

there was the old-fashioned black walnut stand adorned with a new spread, and upon it the worn bible, also taken from the parcel near the door. Beneath it Helen had slipped an envelope containing a cheery greeting and a note promising the payment of room-rent for the year, signed by Grandma Merle. All about the room were touches of brightness, such touches as girls know so well how to give their own rooms to make them look bright and cheerful. The tiny sleeping room had been freshened, too, and the cupboard with its three shelves held a real Thanksgiving repast — and much to spare. Somebody, hearing of the girls' beautiful idea, sent up a quantity of wood, and somebody else was heard to say, 'If those girls care enough about the old lady to work as they will have to in order to get those rooms comfortable and cozy, I surely can help provide for her this winter.' True it was that Mrs. Graham's surprise was proving a greater success than the girls had dared to dream.

'Oh, you sweet little primrose,' said Helen, as she stepped out of the door, 'you look as if you had blossomed expressly for the occasion.' There it stood, in a tissue-covered jar, close beside the little old bible, and quaint little Prue remarked, 'I guess it will make her think of old times,' and they all laughed and said they guessed so too.

'Hark! was that a step? Yes, it's her,' whispered one nearest the door. 'Now listen!'

Mrs. Graham walked slowly; she was weary and her heart ached. Her hand was on the door-knob; but she paused to look down the street. 'They will be here for me soon, and to-night, Thanksgiving eve, I shall sleep for the first time in the poor-house!' She sighed deeply, then turned the knob and walked in.

Yes, Mrs. Graham stepped in upon the bright new carpet, heard the cheerful crackle of the wood fire, saw the comfortable rocker inviting her to rest. She saw, too, the bible on the little old stand, and with a start she exclaimed, 'Why, this looks like the little sitting-room I had before Joseph was called home,' and, then, as if arousing from a beautiful dream, she added, 'but this is only a fancy, I'm tired and my poor old eyes are seeing things as they used to be, not as they are.'

Five girls just outside could bear it no longer, and in they rushed all saying at once, 'Why, Mrs. Graham, this is your Thanksgiving surprise, and your eyes are not deceiving you a bit!'

Then it all flashed upon her. They were the ones who had changed her dreary abiding place into a veritable little paradise. Yes, Mrs. Dale had said that Marcia was out with some girls — and here they all were in her own little rooms.

Someone read her the note from Grandma Merle, and what do you think the dear, surprised old lady did? She simply clasped her hands, and in a trembling voice thanked her heavenly Father for all the happiness of the hour, and then, unable to restrain herself longer, she burst into tears. Tears which caused the girls to stroke the gray hair and tell her how happy they had been in doing for her. Tears which, when wiped away, left the old eyes beaming with delight, and the pale lips wore a smile, a sweeter smile, the girls said, than they had ever seen before upon her face.

'But where is the man — the man that was to —'

'Papa telephoned him that you would remain in Galesburg,' interrupted Marcia, unwilling to have a single unpleasant thought cross the mind of the happy old lady. She smiled in reply. One of those smiles of per-

fect satisfaction that carried a deeper meaning than all the thank you's she could have showered upon them.

Amid many a 'Bless you,' and 'God protect you,' the tired, but happy girls started homeward. As they hastened along in the frosty evening air, one and another exclaimed, 'How perfectly delighted Mrs. Graham was.' 'Really, I never enjoyed a day more in my life!' and Marcia suggested as she bade them good night that they do something of the kind on the next Thanksgiving, and four girlish voices made quick reply, 'Yes, indeed we will.' — *Michigan Christian Advocate.*

A Noble Dressmaker.

(By Mrs. Euren.)

A great many people are to be found ready to engage in philanthropic or spiritual work if they may but labor in agreeable company and be provided with attractive appliances and promising material. But there have also been noble men and women who, with straitened means and slender equipment have entered single-handed, into some waiting field of labor and won a harvest from the most unpromising soil. Single-handed, however, only in the human sense, for they have been led and sustained by an intimate sense of an ever-present Divine Helper.

In the early part of the century there lived in the small fishing borough of Yarmouth a solitary young woman earning a fair income as a dressmaker. As every one knows, this is a calling needing close application and attention in order to ensure success. There was then no eight, or ten, or twenty hours' limit beyond which a much-pressed dressmaker was supposed to be incapable of stitch, stitch, stitching. But Sarah Martin was a Christian woman, and the stitching only represented one side of her life. At the age of nineteen a change had passed over her. In consequence of a sermon she had heard and much subsequent study of the bible she was led at length to the assurance that Christ was hers, and to consecrate herself and all her powers to his service.

From this time forward the attitude of her whole life was expressed in the desire to be used by God, and she held herself in readiness to enter upon any field of labor that he might open to her. At first she taught in the Sunday-school. Then she went to see a sick girl in the work-house, and after the death of the girl the sick and aged in the infirmary begged her to continue her visits. There was then no provision for the spiritual needs of the inmates of work-houses. During these visits the sad case of the workhouse children, at that time so ignorant and utterly neglected, came under her notice and excited her pity. She obtained permission to teach them, and for many years set apart one working day each week for that purpose. For the rest of the week she secured for them the supervision of one of the paupers, whom she herself had to instruct. One of these men had been a drunkard, his successor was a thief, but under her good influence both became changed characters and shared in her anxiety for the religious welfare of the children. At length, when a new work-house was built, Sarah Martin had the satisfaction of seeing a regular schoolmaster and mistress appointed.

Her attention was next turned to the teaching of factory-girls. She had only one person to assist her, the difficulties of the position were great; but the indomitable energy and untiring devotion of the teacher at length conquered, and her class of forty or fifty, between the ages of fifteen and thirty, became a model of good behaviour. Beyond the bible-class, Miss Martin endeared her-

self to her scholars by entering into their griefs, and sympathizing with their difficulties.

Sitting all day at her needle, and teaching a large class twice a week in the evening this young woman might be supposed sometimes to need relaxation. On off evenings her recreation was found in still doing her Master's work, visiting the poor and sick, bringing brightness and consolation wherever she went.

Yet all this was but preparatory. During many years the heart of this true woman had gone forth with deepest compassion towards the inmates of the town prison. The Tol-house Prison was like others of the time — unsanitary, wretched, with underground cells only fit to be the habitation of wild beasts. There was no chaplain, no schoolmaster, no attempt at occupation or reformation; prisoners were simply kept under lock and key, and spent their time chiefly in cursing, gambling, quarrelling, and fighting.

The secret wish of Sarah Martin's heart to gain admittance and read the bible to these depraved beings was made known to no one till the object was attained, 'God led me, and I consulted none but him,' was her own account of the matter. A woman was committed for cruelty to her child, and admission to see her was applied for and at first refused; but perseverance was at length rewarded. It was so new for any one to care what became of the inmates of the prison that the unnatural mother, upon realizing that a good and pure woman had come to see her, burst into tears.

This first visit showed Miss Martin so clearly the deplorable state of the wretched inmates that she henceforth devoted all the time she could spare from earning her daily bread to the task of ameliorating their condition and reforming their characters. It was a gigantic task for one poor working woman to set herself, was it not? Any one who has read of the vileness of that old Tol-house Prison might be excused for considering it the proposal of either a lunatic or a visionary. But this woman was neither. On the contrary, she was possessed of sound judgment, and good, practical, common-sense; but she was inspired with an exalted faith, and her heart was filled with Christ-like pity and love.

At first she was content with reading the bible to the prisoners — the bible which she herself knew from cover to cover. Then she talked to them; she had a winning manner, though she could be firm enough, too. Then she taught them to observe the Sabbath — all days having erewhile been alike in the prison. She established a Sunday service, and obtained readers from outside, but as difficulties arose the office at last devolved upon herself, and from reading addresses she in time accustomed herself to give extempore religious discourses. She gave up an entire day in the week, besides many other occasions, to teach the prisoners to read and write, and also set them to work at various employments by which they might earn a little money to take at the end of their imprisonment. Two gifts of ten shillings and one pound respectively enabled her to get materials to commence upon, and she begged patches, straw and bones in order to keep the men from that bane to all improvement — idleness. The women were taught to sew and mend, the men and boys to make straw hats, caps, spoons, scoops and other useful articles from bone; also shirts, patchwork quilts, etc. So skillfully did she manage that employment was regarded as a privilege, not as a task.

That this one woman, without external authority to back her, should have been able to establish and maintain order and discipli-