

### The Cup of Blood.

WHEN deep in Adullam's cave David, the king,  
Lay, hemmed by the troop of the insolent foe,  
He dreamed of the beautiful Bethlehem spring  
That flowed by the gate of the city below.

He saw there the maidens with pitcher and jar,  
The faint camels kneeling and stirring the tide,  
And the stream flowing down and refreshing afar  
The cool, waving palm-trees that sprang by its side.

The waking from slumber, the king started up,  
With thirst of the soul and the body distraught,  
And he cried: "O that some one would bring me a cup  
Of the crystal, sweet well by the Bethlehem gate!"

Then the three mighty men who had followed him there,  
The chief and the bravest of thirty, arose,  
And girded their loins, and laid their swords bare,  
And mightily brake through the midst of their foes.

Then back, with the cup of the Bethlehem spring,  
They fought their fierce way through the Philistine band,  
And fled to the fastness, and came to the king,  
And proudly delivered the cup to his hand.

For a moment he stood, all his veins hot as fire,  
And drank with his eyes; then he marked the red stain  
On the cup, and turned quickly, and crushed his desire,  
And poured out the draught on the sand of the plain.

And he looked up and said: "Be it far from me, Lord!  
Shall I drink of the blood of the men who went forth,  
At the price of their lives, against spear, against sword?  
Shall I quench my vile thirst with a draught of such  
worth?"

O David! O kingly one, mighty of soul!  
I would we were great with that greatness of thine,  
That royal unselfishness, noble control,  
That so in this act of thy majesty shine!

I would that we thought of the price of our gain,  
Of the cost unto others of what we possess—  
Of the labour it cost them, the anguish, the pain,  
The woe and the toil, and the strain and the stress.

I would we might add to each blessing, each gift,  
Some thought of its price, some appraisal of love—  
Not batten on life without sorrow or shrift,  
Not rend the weak as the hawk rends the dove.

But O, might we feel, as did David, the king,  
The infinite cost of the hardly won good;  
And steep not our lips in that too sacred thing—  
The over-full cup of our fellow-man's blood!

### Helen's Place.

BY SALLY CAMPBELL.

It was Sunday afternoon. Helen Day was sitting with her Bible open, but unread, before her. For a long time a storm had been gathering on her face, which now at length burst.

"I wish," she said, hotly, to the only other occupant of the room—placid, white-haired Aunt Janet, who had come to spend a week with them, "I wish people wouldn't always be thinking that they can point out other people's duties for them. Why can't they understand that a person probably knows about her own affairs better than they do?"

Aunt Janet pushed back her spectacles, shut her book, and waited, knowing that the rest must come.

"After church this morning," Helen went on, "Mrs. Parsons stopped me outside, and asked me whether I didn't think I ought to take a more active part in the church work. Couldn't I teach a class in Sunday-school, or fill some office in one of the societies? She said she thought all young Christians ought to find a place to serve in at once, or they were in danger of drifting into doing nothing. You know, Aunt Janet, I haven't got time to teach a Sunday-school class, or any of those things. Now have I?"

"No, dear, I don't think you have," said Aunt Janet, soothingly.

"How could I hunt the children up, and look after them properly, even if I squeezed in the learning of the lesson? I told her that I didn't have time; and she pursed her lips up, and said that very often we could make time for things if we only thought so. And then she talked to me about Susie Bridges—how she had gone right to work, and is in the front of all the good enterprises. I felt like telling her that if she would provide me with three older sisters, and plenty of servants, and a long purse—such as Susie has—I should be only too delighted to offer my services for charitable purposes too; but that, as it is, if I am going to 'make time' it must be by leaving father's and the boys' clothes unpatched, and their socks undarned, and the house unkept, and my own dresses unmade, and the pennies unsaved, and all the other things undone that—"

"That God has given you to do," finished Aunt Janet, gently, as she paused, out of breath.

"I don't see why," Helen went on, more quietly, "Mrs. Parsons should make me a present of so much good advice. It is no concern of hers."

"Oh, yes! indeed it is. You are wrong—all wrong—there! We are all our brothers' keepers. We do not aid each other by our counsel and sympathy enough—there's where the trouble is. And so, when any one does try to help us in our journey upward, I think we ought to take it kindly, even if she may blunder a little in doing it. You know Mrs. Parsons was a friend of your mother's, and it is very natural for her to take an interest in the daughter."

The thought of her dead mother always softened Helen. Nothing more was said for a few minutes, while the peculiar Sunday quiet took possession of the room. Then Helen rose, and pulled her chair close to Aunt Janet's side.

"Auntie," she said, with a quiver in her voice, "the reason why I was so hurt at what Mrs. Parsons said is, that that is the very thing I keep fretting and worrying over myself. I know she meant kindly, and I'm cross. I should just love to do some such useful work; not the little I get time for now and then, but regularly. I long, and long for it. When I started, I thought that things would be so different; but I don't see that trying to do right makes any more than twenty-four hours in the day after all. How can I find a place to 'serve' in, as Mrs. Parsons calls it?"

"She is quite right about that, Helen, dear. We all need a place to serve in, and I don't know anybody that has a better one than my own discouraged, foolish little niece."

"I!" said Helen, lifting her head to take a look at Aunt Janet's face.

"Yes! you. I think a girl who has three brothers to advise and guide and stimulate and make much of, has as large a field for usefulness as any one need desire. Why, my dear child, if those energetic, active-minded, splendid boys can be formed into living powers for good, how much may they not accomplish! And God has—to a very large extent—put it into your hands to help them to this. You make their home. You have many chances to set high Christian motives before them, and to influence them in right directions. Make them sure of your sympathy, and let it be your great aim to counsel them wisely. Then, as to the patches and pennies you were talking of just now, work them all up into a pattern of thorough, sweet-tempered, conscientious duty-doing, which the boys may have before their eyes daily. Give them precept and practice both. Do you see what I mean?"

"Yes'm, I see now," said Helen, soberly. "I thought I had too little to do," she added, presently; "but now I am afraid it's too big. Of

course I knew I ought to help my brothers, but I forgot how much they depended on me. I go wrong so often myself, that I am afraid I won't know how to show anybody else the right way."

"If any of you lack wisdom," quoted Aunt Janet softly. And then some one opened the door, and the little talk was at an end.

Let us pass over four long, busy years, and see what came of the purpose formed in a young girl's heart on that Sunday afternoon.

It was the day for the contest of the debating societies at the academy where Helen's brother, Andy, had spent his first winter away from home. As he was to have a part in the performance, he had yielded to his very wheedling letters, and come up to see him "distinguish himself," as she said. Seated behind her in the hall was a party of several ladies, with a chattering school-boy as escort, who, to beguile the tedious waiting, was pointing out to them the various objects of interest in the gathering crowd. By and by Andy himself appeared in a doorway, and a little ripple of applause ran along the benches.

"Who is he, Will?" asked one of the ladies.

"That is Andy Day," said the boy. "Almost all our crowd are hurrahing for him this year. In fact, whatever Andy goes in for, he's pretty sure to take the sympathy of the school with him."

"Is he so popular?"

"Yes; and he deserves every bit of it, too. I tell you, Andy's all right. He's our living epistle, you know."

"Living epistle?" repeated the lady.

"Yes'm; don't you know? There was a preacher here last winter who preached about that verse, and somebody said he ought to have had Andy up in the pulpit with him, to illustrate it. Soon after that the name stuck to him."

"You certainly praise him very highly."

"At first we thought perhaps it was only word of mouth with him. Sometimes they are that way, you know. But we soon found, by sending out quite a lot of pretty lively exploring expeditions, that his actions spoke every bit as loud as his words. He has kept his light shining in all kinds of weather, and it has lit up the fellows' ideas of things considerably. He's raised the standard on 'ponies' and all that sort of business so high that it works a person's brains for all they are worth to keep up to it. I'll tell you how he does: During the whole of the first term, he and Ap Gregory were both trying with all their might to come out ahead on mathematics at the Christmas examinations. Ap's a queer fish. He's got an awfully long head on him, and if you'll only let him write down what he knows he's all right, but the minute those old directors begin to ask him any questions, or anything like that, why he gets so rattled—I beg your pardon, agitated—that he doesn't have any show at all. He just stands with his mouth open—his eyes goggling round anywhere. Well, he and Andy kept the score pretty even between them all along, until everybody could see that they'd have to fight it out before the directors at examination time. Fortunately for Ap, the old dears just gave us a string of problems to work out on the board. Of course, the most of us succumbed easily; but Andy and Ap, neither of them made any mistake until there was only time left for one more problem. When the answers were read, they were both out by one figure—making them still even, you see. The hour was nearly up, so the examiners didn't have them go over their processes, but gave them a little tally, and told them they might sit down. We thought it was all fixed, when Andy—who had kept looking over at Ap's board all the while they were speech-making—suddenly spoke up, and said: 'I