

Mother's Thanksgiving.

BY MARGARET K. SANDOZ.

Such a quaint little Mother, in a gown of silver gray,
Her snowy hair smooth-parted, in the dear old-fashioned way,
And on her head a lint-white cap, of softest, flimsiest lace,
That made a picture-frame about her sweet and placid face.

Such a brave little Mother! So many a year had fled,
Since her husband, loyal and loving, had been numbered with the dead,
So many, many summers had she borne a lonely heart,
That her fair age and his bright youth were half a life apart.

Such a gentle little Mother! Ah! the boys remember now,
Sorrowfully, every shadow on that tender, tranquil brow,
They remember how she taught them, how she kissed them each at night,
And they felt no need of angels keeping watch till morning light.

Such a trustful little Mother! There were dark days now and then,
Though the dear lads never dreamed it until they were bearded men;
She would go away alone, kneeling in her chamber dim,
And would tell the Lord her troubles, casting all her care on him.

Such a happy little Mother! With a laugh like bells a-chime,
Ever swift to see the bright side, ready with a quip and rhyme,
Oh, so quick with love's own pity! oh, so earnest 'neath the jest!
Ever lavishing her kindness, giving ever of her best.

Such a winsome little Mother! Why the village children came
Trooping merrily about her; she knew every one by name;
Baby faces smiled to greet hers, by some subtle impulse stirred,
As if fledglings knew the brooding of the tender mother-bird.

Such a true little Mother! Never dallying with wrong;
Honest to the very heart's core; bearing burdens late and long;
Paying every debt with interest; filling every day with work,
With a deep disdain for any who the day's demand would shirk.

Such a blessed little Mother! Through their tears her sons to-day
Thank the God she served and honoured that she sleeping passed away
Lifted to the home in heaven, to the comrade gone before,
Just as earth's Thanksgiving greetings floated through the open door.

TWO LITTLE MAIDS IN CHINA.

BY ELLA E. GLOVER.

It was after school hours and the girls had just finished eating their afternoon rice when there came a knock at the study door. In came two of the largest girls, and, as each has a history, perhaps you would like to make their acquaintance. Wen Ling says: "Teacher, please may Kule Ch'iu see her uncle's picture? She is homesick." Now, while they are sitting at the desk talking quietly over the photographs, let me tell you what I know about them.

Wang Wen Ling is the daughter of one of our preachers. When she was twelve years old (that was seven years ago) she was betrothed to a boy four years her junior. Then a year or two later her father heard the Gospel and believed. He wanted to send Wen Ling to school, and in 1890 she was all ready to come, and in fact had gone into the cart, when her heathen mother made such a fuss that the girl went back. The next year her father told her to get ready, and again the mother was so angry that the plan was given up. But the Lord touched the mother's heart, and three years ago Wen Ling went into a country school, and in the fall of 1895 came here.

Do you ask, "Is she still betrothed into a heathen home?" That is what I asked one of her friends.

"Oh, yes, for the mother-in-law does not want to give her up."

"But is there no way, if the father has plenty of courage and the girl wants to be freed?"

"No way."

"Will Wen Ling's feet be bound when she is married?"

"I do not know. Her mother-in-law is not pleased to have her here and of course is not pleased with her large feet, but she cannot help herself as long as

Wen Ling is still in her father's house. Other betrothals have been broken off. There are four or five girls of whom I know who were engaged and now are free."

And now you want to know Kule Ch'iu's history. She is not pretty like Wen Ling, but I think she has a good face. She is two years younger than Wen Ling, but fully as tall.

Her father died six years ago, but not until he had heard of Jesus Christ. There was no church in the place, and so he died without having become a member of the church on earth. He had a brother who smoked opium and gambled. The new Christian urged him to reform and told him that there was help for him. The entreaties were not in vain, for the opium smoker and gambler proved the power of Christ to save, and became an earnest preacher of the Gospel when Kule Ch'iu's father died. The two oldest daughters were married off into heathen homes, having no desire to believe this new faith. The uncle wanted the third daughter to go to school, but she refused, and heathen relatives found her a mother-in-law. There were left in the home the mother and elder brother, both of whom have accepted Christianity, and Kule Ch'iu. She had been betrothed to a heathen. Her uncle wanted her to study, and she, having heard some of the other girls tell of the pleasures they had in school, wanted, too, to study, and so she went into a country school. This made trouble at once, as the mother-in-law was displeased. The uncle sent word: "Kule Ch'iu is to have her feet unbound now, and study; when she is married you can make her bind her feet and we cannot help ourselves, but at present she is in our control."

The mother-in-law sent back word she would not have the girl, and so she is free. She is a bright girl and an earnest Christian, giving promise of a useful life.

HUNTING FOR BEE TREES.

BY LEWIS ALBERT HANKS.

When I was a boy over on the Oregon hills there used to be large numbers of wild bees. The great oak forests made a splendid home for them. It was very easy to find a large hollow tree or limb where a new swarm could make its home. Besides, the climate was very mild, and the woods abounded in wild flowers, not only on the trees and shrubs, but every wild hillside pasture was a garden of honey-bearing blossoms.

The best honey in all the world is wild honey. There is something so mild and delicious in the honey that is found in hollow limbs of the big oak trees that no one who has ever tasted it can forget it. It is of course very rare that any of this kind of honey finds its way to the market.

Hunting for a bee tree requires a great deal of patience. The bee hunter will sit, of a fine morning, with his back against a tree and his eyes toward the sun until he sees a bee streaking it through the air. A few moments' close observation will show a line of bees all going in one direction. They are going home. Those that are going out in search of flowers fly high, but the bees that are loaded with honey fly very low. The hunter knows that the bee never loses any time, but flies in a straight line.

When the hunter has fixed the direction of the bee line (who has not heard people talk of going "in a bee line"?) he follows it with the greatest care. He walks slowly and keeps track of that little line of loaded bees that shoot like bullets over his head. He generally finds the home tree within a mile of the honey field, and often much nearer.

When the hunter has tracked the little workers to their hive, which is usually the hollow limb of some big tree, he marks the spot by blazing some trees near it, and then cuts his initials into the bee tree. That makes the tree his, according to backwoods law; and on the frontier it would be no more stealing to take a man's potatoes out of his garden than to chop down his bee tree after his initials had been cut on it.

When the bee hunter has thus made sure his title he goes home and brings back his wife and children, with all the available buckets and kettles, prepared to rob the unsuspecting little toilers of the woods. He builds a fire at the base of the tree, if it be hollow all the way up, and in a few minutes the bees, sick and angry, are forced to get out. The hunter and his family make themselves scarce about this time, for it is not healthy for a man to show himself when a swarm of bees has been smoked out of house and home. When the bees have all disappeared the hunter climbs up, chops a hole big enough to insert a tin dipper, and fills his buckets with

the delicious nectar-like honey. Wild honey is usually a pale straw colour, and has a delicate fragrance, born of the wild flowers and the woods, that is never found in honey that is made by domesticated bees in artificial hives.

There is a charming bee story told in the Bible concerning Jonathan, who was a bosom friend of David. It was on the day of a great battle, when Saul had made all the soldiers take an oath not to eat anything until the battle was over; but Jonathan had been away at the time, and so knew nothing about it. Late that afternoon, when he was hot and tired, passing through a forest he came under a bee tree, where the honey was dripping from the overfull hive in a hollow limb. Jonathan had a feast that day, and was greatly comforted and refreshed by it, though it came near costing him his life afterward.

It was related of two Scotchmen who were coming to America that each of them determined to bring something characteristic of his native land that might perpetuate his love for the old country in his new home. One of them brought the Scotch thistle and planted it in his garden, and the winds caught up the thistle balls and carried them far and wide until the whole land was cursed with thistles. His neighbour brought with him a hive of bees, and every now and then a swarm would escape his vigilance and go wild in the woods, until the forests were full of wild honey. It would be a good thing to ask ourselves the question, which is it we are scattering abroad in the world by our daily lives—thistles or honey?

Johnny's Complaint.

Our preacher says—an 'course he's right—
It's very wrong to tell a fib.
(So mother's taught me ever since
She rocked me in my little crib).
That's why I can't just understand
Why in his sermons he will run
Along like sixty when he's said,
"But one word more, and I have done."

When first I heard him say those words,
They made me glad, for I, you see,
Was tired, for half-hour sermons seem
Enough for little folks like me;
But, gracious! I was quite surprised
To find he'd only just begun.
When, pausing for a breath, he said,
"But one word more, and I have done."

I wonder what he'd think if I
Should say, when at his home I'd sup,
"Just one plum more, and I have done."
Then eat his wife's preserves all up?
I guess he'd ask me what I meant;
I'd have to say I was in fun,
Just like he must be when he says,
"But one word more, and I have done."

THE SERMON JANET PREACHED.

BY ROBERTA FRANKLIN BALLARD.

It was Junior League afternoon, and Janet was waiting to go. She had wanted to be early, for Miss Lou had asked her to read the Scripture lesson, and her little Bible lay on the table with her gloves waiting for her. It had been lying there for some minutes, and now the clock pointed to five minutes of opening hour and still mamma did not come.

Janet made a little move to go when she saw how late it was, but Robble gave a little moan and nestled closer in her arms. Robble was the dear baby brother, and he had struck his little curly head a bad blow on the table corner.

It had happened a half-hour ago, and Janet had bathed it and had taken him in her arms to put and hold till mamma came back. She had expected to be home before this, and Janet knew something unavoidable had detained her, as mamma was very careful not to disappoint her little daughter if she could help it.

If Robble were well, she could put him in the kitchen with the cook, and he would play there with his toys till mother came home; but he did not want to go to cook now he was hurt; he wanted Sister Janet, as there was no dear mamma.

Tick, tick, went the clock, and Janet watched the hand go slowly up to the hour. She really ought to go, Miss Lou would be disappointed and wonder at her absence. Was it right to stay home and miss the meeting, with the Bible reading and prayer and Miss Lou's helpful talk? Still, what could she do? Robble's eyes were closed, but when she tried to lay him on the couch the little curly head nestled closer to her, and the dimpled hand was put in a loving caress against her cheek. Oh, no, it couldn't be right to leave the little fel-

low, she would not think of it any longer.

Then she sat and listened to the tick of the clock and the scratch of Uncle Hal's pen in the adjoining room. He was not her real uncle—a more distant relative—but he had lived at their house ever since she could remember, and Janet loved him dearly. He was quiet and reserved with most persons—mamma had told her of a lonely child-life, with little but harshness in it, that had served to make him seem cold and hard to others, but never so to Janet.

He was not a Christian. Janet often wondered, as she prayed for him, if there had been the same loving home-life for him that she had, whether he would not have been a Christian too.

From where she sat she could see in the other room the iron-gray head bent over his desk, and she wondered to herself, with a little smile, if, when it was a baby head and full of curls, it had ever been hurt and petted and held on a sister's arm. No, she remembered mamma had said there were no brothers or sisters—a lonely little orphan boy, with no one to love or care for him but a stern old uncle. How dreadful it was! She drew the curly head on her breast closer to her; she was glad she had not left Robble.

The scratching of the pen stopped after a little and Uncle Hal came softly into the room.

"Is he asleep?" he asked, in a low tone. "I'll lay him down for you. Poor little fellow! that's a bad-looking brute." Then he looked at Janet. "Why, you have your hat on; were you going out?"

Janet told him.

"And you gave up that precious meeting for a little brother's hurt head? That's quite remarkable. Are you sure you did right?"

Janet looked at him. He was teasing, she could see; but what did he mean, what did he think was right?

"Well, I wanted to go real bad," she said, "but I didn't think I ought to leave Robble with cook, he seemed to want me."

"Exactly," Uncle Hal said, with a smile, "but a good many folks would have thought it a very trifling excuse to keep them home. I'm glad my little girl's religion is the kind that prompts to kindly deeds. It's the kind this sick, hurt world needs the most of all. I see your little Bib'le here. I'll mark a verse—you see I know some Bible verses—that you may remember as a text you preached a sermon from to your old uncle to-day. I will have mercy and not sacrifice." You see I don't go to church very often, so I don't get many sermons from regular preachers; but once in a while a little girl I know preaches the sweetest kind of sermons by her kindly life. It does me good, too; makes it easy to believe in the tender love of the great Father, when one sees his children filled with the same spirit."

Then he stooped and gently kissed Janet's flushed, glad face.

"I thank you for the little sermon to-day, dear. I hope I'll be a better man for it."

IN THE LION'S MOUTH

St. Lyon Playfair gives the following testimony of three men who have been in the power of wild beasts:

"I have known three friends who were partially devoured by wild beasts under apparently hopeless circumstances of escape. The first was Livingstone, the great African traveller who was knocked on his back by a lion, which began to munch his arm. He assured me that he felt no fear or pain and that his only feeling was one of intense curiosity as to what part of his body the lion would take next. The next was Rustom Pasha, now Turkish Ambassador in London. A bear attacked him and tore off part of his hand and part of his arm and shoulder. He also assured me that he had neither a sense of pain nor of fear, but that he felt excessively angry because the bear grunted with so much satisfaction in munching him. The third case is that of Sir Edward Bradford, an Indian officer now occupying a high position in the Indian Office. He was seized in a solitary place by a tiger, which held him firmly behind his shoulders with one paw and then deliberately devoured the whole of his arm, beginning at the hand and ending at the shoulder. He was positive that he had no sensation of fear, and thinks that he felt a little pain when the fangs went through his hand, but is certain that he felt none during the munching of his arm."

Unless the race is to degenerate, sons must excel their fathers and daughters their mothers. Are you on the way to a better manhood and womanhood than that of your parents?