

to the well being of a family. There is an old saying to the effect that an untidy mother has disobedient children; and while neither parents nor children may realize the why or wherefore of it, yet there is always a lack of respect and an indifference to the authority of a mother who takes no pride in her personal appearance. And it is not the mother alone upon whose shoulders rests the burden of responsibility for home neatness and order in dress; the father has his duties to look after as well, and should never fail to insist upon the younger members of the family presenting themselves with well-kept hands, clean faces, neatly brushed hair and orderly dress, at least at every meal where the family assemble.

There are thousands of women who are wasting the present because they think the real happiness of their life is still in the future. They take up no serious duties, they fix no serious affections, because they think the time and the object have not come; and perhaps they never come, a though opportunities for a high and noble and unworldly life crowd round them, and such opportunities offer the only true happiness. If you are working towards no higher end than earthly happiness, it is but a low, miserable kind of life after all. It is a life that will never satisfy. You want something the world cannot give you to make you rich and to make you happy. You want what you may have this very night, if you really desire it. On the veranda of a pleasant residence at the northern entrance of the Suez Canal, says a writer, I once spent a delightful afternoon. Immediately below was the wonderful highway of water, with noble steamships passing to and fro, bound for distant parts of the world, whilst across the narrow line stretched the vast expanse of sandy desert. Bidding me rise and look in a particular direction, my kind host said, 'Do you see that lake about a mile off looking so inviting?' 'Yes.' 'Well,' rejoined he, 'there is not a drop of water nor a green spot there. That is an illusion, a mirage.' It was difficult to believe it. But, sure enough, before half an hour had gone, the picture that looked so real had vanished, leaving nothing in its place but a waste of barren sand. Ah! such and so fleeting are the fairest visions of the future that rise before you, so long as religion and self-sacrifice are unknown. But become true disciples of Him who served mankind, and your happiness is secure; your fortune is made; all things must work together for your good.

FAMILY DEPARTMENT.

THE DIVINE CALL.

To-day, to-morrow evermore,
Through cheerless nights without a star
Not asking whither or how far,
Rejoicing though the way be sore,
Take up thy cross
And follow me!

Though some there be who scorn thy choice,
And tempting voices bid thee stay,
To-day, while it is called to-day,
If thou wilt hearken to my voice,
Take up thy cross
And follow me!

I cannot promise wealth or ease,
Fame, pleasure, length of days, esteem;
These things are vainer 'han they seem.
If thou canst turn from all of these,
Take up thy cross
And follow me!

I promise only perfect peace,
Sweet peace that lives through years of strife,
Immortal hope, immortal life.
And rest when all these wanderings cease,
Take up thy cross
And follow me!

My yoke is easy; put it on!
My burden very light to bear.
Who shareth this my crown shall share—
On earth the cross, in heaven the crown.
Take up thy cross
And follow me!

—The Quiver

THE BEST SOCIETY.

BY OLARA F. GUERNSEY.

'I don't think it was at all proper to put Helen Gray in our class,' said Miss Ida Maynard, aged fourteen, on her way home from Sunday-school one bright June Sunday.

Miss Maynard, for she was the oldest daughter, an was fond of being called Miss Maynard, was a pretty girl, tall of her age, and, though she did not say so in so many words, she considered herself quite the pattern young lady in her class. It was not only that her parents were wealthy, but the family had lived in the same handsome old house 'ever since the war of 1812,' which, to Miss Ida Maynard, seemed a remote antiquity. She looked upon her family as one of immense consequence, and at the bottom of her heart she thought herself the most genteel person in it. In fact, for the last year Miss Maynard had rather felt it incumbent upon her to keep up the dignity of the Maynards, for she thought her father and mother had not quite the value they should have for their privileges. As for her brothers, George and Jim, I am sorry to say they often laughed at Miss Maynard and called her 'stuck up,' a sadly unrefined expression which she translated into 'proper pride.'

'No,' said Miss Maynard, with decision, 'Helen Gray is really not a suitable person for our class,' and I cannot give you an idea of the peculiar emphasis she laid on the word *person*; 'She may be very well in her way, but—' and Miss Maynard primmed up her mouth, and the thought crossed her mind that she was looking 'ver. aristocratic.'

Now this sad word, 'aristocratic,' which, as Ida remarked of Helen, was 'all very well in its way,' was at the bottom of all Miss Maynard's conceit and folly. A certain lady who had visited at the Maynard home had praised Ida's refinement and beauty and had said in the little girl's hearing that Ida had 'an aristocratic air,' and ever since then Miss Maynard had, as Jim said, been 'doing the aristocratic' to a distressing extent.

Ida was a leader among her mates, and she had done mischief in the academy and Sunday-school. There was growing up a spirit of pride and insolence, a spitefulness of classes and cliques which was working evil.

Miss Maynard's exclusiveness met with no encouragement at home, but she turned a deaf heart to all her mother could say, and when her brothers laughed at her, thought herself a martyr to 'proper pride.' Ida was very polite to all whom she thought worthy of her politeness, but was apt to be very stand-offish and even rude to others.

'Helen is a church member,' said Jane Derby, timidly. 'They say she is a very good girl.'

'Oh! I dare say, in her way,' said Ida loftily; 'but you can't think the daughter of a carpenter, who works in a shop, is fit for the best society,' and having reached her own home, she went up the steps with a grand air, leaving the girls much impressed.

'Mother,' said Helen Gray, when she went home, 'please don't ask me to go to that Sunday-school again. Ida Maynard set on the other girls and they all showed they didn't want me. I'll never go there any more.'

There was company staying at the Maynards' house over Sunday. Mr. and Mrs. de Courcy Jones, of Washington, who paid Ida many

compliments, and Miss Maynard was much gratified when she heard Mr. Jones remark to her mother: 'Your daughter's manners are so finished and distinguished that, even now, she is fit to appear in the best society.'

'Miss Ida shows so plainly that she has never had the least contact with the vulgar,' said Mrs. Jones. 'She will shine in the best society.'

Ida wondered why her mother did not seem pleased, and why her father came very near saying 'Pshaw!' out loud.

Miss Maynard laid her head on her pillow revolving in her mind those delightful words, 'Fit for the best society.' Ah! What had happened, that the world had rolled away, and all relations of space and time were altered and nothing was the same only her own little self, and what was this vast, lonesome, desolate land where she stood bewildered, repeating to herself, 'The best society! the best society!'

'She can never be company for us,' said a sorrowful voice, speaking out of the air. 'The poor little thing is so vulgar.'

Ida looked up, wondering who was speaking and who was vulgar. There stood two shining ones, just on the outer edge of a great shadow that hung above her head, and far away on the distant horizon was a glorious light, but oh, so far away!

'No, she is not fit for the best society,' said the other voice. 'Her heart is all full of arrogance and pride and vanity. Such common, low sins!'

'Driving that poor child, one of our Lord's own little ones, too, out of His house!' said the first, sternly.

'I do not see any excuse,' said his companion. 'She had a Christian mother and father, and she has despised their instruction, and preferred to listen to the angels of the prince of this world. Oh! that miserable fondness for low company!'

'She has used all her influence to make her mates as low and cruel as herself,' said the other. 'What would she do in our society? She wouldn't think Peter or James or John fit to speak to.'

'If she can't let a carpenter's child study God's Word beside her, how can she expect to see Jesus of Nazareth face to face?' said the first speaker; and then from far away, oh, so far away, came a sternly sorrowful voice:

'Whoso shall offend one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were drowned in the depths of the sea.'

The shining ones vanished; the far off light grew dim; the black shadow above her head deepened and lowered about her. A horror of great darkness fell upon her. She stretched out her hands imploringly toward the last glimmer of light, and then, with a scream, she woke.

Oh, the relief to find herself still in the land of the living, still where there was time for repentance.

Poor little Miss Maynard was 'alone with her conscience,' and oh, what truths it told her that night!

The next morning all the girls were amazed when Ida walked up to Helen Gray as she came into the academy door.

'Helen,' said Miss Maynard, 'I'm very sorry I behaved so badly yesterday. I acted like a rude, vulgar girl. Won't you forgive me? Oh, dear!' and Miss Maynard began to cry, and Helen kissed her.

All this happened years ago. Ida Maynard is an elderly lady now, and a true Christian, and so gracious and sweet a woman that all who know her feel sure that the best society, which is 'the innumerable company,' will be glad to welcome her home.

I have heard people striving for that which is enough, but I never heard of any one who had enough.