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WINNIPEG, Man.

PRAYER AND POTATOES

[Of this poem—a fragment of a charity sermon preached in Dorchester, Massachusetts, some twelve or fourteen years ago—John G. Whittier wrote: "It is more valuable than some epics. I am not sure but it is more to the Master's purpose than any learned theological tome which has been published since it was written."]

An old lady sat in her old arm chair,
With wrinkled face and dishevelled hair,
And pale and hunger-worn features;
For days and for weeks her only fare,
As she sat there in her old arm chair,
Had been nothing but potatoes."

And now they were gone:—of bad or good
Not one was left for the old lady's food,
Of these, her stock of potatoes;
And she sigh'd and said: "What shall I
do?
Where shall I send, and to whom shall I
go
To get some more potatoes?"

And she thought of the deacon over the
way,
The deacon so ready to worship and pray,
Whose cellar was full of potatoes.
And she said: "I will send for the deacon
to come,
He'll not mind much to give me some
Of such a store of potatoes."

And the deacon came over as fast as he
could,
Thinking to do the old lady some good,
But never thought once of potatoes;
He ask'd her directly to tell her chief
want,
And she, simple soul, expecting a grant,
Immediately answer'd, "Potatoes."

But the deacon's religion went not that
way,
He was more accusom'd to preach and
pray,
Than to give of his hoarded potatoes;
So, not hearing, of course, what the old
lady said,
He rose to pray with uncovered head;
But she only thought of potatoes.
He pray'd for patience, for wisdom and
grace,
But when he pray'd, "O Lord, give her
peace,"

She audibly sigh'd, "Give potatoes;"
And at the end of each prayer that he
said,
He heard, or he thought that he heard, in
its stead,
The same request for potatoes.

The deacon was troubled—knew not
what to do;
'Twas embarrassing very, to have her
act so
About "those carnal potatoes!"
So, ending his prayer, he started for home;
As the door closed behind him he heard a
deep groan,
"Oh, give to the hungry, potatoes!"

And that groan follow'd him all the way
home;
In the midst of the night it haunted his
room,
"Oh, give to the hungry, potatoes;"
He could bear it no longer—arose and
dressed,
From his well-fill'd cellar taking in haste
A bag of his best potatoes.

Again he went to the widow's lone hut,
Her sleepless eyes she had not shut,
But there she sat in her old arm chair,
With the same wan features, the same sad
air;

So, entering in, he poured on the floor
A bushel or more from his goodly store
Of the very best potatoes.

The widow's heart leap'd up for joy,
Her face was haggard and wan no more,
"Now," said the deacon, "shall we
pray?"

"Yes," said the widow, "now you may;"
And he kneel'd him down on the sanded
floor.

Where he had poured his goodly store;
As never before his lips essay'd;
No longer embarrassed, but free and full,
He poured out the voice of a liberal soul,
And the widow responded aloud, "Amen!"
But said no more of potatoes.

And would you who hear this simple tale
Pray for the poor, and praying "prevail,"
Then preface your prayers with alms and
good deeds;

Search out the poor, with their cares and
their needs;

Pray for peace, and grace, and heavenly
food,

For wisdom, and guidance, for all these
are good,

But don't forget the potatoes.

BEAUTIFUL SNOW

The following heart-touching effusion
was found among the effects of an erring,
fallen young woman, who died in Cin-
cinnati, at the close of the late American
war.

Oh, the snow, the beautiful snow,
Filling the sky and the earth below,
Over the house tops, over the street,
Over the heads of the people you meet.

Dancing—Flirting—Skimming along,
Beautiful snow! it can do no wrong;
Flying to kiss a fair lady's cheek,
Clinging to lips in frolicsome freak;
Beautiful snow from heaven above,
Pure as an angel, gentle as love!

Oh! the snow, the beautiful snow,
How the flakes gather and laugh as they
go,

Whirling about in maddening fun;
Chasing—Laughing—Hurrying by,
It lights on the face, and it sparkles the
eye;

And the dogs with a bark and a bound
Snap at the crystals as they eddy around;
The town is alive, and its heart is aglow,
To welcome the coming of beautiful snow!

How wild the crowd goes swaying along,
Hailing each other with humor and song;
How the gay sleighs like meteors flash by,
Bright for the moment, then lost to the
eye;

Ringling—Swinging—Flashing they go,
Over the crust of the beautiful snow;
Snow so pure when it falls from the sky,
To be trampled and tracked by thousands
of feet,

Till it blends with the filth in the horrible
street.

Once I was pure as the snow, but I fell,
Fell like the snow flakes from heaven to
hell;

Fell to be trampled as filth in the street,
Fell to be scoffed, to be spit on and beat;
Pleading—Cursing—Dreading to die,
Selling my soul to whoever would buy;

Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread,
Hating the living and fearing the dead,
Merciful God, have I fallen so low?
And yet I was once like the beautiful
snow.

Once I was fair as the beautiful snow
With an eye like a crystal, a heart like its
glow;

Once I was loved for my innocent grace—
Flattered and sought for the charms of
my face!

Father—Mother—Sisters—all—
God and myself I have lost by my fall;
The veriest wretch that goes shivering by,
Will make a wide sweep lest I wander too
nigh;

For all that is on or above me I know,
There is nothing so pure as the beautiful
snow.

How strange it should be that this beautiful
snow,

Should fall on a sinner with nowhere to go!
How strange it should be when the night
comes again,

If the snow and the ice struck my desper-
ate brain,

Fainting—Freezing—Dying alone,
Too wicked for prayer, too weak for a
moan,

To be heard in the streets of the crazy
town,

Gone mad in the joy of the snow coming
down;

To lie and die in my terrible woe,
With a bed and a shroud of the beautiful
snow.



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Helpless and foul as the trampled snow,
Sinner, despair not! Christ stoopeth low
To rescue the soul that is lost in sin,
And raise it to life and enjoyment again.

Groaning—Bleeding—Dying for thee,
The crucified hung on the cursed tree!
His accents of mercy fell soft on thine ear,
"Is there mercy for me? Will He heed my
weak prayer?"

God! in the stream that for sinners did
flow,
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

MOTHERS' QUESTIONS

Can you advise me what to do for my
hands? I have worked very hard for
twenty years, and my hands show the
fact only too plainly. I am invited to
stay with rich relations, and my hands
make me wonder if I ought to accept.
Please give me advice about them, if
you can, and I shall be grateful.

OLD MOTHER.

Dear Mother:—Get a bottle of glycer-
ine, a pair of loose chamois gloves and
a cake of super-fatted soap from a
chemist. Every night wash the hands
well with the soap and hot water, rub
in the glycerine, put on the gloves and
sleep with them on. If you are near a
large town I would advise you to have
the hands manicured; if not, buy some
nail paste and cherry sticks, clean them
twice a day with paste and polish with
chamois leather. Dear hands, how
many messages of love and helpfulness
do these same marks show, and how
proud some day we daughters will be
of these hands that have helped to make
the nation's strength, never tired, never
shirking. God bless these hard toil-
worn hands!

Mrs. Mark Johnson, Young, Sask.:—
Dear friend, I am sending you the
pamphlet as requested and hope that
you will find it a very great help.

Mother:—I will still continue this

title, and feel assured you will not mind.
Your tribute to The Grain Growers'
Guide I thoroughly enjoyed, and I will
print just exactly what you have written
so that my readers may also enjoy it.
"I am heart and soul in sympathy with
the work of The Grain Growers' Guide,
and your page and your aims and de-
sires as expressed therein. If a word
from a farmer's wife is any encourage-
ment, then you shall have it. Press on
in the path you are taking, your influ-
ence must be for good, and it is greater
perhaps than you can realize, and your
reward will come, if it is not already
with you. Please send me 50 cents'
worth of pamphlets which you speak
about re eugenics, etc."

If you could just realize what these
words of appreciation mean to me you
would feel glad, indeed, that you had
written. To be the woman's friend is
my one aim and object, and to be a big
factor in giving them their freedom in
the not very far distant future will be
the life work of your friend,

MARY FORD.

Shrinking Washing Materials.—When
making up washing materials it is import-
ant to shrink the goods before cutting.
All such materials as duck, madras, linen,
and cheviot shrink an inch in a yard the
first time they are washed, and it is quite
possible that every time they are washed
subsequently they will continue the
shrinking process to some extent. The
following is a simple and satisfactory way
of shrinking washing goods. "Fill a
bath-tub one-quarter full of clear water.
Fold the material in a clean towel, to
prevent dust settling on it; place it in the
water, and let it remain there all day and
over night. Then hang it up dripping
wet to dry. It will take a long time to
dry, but it will dry in time and be smooth
enough to make up without ironing. When
the dress or blouse is completed, dampen
and press."