

of Sabbath and the Sins  
Sabbath and the Sins

Little Meg.

BY PHILA H. CASE.

Such a pitiful face—yet so daintily fair,  
With its great brown eyes full of mused tears,  
And the sweet mouth worked with such lines of care.  
A should not have been left by a score of years.  
There are soft bright waves in her bronze brown hair.  
Uncovered, she met in the driving sleet,  
Such a thin old dress, and her wee feet bare,  
So blue and cold, on the frozen street.

Poor lone little one, poor motherless Meg—  
Timidly pleading for something to do;  
Too proud even now in her anguish to beg,  
Somebody must want her, somebody she knew.  
She was a sweet young maid and comely.

How well she can sweep, and dust, and clean!

But nobody lists to her sorrowful call,

And the night comes on with a coat and snow.

A lady sweeps past her with queenly grace,  
In her soft white robe and elegant furs;

And the child looks up at her beautiful face.

And her heart again with a glad hope starts.

Please, lady, take me. I can comb your hair,

And weave it into such wonderful coils—

You rugged wretch!" with a haughty stare.

What a plague are these blatteries bairns!

All the street is glowed with warmth and light,

And hundreds go by with their pride and gold,

But their hearts are with this child, the lost,

And they leave her alone in the pitiless cold.

Most I lay down in the street to die—

Has nobody anything for me to eat?

Lifting her face to the lowering sky,

And calling the mother who loved her true.

God pity the little friendless thing!

Out there in the merciless sleet and snow,

Oh angel, tell her your sweet white wing;

So hungry, and naked, and shivering so—

Poor homeless child, poor motherless Meg!

At last there is beauty and warmth for you,

No need that you longer for work should beg.

For the angels have found you something to do.

—Our Schoolday Visitor.

**THE ORPHANS.**

"Our Father which is in heaven."

The wind was howling fiercely around the old cottage, and sweeping through the broken window with its chilling breath. There was a sad scene within. A woman, pale and wasted by disease, lay on a heap of straw, which formed the only bed; the room contained, while two children—a girl of ten and a boy of eight—sat fondly over her. She had just awaked from sleep, and Rose smiled and asked:

"Do you feel better now, mother?"

"Yes, a little, darling."

"I thought so; I know you would be better if you could only go to sleep."

You must not deceive yourself, Rose; I am not really better. I feel that I am dying. I can not live through another day."

Oh, mother, you must not say that! pleaded the girl in saudied tones. "You must live for our sake. What will become of us when you are gone?"

"God can make her well; he's, sissey!"

"Yes, dear; and I think he will. I have asked him often to do it."

"My dear children, God can make me well; but if He should not, He knows what is best for us, and you must not murmur. That God who has watched over you from infancy will not forsake you when I am gone, and you must put your trust in him. I have commanded you both to the kind care and keeping of "Our Father which is in heaven".

Just then a gust of wind blew out the last feeble, flickering ray of the candle, and left them in darkness.

"Oh, mother! what will we do now?" It is so dark, and we have no other candle."

You had better lie down here by me. Nestle closely, and we will keep each other warm, and sleep till morn."

A few more words of conversation, and their voices grew fainter. The wan child and their mother fell asleep, and in that sleep the mother's spirit passed from earth.

The sun was shining when Rose awoke the next morning. Her brother's eyes were fixed steadfastly on his mother's face.

"Hush," he said, "mother is asleep; it will do her good. Be quiet and do not wake her."

Also also! it was the sleep that knows no waking. Rose felt it as soon as she saw the pale face and motionless body. She had seen death once before, and she could not forget its tokens. She pressed the tips to her forehead. Her icy coldness startled her, and she drew back with a shudder.

"Don't, sissey, don't; you will wake her."

Eddie dear, mother is not asleep. She will wake no more on earth."

"Oh, yes she will, sissey!"

"Touch her, she is so cold."

"But so are we. The room is cold; there is no fire. I wish we had some wood, and that would soon warm her."

"No, no, Eddie; that cannot be. It is too late now."

But she can't be really gone, sissey. She didn't tell us good-by, and kiss us, as father did."

Because God took her in the night when all was dark, and we were asleep.

"And we are all, and so little! What will we do now? Who will care for us now?"

"Not all alone, Eddie. You know we have 'Our Father in heaven' yet; mother told us we must trust in him. Hadn't we better say our morning prayer together now?"

The orphaned children knelled beside their dead mother, and in broken, tremulous accents, repeated the Lord's prayer. He who is the father of the fatherless looked down from his throne of high, and in love and compassion heard their prayer.

Their souls, while they were upon their knees by their mother's side, had fallen upon the ear of a passer-by. They were tokens of distress, and he was one who was ready to lend a helping hand in sorrow. The shutters were open, and he looked through the broken pane, and saw the kneeling children. He heard, too, the childish, broken accents, repeating, "Our Father which is in heaven," and his heart was moved with compassion towards them. While still their prayer was finished, he knocked at the door. Rose looked up affrighted.

"Oh, Eddie, it most be the landlord, and we haven't the rent for him. He will turn us out, and they nestled closer to their mother, as if even yet she could protect them. The stranger heard their whispered words, and did not wait for them to give him admittance. He opened the door and stood before them. They looked at him with fear and then with wonder, for he was a stranger. They had never seen him before. As they looked they felt that they could trust him, there was so much kindness in his face, and his first words were very gentle.

"I heard your sons, my children, and feared that something was wrong. I thought that perhaps I might be able to do something for you." They pointed to their mother. That pale face told the tale.

"When did she die?"

Last night. It was in the dark, and we did

not see her die; and at the thought the tears flowed forth afresh.

"Never mind, now," he said, drawing them toward him. "Tell me all about it, and I will tell what I can do."

"This world alone told the oft-repeated story. All others had been a very happy home when their father was alive; but sudden sickness had laid him low, and in a few days had carried him to the grave. A widowed mother was left alone with two young children. She had striven hard to keep them from want, and had succeeded, till in her turn she was attacked by the disease. She fought against it as long as she might, and had even till the week of her death, comforted her last hours with part of the day. They had for months been growing poorer. One article of furniture after another was sold that they might buy bread. Now all was gone; their mother, too, was dead, and they were left alone, to starve, perchance, "scroop." Rose said, and she thought it would be so, "our Father in heaven will take care of us." The simple words, and simple manners had their effect on the good man's heart.

"Would you like sugar with me?" he asked.

"I will give you some and pleasant home, and you shall have bread enough to eat."

"You will go, won't you, sissey? I am so cold and hungry."

Rose looked up with tears of thankfulness in her eye, and then glanced thoughtfully at the floor.

"Never mind, dear, I will not take you yet. You must stay here till your mother is buried, and then you shall go with me."

He made inquiry in regard to them and found their story true. Their mother was spoken of in the highest terms. At the funeral service the children were taken to be at home and committed to the care of his sister, who kept house for him. The children lived happily there, but never forgot their mother's early teachings. When asked who had provided them with such a home, and given to them so many kind friends, their answer was given in a childlike faith, "our Father which is in heaven." —Golden Hours.

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