

* * * The Story Page. * * *

A SUMMER LONGING.

I must away to wooded hills and vales,
Where broad, slow streams flow cool and silently,
And idle barges flap their sails—
For me the summer sunset glows and pales,
And green fields wait for me.

I long for shadowy forests, where the birds
Twitter and chirp at noon from every tree;
I long for blossomed leaves and lowing herds;
And Nature's voices say, in mystic words,
"The green fields wait for thee."

I dream of uplands where the primrose shines
And waves her yellow lamps above the lea;
Of tangled copses swung with trailing vines,
Of open vistas skirted with tall pines,
Where green fields wait for me.

I think of long, sweet afternoons, when I
May lie and listen to the distant sea,
Or hear the breezes in the reeds that sigh,
Or insect voices chirping shrill and dry
In fields that wait for me.

These dreams of summer come to bid me find
The forest's shade, the wild bird's melody,
While summer's rosy wreaths for me are twined,
While summer's fragrance lingers on the wind,
And green fields wait for me.

—George Arnold.

Aunt Mary's Way.

BY LOUISE J. STRONG.

"What a sad face your washwoman has, Helen," Aunt Mary remarked across the dinner table.

"Has she?" laughed her niece, pretty Mrs. Walford. "I hadn't noticed. But I know she is dreadfully slow about her work. She is always two or three hours behind the neighborhood in getting the clothes on the line. I wouldn't keep her only that she is so careful and particular."

"To be particular and do the work well is a good deal to be said for any one these helter skelter days. She doesn't look straggly; do you know anything about her circumstances?" asked Aunt Mary.

"Not a thing," Mrs. Walford answered, "I pay her when her work is done, and ask her no questions about her affairs. I don't know that it is any of my business."

"And yet you belong to several charitable societies," Aunt Mary suggested softly. "One of them, I think you said, was called the 'Helping Hand.'"

"Oh, the 'Helping Hand' is very exclusive, Aunt Mary," said Mr. Walford, lightly. "You have to reach a certain genteel notch before the tips of its aristocratic fingers are held out to you."

"Arthur is always ridiculing us," Helen said, a little petulantly, "but we have done a great deal of good, Aunt Mary, I can assure you; and even a society must draw a line somewhere, you know."

"Yes, I suppose so," Aunt Mary assented, "though I know very little about such things. I never belonged to a society in my life."

"Never belonged to a society!" Mrs. Walford exclaimed in astonishment. "But you seem so familiar with charitable work; how have you carried it on?"

"The little I have ever accomplished has been by individual effort," said Aunt Mary, modestly.

"You must visit our societies, and see how superior organized work is," Mrs. Walford said, rising. "And oh, yes, Aunt Mary, as you are going to be here, will you give the woman this half dollar for me when her work is done?"

As she took the money, Aunt Mary said, impulsively, "Does she do that large washing for fifty cents?" and then added, hastily, as Mrs. Walford's face flushed, "Excuse me, Helen, I spoke thoughtlessly, but I have so many things to be washed to-day that I think I ought to add to this."

"My visitors never pay for their washing, Aunt Mary, it belongs with the family wash, of course; but you must please yourself."

A couple of hours later, Aunt Mary going to the kitchen, found the woman waiting, her thin face pale and drawn, and tired lines around her lips and eyes. It was a delicate, refined face, with a gentle patience in it that touched Aunt Mary's kind heart. She arose and took down her sun bonnet as Aunt Mary entered.

"You look very tired," Aunt Mary said, gently, "don't be in a hurry to go. Come out on the porch and rest awhile in one of the rockers."

"No, thank you, I can not stop. I am needed at home," then as Aunt Mary put a dollar in her hand, she added anxiously, "I can not change it; haven't you a half dollar?"

"You had so many of my clothes, to-day, I think you have earned the dollar," Aunt Mary said, smiling.

An eager look flitted across her face, and she answered,

"It is not usual I believe, to pay for a few extra things; and I oughtn't to take it, but I need it so much, and a half dollar more would—" she stopped, flushing scarlet and turned nervously to the door.

Aunt Mary laid a detaining hand on her arm, and said with gentle sympathy, "Don't think me intrusive, but will you not tell me your trouble? I am sure you are carrying a burden; let me share it."

The sudden tears gushed forth, and the poor creature sank sobbing into a chair; but she quickly controlled herself and looking up wistfully, said, "I don't often give way like this; I hope you will excuse it in me."

Aunt Mary nodded, stroking the toll-worn hand she held.

"Things are very hard with us just now," she went on. "My husband has had no work, only an odd job or so, since the shops closed last year. We have four children, and I am not very strong and so slow at my work that we can hardly get enough for them to eat."

"You are a conscientious worker," Aunt Mary interposed, "haven't the societies helped you?"

"A little at first," the woman answered, "but they seem to think we are not deserving and that my husband is idle and shiftless. Heaven knows he would thankfully take anything to do, so that he could be earning something. Oh why do they not have work enough, some how or other, so that all the poor men could take care of their families. The poor must have work or starve, if they are too proud and honest to beg or steal."

She spoke with passionate earnestness, then started up suddenly, adding, "I must go. I ought to have gone at once. Oh, ma'am, you will understand what a headache I have, and how grateful I am to you for this extra half dollar, when I tell you that my little ones have had nothing but a scanty breakfast of potatoes to-day; and will have nothing until I get home. Robbie, the oldest one, is a cripple, and takes care of the rest when I am away."

"Why didn't you tell us that your children were going hungry?" Aunt Mary said, as they rapidly packed a basket with food. "It is wicked to let them suffer and not speak of it."

"Nobody ever spoke to me about it before," the woman answered, "and it is very hard to make people listen when they do not want to. I have tried to sometimes, but I couldn't force my troubles on them when they didn't care. I've wished so many times that I could have the broken pieces of food for my children that I see thrown away at places where I work."

"Send your husband here in the morning," Aunt Mary said, "they need a man to do chores and take care of the garden, and I will see that he gets the place. The pay will not be very much, not more than ten or fifteen dollars a month; but that will help you a little."

"Oh, ma'am, it will be like a fortune to us. Ten dollars will more than get our food, and to have it coming steady,—oh, you don't know what a help it will be! I wash for the rent, and sometimes both of us together manage to get enough besides to keep the children warm and something for them to eat; but often they've had to go hungry. I only wish I could thank you for all your goodness and—"

"Never mind," Aunt Mary interrupted, kindly, putting the basket in her hand, "we all must try to help each other."

"I have hired a man for you, Arthur," Aunt Mary remarked that evening.

"Hired a man for me!" he repeated in surprise.

"Yes," she answered, smiling, "I am going to be with you for some time, and I want a good deal of waiting on; getting the horse and buggy ready for my rides, etc. I will see that he is paid; he is coming in the morning."

"I have often thought of having some one to keep the place in order," he replied, "and I think I shall attend to paying him myself. But come now, Aunt Mary, there is something behind this. What is it?"

And she told them the wash-woman's story; told it so pathetically that Helen's eyes ran over; and her husband whistled softly.

When she finished he exclaimed, "Why, I might have given the man work long ago if I had known! That's what you call individual effort, is it, Aunt Mary? I think it a grand way to do charitable work. Why, it is just giving a hand to the one nearest you who may be in trouble and want. That poor soul has been coming here for months, struggling silently with her burden, and we have never given her a kind word even. I like your way Aunt Mary, and I am going to begin practising it at once. I remember that our gray-headed old porter at the store has looked downcast for a long time, and I've joked him about being 'blue.' To-morrow morning I mean to find out his trouble and help him if I can."

Aunt Mary patted his shoulder approvingly as she said, "that is it Arthur, just give a hand to lighten the burden of the one nearest you. If all would do that with kindness and sympathy, the hard times would bear less heavily everywhere."

Aunt Mary's way is a good way. Try it.—Standard.

What the Flowers Said.

"Mother, did you know that flowers could talk? I never dreamed of such a thing; but to-day Hester Joliffe got a bunch of heliotrope from one of the college boys, and I heard the big girls laughing at her, and saying heliotrope meant 'I love you.' And when I asked what they meant, Hester called me a little goose, and asked me if I didn't know that every flower has a motto; she calls it the flower language, and she says, mother, (here Sybil looked doubtful at her mother) she says if I come to her house this afternoon she will tell me what the motto is of all the flowers."

"I can tell you all the flower mottoes, daughter, after tea; but I do not want you to spend this lovely afternoon in-doors; I can tell you a much sweeter way to make flowers talk than by their mottoes."

But mother would not tell what she meant till Sybil had washed her face and hands and eaten her dinner. "Now, daughter," she said, "if you take my shopping basket full of flowers to Miss Louisa Perry, away down in the village, and ask what the flowers say to her, you will find that they can talk like preachers."

The village was two miles away, and the spring sunshine was getting pretty hot, but under mother's Japanese parasol Sybil did not care for the sun, and Miss Louisa did seem glad to see her. The poor old woman had been paralyzed, and could not walk a step from the big cushioned chair, where she was placed every morning by loving hands.

"What do the flowers say to me, dearie?" she said with a bright smile; "they say, 'Well, old lady, ain't you glad your heavenly Father made such pretty things for you to look at? And ain't you glad he made little hearts tender, and little hands kind, and little feet willing to bring them to you?'"—Our Boys and Girls.

The Three Sieves.

It was the rule of Peter the Great never to say anything about a person if he could not say anything good. This is a good rule. Here is a little story that shows how one mother taught her little girl a very important lesson says The Evangelist:

"Oh, mamma!" cried little Blanche Powers, "I heard such a tale about Edith Howard! I did not think she could be so naughty. One—"

"My dear," interrupted Mrs. Powers, "before you continue we will see if your story will pass the three sieves."

"What does that mean, mamma?" inquired Blanche.

"I will explain it. In the first place, is it true?"

"I suppose so; I got it from Miss White, and she is a great friend of Edith's."

"And does she show her friendship by telling tales of her? In the next place, though you can prove it to be true. Is it kind?"

"I do not mean to be unkind; but I am afraid it was. I should not like Edith to speak of me as I have of her."

"And, 'Is it necessary?'"

"No, of course, mamma; there was no need for me to mention it at all."

"Then put a bridle on your tongue. If we can't speak well, speak not at all."—Exchange.

The Divine Measuring Rod.

Let us measure our duty in giving. What shall be the measuring rod?

1. Your capacity. "She hath done what she could."

2. Opportunity. "As ye have opportunity do good unto all men."

3. Your convictions. "That servant which knew his Lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes."

4. The necessities of others. "If a brother or a sister be naked, or destitute of daily food," etc.

5. The providence of God. "Let every man lay by him in store as God has prospered him."

6. Symmetry of character. "Abound in this grace also."

7. Your own happiness. "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

8. God's glory. "Honor God with your substance."—Watchman.

Getting into heaven is getting hell out of us, and then heaven is within us.—Ram's Horn.

Let all who claim to be on the Lord's side be there in reality, and the powers of evil will soon be routed.—Ram's Horn.

When the three words with him: "God!" "What am I?" "I will own it!" and told his mother college his mother of Parliament was still: "God!" Lord Chancellors and his minister devote to that will now require the reply, "I will own it!"

Several years chimney sweeps of education, was asked if he

"Oh, yes, sir," "Do you spell?" "Oh, yes, sir," "Do you read?" "Oh, yes, sir," "And what be?" "Oh, I never

"And who was?" "I never was a student without a book

Why, another little had taught him to the shop doors w the city. His ter like himself, and What may not be will there is a wa

What is

A gentleman w York, and, as a tr ever to be about started he furnish and as the train g began to hand th fused; and taking it up, saying: "You see this. Is it, my friend? Yes," he repli "I suppose you Oh, yes; I ha piece."

"Well, then, go can, pin them all tells you that youm them all down, religion is worth."

They sat quiet in anxious thought door to alight, the one of those paper mediately given, but not let his word ret its purpose.

Dear reader, what religion of some so and make a god of

Moth

All that I am n Adams, All that I am, or h —Lincoln.

Let France have g sons.—Napoleon.

I would desire for the tears of his moth

If you would reform begin by enlisting th

If there be aught s thought, it is a moth

When I try to mak the hand of my moth

ing my ear as she tau in heaven."—John R