

"we have a great surprise for you—the first dish of strawberries."

"So early!" said the old lady; "How very extravagant of you, but how very pleasant." She took one and ate it slowly, while Mr. Dabney laid the ruined fork aside and assumed the expression of a reprieved assassin.

"Doubtless," Grandmamma quoted, "God could have made a better berry, but doubtless He never did." Do you know," she asked Mr. Dabney, "who said that? It was a favorite quotation of me fawther's."

"Oh yes," said Mr. Dabney, who had been cutting it out of articles every June for years, "it was Bishop Buttler."

The situation was saved, for Grandmamma talked exclusively of fruit for the rest of the meal. Ludlow, it seems, has some very beautiful gardens, especially Dr. Swower's, which is famous for its figs. A southern aspect.

At one moment, however, we all went cold again, for Lionel, who is merciless, suddenly asked in a silence, "Didn't you once meet Thackeray, Grandmamma?"

Naomi, however, was too quick for him, and before the old lady could begin she had signalled to her mother to lead the way to the drawing-room.

Hope's Quiet Hour.

Many Brought Gifts.

The LORD guided them on every side. And many brought gifts unto the LORD.—2 Chron., xxxii., 22, 23.

Two more of our readers have sent me a dollar each to spend for them, and another reader sent two dollars to give some sick ones an outing on Victoria Day. The latter reached me too late for that special day, but I will see that it is expended as the giver has requested. I have one sick girl in mind, who is anxious to get to friends in the country as soon as she is well enough to stand the journey; and the railway fare is almost beyond her means. Many thanks.

In our text we learn that when God saved His people from the Assyrians, and guided them on every side, they showed their gratitude by bringing Him gifts. These were thank-offerings, over and above their regular offerings to God. It seems to me that many of our readers are trying to show gratitude in practical fashion by bringing gifts to their needy brethren. When so many have honored me by making me their almoner there must be thousands more who come directly into touch with those they wish to help. God is guiding us all "on every side."

Another gift of very great value reached me this morning, and, as I have shared your gifts with so many, I want to return the kindness by sharing part of this gift with you.

Let me explain. More than six months ago, a dear friend in England wrote to say that she wanted to make me something really useful, and asked what it should be. I asked for a MS. book of selections suitable for reading to sick people, so that I might have the cream of many writers' thoughts, without the necessity of carrying bulky volumes in my bag when making sick visits.

The book arrived this morning, beautifully written and carefully indexed. I have only dipped into it yet,—but we are all eager to share our pleasures with those who will appreciate them, so I shall at once pass on to you some of the selections. So my friend's gift to God, of much thought, research, and long hours of writing, will swiftly go out to cheer thousands of people. Perhaps many of you will be inspired by the idea, and will write out your favorite selections and pass them on to those who are "shut-in" or heartsick. Yesterday I heard of a woman who has been a hopeless invalid for many years, and who takes old Christmas cards (hundreds of them are given to her) and pastes on them verses of good cheer, sending them to others who are shut-in.

When the Tabernacle of God was built all—both men and women, as many as were willing hearted—brought their offerings. All kinds of things were brought, for all kinds of things were needed. Not

only gold, silver, brass and jewels were offered, but wood, fine linen, cloth made of goats' hair, the skins of animals, spice, oil, etc. Those who were wise hearted brought their own handiwork. For instance, we are told: "All the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goats' hair. Others were filled with the spirit of God so that they were able to do cunning work—wood carving, embroidery, and many other useful and ornamental things."

We all have special talents, and we all have the opportunity—right in the spot where God has placed us—of consecrating our handiwork by offering it to God. The everyday duties—cooking, washing, weeding, milking, etc.—may be glorified by being brought as thank-offerings to the King.

Now for some of the selections from this treasure-trove which the postman dropped at the door a few hours ago.

Here is one which will encourage those who feel that their love of God is weak—love is alive and capable of infinite growth.

"There are degrees of faith and love: yet they may be real faith and love, even when the power of both is lessened, because the soul does not keep itself, or live in the full presence of God. Or, as through a closed window more light comes than heat, so in some hearts there may be more of knowledge than of love."—Dr. Pusey.

Here is encouragement for those who are bravely toiling in the dark—building for God, and therefore building far better than they know.

"We cannot kindle when we will
The fire which in the heart resides;
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery our soul abides.
In tasks in hours of insight will'd
Can be through hours of gloom
fulfill'd."



"A Puppy Loves You So."

"With aching hands and bleeding feet,
We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;
We bear the burden and the heat
Of the long day, and wish 'twere done.

Not till the hours of light return
All we have built do we discern."
—Matthew Arnold.

Here is a beautiful poem, which was added at the end of the book, at the request of a lovely servant of God, who is now standing in light unshadowed by earth's clouds—the Light of God's Face.

LUX IN TENEBRIS.

"A little maid of two,
A treasure sought one day,
Which in a darkened room
Was safely laid away.
When we set forth in quest,
She whispered as we went,
'Is it all dark in there?'
And when I gave assent
She turned to me and said—
This simple message mark—
'You hold my hand and then
It will not be so dark.'"

She slipped her hand in mine,
And bravely went ahead,
'It's not so velly dark!'—
Triumphantly she said.
To-day we trembling stand,
Before an unknown year,
And some perchance will ask,
'Is it all dark in there?'
There must be darkened rooms
Of sorrow, suffering, pain,
Through which we have to pass,
Ere we our treasure gain.
But we may see to-day
The Heavenly Father stand
Waiting for us to pray,
'Hold Thou, O Lord, my hand.'
Then, with our hand in His,
We too shall always mark,
That as we go with Him,
It's not so very dark."

—ANON.

Here is encouragement for those who long to bring some gift to God, yet feel as if they have nothing to give.

"May it not be a comfort to those of us who feel we have not the mental or spiritual power that others have, to notice that the living sacrifice mentioned in Rom. xii., 1, is our 'bodies.' Of course that includes the mental power, but does it not also include the loving, sympathising glance, the kind, encouraging word, the ready errand for another, the work of our hands, opportunities for all of which come oftener in the day than for the mental power we envy? May we be enabled to offer willingly that which we have?"

How often we hear people say longingly that they would like to do great things for God, but they are too poor or have little time to spare. Does God need gold or silver, or our time and work? He wants our willing hearts, as St. Paul says: "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to

What form is it that flies
And brings to me an unguessed Peace,—
Undreamed—unknown!
Lips pressed upon the racking pain?
With what unutterable gain
Of rest and cease,—
I go to face
The Hidden Grace
Of God—above."

The kiss of the Father wakes His loved
children to the work of the glad new
Day.
DORA FARNCOMB.

The Beaver Circle

Our Junior Beavers.

[For all pupils from First Book to Junior Third, inclusive.]

The Birthday Gift.

By Louise Taylor Davis.

Last week I had a birthday, and my father said to me,
"I'll give you anything you want. Now, son, what shall it be?
How would you like a phonograph?"
But I just answered "No."
I'd rather have a puppy, 'cause a puppy loves you so!

So then he laughed and said that he would try and get a pup,
And on my birthday morning, the minute I woke up,
The fattest little furry dog was sitting on my bed!
There's nothing in the world that I'd 'a rather had instead.

He follows me around all day and sleeps with me at night;
He loves to bark at me and growl, and then pretend to bite.
His little legs are wobbly, and he can't run fast, but oh!
I'm glad I've got that puppy, 'cause a puppy loves you so!

The Boy with a Queer Name.

Little "I WILL" was a very small boy with the sweetest face any one could wish to see, and under his white blouse, with its big sailor collar, beat the sweetest little heart that ever grew.

Of course "I WILL" had another name. His "really truly" name he would have told you was Louis, but those who knew him thought that "I WILL" suited him better.

"Dear," mother would say, "will you run upstairs and get my scissors? You will find them on the sewing machine."
"I will, I will," would sing out the pleasant little voice. And in a twinkling the scissors would be put in mother's hand.

Or father would say: "Louis, gather up your toys; it is almost supper time."

"I will," would come the smiling answer.

Dear little "I WILL!" He is a big boy now—big enough to study Latin and all sorts of other hard things—but the sunshine of his merry baby ways has never faded from his mother's heart.

Wouldn't it be pleasant if there were a little "I WILL" in every home?—Anna C. Hall, in Sunbeam.

Junior Beavers' Letter Box.

Hello Puck,—I am sending my first letter to your circle. I go to school nearly every day. We have eight horses and eighteen head of cattle. Our teacher's name is Mr. Fred Thomson. We have had him for two years, and think he's very nice. We have a concert every Friday night, and I intend to say a piece next Friday. I am very fond of drawing and reading; I would write you a story only I had better go and feed my chickens; and my letter is getting pretty long; I will close with a riddle:

Sixty (tea) cans upon a shelf, one fell off, how many were left? Ans.—Five.
When does Christmas and New Years come, on the same year? Ans.—Every year.

Watford, Ont.

JANE BAIRD.
(Age eight.)