

The Family.

AT THE LAST.

THE stream is calmest when it nears the tide, The flowers are sweetest at the eventide, The birds most musical at close of day, The suns divinest when they pass away.

Morning is holy, but a holier charm Lies folded in evening's robe of balm; And weary men must ever love her best, For morning calls to toil, but night to rest.

She comes from heaven, and on her wings doth bear A holy fragrance, like the breath of prayer; Footsteps of angels follow in her trace, To shut the weary eyes of Day in peace.

All things are hushed before her, as she throws O'er earth and sky her mantle of repose; There is a calmer beauty and a power That morning knows not in the Evening's hour.

Until the evening we must weep and toll— Flow life's stern furrow and dig the woody soil— Tread with sad feet the rough and thorny way, And bear the heat and burden of the day.

Oh! when the sun is setting, may we glide Like summer evening down the golden tide, And leave behind us as we pass away, Sweet starry twilight round our sleeping clay. —Exchange.

WISE AND UNWISE WAYS OF HELPING.

It was Charles Kingsley who said "We become like God only as we become of use." The duty of being helpful to others stands foremost among our duties. But there are wise and unwise ways of giving help. We all have power to do much for others, yet just what we ought to do in each particular case requires careful thought. Indiscriminate help is often more harmful than it would be to do nothing at all. Indeed oftentimes we ought to do nothing but put a little fresh hope or energy into the heart of the one who appeals to us. There is a delightful story in the earliest annals of the Christian Church, which is rich in its practical suggestions just at this point. A poor lame man lay at the temple gate, asking alms. Two apostles were entering, and to them the beggar appealed. One of them answered "silver and gold have I none"; so he put no coin in the outstretched hand. He might have passed on after telling the man that he had no money, but he did not. Money was not all the beggar needed, and Peter had something to give. "Such as I have give I to thee."

We often stand before human needs and distresses which we seem to have no power to relieve. Poverty appeals and we have no silver or gold. Sorrow waits before us and we cannot lift it away. Lamentation or blindness or sickness, or misfortune of some other kind touches our heart, but we have no miracle-working power. What shall we do in such cases? Can we do anything? Yes, we always have something which we can give, and it may be a better gift than that which the sufferer craves.

Here is a suggestive story from Turgeneff's "Poems in Prose": "I was walking in the street—a beggar stopped me, a frail old man. His tearful eyes, blue lips, rough rags, disgusting sores—oh, how horribly poverty has disfigured the unhappy creature. He stretched out to me his red, swollen, filthy hand; he groaned and whimpered for alms. I felt in all my pockets. No purse, watch or handkerchief did I find. I had left them all at home. The beggar waited, and his outstretched hand twitched and trembled slightly. Embarrassed and confused, I seized his dirty hand and pressed it: "Don't be vexed with me, brother. I have nothing with me, brother." The beggar raised his bloodshot eyes to mine, his blue lips smiled, and he returned the pressure of my chilled fingers. "Never mind, brother," stammered he; "thank you for this—this too was a gift, brother." I felt that I too, had received a gift from my brother.

Who will say that the word which revealed the feeling of brotherhood was not ten times a better thing to the beggar than if his hand had been filled with coin? None of us are too poor to speak kindly to the beggar who asks our alms.

Following the old story of the Beautiful Gate a little further we see the apostle who had no money to give, giving his hand to the beggar, lifting him up and healing him. Some of us say that if we only had money we would do a great deal of good. Here we learn that there are other ways of helping even beggars than by putting coins in their hands. Money is good alms when money is really needed, but in comparison with the divine gifts of hope, courage, sympathy and affection, it is paltry and poor indeed. Who will say that Peter did not do immeasurably more for the beggar than if he had filled his hands with coins and left him lying there in his lameness? Was not healing which gave the man power to earn his own living, far better for the beggar than would have been gold enough to support him all his life in his helplessness? If we can put new life and hope into the heart of a discouraged man, so that he rises out of his weak despair and takes his place again in the ranks of active life, surely we have done a far better thing for him than if we had given him money to help him nurse a little longer his miserable unmanly despair.

What most people really need in their troubles is not to have the burden lifted off or even lightened, but to have their own hearts strengthened, so that they shall not fail in their duty, nor faint in their struggle. Not assistance in carry-

ing the load, but a fresh inspiration of courage and energy, that they may carry it themselves, is, for most people, in most cases, by far the wisest and best help. That is God's way of helping. "Cast thy burden on the Lord," is the divine command, but the promise is not "He will carry it for thee" but "He will sustain thee." Usually it is a good deal better for people to fight their own battles through, carry their own loads, and bear unlightened the crosses God has shaped for them, than to have any one seek to make things easier for them. We may interfere with the divine discipline, when we come running up to our friends with our help at every point of stress.

It is always vastly better to give a well man something to do by which he can earn his own bread, than to put the bread in his hand and leave him idle. In the former case we encourage him to be brave and manly; in the latter we make it easy for him to be weak and despairing. It is the poorest kind of help to work out a child's school-examples for him, the truly kind thing is to encourage and stimulate him to solve the examples himself. So in all spheres of life we may do others sore harm by unwisely helping them and making life easier for them than God intended it to be. Our mission to others is not so much to do something for them as to help to make something of them.

"Our friends are those who make us do what we can," said Emerson. We stand for Christ in this world of need and sorrow, and must be to men, in our little measure, what He would be if He were in our place. He has put the leaves in our hand with His blessing upon them, and we must not fail to give the hungry people to eat, that they may not faint in the wilderness. We must give just what we have to give. Because we do not happen to have silver and gold, we must not therefore conclude that we have nothing to give. Really we have better things than money coins. Bread is better than money when one is hungry. Love is better than money when one is heart-hungry. Hope is better than money when one is discouraged. Such as we have we should always give. That is one lesson.

Another is that we should be sure not to help unwisely. When people come to us in their distress and need, it is very easy to fall into a mere emotional sympathy with them which in no way makes them stronger to bear their trouble, or brave their hardship. It is easy to encourage in our friends their sense of loss or of bitterness, by merely commiserating them as they sit in the shadows, by encouraging their recital of misfortune, and by dwelling with them on the elements of sadness in their peculiar experience. This is what many mean by condolence. But we do not in this way give any real comfort to our friends. True comfort is strength to endure. Merely weeping with those who weep is not enough; we must help them to be strong, to be acquiescent in the will of God, to believe, and trust and hope, even in the darkest hour. We must be sure that it is real help that we give, help that strengthens and inspires, and not mere weak emotional tenderness that only leaves the sufferer weaker with less courage and power to endure. —N. Y. Evangelist.

SARAH GOODWIN AND HER BOYS.

SARAH GOODWIN was the name of a poor seamstress, residing in the city of New York. She was not wholly friendless; but those whom she knew, and who would have aided her in her struggles, were very poor and could not. So, she, a widow with four boys, from the ages of four to nine years, struggled through winter's cold and summer's heat, providing her little family with bread; and that was all. Her boys were good children, always in home after nightfall, and giving their mother every half-penny of their earnings, as often as they found work to do. At last the mother fell sick, and through a weary illness she had no other attendance save the occasional help of a neighbour, and the constant aid of her poor little boys. It was touching to behold their kind ways, and to hear their gentle words. Everybody said that they would be blessed in coming years for their thoughtful love toward their mother.

The widow recovered; but it was now the middle of a bitter winter, and their little stock of fuel was nearly gone. As soon as her strength permitted, she walked through the cold of a cheerless day, to the shop of her employer, and told him her pitiful story. But he said it was hard times; her illness had made room for others as destitute as herself, and they had not one stitch of work to give her. With a sinking heart, but praying, to keep her courage up, the poor woman toiled on from shop to shop, till it became late; and, what with tears and the darkness, she could hardly see her way home.

"If Mr. Hart had himself been there," she said to herself, bending to the strong wind, and drawing her scanty shawl closer about her form, "I know he would have given me work." As she whispered thus through her chattering teeth, a tall gentleman passed by her; and as he did so something fell to the sidewalk, and lay upon the crusted snow. Sarah paused; she heard the noise made by the little packet, and a strange impression led her to search for it. Oh, joy! it was

a purse, heavy and filled to the brim; yellow and shining lay the gold within, as she carried it to a lighted window. "My poor boys, they shall not want food no more," she cried; "this is gold. I think that God must have put it in my way, for He saw I was in despair."

Suddenly, like a flash of lightning, the thought occurred to Sarah that the treasure was not honestly hers. But a moment she lingered, pressing the money with numbed fingers, the sorrowful tears chasing down her thin cheeks; then starting forward to find the owner of the purse, she walked hurriedly up the street, fearful that the temptation, should she arrive at her poor room, and see her hungry children, might prove too strong for her honesty.

Opposite the great hotel, as she stood thinking which way to take, she saw the stranger enter. She knew him by the long hair which curled to his shoulders, and, timidly crossing the street, she made her way into the hall, and there, bewildered by the light, knew not what to say, till twice asked by a servant what she wanted. Of course, she could do no more than describe the stranger by his tall stature and flowing hair. But he had already gone out again; she must call on the morrow, they said, and ask for Mr. Ashcraft.

The next morning, having eaten nothing—for she could not touch a piece of the gold—she was admitted into the room where sat the stranger. He arose as she entered, and gazed with a curious air till she presented the purse. Then he started with pleased surprise, laid down his paper, took the gold and carefully counted it over. "It is all safe," he said; "you have not taken—"

"Not one piece, sir," she cried, eagerly, trembling as she spoke. "You seem poor," remarked the stranger.

"I am poor," she replied. "Got a family, I suppose?" "Four little boys, sir; I am a widow."

"Humph! so I suppose—that's the old story." "Ask Mr. Hart, the tailor," cried the widow, stepping forward a little; "he knows that though I am poor I am honest."

A bright red spot burned on her cheeks as she spoke, and then forced back the tears.

"Now confess," said the stranger, rising and walking to and fro before the fire, "tell me did you not expect a large reward for this?"

"I did think, perhaps—" and she turned with quivering lips to the door. "Stop, stop!" cried the stranger; "you know you never would have turned the purse, had you not expected to be well paid for it, do you not?"

"Sir!" said the widow, her voice rising beyond its usual tone, and her thin form erect. The stranger paused, holding the purse in his hand, then drawing forth a small coin, offered it to her.

For a moment she drew back; but then remembering that her poor boys were hungry at home, and in bed because there was no fire, she burst into tears as she took it, saying, "This will buy bread for my poor children, and, hurrying away, she buried the bitterness of that morning in her own heart.

It was four o'clock on the same day. Sarah Goodwin sat by a scanty fire, busy in sewing patches on the very poor clothes of her four boys.

"Run to the door, Jimmy," said she to the eldest, as a loud knock was heard. "Oh, mother!" the boy cried, returning, "a big bundle for us! What is it? What can it be?"

"Work for me, perhaps," said the widow, untying the large package, when suddenly there came to light four suits of grey clothes, with four neat black shining caps, each cap exactly fitting to the heads of her boys. Almost overcome with wonder, the widow fell on her knees, her eyes fixed on the words, "A present for the fatherless"; while the boys, laying hold of their suits of clothes, danced about the floor shouting with glee.

"What's in the pocket here? what's in the pocket?" cried Jimmy, thrusting his hand into that place; when lo! out came the very purse of gold the widow had returned that morning. A scene of joyous confusion followed, and the voice of prayer ascended from Sarah Goodwin's full heart. Again and again she counted the glittering treasure: twenty sovereigns. It seemed an almost endless fortune. How her heart ran over with gratitude to God and the stranger!

She could not rest, till throwing on her bonnet, with cheeks glowing now with hope and happiness, she ran back to the hotel to pour forth her thanks.

A carriage stood at the door laden with trunks behind. The driver mounted the seat as she had reached the step, and turning her head, there within sat the stranger. She had not time to speak; but he nodded his head, as he saw her with clasped hands standing there, and a prayer on her lips. Sarah never saw the stranger again. She took a little shop, and stocked it well, and put her boys to school. To day she is the owner of a respectable shop. Of her four boys, two are ministers, one is a doctor, and the other a thriving tradesman.

Nobody knows where the man with the flowing hair has gone; but if he is living and should ever hear of Widow

Goodwin, he will have the consolation of knowing the noble results of this generous deed toward the worthy woman and her four boys.—Presbyterian Journal.

THE GREAT GIVERS OF AMERICA.

THE gifts for the public good in the United States, during the past twenty-five years, form a record probably without parallel in the world's history. Here are only some of the benefactions for the higher education.—Senator Leland Stanford, \$20,000,000 to found a university in California in memory of his deceased son; John Hopkins, \$3,148,000 to the university which bears his name; Asa Packer, \$3,000,000 to Lehigh University; Cornelius Vanderbilt, \$1,000,000 to the university bearing his name, to which gift his son William added \$500,000; John C. Green, \$1,500,000 to Princeton; Ezra Cornell, \$1,000,000 to the university bearing his name; Isaac Rich, \$700,000 to Boston University; Amos Stone, \$600,000 to Adelbert College, W. W. Corcoran, \$170,000 to Columbian University; Benjamin Bussey, \$500,000 to Harvard; Whitmer Phoenix, \$640,000 to Columbia; J. B. Trevor, \$179,000 to Rochester; Matthew Vassar, \$800,000 to the college bearing his name; Gardner Colby, \$170,000 to Colby University, and \$100,000 to Newton Theological Seminary; J. B. Colgate, \$300,000 to Madison University; George I. Seney, \$459,000 to the Wesleyan University; the Crozier family, \$300,000 to Crozier Theological Seminary; Mr. Clark, \$1,000,000 to found a university in Massachusetts to bear his name; Henry Winkley, of Philadelphia, \$200,000, to Williams and other colleges; Dr. W. H. Ryder, \$300,000 to educational institutions; John R. Buchtel, of Ohio, \$500,000 to Buchtel College. This list includes only a part of what has been given within a quarter of a century. It would be easy to double the sum of the educational benefactions. There is good hope for the United States.—Christian Leader.

BOYS, GO HOME.

Ah, boys! you who have gone out from the homestead into the rush and bustle of life, do you ever think of the patient mothers who are stretching out to you arms that are powerless to draw you back to your old home nest?

No matter, though your hair is silver-streaked, and Dct in the cradle calls you grandpa, you are "the boys" so long as the mother lives. You are the children of the old home. Nothing can crowd you out of your mother's heart. You may have failed in the battle of life, and your manhood may have been dashed out against the wall of circumstances; you may have been prosperous, gained wealth and fame, but mother's love has followed you always. Many a "boy" has not been home for five or ten or twenty years. And all this time mother has been waiting. She may be even now saying, "I dreamed of my John last night. Maybe he will come to-day. He may drop in for dinner," and the poor, trembling hands prepare some favourite dish for him. Dinner comes and goes, but John comes not with it. Thus day after day, month after month, year after year passes, till at last "hope deferred maketh the heart sick," eye, sick unto death; the arms are stretched out no longer.

The dim eyes are closed, the gray hairs smoothed over for the last time, and the tired hands are folded to everlasting rest, and the mother waits no more on earth for one who comes not. God grant that she may not in vain wait for his coming in the heavenly home. Once more I say unto you, Boys, go home, if only for a day. Let mother know you have not forgotten her. Her days may be numbered. Next winter may cover her grave with snow.—Selected.

THE EAGLE AND THE OWL.

THERE is a fable, I know not by whom told, of a league between the eagle and the owl, both birds of prey; they agree to forbear devouring the young of each other.

The eagle however said, "That I may not unknowingly do you this injury, pray give me a description of your young."

The owl replied, "If you happen to meet with some little creatures more beautiful than the loveliest of the feathered race, you will know them to be the family of your friend. So much are they superior to the young of every other bird, that it is impossible, after having heard this description, that you should mistake them; and their voices are remarkably melodious."

Not long afterwards, the eagle, wandering about in search of food to carry to his eyrie for the supply of his eaglets, perceived in the cavity of a tree over-canopied with ivy, four of the ugliest little staring birds he had ever beheld, who made a very disagreeable hissing noise. As it was a case of necessity, and he really thought it rather a good thing to rid the world of such ill-looking little creatures, he bore them off without ceremony as a breakfast for his own family. The mother owl, in despair for the loss of her owlets, sought the eagle, whom she knew had destroyed them, and reproached him with cruelty and breach of faith, in terms of the bitterest anguish. The eagle, concerned

at what had happened, defended himself by saying:

"Unfortunate creature! had you not been blinded by parental vanity, and had more justly described these poor victims of mistake, you would not now have been deprived of them."—Child's Companion.

AS QUICK AS THE TELEPHONE.

ONE night a well-known citizen of a western city who had been walking for some time in the downward path, came out of his house and started down town for a night of carousal with some of his old companions he had promised to meet. His young wife had besought him with imploring eyes to spend the evening with her, and had reminded him of the time when evenings passed in her company were all too short. His little daughter had clung about his knees and coaxed in her pretty, wilful way, for "papa" to tell her some bedtime stories; but habit was stronger than love for child and wife, and he eluded her tender questions by the deceptions and excuses which are the convenient refuge of the intemperate, and so went on his way.

When he was some blocks distant, from his home, he found that in changing his coat he had forgotten his wallet and he could not go out on a drinking bout without money; even though he knew his family needed it, and his wife was economizing every day more and more in order to make up his deficits. So he hurried back and crept softly past the window of his little home, in order that he might steal in and obtain it without running the gauntlet of either questions or carcasses.

But as he looked through the window something stayed his feet. There was a fire in the grate within, for the night was chill. It lit up the little parlour and brought out in startling effect the pictures on the wall. But these were nothing to the pictures on the hearth. There in the soft glow of the firelight, knelt his child at her mother's feet, her small hands clasped in prayer, her fair head bowed; and as the rosy lips whispered each word with childish distinctness, the father listened, spell-bound, to the words which he himself had so often uttered at his mother's knee—"Now I lay me down to sleep."

His thoughts ran back to his boyhood hours; and as he compressed his bearded lips he could see in memory the face of that mother, long since gone to her rest, who taught his own infant lips prayers which he had long ago forgotten to utter.

The child went on and completed her little verse, and then, as prompted by the mother, continued, "God bless mamma, papa, and my own self"—then there was a pause, and she lifted her troubled blue eyes to her mother's face.

"God bless papa," prompted the mother softly.

"God bless papa," lisped the little one. "And—please send him home sober."

He could not hear the mother as she said this; but the child followed in a clear, inspired voice;

"God—bless—papa—and—please—send—him—home—sober, Amen."

Mother and child sprang to their feet in alarm when the door opened so suddenly; but they were not afraid when they saw who it was returned so soon. But that night, when little Mary was being tucked up in bed, after such a romp with papa, she said in the sleepiest and most contented of voices:

"Mamma, God answers 'most as quick as the telephone, doesn't he?'" —Selected.

The Children's Corner.

A BED-TIME SONG.

SWAY to and fro in the twilight gray, This is the ferry for Shadowtown; It always sails at the end of day, Just as the darkness is closing down.

Rest, little head, on my shoulder—so A sleepy kiss is the only fare; Drifting away from the world we go, Baby and I in the rocking-chair.

See where the fire logs glow and spark, Glimmer the lights of the shadowland, The pelting rains on the window—hark! Are ripples lapping upon its strand?

There where the mirror is glancing dim, A lake with its glimmering cool and still; Blossoms are waving above its brink, Those over there on the window-hill.

Rock slow, more slow, in the dusky light, Silently lowering the anchor down; Dear little passenger, say good-night, We've reached the harbor of Shadowtown.

HOW ROB SAVED "SHACK."

"TAKE good care of 'Shack,' Rob."

"I will, mother."

"And don't dromph into the cistern."

"No, father," replied curly-headed Rob, with a laugh.

"We will be back before dark, dear Rob," and away drove his father and mother to town, leaving sturdy ten-year-old Rob standing by the claim shanty, where he watched the wagon until it was lost to sight behind one of the little knolls on the rolling prairie.

Rob was not in the least afraid of being left alone there, but it was the first time he had ever been left in charge of "Shack," and he felt a little embarrassed by the gravity of his trust.

"Shack" was a remarkably good baby. He derived his peculiar name from the fact of having been born in the claim shanty, which is called in

some parts of the west a "shack." He was round-eyed, round checked, and possessed of an astonishing amount of patience. For he would let Rob stand him on his head in the pile of dirt by the unfinished cistern, and never utter a sound of complaint.

"What'll I do to him if he howls?" thought Rob. But "Shack" seemed to have no intention of howling. He sat on the floor, blinking at the hot sun like a toad, and looking so comically wise that Rob burst out into a laugh, in which "Shack" joined, with a chuckle and a crow peculiar to himself.

"Come, 'Shack' let's play," said Rob. There lay the heap of moist earth right out of the cistern, and, happily, in the shade of the bruse all the afternoon.

A piece of an old barrel stave made a splendid trowel. A section of a stove-pipe made a very good shovel, and in a short time a gorgeous palace arose, more substantial and producing more real happiness than many of those Spanish castles you sometimes build when you get to be older children.

"Shack" sat near by, almost as much interested as the youthful architect himself, although, it must be confessed, he did not help much in the building, and, in fact, at a critical moment, by a careless movement of one of his feet, he demolished the entire left wing of the palace, and flattened the dungeon tower to the ground.

Patient Rob built it up again, and to keep "Shack" occupied, put a pile of sand into his lap, into which he thrust his grimy hands and occasionally tasted of it, and made queer faces, at which Rob laughed merrily.

But when the palace was almost done, and Rob was putting the last touch to the last tower, it began to grow dark very fast. Bob jumped up and looked around. There was a big black cloud coming up in the south-west, and Rob's heart beat fast as he thought of cyclones. He had heard his father and mother talk about them, and they said it was best to go down cellar when they came. But there was no cellar dug yet under the new house, which looked like a small mouthful for a big cyclone.

The cloud was coming up very fast. There was not a whisper of wind, but right overhead, the edge of the cloud which now reached the zenith was curling and twisting strangely, like the crest of a wave when it begins to break. The colours in it fascinated Rob so that he almost forgot the danger, until one long rattling crash of thunder rolled over the prairie, and the weeds on the edge of the breaking about the house began to sway gently back and forth, as they felt the first breath of the coming storm.

The cloud dipped lower and lower to the earth, and from its centre, as if pushed down by a great hand above, a funnel-shaped mass dropped to the ground, and suddenly all was dark as night, except for the lightning, which was merged into one broad glare, instead of coming in several flashes.

Then Rob thought of the cistern. There was no water in it yet, and it would answer the place of a cellar. He was only a boy, but he was big and strong for his age. He carried "Shack" to the edge of the cistern, which might have been tenfeet deep, and then looked anxiously around for a piece of rope which his father had used in pulling up dirt the day before, when one of the neighbours helped him. It was near by, and Rob tied one end of it carefully about "Shack," close under his arms.

"Don't cry, 'Shack,' we'll have lots of fun," said Rob, a little tremulously. "Father told me not to drop you into the cistern, but I'm going to."

Then the brave boy carefully lowered his precious load down the cistern. The walls sloped inward as they neared the bottom, and "Shack" rubbed against them; but he was not hurt, and reached the ground in safety.

Rob threw himself flat on the ground just as the cloud burst in all its fury. It struck the frail shanty, and in two seconds not a board of it was left. Rob dug his fingers into the ground, and, although terribly frightened by the roar, and the darkness and lightning, and once even lifted off the ground and rolled completely over, he felt that if he could only hold out a little longer all would be safe. He was fortunately sheltered a little by the mound of dirt behind which he lay.

The cloud passed as quickly as it came, and as the rain began to fall in a torrent, Rob breathed again as he realized that the cyclone had gone by, and he was unharmed.

He ran to the cistern. The rain was running into it in great streams, and "Shack" who was not proof against everything, was beginning to cry.

A great fear came over Rob that "Shack" might drown. He tried to pull him up, but his strength was not equal to it. The sloping walls hindered him now as they had helped him before.

"Oh, if father and mother would only come!" sobbed Rob. And as if in answer to his wish, almost at that moment his father and mother did come, and "Shack" was soon at the top, cuddled in his mother's arms.

It would make too long a story to tell how Rob's father and mother came just after the storm. But they had stopped at a neighbour's on the way home, and had been near enough to see the cyclone carry the house away.

You can imagine how proud they felt of their boy Rob.

And as for "Shack," he is a stout, handsome baby yet, and I hope he will grow up to tell his children how Rob saved him from the cyclone. Don't you?—Youth's Companion.