

**The Bootblack.**

BY DELLA ROGERS.

"SINGING for Jesus, my Saviour and King ;"  
Hark, how the words on the frosty air ring !  
"Singing for him who died on the tree,  
Purchased a pardon for you and for me."

'Twas a poor little bootblack, friendless, forlorn,  
With a shabby old coat and a cap badly torn ;  
But a bright sunny face, and a smile that was gay,  
And he sang as he brushed, on that dark, dreary day.

"Singing for him, who died on the tree,  
Purchased a pardon for you and for me ;  
Now he has gone to that glad home on high,  
Where I shall dwell with him by-and-by."

The merchant stood, on that cold, cheerless day,  
Watching the bootblack brushing away,  
With a bright smiling face and a cheerful heart,  
And he said to the boy, as he turned to depart :—

"Why sing you to him, who died on the tree,  
So long, long ago, in dark Galilee ?"  
And the bootblack earnestly, gladly replied :  
"I sing, Sir, because for me he hath died."

The merchant passed on down the busy street,  
'Mid the noise and bustle of hurrying feet ;  
But those words, "for me," ever rang in his ear—  
'Mid the hurry and tumult, their sound he could hear.

And scenes long forgotten came then to his mind,  
The old cottage home and the clustering vine ;  
And the silvery-haired woman, in the old oaken chair,  
With the Bible before her, who prayed for him there.

And who knows but that mother, from her home in  
the sky,  
Where she now dwells with Jesus, who for us did die,  
Heard what the angels whispered in heaven—  
"That another heart to the Saviour was given."

We know not the good that a song may do ;  
Let us sing as we journey life's weary way through ;  
A song or a word—how little we know  
The good we may do—the seed we might sow !

**ARE YOU SHINING FOR JESUS ?**

BY BELLE V. CHISHOLM.

"Are you shining for Jesus, dear one,  
Shining just everywhere—  
Not only in easy places,  
Not only just here or there ?"

NELLIE hushed her glad song at sight of her mother's troubled face.

"I am very sorry to disappoint you, girls, but one of you will have to stay at home," said Mrs. Bradley, gently, glancing from Nellie to her older sister, Gertrude. "Nora's mother is worse, and I could not deny her request to spend the day with her sick parent. You both know that it will be impossible for me to do the work and look after the children too." Of course the girls knew that. This delicate little mother overworked herself at all times in order that they might be kept in school and enjoy the advantages of other girls of their age.

"I wish it were not so," the mother added, feebly, "but I would be in bed sick before night were I left without help."

Gertrude bit her lip with vexation as she muttered,

"I cannot say, I am sure, for I am one of the committee of arrangements, and it would spoil the plans for the whole day should I be absent. Nellie has nothing special to do ; let her remain at home."

"You know I am one of the singers," began Nellie, sharply ; but the words that she had been humming a few moments before came back to her like a reproof. Only a few weeks before she had stood up in the presence of God's people and promised henceforth to live for Jesus. Should she shine for him only in easy places ? Would he accept such service ? Not only here and there, but everywhere, she was to be faithful,

"Shining at home, and making  
True sunshine all around."

The lines left no doubt in her mind concerning the course she ought to pursue. Her disappointment was keen, for she had anticipated much enjoyment from the day's ramble, and everything was ready for the excursion. After thinking for a moment or two she said, with a little quiver in her voice it must be confessed,

"It shall be just as you say, mother."

"I am the oldest and have the best right to go," interrupted Gertrude, selfishly. "And, what's more, I am going. There are the girls now," and before Nellie could frame a reply she snatched up her hat and hurried out to meet her companions.

Tears gathered in Nellie's eyes, but she bravely choked back her sobs, and then went softly up stairs to change her holiday attire for a plain print, that was to do duty in the kitchen.

"I am going to stay and help you, mother," she said, a little later, as she appeared at the pantry-door with a bright face and a cheerful voice.

"Thank you, dear ; you are a great comfort," said her mother ; and in the tone and the looks there was a precious heart-reward for the dutiful daughter.

Nellie was strong and willing, and went about her work singing snatches of glad songs, until the weary mother forgot her own weakness in the happiness of her child.

Late in the afternoon, when the work was out of the way and she had persuaded her feeble mother to lie down for an hour's rest, Nellie took up an interesting book and was soon deeply interested in its contents. In a short time, however, her attention was called to the jangling of the children in the adjoining room, and, fearing that they would disturb the mother, she laid aside her book and went to make peace among them. When they tired of story-telling, she brought out a small trunk that contained the carefully-preserved toys and games of her own childhood. It required both tact and patience to hold three little brains busy for a full hour, but in her efforts to keep her light shining brightly she succeeded admirably, not only in doing her mother a kindness of which she stood in need, but also in forming a new bond of affection between herself and the little brother and sisters, who wondered what made Nellie so different from the girl that heretofore had been so full of self as to forget the claims of others.

"I'll tell you what makes her so good to us," said Kitty, when the young housekeeper had left them to prepare an early tea. "You see, she belongs to the church now, and she means it. I can tell it by the way she acts."

"So can I," assented Freddy. "She is good like mamma now."

"By their fruits ye shall know them," whispered Nellie, with glistening eyes, as she chanced to hear the witness-bearing of the little ones. "Has my life been so empty and useless as to merit such a rebuke ?" she asked herself as a vision of her selfish conduct in the past came back to her.

"Can everybody see it  
That Jesus is all to you ?"

she repeated, with a throb of pain at recollection of the dimness of the light she had been reflecting.

**ONE USE OF BIRTHDAYS.**

You know that birthdays are the days that our friends remember, and tell us they do by sending us presents. Now, these presents should always mean this : "I send you this to tell you how glad I am that you were born. You have made me happier because you live in this world." I wonder if we are all trying to make our friends feel this ?

There is a blue-eyed little girl living not a thousand miles from New York who calls her birthdays

"worth-days." She is so sweet and lovable that every day she lives is a "worth-day" to those about her. We can all make our days "worth-days" to our friends, each day richer and more happy because we live here, if we try.

There are different ways of celebrating our birthdays, but those that are most to be desired are thanksgiving birthdays. Last winter there was such a pretty birthday celebration not far from Boston that I know you will enjoy hearing about it.

The little girl was twelve years old. She had been receiving presents and birthday letters all day. When night came and the family were all at dinner—a dinner prepared especially to suit this little girl—she came into the dining-room carrying a tray on which were a number of paper parcels neatly tied. Each parcel had on it a white card with the name of some member of the family, and contained a gift. These she gave to each one, to remember her birthday by, she said, and had been purchased by saving her own pocket-money. That certainly was a pretty way of keeping a birthday. Giving, you will find, makes you just as happy as receiving, and sometimes more happy. In a small Sabbath-school room in New York State there is a pretty money-jug standing on the desk. On the Sabbath after each teacher's and scholar's birthday they put into the jug a penny for each year they have lived. Johnnie, who is five years old, brings five pennies ; Johnnie's father, who is thirty-eight years old, brings thirty-eight pennies—one for each year. This money goes to the missionary society of the church.

These pennies must be thankofferings. You might try it in your family. Have a money-jug on the dining-room mantel, and use the pennies to buy Christmas presents for some one who would not have any Christmas if you did not remember him. Call the jug the "birthday jug."—*Christian Union.*

**CURING A BLIND GIANT.**

CALCUTTA is a fine large city on the north-east coast of India, and one who lived there tells a strange, but true story of how a doctor cured the biggest patient he ever had. The patient was a huge elephant, and for a long time had suffered from a disease in the eyes, which at last got so bad that he could not see.

His owner, an English officer, went to Dr. Webb, and begged him to come and see what could be done. He did ; and after looking carefully at the giant creature, the doctor said :

"The best cure that I know of is nitrate of silver ; but it will give a good deal of pain."

Perhaps some of my readers whose friends have bad eyes have heard the name of this remedy.

Well, the owner said he had better try, and if the animal would not allow it he must give it up.

But—would you believe it ?—the elephant, who, like most of his race, was as wise as he was big, found so much relief from his first day's doctoring, that when Dr. Webb came the next day he lay down of his own accord, placed his great heavy head on one side, curled up his trunk, and then, just like you or I might if we were going to bear some dreadful pain, he drew in his breath and lay perfectly still. The healing mixture was dropped into each eye, and when the sharp, short pain was gone, he gave a great sigh, as much as to say, "That's a good thing got over. I feel all the better for it."

And when he got up he tried in his poor dumb fashion to thank his friend for giving him back his sight.

What a lesson to us to bear our troubles patiently, knowing that our sufferings are all for the best.