

THE MOTHER AT HOME.

STORY BY PANSY.

CHAPTER II.

DEVELOPMENT.

THE days went on, and Mrs. Prescott thought and read and prayed over the cause of missions — Home Missions, Foreign Missions — whatever came within the scope of the word arrested her attention. Do you know the first marked result? She began to have an absorbing interest in the subject: what was begun as a *duty*, with a view to the development of her children, grew into an enthusiasm. When she prayed it seemed to her almost impossible to get away from missions. Her heart began to go out to the missionary mothers, trying amid many disadvantages and discouragements to guide their own children. She incorporated them into her prayers as she had not done before. In the course of her day of work, for her work was the doing of plain sewing for many ladies, she came in contact frequently with Christian mothers. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Full of her object, she one day asked Mrs. Mason Brooks, a wealthy and fashionable Christian mother.

Mrs. Brooks, how do you interest your girls in missions?"

Springing itself right into the midst of conversations as to whether she would have her new French cambric ruffled and puffed, or made with ribbon bands and Hamburg, Mrs. Mason Brooks was so much amazed as though she had been asked, "How do you interest your girls in tracing the constellations of the heavens?"

"Why," she made answer, in an embarrassed and hesitating tone, "I have them give *money* of course."

This was an idea. This giving *money* to the cause of missions was something that had not occurred to Mrs. Prescott before, by reason of the fact that she certainly had very little to give. But Mrs. Mason Brooks, it seems, had thought somewhat of that phase of the matter, and therefore contributed her mite to Mrs. Prescott's education. Though, be it known to you, that by reason of the earnest and earnestly put question, Mrs. Brooks gave more thought to the subject during the next half hour than she had ever given before. She really was a woman who had ideas above cambric dresses and ruffles.

Mrs. Prescott, after her patron had gone, pondered. What was there she could do to rouse in her children a desire to earn and then to consecrate money for the cause of missions? She went to her knees for help; she was learning more and more to go thither for inspiration not only, but for balance. Then she opened her worn little Bible and opened it at random, so she said, and she did not mean to speak irreverently — to this verse:

"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." It startled her with the newness of its application. Why was it so new? "Children, obey your parents." Yes, she had been wont to turn to that verse for authority; she had used it in the training of her children, and recognized its helpfulness. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Oh, yes, she had applied the golden rule, her children knew, and in a measure professed to live by it. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." It was only last week she had reminded Robert of that, when he demurred at something that must needs be done by him because of Nettie's forgetfulness. The question was, why had not this direct, plain command of the Lord Jesus ever pressed itself upon her as addressed to herself and her children? How could they obey it? They certainly could not *go into all the world*. No, but into their corner of it. Nay, they could reach remote corners of it by those pennies which she was anxious to have earned. Why was not this an incentive? Had she not tried to bring up her children in such a manner that her quiet "Mother wishes it" would be to them a potent reason for any line of action? Then could she not hope to make them feel that when she said "Christ wishes it" that was reason enough? She determined to make a trial of it.

"But, mother," said Robert, "we haven't *got* any pennies. Slate pencils, shoe buttons, and pens, and ink, and oh, I don't know what not, take every cent of money I can get, besides some that I would like to get and can't."

"But, my boy," said the mother, "there is the command. Don't you want to obey it? Is there no way that we four, putting our heads together, can contrive for earning a little money that shall go out into some part of the world and preach the Gospel for us?"

The proposition, put in that manner, sounded inviting, and the four heads were put together many a time after that, and plans were talked over and abandoned, and others brought up, until the sister and the two brothers found their interest rising and rising, and before the spring opened, in that home each had his or her well laid scheme whereby certain pennies were to be earned and consecrated.

Now the interest was fairly developed — how to foster it was the question. After mature deliberation, Mrs. Prescott again resorted to her pastor for help. First, she told him, with enthusiasm, how thankful she was for those books, and how interested her children had been in them, and the pastor listened with puzzled wonder. It had not occurred to him to try to interest his children in those books; he had called them too advanced for young people. Then Mrs. Prescott wondered if there could not be a way by which the children