

Literary Department.

NOT FAR.

Not far from the Kingdom,
Yet in the shadow of sin,
How many are coming and going,
How few are entering in!

Not far from the golden gateway,
Where voices whisper and wait;
Fearing to enter in boldly,
No lingering still at the gate;

Catching the strain of the music
Floating so sweetly along,
Knowing the song they are singing,
Yet joining not in the song.

Seeing the warmth and the beauty,
The infinite love and the light;
Yet weary, and lonely, and waiting,
Out in the desolate night!

Out in the dark and the danger,
Out in the night and the cold,
Though He is longing to lead them
Tenderly into the fold.

FROM SHADE INTO SUNSHINE.

(Continued).

It was a wild night in autumn; the distant roar of the sea mingled with the rush of the wind as it swept by the cottage, shaking everything that it could lay hold of, and bending low the heads of the pine trees as it passed. It was full moon again, but there was something icy in her excessive brightness, and the masses of black cloud piled up around her, the edges of which were touched with a weird light as they approached, looked like vast floating continents of a chaotic world. Charlotte's head rested on her hand, before her lay her manuscript, the last page written with the same scrupulous neatness that characterized it throughout. The labour of months was over, and with a deep-drawn sigh of satisfaction she looked upon it, knowing that she had not failed. At the same time, however, the strain which had enabled her to reach the goal relaxed, and she felt that she had done too much. Her hands trembled as she sewed her manuscript together, her cheeks glowed with excitement and fatigue. It was past midnight, but she determined before she went to rest, to prepare the manuscript for postage to-morrow. It was neatly and carefully put up, and addressed to no less a man than the editor of the B— Magazine. A short, simple letter was written and laid beside it, and Charlotte, at length exhausted, but happy, laid her head upon her pillow.

The following day letter and manuscript were posted, and Charlotte determined to follow her mother's counsel and give herself more rest for the future. She would write nothing more until the fate of this first venture was decided, and in the mean time would put it out of her mind as much as possible. She felt languid and overwrought, but the fortnight's holidays were approaching, and would set her right again. It might have done so, and Charlotte been spared the dark days which she was to pass, but for an occurrence which took place about this time. It was one of the last days of November, and the first of Charlotte's holidays, a day of unequalled beauty, calm and warm as a summer's day in England. The boys had insisted on their sister's walking with them along the shore to a cave which they had long been desirous of visiting, and to which they had been forbidden to go alone, as from the formation of the coast and the sudden inrush of the tide, it was necessary to exercise caution in walking along the sands. The cave itself has a melancholy tradition attached to it about two young lovers, who, having strolled along the sands from Biarritz, had entered it, and there, oblivious of all but each other, had lingered until the pitiless tide had rushed in upon them, and escape was impossible. The following day their lifeless bodies were discovered in the cave, which, from that time forward, had been designated "la chambre d'amour."

Leaving their mother with books and work to while away the time of their absence, Charlotte and the children set out on their expedition. The beauty of the day, the glee of her young brothers, the feeling of rest from unremitting work, all conspired to make Charlotte more like herself than she had felt for weeks past, and when they reached the sands and the delicious sea-air met them, soon brightening Charlotte's cheeks, she was as merry and light-hearted as the boys themselves. They walked forward along the level sands, stopping to pick up shells and to

look at the great waves in the distance, for the tide was far out. The cave was reached at length, and found, to the children's disappointment, to be a small one, and so choked by the accumulated sand that they had almost to creep through the entrance. But the masses of beautiful maiden-hair fern, growing in its moist recesses, repaid Charlotte, at least, for the visit, and she filled one of the boy's satchels with the carefully uprooted, delicate feathery tufts. How pleased her mother would be to plant and tend them. The shore here had changed its character, and bold rocks took the place of the sandy incline, broken by patches of cultivation, which had extended for some miles. Just about the cave, these rocks were of great height and very precipitous, and the sands were scattered over with huge blocks and boulders, which had parted from the mass and fallen forward. There were fantastic forms among them. Some resembled sea monsters of uncouth shape, others were like the ruins of some ancient structure. Charlotte wandered amongst them, while the boys hunted for limpets and other treasures, the value of which children can only estimate.

They had brought their lunch with them, and having done full justice to it, Frank and Charlie recommenced their investigations, while their sister seated on a fragment of rock fell into a pleasant day dream, only rousing herself to see that the boys were not climbing to perilous places in their pursuit of treasures. There was something so soothing in the murmur of the approaching water, and the quiet breathing of the wind, that she might after a while have fallen pleasantly asleep, had she not begun to realize that, ere long, the tide would be invading this little promontory, and that it would be advisable, the afternoon being somewhat advanced, to set off on their return. A few moments more gazing out to seaward, and she rose from her seat and looked round for her brothers. Charlie was not far off; seated on the sand, he was watching, with earnest attention, the movements of a young crab which was making ungainly efforts at locomotion beside him. Frankie was not visible. "We must go home," said Charlotte, somewhat anxiously, as she became aware of the increasing noise of the waves; "where is Frankie?"

Charlie, unwillingly but promptly, giving up his engrossing employment at his sister's voice, replied by looking round in all directions and shouting his brother's name. "I am sure he was here not ten minutes ago," he said—"why, what a fellow he is; you may be sure he has gone climbing up the rocks after sea-pinks. Charlotte, he said he would." "Run to the cave and look there," said Charlotte, a sudden sense of alarm taking possession of her, while she herself hurried in another direction, repeatedly calling her little brother. No he certainly was not among the boulders, and the smallest object would have been discernible upon the stretch of yellow sand. "Not in the cave," shouted Charlie. With a sickening sense of uncertainty, Charlotte raised her eyes to the rocks, precipitous as they were in some places, in others they were more gradual in their fall, and here and there was a sort of natural pathway, terribly steep indeed, but as it seemed from here not altogether impracticable. With what speechless anxiety did Charlotte's questioning eyes rest on first one then another of these paths, but the little figure which she sought was nowhere to be discerned. Again she called him, again she searched among the debris of rocks, but only found herself retracing her steps to no purpose. Charlie mean-time had made a discovery; hidden by a projecting angle of rock, there was a roughly hewn flight of steps, with an iron rail running beside it, which doubtless formed the most direct way to the summit of the cliffs, and which Frankie must have discovered and made use of.

Charlotte was unutterably thankful. Of course, he must have ascended these steps, was waiting for them at the top, most probably, little realizing, dear child, what she had passed through within the last few moments.

"Come, Charlie," she said, giving one last look around, to assure herself that she was not mistaken, "we will go up at once; in ten minutes more the waves will have reached this," and they began the tiring ascent, holding by the rail, and pressing eagerly forward. But the steps were very rough and unequal, and when Charlotte saw with what difficulty Charlie climbed them, that terrible anxiety once more laid hold of her. Frankie was two years younger, and had neither the strength nor the agility of his brother.

They got on so slowly, her heart beat violently, and she trembled with anxiety to reach the top, yet every moment she glanced down to the sands and marked how the sea was encroaching upon them. Up, up the weary steps,—was it certain, after all, that Frankie had climbed them? But now they reached a little level projection in the rock, railed round, for it was a dizzy and dangerous spot. They paused a moment. Charlie, leaning against the rail, looked down, looked and uttered a cry of consternation. "See, Lottie, see! He is down there, after all!" She looked; and there, behind a boulder, so low that she had not thought of going round it, lay Frankie in the warm sand, fast asleep! Fast asleep! and the sea, the pitiless sea, within, as it seemed, a few yards from the spot where he lay, and which—in how many minutes more—would be covered deep by the rolling, seething waters!

(To be Continued).

A MOTHER'S POWER.

A moment's work on clay tells more than an hour's labor on brick. So work on hearts before they harden. During the first six or eight years of child life mothers have full sway; and this is the time to make the deepest and most enduring impression on the human mind.

The examples of maternal influences are countless. Solomon himself records the words of wisdom that fell from a mother's lips; and Timothy was taught the Scriptures from a child by his grandmother and his mother.

John Randolph of Roanoke used to say: "I should have been a French atheist were it not for the recollection of the time when my departed mother used to take my little hands in hers, and make me say on my bended knees, 'Our Father who art in heaven!'"

"I have found out what you are," said a gentleman one morning to President Adams. "I have been reading your mother's letter to her son." Washington's mother trained her boy to truthfulness and virtue; and when his messenger called to tell her that her son was raised to the highest station in the nation's gift she could say: "George always was a good boy."

A mother's tears dropped on the head of her little boy one evening as he sat in the doorway and listened while she spoke of Christ and His salvation. "These tears made me a missionary," said he, when he had given his manhood's prime to the service of the Lord.

Some one asked Napoleon what was the great need of the French nation. "Mothers," was the significant answer.

"Woman, has God given you the privileges and responsibilities of motherhood? Be faithful then to the little ones. You hold the key of their hearts now. If you once lose it, you would give the world to win it back. Use your opportunities before they pass.

And remember, little ones, you never will have but one mother. Obey and honor her. Listen to her words, and God will bless you day by day.—*The Christian*.

BLAMELESS, NOT FAULTLESS.

We are to be blameless now. We shall be faultless hereafter—"preserved blameless, and presented faultless." Such is the blessed and glorious ideal which is set before the Christian, and which both the ability and faithfulness of God are pledged to make real. It is to be asked what practical difference there is in such a distinction. We may take as an example a little child, whose heart is bent upon pleasing her mother. Her first little task of needle work is put into her hands. But the little fingers are all unskilled, nor has she any thought of the nicety required; still with intense pleasure she sets stitch after stitch, until at last she brings it to her mother. She has done her best and does not dream of failure. And her mother, taking it sees two things; one is a work as faulty as it can well be, with stitches long and crooked, and the other is that smiling, upturned face, with its sweet consciousness of love. Not for anything would she coldly criticize that work. She thinks of the effort to please, and how little she could expect in a first attempt. It is the child's best for the time being. So she commends her, and even praises the poor imperfect work, and then gently and most lovingly shows her how she may do better. The believing, loving child of God may possess this blessing of blamelessness, not as one to be finally

reached, but as one to enjoy along the way. Only in this case there will be not a life more and more holy, but a heart growing purer and purer in its love.—*Southern Churchman*.

WAITING TO BE GRACIOUS.

SOME years since a family moved to the West. They secured a piece of land, and began to make them a home. As years passed, that home assumed shape and acquired beauty, and the wild land became a rich farm. Beyond their expectations even, they prospered in all they undertook.

Among the few books taken with them from their former home was the old family Bible. They had never used it much before; they used it even less now. It was kept on the stand at first; but in the small house it proved to be in the way, and was moved from place to place, till at last it was thrust on an old shelf over the door of the cabin. When they entered their "new house" the Bible was put away with many other things, "too good to leave behind, but not of much use."

Many years had passed, and one of their children was sick. For many days they watched at the bedside. At last the doctor said, "To-night will be the crisis. As she passes it, so will she live or pass away." It was a fearful night. Most people know of some such night—a night never to be forgotten. Hour after hour those parents waited. Midnight had passed, and the clock had struck one, and still no change. At length mother said:

"I cannot bear it any longer. I feel that we must pray and ask God to help us."

"But I have not prayed for years—not since I was a boy at home. And our Bible; I do not know that we have any."

"I think I can find it."

She went and sought the book, which for years had been an incumbrance. She brought it out, and they both sat down and read it. O, how different it seemed now! Passages they had learned when children now glowed with brightness. How rich! how comforting! how wonderful it was! It seemed as if God was right there with them, and talking to them. For a long time they read on, and at last knelt down and prayed as they never prayed before. They did not pray for the life of their child, but for themselves, that God would heal them. And God heard them, and that night of sorrow was turned into a morning of joy. To their bliss, their child awoke in the morning refreshed, and from that began to recover.

It seemed to me that the Bible illustrated the grace of God! How patiently it had waited for its time to speak! For fifteen years it had been neglected. It had been thrust from its place again and again. There was not room for it in the house. It was never spoken of but in jest. It was never looked at but to find for it a more obscure place. But it never murmured when thrust aside, and when it was reviled it reviled not again. At last its day came, the heart opened, and it was ready to speak and bless. How it waited to be gracious! How ever after it blessed that home, filling the place it had waited to fill these many years?—*Selected*.

FAMILY WORSHIP IN AFFLICTION

"The value and beauty of family worship in the time of bereavement are illustrated by an incident in the life of the Rev. J. A. James, which has almost a touch of the sublime. It was his custom to read at family prayer on Saturday evening the 103d Psalm. On the Saturday of the week in which Mrs. James died, he hesitated, with the open Bible in his hand, before he began to read; but, after a moment's silence, he looked up and said, 'Notwithstanding what has happened this week, I see no reason for departing from our usual custom of reading the 103d Psalm, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name." What must be the effect upon a household of such a scene! What a picture is thus presented of holy resignation and thankfulness! The greatest sufferer recognizing, as the head of the family, the hand that has smitten his home and made it desolate, and in the depth of his sorrow blessing the name of the Lord!'—*Christian Home Life*.

A HOLY LIFE.

A HOLY life is made up of a number small things. Little words, not eloquent speeches or sermons; little deeds, not miracles, nor battles, nor one great, heroic act, or mighty martyrdom, make up the true Christian life. The little constant sunbeam, not the lightning; the waters of Siloah, "that go softly" in their meek mission of refreshment, not the waters of "the river, great and many," rushing down in torrent noise and force, are the true symbols of a holy life. The avoidance of little evils, little sins, little inconsistencies, little weaknesses, little follies, little indiscretions and imprudences, little foibles, little indulgences of self and the flesh—the avoidance of such little things as these goes far to make up, at least, the negative beauty of a holy life.

Children's Department.

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH IT?

ONE Sunday evening Mr. Bath's family were in the sitting-room just before family worship.

"Children," said Mr. Bath, "I want to ask you some questions."

The children looked up at him in surprise. What was coming?

Mr. Bath began: "What are you going to do with what you got to-day, Charles?"

Charles looked at his father, then at his sister, and then at his father again. "I did not get anything, father."

"What are you going to do with what you got, Mary?"

The child looked at him, while she played with her handkerchief, thought a moment, and then said, "I do not know what I have received, father. I am sure I do not know what you mean?"

"Where were you both to-day?"

"At Church, and at Sunday School, father. Oh, yes, I did get something," said Charles.

"So did I," said Mary. "I got a book and a paper."

"If that is what you mean, father, I got just what Mary did," said Charles. "I also got this reward check."

"This is only a part of what I mean. Did you get anything at church?"

"What a question!" said the children. "Why, we never get anything there, papa."

"Did you not get a sermon? Was not that God's Word? Did you not understand part of it?"

Father waited for an answer. That was a new way of looking at the matter, and the children waited a little time to think.

"In fact," said he, "you got more than books and papers in Sunday School. What was it?"

"I suppose you mean the lesson," said Charles, wondering where papa would end.

"Yes," the lesson is the main thing you get at Sunday School. Boys and girls generally think only of books and papers which are there given to them; but you must know that they are of far less account than the lesson, which is God's Word of grace and love to man. Never forget that this is Divine truth, as it comes to us from God through those whom the Holy Ghost moved to write it for our instruction."

"Yes, we had such a good lesson to-day about Peace with God," said Mary, "and our teacher made it very plain to us all."

"Well, what are you going to do with all this truth of God?"

"We must remember it," said Charles.

"Yes, and tell it to others," said Mary.

"So far very good: but you must do even more than this, my children; you must lay it to heart."

"How does one do that, father?"

"Laying it to heart means that you not only believe what God says, but also feel that He says it to you, and that you try to use it for your own good."

"Now, dear children," said Mr. Bath, opening the Bible for worship, "I want to press upon your hearts and minds the solemn question which I asked at the beginning, 'What will you do with what you got to-day from God?' You need not answer it to me; but give answer to God when you kneel down to pray every day this week. He gives us all things, and He holds us to account for what He gives us."—*Kind Words*.