

Poetry.

THE SEED AND THE PRAYER.

"Mamma, I've often heard you say,
That God is listening when we pray,
And if I do indeed believe,
That what I ask I shall receive.

"Why will he not then take away,
My naughty, sinful heart to-day,
And make me humble, meek, and mild,
A quiet and obedient child?

"I ask him every day and night
For a new heart that's clean and white;
You know I have not got it yet,
He hears my prayers, can He forget?"

No, darling, God does not forget,
Although He has not answered yet;
And if you listen I will try
And give you now a reason why.

I once pulled up a garden weed,
And in its place I dropped a seed;
Because they told me God's great power
Could change that seed into a flower.

I was a little child, you know,
And thought the seed would quickly grow;
But days and weeks passed slowly round,
And still it lay deep in the ground.

At length there came some gentle rain;
And when the sun shone forth again
I hastened to the spot, alone,
Wherein my little seed was sown.

And there I saw the softened ground,
Raised in a gently heaving mound,
And in the middle there was seen
Two little leaves of brightest green.

And day by day, and hour by hour,
I watched until there came a flower,
And thought how good that God must be
That gave such pretty flowers to me.

And now, my dear, your little prayer
Is like the seed I dropped in there;
God gives it in your hand to sow,
And promises the seed shall grow.

And, if you wait, and watch, and pray,
The seed will spring up day by day,
And God will bless it, like my flower,
Both with the sunshine and the shower.

Until at length one morning bright,
You'll find a heart both clean and white;
And evermore your song shall be,
"How very good God is to me."

Miscellaneous.

PROVOKING CHILDREN TO WRATH.
A SAD STORY OF FAMILY LIFE.
Chapter II.

Harry Browne came one morning bounding into the room where his brothers were, his whole face kindled into pleasure.

"Oh, lads! what do you think? Isn't this good news? Here's a note from the governor, saying that he's called away by business, and may not be home for two or three days. I bless that business, whatever it is; don't you?"

Now, that word "governor" always seems to us a very objectionable one when used towards the kind and loving father who is interested in his children—who has borne with them and forgiven them, and loved them even from their infancy. So that in the case of Henry Browne it was decidedly improper. But in his delight he forgot that it was a coarse and unpleasant word.

"Hurrah for the temporary emancipation of slaves!" And Arthur clapped his hands, feeling to the full as pleased as his brothers.

"What a jolly time we will have!"
And so, no doubt, they would have had, but for an unfortunate circumstance which occurred on the following day. There was a fair to be held at Bradbury, the town in which they resided. Henry was busy at the office; and Charles proposed to his younger brother to take a walk through the town. As they passed out of the door, one of their father's customers came up.

"Is Mr. Browne at home, sir?" he asked of Charles.
"No; he is not; and we do not know exactly when he will return. My brother is at the office; could you speak to him?"
"Well, yes, I could," said the man, hesitatingly; "only that I do not know how to spare time to go to the office. I merely wanted to pay Mr. Browne my account. Couldn't you take it?"
"Yes, certainly, if you wish it."
"Have you ever before received money for your father?" asked the man, with a shade of suspicion.
"Yes; I have frequently done so. I can give you a proper receipt for it."
"If you can I shall be glad."

Charles received the money, a twenty-pound note, and gave the man the receipt properly signed.

"Of course not," broke in Charlie; "we never supposed that the would; but—"
"And I do not think mother would be pleased." The boys were sobered a little then; but they decided that she would not have minded much, as they had kept out of mischief, and had come to no harm.

"Charlie," asked Arthur presently, "did you give Harry the note that Mr. Sampson paid you this morning?"
"Oh, no; I will do so now."

"What note?" enquired the eldest brother.
"A twenty-pound note. He said he did not want to go to the office with it—it was out of his way; so I took it, and gave him the receipt."

"You should have brought the money to me at once," said Harry, "that I might have entered it in to-day's account."

"I thought that would be of no consequence. Why, which pocket could I have put it in?" For Charles had been looking among his papers, and had failed to find it.

"I hope nothing has happened to it!" exclaimed Harry in some concern; "and, Charlie, mind you never take money again without at once handing it to me."

"I never will," said Charlie; "but I can't find that note—it must be in the pocket of my jacket." And he ran upstairs to see, coming down again with a deeper shade of care upon his face.

"Arthur, do you remember anything about it?"
"No," said Arthur, "I was looking out of the window watching the children playing."

"Are you sure that Mr. Sampson gave it to you?" asked Harry. "Might he not have put it back in his pocket by mistake?"

"I am sure he gave it to me. I asked him to write his name on the back, as you know father has directed us to do, and I distinctly remember his handing it back to me. The ink was not quite dry, and as no blotting paper was near, I held it up to the light, noting the water-marks as I did so."

"Where did you receive the money?"
"In the library. Ah! I must have laid it on the table, though I thought I had put it in my pocket." He hastened towards the library as he spoke.

"But do you really mean to say," demanded Harry, "that you would put a twenty-pound note loose in your pocket?"

"I did not put it in loose; it was tucked inside an envelope."

They all searched the library through, looking on the tables, among the books, in the books, everywhere they could think of; but not a trace of it was to be seen.

"Oh, Harry! it surely cannot be lost," said Charlie, his white face uplifted towards his brother.

"I hope not, lad," he said kindly. "Look again among the letters in your pockets."

He did look, and then passed them to his brother, who also looked, but in vain, for the missing note. Hour after hour they looked, moving and removing everything in the room; but nowhere could it be found.

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