

The Fireside.

"YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ME."

The sun was slipping behind the fringe of trees across the field when Zeb Fulton reached the end of the rows. With an effort he straightened himself. The hoe fell to the ground. He unwound a red handkerchief from about his neck, wiped over his face, and, turning, let his eyes wander over the patch of cotton. Something like a groan escaped him. It looked a hopeless task; excepting for a few dozen rows that he had hoed, cotton could scarcely be seen in the rank weeds.

Zeb Fulton had moved into the Gibtown neighborhood, in the early winter, from the Clear Creek country. There he had owned a small farm; but, his wife falling sick, he had mortgaged it that he might pay the doctors' bills. A crop failure forced him to turn over the farm to his creditors. With an invalid wife and four helpless children it had been difficult for him to rent a farm. Landowners wanted men that had a "good force of hands." The cabin and little hillside patch was the best he could do. Under favoring circumstances it did not promise much; hampered as he was it looked almost hopeless.

He walked slowly toward the cabin. As he climbed the fence between it and the field the children came running to meet him. The tired look vanished from his face as they clung to his trousers and reached up for his hands. The smallest, a toddling baby, he kissed and lifted to his arms. The group entered the cabin. Fulton sat down by the bedside, the baby on his knee.

"How have you been resting, Mollie?" he asked, a shade of anxiety in his voice.

There was a movement in the quilts; a thin hand was stretched out to him. Fulton took it tenderly between his rough palms.

"Zeb, I'm so much troubled. How tired you must get worryin' with the children, the cooking, tending the crop, and me such a burden—an'—"

"There, don't talk any more, Mollie. You've had a bad day. You musn't feel that way. I'll hurry the supper and gallop over and see the doctor."

"No, Zeb, don't; you can't afford it, and it'll be of no use."

"Don't, Mollie, don't—that 's what hurts. You musn't give up. The doctor will pull you through all right, yet."

He leaned over and kissed the pale brow.

"There, now, see if you can't get some sleep while me and the children cook a bite."

He took the children into the shed-room and closed the door. A fire kindled and the supper placed on the stove, he took down the milk pail and went down to some thatched stalls to milk and feed the cow, the children following at his heels.

Dr. Gaines and the village preacher, Zora Pertil, were engaged in conversation when Fulton reached the doctor's office that night. So it happened that the Rev. Pertil learned of Fulton's sick wife. The next morning he drove out. It was late in the day when he reached the cabin, and Fulton had already gone to the field.

The minister didn't remain long. After speaking a few words to the sick woman and the children, he prayed and took his departure. He saw at a glance

that other things than prayers and words of sympathy were needed. He spent the morning visiting the neighboring farms. When he returned home, late that evening, tired with the day's work, he felt that it had not been in vain.

At noon, when Fulton was told of the preacher's visit, he said nothing, but a queer expression came on his face. Whether of approval or resentment it was hard to tell.

The next morning he was clearing away the breakfast dishes and trying to quiet a fretful child, when he chanced to glance out of the door. He was almost startled. A dozen men were hoeing industriously in the cotton patch. He stood for some minutes regarding them, dazed. He was not a hard man, and, touched by the unexpected show of kindness, a tear came into his eye, rolled down his cheek, splashed on the plate he was drying. In a moment he was ashamed of the weakness and quickly brushed all traces of it from his eye. He hung up the dish-pan, washed the baby's face, and entered his wife's room.

"Molly, we'll have company for dinner," he said, as he began to tidy the room. "The neighbors are hoeing in the cotton."

There was a little smothered cry of joy.

"I'm so glad for you Zeb."

Fulton picked up his hoe and walked toward the men. They saw him approaching. One of them stepped out to meet him.

"We've treated you shabby, Mr. Fulton," he began. "We didn't know just how you were situated till the parson rode roun' yesterday an' t'le us."

"I'm shore I 'preciate yore kindness," returned Fulton, as he began to chop into the weeds industriously.

"I 'low you needn't work today," continued the man. "We'd rather you'd stay with yer wife. We'll git over the patch 'gin night 'thout yore help."

Fulton threw down his hoe to the fence corner and returned to the house. The wives of the men had arrived in his absence. When he entered the cabin it presented the appearance of having undergone a general renovating. There was snowy linen on the bed, and it was wheeled to where his wife, dressed in a clean wrapper, could look through the sunshine across the valley. A faint color had crept into her cheeks and brightness into her eyes. The children, with clean dresses and faces, looked tidier than for many a day. The baby sat on a quilt on the floor playing with a new rag doll.

Some of the women were in the kitchen getting dinner that they had brought, and behind the shed he could hear the sound of scrub-boards as others busily washed the soiled clothes that had accumulated in the house for weeks.

Fulton glanced about him dubiously, not knowing just how to adjust himself to the situation.

"Now you jest sit down by yore wife an' rest today," said one of the women, stepping in from the kitchen. "We're shore ashamed for bein' so onneighborly. Guess you think we're a hard set 'bout here, an' not without cause. We ain't makin' no excuse, but spring's been so late, an' been so much rain, a' the men folks so behin' with the crops, we jest ain't had no time to think o'

anybody but ourselves. The parson came over yesterday an' tole us we ought to be ashamed, an' we air. You'll not hold it 'gin us, will you, Mr. Fulton?"

"I'm shore I 'preciate yore kindness," said Fulton, awkwardly pushing a chair to the side of the bed.

"Yes, do set down an' rest. You shorely must be petered out with all the work you've had to do."

The door closed and Fulton was left alone with his wife. The baby still cooed over the rag doll. He sat in silence, holding his wife's hand, his eyes rested on the men in the field and the baby on the floor.

The next Sunday morning, Fulton, the baby on his knee, sat on the doorstep looking across the valley to where the house tops and spire of the village church had glistened in the sun. He had been gazing some time through the shimmering air that lay over the fields, when he turned and spoke to his wife.

"Molly, would you mind if I leave you a couple of hours with the children?"

"Why, no, Zeb; but where are you going today?"

"I thought I would go over and hear the parson."

Again the sun was sinking behind the fringe of woods along the ridge. The trees made long black shadows across the cotton patch, now white as a field of snow, with its millions of bursting bolls.

Fulton and his wife stood by the rail fence viewing the promising prospect. The baby played about its mother's knee, and the children gazed out over the fields toward the golden sunset.

Fulton put his arm about his wife and drew her closer to him. As he kissed the upturned brow the sun gilded for a moment their bared heads.

"Molly, when the crop's sold," he was saying, "we'll buy back the little Clear Creek farm."

The baby clapped its hands and laughed.—*Guy A. Jamieson, in New Orleans Times-Democrat.*

TWO INVITATIONS.

A friend tells the story of a confidential clerk of a firm in an interior town, who was sent to a large city on important business. He had always been a steady fellow, was married, and was fond and proud of his home, wife and child.

But he was young, and had a vague idea of "seeing life." A single secret sip of the intoxicating pleasure of a large city could surely do him no harm.

Arriving at the city on Saturday night, he went to one of the principal hotels, registered his name carefully, reading it over after the manner of unaccustomed travellers, and went to supper.

Before he had finished, the waiter brought him two letters.

"Already! why, these are from the city! Nobody knows I am here!" he exclaimed.

"City folks mighty wide awake!" ejaculated John.

Our traveller tore open one envelope. Within was an invitation to a variety theatre of a bad reputation that evening, with a hint of a "sacred concert" on the next day, and "unlimited fun."

The young man's face reddened, and his heart throbbed hotly. The door was opened for that secret glimpse into inquiry. What harm could it do him?

He opened the other letter. It contained a few words:

"Dear Sir: In order that you may



Kidney Disorders

Are no respecter of persons.

People in every walk of life are troubled. Have you a Backache? If you have it is the first sign that the kidneys are not working properly.

A neglected Backache leads to serious Kidney Trouble.

Check it in time by taking

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS

"THE GREAT KIDNEY SPECIFIC."

They cure all kinds of Kidney Troubles from Backache to Bright's Disease.

50c. a box or 3 for \$1.25

all dealers or

THE DOAN KIDNEY PILL CO.,
Toronto, Ont.

Allen's Lung Balsam

The best Cough Medicine.

ABSOLUTE SAFETY

should be the first thought and must be rigorously insisted upon when buying medicine, for upon its safety depends one's life. ALLEN'S LUNG BALSAM contains no opium in any form and is safe, sure, and prompt in cases of Croup, Colds, deep-seated Coughs. Try it now, and be convinced.

not pass a lonely Sabbath in a strange city, we enclose a list of churches open tomorrow near your hotel, in any of which you will be cordially welcomed. Our rooms and library are also open and at your disposal." It was signed by an officer of a Christian Association.

"These invitations of both kinds are left at the hotel, and directed to each guest as soon as he registers his name," explained the clerk. "Which will you accept?"

The young countryman colored and laughed. "The first is tempting. But I'll accept the second."

He kept his word. It seemed to him as if he was close to his wife and little boy all day. Going to the hotel in the evening, he saw a group of pale, bloated creatures coming out of the "sacred concert hall." One or two were arrested for disorderly conduct.

"They have been 'seeing life,'" said the clerk. "They accepted the other invitation."—*Unitarian.*

Sleeplessness.—When the nerves are unstrung and the whole body given up to wretchedness, when the mind is filled with gloom and dismal forebodings, the result of derangement of the digestive organs, sleeplessness comes to add to the distress. If only the subject could sleep, there would be oblivion for a while and temporary relief. Parmelee's Vegetable Pills will not only induce sleep, but will act so beneficially that the subject will wake refreshed and restored to happiness.

Let love not visit you as a transient guest, but be the constant temper of your soul. Let it pant in your heart, let it sparkle in your eyes; let it shine in all your actions, and let there be in your tongue the law of kindness.