

THE LITTLE ONES.

Speak gently to your little ones ;
You know not in what hour,
The Lord may take them to Himself
By His Almighty power.

Speak kindly to your little ones,
For each ungentle word
In some sad day of memory
May wound you like a sword.

Check the harsh words of anger,
And speak in tones of love,
For so our Lord and Saviour
Calls to us from above.

Speak to them in kindness,
For life is but a span ;
Remember the Redeemer
Spoke lovingly to man.
Toronto. (late) WM. WILSON.

GOD'S LITTLE MESSENGER.

An old woman sat at the window of a tiny attic high up in one of the worst slums of New York. Her room was comfortless and untidy, and in her rags and unkempt hair she looked the picture of discontent and misery. Her face wore a perpetual scowl, and even as she sat alone now and then she would mutter an oath.

In the court below could be seen the very lowest, saddest side of human life. There you may see the drunken husband cursing his frightened, worn-out wife because she cannot find in her empty purse a few cents to give him for drink, while around her children, half-grown from want of food and care, are gathered crying vainly for bread.

On almost every doorstep you may see the faces of women, not womanly as God intended they should be, but marred by sin and misery. All about the court little ones are playing, those of whom Christ said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." Yet their faces are drawn and pinched and scarcely childish, and, sadder still, their pale, thin lips, that God intended should be full and rosy, as they play drop, though they scarcely knew the meaning, words of filthiness and mockery of God.

Even in the midst of so much sadness the woman we have spoken of seemed more miserable than the rest. People in the court called her "Swearing Sal."

No one knew her early history, but many were the stories told of how she had discomfited and routed clergymen and district visitors who, from time to time, had visited her. Now all but two seemed to have given up the hope of helping her. One was a clergyman whose occasional calls were met by torrents of abuse ; the other was Miss Grant, a deaconess, whose work lay in the neighbourhood of the court.

Though Miss Grant still continued her visits, there was nothing she dreaded more than going to see this poor old woman, for it seemed to her that her visits must only make "Swearing Sal" more furiously wicked than usual. One afternoon, setting out to make this dreadful call again, she felt specially impressed with the hopelessness of ever softening this hard heart. She climbed the rickety stairs leading to the garret feeling greatly discouraged, and when she reached the door, brave though she was, she found herself trembling. To knock meant to open again that torrent of vile language with which "Swearing Sal" always received visitors. She stood a moment and then knocked gently. There was no answer. She quietly opened the door and entered. "Swearing Sal" was kneeling by the ragged bed ; in her hand she held a faded letter. Her face was hidden, but Miss Grant could see that as she knelt her whole body was shaken by violent feeling. After a little she seemed to become calmer, and to realize that she was not alone in the room. Her face as she raised it had a new, strange look of gentleness upon it.

Her friend knelt down by her, and prayed with her whole soul to Him who cast the devils out of those tormented by the sea of Galilee, that He would save this woman from herself. From the lonely attic the silent prayers of these two women went up to Him who stills all storms, and He gave to the storm-tossed wanderer, as she prayed, His peace that passeth all understanding.

Before Miss Grant left, Sarah

Brown, for that was her real name, explained in a few words the cause of the change that had come over her.

"I was sitting at the window this afternoon," she said, "full of bitterness and misery, hating myself and God and everyone, when that butterfly flew in at the open window," and she pointed to the little, yellow insect resting on the ceiling. "I had never seen a butterfly for years, so it brought back to me memories of my happy girlhood days in the country, when I was innocent and pure and full of love. Now I saw myself a little rosy-cheeked, fair-haired girl bending over my books in the old brick school-house, and now I was again in the playground full of life and joy. Then with the quickly changing thoughts other scenes would come. This time I am sitting, as the same little, fair-haired girl, in front of the old farm-house just as the sun is setting, nestling my head against my mother's knee. It is Sunday evening in the early summer. The lily bed is dotted with pure white blossoms, and the lilac flowers are drooping with their own weight. The air is heavy with rich perfume. From the distant village comes the sound of gently tolling bells calling to church, and from all the flowers comes the happy buzz of insects. But I can only hear my mother's sweet, low voice telling the loveliest of all stories—how Jesus lived and died. I remember, as my mother dwelt on that boundless love, how my eyes would fill with tears, and how my little heart would seem to swell with love and wonder, and how I would think, 'There is no one like Jesus ; I will follow Him till death.'

"Then I seemed to hear her prayers again as I said good-bye to her, starting for the great city. I had only been a few weeks at the store where I was employed, when I was accused, though innocent, of taking money. I was dismissed in disgrace. My heart became as hard as iron ; and falling in with evil companions I began to drift down to the lowest