

the pillow, and he silently passed into the presence of Him whose blood cleanseth from all sin.

Knitting.

GRANDMA sits in her easy chair,
Knitting a stocking for baby May;
Slipping the stitch with loving care,
Knitting and dreaming the time away;
Thinking of other little feet,
Cold and silent, at rest so long;
And as she dreams of the old time sweet,
Her heart runs over in simple song:

Narrow, and widen, and slip, and bind!
Swift and silent the needles run;
Hands are willing and heart is kind;
Honest workers are hard to find;
Baby's stocking begun!

Grandma dreams of a glad spring day,
Years and years ago,
When her hair was gold, now so thin and
gray,

And her faded cheeks wore a rosy glow;
And Robin comes to the farm-yard gate,
And tells his love in his bashful way;
And grandma sings, while the hour grows
late,
The song she sung on her wedding-day:

Narrow, and widen, and slip, and bind!
Click the needles and sing the song;
Swift and silent the skeins unwind;
Hands are willing and heart is kind;
Baby's stocking grows long!

Grandma thinks of the children three—
Bob, and Charlie, and little Bess,—
Lisping prayers at her mother-knee,
Making music her life to bless,
O'er her face comes a shade of pain,
Brought by thoughts of the long ago;
Trembling voice breaks forth again,
The song runs on while the tear-drops
flow:

Narrow, and widen, and slip, and bind!
Work and trust while the moments
run;
Eyes with tears are often blind;
Hands are willing and heart is kind;
Baby's stocking half done!

Grandma's hands have tired grown;
Poor old hands, that have worked so
long!
Daylight swift from the earth has flown;
Almost silent has grown the song;
Still she knits, as she sits and dreams,
Hurrying onward to reach the toe;
Deftly turning the even seams,
While she murmurs in accents low:

Narrow, and widen, and slip, and bind!
Hands grow tired at set of sun;
Hands are willing and heart is kind;
Life grows short while the skeins unwind;
Baby's stocking most done!

Grandma stops, and her knitting falls
Idly down on the sanded floor;
Shining needles and half-wound balls;
Grandma's knitting, alas! is o'er.
So we found her at close of day,
White head resting upon her breast;
Knitting finished and laid away;
Loving fingers for aye at rest.

Narrow, and widen, and slip, and bind!
Skein at last to the end has run;
Heart stops beating that once was kind;
Hands are folded that ne'er repined;
Baby's stocking is done!

—J. S. Culler.

My Sermon.

BY D. L. MACLONE, COBOURG, ONT.

"WHO'S going to church this morning?" asked Cousin Charley last Sunday, just as we had finished breakfast. "If anyone wants to go, he'd better be getting ready."

"Why," exclaimed Aunt Margaret, jumping up hastily. "It can't be so late as that, Charley. I had no idea of the time; really we must turn over a new leaf after this, and be smarter Sunday morning."

But as aunt says that every Sunday, no one appeared disturbed or alarmed at the prospect for future Sunday breakfasts.

"I s'pose, then, you won't feel like going out, Margaret, since it's so un-

usually late," said Uncle James with a touch of irony.

"No, James, I couldn't think of going this morning, but next Sunday, I'll see to it that we have breakfast in time anyway. One would think we were perfect heathens, to see us getting up from the table at this time of day."

"Well, I guess I'll drive over and take grandma to meeting; she's generally ready and waiting to go," said Uncle James as he left the room. "Want to go, Ada?" asked Charley of me.

"Are you going, Maggie?" I asked in my turn of Cousin Maggie.

"Guess not, it's too hot," was the reply; then, with a slight laugh, she added, "I'll wait till next Sunday, and go with me."

"But somebody ought to go," said Allie, my sister, who was visiting with me at our uncle's.

"Why?" suddenly said John, the oldest of our cousins, "what's the use of going to church if you don't feel like it?"

"O nothing," Allie said, with some confusion; "only it looks so, you know."

"What if it does 'look so'?" Every one has a right to please himself. We talk about our free country, and then make ourselves slaves to other people's opinions, and hypocrites as well as slaves when we go to church to make folks believe we are pious."

"Yes," assented Allie feebly. But aunt took it up as she invariably does all John's strictures.

"There's plenty of excuse for the sin in the world now, without your making more," she said. "Allie's right enough when she says it looks disgraceful not to see one of a whole family at church of a Sunday morning; and," she added in a lower tone, "the pew rent going for nothing too."

John smiled slightly as he rose and shoved his chair back, but Charley said: "Beaten again, John; mother's arguments clinch every time."

So none of us went to church that morning, which, by the way, was no very unusual thing, for driving grandma over to meeting was not considered going to church by any one of the family. Grandma does not go to our church in the town, but keeps to her own little old-fashioned meeting house, several miles further back in the country.

After breakfast we separated, and each one went his own way. Aunt bustled herself over affairs in the kitchen, and held what Charley calls an "inquisitive meeting" with Nancy, the girl. John took down a book on Civil Engineering and went up to his own room. Every one knew what that meant; while Charley vanished under the maples leading to the garden. Within, girls strolled around rather aimlessly for a while, and I for one felt decidedly glad when Charley appeared again at an open window, holding out a great handful of ripe berries, and proposed a walk to the woods. Allie declared that it was too hot to walk and that it would make her head ache to be in the sun; so Charley, Maggie and I started off, under the protection of a huge umbrella, for the woods were nearly a mile away.

Nothing is more delightful to me than an hour in one of our lovely Canadian woods. Everything is so refreshing and inspiring: the cool air, the rustling leaves, the flutter of birds and hum of insects—all are to me charming.

That Sunday everything seemed par-

ticularly peaceful and cool and pleasant. We wandered in and out among the thick trees, continually finding new beauties and curiosities.

It was a very thick wood, and after we had gone what seemed a long way, Charley said: "We must be nearly out to the road by this time; the 'darkey meetin' house' can't be far from here."

"Darkey meetin' house, what's that?" I asked. "O just an old place where the darkeys come to meeting every Sunday," said Maggie. "There used to be a great many of them around here, you know, and they used part of the woods for a burying place, didn't they, Charley?"

"So they say," answered Charley. "Where are they now?" I asked.

"O most of the older ones are dead, and a good many of the younger ones have moved away, and anyway they would be much too 'toney' to come to this tumble-down old place. O there it is now; see, Ada?"

We went towards it and, sure enough, it was a tumble-down old place. I was some little distance in from the road, and as the other side of the road was a continuation of the woods, it was a lonely spot. Deserted as well as lonely it seemed old and weather-worn, and likely to fall any time. One corner had been propped up, showing that it had been long in use, and one could trace a nearly overgrown path from a low place in the snake fence leading up to the steps; the bushes also were less thick thereabout than in the rest of the woods. How much more lonely a deserted place "where man hath been," seems to be, than a spot where nature has been alone! Before we came to this old building, all had seemed still to me and silent, but now it was lonely as well as silent. We were tired and threw ourselves down upon low branches of a pine a few yards from the old house, and when the noise of our steps had ceased, there rose upon the air the sweet song of a bird perched upon the bough of a tree which swayed over the low roof. It sounded like a hymn of praise, befitting the spot, but almost before it closed we heard the unmistakable tones of a human voice. At first Charley started up, exclaiming, "Why, there must be some one in the old meeting house," but after a moment's hesitation he sat down again. It was a low, tremulous voice singing

"There is a fountain filled with blood."

In silence we listened to the familiar melody, sometimes scarcely catching the air, and again hearing even the words distinctly. The last refrain came clearly:

"And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains."

What a weak old voice it was! but it carried the song through two stanzas; and after that, we heard the same voice in prayer; we could catch no word, but it sounded more like a person engaged in conversation than in worship. At last it ceased, and presently we saw an old coloured man coming out of the door. He looked queer enough with his white hair and beard, and dressed in a long black coat and high hat, both shabby and old, but carefully brushed. He carried in one hand his Bible, and in the other a large cane. After shutting with some difficulty the creaky door behind him, he moved with painful slowness down the broken steps, and made his way towards a large pine-tree not far from where we sat. We

had not the slightest idea of the old man's errand, but when we saw him stoop over something at the foot of the tree, we noticed for the first time that under almost every tree there were low, regular shaped mounds. Instinctively we arose, and at the noise the old man turned his face towards us.

"Why, it's Uncle Pete," said Charley, and going forward he greeted the aged man.

"Good morning, Uncle Pete! I did not know that the old meeting house was used any more. We should not have come to disturb the—your services—if we had thought of such a thing."

"Good mawnin', Marser Spence," said Uncle Pete, after peering into Charley's face. "Do meetin' house but use any mo', cept by ole Pete."

"What! you don't mean to say you come here alone every Sunday for nothing, Uncle Pete! It must be nearly two miles from your cabin."

"Two mile an' alf, but tain't ver far. I starts early an' jes' takes one step to onc' an' I'se soon heah. Bress yo', young marse, de Lawd's been ver good 'old Pete, an' t'wouldn't be savin' ver much ef I nebber come to see great Marser in his own house, an' on his own day too. An' tain't for nothin', Marser Spence! I'se read a bit, an' sing an' pray, an' t'does ole Pete heaps o' good. Deys mos' on 'em," continued the old man, noticing our silence, "forgot the ole meetin' house, an' right 'nuff too, 'is gettin' ole; but d're can't nebber be no oder meetin' house fer ole Pete now, 'cept de noo one up dere. My ole woman, she come yere fer good seben springs ago, an' I han't missed a Sunday sence."

We glanced at the grave at our feet, where the trembling finger pointed, and saw beside the larger one four small graves, all long since grass-grown. In the trunk of the tree above were cut five crosses with a solitary initial under each. Near the larger grave a thrifty wild rose bush grew, now covered with blossoms. I had often been in our cemetery at home, and it seemed to me to contain a city full of tears and a row within its four walls, but I never felt more pity than now. Here was the tale of a household and the traces of sorrow born in solitude. The tears sprang to my eyes, and we silently stood before that old man, fearing to speak, afraid or ashamed to look at each other.

"We wus boaf fond o' poses, so we boaf has 'em yit," said Uncle Pete presently, and bending over he plucked too full blown roses and gave them to Maggie and me, saying: "Dey be none de wus, Mi', fer habin' growed on the grave." Maggie answered for us both, "Thank you, Uncle Pete, they are beautiful."

We turned and went towards the path, and as we were getting over the fence I saw that the old man was plucking the few dead leaves and broken twigs from the graves. That was my sermon. I cannot forget it, and I think it will be many a Sunday before I fail to appear in God's house again. Our walk home was such a silent one that I think Charley and Maggie felt the power of that sermon as much as I did.

It is not stately walls nor beauteous spires that tell for Christ; nor eloquent sermons, nor artistic anthems; but lives that are clean, hearts that are glad with the life of Christ, and hands that are loaded with mercy.