

Sunday Reading.

A Song of Coming Christmas.

Oh, softly sweet, oh, softly sweet, an angel band on high
Held harmonies divinely rare through the heaven
lit sky;
Touching tuneful harps of gold to sound most dulcet strains,
And mingling their pure voices o'er Judea's silent plains.
Wonderfully, oh wondrously, they told of the Lily Maid
And her Babe, the Lord of Hosts, in a lowly manger laid;
And stars leaned low with ecstasy 'round the singing throng,
Attuning sleeping earth with love's everlasting song.

—Julia Teresa Butler.

A LIFE MADE HAPPY.

Little deeds of kindness that cost those who do them almost nothing sometimes carry a great deal of sunshine and happiness into other lives. An instance of this came to the attention of the writer a short time ago. A very poor woman who went out by the day doing scrubbing, window-cleaning and labor of that kind, was working in the home of a lady who had set the woman the task of cleaning a large store room.

In this room was a pile of old magazines and illustrated papers, and during the progress of the work the lady said, 'I hardly know just what to do with those old magazines and papers. I have thought of having some of the magazines bound, and I didn't know but I'd make some picture scrap-books out of the illustrated papers and send them to some hospital. But I don't know as I'll ever get it done. And yet I don't want to throw them into the ash barrel.'

'Oh, no, don't do that!' said the poor woman eagerly. 'I've been looking at them while I've been working in the room and wondering if—if—well, it may be bold and presuming in me to ask, but if I might have just two or three of the picture papers to carry home to a little girl of mine, they'd give her a world of pleasure. You see she's a cripple and can't go out to play. She can't even stand, and the days are terrible long and lonesome for her when I'm away. When I get hold of a picture paper to take to her she's that happy as you wouldn't believe. She'll look at it only a page a day so as to make it last longer, and she'll make up little stories and imagine things about the pictures for hours at a time. If you'd be willing to let her have two or three of these old papers, ma'am, I'd work an hour extra for them and—'

'My good woman,' interrupted the lady, 'you may have all of them, and you shall not work a minute for them. Take all of them with you when you go home.'

'All of them!' exclaimed the woman with a suggestion of tears in her voice.

'All of them! Oh, ma'am, you can't know, you can't think, what they'll be to my little girl! They'll make her happy for weeks and months. I can't thank you enough! I can't begin to! Jennie will just go wild over them! Won't she be happy, though!'

'I shall be happy in thinking of her pleasure,' said the lady, and then she added, 'I have brought a couple of scrap books that I intended filling with the pictures, and I will give you the books and a bottle of mucilage when you go home, and your little girl can fill the book with the pictures herself if you think that she would enjoy it.'

'Enjoy it? Why, ma'am, I ain't words to tell you how happy she'll be, nor I ain't words to tell you how thankful I am!'

Six months later the lady, who had been abroad, returned, and sent for the charwoman to do some more work. She came wearing a bit of rusty crape on her old black hat.

'Yes, ma'am,' she said quietly but with tears in her eyes, 'Jennie's gone. I laid her away three weeks ago today. It was hard to give her up, but I know where she is, and there's great comfort in that, and in knowing that she won't suffer any more as she suffered here. She's safe with Him as carries the young lambs in his bosom. And oh, ma'am, I want to tell you what a pleasure and comfort them magazines and papers was to my dear little girl. She never got tired of 'em. She filled the two scrap-books full of the pictures, pasting them all in so neat and nice and not musing up the pages with the glue or anything. And every day she'd look 'em over, and she had 'em by her on the bed when she died. She knew she was going, and she made me promise that I'd give one of the books to some other little crippled girl and the other one I was to keep myself. And money couldn't buy it of me. No, it couldn't. But you can't know how much happiness you put into the last months of our poor, suffering, little girl's life when you sent her them picture papers. I'll bless you for it all my life.'

'And it was such a little thing to do,'

said the lady afterwards when she told the story. It was a little thing for her to do, but it made true these words: 'We may scatter the seeds of courtesy and kindness around us at so little expense! Some of them will inevitably fall on good ground, and grow up into benevolence in the minds of others; and all of them will bear fruit of happiness in the bosom whence they spring.'

SET THE DAY.

Good Opportunities Come to us but Once in Our Lifetime.

A great help to the accomplishment of any task or pleasure would be found in the three words of our title. How many beautiful things we all plan to do sometime? And how the years go by without their ever being attempted!

Mr. Anytime is a most deceptive friend and counselor. You do not mean to deceive yourself. You only ask Mr. Anytime to jog your memory. He is a good-meaning fellow, too, and does not in the least intend to thwart you. It is only that he does so love to wait for a 'convenient season.' Those are Bible words, and may perhaps remind you of a certain Governor Felix who once used them. Just stop this minute, and hunt up his interesting story. How strange it seems that any one can read it, and then say of any good deed he means to do. 'By and by, when it is convenient.' The clock-hands point to that hour about once or twice in a life-time.

The truth is, most things worth doing are not easy. The minute you plan to do a thing, there are half a dozen reasons for not doing it. 'I wouldn't start for school to-day. It looks like rain! Did you ever hear anybody say that? There is another coward self in most of us who whispers countless silly suggestions just like that. 'Well, let it rain!' you say—at least, I hope you do!—and go on with your preparations. 'Spoil your nice hat!' says the tempter. 'Wear my old one, then!' you fling back at him. 'Your history lesson isn't half-learned, either! Stay at home!' 'No, I won't!' you answer flatly (if you are the right minded young person I take you for) 'I'll go and fail, if I have to, and then I'll take care to have a gilt-edged lesson next time. But I won't be a sham and give into make-believe excuses!'

You see, in even a little matter like that, liable to come up any dull-feeling morning, the right thing isn't quite easy. You have to brace yourself to a bit of an effort. Seeing that this is so, it will not do to say, 'I'll do it sometime!' There are terrible chances that you never will. The 'convenient season' is only a beautiful mirage. It never comes any nearer than the painted clouds.

'What is to be done?' Why, 'grip' your teeth, square your shoulders, and—'set the day.' Arrange for success. Fix things so that at some definite time in the future you can write over against the thing that should be done the canceling label 'DONE.' Divide your tasks into two portions, a resolution, and the living up to it. You need the resolution, as a rower needs some tree or rock for a land mark. He fixes his eyes on that, and then gives his arms to the oars. You must have a resolution to steer by. A drifting boat is one of the saddest sights in the world to me. It goes nowhere, is bound nowhere. What is a man or a boat good for that only minds the wind and weather?

Oh, how easily you might change all that! You do not need to let your life drift one more day. Blot that word 'sometime' out of your dictionary. Decide exactly when you will do this good thing you are promising yourself. Let it be the earliest possible time it could be done. A life is so short when all its days and weeks and months are counted. Remember that for some things God has set the day; there is only one time—NOW!

A Definite Purpose.

Most men merely drift through life, and the work they do is determined by a hundred indifferent circumstances; they might as well be doing nothing at all. But, from the time when he became a Christian, Paul knew that he had a definite work to do; and the call he had received to it never

ceased to ring like a tocsin in his soul. * * He lived with the account which he would have to give at the judgement seat of Christ ever in his eye, and his heart was revived in every hour of discouragement by the vision of the crown of life which, if he proved faithful, the Lord, the righteous Judge, would place upon his head.—[James Stalker, D. D., in 'The Life of St. Paul.'

IF YOU EARN IT.

It is not Always a Misfortune to Earn our own Living.

It is very easy for young people to envy others whose natural abilities surpass their own. Plodding students sigh as they tell of some class-mate who can learn a history lesson by reading it over once. The boy who is awkward and reserved in company looks with admiration and almost with awe on that other lad, no wiser than himself, who is perfectly at ease in any sort of society, and able to join in the conversation of his elders without embarrassment. Those people who learn without effort, who please without trying, who have as a natural gift what most of us must earn by hard work, seem to many the most fortunate of mankind.

In the same way, there are many who envy those who inherit fortunes. It seems to them the very height of happiness to be born rich, to have one's desires gratified without the need of exertion. But observation shows that those who get the most out of money are the ones who earn it. A rarely gifted man, who wasted his life because he happened to be born wealthy, said sadly of himself, 'I did not know the curse which so easily lights on those who never have to struggle for anything.'

It is not a misfortune if we are obliged to earn what we have. We need not complain even if we can learn only by dint of hard exertion. It is no reason for regret if we must win our friends by lives of loving unselfishness, rather than through some natural charm. Even those of us who have quick tempers which must be mastered, should not envy those to whom amiability 'comes easy' as we say. The man who earns his money is the one who appreciates it and knows how to use it to advantage, and the same is true of other things which may be the gift of inheritance, but are often the reward of effort. 'He has to work for what he gets,' a father said rather disparagingly of the son he had just taken to a new school. And the teacher who had watched the career of many a brilliant student answered, 'Then I have hopes of him'. And you young people may have hope for yourselves if by love and patience and untiring effort you must earn the good things you desire.

STEP BY STEP.

It is as Easy to be a Christian Always as for a Short time.

Young folks—and they are very much like older people in this—think it is far easier to pledge themselves for a limited time, a month or a year, than for life. If you should ask some of them to follow Christ a week, they might not think that hard; but they would hesitate to give the m selves to him forever. We should all do well to remember that eternity is made up of weeks, and that it is no harder to follow the right path the second week than it was the first. All the time we need to care for is to-day. To-morrow will be only another to-day when we get to it. May all who read this story be as prompt to act as Edwin was.

Edwin was a good, thoughtful boy, free from bad habits, very constantly at church and an associate member of the Endeavor Society; but he refused to become an active member.

'That means, to become a Christian, to act like a Christian always, and I am afraid that I could not hold out.'

The pastor was very much concerned for Edwin. He felt that if the boy remained in such a state of mind he would lose all care for Christ and, by and by, drop all interest in the church also. So he called at the boy's home to have an earnest talk with him. Edwin had just come from school, bringing a new history with which he was greatly pleased. He liked the



study and showed his new book to the pastor.

'There are more than four hundred pages in this book, Edwin,' said the pastor soberly; 'you can never learn so long a history.'

'I have already learned tomorrow's lesson; we have only seven pages, and they are very interesting,' said the boy.

'But there are at least sixty such lessons in this book. How in the world are you going to learn all those?'

'Why,' said Edwin, surprised at his pastor's manner and words, 'I shall have sixty days to do it, and I can learn as long a lesson in one day as I can in another.'

'Oh, you have only to think of a day at a time,' said the pastor again; 'then you would about as soon promise to learn the whole book, as to promise to learn one lesson. would you not?'

'I have made up my mind to know all that my history tells about before school ends,' said Edwin confidently.

'Step by step, lesson by lesson. I have no doubt, Edwin, but that you will do what you have made up your mind to do. Now, can you not learn Jesus' lessons, one at a time, and follow him step by step, day by day, just as hopefully as you begin your beautiful book? Won't you promise me, with his help, to begin to learn of him now?'

The pastor took Edwin's hand affectionately, and the boy returned the clasp promptly and with shining eyes. He pledged himself as an active member of the Endeavor society at the next meeting.

THE OFFICE OF SORROW.

The Growth of Secret Faults eats out our Spiritual Strength.

All sorrow has a purifying purpose with it; but bereavement is meant to produce results which perhaps no grief can bring about in the same way. When, with the spirit of the departed, we have, so to speak, mounted up in the higher heavens and looked on the earth, as men might look at it from the stars, we see it at its 'exact' worth, both in its comprehensions and its disappointments—not despising it utterly, since it is the place God has chosen for us, yet coloring it no longer with the old false hues. Then we see ourselves as we never saw ourselves before. Just as pain, and fatigue, and sickness bring out the features of the body in a kind of ghastly sharpness, so in the hour when God is searching us as with candles we seem able to look in at ourselves as persons outside look through an open window into a house.

The growth of secret faults, such as covetousness or envy, or pride—a multitude of little failings separately but trifling, yet together eating out our strength—with the voracity of parasites, the heart settling quietly down into hasty prayers, easy self-love, scanty self denial—these things all suddenly stare at us as the lightning flashes into the darkness of a closed room. And some have felt at such times that there is something more woeful, more intolerable even, than the death which has changed the current of our life; that sin is the worst kind of sorrow; that to have grown cold to wards Jesus Christ can move the stirred heart into a more bitter relenting than the thought of the dead face shut up in its long home, never to smile on us again.—Bishop Thorold.

It Reached Its Destination.

The following incident, related by an English minister and published in the 'Christian Herald,' carries a helpful lesson to those who have watched in vain for results to their efforts to widen Christ's kingdom.

I was asked to go to a public-house in Nottingham to see the landlord's wife who was dying. I found her rejoicing in Christ as her Savior. I asked her how she found the Lord.

'Read that,' she replied, handing me a torn piece of paper.

I looked at it, and found that it was part of an American newspaper containing an extract from one of Spurgeon's sermons, which extract had been the means of her conversion.

'Where did you find this newspaper?' I asked.

She answered: 'It was wrapped around a parcel sent to me from Australia.'

A sermon preached in London, conveyed to America, then to Australia, part of it torn off for the parcel despatched to Eng-

and, and after all its wanderings, giving he message of salvation to that woman's soul! God's Word shall not return to him void.

The Tramp's Good Nap.

In the articles I have spoken often about the importance of rest, of sleep, of doing what you can to provide for a lull in the rattling, banging battle of living. I know we cannot all of us go off on a holiday whenever we would like, but what is to prevent us getting a good sleep once every twenty-four hours? To this end it is not needful to have a fine house or even any house at all.

One night last winter—and it was cold and frosty—I chanced to see a man asleep in the hallway of an apartment building. He was sheltered on two sides of him and that seemed ample. He was not drunk, but breathing as regularly and gently as one should when enjoying Heaven's best gift. His face was contented and serene, and he had forgotten 'the curse of the wandering foot.' He had been walled out of sight and sound of his loneliness and poverty.

A little later I met the servant of one of the richest and foremost men of our town on his way to fore the night clerk of the chemist's shop to get some bromide for his sleepless and tormented master.

So it goes; the point for us to remember being that it is not our worldly circumstances, but our personal condition that cheats us out of our share of God's benison of quiet and repose. Better be a tramp asleep than a king calling for a narcotic.

In lying awake most of the night, hearing the clock chop up the time into small pieces—in doing this, I say, Mrs. Richard Brooke was scarcely acting in harmony with her own wishes. Far otherwise, as a matter of fact. The trouble of the day was continued into the night in her case. There was no shaking it off or having a good riddance of it merely because the sun was gone down and the lamps lighted. And it dated back, too.

'In April, 1894,' she tells us in her letter, 'after my confinement, I was not able to get up my strength. My appetite was poor and fitful, and after eating I suffered great pain at the chest. I also came to be much swollen around the body.'

'And as my complaint increased upon me, I got to be dreadfully nervous. You will understand this better when I say that so common an occurrence as anybody knocking at the door would startle me. I had but little sleep at night, and finally grew so weak that I could scarcely get about.'

'In his low and feeble state I continued for fully a year, during which time I spent pounds in doctoring, but got no better for it all.'

'At about this time it was that I read in a book what Mother Seigel's Syrup had done for people afflicted as I was; and I bought a bottle from Mr. Prudence, the grocer, &c., Aberford.'

'After taking this medicine a short time, I began to improve. I could eat better, and the food I took gave me no pain or distress. As you may suppose, this good effect induced me to continue the use of it, and I gradually recovered my health and strength. Since then by taking an occasional dose I keep in good health. For the sake of the benefit the knowledge of my cure may be to others, you are at liberty to publish this statement and refer any inquirers to me. (Signed) (Mrs.) Richard Brooke, Aberford, near Leeds, March 19th, 1897.'

This woman rests and sleeps now without a break from bedtime till morning. Not because her bed is softer than it was' not because a worthy relative has left her a fortune, but because Mother Seigel's Syrup delivered her from her malady—indigestion, or dyspepsia—that vile destroyer of strength and comfort, that ugly slaughterer of sleep.

I hope plenty of other pained and sleepless men and women may see this little story and learn its valuable lesson. No matter what your ailment seems to be, or how much it bothers the medical men, try Mother Seigel's Syrup for it. For—I give you my word—out of a dozen diseases, ten are dyspepsia with a different suit of clothes on.

There is a vast difference between prayer in faith and faith in prayer. Having faith in prayer is believing that because certain prayers are offered certain results will follow, that the praying will secure the thing prayed for! Praying in faith comes of an abiding confidence in the person prayed to; the confidence is in him; it is based on a knowledge of what he is and on a conviction that he is every way worthy to be trusted. Praying in faith is the act of a simple-hearted child of God.—[H. Clay Trumbull.

'Is it fair to forget all the good, or kindness, shown to us, by those with whom we live, for the sake of one little pain they may have caused us, and which, most likely, was quite unintentional on their part?'

'Like the sunlight which fills the air all around us, and enters wherever there is an opening, so does the presence of God fill the whole universe, and enters every heart that opens to receive him.'

Walter Baker & Co., Limited.

Dorchester, Mass., U. S. A.
The Oldest and Largest Manufacturers of

PURE, HIGH GRADE Cocoas and Chocolates



on this Continent. No Chemicals are used in their manufactures. Their Breakfast Cocoa is absolutely pure, delicious, nutritious, and costs less than one cent a cup. Their Premium No. 1 Chocolate is the best plain chocolate in the market for family use. Their German Sweet Chocolate is good to eat and good to drink. It is palatable, nutritious and healthful; a great favorite with children. Consumers should ask for and be sure that they get the genuine Walter Baker & Co.'s goods, made at Dorchester, Mass., U. S. A.
CANADIAN HOUSE, 6 Hospital St., Montreal.