

Family Department.

THE BEAUTY OF CHURCHES.

"The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my Sanctuary; and I will make the place of My Feet glorious."—
Isaiah lx. 13.

When God has created the forests and groves
With splendor and beauty untold,
Why then should His Church be the only retreat,
Where this beauty we may not behold?

And why should our homes be em' embellished with art,
With frescoes and ornaments fair,
But the Temple of Jesus our glorious King
Be plain, or unsightly and bare?

And why should the lowliest pathways be strewn
With flowers of fragrance so sweet,
But God's earthly abode be the only resort
Where we must not consider them meet?

Since God, then, has made all creation so fair—
Bright sunshine and cool shady bowers—
The glistening sea with her treasures unknown—
Rich plumage, rare plants, and sweet flowers,

Oh! why, then, should only His Temple on earth,
Which should be our joy and our pride,
Receive less of honor, less beauty and care
Than the buildings wherein we reside?

'Tis dreary to enter the doors of a church
Where no beauty appeals to the eye,
For how can such places symbolical be
Of those mansions of glory on high?

'Tis joyous to enter a beautiful church
Embellished with splendor and grace,
For there we behold, though it be through a veil,
The glory of God's blessed Face!

WM. E. ENMAN.

Over The Sea Wall.

CHAPTER III. [CONTINUED.]

"And Mr. Douglas is half-brother, too, Mrs. Marks—not step-brother," I answered, airing my information with an assurance that amused myself. "They both had the same father, and the tie of blood is a strong one. Perhaps you are more afraid than you need be."

"Well, maybe I am—I'm sure I hope it may be so; but step and half always seems to me one as bad as t'other. I never know what the difference is. But come in, ma'am, come in. It's hot to stand in the sun. The children are out on the shore, so we can sit down here, and I'll tell you all I know about them, poor darlings!"

So we went into the little parlor. I sat down and made Mrs. Marks do the same, and then I asked when Mrs. Douglas had first come to her.

"It was last November, ma'am; and she drove up in a fly with her boxes and the children, and came and asked me if I could take them in for the winter, and what my terms would be. Well, I looked her up and down, and I thought to myself that such a lady as she could never make shift with such rooms as mine, and I ventured to say as much, and to tell her that the houses in the Crescent were better ones, and not dear in the winter months when visitors scarce came at all. And then she smiled a smile that went to my heart, and told me straight out, without a bit of pride or shame, that she wished to live as cheaply as possible for the next few months, because she was afraid she was going to lose a great deal of the money her husband had left her, and that she must live as quietly as ever she could whilst some sort of settlement was made. I don't understand them affairs myself, ma'am; but from time to time she used to hear how things were going, and everything went as bad as it could, and helped to kill her at the last. But when she came she hoped there

would be something saved, and she settled down herein my little rooms with the two dear children and paid as regular as clock-work every week, and me getting that fond of them all that I could scarcely bear to take her money at the last."

"And she lost her money, you say?"

"Yes, ma'am she did—that is, the worst part of it. And a sore blow it was to her when she found out that there would scarcely be anything saved for the children. She had a bit of a pension herself, for her husband had been a soldier, and was killed in action in India, and she had enough just to keep her from want so long as she lived. But there would be almost nothing for the children, as she was always saying as she lay dying; and neither she nor her husband had any near relations to care for them. 'They will only have their brother to look to—and I have never seen him,' she used to say, with tears running down her face, as the days went by and she knew that she must die. 'Oh, I do hope he will be good to my darlings. He writes kindly to me. But letters tell so little. And a young man must feel it hard to have helpless children thrown upon his hands like this. Oh, my little ones—my little ones! If I could only stay with you!'"

Mrs. Marks was fairly crying herself now, and I felt my eyes smarting with unshed tears; but I was young enough to be ashamed of showing feeling, and so I checked my emotion and asked—

"Do you know anything about Mr. Douglas? He is an engineer, I have heard. What kind of a man is he? Did Mrs. Douglas know anything about him?"

"Not very much; that was what made her so terrible anxious. You see, it was like this. He had gone out to India as a young man before she ever married the colonel, as her husband was called when she met him, and they fell in love with one another. She always said he had behaved very well, and had never seemed angry at the marriage; and when these two babies came he had of his own accord requested his father to settle all the money he had on his second wife and her children, as he was in a position to make his own way in the world, and had his own mother's money as well."

"That was a very generous thing for a young man to do. Was she not pleased by it?"

"Yes; she said it was very kind, and that she hardly liked her husband to do it. But he said he thought it was the right thing, for his eldest son had got on wonderfully well, and was making a really good position for himself, and would have all his own mother's money in any case, which was a pretty little fortune. And so it was settled, and before very long the colonel was ordered out to India, and had to leave his wife and the babies behind. And then he was killed out there, and never came home; and when his affairs came to be looked into, it was found that his money had been put into things that were not at all safe. For a few years it seemed as if they might recover; but when Mrs. Douglas came here it was because her lawyer had told her that some company had gone into liquidation (whatever that may be), and that he was afraid all her husband's money would be found to have gone. And so it came to pass, and the worry and the trouble helped to kill the poor thing, as I do believe. And there were the two poor children left, with only this step-brother to look to."

"But if he is rich, and if he is kind—"

"Yes, ma'am, that is what I used to say to the poor lady to try and hearten her up, but she would shake her head, and say that a young man to have two helpless children thrust upon his keeping, so to speak, and though he may be well off himself, he may not care to have to share his money with them, just as he may be thinking of marrying and having perhaps a family of his own. As she said, after he had really done more than most in giving up all claim upon his

father's estate—though, as it turned out, the best part of that money was lost—it would seem rather to much to have to support the children of the second marriage besides; and I do believe it was partly the fear of writing to tell him that the money was lost that helped to hasten her death. She never lived to get his answer to that. She never knew how he had taken it."

"But the letter never came after her death, I suppose? Did nobody open it?"

"No, that letter never came at all; for you see, ma'am, the lawyer he sent a telegraph to tell Mr. Douglas that she had died, and, as he explained to me, he would get that telegraph before he got her letter; so as he would know her dead by that time he wouldn't answer it and he didn't. What he did do was to write to the lawyer, and say that he had what they call a furlough due to him, and that he would come over to England as soon as he could, and settle what was to be done about the children. And meantime I begged to have them with me, and take my chance of getting paid. For the place suits them, and they are happy with me bless their little hearts! and Mrs. Douglas she left a bit of money with me, and would have left more, but that she went off so sudden she never got the last check signed. But there, there, if I do lose a bit I shan't make no complaint; for I love them children like as if they were my own, and I couldn't abear to have them go to strangers—not until something's been settled one way or the other."

"And when does Mr. Douglas come home?"

"Next month, ma'am I got a letter myself only the other day. It said that he'd be in England next month, and would come as soon as possible to see the children and settle up with me. It told me to get any thing needful for them, but didn't give no directions; and was a regular gentleman's letter, and didn't seem to tell you nothing—least of all what kind of a gentleman he was, which is what I'm main anxious to know. Still it was better than nothing, and we know what to expect."

"And what do the children think about it all?"

"Poor lambs! they don't know what to think no more than the rest of us. Little Guy, bless him! is all for going to India to shoot tigers and ride elephants and I don't know besides. Or else, when the other fit is on him, he is going to have a boat and sail round the world and take his sister with him out of the way of Brother Reginald, as their mother taught them to call him. As for Miss Maudie, she looks at me and at him with those big eyes of hers, and I see the tears stealing into them. I know what she thinks. She thinks they will be separated and sent to school, and kept there all the year round; for there will be no home to spend the holidays in, and so she and Guy will never see each other, and he will forget her in time and hardly know her when they do meet. I know that is what she is afraid of, poor lamb—of being sent away to a strange place all alone; and she so wrapped up in the little boy as it would break her heart to be taken away from him. She is a sweet loving little thing, and when her poor mother died I thought it would have killed her. But there was the boy, and I could always rouse her up by saying that she must learn to be a little mother to him. And now if they go and take him away from her too—"

Mrs. Marks stopped short and put her handkerchief to her eyes. She gave one great sob, and then shook her head as if to shake off her weakness, and concluded almost angrily.

"Well, it will be downright murder, that's what it will be; and I'll make bold to tell Mr. Douglas so myself if it comes to that. If it don't kill the child's body, it will break her little heart. And yet men-folks are that pig-headed and that ignorant where children are concerned, that as like as not he'll only laugh in my face, and tell me that she'll forget and be happy in a