

NANNIE'S ANSWER.

BY M. WATERMAN.

"Them cows fall off dretful in their milk, 'n the lump o' butter's smaller every week!" said Aunt Judith, as she pressed with her paddle the fat mass in the tray, while her face wore an anxious look.

Nannie was stirring chicken-feed, and watching the butter-making at the same time. She knew the meaning of that look on the good old face; for Aunt Judith had often taken her into close confidence in their dressing and furnishing plans.

"She is thinking about her new cloak," thought Nannie. "She *must* have have it this fall somehow, but if the butter is falling short I daren't mention a new hat. Oh dear! The old one is so shabby, 'n it'll look worse in the fall when the girls have their new ones, 'n the Sunday school's in the new church. I don't mind so much while it's in Mr. Black's kitchen."

She watched the brook of Plymouth Rocks as she stood out by the ash-heap scraping the scalded bran from the pan for the hurrying chickens.

"I'm glad they're mine," she said, "but I wish they were big enough so that I might get some money for their eggs. I've got nothing to sell!"

Then she looked over at the yellow wheat field beyond the narrow potato piece. Farmer Trot had rented Aunt Judith's acres, and now he was harvesting with his three gray horses.

"Poor crop this year!" he had said to Aunt Judith. "Won't more'n get yer bread; but of course you'll say yer thankful for that much!"

"I'm glad we'll have our bread," said Nannie, watching the reel flying round and round; "but I do wish there 'd ha' been lots of rain all summer, 'n there 'd ha' been a good, heavy crop, 'n I might ha' dared to say I'd like to have a new hat like Jane Winters' 'n Bell Joys! But I must get along somehow. I ought to feel glad 't the hail didn't take the wheat 'n the garden, like it did John Burton's! Why, there! I never thought! Miss Telfer said last Sunday we must go to God with anything that troubles us, no matter how small it is, 'n my hat matter is pretty big to me! I'll go right away 'n tell Him I do really need a new hat, 'n ask Him to send me one if He thinks best, and whenever he sees fit to send it. I'll just give the whole thing right up to Him, 'n not bother any more about it, that's the way she said to do!"

So when Nannie went into the house to do her usual work in Aunt Judith's room, she kneeled down by the chintz-covered trunk, and did just as she said she would do—left her request in the hands of her heavenly Father, who clothes the lilies of the field, and feeds the tiny sparrows.

Nannie's heart was very light as she went about her various tasks that morning. Aunt Judith saw the sunshine in her face, and said, softly, "Bless the Lord for bringing her to me! She is a dear, good child!"

The two sat out on the porch that afternoon mending stockings.

Nannie loved to watch the tall sunflowers close to the porch. They had such gorgeous yellow-frilled caps round their honest brown faces.

"They turn toward the sun; we must look to God

the same way," said she to herself, as she placed the darning egg in her red stocking.

"Prayer makes the darkened clouds withdraw."

Aunt Judith was softly singing to the tune "Hebron," as she listened to the hum of Farmer Trot's harvester.

Clouds of blackbirds were flying hither and thither on foraging expeditions, chattering as they flew; the tall, tasselled corn waved in the lazy breeze; houses and haystacks jutted out into the sky all along the horizon, and one might see lines of growing young willows here and there on the distant prairies.

"Do you always have your prayers answered?" suddenly asked Nannie, as Aunt Judith stopped singing.

"Yes, certain!" responded Aunt Judith promptly. "He says when we call upon Him, He'll answer, and while we are yet speaking, He'll hear."

"Have you always really got everything you prayed for, Aunt?" asked Nannie eagerly.

"No, no, Nancy; you're only fourteen, 'n I'm sixty. He aint showed you as many of His ways as He has me, blessed be His name!" answered Aunt Judith.

"I don't always get just what I've prayed for, but I always get an answer when I pray to the Lord in a believin' way, givin' up entirely to His will! There's different kinds o' answerin' as you'll find out, Nancy!

Once when I lived down east, 'n had a cozy little tenement, I wanted a centre table for my sittin' room so much! I asked the Lord if He would send me one when it was His will, 'n sure enough one evening your Uncle 'Siah says to me: 'Judy, I bought a pooty little round table fur you to-day, got it kinder cheap. I'll fetch it home ter-morrer!'

That was *one* kind o' answerin'. Then when I was a widder, 'n come here to live on the prairie, my money went dretful fast one winter, 'n I didn't see how I was going to buy coal enough to keep me warm till spring. I took that trouble to the Lord, an' waited my answer. It came one day with one o' my neighbours, who begun tellin' me how she'd been burning twisted hay, 'n she showed me how to make 'em tight 'n hard, 'n how to manage my fire, 'n I tried it, 'n got through that winter nicely.

That was another kind 'o answer. Then just the year 'fore your mother died 'n you came here, I got terrible homesick. Thought I must go down east if I'd have to go out at day's works. Well, I told the Lord how bad I wanted to go, 'n kep a lookin for somebody to send me money to go with, or somethin' like that; but no, I didn't get there at all. He didn't give me any way to go; but He give me such peace and contentment!

Took all my homesickness away, 'n I enjoyed this country's I never had before. That's a third kind of an answer." Aunt Judith went on singing again as she peered over her spectacles searching for thin places in her stocking:

"Gives exercise to faith and love,
Brings every blessing from above."

Nannie listened to the quavering voice, and let her eyes rest on the creamy, feathery row of ripe "fox-tail" grass growing alongside of the sweet corn. Something in their plummy tops must have sent a bright idea into Nannie's head, for she cried out all at once, "Splendid! Just the very thing!"

Aunt Judith was laughing a queer easy laugh.

"That's a funny thing to say when I say I don't