

All I Can Do.

There is care in the heart of my loved one,
There is grief in her burdened soul;
I am far away from my dear to-day,
I cannot lift a stone from her way;
All I can do is to kneel and pray
That the Lord will make her whole.

All? But how much I am doing
When I plead for my friend at the
Throne,
Asking the best, and leaving the rest,
Putting the strength of the heavens to test,
And bringing sweet heaven to be her guest,
When I pray to the Lord for his own!

Dear house in the distant country,
Dear voice that I cannot hear,
There's a tug at my heart, and the quick
tears start,
I am faint of your sorrows to bear a part,
Each ache of yours has for me a smart,
Yet I pray for you, void of fear.

I know that His swiftest angels
Will haste to you while I pray,
That whatever you need will be your need,
That your faintest sigh the Lord will heed,
Your wish unspoken His grace will read,
In your dark and cloudy day.

Margaret R. Sangster.

Annie's Way of Working.

Very tiny and pale the little girl looked as she stood before those three grave and dignified gentlemen. She had been ushered into the study of Rev. Dr. A. J. Gordon, of Boston, where he was holding counsel with two of his deacons, and now upon inquiry into the nature of her errand, a little shyly preferred the request to be allowed to become a member of his church.

"You are quite too young to join the church," said one of the deacons, "you had better run home, and let us talk to your mother."

She showed no sign of running, however, as her wistful blue eyes traveled from one face to another of the three gentlemen, sitting in their comfortable chairs; she only drew a little step nearer to Dr. Gordon. He arose, and with the gentle courtesy that ever marked him, placed her in a small chair close beside himself.

"Now, my child, tell me your name and where you live."

"Annie Graham, sir, and I live on K—Street. I go to your Sunday-school."

"You do; and who is your teacher?"

"Miss B—. She is very good to me."

"And you want to join the church?"

The child's face glowed as she leaned eagerly toward him, clasping her hands; but all she said was, "Yes, sir."

"She cannot be more than six years old," said one of the deacons, disapprovingly.

Dr. Gordon said nothing, but quietly regarded the small, earnest face, now becoming a little downcast.

"I am ten years old—older than I look," she said.

"It is not usual for us to admit any one so young to membership," he said, thoughtfully. "We have never done so; still—"

"It may make an undesirable precedent," remarked the other deacon. The Doctor did not seem to hear, as he asked, "You know what joining the church is, Annie?"

"Yes, sir," and she answered a few questions that proved she comprehended the meaning of the step she wished to take. She had slipped off her chair, and now stood close to Dr. Gordon's knee.

"You said, last Sabbath, sir, that the angels should be in the fold?"

"I did," he answered, with one of his own lovely smiles. "It is surely not for us to keep them out. Go home now, my child. I will see your friends and arrange to take you into membership very soon."

The cloud lifted from the child's face, and her expression, as she passed through the door he opened for her, was one of entire peace.

Inquiries made of Annie's Sabbath-school teacher proving satisfactory, she was baptized the following week, and, except for occasional information from Miss B. that she was doing well, Dr. Gordon heard no more of her for about a year.

Then he was summoned to her funeral. It was one of June's hottest days, and as the Doctor made his way along the narrow street on which Annie had lived he wished, for a moment, that he had asked his assistant to come instead of himself; but as he neared the house the crowd filled him with wonder; progress was hindered, and, as perforce he paused for a moment, his eye fell on a crippled lad crying bitterly as he sat on a low doorstep.

"Did you know Annie Graham, lad?" he asked.

"Know her, is it, sir? Niver a week passed but what she came twice or thrice with a picture or a book, mayhap an apple, for me, an' it's own to her an' no clergy at all that I'll ever follow her blessed footsteps to heaven. She'd read me from her own Bible whenever she came, an' now she's gone there'll be none at all to help me, for mother's dead an' dad's drunk, and the sunshine's gone

from Mike's sky with Annie, sir."

A burst of sobs choked the boy. Dr. Gordon passed on, after promising him a visit very soon, asking his way through the crowd of tear-stained, sorrowful faces. The Doctor came to a stop again in the narrow passageway of the little house. A woman stood beside him, drying her fast falling tears, while a wee child hid his face in her skirts and wept.

"Was Annie a relative of yours?" the Doctor asked.

"No, sir; but the blessed child was at our home constantly, and when Bob here was sick she nursed and tended him, and her hymns quieted him when nothing else seemed to do it. It was just the same with all the neighbors. What she's been to us no one but the Lord will ever know, and now she lives there."

Recognized at last, Dr. Gordon was led to the room where the child lay at rest, looking almost younger than when he had seen her in his study a year ago. An old bent woman was crying aloud by the coffin.

"I never thought she'd go afore I did. She used to run in regular to read an' sing to me every evening, an' it was her talk an' prayers that made a Christian of me; you could almost go to heaven on one of her prayers."

"Mother, mother, come home," said a young man, putting his arm round her to lead her away. "You'll see her again."

"I know, I know; she said she'd wait for me at the gate," she sobbed, as she followed him; "but I miss her sore now."

A silence fell on those assembled, and marvelling at such testimony, Dr. Gordon proceeded with the service, feeling as if there was little more he could say of one whose deeds thus spoke for her. Loving hands had laid flowers all around the child who had led them. One tiny lassie had placed a dandelion in the small waxen fingers, and now stood, abandoned to grief, beside the still form that bore the impress of absolute purity. The service over, again and again was the coffin lid waved back by some one longing for one more look, and they seemed as if they could not let her go.

The next day a good-looking man came to Dr. Gordon's house and was admitted into his study.

"I am Annie's uncle, sir," he said, simply. "She never rested till she made me promise to join the church, and I've come."

Dr. Gordon sat in the twilight, resting, after his visitor had left. The summer breeze blew in through the windows, and his thoughts turned backward and dwelt on what his little arishioner had done.

Truly a marvelous record for one year. It is well said "their angels do ever behold His face."—*Christian Arbitrator*.

Skeptics their Superficiality and Inaccuracy.

The arguments of skeptics, though at times apparently learned, specious, and exhaustive, are often as cold and unsatisfactory as they are inaccurate and irrelevant. Prof. G. W. Smith, D. C. L., LL. D., in his criticisms on Prof. Drummond and others is an example. He says in the *North American Review*, August, 1895, "Faith in dogmatic creed and history is waxing faint. It may be said to have received a fatal wound three centuries ago, when the Ptolemaic system was succeeded by the Copernican, and the real relation of the earth to the universe was discovered."

In this brief quotation the author makes several implied and direct misstatements. It is not true, as implied that any accepted biblical creed ever taught the error of the Ptolemaic system. No proof is adduced. The Bible teaches mainly moral and spiritual truth. But wherever "natural law," so called, and the moral and spiritual touch each other, they are in harmony, as Prof. Drummond maintains and the Bible asserts.

Notice he affirms, 'Faith in dogmatic creed and history is waxing faint,' and so on. Here he is surprisingly falsifies facts of history. "Three centuries ago," the time when the creed received a fatal wound and hence is 'waxing faint,' according to the reliable English historian, Sharon Farnham, there were 100,000,000 Christian Bible creed believers in the world. Two centuries ago we find 120,000,000, a century ago 155,000,000 and ten years ago 390,000,000 Christians. Now from a table published in Berlin recently, and copied in the *Literary Digest* of Aug. 10, 1895, we find 500,000,000. nationally and nominally Christian. The *Presbyterian Review*, remarking on this table, says, 'One-third of the population of the globe is Christian. Protestants surpass the Catholics in numbers by more than four millions, controlling the destinies of the leading nations of the earth.'

The Bible, our 'creed,' never was 'waxing' so popular. When the new translation of the New Testament was finished a few years ago,

edition after edition was exhausted, till in a few weeks 2,500,000 copies were sold. The new version of the entire Scriptures continued this marvelous sale. No other book since the art of printing was discovered has had one tenth so great a sale. Some fourteen English revisions of the Bible have been made, and it has been translated into 200 languages, mostly within those years in which Prof. Smith says, 'faith in dogmatic creed and history' was 'waxing faint.' Thank God, the Bible and the religion it teaches has come to stay, and to be the greatest blessing the world has ever seen. We notice only one more of Prof. Smith's peculiar criticisms. He says: 'Dogmatic religion is egocentric. It assumes that the earth is the center of the universe, the primary object of Divine care. Is it possible that so much importance as the creeds imply can attach to this tiny planet and to this little drama of humanity?' Evidently God wisely gives the human race just the light in science and revelation best for them without needlessly confusing and hampering us with information and speculation about any other worlds in existence under his all-seeing benevolent eye and paternal hand. But he more than intimates he has the same care for all worlds. The heavens declare the glory of God. Upholding all things by the word of his power. Everywhere he is impartial. The President of the United States recently gave special attention to a few square rods of territory under his protection to secure safe transit of the mails. This assured us that every inch of mail route in our vast nation would be protected. Isn't it assuring and comforting to know that the infinite God can give special attention to our 'tiny planet and to the little drama of humanity,' and at the same time most minutely look after all the interests of every planet and the countless hosts peopling them! Faith in Him who said, 'I will not leave you comfortless,' and 'The very hairs of your head are all numbered,' is our world's imperative need. Voyaging over vast oceans of research, we need the implicit trust of Whittier, who said:

"I know not where His islands lift
Their frosted palms in air,
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care."
—*Veteran, in Star*.

Little Weights.

The superintendent of a large retail store in New York, while talking to a friend one day, said: "It is not always the most industrious or intelligent salesmen who succeed in our business. Sometimes a peculiarity of speech or manner will make them distasteful to customers. Note that young man who is selling towels, for example. He is too familiar. He leans over the counter and whispers as if he were the confidential friend of every woman who buys a napkin. He means only to urge his wares, but ladies do not like it. They will not be served by him again. I shall probably be forced to discharge the poor fellow, though he means well."

A trustee of one of our colleges was asked why Professor Blank was held in comparatively light esteem as a teacher. He is a learned man, accurate and earnest in his teaching," said the inquirer, "and an honorable gentleman. Yet inferior men are advanced in general esteem, while he remains just where he began ten years ago."

"There is but one cause for his failure," was the reply, "his untidy habits. How can it be otherwise with a man who comes on the platform with soiled linen, a greasy coat, and black finger-nails? He looks like a tramp. Good and wise as he is, he does not command the respect of the students."

Dr. Weir Mitchell, in a lecture to nurses, said that competent, earnest women fail in the sick room because of some peculiarity of habit which renders them unpleasant to their patients. Among these was the use of perfumes. No well-bred persons will carry about a scent which may be offensive to half the people they meet.

Men and women in every department of life find their usefulness impaired by some little habit often unconsciously acquired. A sensible, friendly woman finds that her companions, after a few moments' conversation with her, look bored and manage to leave her. She is wounded and perplexed. No one has told her that she has the annoying habit of talking only about herself, or giggling at the end of each sentence, which wears the most patient listener.

A clergyman of piety and much talent was unpopular in every parish over which he had charge because of his brusque, harsh manner of speaking.

Such little weights have burdened and hindered usefulness and success in many a human life.—*Youth's Companion*.

The Backsliders Experience.

One of our busy bankers, ever ready to turn a listening ear to the cry of a soul for light, however pressing his secular work, was interrupted by a mechanic who entered his office, evidently borne down by a heavy burden. His first remark was: Mr. —, I am bad off. I'm broke. I must have help. Of course, our banker expected to be asked for pecuniary aid. 'Tell me what you need. Are you in financial straits?' 'Worse than that,' was the reply: 'I am a spiritual bankrupt!' and tears and sobs shook the strong man as he sat in the presence of his friend the personification of grief.

The story he told has its thousands of counterparts. Said he: 'Myself and wife are members of — Church. We have not been inside its walls for more than two years. I have drifted out and away into darkness, and I am at unrest. Will you, can you, help me?' But tell me the cause of this backsliding. Where did the departure begin, and what has brought you to me in such a condition?

'Well,' said he, 'my little girls were at the Sabbath school concert last Sabbath. On their return I asked as to the lesson of the evening. Their reply was, Prayer, and, turning to me, one of the dear pets said, with such an appealing look: 'Papa, you used to pray with us; why don't you now?' This question for three days has sounded in my ears day and night. I cannot sleep. I am at unrest. What shall I do?' 'Where did you leave off?' 'With the omission of family prayer. At first morning devotions were omitted. I was in haste to get to my work. I excused myself because of the lack of time. Then at evening I gradually left off the habit on the plea of weariness or some other excuse. The neglect of Sabbath service followed, till at last I am here, with no rest, no comfort, no peace. Neither my wife nor myself has been to church for two years.'

The practical answer of the banker was: 'Begin where you left off. Commence to-night. Call your family together and pray with them.' 'But I cannot; it is far harder than at first.' 'Very well if you will not do this you will have no rest, and I hope you will continue in this condition till you again resume the duty which you never should have laid aside.'

With a few kindly words they parted, but not till the tired soul had made the promise desired. The burden was taken up, duty became a pleasure, new life and joy came to the household, and with loving harmony the family are now walking upward toward their Father's house.

—*Congregationalist*

WHY SHOULD CHILDREN LOVE AND Serve their Parents?—'What would I not give,' said Charles Lamb, 'to call my dear mother back to earth for a single day, to ask her pardon, upon my knees, for all those acts by which I grieved her gentle spirit.' But after father and mother are dead, it is too late. The time for children to show affection and gratitude is along the years, while father and mother are living and treading earth's paths. If they then strew thorns for their feet, what does it avail that they bring flowers for their burial? Be careful not to grieve your parents either in words or acts. If we love them as we ought, we shall not only do all that they tell us, but shall try to do everything that we know will please them, whether they tell us to do so or not.

Keep your conduct abreast of your conscience, and very soon your conscience will be illumined by the radiance of God.

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