

# The Inglenook

(For Dominion Presbyterian.)

## A True Thanksgiving Hymn.

### An Incident of the "Bonnie Brier Bush."

It was a bright Thanksgiving morning, clear and frosty, as I, with many others, wended my way to the village church to offer praise and thanks to the Giver of all good. The Frost King had been abroad during the night, robing the earth in white attire and fringing the trees with snowy pendants that gleamed like diamonds in the sunshine. As our minister spoke of the many reasons each one had for thanking my thoughts flow down the street to a humble abode where an aged Christian was being sorely tried in the furnace of pain. Cancer had done its deadly work in one eye, necessitating its removal a few days previous; and, knowing the agony she was enduring, in my human ignorance I said to myself, "There is one woman at any rate who has not much to be thankful for."

Prompted partly by curiosity and partly by a desire to carry what comfort I could to this afflicted friend, late in the afternoon I made my way almost reluctantly to her humble dwelling. There are times, and this was one of them, when one stands utterly helpless in the presence of humanity, not daring even to touch the fringe of its heavy mantle of suffering.

The door was opened by her son, a strong, well-built, genial man, who motioned me into a little room off the sitting room. Here in the snowiest of caps lay a poor, wrinkled face almost hidden by a bandage which covered the disfigurement. The honest, toll worn hands, that had bravely worked and fought through fifty years of widowhood to bring up a family on a bush-farm, were folded on the white coverlet. All that loving hearts and hands could devise for her comfort had been done. I was very glad to hear that she had rested a little during the night and in consequence was feeling easier.

"How are you, Mrs. M.?" I asked, not knowing very well what to say.

"Ach, I've much to be thankful for," she replied. "The Lord has been very merciful to me."

All the cheering words I had intended to leave with her vanished at the sight of her peaceful face. The Great Comforter had spoken to her soul and nothing remained for me but to sit at the feet of this aged saint and drink in the living sermon.

"I was thinking before I came in that you had very little to be thankful for, Mrs. M." I remarked, but before I had finished speaking she interrupted me by repeating: "The Lord has been very merciful to me. There were days when I thought I would see that I couldn't thole the pain any longer; but the Lord gied me far mair strength for ma time o' need than I deserved." Her eye filled with tears as a memory of those dark days came over her, and she said sadly: "But I often think it will mak' my life gay dark."

"Well, Mrs. M.," I said, "you are an old lady now, and it cannot last long. Perhaps the darkness here will make your home on the other side all the brighter when you reach it."

"Maybe it will, an' it canna' last lang noo. I've often thoct that I was na' thankfu' enough for my eye an' so God took it away. It's a' for the best an' He must have seen that

I needed it. I often think when I'm lying here an' the pain's verra bad o' the young minister in the Bonnie Brier Bush (I read it before I took sick an' I liket it weel, it was just the way the folk talked in the parish I cam' frae), hoo's mither telt him aye tae speak a guld word for Jesus Christ, an' gin He offers ye the cross ye'll no refuse it, for He aye carries the heavy en' Himself. It's a' true an' it's been a great comfort tae me."

Tears stole down my cheeks as I quietly took leave of that brave, noble woman who was patiently, yes even joyfully, bearing such a heavy cross and trying to speak "a guld word" for the Master; and I thought how strangely the scent of the Bonnie Brier Bush that bloomed in Margaret Howe's garden had been wafted across the sea to cheer this darkened life with its blessed sweetness. Many were the voices raised to heaven that day, but I knew that from one heart at least there ascended a true thanksgiving hymn.

Another year of endurance was appointed her; and then the cross was exchanged for the crown of life.—H.

## "They Say."

By Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Have you heard of the terrible family  
"They?"

And the dreadful venomous things they  
say?

Why, half the gossip under the sun.  
If your trace it back you will find begun

In that wretched House of "They."

A numerous family so I am told,  
And its genealogical tree is old;

For ever since Adam and Eve began  
To build up the curious race of man,

Has existed the house of "They."

Gossip-mongers and spreaders of lies,  
Horrid people whom all despise!

And yet the best of us now and then,  
Repeat queer tales about women and men,

And quote the House of "They."

They live like like a lord and never labor,  
A "They's" one task is to watch his neighbor,

And tell his business and private affairs,  
To the world at large they are sowers of

tares—

These folks in the House of "They."

It is wholly useless to follow a "They"

With a whip or a gun, for he slips away

And into his house where you cannot go,  
It is locked and bolted and guarded so—

This horrible House of "They."

Though you cannot get in, yet they get out

And spread their villainous tales about;

Of all the rascals under the sun

Who have come to punishment never one

Belonged to the House of "They."

—Youth's Companion.

A Crouch-End Sunday-school teacher received an amusing answer from a promising

pupil on a recent Sunday. "What," she asked,

"did Naaman say when he was told to bathe

himself in the river Jordan?" The unexpected

reply came without a moment's hesita-

tion: "He said, 'Is thy servant a dog that he

should do this thing?'"

## "It Might be Worse."

By Helena H. Thomas.

"I confess that I rather dreaded to visit her," said my friend, "for during her early married life, she was one of those overcareful housewives who give all under their roof a feeling the reverse of restful. I found her, however, so greatly improved that I gladly would have prolonged my stay. I puzzled not a little over the calmness of my hostess in meeting what would in other days have vexed her sorely; but I did not learn the secret of the change until on the eve of my departure, I said: 'Your home is a haven of rest these days.'"

"Now I did not intend to let slip 'these days,' but, though readily understood, they gave no offense, for they called forth the laughing rejoinder.

"You need not blush for hinting at the truth, for I, too realize that my home was not restful during the first years of my married life; and I can not find words to express my gratitude that my eyes were opened before it was too late to bring sunshine into it."

"I did not venture an apology for my thoughtless words for they had given a hint of my true feelings. So I merely said, 'Do tell me what about the change.'"

"I will cheerfully," rejoined the one so greatly changed, "even if it is rather humiliating that I first saw myself, my foolish habit of fretting over trifles, when I was brought in daily contact with an ignorant cook, who was such a sunny creature that I took pleasure in going into the kitchen. Besides, I wanted to see if the smiles did not sometimes give place to frowns. I soon learned, however, that she was hopeful and cheery under all circumstances."

"If company came unexpectedly when things were the reverse of what she would have liked, or the grocer failed to put in an appearance, it was always met by, 'It might be worse!'"

"She was such a constant rebuke to me that I one day asked her how she came to meet everything so bravely. Then she told me that she had been bound out to a woman who 'jawed from mornin' till night.' She said her mistress so worried the life of 'the best man that ever lived,' that he took to drink, and that her only son ran away."

"But," said Kate, with a merry laugh, "her jaw was worth a sight to me, for I was that contrary I begun to be just the other way, 'n' when things went all in a heap I laughed 'n' says as how it might be worse. So I kept on a sayin' it, 'n', plaze God, I'll say it so long as he lets me live."

"After a time," continued my hostess, "this veritable sunbeam married, and I lost sight of her for a while. Then I heard that her husband, who was a mason, had fallen from a high building, and had barely escaped with his life. I went immediately to poor Kate, with no other expectation of finding her, for once, the reverse of sunny. But, greatly to my surprise she came forward to greet me with so beaming a face that I jumped at once to the conclusion that if here had been an accident it must have been of a very trifling nature, but before I had time to inquire, Kate began, as if telling me some good news, to tell how her husband had fallen and broken his right arm and two ribs."

"But, Kate, how can you talk of it in such a light-hearted way?" queried I, a bit rebukingly; "I fear Mike will be laid up for months, and that is a serious matter, to my way of thinking."

"Sure 'n' you are right!" was the cheery answer, "but all the same, I'm so thankful that ugly fall didn't knock the breath clean out o' his body that I'm not thinkin' o' how we're goin' to live. It's a bit unlucky, to be sure, but it might be worse, you know."

"As the years rolled on Kate's sweet spirit was sorely tested in many ways, but she faced every trial with a cheery, 'It might be worse!' and in justice to her I must confess that the change you note in me was brought about by the bright example of my humble Irish servant; whose motto all would do well to adopt."