

"Of what use are you?" asked the bird. "You do not even give as much light as the gaslight."

"I do the best I can. I am in the window to throw light down the path, that Father Brown may see the way when he comes home. I do the best I can."

"That's true," said the bird, and away he flew.

But again his sharp eyes spied a light—a tiny candle-light in a nursery window.

"Of what use are you?" asked the bird. "Your light is so small. You do not give even as much light as a lamp."

"I do the best I can," said the candle, "and I can easily be carried from room to room. Nurse uses me when she gives the children a drink of water at night or sees that they are snugly covered up in bed. I do the best I can."

"That's true," said the bird; and away he flew, thinking, as he saw the many lights here and there, little and great: "All are helpers."—*Kindergarten Review.*

P.S.—As he flew he saw a little child wearing a star-badge and on the badge was a tiny candle, and around the candle were the words "I shine for Jesus." "Of what use are you asked the bird. "I am helping to send the Jesus-light into dark heathen lands," answered the child. "That's true," said the bird, "and that is really the best Light of all."—*C.M.F., in The Palm Branch.*

HOW PONTO HELPED TO FILL THE MISSIONARY BOX.

Olive Graham was trying to be a missionary. At least she was trying very hard to earn some money for a missionary cause in which she was deeply interested. All winter long she had been hoarding her pennies, and when, in early May, her mission box held the magnificent sum of fifty-five cents, she took the money and embarked in a business undertaking.

Olive's plan was to raise chickens for the market, and with that purpose in view she invested her money in a setting of thirteen Brahma eggs, and borrowed a hen from her mother's flock to do the necessary hatching. She felt quite sure that, owing to her enterprise, her missionary box would be weighty with her offering.

But, alas! from the day when the first tiny bill chipped its way through the egg-shell, misfortune seemed to attend her. The pompous old turkey gobbler, strutting about with his head in the air, crushed two of the peeping yellow balls; croup carried off one nursing, and a sly weasel made a meal of still another. Then, as if to make a bad matter

worse, the discouraged hen deserted her lessening brood, and nine helpless chickens were left in charge of their inexperienced foster mother.

The missionary's hands were now full indeed. Every spare minute through the day was spent with the flock, and each evening she tucked them in a wool-lined nest and reluctantly left them alone for the night.

One morning there was a hint of frost in the air. Olive ran to her pets, to find that two chickens lay dead on the floor below. They had fallen from the nest and had perished in the chill night air; while another, still, in the midst of the scrambling brothers and sisters lay another that had been smothered in the nest.

Olive sat down on the floor and cried. It seemed cruel to bring chickens into the world to meet such a fate, and she felt very helpless and forlorn and very doubtful whether her investment of the missionary money had not been a great mistake.

But help was to come from an unexpected source. Old Ponto had followed her to the door of the hen house, and was surveying her with both pity and interest. It was not often that he saw his mistress in tears. Ponto was an old shepherd dog, set aside by age and rheumatism from active duties. He was devoted to Olive who had always a kind word or a dainty tidbit for him. He looked curiously at the dead chickens and at the restless little brood, then slowly limped away to his corner to meditate on what should next be done.

A curious sight met Olive's eyes that evening when she came to tuck the brood into the nest. Ponto lay on the hen-house floor, with six tiny chickens nestled against him. He wagged his tail gently as Olive appeared at the doorway, saying as plainly as a dog could, "I have thought out a way to help you. Do not be afraid, I shall take care of your chicks."

And, strangely enough, from that day the missionary chickens were the especial charge of old Ponto. Every night they cuddled up to his warm body, and every day he guarded them so jealously that neither turkey gobbler nor weasel could annoy them. Even when they grew to young chickenhood they were mindful of their early protector, and to the last preferred his society to that of their feathered neighbors.

They grew up plump and well-favored, and brought a good price at the market. When the missionary offerings were made, Olive had three dollars in her box.

"But it is not quite my own offering," she said, as she handed in the money. "I did not really and truly earn it all myself."

And then she told the strange but true story of how Ponto helped to fill the missionary box.—*The Missionary Helper.*