

Family Department.

A ORY FROM THE WILDERNESS.

O, brethren, blessed the Lord!
We read of your churches of stone,
Of your vessels of silver and gold
And your organs of silvery tone.

Of windows where glitter the hues
Of the precious gems of the mine,
Of pulpits of brass, and of altars
Of costliest work and design.

We rejoice that His servants are willing
To bring their gifts to His shrine,
And offer the best and rarest
To honor the Master Divine.

But, oh! we pray you remember
The scattered sheep of the fold,
Who wander afar in the desert,
In hunger, in darkness and cold.

No shepherd to guard or to warn them
Of peril on every side,
To lead them to heavenly pastures,
To gather the lambs, or to guide.

We faint by the way—we are waiting
And watching with longing eyes,
For a crumb from the Master's Table:
Oh! will you not heed our cries?

THE 'ROUND ROBIN.'

BY EMMA M. ROBISON.

(Concluded)

"Oh, Herbert, you wouldn't give it up now!" she exclaimed.

"It will be now or never. I shouldn't want to decide such a thing but once," was the quiet reply.

"It is all my fault," said Helen, half crying; "I'm sorry I said such a hateful thing, Herbert. I didn't mean it, really."

"What you said was true anyway, though I hadn't thought of it before. It is selfish to spend so much for something I can do without, when others are needing—"

"You're thinking of Miss Edna and her chair," burst in Helen. "You couldn't give her one, anyway; mother says it is very hard to give the Deans anything, you remember."

"Mother could find a way, though," said Herbert, with absolute faith in mother's judgment and tact. "But I haven't decided yet, Helen, and you are not to speak of it, unless I give you leave," and he hurried out, while Helen rushed to her own room and had "a real good cry." She was sorry for what she had said about the bicycle, and ashamed of what she had said about the Easter offering. And then to think of Herbert giving up all his money in that way made her plan appear rather too selfish for her own peace of mind.

"I can't give up the dress, anyway," she thought, and tried to persuade herself that she was right, though she did not succeed very well.

As nothing more was said about the bicycle she allowed herself to hope that either Herbert had decided not to make the sacrifice, or that her mother had refused his request.

But the next Friday evening, as she was looking over her music, for Saturday's lesson, Herbert came in, saying to his mother, "Well, they will be here tomorrow. I've found the last boy."

"The last boy," echoed Helen. "what in the world do you mean?"

"Mother has thought of such a 'dandy' plan, I told you she would," said Herbert, triumphantly.

"What is it?" asked Helen, with a sinking heart.

Mrs. Forbes explained that she thought it

best to give all of Miss Edna's class a chance to contribute something towards the chair. Miss Dean could then have no scruples about accepting it, and the boys would be glad of the privilege of giving for such an object.

The boys of the class, still living in the city, were to meet at the rectory the next evening, when Mrs. Forbes would tell them the plan, and prepare a "Round Robin" for their signatures.

"Didn't I tell you mother would know just how to fix it?" demanded Herbert, happily ignorant of Helen's state of mind.

She gave an affirmative nod, and began to practise vigorously, not wishing to talk about it any further.

The six boys came on Saturday evening and Mrs. Forbes laid the matter before them. They were very much pleased with the idea of doing something for Miss Edna; Johnnie Symes voicing the sentiments of the crowd, when he declared her to have been "just a daisy teacher."

Each name was signed to the Round Robin, with as many flourishes as possible, and the amount that each would give was to be sent to Mrs. Forbes within ten days. (She was chosen treasurer and general manager, and she alone knew how much each gave.) Will Downer was written to in his far-away home, and the answer came promptly, ten dollars being enclosed. He wrote that he was glad to do a little for Miss Edna, who had always been so kind to him.

Then Tom Dean, having been a member of the class, was told of the plan, and he gave fifteen dollars.

"Of course, I should like to get it with my own money entirely, but it is so kind of the boys, and Edna needs it so much, that I am very glad she will have it without waiting so long," he said, as he added his name.

Mrs. Forbes now had thirty-seven dollars, and Herbert added twenty-three, as his father said that the sixty-dollar chairs were much better than a cheaper article. The money, the Round Robin, and Will Downer's letter were enclosed in one envelope, and sent by mail, the boys being far too shy to undertake the delivery thereof.

In a very few days, Miss Edna sent a beautiful letter of thanks to them collectively, and expressed the hope that sometime she might have an opportunity to thank each one personally. She had already been around the block in the new chair, and was looking forward to many delightful journeys in it, when summer came; and that she should now be able to attend the Easter services, a privilege very dear to her. "And then, as now, my prayers will be for the welfare of my dear boys," was the concluding sentence.

Mrs. Forbes made a copy of the letter for each of the boys, and sent the original to Will Downer, Herbert saying that he deserved it more than the others, as he had never neglected Miss Edna.

Meanwhile Helen had been struggling with herself, and gained the victory over her selfish vanity. And when Mrs. Forbes spoke about the new suit that was to be made ready for Easter Day, Helen said, gravely, "I have decided not to get the blue suit, mamma, and, after Easter, I would like to get only what you think best."

"That is right, my daughter," said her mother, with tender approval. "You know, dear, I do not think fine dresses at Easter a fitting preparation for that holy day; and that both papa and I think that young girls should dress plainly and simply at all times. But as t Nedie's gift having always been allowed you to spend as you pleased, we would make no opposition to your wishes."

On Easter morning as Helen and Herbert walked together to church, she said, shyly, "I want you to know, Herbert, that I shall give a tenth as usual, and I am ashamed that I even thought of giving less."

Herbert gave a quick, surprised glance at the old dress and hat.

"I say, where're the drooping plumes, and all the rest?" he asked.

"Lou Dutton has them, I suppose," she answered, lightly.

"Why haven't you, too?" then added. "I think I know, though, and I'm sure you look nice anyway," giving her an approving pat on the shoulder, as she turned toward the choir room. There was a new beauty in Helen's voice as she sang that day. "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord."

HOME WITNESS.

"Go home to thy friends."—ST. MARK v. 19.

THESE words of our Blessed Lord teach us a very important truth as regards our witnessing for Him. On another occasion He had said, "Follow Me"; and on another had spoken those seemingly severe words: "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." But to this man, out of whom a legion of devils had been cast, and who was anxious to follow his Deliverer, He says, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

Self-denial and self-sacrifice are at the root of true religion, and these are called forth differently in different persons, and under different circumstances, and therefore we can see how these two sayings of our Blessed Lord do not contradict each other. The principle underlying each is the same, viz., we are not to please ourselves, and we are to be ready and willing at any cost to follow Christ, and to witness for Him. In the case before us it might have been an easier and a pleasanter thing for this man to have followed Christ than to go home and witness for Him there. And the same truth finds application in our own day. We hear and read a great deal of people going out as missionaries to the heathen, joining sisterhoods and becoming nurses to attend upon the poor; and it is good and right that such things should be. But it does not follow that everyone, out of whom the evil spirit has been cast or who has yielded to the Spirit of God, and desires to devote himself to the service of God, should thus act. On the contrary, from what is seen and known around us, we would readily believe that it would be much better if the command of the Lord, "Go home," were more often heard and obeyed. In some cases, there can be no doubt where the duty lies, where is the true self-sacrifice and self-denial. An only daughter's place is, without doubt, at home; and one can hardly believe that an only son is justified in leaving his father and mother for the mission field. If we are faithful to ourselves, and will analyse our thoughts, we shall often find, right down in the bottom of our heart, a secret desire to escape from the restraints and difficulties of home, and we at last persuade ourselves that we are "doing God service" by going out and preaching to the heathen. The truth is, that "home witness" for God is often far more difficult than making some open declaration which is seen and praised of all men. There are many instances where one in a family has been led to give him or herself to God, and, of course, such an one meets with much opposition in one way or another; but more is done for God by showing an enlarged sympathy for the other members, and an increased interest in their lawful pursuits, than by running off to church at all hours of the day, and thus disturbing the arrangement of the household. The relation between children and parents is a very delicate one, and the goaly child of ungodly parents has a most difficult task to perform: