

We'd like to set the world to rights,
And have it clean and sweet!

Put people laugh when we say so,
And say, "It can't be done;"
But Granny sighs, and says it might
If "each one mended one."

A Brother's Charge.

ONE day a little boy asked his mother to let him lead his little sister on the green grass. She had just begun to run alone, and could not step over anything that lay in the way. His mother told him he might lead out the little girl, but charged him not to let her fall. I found them at play, very happy, in the field.

I said, "You seem very happy, George. Is this your sister?"

"Yes, sir."

"Can she walk alone?"

"Yes, sir, on smooth ground."

"And how did she get over these stones which lie between us and the house?"

"O, sir, mother charged me to be careful that she did not fall, and so I put my hands under her arms and lifted her up when she came to a stone so that she would not hit her little foot against it."

"That is right, George; and I want to tell you one thing. You see now how to understand that beautiful text: 'He shall give His angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.' God charges his angels to lead and lift his people over difficulties, just as you have lifted little Annie over these stones. Do you understand now?"

"O yes, sir, and I shall never forget it while I live."

Can one child thus take care of another, and cannot God take care of those who trust him? Surely he can! There is not a child who may read this story over whom he is not ready to give his holy angels charge.

Excuses.

ELLA FARWELL is called a very amiable girl. She is never out of temper, and never sulky, and always has something to say. She has very soft, caressing manners, and professes a great deal of affection for all her friends.

But Ella, I fear, uses these gifts of hers most for her own selfish ends, rather than for the sake of giving pleasure to others. She is skillful in coaxing; and she has acquired to perfection the very undesirable art of shirking her own duties on to the shoulders of other people. She always has some good reason why she cannot mend her clothes just then, and is sure that dear sister will do it for her just once. She is so anxious to get on with her practising, that she can not do that errand for her father right away; and won't James, who is always so obliging, just lay aside his book and go down town in her place? She is so busy, and her head feels like aching; and Laura, her intimate friend, darling Laura, who is always so sweet, will look up those places on the map, and tell her where they are before class time. Ella is sure that she would do three times more than that for Laura any day. But if the day ever comes when she might oblige Laura in turn, if it is the least inconvenience, Ella has always some excellent excuse, which she offers in her sweetest manner, why it is just then quite impossible to do what she is asked.

Ella has no idea that she is not quite a pattern girl, and succeeds in deceiving herself by her excuses even more than she does others; and every day, in spite of outward sweetness, grows more and more unlike Him who came not to do His own will.

Brave Little Tom.

"MOTHER!" said Bessie Stanford, "where shall we go? who will care for us now?"

These words were spoken by a little girl, as she clung to her mother's side one autumn evening: mother and daughter were standing by a newly-made grave, in which but a few days before he who had been their earthly comfort and support had been laid.

For a few moments the widow's heart was too full of grief for her to reply to Bessie's words, till again the child, raising her tearful face, exclaimed:

"Oh, mother, who will care for us now?"

"Our Father in Heaven," answered Mrs. Stanford. "He knows our sorrow, He watches over us at this very moment, and for the Saviour's sake He will guide and direct us, if we trust in Him." Then, with one last look at the grave, Mrs. Stanford took her little daughter's hand, and turned her steps towards her home.

Though Bessie could not thoroughly understand all that her mother's words implied, yet they gave her some comfort; and as she walked on by her side she began to talk more cheerfully of their intended journey on the morrow, and to wonder how their strange uncle would welcome herself and younger brother Tom. For Mrs. Stanford was going to leave the village where she had lived ever since her marriage. Her husband's long illness, previous to his death, had compelled her to part with all her furniture to pay off their debts; they had no near friends or relatives in the place, there seemed no way by which she could support herself and children, so she had resolved to seek a home with a younger brother, who was head gardener in a gentleman's family, about thirty or forty miles away. This brother was unmarried, and had always been much attached to her. Not only that; Mr. Holland, the gentleman for whom he worked, would, she knew, do all he could to befriend herself and children, and put her in the way of earning a livelihood.

The next morning at daybreak Mrs. Stanford quitted the cottage in which she had lived so many years. As she passed down the village she left the key at the landlord's, who had bought her furniture, and then set out on her journey. The two children walked along, pleased enough with the thought of a change; but Mrs. Stanford was too full of sorrow to heed their childish prattle. Her strength had been much tried during her husband's illness, and by anxiety since, and she feared lest it should fail her before she could arrive at Holland Manor.

She had intended to walk about ten miles that day, so as to reach a farm-house where she was known, and where she knew they would give her a night's lodging. It was quite late when they came to the farmgate, for Tom, who was only six years old, had become very tired, and had scarcely been able to get along. Very thankful were they for the welcome they received, and were soon asleep after the fatigues of the day.

"If it wasn't harvest time," said Farmer Rogers next morning, "I could give you all a lift for a few miles on your way; but my horse is overworked as it is—better stay a day or two with us, you don't look fit for much just now."

But Mrs. Stanford was very anxious to see her brother as soon as possible; she did indeed feel very ill, but that only made her more desirous to place her children under their uncle's care without delay, so that, should she be taken away from them, they might not be without a protector. It added much to her anxiety that she had not heard from her brother for some time, for at the time of my story people did not write so many letters as they do now, and travelling was much slower and more expensive. This was why Mrs. Stanford had determined to walk most, if not all, of the way to Holland Manor; leaving such little property as still was hers in the care of a friend in the village she had left.

Bessie and Tom would gladly have had their mother accept the farmer's kind proposal, but, for the reasons I have said, Mrs. Stanford determined to continue her journey at once; so, thanking Mr. Rogers warmly for his kindness, she left the farmhouse directly after breakfast.

By the evening of the third day they were still six miles distant from Mr. Holland's house. Tired and footsore, Mrs. Stanford sat by the roadside to rest; Bessie leant her head upon her mother's knee, while Tom peeped through the hedge at the cows in the fields beyond, and wished that his mother would have stayed for the night in the little village they had passed through about an hour before. He was not so weary as the others, for his mother had sometimes carried him a little way, and once a lad with a donkey-cart had found room for Tom among his baskets, &c., and so had helped him a mile or two on the road.

While Mrs. Stanford was thus resting, there passed by a waggoner; he came from the direction our friends were taking, and as he looked pleasantly at the little group Mrs. Stanford was tempted to ask him a question—

"How far is it to Holland Manor?" said she, "and is there not a shorter road to it across the fields?"

"Yes," answered the man "there is. But what be you wanting at Holland Manor?"

"My brother is head gardener there—Squire Holland knows us well—I want to get there to-night."

"There is not much use in your going, misses. Why, didn't you know as the old Squire be dead? Died four months past, and the family be all gone away, servants and all, and the place well-nigh shut up."

"But my brother will be there, surely," cried Mrs. Stanford. "He has been with them for years."

"May be," answered the waggoner, "but I doubt you will find no gardener there, only two old folks left in charge of the empty house. I tell you the Squire is dead, and the family right gone away. Better come back with me to Amherst and get a night's lodging somewhere."

"No, thank you," answered Mrs. Stanford, rising, "I am too anxious; I must go on at once; I must find out where my brother is," and taking up the small bundle she was carrying with her, she and the children began to walk on.

[To be concluded in our next.]

HAVE a care of your temper, for a passionate boy rides a pony that runs away with him. Passion has done more mischief in the world than all the poisonous plants that grow in it; therefore again I say have a care of your temper. "A soft answer turneth away wrath."

The shortest verse in the Bible, "Jesus wept;" the sweetest verse, "God is love."