

Family Department.

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE.

BY M. A. THOMSON.

Hail! Thou Messenger Divine
Of the covenant of grace:
Light, o'er Gentile lands to shine,
Glory of the chosen race.

Suddenly, in days of old,
By the faithful gathered round,
As by Malachi foretold,
Thou wert in Thy Temple found.

Mildly there Thy glory beamed.
Few the promised Shiloh knew.
As a Babe to be redeemed
Thou didst meet Thy people's view.

In Thy courts we find Thee now,
Bringing blessings from above:
Priest and Pure Oblation, Thou,
In Thy sacrament of love.

Faith prevails where right hath failed,
And, beneath the outward sign,
Sees and hails Thy Presence veiled,
Child of Mary, King Divine!

Blessed was the Mother Maid!
Blessed all the pure in heart!
Thou wert on her bosom laid,
They with her shall have their part.

Son of Mary, make us pure
Like to her who gave Thee birth:
Like to Thee, whose promise sure
Is to all the pure on earth.

Philadelphia, 1892. (Living Church.)

Little Trouble-the-House.

BY L. T. MEADE.

CHAPTER VII.—WHAT A GOOSE SHE IS NOT TO KEEP A PET OR TWO.

(Continued.)

"I declare there's nothing here, after all," said Miles, "what a goose she is not to keep a pet or two; why she might have a rabbit hutch here in this corner, and cages full of birds hanging in the windows; wouldn't it be fun for her? But I say, Polly, look at that chair with little wheels to the legs—just the thing for a ride, isn't it? Jump in, and I'll race you up and down the room."

This proved excellent sport, and with loud laughter they dragged the large chair about, Miles in it one moment, Polly the next.

In their journeying they pulled the hearth-rug crooked, and threw down a small writing-table; and what with the open drawers, the linen tossed on the floor, and the ink from the upturned inkstand staining the carpet, the neat room was being reduced to a state of hopeless chaos. But further and worse mischief was to follow.

Miles, whose restless eyes were moving everywhere, stopped short.

"What's that?" he said.

In a sheltered corner, close to Miss Cecil's bed, hung a roughly executed pen-and-ink sketch—a sketch of a boy's head, a boy of about Miles' age.

The sketch was framed in a very poor wooden frame, and covered with glass with a flaw in it.

What with the badly executed drawing, the ugly frame, and wretched glass, the picture was anything but a pretty one, but not all the artist's want of skill could prevent the brave, sweet mouth from smiling at you, or take away from the dark eyes their fearless glance.

Round the picture, encasing it as in an outer frame, was hung up an old-fashioned and much discolored hoop.

It was on this hoop now that Miles fixed his wondering gaze.

"I say, Polly," he exclaimed, "I've found out now what it is—she plays hoop here. What a rum old hoop! See! Polly, fetch me a chair, and I'll get it down."

Polly did so, and after considerable difficulty, for the hoop was very firmly fastened to the wall, Miles got it into his hands.

Yes, it was a very old hoop indeed, a hoop made after an uncouth and unwieldy fashion. On one side of it, carved out in rough boyish characters, were five letters—the letters in large capitals were put one under the other so—

R
A
N
K.

Together they spelt "Frank."

"Well!" said Miles, "this is the rummest lark, fancy her bowling this old thing! I say Polly, she's sure to be as mad as possible when she sees that ink on the floor, so as we're in for it, we may as well have a bit of fun. I'll tell you what we'll do, we'll take the old hoop and howl it down the avenue to meet her. Won't she be in a way to find we have got hold of her plaything? Why, she is a baby!"

Without pausing to consider (indeed they were past that) the children set out. For a time they played quietly, and the poor old hoop did its work as well as so ungainly an article could be expected to; but it was very old, very dry, and very brittle, and after a time they began to quarrel over it. Both wished to have it, and neither would yield to the other's claim. In their angry disputes, the hoop being violently held and knocked about, came in two in their hands.

It was just then Miss Cecil came up.

"You naughty children!" she began, and then stopped short.

She was a slow person by nature, a person by no means quick to take in her surroundings, but this scene touched some part of her not often moved. She suddenly became so still that the children expecting a torrent of angry words, looked up in alarm. She neither returned their gaze, nor did she at once speak. Two tears gathered heavily in her dim, blue eyes, but they did not fall. She took the broken piece from Miles, and the broken piece from Polly, and tried to join them together with her trembling hands. Then, before she walked away to the house, she said,

"You don't quite know what you have done to me."

CHAPTER VIII.—I'M SO GLAD 'TIS A LEAKY BOAT.

"I am sorry," said Polly, when the governess was quite out of sight.

Miles did not speak. With all the strength of his nature he was wishing he had left that old hoop alone. Why had Miss Cecil's eyes filled with tears? and most of all, why had she not scolded him?

If she had scolded him he would have resented it, and felt quite comfortable, but she only said, "You don't quite know what you have done to me."

What had he and Polly done?

They had disobeyed her, of course, but that was nothing; they always disobeyed her now.

What else had they done? Not much surely—only untied her room, spilt a little ink on the floor, and broken the very clumsiest old hoop they had ever seen.

She must be a cross old thing to mind that much.

And yet Miles had enough of justice in his nature to acquit Miss Cecil of this latter charge.

Whatever she looked she did not look cross; she took away the broken pieces of the old hoop so quietly, and spoke in such a gentle tone; she certainly was not cross then.

Miles gave a great sigh, the miserable undercurrent was coming to the surface and choking him.

He hated himself for his conduct of the last three weeks; he hated himself for bringing the look he had just seen into anybody's face.

And yet he had no idea of confessing himself beaten, or of turning back now—perhaps he did not know how to turn back.

"Well! we had not much of a lark," he said turning to Polly, "the old thing was put out about the hoop. But if she is found of bowling, she may have my new hoop, she will like to spin that along."

"Shall I run and speak to her about it?" asked Polly.

"No, no; don't let us bother her now. She did not tell us to come in, so we won't come—you and me, we'll stay out for a good hour or two—and, Polly, I know what we'll do—we'll go down to the lake and unfasten the old boat, and get into her, and float about a bit. Oh! hurrah!" and at the thought this fresh fun Miles forgot the broken hoop: Miss Cecil's face.

"But, Miles," said Polly, who could never have even dreamed or so daring a scheme, "ain't you 'fraid?"

"Not I," said Miles; "what is there to fear? I tell you, Polly, this will be sport, and what's more there's no harm in it, for I was never forbid to get into the boat."

Where was Miles' conscience—that voice within his breast which told him plainly what was right and what was wrong?

He knew very well that he would not have dared to confide to his father, his governess, or his nurse, his present scheme. He had never been forbidden to get into the old boat, for the simple reason that no one had supposed him capable of performing such an exploit.

When he said these words to Polly, his conscience for a moment spoke out loud and clear; but it said such unpleasant things, that Miles would not listen to it, and forced it to be silent.

Soon he and his easily influenced little sister were hurrying with all speed to the lake.

"Yes, there she is!" said Miles, apostrophising the boat. "I was 'fraid she might be hauled up. There she is floating as neat and trim as possible. Ain't she pretty? Polly, when I'm a man I mean to be a sailor."

"Oh! I wish I was to grow up a man, or that there were girl sailors," said Polly.

"Never you mind that; I'll have a big ship all to myself, and I'll take you aboard. Now, let's see; how will we manage? We'll get into the boat first, and then I'll cut away the rope with my pocket knife. No, there are no oars. Well, never mind, we'll float; there's a nice little bit of a breeze."

The old boat, a very crazy affair indeed, was fastened by a rope to a large stone, and Miles, catching hold of the rope, managed to pull the boat to the water's edge, then jumping in himself, he contrived, with a good deal of screaming on her part, to get Polly in after him.

Their first discovery was not a pleasing one. The bottom of the boat was full of water; there were also no seats whatever for them to sit on; they must either stand or lie, in the bottom of the boat.

"I'll get out," said Polly, who did not like her position at all; but this Miles would not hear of. No, they would float across to the island in the middle of the lake, and land there, and play as Robinson Crusoe.

As to the boat having water in it, all boats had; and it was quite the proper thing for people about to be cast away on a desert island to have not seats to sit on; finally, to cut matters