

large face coarsely wrinkled, with a suspicion of a stubble of beard on the square chin.

When her tin pan was filled to her satisfaction with the sprawling, spidery greens, and she was hobbling stiffly towards her sister on the doorstep, she saw another woman standing before her with a basket in her hand.

"Good-morning, Harriet," she said, in a loud, strident voice, as she drew near. "I've been frying some doughnuts, and I brought you over some warm."

"I've been tellin' her it was real good in her," piped Charlotte from the doorstep, with an anxious turn of her slight face towards the sound of her sister's footsteps.

Harriet said nothing but a hoarse "Good-morning," Miss Simonds. Then she took the basket in her hand, lifted the towel off the top, selected a doughnut, and deliberately tasted it.

"Tough," said she. "I s'posed so. If there is anything I s'pose on this airth it's a tough doughnut."

"O Harriet!" said Charlotte, with a frightened look.

"They air tough," said Harriet, with a hoarse defiance, "and if there is anything I s'pose on this airth it's a tough doughnut."

The woman whose benevolence and cookery were being thus ungratefully received only laughed. She was quite fleshy, and had a round, rosy, determined face.

"Well, Harriet," said she, "I am sorry they are tough, but perhaps you had better take 'em out on a plate, and give me my basket. You may be able to eat two or three of them if they are tough."

"They air tough—turbid tough," said Harriet stubbornly; but she took the basket into the house and emptied it of its contents nevertheless.

"I suppose your roof leaked as bad as ever in that heavy rain day before yesterday," said the visitor to Harriet, with an inquiring squint towards the mossy shingles, as she was about to leave with her empty basket.

"It was terrible," replied Harriet, with crusty acquiescence—"terrible. We had to set pails an' pans everywhere, an' move the bed out."

"Mr. Upton ought to fix it."

"There ain't a fix to it; the old ruff ain't fit to nail new shingles on to; the hammerin' would bring the whole thing down on our heads," said Harriet grimly.

"Well, I don't know as it can be fixed, it's so old. I suppose the wind comes in bad around the windows and doors too."

"It's like livin' with a piece of paper, or mebbe a sieve, 'twixt you an' the wind an' the rain," quoth Harriet, with a jerk of her head.

"You ought to have a more comfortable home in your old age," said the visitor thoughtfully.

"Oh, it's well enough," cried Harriet, in quick alarm, and with a complete change of tone; the woman's remark had brought an old dread over her. The old house 'll last as long as Charlotte an' me do. The rain ain't so bad, nuther is the wind; there's room enough for us in the dry places, an' out of the way of the doors an' windows. It's enough sight better than goin' on the town. Her square, defiant old face actually looked pale as she uttered the last words and stared apprehensively at the woman.

"On, I did not think of your doing that," she said hastily and kindly. "We all know how you feel about that, Harriet, and not one of us neighbors will see you and Charlotte go to the poorhouse while we've got a crust of bread to share with you."

Harriet's face brightened. "Thank ye, Miss Simonds," she said, with reluctant courtesy. "I'm much obliged to you an' the neighbors. I think mebbe we 'll be able to eat some of them doughnuts if they air tough," she added mollifyingly, as her caller turned down the footpath.

"My, Harriet," said Charlotte, lifting up a weakly, wondering, peaked old face, "what did you tell her them doughnuts was tough for?"

"Charlotte, do you want everybody to look down on us, an' think we ain't no account at all, just like any beggars, 'cause they bring us in vittles?" said Harriet, with a grim glance at her sister's meek, unconscious face.

"No, Harriet," she whispered.

"Do you want to go to the poorhouse?"

"No, Harriet," the poor little old woman on the doorstep fairly cowered before her aggressive old sister.

"Then don't hinder me agin when I tel' folks their doughnuts is tough an' their peraters is poor. If I don't kinder keep up an' show some spirit, I sha'n't think nothing of myself, an' other folks won't nuther, and fust think we know they 'll kerry us to the poorhouse. You'd 'a' been there before now if it hadn't been for me, Charlotte!"

Charlotte looked meekly convinced, and her sister sat down on a chair in the doorway to scrape her dandelions.

"Did you git a good mess, Harriet?" asked Charlotte, in a humble tone.

"Toler'ble."

"They 'll be proper relishin' with that piece of pork Miss Man brought in yesterday. O Lord, Harriet, it's a chink!"

Harriet sniffed.

Her sister caught with her sensitive ear the little contemptuous sound. "I guess," she said querulously, and with more pertinacity than she had shown in the matter of the doughnuts, "that if you was in the dark, as I am, Harriet, you wouldn't make fun an' turn up your nose at chinks. If you had seen the light streamin' in all of a sudden through some little hole that you hadn't known of before when you set down on the doorstep this mornin', and the wind with the smell of the apple blows in it came in your face, an' when Miss Simonds brought them hot doughnuts, an' when I thought of the pork an' greens jest now—O Lord, how it did shine in! An' it does now. If you was me, Harriet, you would know there was chinks."

Tears began starting from the sightless eyes, and streaming pitifully down the pale old cheeks.

Harriet looked at her sister, and her grim face softened.

"Why, Charlotte, hev it that thar is chinks if you want to. Who cares?"

"Thar is chinks, Harriet."

"We'al, thar is chinks, then. If I don't hurry, I sha'n't get these greens in time for dinner."

When the two old women sat down complacently to their meal of pork and dandelion greens in their little kitchen, they did not dream how destiny slowly and surely was introducing some new colors into their web of life, even when it was at most completed, and that this was one of the last meals they would eat in their old home for many a day. In about a week from that day they were established in the "O'd Ladies' Home" in a neighboring city. It came about in this wise: Mrs. Simonds, the woman who had brought the gift of hot doughnuts, was a smart, energetic person, bent on doing good, and she did a great deal. To be sure she always did it in her own way. If she chose to give hot doughnuts, she gave hot doughnuts; it made not the slightest difference to her if the recipients of her charity would infinitely have preferred ginger cookies. Still a great many would like hot doughnuts, and she did unquestionably a great deal of good.

She had a worthy conductor in the person of a rich and childless elderly widow in the place. They had fairly entered into a partnership in good works, with about an equal capital on both sides, the widow furnishing the money, and Mrs. Simonds, who had much the better head of the two, furnishing the active schemes of benevolence.

The afternoon after the doughnut episode she had gone to the widow with a new project, and the result was that entrance fees had been paid, and old Harriet and Charlotte made sure of a comfortable home for the rest of their lives. The widow was hand in glove with officers of missionary boards and trustees of charitable institutions. There had been an unusual mortality among the inmates of the "Home" this spring, and the matter of the admission there were several vacancies, and the matter of the admission of Harriet and Charlotte was very quickly and easily arranged. But the matter which would have seemed the least difficult—inducing the two old women to accept the bounty which Providence, the widow, and Mrs. Simonds were ready to bestow on

them—proved the most so. The struggle to persuade them to abandon their tottering old home for a better was a terrible one. The widow had pleaded with mild surprise, and Mrs. Simonds with benevolent determination; the counsel and overend eloquence of the minister had been called in; and when they yielded at last it was with a sad grace for the recipients of a worthy charity.

It had been hard to convince them that the "Home" was not an almshouse under another name, and their yielding at length to anything short of actual force was only due probably to the "Home," which was advanced most eloquently to Harriet, that Charlotte would be so much more comfortable.

The morning they came away, Charlotte cried pitifully, and trembled all over her little shrivelled body. Harriet did not cry. But when her sister had passed out the low, sagging door she turned the key in the lock, then took it out and thrust it slyly into her pocket, shaking her head to herself with an air of fierce determination.

Mrs. Simonds' husband, who was to take them to the depot, said to himself, with disloyal defiance of his wife's active charity, that it was a shame, as he helped the two distressed old souls into his light wagon, and put the poor little box, with their homely clothes in it, in behind.

Mrs. Simonds, the widow, the minister, and the gentleman from the "Home," who was to take charge of them, were all at the depot, their faces beaming with the delight of successful benevolence. But the two poor old women looked like two forlorn prisoners in their midst. It was an impressive illustration of the truth of the saying that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Well, Harriet and Charlotte Shattuck went to the "O'd Ladies' Home" with reluctance and distress. They stayed two months, and then they ran away.

The "Home" was comfortable, and in some respects even luxurious; but nothing suited those two unhappy, unreasonable old women.

The fare was of a finer, more delicately served variety than they had been accustomed to; those finely flavored nourishing soups for which the "Home" took great credit to itself failed to please palates used to common, coarser food.

"O Lord, Harriet, when I se' down to the table here there ain't no chinks," Charlotte used to say. "If we could hev some cabbage, or some pork an' greens, how the light would stream in!"

They had always been tidy enough, but now it had to be something more; the widow, in the kindness of her heart, had made it possible, and the good folks in charge of the "Home," in the kindness of their hearts, tried to carry out the widow's designs.

But nothing could transform these two unpollished old women into two nice old ladies. They did not take kindly to white lace caps and delicate neckerchiefs. They liked their new black cashmere dresses well enough, but they felt as if they broke a commandment when they put them on every afternoon. They had always worn calico with long aprons at home, and they wanted to now; and they wanted to twist up their scanty grey locks into little knots at the back of their heads, and go without caps, just as they always had done.

Charlotte in a dainty white cap was pitiful, but Harriet was both pitiful and comical. They were totally at variance with their surroundings, and they felt it keenly, as people of their stamp always do. No amount of kindness and attention—and they enjoyed both—sufficed to reconcile them to their new abode. Charlotte suffered continually with her sister to go back to their old home.

"O Lord, Harriet," she would exclaim (by the way, Charlotte's "O Lord," which, as she used it, was innocent enough, had been heard with much disfavor in the "Home," and she, not knowing at all why, had been remonstrated with concerning it). "I don't like the vittles, an' I don't like to wear a cap; I want to go home and do different. The currants will be ripe, Harriet. O Lord, thar was always a chink, thinking about 'em. I want some of 'em; an' the Porter apples will begettin' ripe, an' we could have some apple pie. This here ain't good; I want m' rasses for steakin'." Can't we get back no w'ys, Harriet? It ain't fair, an' we could walk, an' they don't look us in, nor nothin'. I don't want to die here; it ain't so straight up to heaven from here. O Lord, I've felt as if I was slanting down from heaven ever since I've been here, an' it's been so awful dark. I ain't had any chinks. I want to go home, Harriet."

"I'll go to-morrow mornin'," said Harriet finally; "we'll pack up our things an' go; we'll put on our old dresses, an' we'll do up the new ones in bundles, an' we'll jest sh' out the back way to-morrow mornin'; an' we'll go. I kin find the way, an' I reckon we kin git thar, if it is fourteen mile. Mebbe somebody will give us a lift."

And they went. With a grim humor Harriet hung the new white lace caps with which she and Charlotte had been so pestered, one on each post at the head of the bedstead, so they would meet the eyes of the first person who opened the door. Then they took their bundles, stole slyly out, and were soon on the high-road, hobbling along, holding each other's hands, as jubilant as two children, and chuckling to themselves over their escape, and the probable astonishment there would be in the "Home" over it.

Would be in the "Home" over it.

"O Lord, Harriet, what do you s'pose they will say to them caps?" cried Charlotte, with a gleeful cackle.

"I guess they 'll see as folks ain't goin' to be made to wear caps agin their will in a free kentry," returned Harriet, with an echoing cackle, as they sped feebly and bravely along.

The "Home" stood on the very outskirts of the city, luckily for them. They would have found it a difficult undertaking to traverse the crowded streets. As it was, a short walk brought them into the free country road—free comparatively, for even here at ten o'clock in the morning there was considerable travelling to and from the city on business or pleasure.

They were whom they met on the road did not stare at them as curiously as might have been expected. Harriet held her bristling chin high in air, and hobbled along with an appearance of being well aware of what she was about, that led folks to doubt their own first opinion that there was something unusual about the two old women.

Still their evident feebleness now and then occasioned from one and another more particular scrutiny. When they had been on the road a half-hour or so, a man in a covered wagon drove up behind them. After he had passed them, he poked his head around the front of the vehicle and looked back. Finally he stopped, and waited for them to come up to him.

"Like a ride, ma'am?" said he, looking at once bewildered and compassionate.

"Thankee," said Harriet, "we'd be much obliged."

After the man had lifted the old women into the wagon, and established them on the back seat, he turned around, as he drove slowly along, and gazed at them curiously.

"Seems like me you look pretty feeble to be walking far," said he. "Where were you going?"

Harriet told him with an air of defiance.

"Why," he exclaimed, "it is fourteen miles out. You could never walk it in the world. Well, I am going within three miles of there, and I can go on a little further as well as not. But I don't see—Have you been in the city?"

"I have been visitin' my married darter in the city," said Harriet calmly.

Charlotte started, and swallowed convulsively.

Harriet had never told a deliberate falsehood before in her life, but this seemed to her one of the tremendous exigencies of life which justify a lie. She felt desperate. If she could not contrive to deceive him in some way, the man might turn directly around and carry Charlotte and her back to the "Home," and the white caps.

"I should not have thought your daughter would have let you start for such a walk as that," said the man. "Is this lady your sister? She is blind, isn't she? She does not look fit to walk a mile."

"Yes, she's my sister," replied Harriet stubbornly; an

she's blind; an' my darter didn't want us to walk. She felt reel bad about it. But she couldn't help it. She's poor, and her husband's dead, an' she's got four leetle children."

Harriet recounted the hardships of her imaginary daughter with a glibness that was astonishing. Charlotte swallowed again.

"Well," said the man, "I am glad I overtook you, for I don't think you would ever have reached home alive."

About six miles from the city an open buggy passed them swiftly. In it were seated the matron and one of the gentlemen in charge of the "Home." They never thought of looking into the covered wagon—and indeed one can travel in one of those vehicles, so popular in some parts of New England, with those vehicles, as he could in his tomb. The two in the buggy were seriously alarmed, and anxious for the safety of the old women, who were chuckling maliciously in the wagon and they soon left far behind. Harriet had watched them breathlessly until they disappeared on a curve of the road; then she whispered to Charlotte.

A little after noon the two old women crept slowly up the footpath across the field to their old home.

"The clover is up to our knees," said Harriet; an' the sorrel an' the whiteweed; an' thar's lots of yaller butterflies."

"O Lord, Harriet, thar's a chink, an' I do believe I saw one of them yaller butterflies go past it," cried Charlotte, trembling all over, and nodding her grey head violently.

Harriet stood on the old sunken doorstep and fitted the key, which she drew triumphantly from her pocket, in the lock, while Charlotte stood waiting and shaking behind her.

Then they went in. Everything was there just as they had left it. Charlotte sank down on a chair and began to cry. Harriet hurried across to the window that looked out on the garden.

"The currants air ripe," said she, "an' them pumpkins hev run all over everything."

"O Lord, Harriet," sobbed Charlotte, "thar is so many chinks that they air all runnin' together!"

## THE QUIET HOUR.

### Friendship.

How will sad memory point where, here and there,  
Friend after friend, by falsehood or by fate,  
From him or from each other parted were,  
And love sometimes becomes the nurse of hate! . . .  
Rather, he thinks he held not duly dear,  
Love, the best gift that man on man bestows,  
Whi' round his downward path, recluse and drear,  
He feels the chill indifferent shadow close.  
"Why did I not?" his spirit murmur-deep,  
"At every cost of momentary pride,  
Preserve the love for which in vain I weep;  
Why had I wish or hope or sense beside!  
O cruel issue of some selfish thought!  
O long, long echo of some angry tone!  
O fruitless lesson, mercilessly taught,  
Alone to linger—and to die alone!" —Houghton.

### The Time is Short.

Oh, my dear friends, you who are letting miserable misunderstandings run on from year to year, meaning to clear them up some day; you who are keeping wretched quarrels alive because you cannot quite make up your mind that now is the day to sacrifice your pride and kill them; you who are passing men sullenly upon the street, not speaking to them out of some silly spite, and yet knowing that it would fill you with shame and remorse if you heard that one of those men were dead to-morrow morning; you who are letting your neighbor starve till you hear that he is dying of starvation; or letting your friend's heart ache for a word of appreciation or sympathy, which you mean to give him some day,—if you only could know and see and feel, all of a sudden, that "the time is short," how it would break the spell! How you would go instantly and do the thing which you might never have another chance to do.

"Thou must endure! yet loving all the while,  
Above, yet never separate from, thy kind,—  
Meet every frailty with the gentlest smile,  
Though to no possible depth of evil blind."

### Giving Comfort.

Ask God to increase your powers of sympathy, to give you more quickness and depth of sympathy, in little things as well as great. Opportunities of doing a kindness are often lost from mere want of thought. Half a dozen lines of kindness may bring sunshine into the whole day of some sick person. Think of the pleasure you might give to someone who is much shut up, and who has fewer pleasures than you have, by sharing with her some little comfort or enjoyment that you have learnt to look upon as a necessary of life—the pleasant drive, the new book, flowers from the country, etc. Try to put yourself in another's place. Ask, "What should I like myself if I were hard-worked or sick, or lonely?" Cultivate the habit of sympathy.

"Yet sets she not her soul so steadily  
Above, that she forgets her ties to earth,  
But her whole thought would almost seem to be  
How to make glad one lowly human hearth:  
For with a gentle courage she doth strive  
In thought and word and feeling so to live  
As to make earth next heaven!" —G. H. W.

### Small Worries.

Nothing else but seeing God in everything will make us loving and patient with those who annoy and trouble us. They will be to us then only the instruments for accomplishing His tender and wise purposes towards us, and we shall even find ourselves at last inwardly thanking them for the blessings they bring us. Nothing else will completely put an end to all murmuring or rebelling thoughts.

"What'er God does is well!  
Patience: let us wait;  
He doth Himself our burdens bear,  
He doth for us take care,  
And He, our God, knows all our weary days.  
Come, give Him praise."

The subjection of the will is accomplished by calmly resigning thyself in everything that internally or externally vexes thee, for it is thus only that the soul is prepared for the reception of Divine influences. Prepare the heart like clean paper, and the Divine Wisdom will imprint on it characters to His own liking.

M. Molinos.

## "Calling."

Standing on the which divides the two peasants was them across. "Ah echoes and re-echo limpid stream, but delinquent charon awaiting the change until the call has roused from his bl strokes from his pas spot where his pas

## THE CHIL

### The C

A somber old looking in a mo close to his feet. grub," said the c pillar hanging to from. I'd like to k "Like you, Mr "Ha! ha! ha! And the crow laughter.

"An egg? In came from an egg you did, I should and not have a and shiny a coat on to-day. You'r enough to make der, and really y marks would n blush, only I can on black."

"Well, as fa goes, I confess boast of a very l form; but I am sleep presently. I wake up again more beautiful could ever dres with all you're p answered the grub. "You little a mind to make of you, only y small and ugly neither be sat pleased," resp crow.

"Don't bo please," said the "I want to eat this leaf before sleep, for I feel ness coming on.

The old cro more closely, a sight of the t eyes, and six legs, and then, ing to himself, I

"Well, he m but I declare well supplied and legs."

"Caw, caw, again: "Say, G eyes and legs w "My twelve together, and f not so large, ar wings, and, ins grub, I shall majesty."

"Well, I sh too amusing fo At this the body, and very

"Good-by; a chrysalis."

Mr. Crow w the change, b wonderful com remark he ma was:

"Poor delu insects can bel rection he will able imaginat for sure enough

After a tir smiled upon deail, dry and and one day stretching itse encumbrance, wings beautif very close to him to burst f

"What a b "How do Butterfly, "we met, isn't