

Beautiful Threads of Gold.

BY ANNA J. GRANNING.

WEAVING them into a work-a-day life,
Beautiful threads of gold!
A thread of joy, with a strand of strife,
And yet, the hands that hold
May fashion them out into patterns rare,
Designs of beauty, now and fair,
Till the Master-Weaver finds them there,
In beautiful threads of gold.

Weaving them in with a patient hand,
Beautiful threads of gold!
Filing them in as the Artist planned
When He laid life's sombre fold,
Weaving them in with the homeliest cares,
Over some burden another bears,
Glad that the Master-Weaver spare,
Some beautiful threads of gold.

Weaving them in with the hopes and fears,
Beautiful threads of gold!
Brighter the gold of the thread appears,
As the web of life grows old.
Weaving them in with a smile and song,
Wonderful threads, so fine and strong,
Under the good and over the wrong,
Weave beautiful threads of gold.

Weaving them in with a watchful eye,
Beautiful threads of gold!
To shine across where the shadows lie,
When the web is all unrolled.
Weaving them in when the Master's call
Let the bright threads break, and the shuttle
fall,
And angels come down to gather them all,
Life's broken threads of gold!
—Good Cheer.

A Glass of Wine.

A LARGE party of excursionists, guests of the company, were in an Arkansas railway train, en route to visit the advertised lands of a famous pine district. Baskets of champagne had been provided, and the excursionists, in that unrestrained conviviality which steals along so gently with the alleged juice of the grape, soon became unable to distinguish one kind of land from another or to recognize the difference between a pine log and a sycamore sapling.

At a way station a young man boarded the train and took the only vacant seat in the car, beside a rather old gentleman who did not seem to join in the festivities of the intoxicated occasion.

"Join us, cap'n," said a red faced fellow, handing him a glass. "Fill 'er up to the brim, 'pouring out the seething enemy to a clear head. "Everything goes," and he passed on in answer to the summons of an uplifted glass at the other end of the car. Just as the young man was about to drink, the old gentleman said:

"Will you wait until I tell you a story before you drink that?"

The young man looked up in surprise at the old gentleman.

"I won't detain you long. This reminds me so much of something that occurred years ago in my life that I cannot refrain from speaking of it.

His earnest manner impressed the young man, and as he held up the glass and looked for a moment at the shining beads arising from its stem-like bottom, he replied:

"Yes, I will wait."
"Thank you," and in a manner still more impressive the old man began: "I had been away from home a number of years and was returning on a steamboat, when I fell in with a party very much like this one. (Champagne was as free as water, and with that deceitful idea of hospitality which wine inspires, I was enjoined to drink. I shuddered at the thought. My father had died a drunkard and my eldest brother was in a drunkard's grave. I had ever been sober, and my mother, the gentlest of women, looked to me

as the solace of her feeble years, the one embodiment of purposes, rescued from the wreck of our household ship.

"I say that I shuddered in the mere contemplation of taking the wine which they insisted that I should, and to escape the noisy crowd I went to my state-room: but this was no safeguard against their hilarious persistency, for they beat upon the door and declared that if I did not come out they would beat it down. Thus I was compelled to join them, but still I refused to drink. Finally, a very respectable-looking and quiet old gentleman said to me:—'Take a glass or so; it won't hurt you; a little champagne is no more hurtful than a little water. Here—' and he filled a glass and handed it to me. I drank, and soon felt that the old man had well advised me, for I felt no inconvenience, but, on the contrary, decidedly improved. I took another and another, and the crowd seemed to be less noisy. I went with the men who had knocked on my door, and prevailed on another young man to drink. I laughed immoderately, and thought that I had never before seen so gay a company. Once my mother's often-repeated words, 'My son, I would rather see you in your coffin than to see you drunk,' sounded like a distant knell, ringing from away back in childhood, but they became fainter and fainter until at last I heard no warning. The old man who had advised me to drink, came to me and said, 'Look here, you have had enough wine!' I had become rich. I knew well enough that I had but little money, but somehow I was rich. The boat seemed to be flying down the river, and I laughed at the trees as they seemed to whirl along the bank. I had a great scheme on hand, and after that was going to drink nothing but wine. I thanked the old man time and again for introducing me to drink so delightful a beverage, and thought what fools men were to toil in discontent when they could drink wine and be happy. After a while the pleasurable feelings left me, and were supplanted by sickening sensations.

"My head swam so that I could scarcely see anything. While I was in this condition the boat reached my landing. I saw a hick, heard half familiar voices, and then I saw a face, ghastly pale. I was whirled away in the hack, and saw the ghastly face again, and heard groans of despair. In the night some one tried to arouse me, but in vain. At morning I awoke with a feverish thirst, and in that horror and shame—that feeling which convinces a man of his unworthiness to live—I crept out of bed and down stairs. I could not go into mother's room. I could not bear to see the face I had made ghastly. I went to the well to cool my burning brow. There I met one of the servants, an old negro who had romped with me on his shoulders when I was a boy. The old man did not look at me when I approached, and turning to him I said, 'Uncle Alf, don't treat me this way. I know I ought to die, but I hope to make you all forget this.' Tears were streaming down his face. Turning and pointing to the house he said in a voice of trembling emotion: 'Mars' John, Mars' John, may the Lawd fergib yer!' I waited for no more. A terrible dread seized me. I ran to the house and hurried into mother's room. Great God! she lay there dead! I kissed her ghastly face and cried aloud in

my anguish. The room swam before me and I fell insensible to the floor. When I regained consciousness, old Alf was sitting by the bedside. The ghastly face had gone into the ground, but I saw it still. I cursed a fate that had not sent me home in a coffin, and even now, after long years, I wish that I had been taken home dead. Now, young man, you may drink your wine."

"No! no!" I exclaimed, throwing the wine from the window. "I am going home to see my mother and press the warm red lips of love. Thank God, that you have saved her face from ghastliness."

Work and Play.

HOUSEWORK FOR GIRLS.

ONE of the features in Southern social life which struck Northern visitors to the New Orleans Exhibition as novel and unexpected was the common habit of forming large households by the union of different branches of the same family, and the apportionment of labor among the ladies.

In a family of three or four married sisters or sisters-in-law, one, for example, superintends the cooking, another the dairy, another the sewing, and a fourth the care of the chambers; while such duties as cake-making, preserving, and looking after the poultry usually fall to the young girls. Circumstances have changed the character of Southern women; and instead of the luxurious idle languor which we imagine as the atmosphere of their sunny homes, we find the busy hum of industry.

The question was publicly suggested lately how much housework should an educated young girl be expected to do? A brilliant woman journalist replied in effect, "Only that which she cannot hire others to do for her." "Mrs Carlyle," she says, "would have been more dignified if she had let grates go unpurged and kept her fingers white and her temper sweet."

Housework is almost a lost art among educated American girls. Their mothers unless possessed of large means, were early taught to sweep, to dust, to make beds and cook, besides darning, hemming, felling, and other mysteries of the needle. They learned how to keep their stoves bright and their tempers sweet.

In Germany the noblest fraulein goes through an apprenticeship in the kitchen and chambers to make her a complete housewife. This German training in Queen Victoria's family enabled the Princess Louise, when in Canada, to astonish her guests with plates and ornate letters of her own making.

American girls are apt to look upon such employments as vulgar and belittling. Yet the German matron, who is in her kitchen until noon, discusses politics in her salon in the evening with an accuracy of knowledge which we fear our women could hardly equal.

After all, does the embroidery of a hand-screen really call for more artistic skill than the compounding of a lucent jelly? Or does the spoiling of fresh-baked china with mediocre painting demand higher intellectual power than the thorough organization and control of a household in its minutest detail?

Would it not be wise for our girls, in choosing the woman's work before them, to consider which duties are really the tithes of anise and cumin, and which the weightier matters of the law?—*Youth's Companion*.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN JEWISH HISTORY.

B.C. 587.] LESSON VI. [Feb. 7.

THE FIERY FURNACE.

Dan. 3. 16-28. Comm. vs. 16-28.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace.—Dan. 3. 17.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

God will deliver in the hour of temptation and trouble those who are faithful to him.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Dan. 2. 1-23. Tu. Dan. 2. 24-49. W. Dan. 3. 1-15. Th. Dan. 3. 16-30. F. 1 Pet. 4. 12-19. Sa. Matt. 5. 10-20. Su. Rev. 3. 1-13.

TIME.—18th year of Nebuchadnezzar, B.C. 587. About 16 years after the last lesson; and near the time of the fall of Jerusalem (Les. 4).

PLACE.—The plain of Dura, about five miles south-east of Babylon.

INTERVENING HISTORY.—Soon after Daniel and his friends had become officers in Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, Daniel had an opportunity to show his wisdom by revealing and interpreting a dream for the king. Then Daniel was made chief ruler, and his three friends were exalted to high office at his request.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—1. *The golden image* was erected on the plain of Dura, 5 miles from Babylon. It was 60 cubits (90 feet) high, and 6 cubits (9 feet) broad. This includes the pedestal. It was probably of wood or clay, and covered with plates of gold. Diodorus tells us of three golden images in the temple of Bel at Babylon, worth, with their altars of gold, \$38,000,000. 2. *The inauguration*—The officers and chief men from all parts of the empire were summoned to Babylon, and compelled to bow down and worship before the golden image, on pain of being cast into the fiery furnace. When the music sounded, all bowed before the image except the three men who were with Daniel in our last lesson. 16. *Shadrach, etc.*—See last lesson. *Said to the king*—When they were summoned to him for not worshipping the image. 17. *If it be so*—If God sees this to be best. 19. *Full of fury*—(1) Because their conduct was in direct disobedience to his command. (2) It interfered with his plans of unifying the empire. (3) It was against his religion. (4) It seemed a bad example to his subjects. 20. *Fiery furnace*—Such as was used for smelting metals; a hole in the top into which the men were cast, and an opening in the side, through which they were seen, and came forth. 21. *Bound*—With iron chains (Jer. 40. 4). *Coats*—A long robe. *Hosen*—Inner tunic. *Hats*—Rather, cloaks. These are mentioned because they were combustible, and yet were not burned. 24. *Astonished*—Astonished. 25. *The Son of God*—A son of God, a divine being, an angel (v. 28.)

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—The intervening history.—The three men.—The golden image.—The inauguration assembly.—The object of Nebuchadnezzar.—The fiery furnace.—Religious principle.—The modern golden image and fiery furnace.—How God still delivers his people.—The effect on ourselves and others of standing by our principles.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—What opening toward usefulness and renown came to Daniel soon after our last lesson? What offices did he and his three friends hold after that? How many years between those events and the lesson for to-day? What prophets lived at this time? Who was king of Judah? What great event took place there, not far from this time?

SUBJECT: SERVING GOD AT ANY COST.

I. THE GOLDEN IMAGE.—What plan did Nebuchadnezzar form to consolidate his new empire? Describe the golden image. Where was it placed? Who were summoned to worship it? What punishment was threatened to those who should refuse?

II. THE MEN OF TRUE RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLE (vs. 16-18).—What three men refused to worship the image? What other proof of religious principle had they shown before? What office did they now hold? (Dan. 2. 49.) Give us an account of their summons before the king. What was their reply to his demand? Did they know that God would