

reason, when "The Light that Failed" appeared, it was found that either the judgment must be recast or the long story overlooked. The latter alternative was chosen. "The Light that Failed" deserved a better fate. There is, it must be admitted, a great blemish in the work; this is consequent upon the double ending. To please the readers of "Lippincott," Maisie had to marry Dick; to please the author, she was to break Dick's heart. The latter course is certainly more in keeping with Maisie's character; but even in the amended version there remains a great improbability. Maisie would never have returned from France on learning of Dick's blindness. She was a young woman who knew particularly well what she was about, and she would have recognised that at such a crisis she could only come back to Dick's side in order to be the companion of his solitude. She must have burnt her ships, knowing that she had done so would render her unable to question the rightness of her decision. This is the one flaw in the book; but as an offset to it, there are some superb passages—passages which for insight, power, and tenderness, are beyond anything that the writer has hitherto achieved. The scenes between Dick and Maisie as children; the scenes of life—artistic, journalistic, and military—are all wonderful in their way, whilst the descriptions of the islands "tucked away under the Line," are amongst the most exquisite word pictures in the English language. But, more interesting than any of these for the present purpose, are Mr. Kipling's utterances on the subject of the right arm in art. It follows upon Maisie's question:

"Why am I wrong in trying to get a little success?"

"Just because you try. Don't you understand, darling? Good work has nothing to do with—doesn't belong to—the person who does it. It's put into him or her from outside."

"But how does that affect—"

"Wait a minute. All we can do is to learn how to do our work, to be masters of our materials, instead of servants, and never to be afraid of anything."

"I understand that."

"Everything else comes from outside ourselves. Very good. If we sit down quietly to work out notions that are sent to us, we may or we may not do something that isn't bad. A great deal depends on being master of the bricks and mortar of the trade. But the

instant we begin to think about success and the effect of our work, to play with one eye on the gallery, we lose power and touch and everything else. At least that's how I have found it. Instead of being quiet and giving every power you possess to your work, you're fretting over something which you can neither help nor hinder by a minute. See?"

"It's so easy for you to talk in that way. People like what you do. Don't you ever think about the gallery?"

"Much too often; but I'm always punished for it by loss of power. It's as simple as the Rule of Three. If we make light of our work by using it for our own ends, the work will make light of us, and as we're the weaker, we shall suffer."

We find the same ideal expressed in the beautiful verses with which "Life's Handicap" concludes:

If there be good in that I wrought,
Thy hand compelled it, Master Thine;
Where I have failed to meet Thy thought
I know, through Thee, the blame is mine.

One instant's toil to Thee denied
Stands all Eternity's offence,
Of that I did with Thee to guide,
To Thee, through Thee, be excellenc..

Who, lest all thought of Eden fade,
Bring'st Eden to the craftsman's brain,
Godlike to muse o'er his own trade
And manlike stand with God ag..in.

The depth and dream of my desire,
The bitter paths wherein I stray,
Thou knowest Who has made the Fire
Thou knowest Who has made the Clay.

One stone and more swings to her place
In that dread temple of Thy Worth,
It is enough that through Thy grace
I saw naught common on Thy earth.

Take out that vision from my ken;
Oh whatsoe'er may spoil or speed,
Help me to need no aid from men
That I may help such men as need I

A man who does not flinch before such an ideal as that need place no limit to his possible achievements.

Written for THE QUEEN.

IS IT WORTH KEEPING.

By LILLIAN CLAXTON.

Poor little letter, how faded the page!
Open it carefully, tender with age.

Shall we still treasure it? nay, let it go,
None but the owner its value can know.

What but a mother's eye could understand
All these queer sentences in baby hand?

Say, has that mother's heart throbbed high with joy
At this quaint letter once sent by her boy?

Say, have her yearning eyes oft times grown dim
O'er the child letter in longing for him?

Nothing we know of him, there is no trace,
Yet can we picture his grave little face.

Bent o'er the paper, with hand moving slow,
Writing to mother, such long years ago.

Still can we picture the smiles and the tears,
Caused by that letter in long ago years—

Smiles at the blunders, the spelling, the stops,
Yet on the faded leaf, now a tear drops.

Dear little writer, as older you grew,
O was the world what it first seemed to you?

And when you mix'd 'mid the toil and the strife,
Did you grow weary of this lower life?

O: were you laid in the quiet to rest—
Hands cross'd in silence upon the child breast.

Gather'd in love from each sorrow, each fear?
(Life is so hard for the child-lambs down here.)

Who was the writer we never can know.
"Charley" is all that is written below.

Treasure it still for the love it has had,
Just for the sake of the poor little lad.

Lovingly written in that bygone day,
Fold it up tenderly, place it away.