

FAMILY DEPARTMENT.

CHILDHOOD'S OFFERING.

The wise may bring their learning,
The rich may bring their wealth;
And some may bring their greatness,
And some bring strength and health;
We too would bring our treasures,
To offer to the King;
We have no wealth or learning,
What shall we children bring?

We'll bring Him hearts that love Him,
We'll bring Him thankful praise,
And young souls meekly striving
To walk in holy ways.
And these shall be the treasures
We offer to the King,
And these are gifts that ever
The poorest child may bring.

We'll bring the little duties
We have to do each day,
We'll try our best to please Him
At home, at school, at play.
And better are these treasures
To offer to our King,
Than richest gifts without them:
Yet, these a child may bring.

—*Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette.*

WHAT THE CLOCK TOLD DOLLY.

[CONTINUED.]

"Was that the only clock they had?" asked Dolly.

"If passy had lived in those days they would have used *him* for a clock."

The cricket evidently thought this too big a story to be noticed at all, and even Dolly looked a little shocked, but the clock evidently knew what it was talking about and went right on:

"If you look at Kitty's eyes when she first wakes in the morning you will find the dark place in the middle of the eye is very big and round and dark, but soon you will notice that it is growing smaller until by noon it is fine as a hair, and then it will grow bigger again slowly until night, when it will be big as it was in the morning."

"How uncomfortable it must have been!" said Dolly.

"Yes, I think so myself," replied the clock, "and the people began to think that they ought to have something besides shadows to depend upon, and so some one, about five hundred years ago, invented a clock—not a big, handsome one like myself, but a very poor thing, that had no pendulum and could not strike."

"Poor thing!" sighed Dolly.

"Better not strike at all than strike as some clocks do," observed the cricket rather spitefully.

"But it was a clock," continued the clock, "and a very wonderful thing to people in those days, and they must have been pretty well satisfied, for they never added a pendulum for several hundred years."

"Are you very old?" asked Dolly.

"Yes, I'm very, very old! It must be over a hundred years since my hands began to move—Ah! that was a proud day for my maker. He was only a poor little hunchback whom nobody knew, but he wanted to do something before he died that would live after him, so during many long nights he planned me out and worked over me from daylight until dark. Every tiny shining wheel was as perfect as perfect could be, and my case was a sight to see; they told me the day I was finished the little clockmaker was the happiest man alive. He looked me over until he was perfectly satisfied with me, then he took a big key and wound me up, touched my pendulum, and with a tick—tock, tick—tock, I started out on my life work. The little clock man did not have long to ad-

mire me though, for very soon after an old lady came in and bought me, and I was brought away across the blue rolling ocean and placed in this hall. I'm worn out and useless now, but then I was of more importance than any one in this house, for nothing was done without consulting me; ever and ever so many bright-eyed children have raced up and down the stairs and curled up by the fire just as you are doing, and I've loved them all and tried to show them that it was only by keeping our hands busy working for others and doing the right things always, that we could be happy and make our friends love us; they may have thought that all I said was tick—tock, tick—tock, but really I have always said as plainly as plainly could be: Do—right, do—right."

"Dear old clock!" murmured Dolly, and even the cricket turned its head away to wipe away the tears.

"Before I stop," said the clock, "I must speak of one thing that I see others besides you have noticed, and the clock glanced at the cricket, who looked as if it wanted to sink through the floor; "you must know that it was not a great while ago since my hands refused to move another minute, but it was a sorry day for me, and sometimes now my feelings overcome me when I think of the past, and it is a great relief to strike."

"You dear old clock!" said Dolly, "you shall strike as often as you please, and if the cricket ever dares—"

"Dolly—Dolly Dimple!" Harry was calling and Dolly sat up and rubbed her eyes.

"What is the matter?" she asked.

"That's what I'd like to know!—why the very idea of a little girl with a birthday sleeping the same as if it was any other day!"

"Sleeping! I haven't slept a wink. Why the clock has been talkin', and the cricket and—"

"Very likely! as if I'd believe that when I've knocked over the poker and the shovel and the tongs and you never so much as winked."

Dolly looked up at the old clock but never a word did it say. The broad, good-natured face beamed down upon her the same as ever, but she fancied there was a sly expression that said as plainly as so many words:

"Keep quiet! boys are not half so wise as they think they are; sometimes when they have an idea they know it all, they don't always, that's all, and it isn't much use to try and teach them; yet just keep your eyes open and learn something every day from everything and everybody but never grow too wise."

Dolly nodded and has kept the secret until this day, when she was tempted to tell it to you.—*Minnie G. Clank, in the Church.*

"AND HE SHALL GATHER THE LAMBS."

A STORY FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE.

I.

She was blind. She had been blind from her birth. She had never seen the blessed sun. She had never looked upon the pleasant fields that lay on every side of the lonely cottage. She had never seen the stunted elm-tree before the cottage door, nor the little wren that used to sing therein. She knew the elm-tree was there. She knew, too, the song of the wren. She knew the song of most birds: from the thrushes that warbled the livelong day in the woods up to the country-side, to the humble sparrows that lifted their little heads to the sun at early morn. She would sit and listen sometimes to the wren, when she was alone. She seemed to know and love that little wren. She would talk to it now and then, too, from the cottage door, and say, "Dear, dear wren, come again to-morrow." She was but a child. She was only nine years of age—and motherless.

But she had a drunken father, who in his savage moods would often cruelly beat her.

And this was the whole story of her dreary little life—she was blind and motherless; and she had a cruel father; and she spent the long weary days in listening to the birds, and tidying the small cottage, and getting ready her father's frugal meals. And that was all.

Sometimes the golden rays of the sun would fall, warm and bright, across the meadows and corn-fields that stretched away to the slope of the hill, and touch up with a thousand lights and shades the fresh springing corn, and the beautiful green of the mountain-ash trees, and the many-coloured flowers that shyly hid themselves under hedgerows. Sometimes the yellow-hammers would come darting down to the ash copse by the oatfield, like flashes of golden light. Sometimes the low summer wind would touch up, as if by magic, the long grass in the many meadows, and cause a shimmer of tremulous silver shcen to pass over it. But she saw nothing of these things. She could only hear the wind murmuring, and the yellow-hammers singing "Chit-chit-chirr!" about the young ash-copse. These sounds brought no picture of God's earth to her. She had never seen God's earth. They were only sounds, and no more. She would sit patiently listening, with a wistful look on her face, and try to divine whence each sound came. But it was the faithful, humble wren that sang in the elm-tree that she most enjoyed listening to.

"Dear, dear little wren!" she said, one summer's day; "will you come again to-morrow? And will you tell the blackbird from the plantation, and the linnet from the little wood, that I love them, oh! so much! and will they please to come with you to-morrow and sing for me?"

The breeze rustled a spray of blackthorn for very pity, and sent a commotion amongst the tall grass in the meadow.

"And will you please to tell them, little wren, that I will give them plenty of food if they will only come and sing? Only they must come close to the door when they want the crumbs; and they must twitter to let me know. 'Cos I am blind, little wren! I can't see. I have never seen you once; but I love you all the same, little wren; and I love all the dear little birds that sing in the trees."

The pitying wind shook the blackthorn quite savagely this time, as if impatient at its own impotence, and breathed a long-drawn sigh down the hazel-bushes in the hedgerow. A few plovers crossed the corner of the meadow. A solitary robin came after them, and perched upon one of the hazel-bushes, and burst forth into a low, mellow song.

"There! that's a robin, little wren. And will you please to ask him to? 'cos I love him as well. I love all the dear little birds—"

She stopped suddenly, and a look of terror came over her face. That was her father's step in the lane; and his supper was not ready for him! She felt her way to the fireplace in a dazed, frightened manner, and with trembling hands hastily took up the poker and lifted the fire a little, that the potatoes might boil. Then she turned nervously to meet him as he entered the doorway. He was drunk, as usual. He closed the door, with an idiotic leer behind him, and drew himself, with heavy, lumbering step, across the floor to where she was standing.

"My supper not ready again!" he said, with savage glee. "Nearly bilin', be they! What's the good o' nearly bilin', you little sneak! I tell you I will have my supper ready when I gets home. You was idlin' at the door when I comed up the lane. There! take that, you good-for-nothin' slut!"

He had taken a stick down from the mantelpiece as he went towards her; and he laid it heavily across her little shoulders as he spoke. She said nothing. She only sobbed, and felt her way towards the table, before the little