

EVANGEL.

[Translated by Francois Coppee, in the "Churchman."]

The Lord alone with Peter walked one day
Where bright Gennesareth in sunshine lay,
At that hour when the sun has fiercest glare.
They reached a cottage as they wandered, where
Before a door-way, ruinous and low,
A fisher's widow sat in garb of woe,
Full of sad thoughts. Yet she forbore to weep,
That she might spin her task and rock her babe to sleep.

Not far away the Lord and Peter stood,
Half-hidden by a fig-tree in a wood.

As they looked on unseen, along the road
Came an old beggar staggering with a load,
An earthen jar poised on his trembling head.
He paused before the widow, and he said :
" Woman, this milk has to be carried still
A half-mile further over yonder hill.
But, as you see, exhausted by the heat,
I cannot get it to the village street;
And if I find no help I lose to-day
The penny I was promised as my pay."

The widow rose. She neither spake nor smiled,
But dropped her distaff, ceased to lull her child,
Raised the tall pitcher slowly on her head,
Waved the man on, and followed in his tread.

The eager Peter spoke. " Master," he said,
" 'Tis right to succor those who need our aid ;
But is this woman doing right to fly
From house and child to help a passer-by ?
Doubtless the man need not have travelled far
To find some idler who would bear his jar."

Then the Lord looked on Peter. " Be thou sure,
Whene'er a poor man helps a man more poor,
My Father's care o'er his own home is thrown.
She hath done well in that which she hath done."

As thus the Lord his servant's zeal restrained,
He took the mother's place, and even deigned
The distaff with his hands divine to ply,
And rocked the restless babe, and sang its lullaby.

Then rising when it slept he waved his hand,
And Peter followed at his mute command.

When the poor widow reached her cabin bare—
A home made rich by God's protecting care—
She found—but never knew by whom 'twas done—
That her babe slept, and that her flax was spun.