

Taken Home.

BY D. CARPENTER.

Ye heavenly harpers wake your sweetest lay;
A child's pure spirit seeks your realms to-day;
A lovely flower is borne away from earth,
A mournful void is left—a darkened hearth.

We loved him well. His gentle life was brief,
Our tears attest the anguish of our grief,
His footsteps echoed in the oft trod hall;
His happy voice was sweeter far than all.

Those echoing footsteps press the golden streets,
That angel voice the praise of him repeats
Who called him to his native home,
His golden harp joins those around the throne.

Relentless Death. Though only seemest unkind,
Thou hast no pay; thy missions well defined,
Thou hast released our darling from earth's thrall
Dashed from his lips life's wormwood and its gall.

—Baptist Weekly.

Keypoint, Nov. 12th, 1884.

Selected Serial.

MARGIE'S MISSION.

BY MARIE OLIVER.

Author of "Ruby Hamilton," "Old and New Friends," "Saba's Discipline," etc., etc.

CHAPTER VI.—Continued.

Uncle Toby looked at her.

"Well, you do beat all for guessing," he said with a smile. "You go ahead of Kizzie. But I forget your eyes are younger and sharper. Yes; it is about Margie, and it is this: I was over to Briartown yesterday to get some meal, and I had the longest conversation with the miller that I've had for some time. You've seen Joseph Rankins, haven't you, Ruth?"

"Once, I rode over with papa to see if we could persuade him to let his children join our Sabbath-school. But what has he to do with Margie, uncle Toby?"

"I don't know, dear. Have you ever seen the miller's family, Ruth?"

"Yes," said Ruth, her curiosity increasing, "and I thought them the worst boys and girls I ever saw. Their mother, poor woman, looked as if she had a hard lot in life. Papa tried to get her interested in our Sabbath-school; but though she promised to use her influence with the miller, we never saw the children there. Isn't Briartown a queer place, uncle Toby? I am sure it is well named, for everybody in it is as sharp as thorns. One hardly ever gets a civil answer. I don't see why they don't try to improve the place a little. There must certainly be a few well-to-do people among them. It would be a pretty little village if it was better cared for. I noticed the site the miller's house occupies, commands a fine site of Maplewood. What a pity, that with our example of thrift constantly before him, he cannot be induced to try and improve Briartown."

"The corner-stone isn't laid yet," said uncle Toby thoughtfully.

"Why, are they going to build a church?" asked Ruth in surprise.

"No; I mean the corner-stone of good works," said uncle Toby. "When that is laid, the redemption of Briartown has begun."

"Very true," said Ruth. "But what has Briartown to do with Margie?"

"Just this," Uncle Toby had made up his mind to confine himself to plain facts. "How do you think Margie would get on at the miller's?"

"Get on at the miller's?" repeated Ruth. "Do you mean to live there? What a funny question. Why, uncle Toby, she would die. Only think of the difference between Margie and the miller's children. Ah, uncle Toby, I am afraid you are keeping something from me. That you have a purpose in asking me these questions. Please don't hide it from me. Have you grown tired of Margie? Has she become a burden to you?"

Hot tears began to roll down Ruth's cheeks. Her lips trembled. At that moment Margie put her curly head inside the door to see what the privacy was about, but she sent her away. She could not bear the sight of her dear face just then.

Uncle Toby hastened to quiet her tears.

"No, no," he said; "Margie is no burden, Ruth. But I know the child is anxious to do good in the world, and somehow I fancied I had found just the right kind of work for her. I understand Joseph Rankins, the miller, root and branch. You can't tell me anything about him. I've bought grain of him for thirty years, and I must say he is the stingiest, most cross-grained man I ever met. He's shiftless, too, in all but making money. He can do that to perfection, and keep it after he has made it. But his children are smart. His boy Van is the smartest little fellow I've seen for many a day. He's ambitious, too; but for want of proper clothing, is unable to go to school; so he runs wild, and the others follow his example. Yesterday, the miller and I got to talking about his boys and girls. He complained he couldn't get anything out of them but mischief and play; and finally asked me if I knew of a handy little girl who would be willing to come and help his wife through harvesting time. He would have no objection to her attending school, as most of the work would come night and morning. I thought of Margie, Ruth, not because I am anxious to send her away, but because the idea struck me, that through her instrumentality, a vast amount of good might be accomplished in Briartown. Margie is a Christian child. The miller's children would be greatly benefitted by her example. Besides, there is little Van, eager for knowledge. Think how much she might help him, and perhaps be the means of bringing Briartown to a sense of its wretchedness. I spoke of her to the miller. He appeared interested, and anxious to try her, promising to do well by her if she came; but I told him I could give him no encouragement till I had talked with you. Now, Ruth, dear child, don't tremble so. It shall be as you say. I am only speaking of what might happen. Briartown is full of stones and stubble, and Margie's little fingers might possibly clear the way for some one stronger and better able to carry on the work. If so, would we not be doing wrong in holding her back? Maybe this is the very mission she has been longing for. The Lord loves to have little ones work in his vineyard, and he often calls them where the weeds are thickest. I have been thinking of it all day. It is something boneset tea can't cure."

"No," said Ruth. "It will take something stronger than boneset. Then she burst into tears. 'O, uncle Toby!' she cried, 'Joseph Rankins is a wicked ungodly man. Can I ever let Margie go to live with him? Is it necessary?'"

"No, no, dear child! Certainly not. But when I stumble over stones and stubble, and think of the good wheat which might spring up if the ground was carefully prepared, I can't help longing to see the seed sown. However, we won't say anything more about it to-night, Ruth. We'll leave it till the morning, and then talk it over with Kizzie and Margie. There, I hear Brown Bess calling for her supper. Well, I suppose it is time she had it. Ah! Margie has run off with my milk-pails as usual, the little rogue. Come, Mildred, it is your turn to feed old Speckle to-night."

He went slowly out to the little barnyard, stopping on the way to fill the dish he carried with corn from the covered barrel standing inside the porch.

Margie, bareheaded and bareheaded, ran on before him, a huge milk-pail in either hand, and her hair falling over her shoulders.

Ruth looked after her, a nameless pain creeping into her heart. Could she ever consent to have that dainty darling the daily companion of Joseph Rankins' rude children? No, never! Margie's mission lay among wheat and lilies, not among stones and stubble.

Ruth was a long time falling asleep that night. She got up more than once to make sure Margie was really in her trundle bed, and that uncle Toby had not been up and spirited her away to the miller's while she slept. The sight of the rosy face pressed close to the coarse, white

pillow, comforted her a little, but still she could not help feeling uneasy and afraid.

Towards morning she fell into a troubled slumber, when fancy took flight and led her up to a closely barred gate in front of a beautiful city. An angel clad in the whitest of raiment passed to and fro before it, while along the dusty highway trooped a band of little children, each carrying a tiny roll of parchment.

Ruth could hear their happy laughter and merry music as they pressed forward to the shining gate, and the voice of the angel as he greeted them and took their rolls from them. Among the last to come, Ruth saw the bright face and laughing eyes of her sister Margie. She tripped along like a gay happy sunbeam, her bit of parchment held tightly in her fat hand, and her whole countenance expressing her eagerness to reach the gate. The white-robed angel smiled at her brightest smile as she approached, but it faded as he opened the roll she carried, and glanced over its spotless page. Anxious to learn what had caused that look of pain, Ruth ventured near enough to read the written lines. Imagine her surprise on seeing in plain characters, these words: "WHEAT AND LILIES."

Drawing back, she waited in fear and trembling, the pain in her heart growing deeper as a cloud stole over Margie's bright face. The angel closed the gate against her, and taking her by the hand, led her to the top of a hill overlooking a wide-spreading valley. Not a blade of grass, flower or vine was in sight. Rocks and stones lay everywhere. Margie's blue eyes fell before the angel's. Then taking the parchment and blotting out the delicately written words: "WHEAT AND LILIES," he penned in firm, black characters: "STONES AND STUBBLE." With a bleeding heart Ruth watched her little sister go down the hill, past the shining gate into the black waste beyond, to commence the work the Lord had appointed her. But the brightness of her face away the fearful watcher; and lo! wherever the little fingers lifted a stone, a blade of grass sprang up, till the whole valley lay ripe and ready for the harvest.

A faint glimmer of light falling across Ruth's face awoke her, and she sprang up to find it morning, and Mildred already dressed. But the recollection of her singular dream haunted her wherever she went, and as soon as she could, she beckoned uncle Toby aside.

"Uncle Toby," she said, tears streaming down her cheeks, "I want to tell you something. If Margie wants to go to the miller's, I will be the last to stand in her way. If her mission is to clear Briartown of stones and stubble, I can wish her God speed from the bottom of my heart."

SPECIAL NOTICE.—We learn that the managers of the new paper cannot continue this serial. Any readers who would like the book can procure it of Weeks & Powers, St. John. Price, post paid 30 cents.

How to be Saved.

Some years ago, a lady was traveling with her husband to Kansas. As she was crossing Illinois, she saw in the saloon of the car a beautiful young lady reclining on the sofa, and asked her, "Why don't you come out and enjoy the scenery?"

The conversation that followed revealed the fact that the young lady's father was the agent of the railroad, and she was ill, and in a despondent state of mind. The lady endeavored to direct her attention to Christ and great salvation.

"I am very ignorant," she replied, "I never thought much on the subject, or had any friend to help me."

The tears began to flow. The lady closed the door of the saloon and sat down by her side, and like Philip, "preached Jesus" to her. Then she opened her heart freely: "I have been a gay and fashionable girl," she said, "fond of the ball room and other giddy pleasures. A few months ago, I attended a ball, with an intimate friend, and walking home with our thin shoes in the pouring rain, we both took cold. That friend is in the

grave, and I know I am not prepared to die. I have had no meeting to go to; no Christian friend to consult. I have read in the Bible that I must be converted and I am still in darkness; can you tell me?"

"It is to come right to Jesus, with a humble contrite heart, and cast yourself on him. He invites you, and is willing and waiting to receive you. Are you willing to give yourself up to him, and be his forever?"

"Oh, yes! willing and anxious. The world has nothing to satisfy my immortal spirit. All my desire is to have Christ for my Saviour."

"Are you willing to commit yourself to him without reserve, and when you go home to tell your parents and friends that you have given yourself to him?"

"Still weeping. 'Yes, I will. Blessed Jesus, take me as I am!'"

As she said this her face beamed with joy. She stretched forth her arms and clasped her unknown friend in one long, fervent embrace. "Oh! how grateful I am for your kind words. God has sent you to me. No person ever said a word to me on the subject of religion before in my life. I can, I do trust in Jesus as my Saviour. How can I ever thank you enough? The darkness is dispelled. I am happy now."

As we were nearing the station where her father would meet her, she handed her card and said, "We may never meet again. God bless you." That card and name are sacred treasures yet, and that conversation remembered, as among the most precious of a lifetime. How many such golden opportunities are lost! Oh! let us be faithful.—*American Messenger.*

Christian Ministration.

The mosses and the lichens are the first mercy of the earth, veiling with hushed softness its dintless rocks; creatures full of pity, covering with strange and tender honor the scarred disgrace of ruin; laying quiet finger on the trembling stones to teach them rest. They will not be gathered like the flowers for chaplet or love-token, but of these the wild bird will make its nest, and the weary child his pillow. And, as they are the earth's first mercy, so they are its last gift to us. When all other service is vain, from plant and tree, the soft mosses and gray lichen take up their watch by the headstone. The woods, the blossoms, the gift-heaving grasses have done their part for a time, but these do service forever. Trees for the builder's yard; flowers for the brides chamber; corn for the granary; moss for the grave. Thus it is with many Christians not possessed of brilliant talents; they, by lowly service and sympathy gently expressed in the hour of another's sorrow, are doing a work with which God is well pleased. The world would be barren and drear without them.—*Sel.*

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"In compounding a medicine whose virtues are so palpable to every one's observation."

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"The doctors doing her no good."

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"Indeed! Indeed!"

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