

It is good for a man's heart when a woman's eyes bless him so. The mother made a last effort to speak, and a grating sound escaped her. She pointed to her son.

'Safe!' she said.

An hour later the missionary was on his way back to the orphanage with the weeping child clinging to his warm hand like a father's. The mother was safe now, too, and overhead the winter stars were shining as they once shone at Bethlehem.

### A Plea for Home Music

(By Margaret E. Sangster, in the 'Congregationalist'.)

'Play something for us, Maude.'

'O, mother, don't ask me. I'm out of practice. I haven't touched the piano in a month.'

'But any little simple thing will please your father, child. He likes to hear his old favorites, the tunes and variations you knew before you went away to study. Often since we've been alone he's looked at the piano, shut up there cold and dumb, and said, "It won't be like that when Maude comes home."'

The young girl shrugged her shoulders irritably, a trick she had learned from her music master, and answered, positively:— 'I have forgotten those silly jingling things, mother, and I wouldn't play them if I could. As soon as I've gathered myself together and feel that I can do myself justice, I'll play, but not just yet.'

The mother sighed. She and her husband had made many sacrifices that Maude's musical education should be complete. The cost of her lessons, of keeping her in town, of buying her the new instrument and furnishing her not only with music but with opportunities to hear great performances had been a severe tax on their resources and on their strength. But they were American parents and the self-denial from first to last had been ungrudgingly borne. From the hour when Maude's little fingers played the scales and her father had swelled with pride as he caught the rhythm of 'Money Musk' and 'Pop Goes the Weasel,' her beautiful talent had been the possession on which their hearts had fastened as life's greatest delight. Now she was acknowledged to be an accomplished musician, wonderful for an amateur, aspiring to be a professional, yet Mr. Burrows shook his gray head sorrowfully as he confided to his wife: 'We never get any good from it all. Seems as if Maude doesn't get any good from it herself.'

At prayer meeting, the week after her return from a year's absence, it had happened that the pastor's wife who usually played the hymns was absent. The minister asked whether some one of the young ladies would not take her place for the evening, and had pointedly addressed Maude, after a pause of silence and waiting, 'Will you not help us, Miss Burrows?'

Maude had declined, to the deep disappointment of the old people, to whom it appeared incomprehensible that after all her study she should not be able to render so very small a service. Fortunately, the pastor played a little himself, and was not, therefore, entirely dependent upon others, but he said to his wife later, and she agreed with him, that he thought any young woman who played at all might learn to play simple sacred melodies so that at a moment's notice, if the occasion arose, she could be of use in a gospel meeting. In this opinion the minister does not stand alone. There are many who share it with him.

A thorough musical training, with its discipline of ear and hand, its marvellous technique and its intellectual breadth need not wholly exclude the less while it gives the freedom of the large. The girl whose own refinement of taste is satisfied only with classical music may still, if she choose, give rare pleasure to a homely audience of her own people and her neighbors to whom the harmonies she prefers are an enigma to which they have no clue.

I thought of this one evening lately as I sat on a veranda, where the moths flitted about the fragrant vines, and listened to Chopin and Schumann deliciously played by a young woman, from whose slender fingers the music rippled and dipped in a golden shower. Her repertoire was wide, her attainments large and her memory a phenomenon. And when there was a modest request from a timid, old-fashioned acquaintance for a former favorite it was not preferred in vain to Dorothy, who could dash into college songs, glide into dreamy nocturnes, play the sentimental pieces no longer in vogue and accompany a quartette or soloist with equal facility and willingness. Such ease and grace were not uncommon at an earlier period, but as our ideals have become higher, our standards more exacting, young women have overlooked the fact that a little home music to give enjoyment to the domestic circle and to chance visitors is a charming contribution to the satisfaction of life.

'Why should we not carefully cultivate the memory for music, so that we may not be obliged always to depend upon the score,' is a question for the consideration of amateurs who are not willing to carry their notes wherever they go. The musical memory is as susceptible to cultivation as the memory for history, arithmetic or spelling. And a question for parents is, 'Why should not the boy as well as the girl be taught the piano, the violin or some musical instrument?' To a youth at the period when childhood passes into adolescence music is a resource; it provides agreeable occupation for leisure and a partial defence against temptation. Then, too, the responsibility for making and keeping home the dearest place on earth is as much laid upon sons as upon daughters. The boys as well as the girls should join in making the household cheerful and attractive.

I am not urging a letting down of the plane, nor a slovenly rendering of fine music. I am fully aware of the imperative requirement that an artist should jealously practice and tolerate neither slurring nor sketchy work. Along with fidelity to one's art, however, may go a spirit of gracious accommodation to the less highly educated, an ability to please those who do not understand the difficult and the classic, a willingness to offer now and then a little home music in a plain home.

### Daily Life.

Spending hours of every day

Doing little duties,

Bearing little trials and cares,

Finding out their beauties,—

Nothing great, no famous deeds,

Just the present labors,

Sphere, the home, with all its needs,

Relatives and neighbors.

Of monotonous it looks,

With its troubles teasing,

But He, who 'pleased not Himself,'

Was to God well pleasing.

And we may fulfil the plan

Foreordained by Heaven,

If we do the best we can

With the talents given.

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### Martha's Temptation

(By Marie D. Hanson, in 'Happy Days'.)

Martha Sykes raised her eyes surreptitiously to the clock. It was on the point of striking eight, so she had been at work one hour and a half. Four hours yet before noontime, and then a scant thirty minutes in which to consume two slices of bread thinly spread with butter, and an untempting doughnut.

Martha straightened her bent shoulders, pulled closer the heavy garment on which she was working, and sighed. How warm it was in the room! She remembered how cool and fresh the air had felt when she was hurrying to work that morning. It must be even nicer now, she decided, stealing another upward look, this time through the window. Ah, well! No use to sigh for what could not be. The long cloth seam was there to be bound, the 'boss' was standing near, liable at any time to sharply reprimand her with the remark, 'No idling there, Number 9! Hurry with your work.'

For nearly twelve months Martha Sykes had labored in that close room with twenty other girls, reporting for duty at 6.30 a.m., when urged to do so by 'extra rush orders,' and at 7.30 a.m., other days—and this for a weekly sum that barely served to keep body and soul together. How many, many times Martha had longed for her country home during that year! But her happy girlhood ceased the day she laid her mother to rest in the village cemetery and found herself alone in the world.

At this crisis Martha's first impulse was to turn to the great city. Other girls had made money there; why should not she? And to the dirty, bustling, stifling city the fresh-faced country girl came, full of youthful enthusiasm and courage. The enthusiasm passed away with the first six months of toil in Tailor Edward's shop, but Martha's courage did not fail her. She did her best and hoped for better things.

Nine o'clock struck and the seam was finished, and Martha called for another garment. It was given her and she resumed her work. Her back ached and her head ached. Martha wondered in a vague way if she were going to be sick and who would care for her in such an event. Not the disappointed, impatient landlady who rented her the tiny room Martha called home. Long ago Mrs. Jones had been compelled through the shortcomings of others, to deny herself the charity of giving something for nothing.

The clock struck ten and Martha was still wondering what would become of her if she fell sick, when the head woman bade her get ready and go to the store to match some trimming. The other girls viewed Martha enviously, each wishing that she had been the favored one.

'Hurry there and back. Waste no time. We can't afford to lose a minute,' was thrown after her.

Martha would gladly have lingered in the fresh, delightful outdoor air, but it was her nature to obey. She hastened to the store, completed her purchase, and while waiting for it to be wrapped, glanced around the store. As she did, her eyes rested on a lady who was talking to the proprietor at another counter. Martha thought what a kind, sweet face the lady possessed, and wondered if she had ever known trouble. Then the package was returned and Martha hurried away. Half way to the tailor shop she paused, thinking how large the bundle was she held in her hand. Suppose they had given her the