

"Oh, I don't know, I never thought much about it. I never opened a Bible in my life. It was a matter of pride with my father to never have a Bible in the house. How did this one come here? Oh! it is yours—your pocket-Bible. It is strange you should have surprised me into listening to a chapter, and that I should have been so charmed, and not know to what I was listening."

"You have certainly heard the Bible read in church?" asked the nurse in surprise.

"Not I; I have never been to church. We have always made Sunday a holiday. Papa got into that way in Paris. We have been to all popular places of amusement, of course but not to church. I have never thought about the Bible. I did not suppose it had literary merit. I had no idea it was written in the simple, beautiful style of the portion you have just read. I wish I had known it before."

A few hours later her disease took a fatal turn. The physician came and told her that her time on earth was very short. She would never see another sunrise.

"It cannot be possible," she said; "I never supposed it possible for death to come to me. What was the prayer you read, nurse? 'Our Father who art in heaven. Say it with me, husband,' and he did so.

"I wish I had known it before," she said, over and over, until she fell into a sleep from which she never woke, and the wail of regret was the last word upon her dying lips.

The nurse said it was the saddest experience of her career, to see that beautiful, gifted young woman, with kind friends, a loving husband and a beautiful home, who had all her life taken pride in ignoring the Bible and the Christian Sabbath, turn, when death came, from everything she had prized to the little despised book, and die with the cry upon her lips, "I wish I had known it before."—*Christian Observer*.

#### The Unprofitable Servant.

In a napkin smooth and white,  
Hidden from all mortal sight,  
My one talent lies to-night.

Mine to hoard, or mine to use,  
Mine to keep or mine to lose,  
May I not do what I chose?

And the gift was only lent,  
With the Giver's known intent  
That it should be wisely spent.

And I know He will demand  
Every farthing at my hand,  
When I in His presence stand.

What will be my grief and shame  
When I hear my humble name,  
And can not repay His claim!

One poor talent—nothing more!  
All the years that have gone o'er  
Have not added to the store.

Some will double what they hold,  
Others add to it ten-fold  
And pay back the shining gold.

Would that I had toiled like them!  
All my sloth I now condemn;  
Guilty fears my soul o'erwhelm.

Lord, O teach me what to do,  
Make me faithful, make me true,  
And the sacred trust renew!

Help me, ere too late it be,  
Something yet to do for Thee—  
Thou who hast done all for me.

—Kate B. W. Barnes.

#### The Time to be Pleasant.

"MOTHER'S cross!" said Maggie, coming out into the kitchen with a pout on her lips.

Her aunt was busy ironing, but she looked up and answered Maggie: "Then it is the very time for you to be pleasant and helpful. Mother was awake a good deal in the night with the baby."

Maggie made no reply. She put on her hat, and walked off into the garden. But a new idea went with her.

"It is very time to be helpful and pleasant, is when other people are cross. Sure enough," thought she, "that would be the time when it would do the most good. I remember when I was ill last year, I was so nervous that if any one spoke to me I could hardly help being cross; and mother never got angry or out of patience, but was just so gentle with me! I ought to pay it back now, and I will."

And she sprang up from the grass, where she had thrown herself, and turned a face full of cheerful resolution towards the room where her mother sat soothing and tending a fretful, teething young baby.

Maggie brought the pretty ivory balls, and began to jingle them for the little one.

He stopped fretting, and a smile dimpled the corners of his lips.

"Couldn't I take him out to ride in his carriage, mother; it's such a nice morning?" she asked.

"I should be glad if you would," said her mother.

The little hat and cloak were brought, and the baby was soon ready for his ride.

"I'll keep him as long as he is good," said Maggie; "and you must lie on the sofa and get a nap while I am gone. You are looking very tired!"

The kind words and the kiss which accompanied them were almost too much for the mother. The tears rose to her eyes, and her voice trembled as she answered: "Thank you, dearie; it will do me a world of good if you can keep him out an hour, and the air will do him good too. My head aches badly this morning."

How happy Maggie was as she trundled the little carriage up and down on the walk! She had done real good.

She had given back a little of the help and patience that had so often been bestowed upon her. She had made her mother happier, and given her time to rest.

Maggie resolved to remember and act on her aunt's good words: "The very time to be helpful and pleasant is when everybody is tired and cross."

**CHILDREN** commence life, not indeed as sheets of blank paper on which we may write at will, but with every variety of temper and inclination for good and for evil bequeathed to them by those who gave them birth. The education which fails to recognize this is radically defective. The external forces employed to train a child are successful only as they are adapted to draw out, to guide or to restrain the internal impulses. Unless we discover what these impulses are, and are likely to become, unless we take pains to acquaint ourselves with their origin, their nature and their probable results, we are not fit to take part in the guidance of a youthful mind. Most of the failures of parents and educators proceed from ignorance of these facts.

#### Dorcas.

If I might guess, then guess I would:  
Amid the gathering folk,  
This gentle Dorcas one day stood,  
And heard what Jesus spoke.

She saw the woven, seamless coat,  
How envious for His sake;  
"O happy hands," she said, "that wrought  
That honoured thing to make!"

Her eyes with longing tears grew dim,  
She never can come nigh  
To work one service poor for Him  
For whom she glad would die!

But hark! He speaks a mighty word:  
She hearkens now indeed!  
"When did we see Thee naked, Lord,  
And clothed Thee in Thy need?"

"The King shall answer, inasmuch  
As to my brothers ye  
Did it, even to the least of such,  
Ye did it unto Me."

Home, home, she went, and plied the loom  
And Jesus' poor arrayed.  
She died: they wept about the room,  
And showed the coats she made.

—George McDonald.

#### Helping the Wicked One.

WALKING by the way-side home from church, along the smooth, broad pavement of the city, the whole family moves along together, the mother feeling very complacent in her handsome silk and new bonnet, and the father stepping quite proudly beside his pretty wife.

The young people have all been dutifully drilled to go to church with their parents, unless they have some good excuse for staying at home. So they are all here except the eldest daughter, whose new dress was not quite finished, though the sewing girl worked hard on it until late Saturday evening. Little five-year-old Emma holds her father's hand; George, next older, walks beside his mother; while two bright intelligent misses of ten and twelve follow in their parents' footsteps. Lily, the elder, looks serious and quiet. Some good seed, perchance, has found a tender, moist spot in her young heart, and may take root and bring forth fruit to the glory of God.

Alas! the mother's voice breaks heedlessly upon the sober thoughts of the child:

"Don't you think Mr.—is failing very much? He does not preach near so well as he did at first—do you think he does? There was not a thing in the sermon to-day. I could not keep myself awake all I could do, and you did not try; you were fast asleep before he was half through."

Both laughed as if it was a very amusing thing to throw contempt on a man's faithful, earnest labour.

"It certainly was a poor sermon; but he may not have been feeling very well, I believe he was sick the other day," remarked the father.

"But I don't think a minister has any business to preach unless he can do it well, so that his congregation will enjoy hearing him. Don't you agree with me, Mrs. —?" she added, as an acquaintance stepped up beside her.

"Indeed I do," replied her friend; "I wish we could find some one who would give us good sermons all the time."

"And yet," mused Lily, "he said he had a message from the King of kings, and I thought it was meant for me."

"But I believe, after all," continued the mother, "I would rather listen to our own minister than to that little fellow he had preaching for him last Sunday; his gestures were as awkward

as a school-boy's, and his whining voice made me so nervous I couldn't sit still."

"And he," thought Lily, "told us he was an ambassador for Christ."

"I couldn't sit still either," said little Emma.

"No, you never do," replied the mother, carelessly.

"I liked the young preacher best," spoke up Master George, "because, he did not preach so long."

"Well," questioned Lily in her heart, "if father and mother, who are Christians, see no good in the sermons, why need I disturb myself? Surely, if they believed what the preacher said, they would talk to me about it sometimes. I reckon it will be time enough for me to think about being a Christian when I am grown."

Ah! whether had the good seed gone? Had not the parents, her own father and mother, played the part of the evil one in taking away the word out of her heart, lest she should believe and be saved? And who can calculate the number of souls that have been lost, turned out of the way, by just such thoughtless criticisms on the way home from church, or even at any time?—*S. S. Times*.

#### Smiles.

"I SAY, Pat, what are you about—sweeping out that room?" "No," answered Pat, "I'm sweeping the dirt and leaving the room."

AN IRISH magistrate asked a prisoner if he was married. "No," replied the man. "Then," replied his worship amid peals of laughter, "it is a good thing for your wife."

A YOUNG lady wrote some verses for a country paper about her birthday, and headed them "May 30th." It almost made her hair turn gray when it appeared in print, "My 30th."

THERE is a beautiful precept which he who has received an injury, or who thinks that he has, would for his own sake do well to follow: "Excuse half, and forgive the rest."

BUT we have all a chance of meeting with some pity, some tenderness some charity, when we are dead; it is the living only who cannot be forgiven.—George Eliot.

POLITENESS comes from within, from the heart; but if the forms of politeness are dispensed with, the spirit and the thing itself soon die away.—Dr. John Hall.

A FATHER may save a few dollars by refusing to make the home inviting for his children; but he may spend ten times that—yes, a hundred times—in getting them out of troubles which they have brought on by roaming in the streets.—*National Baptist*.

A CHAP stopping at one of the hotels sat down to dinner. Upon the bill of fare being handed to him by the waiter, he remarked that he "didn't care bout readin' now—he'd wait till after dinner."

CARPETS are bought by the yard and worn by the foot.

PROFESSOR: What can yous vrin regard to the articulation of the b'ses?" Student (doubtfully): "I don't think they articulate very much."

"Now, then, Patrick," said the merchant to his new office boy, "suppose you go for the mail?" "Yis, sor; an' what kind of male wud ye be wantin'? Indian male or oat male?"