

A Plea for the Heathen.

I PLEAD with those whose lives are bright,
For those who dwell in gloom,
On whom there breaks no starry rift
Of hope beyond the tomb;
I plead with those whose homes are fair,
For those whose homes are dim,
O guide them in the way to Christ
That they may learn of Him.

Borne far across blue rounding waves,
A wailing voice I hear,
"Uplift us from this place of graves,
Alas! so vast and drear!"
That call from China's crowding host
Blends with the Hindu's cry,
"O sisters of the blessed life,
Come hither ere we die!"

Turn Eastward still; the Rising Sun
Looks down on eager bands,
Sweet daughters of sea-girt Japan,
Who stretch imploring hands,
And beg with eager hearts to-day
For Christian knowledge fair:
It cannot be their earnest plea
Shall come to us in vain?

Well may we scorn for gold and gems
And brodered garments fine,
To cumber Christ's victorious march,
To shame His conquering line;
The banner of the Cross shall float
From every mountain crest,
For He must reign o'er all the earth,
By all their King confessed.

He stoops to-day our aid to ask,
His name He bids us wear,
The triumph of His onward path
By sovereign grace we share:
O loiter not: to heathen gloom
Bear on the torch, His Word—
What glory for a ransomed soul
To help the Almighty Lord!

—Mrs. M. E. Sangster.

Mrs. Pickett's Missionary Box.

"THAT there missionary box," said Mrs. Pickett, surveying it with her head on one side, as it stood in state on the best parlor mantel, "That there missionary box is worth its weight in gold two or three times over to me. You'd never believe it, Mis' Malcolm, the things I've been alearnin' of, ever sence Mary Pickett, she brought it home, or rather the mate to it, an' sot it out on the dinin' room shelf, an' told me she brought me a present from meetin'."

"Do tell me about it," said the new minister's wife, with girlish pleasure at the prospect of a story.

"I've half a notion to," replied her hostess. "You've got a real drawin' out way with you, Mis' Malcolm. Some way you make me think of Mary Pickett herself, that was the beginnin' of it all; she that's a missionary to Turkey now—my niece you know. You've just got her colored hair and you're light complected like her, and you laugh something like her, too. Mary Pickett always was a master-hand for laughin'. I remember how she laughed that afternoon when she come in with them two boxes an' sot mine on the shelf out there. She knowed I warn't the missionary kind. I do no but she done it jest for a joke. It was five years ago, you know, and I was scrapin' along with my boarders, an' rents was high and livin' higher, an' I had hard enough times to make both ends meet, I can tell you, though it warn't half as hard times as I thought it was. I was that down-hearted that everything looked criss-cross to me, and I had got to have hard feelings against every one't looked's as if they got along easier'n me 'n I'd most give up goin' to church at all, for all I was a professor, an' I won't say but what I had murmurin's against Providence—fact is, I know I had—if you be a minister's wife. And so it was work, work, from one week's end to another, an' I never

thought of nothin' else. Then Mary Pickett she come home from school, where she'd been over since she was fifteen, for she took all the money her pa left her, to get an edication, so'st to teach; an' she got a place in the grammar school an' come to board with me, an' she'd heard about missions to that school till she was full of 'em, an' the very fust meetin' day after she came she walked out into the kitchen an' says she:

"Aunt, a'n't you comin' to missionary meetin', down to the church?" says she. 'I'll meet you there after school,' says she.

"An' if you'll believe me, Mis' Malcolm, I was that riled I could have shook her! I says:

"Pretty doin's 'twould be for me to go traipsin' off to meetin's an' leave the it'nin' an' the cookin' an' set alongside o' Lawyer Stapleton's wife hearin' about—the land knows what! Folks had better stay to home an' see to their work,' says I. But law! nothing ever made Mary Pickett answer back. She jest laughed and said good-bye, an' I stayed and pattered over the kitchen work till I was hot as fire inside an' out; an' 'long about five o'clock back she come with them two boxes.

"I've brought you a present, Aunt Mirandy,' says she, settin' of it down, an' when I see what it was, I jest stood an' stared. 'Twarn't that one there, 'twas one jest like it, an' it had a motto written onto to one end, 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits to me?'

"Well, you're smart!' says I, an' Mary she jest dropped into a chair an' laughed till I couldn't help laughin' too. 'Great benefits I have,' says I, standin' with my arms akimbo an' lookin' that box all over, 'Guess the heathen won't git much out o' me at that rate!'

"I s'pose that depends upon how much you render,' says Mary, says she. 'You might try at a cent apiece awhile, jest for the fun of it. Nobody knows who's got this motto, you know, an' even a few cents would be some help,' says she.

"Bout's many as grapes off bean vines, I'd get!' says I, for I was more than usual low-spirited that night, an' I jest made up my mind I would keep count, jest to show myself how little I did have. 'Them few cents won't break me, I thought, an' I really seemed to kinder enjoy thinkin' over the hard times I had, while I was settin' the table, with Mary helpin', an' I kep' sayin' little mean things about how I s'posed she wanted me to put in a cent for the smokey stove, an' for bread that warn't light, so't I knew all the boarders would be grumblin' at supper, an' plenty more in that line, that she never took no notice of. Miss Stapleton said once that Mary was a girl of great tact, an' I guess I know it better'n any one else.'

"Well, the box sot there all the week, an' I used to say it must be kinder lonesome with nothin' in it, for not a cent went in till next missionary meetin' day. I was settin' on the back steps, gettin' a breath of fresh air, when Mary came home, an' I called out to her to know what them geese talked about to-day. That was the livin' word, I called 'em—'them geese!' Well, she come an' set down along side o' me an' begun to tell me about the meetin', an' it was about Injy an' the widders there, poor oreturs, an' they bein' abused and starved an' not let to think for themselves—you know all about it

better'n I do—an' before I thought I up an' said:

"Well, if I be a widder, I'm thankful I'm where I kin earn my own living, an' no thanks to nobody!'

"Then Mary she laughed an' said there was my fust benefit. Well, that sorter tickled me, for I thought a woman must be pretty hard up for benefits when she had to go clear off to Injy to find 'em an' I dropped in one cent, an' it rattled around a few days without any company. I used to shako it every time I passed by the shelf, an' the thought of them poor things in Injy kep' a-comin' up before me, an' I really was glad when I got a new boarder for my best room, an' felt as if I'd oughter put in another. An' next meetin', Mary she told me about Japan, an' I thought about that till I put in another because I warn't a Jap. An' all the while I felt kinder proud of how little there was in that box. Then one day when I got a chance to turn a little penny sellin' eggs, which I warn't in the habit of, Mary brought the box in where I was countin' of my money, an' says:

"A penny for your benefit, Aunt Mirandy,' an' I says:

"This ain't the Lord's benefit; ' an' she answered:

"If ta'n't His, whose is it?' an' she begun to hum over something out of one of the poetry books that she was always readin' of:

God's grace is the only grace,
And all grace is the grace of God.

"Well, I dropped in my penny an' them words kep' ringin' in my ears, till I couldn't help puttin' more to it, on account of some other things I never thought of calling the Lord's benefits before. An' by that time, what with Mary's tellin' me about them meetin's, an' me most always findin' somethin' to put in a penny for, to be thankful that I warn't it, an' what with gettin' interested about it all, an' sorter searchin' round a little, now an' then to think of somethin' or other to put in a cent for, there really come to be quite a few pennies in the box, an' it didn't rattle near so much when I shook it. An' then, one day, Mary she brought me a little purplish pamphlet, an' she says:

"Aunt, here's a missionary magazine I've subscribed to for you, bein' you're so interested in missions.'

"Me interested in missions! But when I come to think it over I didn't see but what I was, in a way, an' I said it over to myself, kinder curious, to see how it sounded. It was jest what they said about Mis' Stapleton, she't was the president of the missionary society. An' that night our new boarder he picked up the magazine, an' said:

"Why, what's this?' An' I said, quite pleased, before I thought:

"That's a magazine that my niece, Mary Pickett, she's subscribed to for me, bein' I'm so interested in missions.'

"My mother used to take it,' says he. He was a young man, not much mor'n a boy, an' homesick, I guess. 'I'd like to look it over, if you don't mind,' he says. "It looks like home.' So I was so pleased to hear him say that, for the boarders they don't most generally say much, except to find fault, that when I went out in the dinin' room, I jest put another cent in the magazine itself, part for what he'd said, an' part for what I'd been readin' out of it that afternoon; an' while I was droppin' of it in, Mary she come up behind me an' give me a big hug.

"You dear old inconsistent thing she says, an' then I know she'd heard what I'd said in the parlor.

"Well, it went on that way for quite awhile, an' it come to be a regular thing that a cent would get in there every time I heard about the meetin'. I thought Mary would 'a' died laughin' the time I put one in because I warn't born a cannibal; an' one day—I'll never forget that day—Mis' Malcolm, she was atellin' me about Turkey, an' she told how some missionaries heard a little girl sayin' how the smallest thing in all the world wa'n't any smaller than the joy of her father when she was born. Them words went right through me I was standin' over the ir'nin'-board, Mary was opposit to me, but all o sudden, instead of her, I seemed to my husband's face, that had been dead ten year', an' him a-leanin' down over our little baby that only lived two weeks—the only one I ever had. Seemed to me I couldn't get over it, when that baby died. An' I seemot to see my husband smilin' down at it, an' it lyin' there all soft an' white—she was a white little baby, such a pretty baby—an' before I know it, I was droppin' tears all over the starched clothes an' I turned round an' went an' put another cent in that box, for the look on my husband's face when he held her that time. An' Mary she see somethin' was the matter, I guess, for she walked off an' never asked no questions. But all the rest of the day I kep' seein' that little face before me, an' thinkin' how I'd had her for my own, an' how I know she was in glory—I'd only felt it hard that I couldn't keep her before that—an' before I went to bed I went out in the dinin' room, an' I put in a little bright five-cent piece for my baby, because I couldn't bear to count her jest like everythin' else, an' I found myself cryin' because I hadn't enough money jest then, to spare anythin' bigger. I suppose it was from thinkin' about her so much, that that night I dreamed about mother. I could see her as plain, an' father with her, an' we was back on the old farm, an' while I was kissin' of them both, I heard some one sayin', 'As one whom his mother comforteth.' An' I woke up an' I was sayin', 'O Lord, I am a wicked, ungrateful woman!'

"Mis' Malcolm, I don't suppose you could understand—you that's a minister's wife, an' thankful to the Lord in course—what I thought that night. I laid awake, thinkin' an' cryin', an' yet not all sorry, for half the night. I kep' thinkin' of all the things the Lord had ever done for me, an' the more I thought of mother an' the old home, the softer my heart seemed to grow, an' I jist prayed with all my might an' main, an' that there box weighed on my mind like lead. 'A cent apiece,' I kep' sayin', 'a cent apiece for all his benefits! Why, they came over me that night while I lay there prayin', till they was like crowds an' crowds of angels all 'round me. In the mornin' I went up to the box, feelin' meaner than dirt, an' I put in a cent for mother, an' a cent for father, an' one for the old farm, an' the rose-bush in front of my window, an' for my little pet lamb that made me so happy when I was a girl, an' for heaps of other things that I'd been forgottin' in them hard times. An' when I couldn't spare no more, I went to work, an' do believe I was a different woman after that. For there was the verses in the Bible, that I used to get up early to read them mornin's, an' there was the love of God, that I'd never rightly