

The Inglenook.

Grateful for Common Mercies.

BY EMMA C. DOWD.

I had been shopping one cold winter afternoon, and stopped to call on an old lady, whose humble little home was on my road. She met me at the door, her face eager and smiling.

"I'm so glad to see you," she said, as she led me into her cozy sitting room. "This is the finishing touch to my happy day."

"What has happened?" I asked. "I knew there was something, the moment I saw you."

"Oh, I have had such a beautiful day!" said she, making me comfortable in a low rocker beside the stove, and seating herself with a sigh of contentment, "such a beautiful day!"

"What is it?" I urged. "Has a fortune been left you?"

"I feel as if I had two or three fortunes—or half a dozen," she answered, with a happy little laugh. "I will tell you all about it; I had been wishing I had somebody to tell—there, put your feet right up on that fender, and get them warm. To begin with, things seemed different when I first woke up. You see, I had a good night; and I didn't feel tired to start with, as I do sometimes. Then the sun shone so clear that my rooms were lighter than usual. I don't get much sunshine in here this time of year, but when it streams in early in the morning, it always makes a difference with my spirits. I do not suppose it ought to, but I know it does."

"The postman comes while I am doing up my breakfast dishes, unless I am unusually early. I do not have many letters, but Wednesday is the day for my paper, so I knew he would stop this morning. He leaves it on the stairs, and I go down after it. I heard the door shut, and looked to see if it had come, and if there were not two letters on top of it! I guess it did not take me long to go down and back. I had been expecting a letter from a man that owed me a couple of dollars, but it had gone on and on, till I had about given it up and here they were, two spick and span new dollar bills. If I wasn't glad to see those, for it just made my last month's rent, and I had been afraid I would have to let it go over, and I cannot bear to do that."

"The other letter almost took my breath away! It was from a lady I used to know in Montvert, and she stops here once in a while on her way up or down from New York; so she knew I crochet silk mittens, and—what do you think? she sent me an order for a dozen pairs. They are for a fair at her church, and she has told me long enough beforehand so that I will have plenty of time to do them. Isn't it lovely of her? I thought I had enough for one day, but the nice things have kept coming right along ever since. I never saw anything like it."

"It has been a beautiful day. My grocery man comes in every Wednesday to take an order. I can't always want anything; but he is real good to stop and see if I do, for I cannot get out much this weather. Well, I was saying something about a certain kind of candles that I used to get at another store; but he does not keep them. I like them better than any other kind, because they last longer and don't drip. I didn't suppose that he would want to get them for me, so I did not ask him to. But if that man didn't

go and bring them up with the other things this afternoon! He is so kind! Then he brought me some home-made rye bread. I said this morning that if I felt able to bake, I should buy some rye flour and bake some bread, and he said he could get me some that was real home-made. I told him I would like to try it, and oh, it is delicious! I had to go and cut off a piece, it looked so good. You wait a minute, and I will bring you a slice. I know you will like it."

In a twinkling my hostess returned, and I soon found myself eating rye bread and butter from a china plate that would have enraptured a curio-lover, while a century old embroidered napkin was spread in my lap. Meantime the story of the day was resumed:

"Then, another thing, I ordered some washing powder. It wasn't the kind I usually buy; they were out of that. But the man said that this was just as good, and the same price. So I let him bring it. When I went to put it away, I looked to see if it was used any differently, and it said that in every package was a cake of toilet soap. I could hardly believe it, but, sure enough; there it was. I had been wanting some soap to wash my hands with, but I did not feel as if I could spare the money for it just now; so, I tell you, I was glad to get that nice little cake."

"And, as if all those things were not enough, I had another letter this afternoon from a friend out West, that I had not heard from in ever so long. I was afraid she was sick, or a letter was lost, or something; but she had been to California to see her son, and that was the reason I hadn't heard. It was a nice long letter, and I was so glad to hear. Oh, it has been such a beautiful day! If I never have another so good, I shall always have this one to think of, and that will be something. I like to have pleasant things to remember, don't you?"

"Yes, this has been a beautiful, beautiful day!" and she closed her eyes for a moment, while a smile of contentment played over her face.

As I walked home, I wondered how many of us would have summed up these few, common occurrences into a "beautiful day." Only the refreshment that follows a night of rest, the sunshine, the tardy payment of a small debt, an order for work, a loaf of bread, some candles, a cake of soap, friendly letter! But they were enough to make for one lonely woman a day always to be remembered as "beautiful."—New York Observer.

Riches.

Oh, what is earth, that we should build
Our houses here, and seek concealed
Poor treasures, and add field to field,
And heap to heap, and store to store—
Still grasping and still seeking more,
While step by step Death nears the door?

—Christina Rossetti.

"Johnnie," said his mother, severely, "some one has taken a big piece of gingerbread out of the pantry."

Johnnie blushed guiltily.

"Oh, Johnnie!" she exclaimed. "I didn't think it was in you."

"Tisn't—not all of it, mother," replied Johnnie. "Part of it's in Elsie."

The Dog Remembered

A gentleman who is a great traveller, and who is always accompanied in his wanderings by a bull terrier, to which he is much attached, arrived in the city of Florence. His dog was for some reason intrusted to the care of a porter at the station, and in the excitement of the crowd and under the unusual experience of being separated from his master, who generally kept the animal with him, Bruno was moved to make his escape.

The most careful search was made, and before going to his hotel the traveller went to the police station to notify the gendarmes of his loss. It was more than an hour before he reached his hotel. When he got there he spoke of his loss, so that if anything was heard of the dog it would be understood that the animal belonged to him. To his astonishment the porter said:

"Eut your dog is here, sir. He came before you, and we did not know to whom it belonged."

"The dog is here!" repeated the gentleman in surprise. "How came he here?"

"He ran in, sir, about half an hour ago, and after snuffing about the office for a little while, he ran upstairs. I gave orders to have him driven out; but the boys have been busy, and he is up there somewhere now."

The traveller, of course, went upstairs at once and there on the mat before the chamber numbered forty-four lay Bruno, who sprang up with the most frantic demonstrations of delight at finding his master again.

The gentleman remembered that two years previous he had been with the dog in Florence and stayed in this hotel. He did not remember that he had occupied this particular room, but on reference to the hotel register such was found to be the fact.—Youth's Companion.

Harmful Habit of Answering Back

The habit of "answering back" is as reprehensible in grown people as in children, and should be suppressed by every person anxious to lead a peaceable and harmonious life.

The "scrappy" household, in which each member strives for the last word in the argument, is most anxious to maintain an independent course of action, is afraid lest he shall be imposed upon, is not a happy household, nor can it ever become such a one.

It is an odious place to visit, and the separate individuals that compose it can always have a pleasant atmosphere and time somewhere else, yet it is but seldom that any one will give up the habit, or a whole family reform and institute a new order of things.

There is but one way to produce a lasting result, and that is to "withhold your tongue" on each and every occasion when bitter or sharp words arise to the surface.

The old adage, "It takes two to make a quarrel," is invariably true, and while silence is an aggravating response to an irritating remark, its effect is inevitable. The temptation to repudiate an unjust accusation is strong, but if it is unjust it will be regretted more than if a quarrel resulted in which both parties lost their temper.

She who will invariably determine to "withhold her tongue" from ill-natured remarks, from unkind suggestions, from bitter retort, from nagging, will begin a revolution in her own home.

Do not wait for some one else to start the movement; have the joy in your own soul that you have planted the seeds of happiness yourself. Do not be discouraged if your efforts are not met half way. Go all the way if need be. "Seek peace and pursue it!"—Philadelphia Ledger.