

sons of life. There are so many people who scatter their energies, and mind other people's businesses, and look everywhere except where 'de book is.' As a rule, the people who mind other people's affairs never mind their own, and, after all, it is our own tasks that we are responsible for.

The Apostle Paul taught just the same lesson as the negress when he said, 'One thing I do.' The success in life comes to those who do one thing, and do it well. 'All things come to him who waits,' says the old proverb. I would rather read it, 'All things come to him who sticks'—that is, if he sticks long enough. There is no royal road to getting a thing done, but the common road of doing it.

'When I do a thing, I do it. I ain't looking here and dere and everwhichaway. I'se looking right where de book is.'—Christian Age.

### Her Defender.

A heart may beat true under the ragged-est coat. That instinct of chivalry which rushes to the defense of the weak and the oppressed dwells in every manly boy, be he rich or poor, big or little.

He wasn't very big, but he was a sturdy little chap, with a face that bore the marks of much thinking and premature responsibility. He was calling his evening papers good and loud on the corner of two streets.

A ragged young girl was selling flowers near by, when a man, rushing to catch his car, knocked her against the side of the building. Without stopping, probably without noticing what he had done, he continued his rush, when the boy stepped in front of him defiantly: 'Say, what do you want to knock a girl down for? Hit me; I'm big enough.'

The man paused in surprise, and then glanced around. He saw the flower-girl, picking up her wares, and understood. Without a moment's hesitation he went back to her, gave her enough money to make her eyes sparkle with joy, and said:

'I'm sorry, my dear, that I hurt you. I didn't see.' Then turning to the boy, he continued: 'You said you were big enough, young man, but you're a great deal bigger than you think. Men like you will have a lot to do with keeping this world in a condition of self-respect.'

Then he caught his car, and the boy and girl stood there wondering what he meant. —S. S. Messenger.

### Bread Cast Upon the Waters.

The railway train was creeping slowly through valley after valley of sunny Sicily—stiflingly sunny this hot midsummer afternoon. In the distance towered mysterious Etna, the circle of snowy clouds crowning its highest peak, shining in peculiar contrast to the heated atmosphere of the plains and valleys. Within the cars, passengers sought the shady side of the train, while here and there audible grumbings were heard at the clouds of dust and cinders that blew in through the open windows.

Presently the train halted at a village, and, after pausing for a moment to let passengers on and off, drew on to the edge of the town and stopped at a water-tank to renew the supply of water for the locomotive. Here the railway track approached quite close to the adjacent mountain, which rose, in one terrace after another, almost to cloudland.

Just opposite the car window, on the mountain slope, was a neat little cottage, with a brilliant flower-garden surrounding it. The fresh, bright flowers at once caught the attention of the passengers who had been travelling these hours through heat and dust, and they crowded to the car windows to gain a momentary glimpse of the refreshing scene.

Sitting on the low stone wall that separated the garden from the railroad grounds, was a young girl, her brilliant dress vieing in brightness with the flowers about her, her dark eyes looking with wonder upon the train and the scores of men and women who had come out of, and were going back again into that great, mysterious world where the railroad began and ended. She heard the many words uttered by the strangers, and, though most of these words belonged to a

language she could not understand, she knew they expressed admiration for her flowers—the flowers she loved so dearly and which she parted with so reluctantly to the few in the village who could be induced to become purchasers.

As the curious eyes of the girl glanced from window to window they rested at length upon the pale, worn face of a lady whose weary air and attitude, as she half-reclined upon the cushioned seat, marked her as an invalid. The eyes of the strange lady met those of the girl, and involuntarily each smiled upon the other. The girl hesitated just a moment, and then, springing to the ground, she hastily gathered a large bunch of roses from a rosebush near at hand, climbed upon the wall again, and, just as the train started upon its way, threw the flowers into the lady's lap. A flush of pleasure came upon the pale face, the thin lips spoke words of gratitude that the girl could not hear, yet which she knew were uttered, and the next instant the train had disappeared around a bend in the valley, and the dark-eyed, dark-haired Sicilian girl stood alone among her flowers.

An hour later the lady was with her friends in the city of Palermo.

'Take my flowers, Bettina,' she said to the maid, as she lay back in the easy-chair and gave a sigh of relief at the thought that the tiresome journey was over. And then, when the maid had carefully arranged the roses in a vase, the lady added, 'Place them in the window where they can be seen. They have been such a delight to me that I should like to share the pleasure with others.'

And the kind thought was not lost. The window of the little sitting-room looked out on a narrow street upon which were a series of small, dark dwellings, the homes, many of them, of fishermen and porters and their families. The radiant roses were not long in the window before they caught the eyes of the dwellers in these cottages, and soon sad-eyed women were looking up at them with pleased expression, and little children were calling out words of childish admiration in their strange, mixed dialect. Passers-by, too, smiled as they saw the flowers, and the pale-faced lady in the easy-chair smiled back at them and at the children across the street as she saw the pleasure given by the gift of the unknown Sicilian girl.

The following morning a shop-keeper of the neighborhood called and was ushered into the presence of the lady.

'The signora will pardon my intrusion,' he began, with the formal politeness characteristic of the Italian, 'but I saw the beautiful flowers in signora's window, and have called to ask about them. Their color is so rich. It is hard to grow flowers here with that velvety appearance. These must have come from favorable soil. May I ask the signora where she procured them? I am in the trade.'

And then the lady told him the story of the flower garden and the kindness of its young mistress.

A few days later, Maddalena—such was the name of the dark-eyed girl of the roses—was surprised when a strange gentleman came into her garden and began to talk very earnestly of the flowers. He asked about the varieties she grew, how she disposed of them, and whether she could increase the quantity now produced. At length he made known the fact that he was a shop-keeper of Palermo. His store included a floral department, and he now wanted to make arrangements to purchase Maddalena's flowers for his city trade. And so it was finally agreed that the young girl should send daily by the railway train such flowers as she could gather from the garden and should receive pay for the same as they were sold by the merchant.

The trade prospered until Maddalena and her two brothers were kept constantly busy caring for the garden and the flowers. To-day a pleasant home has taken the place of the little cottage on the hillside, and the family occupies an honorable position in the village. But it was long after the first visit of the shopkeeper to her home that Maddalena learned that all this came from the generous, loving act which her kindness of heart led her to do for the happiness of one whom she had never expected to see or to hear of again.—Clem V. Wagner, in 'Epworth Herald.'

### Wasted Lives.

Men think it is an awful sight,  
To see a soul just set adrift,  
On that drear voyage from whose night  
The ominous shadows never lift;  
But 'tis more awful to behold  
A helpless infant newly born,  
Whose little hands unconscious hold  
The keys of darkness and of morn.

Mine held them once: I flung away  
Those keys that might have open set  
The golden sluices of the day  
But clutch the keys of darkness yet;  
I hear the reapers singing go  
Into God's harvest; I, that might  
With them have chosen, here below  
Grope shuddering at the gates of night.

O glorious youth, that once was mine!  
O high ideal! all in vain  
Ye enter at this ruined shrine  
Whence worship ne'er shall rise again;  
The bat and owl inhabit here,  
The snake nests in the altar-stone,  
The sacred vessels moulder near,  
The image of the God is gone.

—J. R. Lowell.

### A Good Friend.

'If only I didn't have to work!' How many a girl has whispered this when stooping over the kitchen stove, or when weary from hours of piano practice or from a long day behind the counter. How easy it is, then, to envy the rich, who, according to the popular theory, have 'nothing to do but enjoy themselves.'

Yet this is one of the pitiful mistakes by means of which we rob ourselves of much that is sweet in life. No one has anything to say in defense of drudgery. But work itself is one of humanity's best friends. Hard work, which, tiring the body, makes sleep sweet, which fills the brain to the exclusion of worry and anxiety, which makes our hours of leisure delightful by contrast, is no foe to our happiness.

Doubtless some of us have wondered that those who have made a competence or a fortune do not lay aside business cares and devote themselves to enjoyment. Perhaps an explanation is found in the testimony of one of the most wealthy men in the world, who was asked if riches produced content. 'Believe me,' he answered, 'the truest source of happiness is work.'

Then, girls, instead of repining over the fact that you belong to this workaday world, why not enjoy the sunshine as you go along? Real happiness may be found over a mending-basket or a dishpan. There is joy in hearty effort, joy in overcoming. Surely the Father who has planned so carefully for our welfare, in decreeing that we shall work, knew that to be best for our lasting good and our present happiness.—S. S. Messenger.

### His Decision.

Twenty-five years ago a young man was sent as a special clerk from Milford, Massachusetts, to Chicago. He was placed in a responsible position, and soon made the acquaintance of many other young men to whom Chicago was a commercial Mecca.

The new clerk was a pleasant fellow, and had a taste for social life; but situated as he was, the social life had to be such as he could make for himself, and that was, not unnaturally, the free and easy comradeship of other clerks. Almost without realizing it, he found himself gradually drifting into dissipation. It was a social drink here, a quiet game of cards there, and always a cigar in the mouth. Every moment that was not spent in business or in bed was given to things which at the time seemed to him innocent enough, but which were really undermining his manhood.

After he had been in Chicago a month or two, he met an old classmate of his from his home town. A few evenings later he found himself in his friend's room.

'Look here, old fellow,' said the friend, 'I want to have a straight talk with you.'

'Go ahead,' said the other, pleasantly. 'I will. Now, what have you got out here in Chicago? A clerkship with a chance. What does the chance depend upon? Education and friends. What is your educa-