

hurts me so that I cannot make these weeks more beautiful for her! She loves pretty dainty things. I know she longs for them, though she never says a word. If I could only brighten up the worn old rooms a bit! If I could only put a picture she liked on the old bare wall, where she could lie and look at it when I am gone! I don't mean to complain, for I am so thankful I can get her the food she needs; but sometimes I feel as though I could go and beg for some of the lovely things I see through the windows of the house on my way home from the factory, and sometimes I almost believe I could steal! There she lies, week after week, day after day, looking at those bare white walls, my precious mother. Oh, Miss Sanford, won't her mansion up yonder seem glorious to her?"

There was a hush in that attic room while a little bird on the sill without twittered softly to its mate; then Mrs. Dunbar went swiftly across the room, and, to Elsie's utter amazement, took Marion's face in both her hands and kissed the tremulous mouth.

"You blessed little messenger! Your King can trust you. I understand. Whatever you want, take, child."

Then the color came flying back into the girl's cheeks, and her gray eyes sparkled.

"Oh, Mrs. Dunbar, may I truly?"

"Indeed you may, my dear. And perhaps the old things will leave a bit of blessing in their trail."

Marion's quick ear caught the note of longing in the light tones, and she looked up into the face above her.

"Our Saviour said it was more blessed to give than to receive."

Mrs. Dunbar laughed a little nervously. "Well, I'm going to try the experiment once, at any rate. Now, my dear, what will you choose out of all this medley? Make your selection, and I will send John down there in the morning."

Then Elsie found her voice before Marion could reply. "Oh, wouldn't it be fun to fix the rooms up and surprise that poor girl? Isn't there some way we could do it?" "We!" Marion's heart gave a great leap. Was it possible that Elsie was interested, Elsie, gay, careless, selfish Elsie, for whom she had been praying so earnestly? No wonder she answered joyously: "Yes, we can, for to-morrow Susie will not be home till night; she can earn a dollar by some extra work at noon, and I promised to go over and get Mrs. Douglas's dinner. We can have the room all ready by the time she comes home. Oh, it is just beautiful!" And Marion's face shone with such a radiance that even Mrs. Dunbar felt the glow, and Elsie left unsaid the saucy little speech that tingled on her tongue.

Then the choosing began, and soon there was a funny pile in the middle of the floor—Elsie's "cumfible" chair, a low rocker, a little swinging shelf, two pretty lamps, three rugs, some curtains which Mrs. Dunbar promised should be sent crisp and fresh, a round table, some old-fashioned vases, two or three fine old engravings, a little foot-stool, and a pair of old andirons and a quaint fire-screen, Marion's choice. A motley collection; but, telling her husband the little tale that night, and showing him the pile, Mrs. Dunbar felt a strange thrill pass through her, as if the old things on that attic floor had a mysterious power about them. Long afterward she knew they had.

Defly and quickly the two girls went about that transformation scene. Marion in her winsome way, seeking first the permission of the gentle invalid to make the changes in her rooms.

Out went the smoky little stove, and Marion's nimble fingers opened the old fire-place, and set up her andirons triumphantly; and soon the crackling, cheery blaze rushed

up the chimney, leaving behind a glow and warmth that filled the room.

The rough floor was soon hidden by the bright rugs; the fresh white curtains were hung before the bleak windows; the little shelf was fastened up and the vases placed thereon; the ivy, Susie's one delight, was carefully twined about the beautiful engravings, hiding the worn frames; the big, easy-chair was drawn up before the fire, and a soft, warm sleeping-wrap thrown over it; opposite, the low rocker, with its pretty new cushions, which Elsie had sat up half the night to fashion, and over the fire-place, in the space just fitted for it, looked down the exquisite face of the picture.

Now, at eventide, their work was nearly done, and they were going. Out in the kitchen was waiting a tempting little supper, which they had merrily prepared, with many excursions to and from the cheerless little bed-room; for they did not know everything, these willing-workers. Very carefully and tenderly they had borne the frail form from the inner room into the bright, home-like one without; and now she lay back in quiet content, looking up at the tender face above her.

It surely was more blessed to give than to receive, thought Mrs. Dunbar, as, wrapped in her warm furs, she stood unnoticed on the threshold of that wonderful room looking at the radiant faces of the two girls, and listening to Marion's low, sweet

"And I shall see Him face to face."

What was there about this girl so strangely fair and sweet? She, a stranger among them, just visiting for a few short months; and see what she had done. Mrs. Dunbar had heard, even to-day, of other little ministrations of this young girl; and she could not understand. Was it possible that this child was wiser than she?

Then there came to her a long forgotten story of a little maid among the Syrians, and she smiled as she raised her hand to give warning of her presence; then her hand dropped silently by her side, and she listened, for it was the low voice of the woman that she heard. "Yes, I shall soon see him face to face, the King in his beauty; and I am glad to have such a sweet story to tell him. How beautiful the days will be, here in this cosy room, where I shall wait for his coming! God bless the willing hands and feet that have done so much to-day. And now, dear ones, shall we ask him to bless her who has made all this possible?"

There was a moment's silence, as the girlish heads were bowed, while the woman in the hallway caught her breath with a quick sob; it had been many years since any one had prayed for her.

"Dear Father, thou didn't whisper a beautiful thought to these thy children, and the joy of it is filling our hearts. Keep these, thy little ones, ever pure and fair in thy sight, until they reach the promised land. And that other, her whom thou hast trusted with thy riches, wilt thou not tell her to-night that, inasmuch as she has done it to one of the least of these her brethren, she has done it unto thee? May thy blessing abide with her; and if she knows not the way of life everlasting, turn her wandering feet into the path that leads to thee. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen!"

They never knew she heard; and they wondered a little as they went out at the faint perfume of violets.

The days are passing on; the little maid has gone back to her distant home; but that thought, God's message, has blossomed into radiant beauty.

In that attic room the treasures are growing fewer; there have been other comforters sent out from among them; other modest

homes have been gladdened at their coming. There will never be a useless pile up there again, for the mistress is learning Marion's secret. Day after day her carriage stands before the old house down by the river, for down there is 'the peace which passeth understanding'; and this weary, world-worn woman longs for it.

Susie has found in her a friend that will make the rough pathway smoother, and shield her from the dangers that lurk along it.

But Elsie, merry, fun-loving, careless Elsie! Last week she wrote: 'Dear Marion, I've found him, too, in the old house on the river bank, in that room. Oh, Marion, suppose you hadn't!'

But she did.

Troublesome Charlie.

(American Messenger.)

It was Monday afternoon, and on his way home from business Roland Parker met a friend—a teacher in the same Sunday-school. 'Have you heard about poor Maitland?' was his friend's inquiry. 'No, what is the matter?' said Roland. 'In mischief again?' 'No; not this time,' returned his companion, sadly. 'He will never trouble you or anyone else with his tiresome tricks any more. The poor boy has met with an accident, and is fearfully injured; indeed, I doubt very much if he is still alive.'

Roland's heart smote him painfully at the sad news, and his friend went on: 'The boy,' he said, 'was leading some horses on Saturday afternoon, and the animals were startled at something, and bolted. Charlie held on and tried to stop them; for he is a bold, resolute lad; but they broke away; threw him down and kicked him terribly about the body and legs. He recovered consciousness, however, when he was taken home, and last night he was still living, though the doctor held out no hope whatever. The accident did not happen here, so that is the reason, I suppose, that no one knew of it yesterday.'

Roland was so shocked at the news that at first he could hardly speak. He felt conscience-smitten, too; for although he had always done the best he could with the boy, and had taught him most carefully the way of salvation through Jesus Christ, he had no hope that his words had been heeded, and he knew that, at the bottom of his heart, he would have rejoiced to be rid of so troublesome a charge. Now, whatever chances he had had were gone for ever, and Charlie Maitland, the most unfit boy in the class to be summoned into the presence of God, was to be called to go, if, indeed, he was not already standing before his Judge.

'Poor fellow!' he said. 'I am indeed distressed to hear the dreadful news. God grant his life may yet be spared, for I have no hope that the boy is a Christian, or that he can be ready to obey so sudden a summons into eternity. I must confess he has almost wearied out my patience, and that I have not been, I fear, so forbearing as I ought.'

Wishing his friend good-bye, Roland Barker hurried off at once to the house of his scholar. Charlie was still alive, his mother said, her voice broken by bitter weeping, but the doctor had been in again and said that there was no hope. He might live a few days, but he could never recover. 'He can speak a little now,' added the poor woman, 'and he knows everyone. He has been asking for you, sir.'

Roland was rather surprised that there had been any such inquiry; it gave him more hope that perhaps some word of his