

Help that Comes Too Late.

'Tis a wearisome world, this world of ours,
With its tangles small and great,
Its weeds that smother the springing flowers,
And its hapless strifes with fate:
And the darkest day of its desolate days
Sees the help that comes too late.

Ah! woe for the word that is never said
Till the ear is too deaf to hear,
And woe for the lack to the fainting head
Of the ringing shout of cheer:
Ah! woe for the laggard feet that tread
In the mournful wake of the bier.

What booteth help when the heart is numb?
What booteth a broken spar
Of love thrown out when the lips are dumb
And life's bark drifteth far,
Oh! far and fast from the alien past,
Over the moaning bar?

A pitiful thing the gift to-day
That is dross and nothing worth,
Though if it had come but yesterday,
It had brimmed with sweet the earth—
A fading rose in a death cold hand,
That perished in want and dearth.

Who fain would help in this world of ours,
Where sorrowful steps must fall,
Bring help in time to the waning powers,
Ere the bier is spread with the pall,
Nor send reserves when the flags are furled,
And the dead beyond recall.

For baffling most in this weary world,
With its tangles small and great,
Its lonesome nights and its weary days,
And its struggles forlorn with fate,
Is that bitterest grief, too deep for tears,
Of the help that comes too late.

—Margaret E. Sangster.

The Singer of the "Holy Angels."

BY GENEVIEVE IRONS.

(Continued.)

"Christmas Eve," said Marie. She, too, heard the voice now.

"Ah! that is it. *Adeste fideles!* I know, I know. Prosper has come to sing to me for my last Christmas." He leaned back in bed and listened with his finger to his lips. Marie stood beside him and listened too.

Out there in the road, already white with fast falling snow, stood Prosper singing the Christmas hymn, feeling very cold, to be sure, but exceedingly happy, with a sort of triumph in having got here at last. I can tell you it had been no easy matter, for the wind, which was against him all the way, had once or twice very nearly taken him off his legs. He comforted himself with thinking that going home it would help to blow him along, and it would be down hill all the way; meanwhile he was here, singing, as he had made up his mind to do, to Simon, who would, no doubt, give him a good warm at the fire presently, and perhaps, who knows? something nice and hot to drink.

As soon as he had finished the hymn, Marie opened the door and made him come in.

"My son, my dear son," cried Simon as soon as he saw Prosper, "God bless you for this Christmas Eve. I never thought I should hear your voice again. Next year," he added softly, "Marie will sing to me, perhaps."

"Don't talk about next year," said Prosper. "Look at me, how white I am; it's snowing for a regular good Christmas, and I'm as cold as can be."

"Sit down by the fire and get warm," said Simon. "Put on a log, Marie, and make a blaze; and then Prosper will sing again presently, won't you?"

"That I will," he answered, and cold as he was he felt glad that he had come, for Simon was so much pleased. Kaspard, Simon's great shaggy dog, came and rubbed himself against Prosper, as if to say, "Thank you for coming out this cold night to sing to my master." Kaspard was a great favourite with Prosper; they had known each other for a long time and had often had fun together.

When Prosper had got quite warm he sang some more hymns to Simon, who listened with

his eyes closed and a smile on his kind old face, half-fancying himself back in the Cathedral again. And after that Marie gave him a cup of hot broth and a large piece of roll before starting to go back to Val-d'or. There was to be a grand service at midnight, and Prosper was to sing a difficult new part.

The wind had risen again, and was sending the snow in great drifts from the north, and when Marie opened the door to let Prosper out, a great puff of it came into his face and nearly blinded him.

"You must take my umbrella," she said, lifting it down from a shelf, "and Kaspard, his dog, and Heric, a neighbour, had better go with you a bit of the way, if you must; but it's a terrible night, and I think you'd better stay."

"I can't, thank you," said Prosper proudly. "I am wanted to sing at the service to-night."

Yet down in the bottom of his heart he would have been better pleased to remain, for he shrank from the five-mile walk alone in such a storm; but he took the umbrella and went out, followed by Kaspard, into the dark, howling night.

"May the good God take care of him," murmured Marie, as she watched him out of sight, and then came in and closed the door.

What a night it was! The wind was blowing round and round on every side; the very air seemed filled with wreaths of snow. It was impossible to tell where the path was, and before Prosper had left the cottage ten minutes he had completely lost his way. Kaspard kept close behind him, with his tail between his legs, disconsolate and frightened, while Prosper pushed on bravely. He need not be at the Cathedral till past eleven; there was plenty of time yet. Out! but the way; which was it? He stood still a minute and looked round. It was all the same; a pitiless black sky above, and a cruel white snow all over everything else, and the wind blowing here, there, and everywhere, whistling in his ears till he was nearly deaf with the noise.

It would never do to stop; he should freeze there where he stood; he must walk on in some direction, and even if it didn't lead to Val-d'or, perhaps it would take him somewhere else. He had not gone on many steps when his foot slipped, sank, and he fell, rolling down, down over the soft snow, and then his head struck against something hard, and a great noise (not the wind) came into his ears, and that was all that he remembered.

All that he remembered for nearly a fortnight. When he came to himself again he was in a strange room, and the first face that he recognized was that of his friend Madame de Coulanges. She told him that he had been found in the snow on Christmas Eve, having fallen and hurt his head very badly. He had been ill ever since and was a long way from well now, but he had taken a turn for the better and the doctor hoped that he would get quite strong again some day. Prosper smiled, and tried to thank her, but he found that he was too weak to speak.

It had chanced that on Christmas Eve about an hour after the accident happened, Madame de Coulanges was driving in her carriage past the very place where Prosper had fallen. Nobody would have noticed the child lying there, with his face downwards in the snow, but for Kaspard, who was keeping watch beside him, and who barked furiously as the carriage went by. The coachman, thinking that something was amiss, drew up, and the groom went to see what was the matter. Madame de Coulanges was very unhappy when she found that her little favourite had met with an accident. She had him lifted up into her carriage and took him home with her, and sent for the doctor, and had her own house-keeper to help her nurse him.

To be Continued.

Think of This.

There is never a day passes that we cannot do some one a good turn. A helping hand, a kind word, or even a pleasant face goes a long way towards benefiting others. How many of our readers will think of this and ever be watchful, seeing what they can do towards brightening the lives of others, and by so doing making themselves happy.

Hints to House-keepers

Articles of delicate texture should be soaked over night in a solution of borax and rinsed in the morning following, when little if any rubbing will be necessary to extract the dirt.

Wash gold ornaments in warm water and soap, afterwards rinsing them well in clean water. Dry thoroughly and polish with a leather.

In baking puddings, cakes or rolls, especially the latter, in which baking powder is one of the ingredients, the oven should be very hot, though not sufficiently so to burn whatever is to be baked before it has time to cook.

TO DESTROY COCKROACHES OR CRICKETS.—Take one spoonful of dry red-lead and two spoonfuls of best flour; mix it well (or it's of no use), then place it in small quantities (such as a shilling would hold) on clean paper and put in their runs; and as you find they eat it, replace more until you find they do not eat, having killed all. Keep some in reserve should any return. Cats or dogs will not eat it.—*L.*

French chalk, tooth chalk, chalk pencil, any chalk—is an agent for cleansing in an endless variety of ways. Rub it into grease spots on dresses, wall paper, anything; it may be rubbed into food spots, say molasses, with excellent effect. It disintegrates the dirt, so that it can be scratched or brushed out. Even on wash dresses this easy remedy is well worth applying. Not only spots, but the hand-rubbed soiled parts, may sometimes be restored, or at the least improved. Rub on the chalk and hang the garment away over night, or for days, to be brushed clean when used again.

PRUNE BLANCHMANGE.—After washing, soak prunes all night in the water to be used for their cooking, and in the morning cover and stew slowly till tender on the back of the stove. This will take several hours. The prunes will be a soft jelly and the skins hardly hold together. Take enough prunes for the size of mould, sift through a colander and beat into a fine grained cereal, prepared as previously directed, adding sugar. Cool in one large or small mould. Serve with cream. Corn-starch may be substituted for the cereal, having it cooked as for orange jelly, using a little less than the proportions usually given on the boxes.

Apple charlotte is a simple and wholesome dessert, made as follows: Cut bread into inch-thick slices, and soak for an instant in cream or rich milk. Line the bottom of a deep pudding dish with bread, adding a layer of sweet apples, sliced fine. Sprinkle well with sugar, and give a liberal grating of nutmeg. Fill the dish with alternate layers of bread and apples, covering the top with bread. Pour over the whole a cupful of milk and bake slowly. It is best eaten slightly warm and with cream.

OLD FASHIONED JOHNNY CAKE.—One egg, well beaten, two tablespoonfuls sugar, two tablespoonfuls melted butter or lard, two cups sour milk, two cups cornmeal, one cup of flour, one heaping teaspoonful saleratus, one teaspoonful salt, less if butter is used. Bake in shallow tins or in roll-pan. Johnny-cake may be baked on the top of the stove in a well-greased spider. The foregoing quantity will make two cakes if baked in the spider; have the pan hot before pouring the batter in and do not have too hot a fire. When cooked on one side turn with a griddle turner; this may seem difficult at first, but a little practice will make it easy. If baked in this way omit the shortening.

BEEF STEW.—Take five pounds of beef from the shank. Cut in six or eight pieces, place in a stewpan and pour over a quart of boiling water. Cover closely and let simmer on the back of the stove till tender; salt and pepper, putting in one-half a sliced onion and replenish with boiling water, if necessary. Slice four turnips across and place over the top; boil twenty minutes, then put in ten good sized potatoes. Turnips need longer boiling and should be put in first. When the vegetables are done, take up the potatoes in a vegetable dish and place the turnips about the outer edge of the platter, with the meat in the centre, with sprigs of parsley on the turnip. Thicken the liquor left in the pot and make a gravy, pouring a little on the meat, and serve the remainder in a gravy dish.