

nothing to help the Lord Jesus. She could not go across the sea to teach the heathen ; she could not nurse the sick ; she could not even save her pennies, because she had none to save. If the ladies who employed her mother to starch their collars and laces ever paid her for carrying home their heavy baskets, she always gave the money to her mother, who used it to buy fuel and food, so that Mary was sure she would not be able to save any pennies for a long time. She felt sure that she wished to help the Lord Jesus as much as the missionary ; but what could the child of a poor widow do for Christ's kingdom ?

She wondered whether the Lord Jesus would think her a silly, useless girl. Somehow she did not think He would, or He would not have said, 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me.' But, oh, how she wished she could be of some use in the world !

To little Mary's surprise a large piece of coal that had been hissing, sputtering and blazing in the middle of the fire began to speak. Mary gazed at it attentively, but she was not afraid. All the smaller pieces of coal respectfully ceased to blaze, and listened while the large coal spoke in a funny, old-world language that was neither English nor French. Strange to say, little Mary understood it perfectly. As you have not Mary's ears, I will translate it into everyday little girl's English.

'Little Mary, little Mary,' said the coal, 'you think you are of no use in the world ; yet you have two feet with which to run errands for the Lord Jesus, you have two hands to work for Him, a voice to speak and sing for Him, a brain to think about Him, and a soul to prepare to live with Him. You shake your head and say you do not know how to use all these gifts, and ask what a black lump of coal can know about usefulness. Now, that is rather rude. Perhaps you will find that I know almost as much as a little white girl. I am fulfilling my mission in the world without a word of complaint. "Mission !" you exclaim ; "that has to do with the heathen, and is what the minister spoke about at the meeting." You say, "How can a piece of coal teach the gospel or nurse the sick ?" My dear little girl, though I have never been to a board school, I am very old, and I know that to fulfil my mis-

sion is to do that for which I was sent into the world. Your mission at present, little Mary, is to go to school, and at night carry home the baskets of clean linen for your tired mother. You look serious ; that does not sound so grand as sailing across sunny seas to teach little black children or nursing the sick, but it is quite as pleasing in the sight of the Lord Jesus Christ ; and if you wish to please Him, you will try to fulfil your true mission in life, and not impossibilities.

'Now, I will tell you about my mission. You see the blaze and feel the warmth that is diffused from my body. Have you ever wondered, little Mary, where I caught this light and warmth ? You say your mother kindled it. Yes ; but your mother could not have produced fire, if there had not been that within me which answered to her efforts. In my black body I hold imprisoned sunbeams that have been stored up for centuries. You look puzzled, and say that I came out of the cold, dark earth, so how could I contain sunbeams. Once upon a time, little Mary, I was part of a plant that grew in a forest, and it was then that I drank in the light and warmth which enable me to comfort you this cold winter night. This light and warmth came from the sun that still shines steadily over your head, and that holds so great a power over all created things that "there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."

'You, little Mary, have not only the rays of the earthly sun to give you health and vigor, but you have a spiritual sun, Jesus, the sun of righteousness, from whom you may receive divine strength. Your mission is higher than mine. Whereas I may only warm the body, you may warm and brighten the soul. When my body expires and falls to ashes, my mission will be completed ; but when your body expires and returns to the dust, your heavenly mission will then be beginning. Store up the sunbeams of God's love in your heart, and they will diffuse themselves abroad upon all your friends, and even upon your enemies. My life is nearly over, little Mary. When you see my ashes, think of the lesson I have tried to teach you ; and when you are tempted to think that you are useless, look at a piece of coal, and remember that the commonest

things in everyday life have a mission appointed by God.'

'Mary, lassie, wake up ; you've slept the fire out !' cried Mrs. Brown, as she bustled into the kitchen with an empty basket in her hand. Mary rubbed her eyes, and looked for the coal that had been speaking. She saw nothing but a heap of white ashes in the grate, and a filmy black 'stranger' shivering upon the bar.

'I'm very sorry, mother, but I've had such a strange dream.' And as Mary helped her mother to chop the firewood, she recounted the conversation of the piece of coal.

'Never think you are useless, my child,' said the mother fondly. 'You are your mother's sunbeam, and what higher mission can a little girl have ?'

Little Mary was satisfied.

### Do all the Good You Can.

(Miriam E. Arnold, in Michigan 'Advocate.')

Do all the good you can,  
As on through life you go ;  
God's holy Word declares  
We reap that which we sow.

Do all the good you can,  
So much there is to do ;  
In life's great harvest field  
There's surely work for you

Do all the good you can,  
No service deem too small ;  
'Tis precious in his sight  
Who watches over all.

Do all the good you can,  
Through love to Christ, thy King ;  
Thy kindly act of love  
May cause some heart to sing.

Do all the good you can ;  
Think what he did for thee ;  
His precious life he gave,  
From sin to set thee free.

Do all the good you can,  
And thou his smile shalt win ;  
His presence thou shalt know,  
Dwelling thy soul within.

Do all the good you can ;  
So short life's little day,  
Let us the time redeem,  
Do good while still we may.

Do all the good you can ;  
Then when shall set thy sun,  
With joy thine ears shall hear  
The Master's sweet 'Well done.'