

owing to the careless and sinful life I had led for years not a single prayer could I utter; they were forgotten.

"I sank into a sort of half unconscious sleep, and the history of my life seemed to pass before me. Again I was a boy—again I took my place in my class at the village Sunday-school, where the kind face of my lady-teacher seemed to call to my mind the beautiful collect for the fourth Sunday in Lent. I found I was able to repeat it. Collect after collect, prayer after prayer now rose to my lips; I felt comforted. It might have been said, "Behold he prayeth." Was a sovereign, then, too much to give for all the mercies I have received—a mere trifle to help to cast the bread upon the waters?"

"Here the soldier paused, and the gentleman who had brought him into the room, said, 'May I ask your name?' 'That,' said the man, 'must remain a secret.'

"All who had listened to his story were deeply moved. Not a word was spoken for some seconds; and the soldier, taking advantage of the silence, made a profound bow, and withdrew to mix again with the busy multitude of the great city."

Not a word was spoken by any of the party at the tea table. Mrs. B—, who had a son in the army, quietly turned away to hide her emotion, and rang the bell for tea to be cleared away. Teddy, who had been listening attentively to the vicar's story, drew his collect book from under one of his sister's music books, and quietly left the room. He went, I afterwards found, to learn the collect for the following Sunday.—
Friendly Greetings

ROBIN REDBREAST.

WHEN I see the redbreast Robin,
And his happy song I hear,
Telling us of life that's waking
And that springtime draweth near.

Then returns the story olden,
How the robins breast was dyed,
When the world's great springtime waited,
When the Lord was crucified.

Crown of thorns His head encircled,
Pressing cruelly His brow,
Mockingly the crowd about Him
Saw Him in his anguish bow.

But the little plain brown robin
Pity felt for Him who saith:
"Not a sparrow falleth earthward
But the Father noticeth;"

Straight, with wings the swifter speeding
For the pitying love she knew,
On the cruel thorn crown lighted,
Plucked a thorn, then backward flew.
Just a little was it lightened,
That cruel crown the Saviour bore,
And the little Robin Redbreast
Bears the blood-stain evermore.—S. H. B.

Boys and Girls' Corner.

BEAUTY IN THE HOME.

No, nothing is more lovely in a home than beautiful, delicate *cleanliness*.

I have seen little latticed windows looking a very jewel of loveliness, with the small diamond panes bright and shining, the honeysuckle or rose creeping round the frame, the clean white muslin curtains, and the flowering creeping plant in a bright red pot suspended from the centre. It was a lowly home, the father's earning not more than ten a week, and a lot of little ones to be fed; but it was very lovely to me. And the furniture too—old-fashioned, plain wooden furniture, of a straight shape, not an elegant curve or a cushion anywhere, but so shining! Not a greasy mark or black spot, but all kept beautiful by sheer rubbing, and nought else. And the ornaments—the bright tins on the mantle-shelf, the shining fire-irons—all reflecting in twenty different ways the sunlight or the firelight. And the fresh gathered flowers, perhaps only a bunch of primroses or cowslips, but surely very lovely. And all this loveliness I have seen brought about by a girl—a girl of fourteen, brave Nelly White, with a sick mother and five little brothers and sisters. I have gone into Nelly's home and have found her down on her knees in the little red-tiled kitchen. She had scoured the floor clean, and now she was rubbing it over with a piece of flannel and a little skimmed milk which she had begged from me to make it look polished and glossy. You would hardly believe the improved appearance of tiled floors served in this way. "Don't it make your arms ache, Nelly?" I asked. "Oh, ma'am, but see how lovely it looks," she answered.

Another time I called, it was spring-time, and the young housekeeper had been in the woods with the little ones, and had brought home such treasures, primroses—dear primroses, blue and white violets, and delicate wood-anemones and tender green leaves, and she was making "a flower-cup" while the

little ones sorted the flowers into bunches of six or eight. The most splendid vase I ever saw, filled with the most costly flowers, did not present a more lovely sight than did Nelly's posy when finished. And what did she use? two old saucers—one larger than the other, and two cups without handles! She placed the largest saucer at the bottom, then stood a cup in it; placed the other saucer on that, and the other cup on the top of all; she filled the saucers and the upper cup with water. Then she arranged the flowers in wreaths. First a wreath of green leaves, then primroses, then blue violets, then primroses again, with here and there a wood-anemone between. This filled the bottom saucer, and quite hid the under cup. The second saucer was filled in the same way, while for the upper cup was reserved the blue and white violets only. "because," said Nelly, "they smell so sweet, and people always sniff at the middle."

Wherever you are, make your home lovely.

And then there is *the comfort*. Comfort means a great deal—pure air, good food, and warmth, all come under the head of comfort. So you must look to the *pure air*. Do you know that this is quite as necessary as good food, especially to those who have to work hard? Bad air is a slow poison, and bad air breathed at night is worse than bad air breathed in the day, because then we lie helpless and do not once move out of it.

If in the home there is a bad drain, too many in one room, a filthy corner, or general neglect of things to make bad smells and poison the air; and if there are stopped-up chimneys, nailed-up windows to prevent such air getting out, then all who live in such a home suffer. They go to bed at night hoping to rest, but they wake up in the morning feeling as tired as when they went to bed, their heads ache, their limbs feel weak, and they won't care whether they work or not. The poison of impure air has been busy all the time they slept, sapping their life and energy, and making them feel as they say, "no-how." Many a man who *must work* crawls from his bed in this state; mind, *he must work*, and he feels *he can't work*. When he passes by those shops that sell stimulants—drink that will appear to put new life into him, and make him feel himself again, is it any wonder that