

Meg's Easter.

BY MINNIE E. KENNEY.

(Continued.)

"You have one thing, dear child," answered Flossie's mother. "You can give Him your heart, and it will be the most acceptable offering you can make. That must be the first thing always. All other offerings and sacrifices are in vain unless we give Him our hearts; but surely it ought not to be a task to love One who has done so much for us."

"I never knew about Him before," answered Meg.

"Did you ever go to Sunday-school?" asked Flossie's mother.

"No; I never had any clothes that were good enough to go in," answered Meg, glancing down at her ragged dress. "What do they do at Sunday-school?" she asked. "Do they teach about Him there?"

"Yes," answered Flossie, eagerly; "and they sing beautiful hymns. Oh! it's so nice. I know you would like it, Meg. Oh! I have such a lovely idea, mamma," she exclaimed eagerly. "Won't you come into the other room, and let me tell you about it?"

Mamma smiled assent, and giving Meg a picture book to look at, she followed her little daughter into the next room.

"Well, darling, what is it?" she asked.

"Oh! mamma, can't I have her for an Easter offering?" exclaimed Flossie, fairly dancing up and down in her excitement.

Now I must tell you what Flossie meant by wanting to have Meg for an Easter offering. Every Lenten season, Flossie saved all the pennies that she had given her for spending money, and besides that she earned a great deal. Mamma gave her ten cents a week for going without butter, five cents every time she went without dessert, and paid her for going errands, running up and down stairs, and denying herself little treats.

In this way Flossie always managed to save quite a goodly sum for an Easter offering. Of course it was hard work sometimes; it was hard to go without butter all the time, and Flossie was so fond of sweet things, that it took all her strength of will to go without desserts; but every victory over herself made the next one easier, and it was a real pleasure to count the rapidly accumulating pile of pennies and silver pieces.

One year, with her offering, she had purchased a Bible, printed in raised letters, for a poor blind woman to read. Last Easter her offering had bought a rolling chair for a poor cripple, who had lost the use of his limbs. This year she had no special object in view, but she had just thought of a way to use up her little hoard.

"Mamma, don't you think I might take my money to get clothes for Meg to go to Sunday-school in? I have enough, haven't I?"

"I think I had better find out whether she would be able to keep them," answered her mother, kissing the earnest upturned face. "Perhaps her mother or father might take them away from her, and then it wouldn't be of any use to give them to her. I will ask her about it, and if she can keep them I think it would be a very nice way to spend your money."

Flossie was very much afraid that she could not get the clothes for Meg, and she was quite relieved when she heard her say in answer to her mother's questions that she had no mother or father, but lived with a woman who treated her quite kindly.

"Wouldn't you like to go to Sunday-school if you had clothes to wear?" asked Flossie.

"Indeed I would like to go," answered Meg, warmly. "Could I go in these clothes," she asked. "I can't earn much money, and I'm afraid I can't get any nicer ones."

She was surprised and delighted when Flossie told her what she meant to do. Her eyes grew bright with pleasure, and Flossie was equally happy.

"Couldn't we possibly fix her so she could go to-morrow?" asked Flossie, eagerly. "I know we wouldn't have time to get everything, but we could

get a hat, and shoes and stockings for her this afternoon, if we could only manage about a dress."

"I have a dress that I think I could fix over for her to wear to-morrow," answered Flossie's mamma, after a few moment's thought. "Yes, dear, I think we can get her ready to begin to-morrow," and she went to the wardrobe in search of the dress, while Meg looked on, too happy even to speak.

I don't think anyone would have recognized Meg a few hours later. The tangled mass of hair had been transformed into a neat plait, she was plainly but very neatly and comfortably dressed, and cleaner than she ever remembered having been in all her life before.

Flossie was radiant with delight over her "Easter offering," as she called her, and walked around her admiringly, noting every change which had been made in her.

"Now you will be sure to come to Sunday-school early to-morrow, won't you?" asked Flossie, as Meg was ready to go home. "I am in mamma's class, and I will meet you at the door and take you up with me. I know you will like it better in her class than in any one else's, because she explains everything so beautifully. Good-bye."

"Good-bye," answered Meg. "I will be there half an hour early. Thank you so much," she added gratefully, wishing that she knew a word big enough to express all the gratitude that was in her heart.

Meg went to her miserable home in a perfect dream of delight. This was the first time that any one had ever taken any interest in her, or done anything for her, and Flossie's kindness had made her very happy.

Her mother had died six years before, and a kind-hearted neighbor had let her come in and sleep with her own children, and whenever she had not been able to earn enough to eat, had shared her own scanty meals with her. She had six children of her own, and very often she wished that Meg had some other home, and she did not mind letting her know how much she was in the way on such occasions; but she never was actually unkind to her except in words, so poor Meg, not knowing where else to go, still remained with her. She did not know whether the woman would be pleased at her good fortune, or envious because it had not happened to her own daughter, and she hesitated a little before she entered the house.

"Look at Meg!" cried one of the younger children as she entered the room.

His mother looked up from the wash-tub, and stared at Meg in astonishment.

"Well, whatever has come to you? she exclaimed. "Why, you look like a lady."

Meg told her the occurrences of the afternoon, and of the kindness of her new friends.

"The lady told me such a beautiful story," she went on. "Let me tell you about it," and the children gathered about her, and the mother stopped her washing, while she repeated all that she remembered as well as she could.

"I used to hear all about that when I was young and went to Sunday-school; but it's so long ago that I've clean forgot it all," said the mother, resuming her work again.

"It's a good place to go to, and I'm glad you've got clothes to go in, Meg," as she rubbed vigorously away, "Maybe you can lend the clothes to Susie, now and again, and she can go too."

Easter morning dawned clear and bright, and Meg could scarcely wait till Sunday-school time, she was so anxious to see her little friend again, and hear more about that wonderful story.

She dressed herself neatly, arranged her hair as nicely as she could, by the aid of a broken bit of looking-glass, and washed her face and hands carefully.

More than half an hour before the appointed time she was at the church door watching eagerly for her little friend.

At last she saw her coming, and ran forward to meet her, her face bright with pleasure.

(To be Continued.)

desirable. The cool way in which "Churchman" of Halifax, assumes that *most* life is in St. George's and in St. Luke's is almost refreshing. But, Mr. Editor, "it's all in the way you look at it." If multiplied services with few attendants, Guilds and Societies which when minutely examined are not *quite* what their originators puff them up to be, and if life means no end of printer's ink, advertisement, and coming forward on all occasions, then certain churches may rightly claim *life*. I contend that there is more "puff" than "life" in all this. That many of these things are bubbles of the first water, and that the "central church" shews more real church life than some of those which resort to noisier and more observant methods. "Churchman" speaks of the serious diminution of attendance in the "central church" where the pulpit power is acknowledged to be pre-eminent. Mr. Editor, the attendance at the morning service (when the orator preaches) more than twice outnumbers the attendance at either of the other churches named, or is more than both put together. Weaker pulpit effort, to some extent, depleted the attendance at the evening service; but this is only a point in favour of Grumblers' contention, for when a good preacher was once more put into the pulpit the congregation at once ran up fifty per cent. Another point noted by "Churchman" is that the revenue of said parish was affected. It is true, I believe, that the revenue is a little lower this year; but it changes the aspect of things when we note that said church pays its rector as much as the combined salaries of the other two rectors, and its revenue amounts to twice as much as the combined revenues of the other two parishes. A stronger case is this; that St. Mark's is left out of the category of "live" parishes. A few years ago St. Mark's was attached to St. George's and was then always struggling to make both ends meet. The healthiness which comes from separation and independence soon filled the Church, and now the rector of St. Mark's gets as much salary as the rector of the present parish receives; all the pews in the church are taken; and when a new organ was wanted the full amount for the same was obtained in less than six weeks. These instances I note simply to shew that churches that are not afflicted with a plethora of guilds, services, etc., and are carrying on their work in a quiet unobtrusive way are in a pretty live condition. I hope that your Nova Scotian correspondent will endeavour to give us the *real* and not *ex parte* statements of what each church is really doing. I heartily concur in the opinion, and such opinion is very general, that some of our men, especially those in large cities, should show more signs of power in the pulpit even at the expense of losing some of their pet machinery and printer's ink. HALIGONIAN.

FAMILY DEPARTMENT.

FLOWER PIECES.

I think in that far time when Gabriel came
And held short speech with Mary in sweet wise—
That when the faint fear faded from her eyes,
And they were lighted with a sudden flame
Of joy bewildering and wonderment—
With reverence the Angel in her palm
Laid one white lily, dewy with the balm
Of the Lord's garden, saying: "This is sent
For thine espousal—thou the undefiled,
And it shall bloom till all be consummate."
Lo then he passed—she prayed where she sat
Felt her life moved in manner wondrous mild;
Then laying 'gainst her bosom the white flower
She bowed her head and said, "It is God's dower."
Bring lilies to God's altar, it is meet—
I think when in Christ all things were complete.
And He had passed from out the sepulcher,
The angels who held watch where He had lain
And gave such loving greeting to those twain,
Who came while it was early yet—said unto her
Who after should see first her risen Lord:
"Into thy hand we give this blessed flower
In earnest of the new life born this hour
In thy poor earth. Thy prayers in heaven are heard."
Bring lilies to God's altar, it is meet!
God's angel sayeth, "It is Eastertide."
Thou too mayst find rest in His wounded side;
Thou too, as she, mayst rise to kiss His feet.
HORATIO GILBERT PARKER.