



## The Day of Small Things.

"But it's such a little thing, mother! The other girls are all going to take lilies and roses."

"Have you anything better to give, dear?"

"Why, no, but I don't see that that makes it any better."

Alice's mother shook her head.

"Three texts—one for reproof or warning, one for encouragement, and one to show what is required of us," she said, smiling at the girl as she stood bending down to pick a dried leaf from a flourishing scarlet geranium.

"For warning. 'Take heed that you do not your alms before men, to be seen of them, otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.' For encouragement. 'For who shall despise the day of small things?' To show what is required of us: 'For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to what he hath not.'"

"I don't think that I meant to 'do my alms before men,' mother."

"No, dear, I do not believe that you did, but there is danger that our giving way come to be influenced by man's opinion, if we do not constantly remind ourselves that, while man 'looketh on the outward appearance,' God looketh on the heart, and judges thereby, for, as he thinketh in his heart, so is he,' that is, God knows that our will is, or is not, good to serve him. Give all that you possibly can, but never be ashamed because your all is but little. He can use it to work his ends as surely as though it were much."

"Mother, I believe you have a text for everything that can possibly happen. And now come along, little pot," laughed Alice, as she lifted the geranium in her arms. "And, mother dear, I'll try not to care when I see the splendid lilies and roses going up. Perhaps, after all, I was thinking more of the girls than of what God would think of my posy." she admitted. "And see," she went on, addressing the plant, as she shook it gently, "that you make a happy time for some one, even if you are not a rose or a lily." And then she went away, with a half-laughing, half-serious glance back over her shoulder at her mother.

The plants which the Sunday School presented were scattered far and wide among the poor and sick, bearing messages of comfort, cheering sad hearts with the knowledge that they were thought of and cared for, but by their givers then were soon forgotten.

And so the season passed away, and one afternoon some weeks later Alice's mother asked her to carry a little parcel to an old woman living in a room of a tenement house at some distance from their home.

"I don't mind the walk," she said, in reply to her mother's question; "but she is such a very unclean, unpleasant old lady, mother dear."

"She will want this tea as much as though she were as that she ought to be; but I think that you will find her very much improved since last you were there, Alice."

An hour passed, and Alice was back.

"Mother," she cried, as she came into the room,

"I never saw such a change in any place as in Mrs. Kelly's room. Why, it is clean, actually clean! And she was clean herself, and it was a real pleasure, instead of an affliction, to sit and talk to her. She always was bright, but one couldn't bear to stay there longer than was absolutely necessary. What has come over her, mother?"

"Did you notice a geranium on her table, Alice?"

"Yes, indeed; and the funny part of it is that it is the one I gave her. I recognized it immediately by the brown pot; and I knew that some of the flowers were to be sent there. But what of it, mother?"

"Only that it is the cause of all Mrs. Kelly's improvement and present comfort, dear."

"Why, Mother Gray! whatever do you mean?" cried Alice, looking at her in wide-eyed astonishment.

"Exactly that, Alice. When I went there for the first time I noticed instantly some rude efforts toward cleanliness, and on questioning Mrs. Kelly, she told me that after the bright little flower came she was, as she expressed it, 'clean ashamed of the looks of things. So at first she washed up the table on which it stood; but that only made the window appear mere dingy, and so the window was washed too. And so it went on from one thing to another till, when I went there, there was an air of respectability which struck me at once. I had often tried, in vain, to make her do this very thing, but never for an instant thought of trying such an expedient. But now she was so delighted with the result of her work that it was easy to suggest other changes, and teach her to keep things nice with the least labour, and finally, when I hung up the little muslin curtain, her delight knew no bounds. Of course she is, and always will be, slack about her work; but it is so much better than once I hoped for that I cannot be thankful enough. When she told me the story, and showed me the plant, I, too, recognized the pot."

"And you sent me there on purpose to-day that I might see with my own unbelieving eyes what God could do with—only a geranium? Mother dear, never, never again will I despise the day of small things!"

## They Did Not Eat Him.

A missionary was landed some what unceremoniously upon one of the Cannibal Islands, and here is the story as he told it afterwards to the ship captain who landed him and found him afterwards still living:

"When I landed upon the island there was no mistaking the kind of preparation made by those cannibals, and the significance of their very looks. I said to the chief, 'do you wish to eat me?' and he nodded assent. The same question was asked of the man next him, and there was the same response. One by one they indicated that they perfectly understood what the programme was. I rolled up the leg of my trousers, and from the calf of my leg I cut a strip and handed it to the chief, who put it in his mouth, made a face and spat it out, and offered it to the next man, who found it equally distasteful, and they concluded I had better live than die. I have been preaching the Gospel ever since, for I had a cork leg."

A Missionary in Persia says that there is a woman there who wanted to give some money toward buying Bibles. She is very poor. Her husband is dead, and she has two little children and her sick mother to take care of. You may be sure there is no money in that house for candy or toys, hardly enough for the plainest food and clothes. What do you think she did? She cut off her beautiful hair and sold it, and brought the money to the missionary. "I had nothing else to give," she said.

Last spring, when the tulips began to bloom, little Harry ran to his mother and said, "Oh mamma, do come and see the flowers! the *four lips* have blossomed!"