

### "A Cup of Cold Water."

(MATTHEW 10: 42.)

THE Lord of the harvest walked forth one day  
Where the fields were white with the  
ripening wheat,  
Where those he had sent in the early morn  
Were reaping the grain in the noon-day  
heat.  
He had chosen a place for each faithful one,  
And hidden them work till the day was done.

Apart from the others, with troubled voice,  
Spoke one who had gathered no golden  
grain:

"The Master has given no work to me,  
And my coming hither has been in vain;  
The reapers with gladness and song will  
come,

But no sheaves will be mine in the harvest  
home."

He heard the complaint, and he called her  
name:

"Dear child, why standest thou idle here?  
Go fill thy cup from the hillside stream  
And bring it to those who are toiling near;  
I will bless thy labour, and it shall be  
Kept in remembrance as done for Me."

'Twas a little service; but grateful hearts  
Thanked God for the water so cool and  
clear;

And some who were fainting through thirst  
and heat  
Went forth with new strength to the work  
so dear;

And many a weary soul looked up  
Revived and cheered by the little cup.

Dear Lord, I have looked with an envious  
heart

On those who were reaping the golden  
grain;

I have thought in thy work I had no part,  
And mourned that my life was lived in  
vain.

But now thou hast opened my eyes to see  
That thou hast some little work for me.

If only this labour of love be mine,  
To gladden the heart of some toiling saint,  
To whisper some words that shall cheer the  
weak,

Do something to comfort the worn and  
faint—

Though small be the service, I will not grieve,  
Content just a cup of cold water to give.

And when the Lord of the harvest shall come,  
And the labourers home from the field shall  
call,

He will not look for my gathered sheaves;  
But his loving words on my ear will fall,  
"Thou gavest a cup of cold water to Me,  
A heavenly home thy reward shall be."

—The Family Friend.

### Nature's Workshop.

If you were to go out on one of  
these early spring days into a forest  
you would see that a great work was  
going on there, though you could not  
hear a sound save, perhaps, the rustle  
of a breeze among the branches, nor  
see anything in motion except it might  
be a waving bough or a fluttering leaf.  
But you would note that a great and  
rapid change was coming over the scene  
before you. Where, but a few weeks  
ago, the trees and shrubs and the  
ground beneath were alike bare and  
brown, you would observe indications  
of returning life and beauty. You  
would see on some trees and plants the  
red buds just starting, upon others the  
leaves half unfolded, and on the ground  
the blades of wild grass and the stalks  
of flowers pushing their way out of the  
layer of mould. It is evidently one of  
the busiest places that could possibly  
be imagined, and yet one of the most  
quiet. There is no jar and whirl of  
wheels, no hum of spindles and thud  
of looms, no grating sounds of files or  
saws or hammers, and yet the most  
wonderful works of architecture are  
going up, the most curious patterns are  
being woven, and the most intricate  
pieces of workmanship are being put  
together.

If our sight could penetrate the

bodies of the trees we could gain some  
knowledge of Nature's ways of working.  
We would see ascending through the  
most minute tubes, drawn up by some  
invisible power, a countless number of  
streams of a sweet watery substance  
called sap. This sap is composed prin-  
cipally of water drawn out of the earth  
by the roots of the trees and carrying  
with it certain substances which help  
to make the buds, leaves, flowers and  
the green, new wood. The sap may be  
properly called the life-blood of plants,  
since its office is very much the same  
in plants as that of the blood in man  
and other animals, carrying the life-  
sustaining properties to every part of  
the body. Like man and brutes, plants  
must have light and air in order to live.  
The sap itself would not sustain the life  
of the plant, if it were not for the help  
it receives from the sunshine and the  
surrounding atmosphere, any more than  
the blood in an animal would keep it  
alive and vigorous if it were placed in  
a dark, air-tight room. Every plant  
has lungs, or organs which answer the  
purpose of lungs in drawing air into  
its body. Every leaf of a plant has a  
countless number of little openings, or  
mouths, so small that you can only see  
them with a microscope. Through these  
mouths plants inhale various properties,  
of which the air is full, especially the  
gases they need to make them live.  
Through them they also send out the air  
and gases from which they have taken  
all they require, and which have become  
impure and unfit to breathe. The sap  
which has come up from the roots, into  
the leaves then meets with the air, and  
together they make wonderful combina-  
tions of new material, which the sap  
carries back in its return journey to  
help build up other parts of the plant.

We may imagine that the particles  
of sap are little servants or workmen  
whom Nature employs to build up the  
trees and shrubs and weave the texture  
of their leaves and flowers. Just follow,  
in imagination, one of these little work-  
men, who are carrying up the materials  
to build the plants in some such way  
as you have seen other workmen carry  
the bricks and mortar to build the walls  
of a house. This little burden-bearer  
gets his load of carbon and some other  
substances that are called for down in  
the dark ground, where Nature keeps  
her choicest stores, and then he goes  
quickly up the long winding stairways  
in the interior of the tree, up and up,  
leaving a little here and a little there,  
as he goes to the topmost branch, and  
out into the little tender twig, where  
he leaves his load to swell the bud and  
open the leaf.

And one of the strangest things about  
this business is that these workmen  
never make a mistake. Here are grow-  
ing in a small space a great variety of  
trees and smaller plants of different  
general shape and texture, with differ-  
ent shaped leaves and flowers, and  
bearing different kinds of fruit, yet  
all drawing their life from the same  
ground. The sweet violet and the  
poison ivy nestle at the foot of the oak,  
and obtain their supplies of nourish-  
ment from the same soil that sustains  
their giant protector. The little work-  
men select from the same great store-  
house the material that is needed for  
each plant where they are appointed to  
work. They never make such a blunder  
as to carry way up to the topmost twig  
of that maple a particle that was in-  
tended to help form a birch tree; and  
as for carrying up a bit of poison, in-  
tended for the laurel, into the innocent

petals of the azalea, such a thing is  
really impossible. We may trust these  
workmen always, for they never are  
disobedient to the great Architect of  
nature, under whose direction they are  
employed.

And what an innumerable multitude  
of these little joiners and masons,  
painters and master-builders, are at  
work in the forest to day putting to-  
gether all this wonderful architecture,  
these massive columns, these graceful  
arches, these bowers of leaves and green  
pendants. How many tons and tons  
of material are being lifted up high in  
the air every moment in this vast  
forest; while through all and over all  
there is perfect order and harmony.  
When we think of these things we are  
prompted to exclaim with the poet—

"My heart is awed within me when I think  
Of the great miracle that still goes on  
In silence round me; the perpetual work of  
Thy creation  
Finished, yet renewed forever."

### The Whirlpool.

BEWARE of the whirlpool, brother,  
The whirlpool strong and deep;  
Steer thy bark with a steady hand,  
And far from its dangers keep;

For a wicked siren singeth low  
To lure you to the spot.  
Ah! lend no ear to her wooing voice—  
Beware, and heed her not.

She beckons you over the fatal waves  
To ruin and shame; for the breath  
Of this cruel siren is alcohol,  
And the raging whirlpool, death.

—Kate McDonald.

### "Our Daily Bread."

WHEN the German poet Herder was  
dying, his family pressed food and wine  
upon him.

"Can you not give me," he said, "a  
great thought to refresh me?"

Byron, whenever he found his cre-  
ative power growing feeble, threw him-  
self into scenes of great beauty and  
waited until nature "struck the electric  
chain wherewith we're darkly bound."

When George Eliot was preparing  
to write a novel Mr. Lewes (who  
guarded the health of her mind as  
parents do that of the bodies of their  
children) was used to take her to Swit-  
zerland or Italy, and took care that  
she heard noble music every day.

"How do you infuse such power  
and magnetism into your sermons?"  
asked a young clergyman of one of the  
most eloquent of American pulpit  
orators. "Your life is eventless and  
monotonous, you meet commonplace  
people and are deluged with common-  
place thoughts, like the rest of us.  
How do you keep yourself awake and  
above it all?"

"Before I sit down to write I go to  
the Five Points, or to the wharves  
where the emigrants come in, or to a  
prison or hospital," was the reply. "I  
face human nature stripped of its ex-  
ternals, or some awful problem of vice  
or disease and death, in which a man  
meets God."

In a word, these people, before at-  
tempting to do a great work, sought,  
like Herder, "a great thought to re-  
fresh them."

The defect in the life of many fami-  
lies is not that it is vicious or impure,  
but that it is cramped, small, and com-  
mon. The whole thought and conver-  
sation of a household or a social circle  
often run upon their own petty busi-  
ness and work, and the personal affairs  
of themselves and their neighbours;  
and this not for days or months but  
for years, until monotonous, gossiping

youth sinks into monotonous, gossiping  
old age.

The mind becomes enfeebled and  
narrow in this belittling process. When  
the body is enfeebled we feed it and  
give it tonics. The boys and girls who  
read the *Companion*, should they find  
their brains growing dull and weak in  
the daily routine of life, ought to have  
the common-sense to see that the mind  
as well as the body must have its food  
and tonics.

If but for ten minutes each day,  
read a great book, listen to music,  
study nature, face some mighty reality  
of life, and so bring back a great  
thought to infuse into the petty mon-  
otony of your daily duty. God speaks  
in many ways to us. We must find  
some great word of His each day.  
"A servant with this clause makes  
drudgery divine."—R. H. D.

### Story of a Tract.

Two ladies were driving over a  
country road in Derbyshire, when the  
elder spoke lovingly to her friend, a  
young Christian, of working for the  
Lord. "How can I—a girl of eighteen  
—serve Him?" asked the other. "Begin  
now," was the reply. "Let us give some  
tracts to those Irish reapers we see  
yonder." The girl took the tracts, and  
offered them to the labourers as they  
neared the carriage. Years rolled by,  
and she became a school teacher near  
Ottawa, Canada. One Saturday she  
was returning to Ottawa from the out-  
lying school, and as she drew near the  
river she saw a man rushing forward  
in evident excitement and despair.  
Seeing him in such trouble, she went  
to him, and attempted to open a con-  
versation by offering him a tract. He  
took it silently, but presently rushed  
after her, talking most wildly and  
incoherently. "Calm yourself," she  
said; "tell me your trouble, and I will  
try to help you. When I gave you  
that tract I was praying for you."  
"Years ago," he said, "when the potato  
famine drove me to seek work in  
England, a lady gave me this very same  
tract in Derbyshire, 'Did You Ever  
Read a Tract?' The title took my  
fancy, and I sat down under a hedge  
and read it through. I had never  
known the gospel before, but that little  
book led me—ay, and my old mother,  
too—to the Redeemer. I got good  
work in Liverpool, but after my mother  
had passed peacefully away, I had to  
come out here and work on the rail-  
way, for the Liverpool firm failed. I  
am ashamed to say I got a taste for  
the drink, ma'am, and the drink made  
me a backslider. My master gave me  
many a trial, but turned me off at last  
for not keeping sober. I had given up  
all hope, and just as you passed by I  
was waiting for a chance to drown my-  
self. You came up to me and gave me  
a tract with the title which I have  
never forgotten. Oh! ma'am, what  
does it all mean?" The teacher per-  
suaded him to accompany her to the  
neighbouring house of a minister, where  
they tenderly relieved his starvation,  
and told him that the thoughts of God  
were indeed those of loving kindness  
towards him, for in far-distant countries  
the same messenger had been sent to  
bid him hope.—*The Quaker*.

EXERCISE is crying out to you louder  
and louder as you near its brink. Rise,  
be going. Count your resources; learn  
what you are not fit for, and give up  
wishing for it; learn what you can do,  
and do it with the energy of a man.