

"Little Brown Hands."

THEY drive home the cows from the pastures
Up through the shady lane,
While the quail whistles loud in the wheatfield,
All yellow with ripening grain.

They find, in the thick waving grasses,
Where the scarlet-lipped strawberry grows;
They gather the earliest snow-drops,
And the first crimson buds of the rose.

They toss the hay in the meadow,
They gather the elder-blooms white,
They find where the dusky grapes purple
In the soft-tinted October light.

They know where the apples hang ripest,
And are sweeter than Italy's wines,
They know where the fruit is the thickest,
On the long thorny blackberry vines.

They gather the delicate sea-weeds,
And build tiny castles of sand;
They pick up the beautiful sea-shells—
Fairy barks that have drifted to land.

They wave from the tall rocking tree-tops,
Where the oriole's hammock nest swings,
And at night-time are folded in slumber
By a song that a fond mother sings.

Those who toil bravely are strongest;
The humble and poor become great;
And from those brown-handed children
May grow rulers of church and of state.

The pen of the author and statesman,
The noble and wise of our land—
Chisel, palette, and God's holy Word,
Shall be helped in the little brown hands.

A Daughter Worth Having.

Two gentlemen, friends who had been parted for years, met in a crowded city street. The one who lived in the city was on his way to meet a pressing business engagement. After a few expressions of delight, he said:—

"Well, I'm off. I'm sorry, but it can't be helped. I will look for you to-morrow at dinner. Remember, two o'clock, sharp. I want you to see my wife and child."

"Only one child?" asked the other.

"Only one," came the answer, tenderly, "a daughter. But she's a darling." And then they parted, the stranger in the city getting into a tram bound for the park.

After a block or two, a group of five girls entered the tram. They all evidently belonged to families of wealth. They conversed well. Each carried a very elaborately decorated lunch-basket. Each was well dressed.

They, too, were going to the park for a picnic. They seemed happy and amiable until the tram again stopped, this time letting in a pale-faced girl of about eleven, and a sick boy of four. These children were shabbily dressed, and on their faces were looks of distress. They, too, were on their way to the park. The gentleman thought so. So did the group of girls, for he heard one of them say, with a look of disdain:

"I suppose those ragamuffins are on an excursion, too."

"I shouldn't want to leave home if I had to look like that. Would you?" This to another girl.
"No, indeed! But there is no accounting for tastes. I think there ought to be a special line of trams for the lower classes."

All this was spoken in a low tone, but the gentleman heard it. Had the child too? He glanced at the pale face, and saw tears. He was angry.

Just then the exclamation: "Why, there is Nettie! Wonder where she is going?" caused him to look out upon the corner, where a sweet-

facéd young girl stood, beckoning to the train-driver. When she entered she was warmly greeted by the five, and they made room for her beside them. They were profuse in exclamations and questions.

"Where are you going?" asked one.

"Oh, what lovely flowers! Who are they for!" said another.

"I'm on my way to Belle Clark's. She is sick, you know, and the flowers are for her."

She answered both questions at once, and then, glancing toward the door of the tram, saw the pale girl looking wistfully at her. She smiled at the child, a tender look beaming from her beautiful eyes; and then, forgetting that she wore a handsome velvet skirt and costly jacket, and that her shapely hands were covered with well-fitted gloves, she left her seat and crossed over to the little ones. She laid one hand on the boy's thin cheeks, as she asked of his sister:

"The little boy is sick, is he not? And he is your brother, I am sure."

It seemed hard for the girl to answer, but finally she said:

"Yes, miss, he is sick. Freddie never has been well. Yes, miss, he is my brother. We're going to the park to see if it won't make Freddie better."

"I am glad you are going," the young girl replied, in a low voice—meant for no one's ears but those of the child. "I think it will do him good. It is lovely there, with the spring flowers all in bloom. But where is your lunch? You ought to have a lunch after so long a ride."

Over the little girl's face came a flush.

"Yes, miss, we ought to, for Freddie's sake; but, you see, we didn't have any lunch to bring. Tim—he's our brother—he saved these pennies so as Freddie could ride to the park and back. I guess, mebbe, Freddie'll forget about being hungry when he gets to the park."

There were tears in the lovely girl's eyes as she listened; and very soon she asked the girl where they lived, and wrote the address down in a tablet, which she took from a bag on her arm.

After riding some distance she left the tram, but she had not left the little ones comfortless. Half the bouquet of violets and hyacinths was clasped in the sister's hand; while the sick boy, with radiant face, held in his hand a package, from which he helped himself now and then, saying to his sister, in a jubilant whisper:—

"She said we could eat 'em all—every one—when we got to the park. What made her so sweet and good to us?" And the little girl whispered back:

"It's 'cause she's beautiful as well as her clothes," the gentleman heard her whisper.

When the park was reached, the five girls hurried out. Then the gentleman lifted the little boy in his arms, and carried him out of the tram, across the road, and into the green park—the sister, with a heart full of gratitude, following. He paid for a nice ride for them in the goat carriage, and treated them to oyster soup at the park restaurant.

At two o'clock sharp the next day, the two gentlemen, as agreed, met again.

"This is my wife," the host said, proudly, introducing a comely lady. "And this," as a young lady of fifteen entered the parlour, "is my daughter."

"Ah!" said the guest, as he extended his hand in cordial greeting, "this is the dear girl whom I saw yesterday in the tram. I don't wonder you called her 'a darling.' She is a 'darling,' and no mistake. God bless her!"

And then he told his friend what he had seen and heard.—*Our Dumb Animals.*

Six Little Words.

Six little words arrest me every day—
I ought, must, can; I will, I dare, I may,
I ought—'tis conscience' law, divinely writ
Within my heart, the goal I strive to hit;
I must—this warns me that my way is barred
Either by nature's law or custom hard;
I can—in this is summed up all my might,
Whether to do or know or judge aright;
I will—my diadem, by the soul imprest
With freedom's seal, the rule within my breast;
I dare—at once a motto for the seal,
And dare I? barrier against unlicensed zeal;
I may—is final, and at once makes clear
The way which else might vague and dim appear.
I ought, must, can; I will, I dare, I may—
These six words claim attention every day.
Only through Thee know I what, every day,
I ought, I must, I can, I will, I dare, I may.

Little Mary and Her Dying Father.

A LITTLE girl, named Mary, had been going to Sunday-school for some time. She was only about seven or eight years old. But she had learned enough to know that she was a sinner, and that Jesus was the only Saviour. She loved him, and prayed to him every day.

Mary's parents never went to church, and never read the Bible. They were careless, wicked people, who never thought about God or heaven. One night Mary's father was taken suddenly ill. His illness was very alarming. The poor man saw death staring him in the face. He felt that he was a sinner, and not prepared to die. He asked his wife to pray for him. She said she didn't know how to pray.

"Oh! what shall I do?" he exclaimed. "How can I die with all my sins upon me?"

"Mary has learned a great deal about the Bible at Sunday-school," said his wife. "Suppose I call her. Perhaps she can tell you something that will comfort you."

"Call her at once," said he.

Mary was called out of her sleep to the bedside of her dying father.

"Mary, my child," said the poor man, "I'm going to die; but I feel that I'm a great sinner. Can you tell me how a sinner like me can be saved?"

"Oh, yes, father!" said Mary; "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."

"But how does he save sinners? And will he save such a great sinner as I am?"

"Jesus says in the Bible," replied Mary, "'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life.'"

"Does the Bible say all that, Mary?" asked the dying man, with great earnestness.

"Yes," said Mary; "those are the very words I learned in Sunday-school."

Then he asked Mary to kneel down and pray for him. So she kneeled down and prayed that God would have mercy on her dear father; that he would pardon his sins, and save his soul, for Jesus' sake.

In the morning, when Mary woke up, her father was dead. But he died, believing the words that Mary had told him from the Bible, and he found peace in believing them.

It is not enough that we have once swallowed truths; we must feed on them as insects on a leaf, till the whole heart is coloured by their qualities, and shows its food in even the minute fibre.