

## FAMILY DEPARTMENT.

## "STOOP TO ENTER."

"Except ye be convinced, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven."—St. Matt. xviii, 3.

These the words of Christ the Teacher,  
True revealing of God's mind,  
"Ye must come as little children,  
If ye would an entrance find;  
For My Kingdom's Courts are lofty.  
But My Kingdom's Gate is low:  
Ye must bend both mind and body,  
Only can ye enter so,"

Not earth's wisdom, not earth's knowledge,  
Not the versed in hidden lore,  
Not the wise are often chosen,  
But the weak things and the poor;  
Yea, the weak, the simple-hearted,  
Who with child-like faith adored,—  
They are they who shall inherit  
That blest Kingdom of the Lord!

Not alone the body's homage  
Doth to worship God avail,  
But the bending of the reason,  
Lowly faith where reasonings fail:  
Shunning strange and divers doctrines,—  
'Twas of old the tempter's cry,  
"Eat of this, ye shall have knowledge,  
And ye shall not surely die."

Intellect must bow before Him,  
Casting down all reasonings vain,  
And each wilful thought and doubtful  
High imaginings restrain;  
Bringing captive subtle questionings,  
Speculative wandering thought,  
That, unchecked, in many a spirit  
Hath a deadly havoc wrought.

Learn we thus to stoop, my brothers,  
Come to Christ in child-like guise,  
For it is to babes He showeth  
What He hideth from the wise;  
So by grace of God's good spirit  
Shall our spirits, too, attain  
To the true and highest knowledge,  
Which none humbly sought in vain.

—E. M. Dawson.

## WHAT A DEAD SPARROW DID.

BY MABEL H. DESPARD.

"A what, do you say?" asked the shopkeeper, who was very deaf.

"A sling-shot—a rubber thing to kill birds with," shouted Harold Beckwith.

"Oh! yes, of course," said the man catching the last few words, "we sell a good many of them."

Harold whistled gayly as he walked along, every now and then putting his hand in his pocket to feel that his two dollar and a half gold-piece was still there. It was his uncle's present to him on his birthday, and he had expected to break into it in order to buy this sling-shot. But he found that he had small change enough to pay for that; so his little gold-mine remained unbroken.

This was Harold's first sling-shot. For some reason he had never cared to own one; but just now there was a rage for them, and all the boys were boasting of their good shots. Now it is a weakness of human nature that no one likes to hear others boast when he cannot boast himself. Perhaps for that worthy reason, and perhaps because of a book he had been reading, Harold felt impelled to buy a sling-shot. This book, a birthday gift from his father, contained stories of knights of all ages. Among them was the story of David, the son of Jesse. The story had

seemed quite new to Harold as he read it in this new form, and it was partly a spirit of sympathy with the brave giant-slayer that sent him to the store for a sling-shot. He lost sight of the fact that David and other knights fought against enemies more powerful than themselves, or at least as powerful, and that the killing of birds is not a chivalrous deed.

"Wish we had chivalry now," thought Harold, snapping pebbles for practice, while he kept a look out for birds. He knew what chivalry meant; he had searched for the word in the dictionary and in the encyclopaedia. "I'd like to have every one look to me to protect them, and have every one trust me. Hallo! there's a chance! What a host of them!"

He took aim, and sent a pebble flying into the midst of a twittering crowd of sparrows perched on a large tree. Without waiting to see the result of his shot, he sent another pebble after the startled birds. A cry of pain made him look around, and he saw a little girl putting her hand up to her head. Unseen by him, she had been standing looking with indignation at the cruel sport.

"Did I hurt you?" cried Harold running up to her; "I didn't mean to."

"No; but you meant to do that," said the child, holding her head with one hand and pointing with the other to a little feathery body on the ground, quivering and struggling in its death agony.

Harold had not a word to say.

The little girl stooped and picked up the dying sparrow, but in its struggle it fell from her cold fingers.

"Oh! oh!" she said, "I hurt you more, you poor little thing. Come, here's a soft bed to lie on," and sitting down on the ground, she laid the sparrow gently on her lap, while two great tears rolled down her cheeks.

Some crimson drops followed them from her wounded forehead. Harold would have liked to cut a gash in his own. A nice knight, he thought bitterly, to make a Goliath of a frail little girl!

"Please let me tie my handkerchief round your head," he said humbly. "I'm a villain, but I don't know you were there, you know."

"There! there!" she exclaimed, pushing his hand away, "look how it suffers! Oh you poor little darling thing!"

The tiny eyes were closed, the little claws ceased twitching, and the warm, pretty bunch of feathers, which a few minutes before had been hopping so gayly about, lay perfectly still.

The blue eyes, which had been watching so eagerly, filled with tears, and then came a storm of sobs. Harold felt miserable. He melted some snow, wet his handkerchief in it, and gently wiped the pale cheek all stained with tears and blood.

"You must let me tie this on," he said "and will you please forgive me?"

"You're very kind to me," said the child, "and I suppose I had no right to speak so sharp to you; but—I—felt so bad!" and another storm of sobs shook her thin little body.

"I'll never kill another bird," said Harold earnestly. "I never did before."

"Oh, won't you?" she asked, brightening. "I'm glad. I'll take him home and bury him," she added, rising.

Harold noticed that she trembled with cold. "Won't you take that, please?" he said, trying to thrust into her hand his bright gold coin.

"Oh! no; I couldn't, thank you," she said, though her eyes looked eagerly at it. "Is it gold?"

"Yes. It's mine to do what I like with. I wish you'd take it."

"I couldn't," she said.

"Well, please tell me where you live."

She hesitated.

"I'll want my handkerchief, you know," he said.

"23 Perkin's Alley, then."

"What's your name?"

"Pamela Burns. What's yours?"

"Harold Beckwith."

Her eyes opened wide with surprise, and then she looked full of trouble.

"Does your father own the big carpet factory?" she asked.

"Yes," said Harold, surprised in turn.

"Why?"

"My father used to work there," she said, in a low tone.

"Did he leave?"

Pamela shook her head.

"Did papa dismiss him?"

Pamela nodded, and the ready tears filled her eyes.

"Hasn't he any work, now?"

Another shake of the head.

"Don't cry," said Harold, "I'll talk to papa about him."

"Oh! will you, please? And tell him papa doesn't drink any more. I know he won't again."

Harold stood a few moments watching the little thinly-clad figure hurrying away, and then walked slowly homeward.

"I'm always doing something hateful," he said to himself; "because I don't stop to think, mamma says. Wonder if I ever will. I'm glad mamma gave me that rule, though—'If ever you do any one an injury, follow it up by some act of kindness.' I'd feel mean enough if I couldn't do something for Pamela. I hope papa'll take her father back again; but if he drinks—papa hates that. Bah! there's that old sling-shot."

Picking it up, he fiercely cut it into a dozen pieces with his penknife.

"I suppose," he added, aloud, looking up at the sparrows, who seemed to be holding an indignation meeting to discuss the death of their murdered comrade. "I suppose I owe you a good turn, too. I tell you what I'll do. I'll build you a nice big house."

"That's a good offer," said a voice behind him; "what have the sparrows been doing for you that you feel bound to reward them?"

"O, papa, you're just the one I wanted to see! The sparrows haven't been doing anything for me, but I did—I 'knocked—I did a pretty mean thing this afternoon."

Harold's story was all told before they reached home. He had to tell it for Pamela's sake; and then Harold had found that there was great comfort and satisfaction in "making a clean breast" of a thing to his father and mother. They helped him to make crooked things straight. Try his plan, boys.

"Will you, papa? Will you take him back?" Harold asked, eagerly, as they went in the house.

"I don't know, Harold I can't promise. I have taken John Burns back twice already, but he has gone back to drink each time. I tell you, though, what I will do. If your mother will go down there to-morrow and see how matters are, I may take him back on trial for a month."

With that Harold had to be content.

Pamela hurried breathlessly up the stairs when she reached home, fearing that her father would be there before her and find the room cold and dark. But he was not yet in. She lighted the lamp, coaxed the scanty fire into a little larger blaze, put two plates and a stale half loaf of bread on the table, and then taking the dead sparrow in her hands, went down stairs, talking softly to it all the way.

"Come in," called a cheery voice, in answer to her knock; "that's Pamela, I know. Come and let me warm your hands, child."

The hearty words came from smiling lips which brightened a gentle, withered face, framed by cap and hair so white one could scarcely tell which was which.

(To be continued.)