

THE WIDOW'S MITES.

When the splendid Jewish temple
Stood erect in days of old,
Gleaming with its walls of marble,
Starry gems and glittering gold,
Spicy woods and fragrant incense
Wafted fragrance everywhere,
While in every court the people
Thronged for sacrifice and prayer.

Rich and noble, grand and lordly,
Offered tithes of all their store,
While the hem of priestly garments
Swept the tessellated floor:
Stately Pharisees trod proudly,
And their costly gifts displayed,
Cast their gold into the treasury
Where the offerings were made.

Overlooking all, was sitting
One of gentle, lowly mien;
Pharisees and priests ignored him—
He was but "the Nazarene!"
Who could think that humble stranger
"Searched and tried the hearts" of men
Saw what prompted every offering,
With his wondrous, God-like ken?

When a shy and shrinking woman,
In her garb of widowhood,
One who knew both want and sorrow,
"Want, perchance, of daily food—
Brought her poor but grateful offering,
Grieving that it was so small,
Jesus said to those about him,
"She hath given more than all."

Ah! he knew of want and hunger,
Grief and care, and sorrow too;
And the widow's pittance farthing
Cost a sacrifice he knew.
So all fruits of self-denial
Are the gifts he loves the best;
Not the richest or most costly
Are the offerings most blest!

—Selected.

Selected Serial.

JESSIE WELLS.

BY PANSY.

CHAPTER XIV.—CONTINUED.

TABLEAU.

"O," said Cornie, at last, "isn't that beautiful? Jessie, we must have it, and I'll tell you how we can arrange it. Don't you know the hill next to our garden? Well, it is exactly at the right of the arbor path, and that is literally glowing with flowers, and we can light it all along the hedge with lamps, and strew flowers on the path, and the boys can get brush and stones for the hill, and we can cover that great tree on the top with something white, and then light it up brilliantly. Why, Jessie, we can make it beautiful. There's no trouble in that, except that I don't know how to dress that angel. How in the world do you suppose those wings are made? Wait; it is a tableaux picture, and I have a book of directions somewhere. Here it is," and she drew a large book from the library. "Now, let me see: 'Silver tissue-paper and gold-leaf and'—O, Jessie, I can fix those."

"I'm sure I don't know who'll be Satan," said Jessie, in a troubled tone.

"Well, I do. Brother Tom can rig himself up in the most frightful shapes you ever saw in your life. Trust him for that. I'll show him the picture and set him to work, and if he don't frighten you when he appears, it will be a wonder. And Jessie, I'll tell you who will do splendidly for the young man. Just see what a look he has, as if he were deciding for life, sure enough. You must get Wayland into that. He can throw meaning enough into his face for anything."

"I don't believe he will," said Jessie.

"O, yes, he will. Coax him. He'll do any thing for you."

"Well, then, you must be the angel."

"I! O, Jessie! My hair and eyes are to dark for an angel; besides, it's my party, and I mustn't act in the tableaux. We'll have your little sister Carrie; she has the most angelic face of any one I know."

"Nonsense, Cornie! As if you knew what colored eyes the angels have! You are pale enough, I'm sure. Carrie won't do. It must be some one who is old enough to understand the meaning of the picture to, put on that wonderful look which the angel has. And, as to its being your party, this is my tableaux. I shall take it into my own hands, and you must be my angel."

Jessie had her own way, and wonders were accomplished that day. As soon as it was dark enough for lamps to glow, a merry company assembled that evening in Judge Gordon's grounds, to rehearse the tableaux. The six simple, graceful ones went off remarkably well, considering the time which had been spent in preparation, and then Jessie got into a flutter of anxiety and hurry over

the last and most difficult one, which they had named "The Question of Life."

"My!" Tom had said, when shown his part; "have I got to make myself look like such an imp as that?"

"Yes," said Cornie, anxiously. "Can't you?"

"O, yes, yes. I'm equal to any thing in that line."

And certainly Jessie thought he was, when, this evening, he emerged with Harry Willard from the small arbor, which had been converted into a dressing-room. She nearly forgot herself, and Julia Willard did quite, and greeted him with a shriek.

"I think I will do," said Tom, laughing. "Only, Julia, you mustn't yell like that to-morrow evening, or you'll surely frighten Wayland out of my clutches."

Cornie's birthday party was voted a success. Some way, there was so much good music, so many pictures to be examined and admired, so much speculation and endless questionings concerning the tableaux that were to be, and which was quite a new entertainment in their village, it didn't seem to occur to any body that they must dance, especially as Cornie said not a word about it, and had made no arrangements for that amusement.

At the supper-tables there was considerable amazement, when it was discovered that even the fashionable currant wine was missing, and in its place nothing but coffee, iced lemonade, and ice-water. Some of the fast young men pronounced Cornie's new notions "humbug," but they laughed it off good-naturedly, with her invariably good-natured brother Tom, and some of the young ladies resolved to profit by her example.

Very soon after supper, the merry company were all invited to the south garden; but strictly prohibited from passing behind the crimson curtains, which divided the broad lawn and completely hid the arbor from view. Then such a busting and laughing as there was behind the scenes.

It seemed to Cornie that they would never all be ready. But "Fairland," when the curtains finally parted, was pronounced perfect. It was formed with many gaily-dressed people, mixed in with bushes and trees and brilliant flowers, and surrounded by many bright and curiously arranged lights, while Cornie, hidden behind the arbor, brought forth the faintest and sweetest of fair-like music from the keys of her piano. This was followed by the "Crowning of Queen Elizabeth," in which Jessie looked very regal. "Lalla Rookh," "Joan of Arc," and "She wore a Wreath of Roses" followed in quick succession; and, in their arrangements for these really difficult tableaux, the girls had succeeded wonderfully. The final one, all supposed, was "Moonlight in Eden," and as the soft, almost unearthly strains of music stole through the garden, which was glowing with lights and flowers, it did not require a vivid imagination to think, for a moment, that the parted curtains gave one just a glimpse of Eden glory.

After this, most of the company wandered off to the front garden, where flowers and arbors were profuse and inviting, while the few who were in the secret hastened to prepare their grand tableaux—"The Question of Life."

It was only a few moments after this that Harry Willard stepped suddenly behind the curtains, with:

"Say, Jessie, Mr. Clynne is!"

And here he stopped and stood entranced by the scene which met his eye, until Jessie turned toward him.

"Mr. Clynne is what?"

"Why, he's going home. I told them to wait until I got back. She's not I keep them for this?"

"Why, of course. We are all ready now. Raise the curtain quick, Harry! Don't you see them all rushing into the garden? They see that light on the hill."

And as the curtains parted, the people who were ready to applaud stood still and looked. The walk leading to the further arbor was fairly aglow with flowers, and a hundred lights gleamed and sparkled all along the path. The piano had been wheeled half-way down the walk, behind the hedge, and Julia Willard was playing the gayest of waltzes; but

away down, almost in the darkness, peered out the most hideous of faces; to evil, it would seem, to belong to any human form. The road up the hill had been made of rocks and stones and brush, and only thistles grew on either side. Dismal and desolate enough looked the hilly path beside the other; but on the summit stood, with one hand pointing up and back, a form clothed in white, with half-folded wings, and such a look of longing pity in her eyes, as she looked down upon the young man below, that even Jessie, who had helped her with every preparation, clasped her hands as she gazed, and murmured:

"Surely that can not be Cornie!"

Beyond her was the great tree shrouded in white, and so arranged that it looked like nothing but a great light, growing brighter as it receded. Between the two roads, as near to one as the other, stood Wayland; and on his face there were such a look of perplexity, that it seemed to Jessie he must be deciding for life. It was perfect. The lookers on gazed in silent wonder till the curtain fell, then clamored for just another look, when, after the third time, Harry refused to give them another glimpse. Mr. Clynne, who had come, according to promise, to see the tableaux, stood very near Wayland. His face was very grave; and, as he laid his hand on her brother's arm, Jessie heard him say:

"The Lord help you to choose the thorny road, Wayland. There is glory beyond."

Wayland glanced up, tried to laugh, and ran up the hill, though it was only to assist the angel in descending. Jessie, who had grown so excited and bewildered that, for a moment, she felt as if Cornie were in very truth an angel; and the glow on the hill-top the "very gate of heaven," clasped her hands and burst into tears.

"I didn't think Cornie Gordon had so much in her, as to do what she did to-night," said Wayland, as he and Jessie lingered in the sitting-room to talk over the events of the evening.

"I hope the girls will follow suit," I tell you, Jessie, a good many of the boys in this place have their sisters to thank for it if they become drunkards."

"Didn't Cornie look wonderfully beautiful on the hill to-night?" asked Jessie.

"Yes, she did," answered Wayland, as he went up the stairs.

FACTS.

ONE TO THE ROMANY DELL.—Carrie (to Gypsy): "But you said you would show us our husband's faces in the water for a shilling, and we only see our own." Gypsy: "And won't they be your husband's faces when you get married?"—Punch.

A Galveston school teacher had a great deal of trouble making a boy understand his lesson. Finally, however, he succeeded, and drawing a long breath, remarked to the boy: "If it wasn't for me, you would be the biggest donkey on Galveston Island."

A lad, who was at play with the son of a next door neighbor, asked his companion: "Is not your father a fool?" "Not who said that of my father?" was the reply. "Nobody, as I know of," responded the knowing urchin, "but mother told me the other day that I was next door to a fool, and I don't know whether she meant your father or Nat Smith's."

Once Curran was pleading before Fitzgibbon, the Irish Chancellor, with whom he was on terms of anything but friendship. The chancellor, with the distinct purpose, as it would seem, of insulting the advocate, brought with him on the bench a large Newfoundland dog, to which he devoted a great deal of his attention, while Curran was addressing a very elaborate argument to him. At a very material point in the speech, the judge turned quite away, and seemed to be wholly engrossed with his dog. Curran ceased to speak. "Go on, go on, Mr. Curran," said the chancellor. "Oh! I beg a thousand pardons, my lords," said the witty barrister. "I really was under the impression that your lordships were in consultation."

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Gen. Lee is said to have as a straggler whom he found eating green persimmons, if he did not know they were unfit for food. "I'm not eating them for food, General," replied the man; "I'm eating them to draw up my stomach to fit my rations."

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A remarkable rough diamond has lately been brought into England from India. It is a pure blue-white stone, 67 carats, in form nearly a drop, and when cut and polished would be about the size of the Sancy diamond. The surface is slightly indented, but there are no marks of cleavage. The value of this precious stone is estimated at \$1,750,000.

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The first Protestant Church in Japan was organized about ten years ago. There are now ninety organizations supported by twenty Protestant missionary societies, employing 167 missionaries and assistants from America and 48 from Europe, and more Bibles were distributed last year by the different Bibles Societies than in all previous years taken together.

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