

Family Reading.

The following beautiful little poem too good to be forgotten, I have had by me for many years. It was written by Miss Marie Lacoste, of Savannah, and refers to one of those sad incidents in the American rebellion, unfortunately but too common in both armies.

Somebody's Darling.

Into a ward of the white washed walls, Where the dead and the dying lay, Wounded by bayonet, shells and balls, Somebody's darling was borne one day. Somebody's darling! so young, and so brave, Wearing still on his pale sweet face, Soon to be hid by the dust of the grave, The lingering looks of his boyhood's grace.

Matted and damp are the curls of gold, Kissing the snow of that fair young brow;

Pale are the lips of delicate mould, Somebody's darling is dying now. Back from the beautiful blue-veined face Brush every wandering silken thread; Cross his hands as a sign of grace, Somebody's darling is still and dead.

Kiss him once for somebody's sake, Murrur a prayer soft and low, One bright curl from the cluster take, They were somebody's pride you know. Somebody's hand hath rested there: Was it a mother's soft and white? And have the lips of a sister fair, Been baptized in those waves of light?

God knows best. He has somebody's love:

Somebody's heart enshrined him there; Somebody wafted his name above, Night and morn on the wings of prayer.

Somebody wept when he marched away, Looking so handsome, brave and grand; Somebody's kiss on his forehead lay; Somebody clung to his parting hand.

Somebody's watching and waiting for him, Yearning to hold him again to her heart;

There he lies—with his blue eyes dim, And smiling childlike lips apart, Tenderly bury the fair young dead, Pausing to drop on his grave a tear; Carve on the wooden slab at his head—"Somebody's darling lies buried here."

Is That All?

JOBY MRS. C. J. WHITMORE.

Having accepted an invitation to preach in the east of London, the first thing was to find the mission hall. Up one street, down another, until I was bewildered in a labyrinth of streets, evidently tenanted by those who had nothing to lose. I therefore stepped into a general shop to seek direction.

'You wish to go into that street?' asked the shopman.

'I am going to preach there.'

'Have you your watch and money with you?' 'Certainly!'

'Then you had better leave them with me. It will be easy for you to take them in; but very hard to get them out again, especially if some of the tenants there see a man decently dressed alone, and not knowing his way.'

'Is that the kind of place I am trying to find?' 'It is, and you had really better be guided by me.'

'Now, it has been my hobby to seek out the very worst parts of nearly all the cities in England, and some in Scotland and Ireland, in order to see what the denizens were like. Moreover, I was anything but a stranger to London slums and other localities: I therefore coolly declined the offer to part with my worldly goods.'

'Very well,' said the civil shopman; 'if you lose them, don't blame me; and take one piece of advice—keep in the middle of the street as you go.'

I thanked him and went upon my way, following his advice to keep in the middle of the street, well knowing that in so doing I was preventing any human beast of prey from springing upon me, and taking me unawares. The caution was needed. Here and there a furred ruffian showed himself, causing me to slacken my pace to prove I was not afraid of him; and here and there something that should have been a woman hurriedly crossed my path. Very rarely the measured tread of a policeman sounded on the hollow pavement, giving a relieving sense of security un-

til the sound died away: until at length I reached the mission hall of which I was in search. On entering I saw that the hall was filthy with the grime of a London low-life neighborhood; the seats, attached to desks, had apparently never been washed since they were made; the floor in the same condition. The walls had dirty remains of pictures on them, and a few women and children were gathered to listen to my address, under the care of a very dispirited attendant at the hall, who was drawing a baize curtain across the hall to shut off about two-thirds of it from view. I felt aggrieved at the prospect, and much inclined to grumble that I had been brought half a dozen miles from home, on a wild, gusty night into such a neighborhood, to talk to such an audience. But having found my way, and engaged to speak, I at once commenced the service. I suppose there were the usual singing, reading, prayer and address, but have entirely forgotten. When the service was ended, the grumbling fit returned, as I prepared to retrace my dangerous way towards home.

I had descended the two steps from the platform, and was passing on, when a shaky voice said, 'I want to speak to you.'

Turning at the request, I saw a very old woman, with an exceedingly dirty face, and hands still more filthy, holding on to the rail in front of her seat, and trembling with excitement or nervousness—perhaps both.

I was wearied, dispirited, hopeless of having done any good, and wishing myself at home. I therefore asked, curtly, 'Well, what is it?' 'I am seventy-three years old,' she said.

'Well! what is that to me?' I thought, but said nothing.

'And I can see to work as well as ever I could.'

'Don't see what I have to do with that?' was my silent comment.

'And I can earn my living by needle-work.'

'Why do you tell me this?' I enquired.

'Because I want you to know that I don't come here to beg,' she said. 'I know well enough there's a lot of lazy wagabones as comes for nothing else; but I'm none o' that sort; I earns my living by my eyes and fingers, and begs nothing o' nobody.'

'But what do you want from me?' I coldly inquired.

'I'm seventy-three years old,' she repeated, 'and I can't expect to live much longer. I have been listening to you talking about the gift of God; I knew I had not got it; and I made bold to ask you to tell me more about it. Remember, I'm a poor old woman of seventy-three, and make it as plain as ever you can.'

If a blaze of light had flashed into the dirty hall, I could not have felt more astonished than I did at the old woman's request. I had not expected—scarcely desired—any results from my address; and yet here was an anxious inquirer. Not a common occurrence; when we do not expect or desire results, they scarcely ever appear. It became interesting; but I remembered the six miles to go, the dangerous way, the late hour, and the expectants at home; and how to reconcile these discordant things was the problem—how to lead an anxious soul, that had been seventy-three years in utter darkness, most speedily and safely into the light. I lifted up my heart to the Lord; and a thought came, that I at once put into action. I put my hand into my pocket, producing a sixpence and commenced conversation.

'Mother, have you got any tea?' 'I didn't come here to beg,' she replied.

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'No one said you did; but that doesn't answer my question, which I intend to repeat until you reply plainly: have you had any tea?'

'I tell you,' she gruffly rejoined, 'I'm not one of your beggars; I can earn my own living, and didn't come here to beg.'

'That doesn't answer me,' I continued; 'and I intend to get an answer before I say more—have you had any tea?'

'No, I ain't,' she shortly rejoined, hoping to get rid of the subject.

'Mother, have you got any supper at home?' 'I didn't come here to beg, she again repeated.

'No, I ain't,' she repeated, more angrily than before.

'I thought not,' I continued. 'Now, see, here is sixpence, just the thing you want. It will buy you bread, butter, tea, sugar, a bundle of wood, a candle, seven pounds of coal, and a ha'p'orth of milk; and so give you food, light and warmth.'

If any one who reads this begins sceptically to inquire concerning this method of expending sixpence, the old woman did not; she knew by many years' experience the statement was correct in her locality. But she only repeated; 'I didn't come here to beg.'

'You have not been accused of begging, or anything else,' I continued; 'but I want to make it clear to you. This sixpence is mine, given in charge to me to give freely to any one that needs it. Your need of it is very sore; you are trembling with hunger and cold, as you stand there. In your poor garret it is dark, hunger-bitten, cold—no light, no fire, no food; the money I offer will produce all these things which you require so much. Take the money; it is mine to give, and you want it.'

Still she said, 'I didn't come here to beg. I only wanted you to tell me how to get safely to heaven.'

'That shall surely come after; but I want to settle this first—or, perhaps they will come together. Now be advised, take the money.'

'I cannot,' she said; 'I have never taken charity; I didn't come here to beg.'

'Well, think once more before I go. Your room is dark and cold, you have great need. I offer you a free gift, just what you want; if you won't have it, and lie tossing all night with cold and hunger, you can't blame any one but yourself.'

The picture of a hungry night was no new thing to her, and signs of relenting appeared in her face. Almost unconsciously she stretched out fingers drawn like bird's claws with age and labor; but she did not take the money readily, little by little she came nearer, until at length her fingers closed upon the coin. She raised it from where it lay in the palm of my hand, and held it in her trembling fingers.

'Well, have you got it at last?' 'Yes, but not willingly,' she said.

'How did you get it?' I asked.

'You gave it me,' she replied.

'Did I give it, or did you take it?' 'I took it,' she said; 'but surely it is all the same.'

'Not quite, for what I want to teach you,' said I. 'For you want the gift of God, which is eternal life; you want pardon for all your sins; you want peace with God; you want His Holy Spirit to teach you the way to heaven; and to make you fit to be there. Now, just as your wants for the body were met in the gift of the sixpence, so God has met all your wants for the soul in the gift of Jesus Christ, His Son. In Him God has provided all that we need for time and eternity. But we must take Him as God's free, undeserved gift; and this is just what we are so unwilling to do. We want to earn Him; we want to deserve Jesus and Heaven. But we never can. We do not like to take Him as a gift. Just as you were so unwilling to accept the money, so thousands are unwilling to accept Jesus on the only terms they can receive Him.'

'I never saw it so,' she said; 'I thought I had to earn heaven.'

'There are untold thousands like you,' I answered, who turn away despising and rejecting the gift of God. But I hope you will be wiser; and, just as you have freely taken the gift of the money now, the infinitely greater gift of Jesus Christ. You have only to take what is ready and offered.'

'But must I not repent and believe?' she inquired.

'These gifts are included in the gift of Jesus, just as food and light and warmth were all in the sixpence; you have only to accept humbly God's free gift of Jesus Christ.'

'Is that all?' she asked, in astonishment.

'That is all,' I replied; 'repentance

faith, teaching, heaven, are all in Jesus Christ.'

'Then I am a saved old woman,' she loudly cried, clasping her drawn withered hands together with the sixpence between them; 'for I will take the gift of God, and take it now!'

'Thank God!' I most rejoicingly exclaimed; 'truly I have not labored in vain, nor spent my strength for nothing and in vain.'

A little more counsel, a few words of earnest prayer, and then I looked for the last time into the aged face. Hope, forgiveness, peace were there; and as I turned into the dark, dangerous way it seemed bright with a light that was not of earth; a light in my own spirit lighted there by the blessing of the Lord of the harvest upon the labors of an unbelieving servant in the great harvest-field.

But not unbelieving as I went on my way home, with eyes brimming with loving tears of gratitude, hands clasped in earnest acknowledgement, and my heart thrilling a psalm of thanksgiving for the Lord's loving-kindness, in making the darkness light, and the rough places plain, to that poor woman 'seventy-three years old.'

'Is that all?' 'That is all!' 'It all lies in believing!' For a man must believe he is a sinner before he can repent. He must believe Jesus is the Son of God before he can trust Him with his body, soul and spirit. He must believe on the Comforter before he can receive the only teaching that will fit him for the inheritance of the saints in light. He must believe that God will help him to work, and reward him for working for Him, before he can work.

'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'

'Is that all?' 'That is all!'—Word and Work.

A Word to Husbands.

Praise your wife when she deserves it! It won't injure her any, though it may frighten her some, from its strangeness. If you wish to make and keep her happy, give her a loving word occasionally.

I called on a friend one day, and found her up to her eyes in work.

'Oh, dear!' she said, 'this is one of my bad days; everything goes wrong, and I haven't got a thing done.'

'Let me help you,' I said.

'No, no,' she replied, gently pushing me into the sitting-room; 'I'm going to leave everything and rest awhile; but I must wipe up this slop first, pointing to an ugly spot that disfigured the pretty oil-cloth.'

Just as she stooped to do it, her husband came in; he didn't see me, but went straight to his wife. One quick lift and he placed her on her feet, and taking the cloth from her hand, wiped up the spot himself.

'There, Busy Bee,' he said 'you have done enough to-day. You tired yourself all out getting my favorite dinner. Now, I think I'd leave the rest till to-morrow.'

I spoke to him then, and he sat with me a few minutes before going down town. Shortly after my friend came in, looking very much amused.

'I guess I was in the dumps,' she said, laughing, 'for I've finished; and everything has gone swimming since John came in.'

ABOUT FLOATING.—The London Nature, gives a number of examples of the custom among savage and half-civilized races of 'treading water,' as a means of sustaining the body in that element. Nothing is easier, if one retains self-possession, and yet, Nature adds, 'here on our own shores, and amid smooth waters, men, women and children perish annually, when a little properly directed effort—treading the water as I have said—would haply suffice to rescue them every one.'

To illustrate to those persons who cannot swim, the folly of throwing up the arms and screaming should they fall into the water, take any short-necked, square-shouldered bottle and a couple of nails. First ballast the bottle with sand so that, with the nails fastened like arms pointing downward

it will just float. Then turn the nails upward, and the bottle will either be forced under water at once, or will be tipped over so that the water will pour into the open mouth and cause it to sink. At the same time it should be explained that the easiest way to float is to lie on the back with legs and arms rigidly extended in opposite directions. In this way the natural tendency of the feet to sink is counteracted, and the mouth and nose are kept well out of the water.

An Illustration.

When Moscow was burning, there was a party dancing in the palace right over a gunpowder magazine. They did not know the flame was approaching, so the leader of the festivity shouted, 'One dance more!' and the voice was taken up through the palace and the cry was, 'One more dance!' and the music played, and the feet bounded, and the laughter ran out; but suddenly through the fire and the smoke and the thunder of the explosion eternity broke. Alas! that some will dance on their sins, and their frivolities and their worldliness, until in an hour that they know not, eternity breaks in and they are destroyed, and that without remedy.—Spurgeon.

A Sermon Tested.

If doubting hearers would put in practice the suggestions of the preacher, their unbelief would often vanish, as in the following incident:

'I heard a sermon once from a venerable itinerant preacher, on benevolence. I thought the effort very lean, but one thing impressed me a little. 'Go,' he said, 'and do something after I have done preaching. Have to say when I come back, four weeks hence, that you have done something, and my word and God's word for it, you will be a better and happier man.' I knew a poor widow living on the edge of some woods about a mile from my home. Her husband had been dead two or three years, and with three helpless little girls, she had a hard conflict with poverty. I had often spoken kindly to her, and thought my duty ended when the words were uttered; but when the sermon of the old white-headed preacher was done, the resolution was to go and do something. The next day I visited the cellar and measured out a bushel of potatoes, a bushel of apples and a variety of other things, and having put them into a wagon, started for the cottage of the widow. A load of wood for which I paid three dollars preceded me. An hour's drive brought both loads in front of the house. When my explanation was given, there were wet eyes and warmer hearts in the parties. The widow wept with joy, and the children joined in, while I, finding my feelings too much for my strength, had to give way also to tears. The act was one that gave me a new spiritual start, and when the preacher came back I thought the discourse one of the most eloquent I had ever listened to. The change was in myself, not in him or his preaching.'

The most important export of Iceland, next to codfish, is wool. Considering the amount of wool required to keep a sheep warm up here, says a writer, this is more of a temperature index than a sheep census. In Iceland, the sheep are never shorn; the wool gets ripe, and is pulled off quite easily without causing the animal any pain. It may, in truth, be said that wool grows in Iceland. The annual export amounts to 1,300,000 pounds, and, though when it comes off the animal it is the dirtiest wool in the world; it goes to market the cleanest. Near Reykjavik there are a number of boiling springs, where all the household washing of the town is done. To this spring all the plucked wool is brought and washed in the steaming spring, then taken out and dried on the grass in the sun.

Father, did you ever have another wife besides mother? No, my boy; what possessed you to ask such a question? Because I saw in the old family Bible where you married Anno Domini in 1835, and that isn't mother, for her name was Sally Smith.—Glasgow Evening Times.

For the Boys.

Boys Rights.

I wonder now if any one In this broad land has heard In favor of down-trodden boys One solitary word?

We hear enough of 'woman's rights,' And 'rights of workmen,' Of 'equal rights' and 'nation's rights,' But pray just tell us when Boys' rights were ever spoken of? Why, we've become so used To being snubbed by every one, And slighted and abused, That when one is polite to us, We open wide our eyes, And stretch them in astonishment To nearly twice their size!

Boys seldom dare to ask their friends To venture in the house; It don't come natural at all To creep round like a mouse. And if we should forget ourselves, And make a little noise, Then ma or auntie sure would say, 'Oh, my! those dreadful boys!'

The girls bang on the piano In peace, but if the boys Attempt a tune with life or drum, It's 'Stop that horrid noise!' 'That horrid noise!' just think of it!

When sister never fails To make a noise three times as bad With everlasting 'scales,' Insulted thus, we lose no time In beating a retreat;

So off we go to romp and tear, And scamper in the street, No wonder that so many boys Such wicked men become.

'Twere better far to let them have Their games and play at home. Perhaps that text the teacher quotes Sometimes—'Train up a child'— Means only train the little girls, And let the boys run wild. But patience, and the time shall come When we will all be men, And when it does, I rather think Wrongs will be righted then.

Something about Dogs.

CLEVER SHEEP-DOG.—In the Maritime snowfall of 1807, the heaviest of the present century, a flock of four hundred sheep was buried. Most of them were covered up beneath walls, or in hollows where they had tried to find shelter when overtaken by the storm and darkness. The drifts were probed with poles in vain. No success attended the efforts of the shepherds until a young sheep dog took part in the proceedings. He began to take a serious interest in what was going on, smelling the ends of the probing-poles, and sniffing at the holes made in the snow. The final result of this patient puzzling was that the light broke suddenly upon him, and he commenced scratching eagerly in the snow. While the older dogs stood indolently by, this young animal continued to point out the spots beneath which the sheep were buried, barking and howling with delight at every release of the endangered sheep. At the end of the first day two hundred had been extricated alive. On the following day many others, some living, many dead, were found. But the last sheep did not come to light until New Year's day. It had remained since November 18th in a hollow beneath a turpentine bush, supporting life on the scanty herbage of this shrub.

HOW HE SAVED A BOY.—A Buffalo Newfoundland dog did an intelligent and uncommon thing one day recently. A little boy was riding on a high two-seated wagon, when suddenly he lost his balance and fell head foremost toward the stone pavement of the street. An instant more and he must have received serious injury, but in that instant the dog made a spring, caught the little fellow by the collar, and stopped his fall. Of course the boy was scared, but he was not hurt, and the dog trotted off, without waiting for so much as a 'thank you.'

A lady was singing at an amateur concert and the audience insisted upon hearing her sing a second time. Her daughter, a little child, was present, and on being asked afterward how her mamma had sung, replied, 'Very badly, for they made her do it all over again.'

If you really intend to do a mean thing, wait till to-morrow. If you intend to do a noble thing, do it now.