

FAMILY DEPARTMENT.

AT REST.

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

It is the evening hour,
And thankfully,
Father, Thy weary child
Has come to Thee.

I lean my aching head
Upon Thy breast,
And there, and only there,
I am at rest.

Thou knowest all my life;
Each petty sin;
Nothing is hid from Thee,
Without, within.

All that I have or am
Is wholly Thine;
So is my soul at peace,
For Thou art mine.

To-morrow's dawn may find
Me here or there—
It matters little, since Thy love
Is everywhere.

—Observer.

A Story for Lent.

"What's the use, anyhow? I've given up butter and cake, and haven't bought a peanut since the day before Ash-Wednesday; but it don't make me *feel* good anyhow, and it ought to. How's a fellow going to be good, I'd like to know, when it goes and rains, and spoils the ice the only day in the week when he can go to the Park skating? It's awful mean!"

So Paul wandered out of the nursery down stairs into his mother's sitting-room, and on his way across it upset her work-basket, sending the spools and scissors flying in every direction; twitched the cushion out from under the white kitten as she lay quietly sleeping on her own stool in the corner; and after setting Fluff, the dog, barking at her, subsided on a stool before the window to watch the sleet dashing against the glass. Cousin Edith came into the room just then. Somehow things always smoothed themselves out wherever *she* came, Paul couldn't but *feel*, even if he didn't think it; for Fluff, after a little pat on the head from her soft fingers, rolled himself up till he looked like a ball of thistle-down, on the rug in front of the fire, with the forgiving kitten beside him. The spools were carefully picked up and put back into their proper places, and then, bringing a chair close beside Paul at the window, she said,

"What is my husband thinking about?"

It was an understood thing in the family that when he was large enough Paul was going to marry his cousin, at least, he said so very often, if she would only wait for him.

"I'm thinking how mean it is that it rains to-day, when I wanted to go to the park so much, and I know there won't be another bit of skating this year; and then I was thinking what's the use of giving up things to eat in Lent? It don't make you good. I never felt madder in all my life than I did just now. Say, what is?"

How it storms! said Cousin Edith, not answering his question, but looking beyond the woe-begone face out of the window. "On, Paul, see! there is one of my splendid boys," and Cousin Edith bowed and smiled to a small figure in rubber clothes, who was making his way up the street against the wind and rain.

"A splendid fellow? Why, I don't see anybody but that telegraph boy grinning up at the window. You don't mean *him*?"

"Yes, I do; that is one of the boys in my class at the Mission Sunday-school, the one your father got a place for a year ago in the Western Union Company. Would you like to have me tell a story? I can tell a nice one about that very boy. Papa won't be home this ever so long. We have the whole house to ourselves this stormy afternoon, now mamma's gone. What *can* mamma be doing in Boston this rainy afternoon, I wonder?"

"But now for my story: One Christmas Day, two

years ago, Miss Annie Warren asked me to go with her to the Christmas service at the mission school in C— street.

"When we got down there we found the room filled with ragged children, boys and girls. Everybody had a clean face, to be sure, but that was all, for I don't believe there was a whole jacket or dress among the eighty children. Their bright eyes were fixed on the curtain that hid the wonderful tree, and what a shout rang through the room when it was drawn away. The children behaved very well indeed while the service was going on and the presents being given out. I don't think the boys in Miss Annie's class pounded one another in a good natured way, more than three or four times, and they were the roughest-looking boys I have ever seen."

"When it came their turn these boys were very quiet, each one listened anxiously for his own name, and when it was called went up with a very broad smile and an awkward duck of the head, to take the wonderful and delightful bundle. Pretty soon I heard called out, 'Jennie Morris!'

"Everybody looked around, but no one moved. Miss Annie was whispering to the boy beside her, and did not notice till the name was called the second time, 'Jennie Morris!'

"Then she started up, saying 'there had been a mistake made, the name was James Morris.' Then 'James Morris, was called out, but I saw Mr. Porter, the superintendent, looking very doubtfully at the bundle he was holding. The boy whose name had been called went forward, and I saw that he was the largest and roughest looking boy in the class, with a mop of red hair, and the very raggedest clothes I ever saw."

"When he was back in his seat again, and began to undo the bundle, I heard the boys all guessing what it could be. One said a hat, another shoes, one went even so far as to think of a whole suit of clothes. But, Paul, when the papers were taken off, what *do* you suppose that present was, but a *doll*! Yes, a large doll, with pink cheeks, and a cloud of very much crimped light hair, lovely blue eyes, and dressed in the height of the fashion. Such a shout as went up from the boys! Poor Jim's face grew very red; Miss Annie was so distressed, she almost cried when she said:

"Jim, there has been a mistake made, and it is all my fault, too, because I did not remember what would be in the bundle when a girl's name was called. Let me have the doll, and I'll change her for something else. Shall it be a knife? I'm so sorry, so very sorry this happened."

"I know Jim must have seen how very badly Miss Annie felt about it, and don't you think it was very nice in him not to mind all the jokes and laughter of the other boys, and answer her as he did? for this was what he said,

"Miss Annie don't you never fret; I'll just keep her."

"And keep her he did in spite of all Miss Annie could say and the shouts of the boys. He held her carefully, though his face was very red all the rest of the evening, and wrapped her away safely under his old ragged coat when the service was over, because it was storming hard."

"After that, the very next week Miss Annie was married and went to Boston. I took her class at the mission school. No matter how hard it stormed, and there were a good many hard storms that Winter, Jim was at Sunday-school. I wanted so many times to ask him what he had done with his queer present, but I was afraid he might not like to have me, so I knew nothing at all about the beautiful doll till in the Summer. Jim, who had never missed a Sunday since I had taken Miss Annie's class, was absent for two Sundays. The second Sunday afternoon, when I was trying to find out where he lived, a forlorn little girl, who carried a baby almost as large as herself, came to bring me a message from him. He was sick, she said, and would I come and see him?"

"So, with the little girl to show me the way, I climbed I'm sure I don't know how many pairs of stairs, and then went into a low bare garret right under the roof, and uncomfortable it was there on such a warm Summer's day.

"Jim had a very bright smile for me, though he could only sit up on the pile of rags that was his bed. He had hurt his foot, and could not walk at all. Think, Paul, what a lonely time he must have had those two weeks, for no one lived with him but his old grandmother, who was a rag picker, and gone all day. They were wretchedly poor; when Jim was well, he held horses, ran errands, swept crossings, or anything else he could find to do that would bring him a penny. I'm afraid his street life must have been a very hard and bad one."

"He was very glad to see me, and after he had been talking a good while and had told me all about himself, I asked him what he had done with his Christmas present; but his face grew so red then, that I was very sorry I had asked him. He stammered out, 'I've got her now myself,' and turning down the ragged quilt, showed me the doll lying there, wrapped in a large, very white handkerchief. 'How pretty she looks,' I said. 'Have you named her, and is she good company while you are lying here in bed?'

"She's always that, Miss, and—and—her name's—Edith, 'cause it's the prettiest name I knows.' He looked at me as if he were afraid almost that I would be angry or laugh at him, but I hurried to say that I felt very much honoured to have such a beautiful young lady named for me."

"You see," he said, "there a'n't never been such a lady here before, and I don't know no name good enough for her. Somehow I didn't want to call her Annie, though Miss Annie, she's so nice—for there's *Annie* Rhyan, she sells papers, and she can make more noise than any girl I ever see in all my born days; she a'n't no *lady*. And *Annie* Green's allus a paddling in the mud puddles; but nobody in our street's named *Edith*."

"And then he went on to tell me all about her, how that he made up his mind that such a beautifully dressed young lady must never touch anything dirty; so he worked very hard and scraped pennies enough together to buy the handkerchief which he kept her wrapt in; he managed to get somewhere a nice box, and lined it with pretty pink calico, for her to live in. Before very long, he told me, he began to think about her more than anything else; he picked pretty stones, begged half withered flowers, or sometimes even bought a fresh one to carry home to Edith; a picture out of an illustrated paper, a broken bit of looking-glass, anything he thought at all pretty, was carefully saved and taken home to Edith. He was learning to read, too, picked out the letters from an old newspaper. A friend of his who was a boot-black told him the letters sometimes, when he wasn't busy, and every night as soon as he had earned a little money, he hurried home and spent his evening in talking to Edith, if he had no candle, or in spelling out the words in his newspaper to her. She must have known all his secrets. I'm sure he told her everything, and because she was so dainty and pretty he used to wash his face and hands under the street pump every night, before he took her out of the box where she spent her quiet days."

"I suppose you think it was a funny thing, Paul, for a boy a good deal older than you are to care so much about a doll; but think, if you had no mother or sister, no one to talk to or care for you but a deaf old grandmother, who only cared for what she picked out of the ash barrels or in the streets; and had never taken anything so dainty and nice as this doll in your hands before, don't you believe it would have been a great pleasure to you to have made a friend of a doll? Before very long Jim was at Sunday-school again, and I was very sure, though I hardly ever spoke to him about her, and then never when any of the other boys could hear, that he thought just as much of Edith as ever. Once or twice I gave him a little package for her, a new bonnet, and once a blue silk dress. Oh, if you could only have seen his face! how proud he looked the next Sunday when he waited after service to tell me how much Edith liked her new dress. I really think he almost believed that she talked to him and told him all her thoughts, as he did his to her."

(To be Continued.)