

HOUSEHOLD.

What Shall we do with the Ear Trumpet?

Helen and Mary Davis were doing painful work that afternoon; painful work that falls sooner or later to the lot of most of us if we live long enough.

It was only about a week since their loved mother had risen at the call of her Lord to leave the home below for the better home up above. The funeral was over now, and the other friends and relatives had gone. Helen and Mary would have to settle down in the old home to the same life again: not that their life could ever be exactly the same now that the dear, deaf, aged mother—deaf no longer—had passed from their sight.

'I think, dear, we had better do it at once. The longer we put it off the more painful it will become,' said Helen to her sister that morning after breakfast.

Helen referred to the sorting and distributing of their mother's private possessions.

All day the sisters were at it. Brave as each tried to be for the sake of the other, many a quiet tear fell upon letters, clothes, work materials; perhaps, particularly upon the ear trumpet, that had seemed to become almost a part of their mother.

Most of the old letters that she had kept were read—some casting light on events long past, others reviving the memory of them. Some of the clothes were assigned to their various elderly relatives; others were to be given to the poor. Various work materials the sisters would use up themselves; other things were to be laid by as treasured relics.

'We can never part with that ear trumpet,' said Mary. At first Helen nodded assent to her sister's remark, then she hesitated.

'I am thinking, dear, of that poor old Mrs. Harvey in your district. You were telling us a few weeks ago how she had quite given up attending the mothers' meeting, and even going to church; because she could not hear a word.'

'Oh, yes, I remember,' said Mary; 'and I thought her spirit was suffering from giving it all up. Her faith did not seem so bright as it used to be. She seemed to be more inclined to murmur and repine at her lot. I believe it would have been better for her to continue going all the same whether she heard or not. But I can guess what you are thinking of Helen dear.'

Both sisters gazed meditatively at the beloved ear trumpet. Then Mary quietly took it up and laid it by a warm shawl which had already been apportioned to the poor old lady.

A few weeks later, after the sisters had gone back as far as they could to their ordinary life, Mary said one afternoon, as she came in from her district: 'Mrs. Harvey is quite regular at the mothers' meeting again. She is looking so bright, too. Although she can read a little, she says no one can imagine what a trial it is never to hear the Word of God—that quickening Word without which the soul is sure to become dead and cold.'

'Then I'm really glad that dear mother's ear trumpet has not been kept shut up in a drawer,' replied Mary.—S. E. A. Johnson, in 'Friendly Greetings.'

How One Woman Helped to Beautify Chicago.

(Martha A. Kellogg, in 'Home and Flowers.')

When the streets of Chicago were laid out a number of little three-cornered parks were formed at the intersections of two streets. A fence was placed around the triangles, and a few trees of rapid growth planted. Each spot was given a name, and the city council declared the work done. No thought of green grass or ornamentation entered their minds. So the little neglected spots were given over to hoodlums, who made day torture and nights unbearable.

Four years ago I came to live opposite one of these deserted parks. My first effort was to ask and obtain an electric lamp of the city. Then, getting bolder, an appeal was made for sod for the park, which was granted after repeated solicitation. A hint was given for a few geranium beds, which was met with stout

refusal. Geraniums in a little city park! Why, the thing was unheard of! There was no money for such useless expense.

So I concluded to wait till the following summer. Then I hunted up the 'park commissioner,' who was drawing salary for keeping the city parks in good condition. He just laughed in derision at my request for a few flowers, but said, 'I see you are in earnest, so I'll interview the commissioner of public works at the city hall, and report to you soon.' He reported that I could have a few geraniums, but the appropriation was so small he could do very little more. Very well, I said. Give me as much as possible, and my friends will help me make our park a credit to our ward and to Chicago. After the beds were made and the grass mowed, and the beautiful scarlet flowers came, I had to ask for public protection to keep boys from playing ball and leap-frog over the beds. Last summer I became desperate. I said to the superintendent, 'Will you allow me to assist you in making the park more beautiful?' He consented. So I bought morning-glory seeds and planted them around the tree stumps (for some of the trees are dying or dead), and asked my friends to give seeds, which they gladly did, and not a day passed that I did not spend two or three hours training the vines and picking off dead leaves and flowers.

Evidently it was pleasing to the city council. The gentlemen informed the superintendent that hereafter he need not go near Green Bay Park, as they had appointed Mrs. Kellogg superintendent. As soon as my appointment came, last fall, I talked with my neighbors and told them all my plans, and contributions came in so generously that now there are one thousand tulip bulbs, single and double, early and late, and one hundred hyacinths and several clumps of peonies planted ready to bloom as soon as spring opens. Money is also on hand for hydrangeas to be set in April. Friends donated compost for the beds and entire lawn, and other friends gave the carting.

The city furnishes me one gardener, and, as soon as the ground will admit, he will set a lot of stumps on the lawn outside of the park and sidewalk, at intervals, on which will be placed tubs for plants and vines. I like morning-glory vines. My leaves last summer averaged eight inches in diameter. This is not on account of good soil, but because I give them plenty of water, showering to the tops of the trees and keeping the leaves well washed. I had one arch formed between two trees which was the delight of all passers-by.

I had one long, fifty-foot bed of blotched petunias last summer which I called the 'children's bed,' and every evening before dinner I took my shears and cut flowers for scores of them—strange faces every day, and I often wondered where they came from. I encouraged the bare-footed boys to wear a flower in a button hole; I told them of President McKinley, who always wore a carnation, and urged them to be refined gentlemen. The police tell me I am helping them.

If women in every ward in our city will only follow this example, they can make their surroundings as beautiful as mine. I fear I am getting too ambitious, for I cannot bear to see a vacant lot full of weeds and tomato cans without wishing I could make a miniature park of it.

After cleaning the pantry, set a small jar of lime in some shelf-corner. It will keep the room dry and make pure air. Repeat the same process for the cellar, using lime in larger proportion.

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