

FAMILY DEPARTMENT.

EASTER MORN.

How joyous bright is Easter morn,
To all who think right,
Had Christ not risen at early dawn
Our birthday would be night.

Our Faith be crushed,
No cross to bear,
Our longings hushed
No crown to wear.

To die, not soar
To realms above,
His word a myth,
No shield, no love.

His life, His death
No fruit to bear,
All, all to end
We know not where.

But hope we have,
The Lamb is bare,
And Christ has risen
Not perished there.

Our Saviour Christ,
The grave must give,
And we with him
Shall rise and live.

—H. J. Du Vernet.

THE GATE OF LIFE.

A. FRAGMENT.

By the Hon. Katherine Scott, Author of "Miss Browne's District, &c."

Uncle John put all his bunch of red, pink creamy, and white roses into one of Nellie's little hands, and drew the other on to his arm.

"No, my child, I do not think we should wish or want to die; it is not natural, it is not generally the wish of a healthy man. The one happy purpose for a man or woman's life here is to do His will and to know Him, and then whether the life is lived here or in heaven, it is all one! But it is true that death itself is an evil, and it is not God's will that it should exist but yet the King of Love and Life at the beginning kept the Tree of Life from being an immortality of evil to those who would have touched it, and by His own death He has unlocked the gate of heaven for us. If we are doing His will here, Nellie, this life becomes beautiful and happy, and there it must be an infinitely more beautiful, more happy life, because He gives us then the perfection of what we only have in part here. Long ago, Nellie, the 'desire of my eyes' was taken from me 'with a stroke,' and it seemed to me then, but for '*Mors Janua Vitæ*,' I must have gone mad.

Uncle John's quiet face was strangely moved, and Nellie only ventured to press her hand tenderly on his arm, and said nothing, till he went on—

"God is love, Nellie, and He took the one I loved most to teach me this: she said it would, and it did. So, Nellie, you see why I keep my scroll." Uncle John was smiling now, and Nellie ventured one tender kiss and fled, thinking now at last she knew the secret of Uncle John's life over which she had often pondered.

* * * * *

The birthday came, and was brighter than any birthday Nellie had ever had. It was all sunshine inside and out; so thought Mr. Vernon, so thought the boys—"the jolliest birthday for years;" so thought the little ones and the neighbours, and even Lady Esther, who remarked to the Major that Nellie made "the whole house different."

Then came the break-up of the party for the

London season, and Uncle John only heard once from Nellie, but the little P.S.: "I am remembering the purpose of life," made him happy. She enjoyed everything—and, when the house re-filled in the autumn, was more than ever the light of the place to mother, brothers, sisters, and poor people, and very specially to Uncle John. About Christmas-time he was called from home on business abroad, and when he returned late in the spring Nellie was ill.

"As frost comes down and blights all the flowers in the fall,

A sudden ailment fell on her;
Almost she heard the Angels' call."

She was bright and full of fun still, but the doctors looked grave, and very soon it was plain that Nellie was going from them.

She herself spoke to Uncle John first, as the one who would understand best.

She had asked to be carried to the rose-garden, where the roses were now again their in June beauty. When she got there she put her hand into Uncle John's: "*Mors Janua Vitæ*," Uncle John; it is quite true! I know I am going; but all I want is to make my going easy for mamma and the boys and the little ones, and, and—Mr. Vernon—and you. You won't mind, will you, Uncle John? for you have made it all real to me."

"Thank God!" was all Uncle John said.

"It is all so beautiful here, and there is so much to do and to learn; but it will be all the same there—only far, far better! 'The King of Love'—'the King of Love': the roses and the river and the birds all seem to sing it." And Nellie lay back, smiling.

"Mother! I want you and Uncle John to promise you won't be very sorry when I go; for of course I know there is no sorrow there; but it would almost—almost make me want to come back if you wanted me very much, and I shouldn't like to think I made anybody sad!

"I know I shall not forget you there, and you won't forget me. And you'll be sure to let the little ones have fun on my birthday each year; and, mother, you won't let the rose time make you sad because I came with them and went with them, will you?"

That was Nellie's last visit to the rose-garden, and when her birthday came she was with the King of Love!

It is five years now since the Gate of Life was opened for sunny, bright smiling Nellie; but no one forgets her.

In her short life she sowed seeds of brightness and goodness which are growing and spreading now.

What life does not leave brightness behind it that has taken the King of Love for its Guide? For here, and there—

"We nothing lack if we are His
And He is ours for ever."

HOT COALS; OR, HOW FRITZ WAS CONQUERED.

Joe Benton lived in the country. Not far from his father's house was a large pond. His cousin Herbert had given him a beautiful boat, elegantly rigged, with masts and sails, all ready to go to sea on the pond. Joe had formed a sailing company among his schoolmates. They had elected him captain. The boat was snugly stowed away in a little cave near the pond. At three o'clock on Saturday afternoon the boys were to meet and launch the boat. On the morning of this day, Joe rose bright and early. It was a lovely morning. Joe was in fine spirits. He chuckled with delight when he thought of the afternoon. "Glorious!" said he to himself, as he finished dressing. "Now I've just time to run down to the pond before breakfast, and see that the boat is all right. Then I'll hurry home and learn my lessons for

Monday, so as to be ready for the afternoon, for the captain must be up to time."

Away he went, scampering toward the cave where the boat had been left, ready for the launch. As he drew near, he saw the signs of mischief, and felt uneasy. The big stone before the cave had been rolled away. The moment he looked in he burst into a loud cry. There was the beautiful boat, which his cousin had given him, with its masts and sails all broken to pieces, and a large hole bored in the bottom.

Joe stood for a moment motionless with grief and surprise; then, with his face all red with anger, he exclaimed: "I know who did it—the mean scamp! It was Fritz Brown; and he was mad because I didn't ask him to come to the launch; but I'll pay him up for this caper—see if I don't." Then he pushed back the ruined boat into the cave, and hurrying on, some way down the road he fastened a string across the footpath, a few inches from the ground, and carefully hid himself in the bushes.

Presently a step was heard, and Joe eagerly peeped out. He expected to see Fritz coming along, but instead of that it was his cousin Herbert. He was the last person Joe cared to see just then, so he unfastened the string and lay quiet, hoping that he would not see him. But Herbert's quick eye soon caught sight of him, and Joe had to tell him all that had happened, and wound up by saying: "But never mind; I mean to make him smart for it."

Well, what do you mean to do, Joe?" asked Herbert.

"Why, you see Fritz carries a basket of eggs to market every morning, and I mean to trip him over this string and smash 'em all."

Joe knew this was not a right feeling, and expected to get a sharp lecture from his cousin. But to his surprise, he only said in a quiet way: "Well, I think Fritz does deserve some punishment; but this string is an old trick; I can tell you something better than that."

"What?" cried Joe, eagerly.

"How would you like to put a few coals of fire on his head?"

"What! burn him?" asked Joe, doubtfully. His cousin nodded his head. With a queer smile, Joe clapped his hands. "Bravo!" said he, "that's just the thing, cousin Herbert. You see his hair is so thick he wouldn't get burnt much before he'd have time to shake 'em off; but I'd just like to see him jump once. Now tell me how to do it, quick!"

"If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing shalt thou heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good!" There, said Herbert, "that's God's way of doing it, and I think that's the best kind of punishment Fritz could have."

You should have seen how long Joe's face grew while Herbert was speaking. "Now, I do say, Cousin Herbert," added Joe, "that's a real take in. Why, it's just no punishment at all."

"Try it once," said Herbert. "Treat Fritz kindly, and I am certain that he will feel so ashamed and unhappy that kicking or beating him would be like fun in comparison."

Joe was not really a bad boy, but he was now in a very ill temper, and he said sullenly: "But you've told me a story, Cousin Herbert. You said this kind of coals would burn, and they don't at all."

"You're mistaken about that," said Herbert. "I've known such coals to burn up malice, envy, ill-feeling and a great deal of rubbish, and then leave some cold hearts feeling as warm and pleasant as possible."

Joe drew a long sigh. "Well, tell me a good coal to put on Fritz's head and I'll see about it."

"You know," said Herbert, "that Fritz is very poor, and can seldom buy himself a book, although he is very fond of reading, but