

Family Department.

AN AUTUMN HYMN.

BY THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF WAKEFIELD.

"He . . . gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons."—Acts xiv. 17.

The year is swiftly waning;
The summer days are past;
And life, brief life, is speeding;
The end is nearing fast.

The ever-changing seasons
In silence come and go;
But Thou, Eternal Father,
No time or change canst know.

Behold the bending orchards,
With bounteous fruit are crowned;
Lord, in our hearts more richly
Let Heavenly fruits abound.

Oh, by each mercy sent us,
And by each grief and pain,
By blessings like the sunshine,
And sorrows like the rain,—

Our barren hearts make fruitful
With every goodly grace,
That we Thy Name may hallow,
And see at last Thy Face.

JULIE.

CHAPTER I.

ELSIE'S STORY—SATURDAY AFTERNOON.

"Tea's ready!" screamed Manda, clapping her hands out of the kitchen window.

Such a bother! That was always the way. We hadn't half finished making our plans, and after tea the little ones would all be around us.

"We'll come in five minutes. Tea can wait," said Guy, in his lordly manner. "Lift up the lid, Elsie—gently, now; a little more—that's all right;" and Emperor fluttered into the basket by the side of Joan. "They're both secured now," said Guy, and he shut down the lid on his handsomest carriers, and made it fast with a piece of string.

"Your aunt's sitting at table. You'd best come 'fonce!" screamed Manda; and she pulled down the window directly to make sure of having the last word.

Manda always pronounced aunt "ant," and it was no use trying to teach her better. "Can't you say 'aunt,' Manda?" I used to say sometimes. "Ant," she would answer, and never see any difference. Her real name was Amanda; but the "A" beginning it made it a whole syllable longer so we always left it out.

Auntie was sitting before the tea tray with Chubbie on one side and Puff on the other, and Julie next to Puff.

"Go and brush your hair: Lance," auntie said; "and very likely your hands want washing too."

"My hands aren't dirty," said Lance, indignantly, holding them up. And pushing his rumpled hair off his forehead he said, "There, auntie, that's brushed enough."

"Go and brush your hair; Lance," commanded auntie again.

"Oh, well, since you're so particular, old lady!" and Lance bounced out of the room whistling shrilly.

Lance's whistling always went through and through my head; it was so piercing. It was the shrillest whistle I ever heard—not a bit like Guy's. Guy whistled so softly, such a sweet low whistle, like music itself. It was strange, though, that it should be so, because Guy had such a heavy touch on the piano, and could not play nicely at all, while Lance used to make up waltzes of his own, and play them beautifully. He never would read the notes. Miss Bryant,

his music-teacher, used to rap his knuckles with a lead pencil to make him look at the music; it was not a bit of good. He could play over any air that he heard once or twice from ear.

Another funny thing was, though auntie was always finding fault with Lance about his hair and hands, and lots of other things, he was the only one of us that dared call her "old lady;" because, as Rose said an elderly lady of forty who was not married has an objection to be spoken to like that.

Rose was the second eldest; she came after Guy. She was the belle of our school, and the belle of Mrs. Craigie's last Christmas party. She seemed to know everything, and was able to do everything; we were all so proud of Rose.

"Our Beauties," we used to call Guy and Rose. Lance and I were never anything particular to look at. Guy was such a handsome fellow! It was wonderful what a difference there was between Guy and Lance. Guy always finished off everything he began, and finished it well; Lance left off everything in the middle, and seldom finished at all. I don't think another boy in the world could be as untidy as Lance. He used to take off his things in the middle of the room, and leave them there in a heap; if any of us went in the dark to the boys' bedroom, we were sure to fall over Lance's clothes, or stumble over his boots. It used to make Guy mad. He said he hated having a bedroom with Lance, and would often give a great kick to the heap, and coats, trousers and waist-coats would go flying over the floor. If his collar got lost he would generally find it in the grate, and his necktie under the bed. But Lance would run miles to do anything for anybody; he was always so very good-natured.

Guy was thirteen, and Rose was twelve; I was eleven, and Lance was ten. Juliet was eight, but she counted with the little ones, Chubbie and Puff—who were five and four. Chubbie's proper name was Charlotte, but it didn't suit her a bit. One always thinks a Charlotte ought to be a thin, long-faced person, and our Charlotte was so fat and round, the best thing we could call her was Chubbie. Puff's real name was Dufferin—our mothers' maiden name; but Chubbie used to call him Puff when he was a baby, and we all got into the way.

We knew Lance was coming downstairs from his shrill whistle. I put my fingers into my ears.

"Take your fingers out of your ears, Elsie," auntie said.

"I wish Lance wouldn't whistle like that; it's like a steam-engine," I said.

"Steam-engine!" retorted Lance, and he gave my hair a pull as he passed my chair. "You haven't any ear for music!"

"Music?" said Rose, opening her eyes, and we all burst out laughing. Lance never minded being laughed at; he joined in the laugh himself?

"Which side is the bread buttered?" asked Lance, helping himself to a slice and turning it about in his hand.

Rose got a little red; she was sensitive about things. She liked things to be refined and graceful and "genteel," as Lance used to say. Only Rose said that word set her teeth on edge.

"For shame, Lance!" she said.

"Butter keep quiet, I see," he answered.

"What d'you say?" asked Guy. He always said, "What d'you say?" when Lance made a pun.

"Butter keep quiet!" bawled Lance.

"Hum!" said Guy. "Not bad for ten."

"Make a butter!" laughed Lance. "But yet butter not try."

Then we all shouted. And Chubbie and Puff laughed the loudest, though they hadn't a notion of course, what we were laughing about.

"What have you been doing all the afternoon?" auntie asked, when she had stopped laughing. It was Saturday afternoon, half-

holiday, and auntie had taken the little one into town to try on new boots.

"Hanging round after the pigeons, said Guy. "We're going to fly Emperor and Joan from Whitstone this evening."

"Have you prepared your lessons for Monday?" she asked—"all of you?"

"I have," said Guy. "I have," said Rose and I.

"Lance?" asked auntie.

"All but a tiny piece of French exercise. I'll do it in a jiffy when we come back."

"If it's to be done in a 'jiffy,'" said auntie, "it can be done before you go."

Lance's face fell. He made a face at Guy.

"I'll see that he does it this evening, auntie, said Guy. "The birds will find their way home sooner while the sun keeps up."

"Then I'll leave it with you, Guy," auntie said; and she knew Guy would make Lance do it. "The sooner you start the better," she added. How are the girls going?"

"We're all going to walk one way, and come back by train," answered Rose. "We'll spend our own pocket-money."

"Very well, said auntie. "I've got no pennies to spare for you to-day. Get off as fast as you can."

We all rushed out into the yard, and Chubbie and Puff began peering through the cracks of the basket where Emperor and Joan had been put.

"Get away, Puff," said Guy; "Those goggles of yours will frighten Joan into fits."

"So'll yours," stuttered Puff, who would never be put down about anything.

"Well, I aint giving her the benefit of mine," said Guy. "Move away, Puff. Julie—where's Julie? Look here, Julie; I want you to be in the yard when the pigeons come home. The minute they fly down you're to run and look at the clock in the hall, and tell me the exact time."

"But I'm coming with you to fly Emperor and Joan from Whitstone," said Juliet, opening her eyes wide.

"Nonsense, Juliet!" said Rose. "You couldn't walk there."

"I could walk there," said Julie, plaintively.

"You couldn't," said Rose, impatiently.

"I could," retorted Julie, with the corners of her mouth turning down.

"No, no, Julie," said Guy; "you're too small, you know. You stop with the little ones, and watch for the pigeons coming home, and tell me the time. I've put my watch exactly with the hall clock. I want to know to the very minute how soon Emperor and Joan will do it."

"I'm not small," said Julie. "I'm not one of the little ones. I won't stop to look at the clock."

That was always the way with Julie. Of course she was small, and of course she was one of the little ones, and she was always wanting to come along with us big ones when it was not convenient at all. She couldn't walk fast; and if she did, she got a pain in her side. Then she would begin to cough, and Guy would have to carry her on his back a little way. If Julie could only make up her mind to keep with the little ones, it would be convenient to all. She kept them out of mischief, and could keep out of our way as well.

"Ah, yes, you will," said Guy, coaxingly. "Dear, good little Julie, you will! There's only you to tell the time, you see; you're as important as any of us, after all. Auntie'll forget all about the pigeons coming home, and Manda'll be scrubbing about the place. Chubbie can't tell the time, and Puff can't: you can—aint you an important little girl?"

Guy generally got people to do what he wanted; he had such a clever way of putting things.

"But it's nicer to go to Whitstone to start the pigeons and come back by train, than to stop in the yard with Chubbie and Puff, and run