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LITTLE THINGS.

ably no industry in
 which more attention
 is given to the saving
 of expenditure than in
 this country. And a
 billity is expended on
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 while apparently in-
 itself, amounts to a
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 train miles run in the
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supposing the rail-
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 stified in spending
 a royalty, however,
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 the money that they
 improvements. It is
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 road has spent on
 returned the com-
 between 15 and 20
 facts are largely
 of the current
 liberal manner in
 is have capitalised
 movements and bet-
 ter times.

"Alma Redemptoris Mater, quae per-
 via coeli"

Porta Manes, et Stella Maris, suc-
 curre cadenti."

Antiphon of the Church.

The fortunes of the Ralstons were
 at low ebb; once inside the park
 gates, which opened with difficulty
 and creaked on their hinges, it did
 not take very long for the most un-
 observant person to discover that
 fact. In the unkempt park nature had
 a free hand; the grass grew rank and
 long, ivy and periwinkle trailed un-
 molested among overgrown shrubs,
 while happy families of rabbits and
 squirrels ran hither and thither,
 peaceful and undisturbed, up to the
 very doorsteps of the hall.

Ralston Hall, a fine old Elizabeth-
 an mansion, shuttered and blinded
 for the most part, looked a perfect
 picture of decaying age—dead and
 blind to all that was going on a-
 round—moss and lichen were busy
 on wall and portico, where birds
 twittered and called and made their
 nests, without a thought of any dis-
 turbing element from within. No
 strangers coming up the drive to the
 great front door would have dream-
 ed of raising the quaint wrought
 ironknocker with the idea of gaining
 admittance; even had he been told at
 the lodge that "Sir Philip was at
 home," he would have hesitated, so
 shut up and deserted did the house
 appear. But the front door faced
 north, if he could have found, near
 by, a little wicket gate, almost over-
 grown with laurels, he would have
 struck a foot path which would have
 taken him round to the south side,
 where on a wide sunny terrace he
 would speedily have seen for himself
 that Sir Philip was at home.

Here, in a suite of rooms opening
 on the terrace, with only a valet and
 a couple of servants to wait on him,
 the owner of Ralston Hall hid, not
 only broken fortunes, but broken
 health as well. For over a year he
 had lain on an invalid couch, watch-
 ing the changing seasons with sad
 and hopeless eyes, looking out over
 a fair scene of stately terrace, fair
 lawn, and undulating park, uncon-
 scious of its beauty, unheeding alike
 its summer verdure, or its covering
 of winter snow.

Sir Philip was young—nature has
 little solace for the sorrows of youth
 —and he was past twenty-seven. He
 was tall and well made, with a hand-
 some figure and a noble face, a little
 spoiled now by the stern, drawn look
 around the mouth which had forgot-
 ten how to smile; he had dark brown
 eyes with the brightness all gone out
 of them, for the lights within were
 all turned low, the fire in the young
 heart was barely smouldering. And
 yet, "but yesterday," and he "could
 have stood against the world!"
 When, a few years previous he had
 succeeded to the title and an impover-
 ished estate, the thought of an
 empty exchequer had no terrors for
 him; he only laughed at his agent
 when he talked of unlet farms or
 mortgages or ruinous buildings, he
 was young, and he had the world at
 his feet, he would build up the fam-
 ily fortunes somehow, even if he had
 to start a ranch in Texas. Then
 came the war, and a country's cry
 to her loyal sons for speedy help.

Sir Philip came of a family of sol-
 diers, and he was one of the first to
 volunteer for service in South Africa;
 he played his part nobly—in a way
 worthy of his race, until—oh, the
 bitterness of the thought—he was
 shot down at "Modder River"—hor-
 ribly wounded, and then nearly kill-
 ed and physically ruined by exposure
 and wet, and want of attention. He
 was patched up, and sent home even-
 tually, and after much overhauling
 by surgeons and specialists and ex-
 perimenting upon, he was ordered in-
 to the country to lie on his back and
 keep quiet, in order to give nature a
 chance to use her own healing pow-
 ers and give the surgeons a lead. A
 great man came from London once a
 week to probe for dead bone in a
 shattered thigh, and take note of the
 poor fellow's condition; he increased
 the doses of morphia from time to
 time, so Sir Philip considered him
 well worthy of his fee, although he
 did not enjoy his visits. But the
 days were long, and the nights long-
 er; too proud to complain or seek
 sympathy he learned to suffer in sil-
 ence, and he discouraged as much as
 possible all visits and attentions
 from friends and neighbors, finding
 more strength in solitude than in
 distractions from the world without.
 He found companionship too, where
 hitherto he had never looked for it,
 in the fine library of his house, so
 he made friends among the immor-
 tals; soared with choice spirits into
 the region of thought and pondered
 over many a strange philosophy—or
 sought the flowing meadows of ro-
 mance where the glamor of love and
 chivalry "shone o'er fair women and
 brave men," and made a fairer world
 for the wandering of a sick and
 weary fancy.

One warm evening in the early au-
 tumn, he lay on his couch on the
 terrace—he was always out of doors

THE LIGHT THAT DID NOT FAIL.

except when "driven in by stress of
 weather," and he liked to be out
 when the gloaming changed into
 dusk; when the night wind blew cool
 against his face, and the owls and
 other night birds began their weird
 concert in the dark—
 "There is that little beggar a-
 gain," he murmured to himself as the
 sound of footsteps, and the click of
 the latch of the gate nearby, broke
 the stillness of the evening; "whist-
 ling the same old tune too, I wonder
 what it is, he is always at it." He
 smiled; then he sighed—some new
 popular song no doubt, some catchy
 chorus from the latest comic opera—
 an echo from the life that used to be
 his—he writhed a little, and then fell
 to listening. The "little beggar"
 was passing along the path below
 the terrace, so the tune came up
 clear and distinct; Sir Philip whist-
 led a few bars himself softly,
 through his teeth, "it is not so very
 catchy after all," he said, as he
 could not get on with it, "otherwise
 I should have known it by now, for
 I have been hearing it morning,
 noon, and night for the last week;
 it is very pretty though."

It was evidently haunting, as well
 as pretty, it floated in upon his mem-
 ory many times from midnight to
 dawn when he grew a little drowsy
 over his novel. Next day he had his
 couch wheeled close to the balus-
 trade of the terrace, and when, at
 noon, he heard the click of the latch
 he leaned over to have a look at the
 little whistler; he concluded he must
 be one of the children from the West
 Lodge, passing to and from the vil-
 lage school on the other side of the
 park. The little fellow, however,
 was not whistling on this occasion,
 he was singing; it was the same tune
 set to rather unintelligible words.
 Everything around was so still, that
 the boy oblivious of the terrace
 above, was singing out boldly with
 never a thought of a possible listen-
 er being near, and just as he passed
 underneath where Sir Philip lay he
 sang out high and clear:

"Porta manes et Stella Maris suc-
 curre cadenti."

"Latin, by Jove," said Sir Philip.
 "Now let me see what it means—
 Stella Maris—Star of the Sea. That's
 about as much as my Latin will run
 to I fancy—succurre cadenti—help
 the falling one—umph! Not much of
 the comic opera about that; that
 was a bad shot—it is more like a
 hymn—a Latin hymn, which means,
 probably, that my little whistler is
 a Catholic. We have not very many
 Catholic families on the estate so it
 will not be hard to identify him—if
 I am so minded, he went on with a
 sigh—Heaven help me, have I fallen
 so low that I can occupy my mind
 with such trivialities—like a prison-
 er, finding interest in the insects of
 his cell—Here, Kitson!" he called,
 "bring me the Times—how the dick-
 ens is it you have not brought me
 the papers these last few morn-
 ings?"

"Beg pardon, Sir Philip," said the
 valet, "you said I was not to bring
 them if you remember, Sir; you've
 fancied the books more, lately—I'll
 fetch them now Sir, with the new
 magazines, they've just come, Sir."
 Kitson brought the papers, and
 piled books and magazines within
 reach of his master's hand, but as
 soon as he had retired the "Times"
 slipped from Sir Philip's listless fingers,
 the fact that the court was at
 Windsor, and that there was to be a
 relief of one penny in the pound on
 the Income Tax were items of news
 that might have been signalled from
 the planet Mars, so little did they
 seem to affect him. Presently he
 found himself humming the air of
 the "Latin hymn" occasionally in-
 terspersing the few Latin words he
 had picked up, and making a little
 hymn after this fashion—Stella
 Maris, Oh Stella Maris Succurre
 Cadenti—"But there is no help for me,"
 he said wearily, at last, picking up
 a novel. "No friendly star shines
 for me, to lighten my darkened life—
 I am falling, falling into nothing-
 ness! Oh to hold a loving hand, and
 rest one hour upon a loving heart
 before the darkness swallows me up
 and I go into the coldness and eter-
 nal loneliness of the grave, or rather
 let me pray, that my dreams would
 leave me, and I could find the
 strength to be resigned."

II.
 That evening, just after sunset, lit-
 tle Leo Watson, with nicely brushed
 hair and a clean collar, started off
 for choir practice in the village
 where he attended school, about a

mile distant. He was in plenty of
 time, but still he hurried along,
 whistling rather excitedly, for it was
 to be a very important practice that
 evening, with the full choir and the
 organ. There would probably be hot
 wine, negus and buns at the presby-
 tery afterwards, and the whole affair
 was large, with happy possibilities
 from the boy's point of view. As he
 passed along under the Hall Terrace
 the little hurrying feet were sudden-
 ly brought to a standstill by the
 sound of a voice overhead. Sir Philip
 was in a wheel-chair leaning over the
 balustrade.

"Who goes there?" he called out
 pleasantly.
 A fair, flushed face was instantly
 raised, and a pair of bright, blue
 eyes suddenly lit up with a look of
 real pleasure.

"Oh, please, are you better, Sir
 Philip?" Leo, cap in hand, looked
 up, the perfect image of frank, friend-
 ly solicitude.
 Sir Philip smiled down at the
 bright, eager face. "Oh, yes, thank
 you," he said, "I'm all right. How
 do you know I am Sir Philip,
 though?"

"I know you quite well," said the
 boy. "You let me hold your gun
 once when I was very little. I'm the
 keeper's little boy, you know—John's
 boy."
 "Oh, are you? I'm afraid I had
 forgotten you. Come along up here
 and let me have a look at you."
 The boy ran to the steps, and in a
 moment he was by Sir Philip's side.
 He was a well-grown little lad of
 about nine, full of health and spir-
 its.

"So, you are John's boy, are
 you?" said Sir Philip.
 "Yes, I am Leo," he answered,
 gravely scrutinizing the invalid ap-
 pliances about Sir Philip. "I'm a-
 fraid you are not quite better yet."
 "Well, perhaps not quite. Where
 are you going this evening, may I
 ask?"

"I am going to a choir practice in
 the church; over at Nettleton, you
 know. Father Maxwell has been
 teaching us boys to sing Vespers,
 and we nearly know them. We're
 learning the Antiphon now—I do like
 the Antiphon—it's a lovely one
 we're learning now."
 "Was that what you were whist-
 ling as you came along?"

The boy blushed a little as he re-
 plied: "I expect it was; I'm often
 whistling and singing it; it's the
 'Alma,' you know, 'Alma Redemptor-
 is Mater,' and we have to know it
 by Advent. We haven't tried it with
 the organ yet, but Miss Cecily is
 coming to play for us to-night, and
 I mustn't be late—perhaps I'd better
 go now, Sir Philip."

"In a minute. Who is Miss Cecily?"
 "Miss Cecily Waring, from Ris-
 worth Park—oh, she is pretty! She
 always plays the organ now, when
 she's at home."
 "Is that so? Then it would never
 do to be late. Will you come and
 see me again? I am generally out
 here by myself."

"Yes, I will. I shall be glad when
 you can go out shooting again; so
 will daddy."
 "Very kind of you, I'm sure. Won't
 you have some of those grapes to
 take with you?" He gave him a
 large bunch from a dish near him.
 "Now, you must run; good-bye."
 "Happy little lad," said Sir Philip
 to himself, as he heard the sound of
 little feet running along the mossy
 path. "That's the most agreeable
 visit I have had since I came home.
 So John will be glad when I can go
 out shooting again! So shall I. I
 thought everybody had forgotten me,
 but perhaps that is because I have
 forgotten everybody; and that little
 beggar seemed positively pleased to
 see me. How funny! He seems very
 keen on his choir music. Let me see,
 what did he call his favorite tune?
 Oh, yes, an Antiphon. Now, where
 did I read about a little boy learn-
 ing an Antiphon? I seem to remem-
 ber something about it. I fancy it
 must have been in the works of one
 of these mediaeval fellows—Malory,
 was it? No; it was old Chaucer, of
 course. I'll have him up and find
 it."

That night, when Kitson had left
 him, with his usual nightly para-
 phernalia of books, reading lamp and
 morphia pills, Sir Philip set up his
 Chaucer on his reading stand, and
 soon found the story he wanted in
 the "Prioresse's Tale." And there
 he read about the widow's son.

"A little clerk that VII. yere was
 of age,"
 who, as he went to school day by
 day, always remembered to do as his

mother had taught him, kneel down
 and say the "Ave Maria," before the
 image of "Our blessed lady Christie's
 mother dere," and how

"This litel child, his litel boke learn-
 ing,
 As he sat in schole at his primere,
 He Alma Redemptoris Mater herd
 sing,
 As children lered her Antiphonere
 And as he durst he drew aye nere
 and nere
 And herkened to the wordes and the
 note
 Till he the first verse couth all by
 rote."

"It must be a very wonderful 'An-
 tiphoner,' this," said Sir Philip,
 smiling, "little Leo seems to be just
 as keen on it to-day as the 'litel
 clerkion' was five centuries ago. I
 wonder if it was the same old tune.
 Very probably."
 He mused a few minutes and then
 read on how this "litel child," not
 understanding the Latin, was always
 asking a companion to expound the
 song and tell him why they sang it,
 so—

"His fellow which that elder was
 than he,
 Answerd him thus, this song I have
 herd say
 Was made by our blessed lady, fre
 Her to salew and eke her to prey
 To ben our help and succour when
 we dey,
 I can no more expound in this mater
 I lerne song, I can but small gram-
 mer."

"So it was not the words that
 caught on it seems."
 Sir Philip was getting thoroughly
 interested; it must have been the
 tune then, but he read—

"And is this song imade in rever-
 ence
 Of Christie's Mother, said this inno-
 cent
 Now certes I woll done my diligence
 To cenne it all er Christenmasse he
 went
 Though that I for my primere shall
 be shent
 And should be beten thrise in an
 houre,
 I will it comme our lady to hon-
 our."

"Ah, to honor our Lady!" Sir
 Philip was struck with the idea. "I
 wonder is that why Leo likes it so
 much? He blushed when he said he
 was often singing it! And this 'lit-
 el' chap risked a thrashing thrice in
 an hour to get it by heart—

"That he sang it wel and boldly
 Fro word to word according to the
 note
 Twice a day it passeth through his
 throte
 To sholeward and homeward when
 he went
 On Christie's Mother set was all his
 entent,
 As I have said throughout the fewry,
 This litel child as he came to and
 fro,
 Full merely then would he sing and
 cry,
 O Alma Redemptoris Mater ever mo.
 The swetness hath his hert persed
 so
 Of Christie's Mother that to her to
 pray,
 He cannot stint of singing by the
 way."

Sir Philip finished the story and
 closed the book; he shut his eyes and
 fell to musing. One idea had come
 home to him, he had read the story
 before, he was fond of mediaeval lit-
 erature, but it had been to him mere-
 ly a quaint tale of bygone days and
 worn out superstitions—that it pre-
 sented a true picture of English life
 in the middle ages was a thought
 that had never occurred to him. Why
 was that? He had required an in-
 terpreter, and he had found one in a
 little child.

Chaucer was not presenting a fan-
 cy picture—he was writing of what
 he saw and heard around him—he
 put it down in immortal verse, that
 in those days the children learned
 the Antiphon to honor Christ's Mo-
 ther. And here was a little, happy
 school-boy, passing daily under his
 windows, with "Alma Redemptoris
 Mater" forever on his lips and in his
 heart, just as mediaeval in his ways
 as if there had never been a Reforma-
 tion and England were still a Cath-
 olic country. How did it happen
 that after all that had been done to
 make England Protestant this devo-
 tion to the Virgin should be still so
 strong and ardent?

Because he mused, perhaps, as the
 embodiment of true womanliness, she
 filled up, with a universal mother-
 hood, that want in the heart of
 every human creature for the love
 and tender protecting care a loving
 mother gives in a manner peculiarly
 her own. That heart, so pure and
 meek, pierced with the sevenfold
 sword, because it had loved and suf-
 fered as no other heart had ever
 done, had power to draw all hearts
 to itself by an intuitive certainty of
 finding there an inexhaustible fount
 of sympathy, had power to reveal
 the thought, deep in the heart of hu-
 manity, the longing inherent there
 for the pure and the true, the noble
 and the good.

One did not need to be a Catholic
 to understand this, Sir Philip re-
 flected; and it was not a Catholic
 poet who had proclaimed her "our
 tainted nature's solitary boast."
 Then he let his thoughts stray off in-
 to the realms of poetry and art, to
 go over all he had ever learned con-
 cerning the Mother of Christ. He let
 his spirit wander amongst the art
 treasures of Italy and Spain. He re-
 visited churches and galleries and
 stood, with a new sense of reverence
 and comprehension, before Madonnas
 of Raphael and Murillo, of Bartolo-
 meo and Fra Angelico, and he dozed
 off to sleep at last before a heavenly
 Botticelli, which, of all the Madon-
 nas of the old masters, he loved the
 best, with a prayer on his lips, that
 she, the tender mother, would be a
 mother to him.

And she came to him in his dreams
 this fairest flower of earth and heav-
 en! He thought she leant down out
 of a golden cloud and held out lov-
 ing arms towards him. He sprang
 towards her with a glad cry of "Al-
 ma Redemptoris Mater," and it
 seemed to him that for one blissful
 moment he rested on a loving heart,
 and loving hands held his own—then
 she faded away; and he heard little
 Leo's voice saying, "Miss Cecily War-
 ring, oh, she is pretty!"
 He woke up at his own happy
 laugh; Kitson was standing over him
 looking rather anxious.

"Are you all right, Sir Philip?" he
 said. "You have been sleeping so
 quietly, I was afraid you had faint-
 ed; for you hadn't taken your mor-
 phia, I noticed."
 "I have had a beautiful sleep," he
 said; "the first real sleep for many
 months; I believe Sawyer will find
 me better when he comes to-day. I
 think he might have lunch with me
 —Kitson, serve it in the Blue room.
 I am sure I can sit up long enough
 for that quite well. We'll have those
 blackcock John shot last week, and
 you can bring up some of the '47,'
 he seems to like that."

"Yes, Sir Philip," Kitson turned
 aside and coughed behind his hand to
 hide a grin.
 "What are you coughing for?"
 "Nothing, sir; a little cold, in the
 throat, sir."
 "Confound your cold, don't do it
 again. I'll have my breakfast now,
 and Kitson!"
 "Yes, Sir Philip."
 "You can put out my Harris suit.
 I've had enough of that dressing
 gown for the present."

Kitson went down to the kitchen
 and told the servants that he believ-
 ed "master had taken a turn for the
 better. It's the first time he's men-
 tioned victuals and drink to me
 since he came home, anyway; and he
 slept last night without his morphia.
 Wants his 'arris suit, too, he does,
 and it's 'confound your cold, Kit-
 son,' if you please; it's my belief
 we'll have him swearin' away like
 his good old self in a few weeks, and
 that will be a blessin' for every-
 body."

III.
 Sir James Sawyer was not only a
 great surgeon, he was a great student
 of human nature as well, he
 studied the whole man, body, mind
 and soul; and he had early come to
 the conclusion that it was a waste
 of effort to treat a patient who
 would not work with him, with the
 strength of his own will—with the
 effort of the higher physical forces
 within himself. In the case of Sir
 Philip Ralston, the patient was cer-
 tainly not on his side; he was deter-
 mined that he would not get well,
 even if his wound did, because he
 was convinced he would always be a
 twisted cripple, and if he could not
 have life on his own conditions he
 would not have it at all. No doubt
 Sir Philip would have been rather
 surprised if the surgeon had told
 him that this was the real attitude
 of his mind, he was not in the least

aware how much his own feelings of
 hopelessness, and distrust of a pos-
 sible beneficent Providence ordering
 all things well, were depressing the
 vital forces within him and holding
 back nature's healing hand. Sir
 James had been feeling anxious
 about his patient for some time—it
 was not so much the wound that
 brought him weekly to Ralston as
 the desire to combat in some way,
 the apathy which was growing upon
 him like a mental and moral paraly-
 sis.

So Sir Philip was rather surprised
 at the change in his voice when he
 greeted him on his arrival with a
 "Ha! This is an improvement," he
 thought he must be alluding to his
 change of dress.

"You prefer your patient in a
 tweed suit, then, doctor?"

"I do not place much diagnostic
 value on clothes, although they have
 a certain value, especially in pa-
 tients of the other sex," said Sir
 James, laughing. "No, young man,"
 he added, "the improvement is in the
 patient not in his suit; he looks as
 if he might be induced now to take
 a little interest in his own case."

"Interest! Good Lord, doctor, do
 I ever think of anything else, morn-
 ing, noon or night."
 "Thinking of a very negative
 kind."

"It is a negative matter altogeth-
 er, I fear; you won't say you will
 cure me?"

"I never say that; I always re-
 member a favorite saying of one of
 the greatest of surgeons—one of the
 old masters, one might call him—
 who, if praised for his work, was
 wont to answer: 'I treated him, and
 God cured him.' Seriously, Sir Philip,
 I earnestly wish that this may
 point a moral for you—I cannot, I
 dare not raise any false hopes about
 your thigh, for there has been no in-
 dication, so far, of a favorable devel-
 opment in the case, but I must tell
 you that I have unbounded faith in
 nature's own curative processes, espe-
 cially with youth and a good con-
 stitution to aid her, and whatever
 others have told you, I at least have
 never said you would not be a sound
 man again. You are better to-day;
 something has brightened and cheer-
 ed you!"

"Nothing more than some sweet,
 sound sleep, and, ah well, I may
 say, a happy dream," interrupted
 Sir Philip, but he flushed a little as
 he spoke and Sir James noticed it.
 "Well, no matter what it was, but
 listen to what I am saying to you.
 If from the faintest and furthest star
 of hope, the smallest ray has reach-
 ed you and pierced that dark and icy
 cloud of despair which is settling
 over your heart and mind, look up,
 and greet it with joy, beg that its
 light may penetrate you more and
 more—be a little more humble—forgive
 my saying so—for indeed we do
 not know all; as there are millions
 of stars beyond the range of mortal
 vision, so there are untold agencies
 both natural and supernatural, un-
 known and undreamt of in our phil-
 osophy, influencing our lives daily
 and hourly in a manner we little im-
 agine, and no man can truly write
 "Finis" to the story of his own life."

"Thank you, doctor," Sir Philip,
 humbly; he put out his hand, and
 Sir James grasped it closely. It was
 the first time he had put himself
 within the range of sympathy and it
 stirred the softer emotions of the
 heart. Then they had lunch to-
 gether, and it was a happy meal for
 both, and Kitson took the news be-
 low stair that "that solemn, old Sir
 James was making jokes and telling
 funny stories, and Master was laugh-
 ing fit to kill his self."

Jessie Roder, in the "Messenger
 Monthly Magazine," New York.
 (To be continued.)

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