

How the Comforter Came.

(Continued from Page 7.)

'My baby is very ill. He has always been so bright and strong that I am sure this cannot be anything really serious. Besides, he is all that I have, and God will not take him from me.'

'The doctor looks grave, and mother turns away her eyes every time they meet mine. I will not ask them what they think. I dare not.'

'Baby is unconscious. Mother tried to tell me this morning that the doctor has no hope. Where is God? Doesn't He care? Isn't He very hard toward me to take my one dear little child? O God, please don't take my baby! Don't don't!'

'I have lain all night in an agony of darkness and pain. It seems to me as if there is a hand with great iron fingers clutching at my heart—a savage, cruel hand. I crept in to see little Leonard, and he was delirious, and tried to "pat-a-cake, baker's man," and to say, "Mam-mam-mam." Oh, if I might go with him! Aunt Ellen sat there with mother. She has lost three babies, and she understands. "Katherine," she said, "God is Love." It sounded to me like rain on the roof, so far from my heart.'

'"God is Love." It isn't Aunt Ellen's voice now. I have heard it over and over all this terrible day. I read once somewhere that the will of God is the most beautiful thing in the universe. I don't want to rebel against Love. I will try to say, "Thy will be done."'

'I've said it and said it, and the agony is just as awful. I think Jesus Christ must be sorry for me. I'll get my New Testament and read how He wept when Lazarus died. . . . Somehow it reads to me as if He did not weep so much for their grief (why should He when He knew that they would soon have their brother again?) as for the lack of faith there. Lord, help my unbelief!'

'Job's word comes to me with new meaning: "The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." The Spirit says to me, "Isn't God just as good to you in the taking as He was in the giving?" I must believe that He is. "When your baby came to you," goes on the inner voice, "you blessed God. Why not do the same now? Can you not say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord?" I am almost shocked at the suggestion. Must I praise God for taking my boy?'

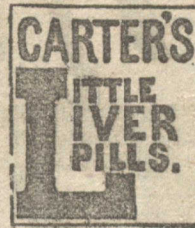
'Again the still small voice: "Is God dealing with you in love?" "Yes." "Is His will altogether best both for you and your baby?" "Yes," my mind assents, but not my aching heart. "Can you not praise Him then? Is not the love of God infinitely stronger than even mother-love?"'

'It seems to me that the Spirit has set before me an almost impossible task. I am not willing to mourn. I cling to the spirit of heaviness. Again that gentle pleading, "Daughter, will you say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord?" Lord, there is no strength in me; but I am willing to feel just as Thou wouldst have me. I know that Thou art Love. Yes, I will say it even though my heart is torn asunder: "Blessed be the name of the Lord!"'

'A beam of light has crept into the darkness, a strain of heavenly music, a breath of irrefragable peace. The light increases, the music comes nearer and grows sweeter, the peace flows in like a river. I begin to understand. The Comforter is a Person just as really as Jesus Christ is a Person. He was standing just outside a barred door—the door of praise. Thank God, I have unfastened that door, and He whom the Father sent in the name of Jesus has come in! Oh, I can say it now! Blessed, thrice blessed, be the name of the Lord!'

'I have been sitting for several hours with my dear child. He does not know me; but the agony is all gone from my soul. I can trust and not be afraid! Oh, how real is the

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'What a marvellous work "to give the oil of joy for mourning!" I have looked up the passage in the word, and I have never noticed before why He does it, but it tells so plainly, "that He may be glorified." That matches so sweetly with another verse: "He that offereth praise glorifieth Me." The enemy tries to steal away my joy. He says that people will think strangely of me, and perhaps my very own will not understand; but I will not close the door that let in the Comforter.'

'The good Shepherd came for my lamb last night. He bindeth up the wounds of the broken-hearted. The Word says so, and I know it is true, for the Comforter reveals it to me. Faith spans the gulf between the now and then. He who is caring for my husband and baby is caring for me. We all live in His presence.'

I laid down the book, and we all sat silent a while on that Thanksgiving evening. Then father said, 'Let us pray.'

As we knelt together he began to praise God quietly for His promises, for His grace, for a Saviour who has brought life and immortality to light, for eternal life, for the Holy Spirit, for our very sorrows. And, word for word, mother and I prayed with him, though our lips were silent; and as our hearts united in praise the clouds that had hung so heavy above our heads parted, and the glory of the Lord shone in upon us, and we were comforted indeed. We, too, had unlocked the iron gate of sorrow with the key of praise, and lo, the Comforter came!—"Christian Advocate."

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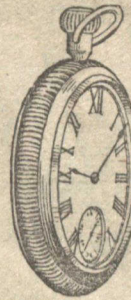
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