

Family Reading.

Daisies.

You sleepy little daisies, All covered up to-night, Beneath your dainty blankets, Of fleecy snow so white, I wonder what you're dreaming, Through all these winter-naps, Asleep so snug and cozy, In your little ruffled caps.

I half believe you daisies Are hiding in these beds; Afraid Jack Frost will catch you, You've covered up your heads; Now tell me, have I guessed it, And is it really so, You little drowsy darlings, Asleep beneath the snow!

But never spake a daisy One single, little word: The dreamy, dainty darlings, I don't believe they heard, But, when the Queen of Springtime, Shall come from 'mid her bowers, With bells and trumpets sounding To waken all the flowers—

When shining, sparkling dewdrops Shall fill the buttercup, And glad, warm rays of sunshine Shall drink their blankets up— O then these little daisies Will wake with sweet surprise, And kiss us all good-morning, And open wide their eyes.

The Chicago Tribune.

New Select Serial.

A DEACON'S DAUGHTER.

BY MISS LILIAN F. WELLS.

CHAPTER XIII. (Continued.)

Roxy saw her first, and said to Mrs. Stirling who was ironing: 'Look round. There's somebody comin'!

'Mother!' cried Martha, with a sudden choking in her throat, and a rush of tears to her eyes. It was four years since she had said 'mother.' She realized it now.

Even if Martha had not spoken, Mrs. Stirling would have known her. A child must be altered indeed to deceive the mother's love-keen eyes. But after the first joy of seeing Martha again, the usual wonderings and questionings were gone through about the latter's altered appearance.

'But you ain't well, Martha!' Mrs. Stirling said presently. 'You're as pale as a ghost, an' them dark circles round your eyes! Why, it looks as if I was goin' to have to nurse ye through a run o' fever.'

'Oh, no indeed, mother!' replied Martha, laughing. 'You know how closely confined I have been and how much sleep I have lost since I have been taking care of Aunt Charlotte. After I get thoroughly rested I shall be quite well.'

'You'd better jest take a few swallows o' this 'ere bosset, anyway. It'll tone ye up, and give ye an appetite,' urged Mrs. Stirling, bringing forward a bowl of the herb tea which she always kept prepared.

But Martha positively refused to be dosed; and after sitting for awhile in the kitchen, and talking with her mother, she went up to look at her little, old room.

How little it was, and how bare and comfortless! Martha stood in the middle of it and looked, and wondered how she could have been even as contented in it as she was. It was just as she had left it—the bare floor and walls; the rickety bedstead, with its patched and faded quilt; the long-legged stand, with its blue bowl and broken-nosed pitcher; and the one worn, cane-seated chair by the curtainless window.

'Suppose I had staid here, and never tried to be or do anything better than the rest?' thought she, sitting down upon the bed. 'How ignorant, how pitifully ignorant I was! I am exceedingly thankful that I have not the contented, easily satisfied disposition that Huldah has. If I were like her, I suppose I should have settled down to the same kind of life that she and mother and all the other women about here are living. Ugh! what an escape I had!'

She fell to thinking then of her life as it had been since the last time she was in that room. She had no thought of God in connection with its changes—no thought of gratitude to Him who had made her life different from that

of those about her. Instead, there was a sense that any success or advantage she had gained was no more than her due. She was of a different mould from parents and sisters; she could never be satisfied with what satisfied them. Her nature demanded a higher wider sphere than theirs; she was capable of a loftier range of thought of nobler action than they. It was just that her circumstances should be adapted to her needs; for was it not so with the others? The difference was, that they were content with merely existing; she must go far beyond that, or life would not be worth living.

But, after all, was she really any better off than they? If they were indeed contented with their lot, as they certainly seemed to be, what more could be wished? Could she truthfully say that much for herself? Was she content? If any one had asked her the question, she would probably have answered, 'Yes.' But here, in the quiet of her old room, her heart made answer, 'No.' A great indefinable desire oppressed her. What was she living for? What did it all amount to—money, knowledge, position in society, everything for which she was striving? Was there anything else better worth striving for? Her father and mother and sister would say, 'yes,' there was something beyond all this, something infinitely to be preferred. But was that any reason why she should think so? Because they, in their ignorance, believed in things concerning which reason was not a guide, must she walk blindly after them?

Then came the thought of death. To whatever lofty heights of philosophic reasoning she might soar, that was the inevitable end after all. Yet, why need she fear it more than those who trusted themselves to One whom they could neither see nor hear, of whom they knew only what had been written ages ago, by men of another race and of naturally far different needs? What did those ancient people know of death and the hereafter that any one might not as readily know now? But why weary herself with such useless questionings? She could not answer them, and she knew of no one who could answer them for her, satisfactorily. So she would put them all aside; she would make the very utmost of what life might bring her—obtain knowledge, friends, wealth, if possible. Then when death came, she would—

But Huldah must be expecting her. She must waste no more time in such idle meditation.

'Marthy,' said her mother, as Martha walked into the kitchen again humming a lively tune, 'what be you goin' to do now?'

'Going back to Huldah's to get my dinner,' replied Martha gaily.

'I didn't mean jest this minute. I want to know whether you're goin' to stay here a spell, or what you're goin' to do. I s'pose now you're so rich, ye can go about jest where you want to,' Mrs. Iredell had left Martha ten thousand dollars in her own right.

'I have not fully decided yet,' said she. 'But you may be sure of one thing, mother—I could not be contented to stay here very long.'

'No I s'pose not.'

There was a slight tremor in the weak voice, and the thin lips quivered a little. Martha did not heed. She was standing in the door-way, listening to the bird-songs, and looking out upon 'the fresh earth and the heaven of noon.' She had eyes and ears for nothing else just now.

Mrs. Stirling turned and looked at her daughter, standing there in her white dress, and everything about her so at variance with the plain old kitchen, and the other two women in it. And into the mother's mind darkened as it was by the dust of ignorance, and weakened by its life-long running in one groove of ceaseless work, there came a dim sense of something wrong—something that was not as it should be. But whether she or Martha was the one on whom the blame should rest—if blame there were—Mrs. Stirling could not tell. Poor mother! she had done the best she knew.

'I wish I'd never let ye go Marthy!' Martha turned, astonished.

'Why, mother?' she exclaimed.

'I do—I wish I'd never let ye go!' repeated Mrs. Stirling, with increased emphasis. 'You've changed so that it

seems as if ye didn't belong to me now; an' it ain't right! I say it ain't right!

Martha stood looking at her mother for a moment, uncertain what to do or say. She was unprepared for such a burst of feeling. Then she crossed the room, and laid her hand—a very fair and shapely hand it was—on her mother's toil-bent shoulder.

'I'm sorry you feel so, mother,' she said, gently.

'Well I s'pose the mischief's done now, and can't be helped. But I do feel as if I hadn't got no children now—Huldah's married, an' you ain't willin' to settle down sensibly to home, but must go off nobody knows where. I might 'a' knowed 'twould be so. But so't you're satisfied, mebbe I'd ought to be. At any rate, 'tain't no use for me to talk. Ye always would have yer own way, somehow, an' it's likely ye always will.'

'Here comes father,' said Martha, glad of a diversion, and going to the door again. Deacon Stirling was coming up from the field for his twelve o'clock dinner. Martha could not see that he had changed at all since she had last seen him. At the sight of his stern face her old fear of him came back. Yet he was her father. She would have so liked to meet him with eager gladness as other long-absent daughters did at their home-coming.

The deacon's eyes were failing him a little of late, and he did not know her. 'Father!' said she, holding out her hand as he stepped upon the broad door-stone.

'Marthy! Is this Marthy?' The deacon took out his spectacles. 'Yes, father,' replied Martha, meekly. Her father surveyed her slowly from head to foot.

'There's ben an amazin' change in ye, an' I'm afraid it ain't for the better,' he said at last gravely. 'I'm afraid ye're indulgin' too much in the pomps an' vanities o' this world.'

'I'm sorry my dress does not please you, father,' Martha replied. 'I thought it very simple.'

The deacon shook his head, and said, with a sigh:

'You're goin' the way o' yer own choosin'. I've done what I could to prevent ye, but it hain't ben no use. Ye never would hear to reason. But remember this—when ye're eatin' the bitter fruit o' yer doin's—I warned ye in time.'

Martha sauntered back to Huldah's through the warm summer noon, feeling depressed and unhappy. She thought they might have tried to make it pleasant for her at least for a little while at home. If it were not for being at Huldah's, she would not have staid in Sherwood a week.

After dinner was over and cleared away, and she sat with Huldah in the cool little sitting-room with the baby in her lap, Martha began to feel better. There was plenty to talk about for the two sisters, separated for so long. Every now and then there was something to laugh about too.

Presently the two boys came in to ask for bread and butter. Having obtained it, they took up their position in the door-way, where they stood munching away with great satisfaction, and staring at Martha till she began to laugh, when they took courage and ventured nearer.

'Pitty Aunt Moffy!' said Charlie, the younger and less shy of the two, laying his chubby brown hand on her white one.

'Dear little Charlie!' responded Martha.

'Is oo an angel, Aunt Moffy?' asked the child, after a moment.

'No, course she ain't!' cried Nathan with great scorn for his brother's ignorance. 'Angels has wings, an' Aunt Marthy haint got wings a bit. She's just nothin' but a woman, like mother, that's all.'

'What made you think I was an angel, Charlie?' asked Martha much amused.

'Cause oor dwess is fwite, an' oor face is fwite, an' oor hands is fwite, an' oo is pity,' replied Charlie.

'Say, Aunt Marthy,' asked Nathan, coming closer, 'do you love God?'

The question was so utterly unexpected, and struck Martha so strangely that she almost dropped the baby, while the color rushed up over her face.

'Why—why, Nathan—I—you—are you not a very little boy to be asking such questions?'

Nathan was regarding her intently with clear, solemn eyes. She could not say 'Yes' to his question, and, strangely enough, she felt unwilling to say 'No.'

'That don't make no difference,' said Nathan, shaking his yellow head. 'Don't you know 'bout him?'

'Know what?' asked Martha, still enquiring.

'Why, if you love him, an' be a good boy—I mean a good girl—he'll take you up to heaven when you die. An' if you're bad an' don't love him, he'll put you in the fire.'

'Do you love him Nathan?'

'Oh yes! But I don't b'lieve you do, 'cause, if you did, you'd say so. You'll have to look out, I tell you, for God can see way down into you, an' he could put you in the fire just as easy!'—and Nathan, evidently satisfied with his exhortation for the present, ran off to his play, followed by Charlie.

Well, Huldah, is this your teaching?' asked Martha, when the children had gone.

Huldah flushed, for there was something in Martha's tone that hurt. But she answered gently as usual:

'Part of it is. Father began with Nathan when he was three years old just as he did with us, you know. And of course he was giving him the awful side of God and religion. I couldn't bear that, so I began at the same time to show him the love side.'

'And so between you are filling his poor little mind with food that it cannot digest! It's like feeding baby with beef-steak, Huldah!'

'Oh no, I don't think so. Nathan's ideas are pretty clear for a child of his age.'

'But it sometimes happens that children who are taught to think too much about such things when they are so young, do not live long.'

Huldah looked sober, and then laughed.

'Wait till you've been here a week,' said she. 'I think that you'll be satisfied then that what Nathan knows of God and good things, don't injure his appetite nor his play; and don't affect his behaviour much, either.'

A Peep into Africa.

BY REV. NEWMAN HALL.

A short voyage of four hours in a tiny steamer of sixty tons from Gibraltar to Tangiers takes us out of civilization into barbarism, out of the nineteenth century of Europe into the ages before the Christian era of Africa and the East. A gang of half-naked Moors are wading through the water from the shore. Now they scramble into our boats, seize our luggage, and, with loud cries and fierce gestures, struggle with each other as if disputing for the possession of us. On landing there is still, greater tumult, agents of different hotels seizing us by the arms and by main force trying to drag us away. On board the vessel we had secured the services of a tall Moor, known as 'Devil's Skin,' a capital guide, by whose help we escaped the yelling, squabbling mob, without injury to limb or loss of luggage, and were soon climbing up the rough, steep, narrow street. Not a vehicle of any sort; no carriage, cart, or even wheelbarrow in all Morocco. What a varied population; and all so strange! Tall, majestic Moors, with white turbans and white flowing robes, bare legs and yellow slippers. Venerable men, with long white beards, moving along with graceful stateliness. I thought I saw Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at every turn. Asses, heavily laden with sacks of corn, moving along amid the motley crowd, attended by their owners, made me think of Joseph's brethren carrying corn to their father. There were women enveloped from head to foot, their eyes alone visible. Many a Shylock met us, habited in handsome dark dressing-gown with red sash and black cap. There were Arabs from the desert, and coal-black Negroes, and wild men from the mountains, armed with very long Moorish guns. On the sides of the narrow street were small openings in the houses, with a counter, on which a Moor was squatting with some goods, about the sale of which he seemed supremely

indifferent. Emerging from the town, under an old Moorish gateway, we came upon the large open space used for markets. It happened to be a fair-day. Hundreds of white-robed men were moving about amidst the little booths, under which veiled women were crouching, surrounded with articles for sale—towels, shoes, slippers, crockery, etc. Others outside were surrounded by heaps of fruit—melons, prickly pears, fresh figs, twenty of which I bought for two cents. A rider was showing off the paces of an Arab steed, which was being sold by auction. A serpent-charmer was surrounded by a wide circle of eager spectators, half pleased, half awed, as they watched some dozen serpents writhing about, near, and upon him, while musicians made hideous hum with barbaric instruments. Now, with his toes, he held the tails of half a dozen snakes, which coiled round his legs and bit them. Now he twisted them round his neck. Now he held one near his face, made grimaces, and held out his tongue, at which the snake darted, holding on by its teeth till the blood dropped. Then the man writhed about as if in agony, calling aloud for more coins to be cast on the white cloth spread out as the treasury. From this disgusting sight we turn to a group of camels. There must have been a hundred of them, calmly resting on the ground, as if weary after a long journey. Three were taking a meal together. The grain was in a heap on a cloth, and the camels, seated on the ground, their heads converging over the food, helped themselves without the least hurry or rivalry, with utmost decorum, a pattern to some travelers I have noticed at table d'hote. Where are we? In one short afternoon transferred to the home and place of the Arabian Nights, or to those of the Patriarchs. One night I went with 'Devil's Skin' to see a wedding. He carried a lamp. There was a great crowd waiting on the narrow street, and hundreds of similar lamps. 'While the bridegroom tarried, scores of musicians, squatting against the houses, were piping and strumming an incessant repetition of two or three notes in minor key. The noise was sometimes deafening. Emerging from the gloom, a sort of bathing machine appears, borne on a mule. Within this big chest is the poor bride: A man at each corner keeps it from falling, as the mule stumbles along the steep, rough street. Some of the lamp-bearers fall in, two and two, preceding, others following. I join the procession, which pauses before a mosque, and the brother of the bride, with a loud voice, invokes the blessing of Allah. This is repeated when passing the house of the father. Arriving at the bridegroom's house, the box is with difficulty conveyed within the narrow porch. 'They that were ready' entered, and the door was shut. Then the musicians changed from a plaintive to a very jubilant strain for ten minutes, when the bride's brother, coming from the house, thanked the people for their presence, and all separated, and the streets were again dark and silent. The bride was about fourteen, and had never seen her husband, marriages being always arranged by the parents. During the first six months she never leaves the house. Women are toys from thirteen to twenty when they begin to fade; are old at thirty, when they are treated with contempt and used as beasts of burden, and are decrepit at fifty.

Everything is centuries behind-hand. Plows are merely a wooden pole dragged by oxen, asses, goats, women. There is no printing-press in Morocco; there are no books, no papers. Medical practice consists of bleeding, wearing snake-skin for fever and verses of the Koran as charms, and fire to heal wounds. From the Sultan downward every official plunders all below him. Peopls of supposed wealth are often imprisoned, often bastinadoed to extort money. Robbery is punished by cutting off the hand, and plunging the stump into melted pitch. The prisons are dens of filth and torture. Having heard of the abominations of the Tangiers prison, I resolved to see for myself. Through a round hole, of about eighteen inches diameter, I saw about sixty men, herding promiscuously, like beasts, in a dark, filthy den. Some had chains on their legs. The stench was horrible. A traveler told me he had been warned not to go near. Prisoners with small-pox, fever, cholera, remain in the same dungeon with the rest, without nurse or doctor. I was told the prisoners were supplied with only a very small piece of bread and no water; what they needed must be bought by themselves or provided by friends. Captives, without friends or money, must die. A corpse was being carried through the town, and a traveler, in reply to his questions, was told, "From the prison." "Starved." A man, laden with loaves, came with us. These were divided into the necessary portions. I shall never forget the hungry faces gathered around the hole, the eager hands held up to clutch the bread. On inquiry, the jailer at once admitted that no water was supplied. We hastened down from the lofty hill on which the castle stands with its prison, to buy water. But this was difficult to find, as trade was over for the day. At length we engaged three men to carry small casks. How pleasant was the sound of the gurgling water in the dark dungeon. By the dim lamp the eager captives could be seen slaking their thirst. Early next morning, Sunday, seven men, each with a goat-skin of water, accompanied us. Most pathetic were the grateful looks of the captives, who had enough for long needed ablution as well as for drinking. The cost of these men was only eighteen cents; yet, rather than spend this trifle, these prisoners perish from want of a prime necessity. My guide said that sometimes as many as a hundred are confined there, that there are no sanitary arrangements, and that the hole is unapproachable. I was told that people are put there without trial, who may be innocent of all crime, but who perish there if they have no money to purchase their liberty, while thieves and murderers may easily escape by payment. All this has been going on year after year, though within half a mile are the residences of the American, Belgian, German and other Consuls, and of an English Minister. An account was sent to our Premier, with this incident narrated, by a traveler at our hotel. He had once inquired of some African official respecting the punishment of the bastinado. Presently a man was thrown down and cruelly punished. "What is his crime?" "Oh! nothing. But you wanted to know what it was!" "But if I inquired about capital punishment would you kill a man?" "Oh! I could easily; but there's a person called Gladstone who would hear of it, and there would be a row." A very few weeks afterward I read this telegram from Gibraltar: "Reform of prisons in Tangier. By influence of the British minister these changes are ordered: 1. More bread. 2. Sufficient water. 3. Prison lime-washed. 4. Cells to be kept clean. 5. Consuls to visit periodically and report." Bad weather had stopped, for several days, the sailing to Gibraltar, where I was announced to preach in the evening. But to-day there was a boat. Thus I had the peculiar interest of preaching in the morning in Africa, and the same evening in Europe. Oh! for the time when this gospel of mercy, peace and good-will shall triumph over both continents and throughout the world!—The Independent.

Of the rebuke indirect, one of the finest examples is that attributed to Dr. South. Once, when preaching before Charles II., he observed that the monarch and several of his attendants had fallen asleep. Presently, one of the latter began to snore, whereupon he Bishop broke off his sermon, and exclaimed, "Lord Lauderdale, I am sorry to disturb your repose, but let me entreat you not to snore so loud, lest you awaken his Majesty."

In Scotland, they have narrow, open ditches, which they call sheep drains. A man was riding a donkey one day across a sheep pasture; but, when the animal came to the sheep drain, he would not go over. So the man rode back a short distance, turned, and applied the whip, thinking, of course, that the donkey, when going at the top of his speed, would jump the drain. But not so. When the donkey got to the drain he stopped, and the man went over Mr. Naddy's head. No sooner had he touched the ground than he got up, and, looking his beast straight in the face, said, 'Verra weel pitched; but, then, hoo ar ye going to get ower yersel?'