

Family Department.

THE ONE OBLATION.

With solemn faith we offer up
And spread before Thy glorious eyes
That only ground of all our hope,
That Precious, Bleeding Sacrifice,
Which brings Thy grace on sinners down,
And perfects all our souls in one!

Ty faith we see Thy suffering past,
In this mysterious Rite brought back,
And on Thy grand Oblation cast
Its saving benefit partake—
Memorial of Thy Sacrifice,
This Eucharistic Mystery,
The full Atoning grace supplies,
And sanctifies our gifts in Thee.

—John Wesley.

Over The Sea Wall.

CHAPTER IX. (Continued.)

"As I dare say you have told him," said Aunt Lois, smiling.

"Oh, yes! I thought he'd like to know that we were pleasantly disappointed," answered Guy in his grandest way. "I told him just what a gory tyrant we all thought he was going to be, and how much better we liked him than we expected. Miss Sea Gull, why do you bite your lip and get red? I'm sure we did all think he was going to be like the gory tyrant in 'Peter Rainbow's Travels.' And I thought it would be nice for him to know, because it's always pleasant to know that people think you're nicer than they decided you were going to be."

Well, it was no use to do anything but laugh, though I could have wished that Guy had learnt a little more discretion with his tongue. Aunt Lois sent the two children to play at croquet, and she said smilingly to me—

"Never mind, dear; Mr. Douglas is too sensible to pay over much heed to the chatter of the child. We can't have every thing in this world; and since we have allowed the little fellow to amuse us with his talk about Mrs. Marks and the neighbors, and all that he has seen and heard, we cannot reasonably complain if he chatters a little too much about us. Perhaps the best and kindest thing is to teach children a little more reticence; but if we don't do that, we must not be surprised at what comes of their frankness."

Well, we really had no need to complain of anything, for the next days were as pleasant as it was possible for days to be. We planned several expeditions in and around the neighborhood, to show Mr. Douglas its many beauties; and we found him the most pleasant and friendly companion. He had a wonderful knack of keeping Guy's tongue within bounds without checking the flow of his happy spirits, and very soon the little boy began to imitate his big brother in the most absurd way, offering little courteous attentions to Aunt Lois and me and Maudie, effacing himself as he had never done before, and altogether showing himself such a little squire of dames and such a perfect little gentleman that it was quite pretty to see him. He had always had the right instincts in him, but they had not been brought out under our training; and he had got into the way of taking the first place almost as a natural right, without a thought. Now his truer manliness began to assert itself, by his drawing back and seeing that others were comfortable before he thought of himself. It was something like a new game to him, and we could see that in imagination he was a grown man like Brother Reginald, doing

and speaking just as he would do under similar circumstances; but the change was a pretty and a beneficial one, and we all lost our hearts to him more completely than ever.

Maudie was the gravest one of the party just now. It seemed as though there was some sort of weight upon the little one's spirit which hindered her from thoroughly enjoying the brightness of the present. I could not get her to tell me exactly what the matter was. She seemed to think it was "naughty" of her to be in any way sad, and would always throw her arms about my neck, and declare almost with tears that she was quite, quite happy, and that it must not trouble me that she could not always laugh and talk like Guy; but I knew perfectly that there was some trouble deep down in her heart, and when I put the question direct she did not deny that the trouble was caused by the shadow of parting that lay upon her heart.

"I know it won't be just yet," she said with quivering lips, "but it will be by-and-by. Guy talks now of going to school, and I think he likes it; and I wouldn't say a word to make him dread it or be unhappy. But I know when he goes that I shall go too, and perhaps we shall not be together. And sometimes it seems as though I could not bear it!" and the child broke down and sobbed uncontrollably.

It was on Sunday evening that this climax took place, and Mr. Douglas was leaving St. Benedict's on the Monday. We knew his plans by that time, and possibly Guy knew something of them too. He would be engrossed by business for some considerable time, during which our life would go on without interruption; but when his business was concluded he would return to St. Benedict's, and then would start an immediate inquiry as to places where the children could be safely placed when he went back to India after Christmas. He had only six months to spend in England, although longer furlough was really due to him, because he was on a very difficult and important piece of work, which required his personal attention for two more years, after which he would have a really long holiday, and could spend a couple of years, he thought, "at home."

That evening after tea I found myself alone with Mr. Douglas. Aunt Lois had taken the children for their Bible lesson, which she had not been able to give them before, and I and my companion strolled about the garden; and I took him down to the sea wall, over which I had first noticed the two children who had since become such an important factor in my life.

Sitting there upon the low wall, I found myself telling him all the story—telling him a good deal more than I should have done had I not felt that the moment had now come in which to make my appeal.

I told him something of my past life, of my own great loss, and the subsequent desolation and loneliness that fell upon me. I told him of my apathy and selfishness, and how I had given way and given up until I had come to believe myself the most miserable being in creation. And then I told him how these children had come into my life how they had chased away the apathy and gloom, and given me such an interest and such pleasure as I had never thought it possible I should know again. I told him how much I had learnt from little Maudie's sweet unselfishness and her brave endurance of sorrow and loss, and the tears were standing in my eyes (though I hoped he did not see them) as I talked about her and her love for her mother and brother—how she had almost lived for them, and how since the death of the mother her heart had twined more and more round Guy, until it was with almost a mother's love she loved him, although there was all the passionate and helpless yearning of childhood in it, which made any sort of thought of parting heart breaking to her.

He looked at me earnestly as I said this, and

spoke thoughtfully and with an air of anxious perplexity.

"I know exactly what you mean, Miss Raleigh. I have seen something of it myself, and it makes me very anxious. The child is fearfully sensitive; she has one of those natures with an infinite capacity for suffering, and I hate to think of causing her any pain. But this thing has to be faced. Sooner or later the boy must go to a regular boy's school. You must see that for yourself, though you are so kind to him that you are a little blind to his faults, and I see that he is the most winning little fellow. But school will soon be the only place for him. If we postpone the thing for a year or more, it is only putting off the evil day; and the wrench may be all the worse when it comes. It has got to come, and if what some people say of children is true, the younger the sorrow comes to them the more quickly it is forgotten. Now, Miss Raleigh, I ask you to advise me. I am a man, and men are clumsy creatures at best, and this little maid has certainly given to you the second place in her heart. Tell me what would be best for her. Would it be less pain to have the separation from Guy now—and it will be a long one, for I cannot get back to England for two years to make any kind of home for them, though I have hopes of getting employment here afterwards on a new railway, so as to be able then to take up something of my position towards them, though it is possible I may have to remain in India many years yet—or shall we put it off for a year and make the move then? Will you tell me your opinion? I shall look upon it as a great favor if you will."

My heart was beating very fast now that the moment had come, but I tried to speak calmly and reasonably.

"I have got a plan, Mr. Douglas, which I think better than any that has occurred to you; and I will not deny that my heart is very much set upon it, and that your concurrence will be counted a personal favor." I could see his eyes fixed questioningly upon me, yet I did not look at him, but only out over the sea, as I went on with the speech I had rehearsed so many times before. "I have told you something of what Maudie has done and has been to me, and how dearly I love her. It would be a great pain to me to have to part from her. It seems as though she was sent to me just when I most needed comforting—most needed something to love and something to care for—and we have comforted one another, and I know that I have seemed to her to fill, just a very little, the blank in her heart left by her mother's death. Now, Mr. Douglas, that this house is mine, that I am nearly of age, and that I have plenty of money; what I want to do is to keep Maudie. No, please wait a moment before you speak, and let me finish. Aunt Lois wants to go and live with a friend, though she will stay as long as I need her; but I do not want to be selfish in keeping her. If I had Maudie I should get a thoroughly well-educated lady to be her governess and a sort of companion to me, who would read with me, and help me with music and drawing and foreign languages. I should have the child for my playfellow and companion too; and you hardly know what a pleasure it is to us to be together. It would just make all the difference in my life. And then about Guy. We have been thinking of him too, and there is a very good school for little boys out on the hill there beyond St. Benedict's. We know the head-master and his wife very well—Aunt Lois, at least does; and they would take special interest in Guy. He would be able to come here for his Sundays, so that the separation would not be great at first. It would be so broken to Maudie that she would make no trouble of it, and the boy would feel that he had friends close at hand. And in the holidays, of course, he would come here and they would be together. Now Mr. Douglas, listen!" And then we both