

*GOD BLESS MY BOY.*

When twinkling stars their vigils keep,  
And all the world is hushed in sleep,  
'Tis then I breathe the prayer so deep—  
God bless my boy to-night.

I know not where his head may lie,  
Perchance beneath the open sky  
But this I ween, God's watchful eye  
Can see my boy to-night.

Oh, sweetly comforting the thought,  
That each one's life is surely wrought  
In God's own plan; thus I am taught  
He'll bless my boy to-night

As pass the busy months and years,  
With all their changes, hopes and fears,  
God make each step of duty clear,  
And keep his "honor bright."

Then when the last day's work is o'er,  
And earthly duties are no more,  
May angels guide him to the shore  
Where there shall be no night.

—Exchange.

**Our Story.**

*"NO TRAMPS."*

"No tramps here," said I; and I shut the door in his face. The wind blew so strong I could hardly do it, and the sleet was beating on the panes, and the bare trees were groaning and moaning as if they suffered in the storm. "No tramps here; I'm a lone woman and I'm afraid of em."

Then the man I hadn't seen yet, for the dark, went away from the door. Champ, champ, champ, came the man back again, and knocked on the door—knocked not half so loud as he did before and I opened it, hot and angry. This time I saw his face—pale ghost of a face with yellow brown hair, cropped close, with great staring blue eyes, and he put his hands against the door and held it open.

"How near is the next house, ma'am?" he asked.

"Three miles or more," said I.

"No," said I; "no drinks to be got there; it's Miss Mitten's, and she's as set agin tramps as I am."

"I do not want drink," said the man, "though I do want food. You needn't be afraid to let me in, ma'am. I have been wounded, and am not able to walk far, and my clothes are thin, and its bitter cold. I've been trying to get to my parents at Greenbank; where I can rest till I'm better; and all my money was stolen from three days ago. You needn't be afraid; let me lie just before your fire, and only give me a crust, the staled crust, to keep me from starving, and the Lord will bless you for it."

And then he looked at me with his mild blue eyes in a way that would have made me do it if it hadn't been I'd seen so much of these imposters. The war was just over, and every beggar that came along said he was a soldier traveling home, and had been wounded and robbed. One that I had been fool enough to help limped away out of sight, as he thought, and then—for I was at the garret window—shouldered his crutches and tramped with the strongest.

"No doubt your pocket is full of money," said I, "and you only want a chance to rob and murder me. Go away with you."

Drusilla, that's my niece, was baking cakes in the kitchen. Just then she came to the door, and motioned with her mouth to me, "Do let him stay, auntie;" and if I hadn't had good sense, I might, but I knew better than a chuck of sixteen.

"Go away with you!" said I, louder than before. "I won't have this any longer."

And he gave a kind of groan, and took his hand from the latch, and went champ, champ, through the frozen snow again; and I thought him gone, when there was once more, hardly a knock at all—a faint touch like a child's now.

And when I opened the door again, he came quite in, and stood leaning on his cane, pale as a ghost, his eyes bigger than ever.

"Well, of all the impudence!" said I.

He looked at me, and said, "Madam, I have a mother at Greenbank. I want to live to see her. I shall not if I try to go any further to-night."

"They all want to see their mothers," and just then it came into my mind that I hoped my son Charlie, who had been a real soldier, an officer he had come to be, mind you, wanted to see his, and would soon.

"I have been wounded, as you see," said he.

"Don't go a showing me your hurts," said I; "they buy 'em, so they told me, to go a begging with now. I read the papers, I tell ye, and I'm principled, and so is our clergyman, agin giving anything unless it's through some well organized society. Tramps are my abomination. And as to keeping you all night, you can't expect that of decent folks go."

Drusilla came to the door, and said, "Let him stay, auntie," with her lips agin, but I took no notice.

So he went, and this time he didn't come back; I sat down by the fire and smelt the baking cakes and the apple stewing, and the tea drawing on the kitchen stove, and I ought to have been very comfortable, but I wasn't. Something kept tugging at my heart all the time.

I gave the fire a poke, and lit another candle to cheer myself up, and I went to my work basket to get a sock that I had been darning for Charlie, and as I went to get it I saw something lying on the floor. I picked it up. It was an old tobacco pouch, ever so much like the one I gave Charlie, with fringe around it, and written on it in ink, "From C. F. to R. H.," and inside was a bit of tobacco and a letter, a rumpled old letter, and when I spread it out I saw on the top, "My dear son."

I knew the beggar must have dropped it, and my heart gave one big thump, as though it had been turned into a hammer.

Perhaps the story was true, and he had a mother. I shivered all over, and the fire and candles and the nice comfortable smells might as well not have been at all. I was cold and wretched.

And over and over again had I to say to myself what I heard our pastor say often: "Never give anything to chance beggars, my dear friends; always bestow your alms on worthy persons, through well organized societies," before I could get a bit of comfort. And what an old fool I was to cry, I thought, when I found my cheeks wet.

But I did not cry long, for as I sat there dash, and crash, and jingle came a sleigh, over the road, and it stopped at our gate, and I heard my Charlie's voice crying, "Halloo, mother!" And out I went to the door, and had him in my arms—my great, tall, handsome brown son. And there he was in his uniform, with pretty shoulder-straps, and as hearty as if he had never been through any hardships. He had to leave me to put the horse up, and then I had by the fire my own son.

Drusilla, who had been up-stairs, and had been crying—why, I wonder?—came down all in a flutter—for they were like brother and sister—and he kissed her and she kissed him, and then away she went to set the table, and the nice hot things smoked on a cloth as white as snow, and how Charlie enjoyed them! But once in the midst of all, I felt a frightened feeling come over me, and I knew I turned pale, for Drusilla said, "What is the matter, Aunt Fairfax?"

I said nothing, but it was this. Kind o' champ, over the frozen snow, kind o' like the ghost of a voice saying, "Let me lie on the floor before your fire, and give any kind of a crust;" a kind o' like some

one that had a mother down on the frozen road, and freezing and starving to death there. That is what it was. But I put it away, and only thought of Charlie.

We drew up together by the fire when the tea was done, and he told us things about the war I had never heard before—how the soldiers suffered, and what weary marches and short rations they sometimes had. And then he told me how his life had been in danger; how he had been set upon by the foe and badly wounded, and how, at the risk of his own life, a fellow soldier had saved him, fighting his way back to camp.

"I'd never seen you but for him," said my Charlie. "And if there's a man on earth I love, it's Rob Hardway—the dearest, best fellow. We've shared each other's rations, and drank from the same canteen many and many a time, and if I had a brother, I couldn't think more of him."

"Why didn't you bring him home to see your mother, Charlie?" said I. "Why, I'd love him too, and anything I could do for him, for the man who saved my boy's life, could not be enough. Send for him, Charlie."

But Charlie shook his head and covered his face with his hands.

"Mother," he said, "I don't know whether Rob Hardway is alive or dead to-day. While I was still in the ranks he was taken prisoner; and military prisons are poor places to live in, mother. I'd give my right hand to be able to do him any good! but I can find no trace of him. And he has a mother, too, and she is so fond of him. She lives at Greenbank—poor old lady. My dear, good, noble Rob, the preserver of my life."

And I saw Charlie was nearly crying. Not to let us see the tears he got up and went to the mantel-piece. I did not look around until I heard a cry.

"Great heavens! what is it?"

And I turned, and Charlie had the tobacco pouch the beggar had dropped, in his hand.

"Where did this come from?" he said. "I feel as though I had seen a ghost. I gave this to Rob Hardway the day he saved me. We soldiers had not much to give, you know, and he vowed never to part with it while he lived. How did it come here, mother?"

And I fell back in my chair white and cold, and said:

"A wandering tramp left it here. Never your Rob, my dear, never your Rob. He must have been an imposter. I wouldn't have turned away a person really in want. Oh, no, no, it's another pouch, child, or he stole it. A tall fellow with blue eyes and yellow brown hair; wounded, he said, and going to his mother at Greenbank. Not your Rob."

And Charlie stood staring at me with clenched hands, and he said:

"It was my dear old Rob, wounded and starving! my dear old Rob who saved my life, and you have driven him out in such a night as this, mother. My mother to use Rob so!"

"Condemn me, Charlie," said I, "condemn me if you like; I am afraid God will. Three times he came back; three time he asked only for a crust and a place to lie, and I drove him away—I—I, and he lying in the road now. Oh, if I had known! Oh, if I had known!"

And Charlie caught up his hat.

"I'll find him if he's alive," said he. "Oh, Rob, my dear friend!"

And then I never saw the girl in such taking. Down went Drusilla on her knees, as if she was saying her prayers, and says she:

"Thank God I dared to do it!" And says she again to me:

"Oh! aunt, I have been trembling with fright, not knowing what you'd say to me. I took him in the kitchen way. I couldn't see him go faint and hungry, and wounded, and I put him in the spare

chamber over the parlor, and I have been so frightened all the while."

"The Lord bless you, Drusilla," said Charlie.

"Amen!" said I.

And she, getting bolder, went on: "And I took some hot short cakes and apple sass and tea," says she, "and I took him a candle, and a hot brick for his feet, and I told him to eat, and go to bed in the best chamber, Aunt Fairfax, with the white counterpane and all, and I locked him in, and put the key in my pocket, and I told him he should have one night's rest, and no one should turn him out unless they walked over my dead body."

Drusilla said it like an actress in a tragedy, and went off into hysterics the moment the words were out of her mouth. She'd been expecting to be half murdered, you know—and the girl was sixteen—but always minded me before as if I was her mother.

Never was there any old sinner so happy as I was that night, so thankful to the good Lord; and it would have done your heart good if you had gone to see the two meet in the morning—Charlie and his friend Rob. And Charlie, who had got so well and had a mother who was not poor either, helped Rob into business. And he got well over his wounds at last, and got as handsome as a picture, and to-day week he is going to marry Drusilla.

"I'd give anything I have," said I. "And I wouldn't refuse you even Drusilla," when he asked me, telling me that he loved her ever since she was so kind to him on the night I've told you of.

And Charlie is to stand up with him, and I am to give Drusilla away, and Rob's sister from Greenbank is to be bridesmaid, and I have a guess that some day Charlie will bring her home to me in Drusilla's place.

I don't drive beggars from the door now as I used, and no doubt I'm often imposed upon; but this is what I say: "Better be imposed upon always than be cruel to one who really needs help." And I've read my Bible better of late, and I know who says; "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto me." - *S&L*

*THE CREED OF THE "CHRISTIANS,"*

the sect to which General Garfield belongs, is just now the subject of considerable inquiry. It numbers about half a million communicants in the United States and one of its pastors thus defines the creed and practice of the Church:

1. We call ourselves Christians or Disciples. The term "Campbellite" is a nickname that others have applied to us, as the early Methodists were called "Ranters."
2. We believe in God the Father.
3. We believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and our only Saviour. We regard the divinity of Christ as the fundamental truth in the Christian system.
4. We believe in the Holy Spirit, both as to its agency in conversion and as an indweller in the heart of the Christian.
5. We accept both the Old and the New Testament Scriptures as the inspired word of God.
6. We believe in the future punishment of the wicked and the future reward of the righteous.
7. We believe that the Deity is a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God.
8. We observe the institution of the Lord's supper on every Lord's day. To this table it is our practice neither to invite nor debar. We say it is the Lord's supper for all the Lord's children.
9. We plead for the union of all God's people on the Bible and the Bible alone.
10. The Bible is our only creed. We maintain that all the ordinances of the Gospel should be observed as they were in the days of the Apostles.