

ing of "the loved and the lost ones so dear," of whom Miss Pearce had sung. But he did not speak of that. He referred to the lines about "the bridge, the brook, and the mill, the lanes, and the sweet budding thorn." "That is exactly my experience," he said. "I can see the scene now just as you described it. Yes, Miss Pearce, that is a song of human nature. Thank you very much. You have given us a rare pleasure. When you see your sister, pray do not fail to tell her how we appreciated her song."

All warmly expressed their thanks, except Mr. Winstall, who seemed pre-occupied and depressed in a way not usual with him. When he did speak he did not express his thanks, but asked Miss Pearce in rather a cold and hard voice if she would favor him with a copy of that song.

"Oh, certainly," she said, "but what do you want it for?"

"I just want it," he said, "and you will write it out for me. Ah, if we could keep the singer as well as the song!" But this last sentiment he spoke to himself.

"Now," said Mr. Stuart, "since the tide of song has begun to flow, I would like to hear Miss Grace. I am told she is developing a fine voice. I suppose, Mr. Winstall, that is one of the good effects of your peculiar system of education. If any pupil has a special talent it gets a chance of being discovered and cultivated."

"Quite so," said Mr. Winstall, "and they do say that Grace will have a good voice, but of course it is far from being developed yet. Grace, could you give us a small sample of its quality?"

But Grace did not like such prominence, so she suggested instead that they might all unite in singing something. Papa, she said, was tenor; Mr. Stuart was bass; Lucinda and Miss Pearce could take the soprano, and she would do her best with the contralto. It seemed a good idea, and the marvel was that, like so many good things, it had not been thought of before. Here were five people, with this great possibility of refined enjoyment, yet making nothing of it until a little girl of fifteen gave them the suggestion. It was no less than a discovery.

Of course they all pleaded that they could not sing, that they had colds, that it was so long since they had sung any, and so on. But good nature prevailed; they were not disposed to be critical of each other; nobody's reputation was at stake. The result was that they chose first a Psalm, putting a well known tune to it, and they were all surprised and delighted with their performance. Then they sung other Psalms and Hymns, for being but amateurs they could not unite in anything advanced or classical; and perhaps the effect was no less sweet and inspiring. What is there in this world more softening, elevating, and inspiring than sacred song?

When the singing ceased the friends seemed in a favorable mood for the little scheme that had been concocted by Miss Winstall and Mr. Stuart. Passing near where he sat she caught his eye and whispered—

"You remember?"

He gave a bow of assent. Then she brought him a Bible. A silence naturally fell on the company. After a pause Mr. Stuart said—

"I hardly ever conducted family worship but I am reminded of my sainted father. His simple, earnest manner in family prayer I can never forget. Many of his petitions I have made my own. That sacred memory of family worship has followed me like a good angel, and many a time has restrained me from sin."

Mr. Stuart paused, but no one replied. Mr. Winstall, however, was touched, for his experience was very much the same as Mr. Stuart's. His heart was more susceptible this evening than it had been for a long time. At length Mr. Stuart resumed—

"I was just thinking now, Mr. Winstall," he said, "that what we find good for ourselves we might try to share with others who are less fortunate. You will pardon the suggestion that your servants might unite with us in family prayer."

"Oh that would be nice," exclaimed Grace "and we would sing a hymn too. Do, please papa, have them brought in."

Mr. Winstall at once assented. He rang the bell, and our friend Lucy Bond appeared. "Ah, Lucy," said Mr. Winstall "you are here yet. The black demons will not come back for you, I hope. Now Lucy, Mr. Stuart is going to have family prayer, and we wish you all to come in—Methuselah, Jerry, and all of you. Now come right in—don't wait to fix up any."

This occult reference to the black demons quite mystified Mr. Stuart. But he was thankful that the little plot had so far succeeded. It had occurred to him that if he could get the servants brought in to-night, Miss Winstall's course would be easier in the morning. That young lady gave him her secret blessing for so skillfully carrying the point. When the servants were all in, Mr. Stuart began to read. He chose that sublime description of the judgment of Matthew's Gospel, beginning with these words,

"When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory."

There was a marked and solemn stillness on the whole company while Mr. Stuart read. Then he said,

"Perhaps Miss Grace will kindly lead us in a hymn. Let us sing Jesus Lover of my Soul. I think we all know that."

All joined more or less in singing the familiar tune. And surely those words brought master and servant, old and young, black and white, unto one plane. They all alike needed to fly to that bosom of love and protection, while the billows and tempests of life rolled high.

Then Mr. Stuart prayed. It was a tender and touching prayer for pardon, and guidance, and salvation. He prayed especially for all the inmates of that home, in their several positions and responsibilities. He remembered the tempted and tried, the sorrowful, the sick, the dying. And he did not forget the loved ones who were far away, but ever near to God, and he prayed that not one would be missing in the home on high.

The prayer was punctuated by a few grunts and amens from Methuselah, but in a very modified tone; Methuselah had to keep reminding himself that he was not in church. The other domestics resented Methuselah's devotional grunts, as indicating an ostentatious desire to take a more prominent part in the service than the rest.

After prayer, the servants having withdrawn, Mr. Stuart felt that the spiritual atmosphere was favorable to the completion of the plan he had in view. Still it was a delicate piece of business to undertake. Mr. Winstall seemed in a favorable mood, but it is not easy to forecast just how far such a man will go. However, Mr. Stuart had pledged himself to try. After a little pause he said—

"You will pardon me, I am sure, Mr. Winstall, but I cannot help saying another word on behalf of stated family prayer. I believe you and I both know the benefit of it. Now

if for any reason it was allowed to lapse here for a time it is not difficult to understand that. But in that case might it not be resumed? It would be a good influence for every one, and might have very blessed effects in later years. I simply make the suggestion."

"Oh, it would be nice indeed," interrupted Grace. "You know dear mama used to have prayers every morning. She read them out of a book. And we have the book yet. I saw it in the library."

This incidental appeal to a very tender memory brought Mr. Winstall almost to the point of assenting. But one difficulty remained.

"You know, Mr. Stuart," he said, "I am no hand at such things myself. I do not object to what you propose, the thing itself is good, but who would undertake the chaplain business?"

"Well," said Mr. Stuart, "you would naturally be the right one, but if you prefer it, Miss Winstall might, perhaps, make a start, and you could take it later when you feel like it."

"Oh, Mr. Stuart," she said, "how could I do it? I never did such a thing in my life."

Miss Winstall was playing her part very well. "Oh, yes," said he, "you can do it well, never fear. And may you be blessed yourself, and made a blessing."

As to the servants coming in," said Mr. Winstall, would you think that desirable?"

"If you would not like to have them in, better not have them," said Mr. Stuart.

"But it might be a bright and helpful influence for them. They have not many pleasures, you know, and none so pure as this would be. I think they would appreciate it, and be no worse servants for it. But if you have any objection it is easy not to have them."

"If we had company, for instance," said Mr. Winstall, "it might sometimes be awkward."

"Very true," said Mr. Stuart, "And if I were in your place I believe I would have prayers in the morning just after breakfast. Then you could be all together. In the evening you might have prayer or not, as you might find convenient, and you could have a standing rule, if you choose, not to have the servants in then."

"You make my way very clear," said Mr. Winstall, "and it is my own fault if I do not follow it. Thank you for all your good suggestions. So you may go ahead, Lucinda, just as Mr. Stuart says."

Thus the matter was happily arranged. It was a source of great thankfulness to Miss Winstall. And how could she ever thank Mr. Stuart for so wisely helping her into this line of duty? When she got a chance of speaking to him privately in this strain he disclaimed all credit in the matter. "It was yourself, you know," he said, "who conceived the whole plan, and it is yourself who has to carry it out. What I did was a very small part, but let me assure you I shall be glad if I can help forward any project you set your heart upon."

He soon took his leave. When he said good night to all he found he had left his gloves in the room, and Miss Winstall returned with him to search for them. He had to bid her good night once more, and in doing so, took her hand and pressed it to his lips.

To be Continued.

The eucalyptus trees in Australia penetrate from 180 to 220 feet into the soil with their roots, which absorb all moisture within a radius of 30 to 60 feet,