

how submissive they become,—how grateful they are for all that is done for them? At home they question and find fault and tyrannize over their friends; but they never do so with strangers. Peevishness seems to vanish when they leave the family circle; they grow quiescent and contented. Why should this be? Why should we treat those near and dear to us with less consideration than we do strangers? Why should we lay on them burdens which we would never ask outsiders to bear, and demand sacrifices which are as unnecessary as they are selfish?

"I never sing now because my sister doesn't like it," said a sweet little maid; "she's so sensitive, you know, and has had so much sorrow, that I feel it would be cruel to do anything she doesn't like, so I've given up singing."

Very right and kind of the little maid, but not so right of the sister who accepted the sacrifice.

There are sacrifices which we have no right to accept, even when they are offered voluntarily. "Oh, that one will would give me drink of the water of the well at Bethlehem, that is at the gate." Yet when the brave men burst through the hosts of the Philistines, and brought back the water, David would not drink it. Why? Because it had cost too much. They had risked their lives to get it. "Shall I drink the blood of these men who have put their lives in jeopardy?"

I think there is a lesson for an invalid in this. Some things that are offered to you cost too much. If they are the price of another's health or another's happiness, or another's usefulness, they cost too much. Refuse to accept them; rather bear your burden alone. And does it ever strike you how much you may be the poorer by accepting these sacrifices? You may get what you long for, it is true, but even in the getting of it you will find it has lost its sweetness. One of a family who was deaf said: "Don't speak so much to each other; it irritates me to know you are speaking when I cannot hear what you say." And so, out of

sympathy with the afflicted one, lips were closed, and smiles checked, and silence reigned. She got her wish, but the shadow that rested on the family circle was more depressing to her than the sight of gaiety which she could not join. Better to witness joy that you cannot take part in than to see no joy at all.

Oh the shadows that even the best and the brightest, and the most hopeful among us cast, shadows often thrown unconsciously,—the shadow caused by a look, a frown, a petulant tone! We don't mean it, perhaps, but the result is the same as if we did; the cheerful are depressed by it, the hopeful cast down. Instead of gladness in our dwelling there is gloom. And what can be said of those miserable people who would banish every pleasure which they cannot enjoy, and vainly lay the burden of their own pain and weakness on everyone beside them? They have their reward; the burden comes back doubly weighted to their own shoulders, and stays there.

What a blessing it would be, not only to the weak, the suffering, the invalid, but to the whole of the little world in which they are placed, if they would but take to heart some such counsel as this:

Do not foster and pet and magnify your complaints; they will only take deeper root by such treatment. And don't let your self-sacrificing friends make too much of you. Take your own proper part in the game of unselfishness, try and find out by experience the blessedness of consideration for others, and instead of always receiving benefits, try and give.

What can *you* give, you will say, as you hold up your thin, nerveless fingers,—what can *you* do for any one? Give love instead of always claiming it, give joy instead of trying to take it away, keep back the murmur that will cause pain to your friends, cultivate a gentle, resigned, patient spirit; fill your sick-chamber with the light that comes from inward peace. "He who imparts light to another," as Dr. Trench says, "has not less light, but

walks henceforth in the light of two torches instead of one." And it is the same with happiness; strive to make those beside you happy, and you will find how greatly your own happiness is increased. *Sister*

#### "BETTER FARTHER ON."

I hear it singing, singing sweetly,  
Softly in an undertone,  
Singing as if God had taught it—  
"It is better farther on."

Night and day unceasing sings it,  
Sings it while I sit alone,  
Sings it so the heart can hear it—  
"It is better farther on."

Sits upon the grave and sings it,  
Sings it when the heart would groan,  
Sings it when the shadows darken—  
"It is better farther on."

Farther on? Then how much farther?  
Count the milestones, one by one?  
No, not counting—only trusting—  
"It is better farther on." *Exchange*

#### EMPTYING BY FILLING.

"We must empty by filling," said a divinely enlightened woman, Ellice Hopkins; and a wise man has said, "Nothing is ever displaced until it is replaced." In these two utterances lies the secret (if it be a secret) of all reform. Here, as elsewhere, nature (which abhors a vacuum) teaches. We cannot pump the darkness out of a room; we must empty it by filling it with light. One tallow dip will do more to exclude darkness than a thousand steam-pumps. The only way to shut out disease is to fill the veins with health. In morals we must banish the degrading by the elevating,—not by prohibition, but by substitution. We must crowd out the saloon by the reading room, the lecture, the boys' guild, and the young men's club, with its light and pleasant rooms, its games, and its cheerful welcome. If your boys are prone to spend the evening on the streets or in the billiard room, forbidding will not answer; you must make the home the brightest place in the world to them. We are all troubled by bad thoughts, by recollections, by imaginings, but we cannot exclude them by an effort of the