

## The Home Mission Journal.

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Rosecroft.

BY CHARA BROUGHTON CONANT.  
CHAPTER II.

THE drawing-room is no place for little girls," Mrs. Fullerton would say, sending her off with a kiss that had no warmth in it. Eliza walked off, her heart in a ferment of rage and jealousy. She knew from experience that her young sisters would appear in their prettiest clothes—Mrs. Fullerton's lady guests would be sure to ask for the "little loves," and their mother, proud of their grace and beauty, would allow them to be brought in for a few minutes. When they grew older, they learned to play an attractive part at her afternoon receptions. What prettier sight than a lovely little girl, picturesquely dressed, presenting to each lady guest as she entered an exquisite flower from a basket on her arm? At less formal receptions they would assist in offering cake and bonbons to the guests, who were quite carried away with their loveliness.

Mrs. Fullerton, though she saw little of the lovely trio, except upon these occasions, was delighted at the praises showered upon them. She kept them beautifully dressed, hired a French governess for them, and sometimes thought complacently of the sensation they would make when they were at an age to be brought out. But Eliza—the mother shuddered as she thought what a blot she was always likely to be upon her family. What could she do with her? Well, at twelve years old, she should be sent away to a boarding-school of the strictest sort and kept there till she was of age. Nine years of culture and training might impart the necessary polish; if they failed to do so—well, it was time enough then to consider what she could do with her.

Alas, for the children of such a mother! Such superficial religious training as the four little girls received was imparted to them by paid attendants. It was at their nurse's knee, not their mother's, that they learned to hush their morning and evening prayers, words almost without meaning to them, for no one ever told them about the gracious Saviour, the friend and lover of little children. If, when they repeated the words,

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,"

they chanced to ask who Jesus was, the answer came briskly: "He lives up in the sky; he good and he love you. Jump into bed now, and go right to sleep, and he will send his pretty angels down to take care of you all night. But if you are troublesome and keep calling for me, the big black man who lives in the coal-cellar will come instead and carry you off!"

It is almost needless to say that the children were never instructed in the Holy Scripture. They were not sent to Sunday school, nor would Mrs. Fullerton take them with her when, sometimes for the looks of the thing, she attended a fashionable church. "They would plague me to death," she reflected, "even if the governess were with them. Church is no place for children, anyway; let them go when they are older."

Poor Eliza's religious training, if it at all deserves that name, was of the hardest and harshest kind. The nurses disliked her as a naughty, self-willed child, who tore her clothes, romped like a boy whenever she got the chance, and did more mischief than the other

three put together. Such a plain little thing, too; she ought to be as good as gold to make up for her homely face.

As Claude Fullerton disapproved of whipping, and declared that he would dismiss any attendant who dared to raise a hand to either of the four children, Eliza, after her mother's marriage to him, was never punished in that way. "Such nonsense," declared the maids, "when a good smart whipping was just what the 'little brat' needs!" When scarcely more than a baby, Eliza was taught by the nurse who had charge of her then, that the "black man," and Satan, a horrid creature with horns and tail, lurked about the bed every night, only waiting a convenient chance to carry her off; that God and the pretty angels did not love her any more than her papa or mamma did. Who could love such a disagreeable, naughty child? The poor little girl was never taught about the benign Heavenly Father, who so loved the world that he gave his son to die for us, or of the tender Saviour who took the little children in his arms and blessed them. Her heart would have responded to such teaching, for she was by no means the dreadful child that this nurse and those who had charge of her later made her out to be. Though naturally self-willed and as full as active life as ever any healthy boy, she had a warm, generous heart, and was so true and honest that she would have taken a whipping any day rather than tell a lie. But her training had a disastrous effect upon her, and her nurse used to relate with horror how, when scarcely four years old, she had suddenly refused to say the evening prayers that she had been taught to repeat every night.

"You say Jesus don't love me!" she exclaimed, facing her nurse with a defiant look. "Then why should I say my prayers to him? I won't say prayers to anybody that hates me!"

"Oh, you wicked little thing! If you were good, he'd love you quick enough; but now—I don't know what he'll do to you for such badness as this! It's only him as has kept that black man and Satan from carrying you off long ago!"

"You're always talking about the black man and Satan!" retorted Eliza with a stamp of her little foot, and thrusting out her underlip defiantly, "You're always talking about them, but they never come for me at all. It's lies you tell, that's what it is!"

"Ah, it's the good smacking you want, Miss, and you're going to get it right away!"

This was before the mother's second marriage, and Ann Garrity had full power to carry out her threat. But in spite of severe chastisement, repeated again and again, the little rebel absolutely refused either to say her prayers or to ask Ann's pardon. In despair, at length, the nurse bundled her into bed, leaving her with half-a-dozen concluding slaps, and the assurance that the black man and Satan were hiding in the cellar and would most likely come up for her before morning.

If Ann Garrity had cared she would have rigged up some improper "bogey" to scare the small rebel into submission. But as she had once tried and had a nervous child into convulsions by such measures, and lost her situation, she dared not repeat the trick.

For half an hour or so Eliza lay awake, smarting from the punishment, her baby heart full of rage, grief, and hatred of the nurse. And though she was not a nervous child she could not help quaking as she thought of Ann's parting words. It was the first time she had refused to say her prayers, and she was vaguely frightened lest God, the God who seemed as terrible as the ogres in the fairy tales her nurse repeated, might be dreadfully affronted. What if he should allow the black man and Satan to come for her as soon as Ann went down stairs? For a moment she was tempted to yield, then her natural pride and tenacious little will asserted themselves.

"I won't say 'em, no!" she murmured to herself, contentiously. "Don't believe the black man and Satan will come up anyhow; they never have, though I think she must have said it a hundred times."

Comforted by this reflection, she closed her eyes, and soon bodily fatigue and the warmth of the bed brought on a sleep untroubled by terrifying visions. When she awoke, the sun was shining brightly into the room. In a moment, full consciousness returned, and she sat up in bed, with a triumphant gleam in her eyes.

"See, now! They never came for me at all. She telled lies, Ann did. I won't never be afraid or say my prayers, never anymore!"

To be Continued.

Paying for Blessings.

By W. C. Martin.

IN 1887 a young lady was rescued from drowning; at Ocean Grove by one of the life guards at the risk of his own life. She was an orphan, but her wealthy uncle, with whose family she was summering there, looked up the man who had saved the life of his loved niece and gave him a quarter.

One of our Indiana preachers regularly supplied a western Pennsylvania church during summer vacations and he enjoyed telling how, after one preaching service there, a lady came to him to acknowledge a blessing. "O," she said, "I never can tell you how much you have done for my home. Last summer my husband, who, before, had been sinful and neglectful of his family, was converted under one of your sermons, and the last year has been, in consequence, a happy one—the first happy year of our married life, and I want you to accept a small token of my great gratitude." When he opened the envelope she handed him he found it contained a quarter.

Ben Potter, a Connecticut friend of mine, had a higher estimate of the value of blessings. When his brother Asa his inseparable companion for fifty years, was killed by a locomotive, he said to me with tears in his eyes—and he was really heart-broken—"I wouldn't have had that happen for five dollars," and he meant it.

How in contrast to these incidents are the following: Last week we were reading in the papers of a woman in New York city, whose physician succeeded in removing from the end of her beautiful nose a disfiguring wart that had given her annoyance all her life, and did it so well as to leave no scar. She gave him a thousand dollars and, no doubt felt she was paying but poorly for that relief from a mortifying nuisance.

A deacon in a Connecticut church heard an evangelist preach in his church five times, and felt that he was better for it, and he gave him \$200 down and I think a great deal later.

Most people think that all blessings are worthy to be paid for but spiritual blessings. The old slogan, "Salvation's free for you and me" has cheapened all things spiritual in the estimation of the average person. Groceries ought to be paid for of course, and dry-goods. Even intellectual pleasures and mental culture are worth money. But when it comes to spiritual blessings, people are grateful for them, their hearts burn within them, and an inexpressible joy fills them; they have meat to eat that the world knows not of—but as for him who brings them the blessing, why let him be satisfied with thanks. If he expects aught else he is mercenary and grasping; he is "an hireling."

Oh, how many pastors there are who have brought to the homes of scores and hundreds of people blessings by the side of which the wealth of the whole world is small; wayward sons restored to virtue; brutal husbands made gentle; wilful daughters made tractable; and considerate; and innumerable such blessings are traceable to their influences and the recipients of them subscribing four dollars to the pastor's salary for the ensuing year, and grumble if more is asked. It looks like rank ingratitude.

I wish people were all like a man who attended just one service in my church, and at the close of it insisted on giving the preacher a dollar—not much, but he felt that he had received a dollar's worth of blessing. Why, if that man had been converted at that service, or had seen his wife or son or daughter led into the Kingdom, I suppose he would have felt like giving half his possessions to the agent who brought the blessing, or the church through which it came. He was a laboring man, or perhaps he would have felt he must pay the preacher twenty-five or fifty dollars for the blessing he received at that service.

There is a woman of large means in Connecticut who attended but one service during my pastorate there—a woman who lives in another town, and has sent the preacher of that sermon