

HOPE'S QUIET HOUR

THE CONSECRATED KITCHEN

With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: knowing that whatsoever good thing each one doeth, the same shall he receive again from the Lord, whether he be bond or free.—Eph. vi.: 7, 8 (R. V.).

"O, little room, wherein my days go by,
Each like to each, yet each one set apart
For special duties—nearest to my heart
Art thou of all the house—in thee I try
New issues, when the old ones go awry,
And with new victories allay the smart
Of dismal failures; and afresh I start
With courage new to conquer or to die!
O, simple walls, no pictures break thy calm!
O, simple floor, uncarpeted below!
And duty done is solace for all woe,
And every modest tool that hangs in view
Thy inward eye has visions for its balm
Is fitted for the work it has to do."

When I speak of the "kitchen," I mean the place where the ordinary routine of daily work is carried on—it may be the stable or field, it may be the store or school. Wherever it is that you are called to work, remember that your service can be consecrated to God, becoming holy and glorious, even though it may be paid for by man in commonplace dollars and cents.

Buxton says: "Let us begin each new day by putting it and all its events into God's hands, by saying—'Lord, undertake for me!'—and we shall be led in the right way. Let us consecrate our work to Jesus. Some people swear over their work, others pray over it. Some do it in a discontented, half-hearted way. If we pray over our task, we shall do it twice as well, and twice as easily. We should touch our labor, however common, as we would touch a consecrated chalice; it is holy unto the Lord."

The prophet, Zechariah, speaks of a time when the horses' bridles shall be holy, and every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be Holiness unto the Lord of Hosts. It is a grand promise and we are right in the glory of the rainbow—let us realize our godly heritage. A rainbow is made by the sun shining on common drops of water, and it is beautiful with all the colors there are. And when we look up and lift up our heads, we see the glory of the Sun of Righteousness making the common work we are engaged in holy and beautiful. Don't let us leave our Royal Guest in the lonely parlor. He wants to go with us wherever our work is calling us—and He wants to help us do it. Do you think that St. Paul was speaking only of spiritual building when he said: "We are laborers together with God?" Perhaps he was, but I feel sure that our Master—Who worked so cheerily 'with hammer, saw and plane'—has, by His holy touch consecrated the everyday labor of the world. I am sure He helped His mother in her kitchen, and He will help you in yours—if you open the door and make Him welcome.

We may think it would be a great privilege to visit the "Holy Land"; but it is only "holy" because God Incarnate—God in human flesh—once walked there. That was nearly 2,000 years ago, but He is ready to consecrate your kitchen by His presence today, and His help is at your disposal. We have little need to wish

"For often time and holier shore," when He is always Emanuel, God with us.

I think it was Abraham Lincoln who said that "God must have a special affection for common people, or He would not have made so many of them." We might also take it for granted that He must be especially interested in the common work of every day, because that fills up most of the time of everyone. He has given us six week days to one Sunday, and even on Sunday most people find a lot of so-called "common" work which has to be done. In an army, there are only a few officers to hundreds of private soldiers, there are only a few battles, and hundreds of days of monotonous drill. In a choir, the most important part of the music is not the part of the soloist, but the varying parts of the other singers—bass, tenor, alto and soprano, blending together in one rich harmony. God wants us all to be singers in His choir, and the song of praise in the heart (in the kitchen) is sweeter to His ear, very often, than a beautifully-rendered solo addressed to a critical congregation. I never can understand why a soloist in church, professing—one might naturally suppose—to be singing to God, should turn around and face the people instead of voicing their feelings for them while gazing up into God's Face. But that is aside from our subject.

Those who make Christ welcome in the midst of common work, bring



JUST AROUND THE BEND.

Him into touch with others' lives unconsciously, and far more effectively, than any sermon—spoken or written—can do. Seeds are sown every day which fall unnoticed into fruitful soil, and spring up without the knowledge of the sower. One of the biggest things in our daily drill is the control of temper. We bring dishonor on our Master and on our Christian profession when we allow the least shade of crossness to creep into the voice, or the least sign of bad temper to disfigure the face. Gloom, complaint, fretfulness, unkind criticism, ingratitude towards God, and many other common faults, do more harm than many apparently greater sins. They can spoil the peace and happiness of a home very thoroughly, and they slowly, but surely, drag down the character of one who allows them to go on unchecked.

It is always their thoughts that make men and women beautiful or ugly in soul. Let us try to keep our thoughts sweet and bright, let our hearts be always open towards God, so that He can fill us with His living power. Then the kitchen in which we work will be a holy temple and an influence for good will stream out from it to the ends of the earth. What anyone is like in the kitchen—that is, in the week-day hours—he is reality. We can't truly judge anyone by his sermons on Sundays, the real test is in his behavior when off his guard and he thinks no one will notice. It was said of a knight of old:

"The needy poor

Flocked to his castle for the careless gift
Of falling dole; but his esquire was faint
From his exacting service, day and night."

And many people who are very noted for their philanthropy abroad, are "difficult" at home. The man who "is a hero to his own valet," who is always pleasant to his wife and children and servants, may not be very heroic perhaps in his own eyes, but he is winning the victory over himself—and that is the biggest victory possible. To live for God is to work effectively for Him. One writes:

"It is a day of large giving, both of service and money, for the good of men, and often for the honor of God. It is to be feared that not a few imagine that their gifts or service will atone for wrong-doing in earlier days, or even excuse them for certain evil traits of character. It is one of those eternal truths that should be borne in upon every man most earnestly, that no amount of doing can excuse the lack of being. It is what we are, and not merely what we do, that makes the sum of character as God sees it. 'He is a mean fellow, but he gives lots of money away'; 'She is a hard worker, but you ought to hear her at home'; 'He is one of our best workers, but he is hard on his employees—they hate him.' What a pity there are so many incongruities in our lives. And the difficulty is that men excuse themselves for those incongruities by 'service.' The grace of giving is a

that "Christ, twice dead, is dead indeed."

"So, in the street, I hear men say!
Yet Christ is with me all the day."
Dora Farncomb.

A HISTORIC SPOT IN SCOTLAND

There is in the neighborhood of Sanquhar, in a lovely little glen on a steep hillside, the ruin of a small church called Kirkbride, within and around which are buried a number of the old covenanters, among them the "black Macmichael," a famed swordsman who crossed weapons successfully with the "bluidy Clavers." This spot is sacred to the people. The sighing of the wind on a Summer Sabbath seems the sound of Psalms. An old man when he was dying said, "Bury me in Kirkbride, for there's much of God's redeemed dust lies there," and on this saying the verses are founded.

Bury me in Kirkbride,
Where the Lord's redeemed ones lie!
The auld kirkyard on the green hillside,
Under the open sky—
Under the open sky,
In the breist o' the brae sae steep,
And side by side wi' the banes that lie
Striked there in their hinmost sleep.

This pure dune body maun sune be dust,
But it thrills wi' a sound o' pride,
To ken it will mix wi' the great and just
That are buried in thee—Kirkbride.

Wheesh't! Did the soft wind speak?
Or a yammerin nicht bird cry?
Did I dream that a warm hand touched
my cheek,
And a winsome face gaed by?—
And a winsome face gaed by?
Wi' a far-off licht in its e'en—
A licht that bude come frae the
dazzlin' sky,
For it spake o' the sternies' sheen.

Age may be donnert and dazed and blin',
But I'll warrant whate'er betide,
A true heart here made tryst wi' my ane,
And the tryst word was—Kirkbride!

Hark! frae the far hill-taps,
And laigh frae the lanesome glen,
A sweet psalm tune like a late dew
draps
Its wild notes doon the wind;—
Its wild notes doon the wind,
Wi' a kent soun' ower my mind,
For we sang't on the muir—a wheen
huntit men,
Wi' our lives in our hand lang syne;

But naething on earth can disturb this
sang,
Were it Clavers in a' his pride.
For it's raised by the Lord's ain ran-
somed thrang
Foregathered abune Kirkbride.

I hear May Moril's tongue
That I wist na to hear again,
And there 'twas the black Macmichael's
sang
Clear in the closin' strain—
Clear in the closin' strain,
Frac his big heart bauld and true;
It stirs my souls as in days bygone,
When his guid braidsword he drew:

I needs maun be aff to the moors ance
mair,
For he'll miss me by his side;
In the thrang o' the battle I aye was
there,
And sae maun it be in Kirkbride.

Rax me my staff and plaid,
That in readiness I may be,
And dinna forget that The Book be laid
Open across my knee—
Open across my knee,
And a text close by my thoom;
And tell me true, for I scarce can see
That the words are, "Lo, I come!"

Then carry me through at the Cample
Ford,
And up the lang hill side;
And I'll wait for the comin' o' God the
Lord
In a neuk o' the auld Kirkbride.

—ROBERT REID.
(The above poem with the accompan-
ing explanatory preface was kindly
sent by Mrs. Scott, who believed it
would be of interest to our many
Scotch readers.—Ed.)