan Smith's wife, she came up to me in a way like patten' me on the shoulder, an' says she, 'The Lord will reward you, Sister Mellows,' says she, 'for bein good to the poor.' I couldn't help a thinkin', with their big house, and great rich farm, and no mor'gage, them Smiths might a put in for that reward themselves, instead o' bein' so ready to give it to us, when we was so poor we couldn't go alone. But, poor things, they didn't prosper; they went off down South, an' run through everything; an' the last we knew of 'em they were as poor as Job's turkey. Nor more did old Jerry Wattles. He was reckoned right well off then, but he run down dreadfully after his oldest boy took to drink. You see, Jerry, he sent word to pa, that we hadn't no business a-loadin' ourselves down with Grammie when the town was able and willin' to take care of her, poor as we was."

"We got out of debt this year," said Mr. Mellows, stirring up the sugar in his coffee.

"Yes," said his wife, "an' didn't we have a good time with Grannie?"

"A reg'lar camp-meetin' every night," he laughed.

"Never got through with my work so easy," Mrs. Mellows went on, "as I did when Grannie stayed with us. The dishes seemed to wash themselves, and such piles o' knittin' and sewin' as I'd git through with! Sometimes I'd look round to see if Grannie was enjoyin' herself, an' there she set a-knittin' away, an' her lips a-movin', an' her eyes kinder lookin' up, an' it seemed like I had a sort of chaplain o' my own to keep the prayin' a-goin'."

"How long did Grannie live with you?"

"Oh, only about three years. You see we had a big revival, and her son Carson, an' his wife got soundly converted, an' round they