

TOWARD THE GLORY GATE



JULIA
MAC NAIR
WRIGHT



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TOWARD THE GLORY GATE

A Story of Soul Growth

BY

JULIA MACNAIR WRIGHT

AUTHOR OF "ALMOST A NUN," "A NEW SAMARITAN," "OATH-KEEPER
OF FORANO," ETC., ETC.

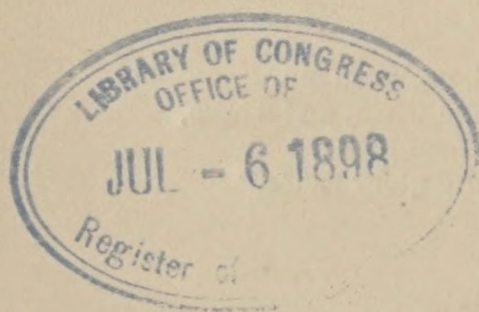
"Use me, O Lord, use even me,
Just as thou wilt, and when, and where,
Until thy blessed face I see,
Thy rest, thy joy, thy glory share."



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TOWARD THE GLORY GATE.

CHAPTER I.

A COMMONPLACE GIRL.

“O’erjoyed that they
An Eldorado in the grass have found,
Which not the rich earth’s ample round
Can match in wealth.”

EIGHT ladies were gathered on the Eastern verandah of Mount Merion Cottage. Before them lay the summer fields, the green slopes of the hills, the bird-filled groves, the broad valley, the gilded river sweeping toward the sunset; beyond—the mountain ranges lifting, lifting to the line where snows lay late. The earth seemed filled with beauty, as a cup is filled to the brim. The eight were resting, enjoying, or, in a leisurely way, working. Near the verandah, between two maples, swung a hammock. Ann Bradford lay in the hammock; she was supposed to be asleep: the eight therefore made no account of her. A quiet, rather shy girl, Ann had gone to Mount Merion Cottage for rest: she was tired out after graduating, and there had been some hint of nervous prostration.

"I am so dull," Ann had said one morning to Dr. Helen Train, "I feel like sleeping all the time."

"Sleep then all the time," said Dr. Helen. "Nature is offering you her sweetest remedy: also this is her gentlest revenge, taken for the years when you have not slept half enough. The account will be squared after a while, then you will wake up." Therefore, Ann was generally supposed to be sleeping. She was awake now, lying quietly, her shade-hat pulled down over her face; from under the rim she could see all the group on the verandah, and she passed them in mental review. There was nothing of envy or acrimony in her reviewing: Ann had a genuine admiration for all that was admirable.

Grace Dare sat with her block of Whatman's paper on her lap; she was sketching in bits of landscapes, heads, trailing vines, branches, draperies. These would all work in as background, foregrounds, what not, in future illustrations, for Grace Dare was already of some note among illustrators, making for herself an ample livelihood among the sweet surprises of art.

"Bright, cheerful, popular, lovely as her own pictures," said Ann to herself, "Grace Dare must find it worth while living. And there is Dr. Helen Train, what a grand life hers is! Thirty, and already distinguished in her profession: full of enthusiasm, each day marked by some good done. What a blessing she is among the poor: how many mothers she has saved from wreck: how many little children on the verge of growing up crooked, half blind,

chronically afflicted, she has set on the road to vigorous health. She meets the suffering as Christ did ; she fears no contagion ; need is to her sufficient prayer. She can say, as did the apostles, ' Silver and gold have I none ; but such as I have give I thee.' For her, surely, life is at the Beautiful gate of the temple. And there, by Dr. Train, is Dorothy Camp. They say she is twenty-six, and has been out of college three years. Her magazine articles are already talked of. Her short stories are full of genius ; people are expecting great things of her and no doubt she expects great things of herself. That must be fine, to face your future, feeling sure that some day you will wake up to find that you have made yourself famous. Expecting great things of yourself ! That would be to live as if one wound along some pleasant upward way, knowing that some turn,—which, or how soon, you could not exactly tell, but surely at some one,—would open upon you the landscape of splendid beauty, crowning the climb up with all you had striven so far to see ! There, on that canvas reclining-chair, resting that she may work, is Sara Fordyce. She graduated this year, leading the University, had at once a Professorship of Literature offered her, and is called already a well-reputed scholar. When one has such brains as hers how well it pays to study ! ”

Next to Miss Fordyce was a low rocker in which swung gently to and fro the eldest of the group, a woman past middle life. A calm, strong face, hair untouched with gray along its chestnut folds, eyes

bent in tranquil satisfaction upon a beautiful child which slept, his shower of golden curls falling back over her arm. As she softly rocked the dimpled sleeper, it seemed from her satisfied smile, that a busy and fruitful life had found its beautiful culmination in this little grandson. Said the watching Ann, "Is it better to have attained, or to feel sure that we shall attain? Mrs. Baron has made fortune and reputation. Wherever she goes her name is an open sesame to hearts. In any gathering, if she should take the trouble to think about it, which I feel sure she does not, she would find herself one of the most distinguished."

Ann's half-closed eyes smiled as they fell on the youngest of the group, a girl sitting on the steps, and swinging her hat by its ribbons—"Pretty Clotilde Arblay—wherever she goes she is known as the beauty! Not the highest style of renown, or badge of distinction, yet it seems that it must be delightful to know that you are always good to look at, always followed with admiration, always as daintily charming as a new-blown rose. And there is Mrs. Baron, Junior, making a blouse for her sleeping golden-hair. She is one of the women who always know exactly what to do, to say, to be, to wear. Always absolutely *au fait*, always gracious, always perfectly dressed, in the most artistic sense, one born to be a social queen, and make life move pleasantly wherever she goes."

A book fell and drew Ann's attention toward the last of the eight ladies she was privately comment-

ing upon, Mrs. Baron's daughter,—Mrs. Waldeck. Said Ann—"There is another who, at thirty-one, has attained more than such an one as I can hope to reach in a long life. People say Mrs. Waldeck has one of the most brilliant minds of the day, and that few women of the country are so splendidly educated as she. She is an authority on many points in social economy and philanthropy, a leader in many great movements. One must fancy she was born great, for it hardly seems possible that so few years could have harvested so much. Born great, achieve greatness, have greatness thrust upon them: for me, I am out of the whole category—was there ever any one so hopelessly commonplace as I?" Ann gave a little smothered sigh and proceeded to pass herself in review.

"No one ever wanted an education more than I did: how indefatigably I have pegged away at it! Learning don't come easy to me. I don't absorb knowledge, I work for it. By dint of years of tireless work, I have graduated, neither booby nor prize man: neither head nor foot, just along in the middle of my class, a fair, average, commonplace, deadly commonplace! Study was not all I did in those years. What making and remaking of gowns, trimming of hats, cleaning of gloves, washing and mending of lace, have I had to do, to keep myself neatly and properly dressed on my small means. I succeeded in being always neat, if never fine; not observable for shabbiness nor for elegance, just so garbed that I was not noticed; commonplace, terri-

bly commonplace ! As for looks, no one ever turned to look after me because I was either strikingly hideous, or handsome; just a plain girl, with a face healthy and fairly intelligent, and sympathetic ; neither dazzling nor repelling, merely unnoticeably commonplace ! It is the same with me in social position ; neither from the depths nor the heights. I have had grandfathers, but they did not head the roll of fame ; they were just as I am, average, commonplace. In friendships, like record : all think me well enough : no quarrels, no enemies, no long list of followers, no enthusiastic admirers and quoters, just commonplace. There's my record : my outlook is of the same sort. I could enter the crowded ranks of teachers, and be a steady, hard-working, unenthusiastic, commonplace instructor. I could marry, and be a quiet every-day, ordinary house-mistress ; though *why* I should marry just to keep a moderate house in moderate fashion, I cannot see. I never met a man that I cared for a whit above a cool friendship : I never met one who cared in warmer fashion for me.

“ Missions open a wide field for some women, and it seems strange that, as I have informed myself well about missions, and am unincumbered I have felt no stronger drawings to such splendid work. Dealing honestly with myself, I cannot say I ever had any divine call to that work ; rather I feel as if across that path must stand some angel with an impalpable but impassable sword, as before Baalam. I have no eloquence for the bar : no nerve for medicine or

nursing, no enterprise for business! What *am* I to do? I feel sinking in this commonplace, of myself and my environment, as Christian in the Slough of Despond. I must do something; conscience will not allow me to idle. What shall I do? No one loves the grand, noble, beautiful, æsthetic, heroic, sublime more than I do, and no one knows more exhaustively her incapacity to attain to any one of them. No one realizes more fully than I do her own dull level of the commonplace. 'Help me, Cassius, or I sink!'—in the commonplace!"

Suddenly Dorothy Camp spoke. "Dr. Train, did you know that Kate Shaw had given up her place at the Sanitarium? How many good positions she has had, and not held one over six months! I cannot understand it."

"Kate," said Dr. Helen Train, "is an instance of an intense desire and dogged pursuit of something for which one is entirely unfit. Great ambition and industry are not always tokens of capacity, or earnestness of success. Kate was determined upon a professional life, without any native fitness for such life. She resolved to be educated abroad, to get the best start possible. She spent nine years of hard labor, on a five-years' course. At last she reached her degree, and came home. The degree, and report of nine years' study, secured her, one after another, valuable positions, which she proved entirely incompetent to fill. Slowly as she had acquired knowledge, she was yet more slow in applying or distributing it. It is a pity when people do not know, to

begin with, their own limitations. It is worth something to know what we cannot do."

"Oho," cried Dorothy Camp, "we often want so much, indeed most of all, to do what we cannot do. What would I not give to be able to make such pictures as Grace makes."

"Let me see your block, Grace. That is exquisite."

"I," said Grace, handing over the block of paper, "do so often long to be able to express myself as *you* do; ah, if I could but write one of your stories! I think of lovely things, and cannot tell them."

"Except with pencil and brush," said Mrs. Baron, Junior.

"How many girls," said Mrs. Waldeck, "have I seen pounding away at music, year after year, in indefatigable efforts to become good performers, and yet they cannot learn to give any musical expression. How many girls spend from two to six years in an art school, when they have really no artistic instincts; form and color elude them."

"Browning notices that trait—as he does most others," said Sara Fordyce. "He says in one of his poems—

'Does he paint? He fain would write a poem.

Does he write? He fain would paint a picture.'"

"It is very common," observed Mrs. Baron, "to set our desires on doing what we cannot do; undervaluing the gift we have, and craving the gift of some other. One of the finest teachers I ever knew told me he had been consumed with a life-

long yearning for the power of oratory. He felt that if he could but once by eloquence sway and bend an audience to his will, he could die content. Yet in the successes of his pupils, and their continued influence, he gained an audience greater than any one voice could reach. One of the best pastors and noblest sermonizers I ever met longed to be a poet. He wrote little verses which he fondly called poems. These were printed in newspapers and copied, because the man himself was loved for his goodness, and admired for his greatness as preacher and pastor. With the most innocent satisfaction he would dwell on these verses, fondly as a mother gazes on her child, fondly as I do on this little golden-haired sleeper! If this man could have been called a poet, he would have believed himself really great, yet none of the earth's poets have builded for eternity as he. It is well indeed if God marks out a plain path for our feet, and makes our gifts and calling so clear that he who runs may read. Then, single-minded, we can go our way, not grasping after the crowns of others."

"I think we *are* so shown our way," said Mrs. Waldeck. "The trouble is that we are not applying attention to the indications, or do not want to see what is plain enough. We want to see something else. Like Naaman we are expecting some miraculous manifestations for our calling, but God does not throw away miracles, nor cater to spiritual pride."

There was a little silence. A carriage rolled by the gate.

"There goes Mrs. Nelson!" said Clotilde, as a handkerchief waved. "Always cheerful," "Always busy and useful," "Such a friend," these were some of the encomiums passed on Mrs. Nelson.

"I want Mrs. Nelson to be to you all a high lesson," said Mrs. Baron, looking at her younger friends. "She is a shining example of a person lifted out of the entirely commonplace by the power of religion. By nature Mrs. Nelson is intensely commonplace, narrow in views, limited in her ideals, inclined to that most commonplace of all things—gossip. A thoroughly Christian upbringing, a true personal work of grace, have developed in Mrs. Nelson a strong deep type of piety. Her horizon is enlarged, her views and opinions sweetened, her ideals elevated. Religion has made of her a faithful friend, a useful member of the community, a most tender and judicious mother, an unusually good and helpful wife, a vigorous church-worker, in fact, a pattern woman."

"And you lay all that to religion?" demanded Clotilde.

"Most emphatically I do. There is nothing which so lifts one out of the commonplace as earnest piety, as a truly active, energizing, religious life."

"Why-y-y, I cannot understand that," said Clotilde. "It seems to me that religion itself is very common; almost every one that I know is religious!"

"There is a vast difference," said Mrs. Waldeck,

“between true religion and mere formal religiousness. If every one were truly religious, we should speedily be enjoying the millennium.”

“Carlyle remarked,” said Sara Fordyce, “that in the British Islands were a certain number of millions of people, mostly fools. He also suggested that the British Isles were a fair sample of the world in general. One might, with much more of truth say, that in Christian lands, in this late age of the Christian Era, are a great many people addicted to religiousness and much fewer people truly religious. Also one might say, with no fear of contradiction, that the population of the world is a certain number of billions of people, most of them commonplace. Now if real religion, that scarce article, is a cure for the commonplace, there is plenty of material for it to work upon, and a wonderful change to effect.”

“The fact is,” said Dr. Train, “that a high style of piety is so very unusual that no one possessing it can be commonplace.”

“Isn’t it easily attained?” asked Clotilde, “I thought it came from heaven, as a free gift, something just put into us.”

“Something, rather,” suggested Dorothy Camp, “to be earnestly desired, the desire being heaven-descended ; something to be sought for, striven after also ; ‘so agonize that ye may obtain.’”

“Put it easier,” said Mrs. Baron. “Ask and ye shall receive. He giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not. See if I will not pour you out a blessing, till there be not room to receive it.”

"But how is it that religion cures one of being commonplace?" insisted Clotilde, in her artless way. "I want to hear. Do you know that I am afraid that as soon as a few thief-years have stolen away my inherited good looks, I shall be dismally commonplace; for I have no wit, wisdom, energy, experiences—nothing but good looks, fleeting looks."

There was a general laugh at this, and Mrs. Baron, Junior, said, "Clotilde, you are not commonplace, you are that uncommon instance, a beauty without vanity."

"My child," said Mrs. Baron, "why should not true religion lift us out of the commonplace? The follower after real piety has for exemplar and companion the Christ of Nazareth, the one uplifting, spotless, magnificent, monumental character known to the ages, the pattern human, and the vivifying upholding God. We are known by the company we keep, and we grow like those with whom we associate. In Christ's divine society we cannot fail to be changed from glory unto glory, toward the image of God. True religion severs us from self, sets us into service, it has the nobleness of self-sacrifice, the beauty of altruism. The rule of the Christian being is Christlike becoming. The law of religion is in that book of which there are more copies than of all other books put together, yet which is never commonplace, unless you can call commonplace the very quintessence of the beautiful, the simple, the venerable, the immortal, the strong. With such a Friend and Master, and such a chart and rule, is

there not imposed upon us a loftiness and helpfulness of living, which has in it nothing of the commonplace? 'We are lifted out of life's sloughs, and set upon a rock.' "

Ann Bradford, supposed to be asleep, had heard.

"Do you mean," asked Grace Dare, "that without religion, all people must be commonplace?"

"Certainly not," said Mrs. Waldeck, "all history contradicts that."

"There are many who seem born to greatness, to heroism," said Madame Baron. "We all meet people whom nothing could make commonplace. There is Mrs. Ware; see what a life of courage and good deeds hers has been. Left young and destitute, with five little sons, she has fought her way up for them and for herself; five distinguished men surround her age, and revere the mother to whom they owe so much. To look at her, to hear her, is to feel that no softness of environment, no enticements of pleasure and indolence, could have betrayed the nobility of that nature. Without a shade or line of beauty, she stands grand, strong, sympathetic and attractive: and knowing her, we instinctively strive toward higher levels. Religion has intensified all in her nature that was fine and lofty. It is the key-note of her character, yet even without religion, she could never have been commonplace."

Presently there was a general movement upon the verandah, and the group scattered. Ann Bradford sat up, shook out her dress, put her hat in its proper place on her head.

"Sleepy still?" queried Dr. Helen, looking toward her with a smile.

"No. I am awake. At last *fully* awake."

"Come up here and sit down by me," said Mrs. Baron, pulling forward the chair which Mrs. Waldeck had vacated, and handing her waking grandson to his mother. "We have scarcely had any opportunity to become acquainted with you. You came here so tired, you have done well to rest."

"It was not weariness merely," said Ann Bradford, dropping into the offered chair, "but, you are all so brilliant, so distinguished—people who have found something to do in the world, and are able to do it; you all look so great to me, for I am so emphatically commonplace, that I have feared to intrude."

"We were speaking of the commonplace just now."

"I heard you. I was not really asleep, and your conversation made me fully awake. It also gave me some encouragement. I felt that I also had what the French call a *raison d'être*, because, though I cannot be distinguished, I can be good. Saying that, I am *not* bidding for you to quote 'Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever.'"

"I see," said Mrs. Baron, "that you can be pleasant company."

"And," said Ann, "as I never met a young girl who could not be agreeable company, if she tried, that also is a very commonplace characteristic."

"It is true," said Mrs. Baron, with a tiny sigh, "youth in its ingenuousness, impulsiveness, trust, vigor, hope, is always attractive."

Ann caught the little sigh with her heart rather than with her ears. She said, "Yes, that is to youth's score, but after all, is it not better to have attained, to have reached the wisdom of many experiences, to be full of counsel and helpfulness, to know the end, and no longer have anything left to fear—to dwell in Beulah Land?"

"With the Glory Gate rising in full view?" said Mrs. Baron, and looking carefully at Ann, added, "Not all, indeed very few of the young, could feel that: not all, indeed very few, could so quickly catch that half-breathed sigh, which a woman gives to her buried youth. Already you must have had more experiences than most girls."

"I have lost both my parents," said Ann; "as far as kin are concerned I am almost alone in the world. I have had myself in charge since I was sixteen. I have been forced regularly to make two dollars do the proper work of four. I am now just past twenty-three. Naturally I have seen somewhat of the graver, more thoughtful, side of life. I think that I have all my life been waiting for a message; perhaps you have brought it to me to-day—that in religion heartily lived, I can find the real worth of living, and be lifted out of the dreariness of commonplaceness. If you had only added to your message, a word of what I ought to do with myself; what direction should my life take?"

"Evidently you have been put in training for something," said Mrs. Baron, "and when the hour strikes then the something will be clearly revealed, if your attitude is that of being truly willing to know. All, I can add to my message to you is— *It is good to be led.* Wait. God never leaves his own standing idle on the ways of life,—just at the right minute you will hear a voice, saying, 'This is the way; walk ye in it,' and you will feel the clasping of a hand."

Ann walked beside Mrs. Baron upstairs, and turned to her own room. She sat down by her window. Of late her life had seemed to have the unvaried dreariness of the desert. Now it had blossomed with possibilities. She had been dwelling, as she admitted, on the gray side of life, now a new thought infused life with splendor, as the westward sky was shot through and through with glory by the sun. She had received no inspirations of romance or beauty, no afflatus of genius, but she had accepted the thought that her strong, sound body, and resolute, mediocre mind, could be used by the religion of the gospel as tools for useful and needed work. In soul-growth, she could reach a richness and fullness of being, otherwise unattainable. For seven years Ann had been a member of the church, and had been considered exemplary, but her religion, in point of fact, instead of being the ruling principle, hourly director, and constant measure of her life, had been relegated to Sabbath days and reserved for the hour and article of death, which always seems so far off from us all.

"Instead," said Ann to herself, "it seems that it must be an affair of every-day living: *that* gives one more breathing-room at once."

She felt as if she had something in common with all these people from whom she had shrunk, and allowed herself to be drawn toward them. They met her bounteously.

"Come walk up to the crest of the hill with me," said Dorothy Camp, that evening. "How I revel in this scenery! It so surpasses what I have some summers; for there are holidays which I spend with my aunts in Dillburg."

"Have you relatives in Dillburg? I have a great aunt there, Mrs. Jane Fontaine—"

"Is she your aunt? She lives just opposite my aunts!"

"I visited her one summer, when I was sixteen. My parents had been killed in a railroad disaster, and I went to Aunt Jane until my affairs were settled, and it was decided where I was to go to college," said Ann.

"I hope if I go there again, you will be there," cried Dorothy.

"Thank you. It seems little likely. Aunt Fontaine has two other nieces living with her. She came to see me graduate, and spent three days with me at my boarding house—nearly three,—there was half a day she was out by herself, I do not know for what. She thought I needed rest, and asked me what I meant to do. I told her about coming here—and she thought it a good plan. She did not sug-

gest that going to Dillburg would be a better plan," and Ann looked half grieved and pained at the thought of her aunt's silence.

"Well for you that she did not!" cried Dorothy. "Dillburg is the most unattractive little place."

"It seemed so to me, dull, unambitious, bereaved of beauty, as if neglected acres forgotten of God and men."

"I should say so! Pigs roam the streets at will. Cows grazing on the waysides mingle the sound of their bells with the wheezing discords of cheap parlor organs and ancient melodeons. The church has lost all its paint, there is not a full block of good sidewalk; only one store has plate glass windows! The houses are all a worn, sad-colored paint; no one keeps a handsome yard or lawn; every one feels it due to thriftiness to feed a horse, colt, or calf in the front yard. There is no library, no reading-room, no hall for public entertainment: lectures and concerts pass Dillburg by on the other side of the way. The place lags seventy years behind the time!

CHAPTER II.

“THIS IS THE WAY.”

“’Tis Revelation satisfies all doubts,
Explains all mysteries except her own,
And so illuminates the path of life
That fools discover it, and stray no more.”

Now that Ann Bradford allowed herself to meet readily the advances made to her by the other ladies at Mount Merion Cottage, she found them very delightful company. “I had no idea,” she said, frankly, to Mrs. Baron, Junior, “that you would be so friendly to me.”

“That was because you did not permit us to be, was it not? I think that most people who are left alone—and feel lonely, and maybe slighted, may themselves be partly to blame because they are too shy or sensitive, and withdraw themselves. I have found it so in churches. I am one of the Deacon’s Aid and Visiting Committee in our church, and it is part of my duty to welcome strangers and to try to make them feel at home. I find some of them very hard to get at. They will not speak nor allow themselves to be spoken to if they can help it, merely because they are reticent, nervous folk. Once we

succeed in making friends with them, they are very nice and often among our best helpers."

"Probably all that is true," said Ann. "There are many folks who wish to have friends, but don't know how to go about making them. They carry their shells about with them, like snails and turtles: they are the world's slow people. Maybe you do not know how to sympathize with them nor how uncomfortable they feel, for I think you were born one of the queens of society in your easy, kindly, gracious nature. Now you know queens have to make advances: their station demands it, even to making their offers of marriage!"

Mrs. Baron laughed. "Well, I did not have to do *that*. But frankly, let me urge upon you to conquer this disposition to withdraw yourself, because it will hinder your usefulness. I think it has its spring in an undervaluing of yourself, and it is dangerous to think too little or too highly of ourselves. Be at ease with yourself, and you will be at ease with everybody."

"I am sure that is so, but I feel so dreadfully commonplace."

"Suppose you do!" cried Clotilde, "what harm is in that? What is more commonplace than grass, the world over, but where would the world be without grass, I'd like to know? So is bread commonplace, and milk, and a hundred other good things are commonplace, and the whole fabric of society rests upon them. Glory in the commonplace well used."

"Bravo, Clotilde!" cried Mrs. Baron.

"To tell you the truth," said Clotilde, "I am quoting from an article Dorothy Camp is writing. I never made that!"

Ann Bradford looked contentedly from one to another; this was very pleasant company—all of these women had thoughts, and discussed high themes. She said—

"If you all keep on you will make something of me."

"Of course we will," said Sara Fordyce, "you are the kind of girl that must do something in the world because you have been put through a good training for usefulness. We cannot allow you to idle; your playtime is nearly over. We are all of the world's workers, and you must be, too."

"By all means," said Ann. "I am restless, until I find my proper work. I wish you could point it out to me!"

"Why does not some one point out work for *me*?" asked Clotilde.

"Bless me, child, you are busy enough; you have your golden locks to wash in soda, your pretty hands to manicure, your skin and teeth to keep at the highest polish, your shoulders to keep straight, your attitudes to keep graceful," said Dr. Helen Train smiling, and speaking with indulgence. They all loved this lovable creature.

"Don't undervalue me that way," said Clotilde. "I may bloom right out into something fine, heroic, some day."

"I have no field in myself for the occupation you suggest for Clotilde," said Ann, "but I wish your larger experiences could direct me to some work, that I could and should do—I want as large work, as much work, as I can administer, not, I hope, for the mere sake of trying to be great myself, but because it is duty and blessedness, and obedience to my Lord not to be idle."

"We can suggest work—but I think, after all, your direction, your compelling call will come from the Lord himself," said Mrs. Baron.

"How about philanthropy? Get a place as city missionary, or general helper of the poor, under one of the city churches," said Dr. Train.

"I see in you a common-sense that would be largely useful there."

"But too little experience," said Ann, "older women are needed."

"Get a Secretaryship in the Young Women's Christian Association."

"Or a sub-editorship for Christian Endeavor."

"Or charge of a Home."

"Don't you feel the calm impertinence of the reporter budding in you, as the new horns sprout in spring on a young deer?"

Thus suggestions rained on Ann from the merry group.

"All this is easy to you, you have all been called to your life-work," said Ann.

"I suppose you couldn't be a fashion designer?" said Grace Dare.

"A librarian's place will be the very thing," cried Clotilde.

The days passed: Ann was happy, vigor had fully returned. Now the remainder of the vacation seemed short before her, and after vacation—work, but what work? The answer came. The mail had been distributed at Mount Merion Cottage, and Ann, who seldom received letters, had one stamped Dillburg. She sat down in her hammock to read it. There, after a little, Dorothy saw her, the letter open in her hand, her head hidden in the hammock cushions, and crying bitterly. Dorothy waited for a little, and then went to her, "What is it, dear?" she said gently touching her shoulder. "Are not our friends to help us bear troubles, and bring us comfort? Is this anything you can tell me?"

"My aunt, Jane Fontaine, is dead," sobbed Ann. "There! you can read the letter! You can see what a noble, grand, brave woman she was, and how little I understood her, how I undervalued her, how I supposed she did not care for me, because she did not gush. You can see what a cold, hard, wicked idiot I have been!"

"When we have been wrong," said Dorothy, "we can at least gather this good out of evil, that our mistakes shall be our lesson in the time to come. Good is the Egyptian commandment—'Thou shalt not consume thy heart.' Idle or vain regrets were, by ancient Egypt, reckoned among the forty-two deadly sins. I am sure it was only a mistake, a lack of knowledge, that led you to misunderstand

your aunt, if you did. Besides, I am sure you gave her respect and affection. You told me you wrote to her regularly every week."

"I did, but what was that?" said Ann, in deep self-scorn. "I ought to have understood what she really was, so brave, so self-sacrificing. Oh, how narrow are our judgments until the gate of heaven has opened to receive a soul, and the light streams back upon the path it trod, and we recognize the lofty character when it is too late?"

Ann Bradford sat up, and made room for Dorothy to sit beside her. "My aunt was buried two weeks ago," she said. "This letter is from her pastor, at Dillburg. Now just think what she was. For several years she had a trouble that she knew to be incurable, but she faced death calmly, unafraid, her whole thought to do the best that could be done for those dependent upon her. I told you that when she came to see me graduate she went away by herself, for half a day, and did not explain it. She went to a famous surgeon to learn how much longer she was likely to live. He told her not two months. She was calm. She did not let me have a hint of this. She took her sentence of death as quietly as an invitation for some long-hoped-for journey. Oh, people call soldiers and officers brave, because they march cheerfully and firmly into battle. What shall we call such a woman, who, being told that within two months she must die, does not let the thought ruffle in any measure her deep calm, and quietly sets her house in order, that she may be gone."

“Consider though, Ann, she had long set her heart on this land where she was going, and there dwelt her Lord, and these whom on earth she had most loved and missed. My aunts told me that Mrs. Fontaine was a very good woman, strong-hearted, and full of good judgment : quiet, reserved, who was naturally reticent, and who had suffered deep sorrows of which she never spoke. One of the summers when I was in Dillburg she was away, and the other she was much shut up with one of her nieces who was sick.”

“All that quiet way, that reserve, made me think she did not care for me, nor for any one ; that she was cold-hearted. Now only think, she never let me know of her state or approaching death, because she said I deserved, after my hard work, a happy graduation. Then, as she saw that I was somewhat worn out, and needed rest, she advised me to come here, fearing that if I went to Dillburg, her sudden death from heart trouble would be an injury to me. Think of that ! How she was planning for my good, while I merely thought her cold and indifferent to me, not caring where I went ! It was thoughtfulness for me that made her charge her minister, Mr. Gillespie, that I was not to be informed of her death until two or three weeks had passed, and affairs were settled. She said she wanted me to have all the rest and strength I could gather, as I should need it all for the work she had left me to do. O Dorothy, I have believed myself so quick to see and admire goodness and

high moral living, and here was one of the strongest, truest-hearted women who ever lived, and I did not recognize it at all. What a blind bat I must be ! I can never forgive myself."

"Do not blame yourself too much, some of these self-sacrificing people that live only for others, so sedulously conceal not only their own good works, but the springs of their action, that we cannot know them for what they are—they live so entirely for eternity that they seem content to be known only there, and misunderstood here. You spoke of a work she left you to do, Ann, what is it ? Has your work found you, the work for which you have been kept ?"

"Why so it has," said Ann. "Do you know, I had not thought of that at all—I was so absorbed in thinking of my aunt, and how I had misunderstood her, and what an inspiration she might have been to me if I had only known her better. You see, Dorothy, I had been with her very little, only that summer when I lost my parents, and I stayed with Aunt Fontaine until my business was settled and it was decided where I should go to college. Then two years after that, she came where I was, and remained with me for a week. I understand that now, she had begun to think she had heart trouble, and came to see a city doctor : he told her that the trouble was incurable, but that she would probably live several years. From that time she made all her plans move toward leaving her affairs and work in good order. Mr. Gillespie says she told him that she felt then that I was the one that she must choose to fill her

place, and she concluded to make me self-reliant, by leaving me as much as possible to myself, not only that I might less need others to lean upon, but that some might lean upon me."

"I see," exclaimed Dorothy, "and she has left the two Tracy girls to you!"

"That, and her property, and the various works she had undertaken. She had a much younger sister greatly beloved, who has been for years in an insane asylum. Mr. Gillespie says she prayed very earnestly that that sister might not outlive her, and God heard her prayer; the sister died three months ago. I did not know there was such a sister, and I think few others did. Aunt spoke very little of her trials. When she found she had such a little while to live, she took Mr. Gillespie into full confidence. He seems an excellent man, he has written me such a good, helpful letter. He says there are things that he can tell me, but not write, and he wishes to know how soon I shall be able to come and fill the place my aunt has left for me. Fill her place! I can never fill her place! But I must go and do my best. I shall go next Monday."

"At least," said Dorothy, "your mind is at rest about what you will do, and where you will go. Work in plenty seems to be mapped out for you, and you are to live in Dillburg, which you and I have decided to be the dullest, most forsaken town or village in creation. However, in this Mr. Gillespie and his wife, you will find friends, cultivated, delightful people, if I am to believe what my aunts

write of them ; and my aunts, Mrs. Gates and Mrs. Percy, live together, right opposite your house, and are your nearest neighbors. They are good, bright, refined women, only needing a little waking up, which perhaps you can give them. In fact, I should advise you to make it part of your business to wake up the whole place."

"I feel no confidence in myself, as able to do anything, now that I see how dull are my perceptions, how mistaken my judgments in Aunt Fontaine's case. And she was equally mistaken about me, or she would not have supposed I could take up her work. She estimated me far above my worth, as I meanly estimated her far below hers."

"I think on the whole, Ann Bradford, she showed her good judgment and insight, in choosing you as she has. There is much more in you, of a usable, common-sense fashion of virtue, than you imagine. Your life has been a good training for the duties now put before you, and the more you exercise your faculties, the more vigorously they will develop. Take courage."

"I am already trembling for fear of being a prodigious failure."

"Then you are failing to remember that you can call upon the Strong for strength ; and that you have a Helper and a Counsellor pledged to your aid."

"That is good thinking," said Ann, wiping her eyes and folding her letter, preparatory to going to her room for a time of quiet meditating over the path so suddenly opened for her treading, of prayer

for help that she might not walk alone. Dorothy Camp passed out into the rose-garden beside the house; branch after branch of the royal flowers she drew down gently to her face, inhaling their fragrance, revelling in the splendor of their coloring, fancying that a perfect rose must be God's completest creative thought in flowers. But only half her mind was on the roses— she kept saying to herself— “The Tracy girls! Davy Tracy! Elizabeth, poor Elizabeth! Certainly, the Lord knew it would not have done to send me to take those Tracy girls in hand.”

After a while she went back to the verandah and finding the others of the group of friends gathered she informed them of the call which had rung out to Ann Bradford; also she made clear to them what fashion of a village was Dillburg. Finally, she delivered her opinions concerning the Tracy girls. “Elizabeth is a chronic invalid, with spinal trouble, can't leave her chair or bed, has a woman all the time to wait upon her, is spoiled so that she is nearly unendurable, poor, little, miserable, sensitive, misanthrope of sixteen. Davy Tracy is the most exasperating, self-willed, gifted little vixen that can be imagined: she has health for six, brains for ten, spite for fifty, and she is fourteen. Elizabeth has some money tied up to her by her grandfather, who left her all he had, because she was a cripple for life. Davy has nothing, and Elizabeth, when she is galled nearly to death by Davy's health, wit, and good looks, twits her with being a pauper. If Ann

Bradford wanted a field for the display of all the Christian graces, I can tell you she has it to the very last item."

"What is going to support all this? I hope there was a plenty of money," spoke up Clotilde, "money answereth all things!"

"There is some money, not a large fortune, I fancy. Mrs. Jane Fontaine had a comfortable house, dull and ugly as the rest of Dillburg houses; she kept a man and a cook and seemed to have income for her moderate style of living. She also economized pretty closely, and I have heard her wish that she were able to do various things, which she had not means to undertake. Ann says that *she* has always been making two dollars fill the place of four, and I fancy she may go on doing that same, to the end of the chapter."

"Poor Ann," sighed pretty Clotilde Arblay.

"Happy Ann," said Madame Baron, "whose Master has so evidently prepared a work for her, so plainly called her to do it. She is not to be pitied that she is placed where, as Dorothy says, she will be called upon to cultivate all the Christian graces; blessed are they who have the widest opportunities for soul growth. Recite for us, Dorothy, the Rosary of Evangelical Graces."

Dorothy smiled, "Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity."

"Who is sufficient for these things?" cried Grace Dare.

"We can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us," said Dr. Helen Train.

Ann Bradford's unexpected change of prospect naturally occupied much of the attention of the group of friends gathered at Mount Merion Cottage. The next afternoon as they were seated on the verandah, Mrs. Waldeck said, "I hope this will open for Miss Bradford a wide field of usefulness."

"I shall miss her," said Sara Fordyce. "I like that girl."

"So do I," said Clotilde, and looking up she saw that Ann had just appeared in the doorway. "We were speaking of you," said Clotilde, "and saying that we were sorry to lose you."

"It is good to be missed," said Ann, taking the seat to which Madame Baron beckoned her, next herself. "Now I have only two days more to stay among you, and I shall miss all the help I get from your wise heads. Won't you each give me some good advice, before I go? I feel as if I should be in the greatest need of it."

"How glad I am to have you say that," cried Dr. Helen Train. "I have been fairly aching to bestow some counsel upon you, and yet did not like to intrude it. My advice concerns that chronic invalid to whom you have fallen heir. Such an invalid, especially one who is young, rouses our keenest sympathy. We feel the lot so hard, such a bitter contrast to our own, or that of any normally healthy

person, that our first instinct is to cater to our invalid in every way, until, unless very rarely graced and gifted, the invalid falls into the role of domestic tyrant, than which nothing can be worse for the invalid, or the family. A sick person in a house naturally occupies much of the thought of the household: if this is made too apparent, the sufferer falls into the general current of thinking, and becomes self-centred, which is even more disastrous for a sick than a well person. A sick person should, as far as possible, forget self. 'A watched pot never boils' is a homely old saying, and watched bad symptoms are slow to ameliorate. Nothing is more helpful for the chronic invalid than cultivating cheerfulness, self-help, as far as possible, unselfishness. Call your invalid out of herself: don't cater to crankiness and fretfulness, and that morbidness that shrinks from all society, avoids all subjects of extraneous interest, and feeds upon its own miseries. A chronic invalid kept in touch with the life of the world, helped to look on the bright side of things, firmly repressed in cantankerousness, is the invalid before whom lie possibilities of some sudden turn in events, which shall tend toward complete, or partial recovery. One never really knows the power of physical recuperation that there is in youth: none of us estimate fully the wide and remarkable developments of hysteria. Good cheer and good common-sense, are two most admirable medicaments for chronic invalids. I wanted to say all this, because I gather from Dorothy, that your Elizabeth Tracy

has been most shockingly spoiled by Mrs. Fontaine, which is an immense pity, at sixteen. The only invalid who should be allowed to tyrannize is the aged one, who has no constitutional or nerve force to build improvement upon. Now this is your chronic invalid from a medical point of view. Sympathy and kindness and tendance, such need, and should have boundlessly ; but whatever you give, give help to make the invalid the best and noblest possible along all moral lines."

"That is worth all our hearing, doctor," said Mrs. Waldeck.

"Here, Ann, is my advice," said Sara Fordyce. "Don't forget that you are college bred, that your opportunities have been better than those of most whom you will meet. Keep yourself up to the mark. Don't throw away or let rust the education which God has seen fit to let you acquire. Keep abreast of the day, and quietly try to bring as many as you can of your associates, into line with you. Don't be afraid to lead, the educated person is bound to be a leader. Read, study, buy books, have on hand the best magazines, and by being liberal to others of your intellectual life, you will unawares broaden their lives, and elevate their thinking."

"Ann, dear," interposed Dorothy Camp, merrily, "I beg of you give a little of your time and attention to making over that miserably dull village of Dillburg! I am obliged to spend a vacation there now and then, do, for my sake, see to it that the

place is modernized—pavements, artesian water, better lighting, paint, plate glass; Ann, when I am in Dillburg, I truly pine for these amenities of life.”

A burst of laughter greeted this extravaganza. Ann said, “I had hoped better things of you, Dorothy, the others are giving me really helpful suggestion, but here you blow in my face a great splendid tantalizing bubble, which breaks as we look at it, and leaves Dillburg with grass-grown walks and paintless houses, and the tinkle and grunt of domestic animals feeding in the streets.”

“I know it is a hideous place,” said Clotilde, “I always have heard that it was, and so, Ann, here is my advice, and it is good and sound. I want you to follow it. *Cultivate beauty.* Strain a point in your finances, if necessary, to create beauty in your home. I see it in my mind’s eye, with stiff shades, perhaps even rattling paper curtains at the windows; the floors, an archipelago of braided rag mats, laid to protect old-fashioned, hideous, ingrain carpets: the wall paper dark, and out of date, the chairs set in stiff rows against the wall; for pictures, a few chromos; the yard barren of flowers, the porches destitute of vines. Of course your invalid will be gloomy and cross, where there is no beauty near to sweep the mind off into joyful thoughts of all the lovely things that God has made and loves. If you settle down, Ann, in ugly dull surroundings, your taste will atrophy, you will be dull and un-hopeful, and you will grow old fast. Now mind that.”

"Clotilde is right," said Madame Baron. "I see Grace had just such advice to give you, and so had I. God is the great beauty Lover, the Creator of beauty for himself. The microscope leads us into ways unknown to human eyes unhelped, where beauty blazes and scintillates, in flower pollen, beetles' wings, fish's scales, butterflies' plumage, a thousand forms made beautiful, not for unseeing men, but for God. As a lover and cultivator of beauty, Ann, you may have a great mission to Dillburg and its people."

"I am going to say a word for your minister and his wife. I have heard about Mr. Gillespie," said Mrs. Baron, Junior. "He is a cousin of my pastor. He was called to a city charge as soon as he left the seminary; it proved too much for his health. His nerves threatened to give way, and he wisely retreated to a village church. You can be a great help to him and his wife, in church work, in the organizing of work, in the social life of the church. Your education and your city life will make you congenial to them, and you can give them aid which many of the Dillburg people cannot. Don't feel that you are too young, too ignorant; there is a deal of false modesty in the world; do what you are asked to do; do all that you can; don't be afraid of being said to put yourself forward; if you give other people their full innings, and never allow in yourself a critical spirit, no one will object to your working. Even if they do, remember that you serve not men but our Lord Christ."

"If I only had *your* social tact and quickness in saying nice things to people, Mrs. Baron," said Ann.

"All that will come with cultivation, and a heartily loving spirit," said Mrs. Waldeck.

"I feel," said Ann, "like the girl in the fairy tale; she was to set off on a journey, and went around among her fairy friends with an open bag, into which they put treasures for her use on the way. Now, Madame Baron, just something more from you, as you are the wisest of all. Base it on the fact that I cannot say as did King Henry Fourth, 'I am not in the roll of common men.' I am absolutely and entirely commonplace. Tell me what will suit even me."

"Life is made up of trifles; character is moulded by daily trifles," said Madame Baron, "and character is that which we shall carry with us out of this life, and which will endure throughout eternity. In these little things, humble events, and simple sayings of your daily living, pursue beauty, service, thoroughness, thought culture; so you shall serve God and help humanity. When you are tired and discouraged take heart, rejoice in the beauty that is everywhere, as a thought of your divine Father; be glad that it is always open to you to serve, and so follow Christ, your Elder Brother; know that whatever you do can be done thoroughly, and so you can work as God works, and working you will grow; he who dwells in lofty thinking will never be betrayed into mean and trivial living."

These words were as Ann Bradford's dower, when

she left her friends and went to take up the life-work of one whose harvests the east wind had touched, until they were utterly withered in the furrows where they grew.

CHAPTER III.

IN HIGHWAYS AND HEDGES.

——“Get leave to work,
In this world, 'tis the best you get at all.”

AN early start from Mount Merion on Monday brought Ann to the city soon after noonday. There were a few friends to bid good-bye, and the last of the packing and sending off of the belongings, which even the most economical of girls will collect during seven years, occupied several hours. There were the various gifts which recalled favorite companions, and especial anniversaries. Ann did not know how dear was the suite of rooms, which she had shared with two other girls of the college, how dear the well-known city had become, until this hour of final leave-taking.

Another early start, and about two o'clock on Tuesday, Ann was in the small, ugly, dusty, deserted station of Dillburg. No one was there to meet her, so asking directions from the baggage-master, and trusting somewhat to her own memories, Ann set off, her sun umbrella held over her head by one hand, while the other carried her linen shawl-bag.

The little town seemed asleep in the hazy late

August afternoon ; the grass and trees wore the dusty faded livery of the passing summer ; the streets were nearly deserted ; here a few hens were taking a dust bath, while a cock with a fountain of prismatic-hued feathers falling over his back, marched stately up and down the sidewalk ; the intermittent jangle of a bell betrayed the whereabouts of the grazing cow ; and a fat porcine mother grunted on her way, followed by six little black sons with tightly curled tails and little dancing legs, rollicking along, glad to be alive even as pigs—perhaps glad because they *were* pigs !

Ann Bradford stopped at a gate in a fence that had not been painted for years ; as she unlatched it, she considered that just seven years had elapsed since she passed out of that gate, going, as now she came, her solitary way. She looked up, and there, on the small porch, sat reading, a girl of about the age Ann had been when she left. The girl, with studied intention, kept her eyes on her book as Ann approached, until the words “good-afternoon” made it impossible for her *not* to look up. Then she raised a very pretty dark face, and a pair of defiant brown eyes, and said, “Oh ! I suppose you’re Miss Bradford. You’ve got here at last, have you ? You’ll hate it, but I suppose you’ll have to stay.”

“As I have to stay,” said Ann with calmness, “I intend to like it. It is idle to grow old and ugly fighting fate. I have ordered my trunks brought down at once, and must see in what room I should put them. Where is my room ?”

"I don't know," said the girl, picking up her book again.

"You are Davy, I suppose. Where is Elizabeth?"

"In her room, of course. But she is in one of her tantrums, so you'll not go near her, if you know what is good for you. No one can put up with her in a tantrum, but C'list'an—and I wouldn't stand it, if I was C'list'an." Davy spoke venomously; she had just been utterly routed by Elizabeth.

"All right," laughed Ann, "I'll take your advice until I find some that is better. Which room did my aunt occupy?"

"Back parlor," said Davy, with a wave of her hand over her shoulder.

"Downstairs, and sunless," summed up Ann, following with her eyes the wave of Davy's hand. "I shall not risk *my* health on such a room as that."

"There are four rooms downstairs," said Davy sharply, "parlor, back-parlor, Elizabeth's and the dining-room. Of course, there's the kitchen and pantry in the L. Elizabeth has the front south east room, below, so she can be next the dining-room. Of course, you can't turn *her* out."

"I should not wish to," said Ann, with calmness. "Are there the same number of rooms above? Then I will take the room above Elizabeth's, unless it is yours."

"That's the spare-room," snapped Davy.

"It will be good enough for me," said Ann with

serenity. "I don't believe in shutting up the healthiest rooms for the occasional use of guests, and giving sunless, cold rooms to those who need to use them all the time. There are my trunks. Who is there on the place to help with them?"

"Mr. Black, I suppose," said Davy, and around the house corner, at the sound of wheels, came a big, ruddy, middle-aged man, in his shirt-sleeves.

"Are you Mr. Black?" said Ann, stepping toward him.

"Yaas,—lived here five years with Miss Fontaine. I lay out you're the new missus."

"Yes," said Ann. "Will you have the two trunks carried up to the room over Miss Elizabeth's, and the box taken to the back of the house, until it can be unpacked."

"Here's Maggie," proclaimed Davy, moving out of the way of the trunk-carriers.

"Cook," announced Maggie, somewhat superfluously, as she had flour on her nose and apron.

"I'm glad to see you," said Ann, frankly, holding out her hand. There was a simple dignity and human kindliness about Ann, which caused the cook to inform Mr. Black that "the new missus was a perfec' lady, an' she jest pitied her havin' to wrastle with them Tracys." Ann went upstairs and proceeded to unpack her trunks and make herself at home. She *was* at home; all from corner foundation-stone to chimney-top was hers. There was no one to welcome her, no one to do the honor of the house, but why be dashed by that? She might

as well not sigh for these little refused amenities, but quietly conquer her position by assuming her rights.

Ann told Maggie to open the windows and fill the pitchers ; then she unpacked her trunks, taking possession of the big, old-fashioned bureau, and great empty closet of her new room. At the end of two hours she put on a black nun's veiling dress, went downstairs, and knocked at the door of Elizabeth's room. A tall, strong woman of middle age, a woman with a pleasant smile and bright eyes, opened the door. Ann announced,

" I am Miss Bradford, and wish to see Miss Elizabeth."

" I'm C'list'an: come in. 'Lizbeth, here's the new missus."

Elizabeth, stretched on a reclining-chair, turned a pale, scowling face toward the door.

" I'm Ann, dear. Let us say 'Cousin Ann,' by courtesy, as we were both Aunt Jane's nieces though by different sides of the house." Thus saying, Ann took a low chair by the invalid, and laid her cool, strong hand upon the slim, nervous one, that hung limply against Elizabeth's brown wrapper. " It does seem a pity that we have not known each other a little, before we have to live together; but we shall soon be well acquainted," added Ann.

" You've never been here," said Elizabeth, " because I did not want you here. I didn't want Aunt Fontaine to have any one here. I hate company. I don't want any one to see me, and I won't have it ! "

"It seems as if that must be hard on you, and not quite kind to other people," laughed Ann. "If all that cloud of golden hair of yours was tied with a blue ribbon and set off by a blue wrapper, you'd be a picture that it would be a true charity to show to people. Is not that so?" queried Ann, turning toward the woman who had sat down to sew.

"C'list'an I am," suggested the woman. "Given name Calista Ann, C'list'an for convenience, an' Bobbs for surname. Yes, it's so: 'Lizbeth's been moody, an' Mis' Fontaine jest fell in with her dispiritin' ways. Mebby it would have been a sight better if she hadn't. Can't bring up health by gloomin' an' pinin' *I* say."

"I should recommend sunshine, plenty of flowers, lace curtains, and bright ribbons, and lovely pink and blue wrappers, until we made our Elizabeth's room the picture-gallery of the house. Don't you like pictures?"

"No, I hate them," said Elizabeth.

"Oh, I don't mean like these," cried Ann, looking at some old style photographs, in black frames, hanging crooked on the wall. "I mean lovely new engravings, and water-colors, and landscapes, that you can feel yourself walking in. I see your magazines are old: have you had this month's number? I brought them in my handstrap, and will let you have them."

Maggie appeared in the hall. "Mr. Black wants to know, Miss Bradford, if he shall open that box now, in case something happened to it over night."

"He might—if you and Davy have time to help me unpack it and carry in the things. I'm very tired."

"Oh, we've got time," said Maggie, who looked on the unpacking as an event to break the general dullness of her life. Davy struggled between curiosity and a desire to be offish.

"Well, I can help," she said, finally. "Did you know there's a big box, up in the attic, of your things? I wanted to look into it, and aunt wouldn't let me."

"Thank you for reminding me, I'd forgotten that box. If Mr. Black will open that also, we'll unpack it the first thing to-morrow."

The house was in a bustle carrying Ann's goods to the upper hall, until nearly tea-time. C'list'an felt obliged to help, as a treat to herself, and as she left the door of Elizabeth's room open, Ann saw that Elizabeth looked interested in watching the progress. Ann then opened the door into the dining room, saying quietly, "You keep too much shut up, child," and she took time also to go out to look for a bouquet for the supper-table, securing some honeysuckle and a monthly rose or two, that were growing in a half-wild state over the back fence. These she placed in a little silver vase of her own, in the center of the tea-table. Thus Ann Bradford introduced herself and beauty into her new home.

Ann and "her Tracys," as Maggie had already begun to call them, were just finishing tea, when C'list'an, who endeavored to enliven the monotony

of her existence by attending to calls at the front door, announced "Mr. and Mrs. Gillespie in the parlor," and Ann went to them, getting her first glimpse thus of that particularly dismal room.

"You will pardon my not meeting you at the station, as I had hoped to do," said Mr. Gillespie. "I was called into the country to a very sick parishioner, and our baby chose the exact hour of your arrival to indulge in the earache. As soon as all was quiet along parochial and domestic lines, we came."

"I am thankful to see you so soon," said Ann. "I feel rather oddly circumstanced here, and much depends upon my beginning right. To do that I must know exactly what the situation is, and I depend upon you to tell me."

"To-morrow, at eleven, I am to take you to Mr. Grace, your aunt's lawyer, to conclude some business formalities. Meantime I can explain how affairs stand. Mrs. Fontaine left you this house and the half-acre surrounding it, and an invested capital amounting to two thousand a year."

"Why," exclaimed Ann, much surprised, "that looks great riches to me. I have been economizing as much as I could, yet still obliged to trench upon my capital, until now an investment that gives me two hundred a year, and three hundred dollars that I had kept for this autumn's emergencies, are all my wealth."

"Your aunt's bequest will look much smaller, when you know how it is encumbered. First, Mrs.

Fontaine's mother long ago subscribed a yearly twenty-five dollars to the church here, and seventy-five dollars to cover all the expenses of a girl in a missionary school in India. As fast as one girl is grown up, and provided for, another fills her place. Mrs. Fontaine made it a condition that that one hundred of giving should be a charge on the estate, in honor of her mother's memory."

"I shall like that very well," said Ann.

"Another charge on the estate is in the shape of a small boy, Arthur Douglas, an orphan nephew of the late Mr. Fontaine. He is now nearly twelve. He has a hundred and fifty dollars a year of his own, and outside of that, Mrs. Fontaine was pledged for all his expenses, giving him a college or business education, and doing all that is properly needed for him until he is twenty-one. He has means but for part of his expenses. He has been kept in a 'Home School for Little Boys,' up in the hills; his cost to Mrs. Fontaine has been two hundred a year, but now the charge will be more, as he has outgrown that school, and must be at once provided for somewhere else."

"Hasn't she had him here ever?" asked Ann. "Has the child grown up, so far, practically homeless?"

"Your aunt was not very fond of children: I think, too, she had a dread of small boys. Finally, Elizabeth hates children, and does not want any visitor of any age here, and Mrs. Fontaine long ago set up Elizabeth as the domestic tyrant."

"Well," said Ann, "I love children, and particularly dote on small boys. If I am responsible for that boy, I must get well acquainted with him, and have personal influence over him. He must feel that he has a home and family, poor little man! I shall send for him this very week."

"Do let me shake hands with you!" cried Mrs. Gillespie, springing up impulsively and holding out her hand. "I have two boys, and that is the way I think boys should be spoken of."

"You see I have brought your income down three hundred," said Mr. Gillespie, "but it must suffer yet another drop. There was a debt, a disgraceful debt, a forger's debt, left by Mrs. Fontaine's youngest brother. He died penitent, striving in South America to make good his defaulting. His father never forgave his act, and pledged his daughter, when he left her his property, never to diminish the capital for her brother's debt. She has been paying the debt out of income, to the heirs of the wronged party. There is a charge of four hundred a year to these heirs, for five years to come; when that debt of honor and dishonor will be fully paid, and, like David, Mrs. Fontaine can plead, 'Then I restored that which I took not away.' You see your income is brought down to thirteen hundred."

"That is plenty," said Ann.

"Consider you have the house to keep up, including taxes and insurance, yourself to provide for, and Davy Tracy, for Davy has not a penny, and in her will Mrs. Fontaine leaves Davy to you, praying that

you will educate her liberally, and put her in a position to take care of herself. Also, this house cannot be sold as long as Elizabeth Tracy lives, for she has right of shelter bequeathed her here for her life. Elizabeth has income of her own, enough for her moderate wants. Mr. Grace is her trustee and you will be put in your aunt's place as personal guardian."

"Even if there were no such provisions," said Ann, who was certainly strong-hearted, "who would think of turning adrift a child, and a hopeless cripple?"

"Do you know," said Mrs. Gillespie, "I have felt so sorry for you, Miss Bradford. You have led a studious literary life in your college, surrounded by all the advantages of the city, with no one to trespass on your time or cares, and here you are, one may say, forced to live in the uncongeniality of the dullest of villages, with almost no one companionable for you near you, burdened with business cares of no small order, and the charge of two very trying girls."

"Do not waste one bit of sympathy on me," said Ann. "The thing I dreaded most was to have nothing to do, to stand all the day idle, while other toilers filled the vineyards and white fields. There are few things that I am competent to do, but this work offered here comes within my limitations. It is so clearly offered me by Providence, God has so distinctly called me, that I cannot doubt I am here because he wants me here. I asked for work:

he gave it. Besides, lately, I have had opened to me a new view of life, and my life can be as well lived here as anywhere—can reach its fullness here, for I think I have learned to want, above all things, to grow into the likeness of my Lord.”

“The value and efficiency of all our doing,” said Mr. Gillespie, “is in the ratio of our own spiritual living. It is open to us to live spiritually anywhere, because God is everywhere. Let this mind be in you which also was in Christ.”

“And what *was* that mind of Christ?” asked Ann, earnestly.

“A mind,” said Mr. Gillespie, “in entire harmony with the will of the Father. A mind in constant, helpful touch with humanity, for its salvation. A mind set on eternity.”

“It is high. I cannot attain unto it,” said Ann Bradford, her eyes growing misty.

“So strive,” said Mr. Gillespie, “and the means are yours, God’s word and earnest prayer.”

When Ann’s guests left, her new household had apparently gone to bed. She went to her silent room, and looked out upon the starlit world; this was to be her home for many a day, and final success or defeat, as defeat and success are measured in eternity, was to be here achieved.

The next morning Ann went to the door of the dining room, when C’list’an and Maggie had seated themselves to take their breakfast, after the family, according to the village custom.

“Will I disturb you,” she asked, politely, “if I

“speak with you while you are eating? I want to see you alone.”

“Land sakes, of course you won’t disturb us, come sit down by the table,” said C’list’an, taking a big bite of toast.

“If things are well to be done,” said Ann, “the sooner they are done the better, and what changes I am to make I will do well to make promptly. C’list’an, that room of Miss Elizabeth’s is dull and ugly. You and she are in it most of the time—much more than you ought to be; it is enough to make you gloomy. I want to brighten up that room with white muslin curtains, some pictures and ornaments. When can it be done?”

“Wednesday I clean that room thorough,” said C’list’an. “I wheel ’Lizabeth into the parlor while I do it. To-day is Wednesday, and I’m going at it soon as I eat. When I get it cleaned, fix it all you like.”

“We’ll bring down the pictures and curtains then, from a box Davy is unpacking for me in the attic. We must make the room pleasant, and Miss Elizabeth must be dressed in better taste, and made to look pretty; then she will not shun people so. As soon as I can find a carpenter, I shall have a big verandah built across the whole front of the house, and the windows of Miss Elizabeth’s room cut down to the floor, then I want her wheeled out on the verandah when it is pleasant. When we are cutting down the windows, we will repaint and paper that room, and put down a Brussels carpet. I don’t see

why she should be compelled to contemplate that hideous rag carpet."

"Mis' Fontaine thought rag carpet good enough for a sick-room," said Maggie.

"We'll drop that notion of a sick-room and call it Miss Elizabeth's parlor," smiled Ann. "I never expect to be as good and unselfish a woman as my Aunt Fontaine, but still I may make changes in her ways of doing things. If there is any advantage in education, and modern improvements, let us have the benefit of it."

"Lawk, yes. Do let's have something new," said C'list'an.

When Elizabeth's room had been re-arranged, the hideous profiles and old photographic portraits exchanged for four or five water-colors, the curtains draped, a pretty embroidered tablecloth replacing an oil-cloth monstrosity, and the best parlor rugs brought to cover, as far as possible, the rag carpet, Ann said, "It only needs flowers." Flowers, however, seemed to have been left out of account by Mrs. Fontaine. Mr. Black had prudently planted some sunflowers for his fowls, and Ann helped herself from that golden row.

Elizabeth condescended to be pleased with her renovated room.

"I'm glad you took down those hideous people from the wall," she said. "I hated them so that I used to lie and make faces at them."

Then she looked at the small square table, relieved of its pile of odds and ends, draped with a cover

worked in shades of brown and gold, upon it a quaint, ancient, brown, narrow-necked jar, rescued by Ann from the kitchen closet, and in which shone four sunflowers.

"I always thought sunflowers so ugly, but those really look well."

"No flower is ugly," said Ann. "Flowers seem to me among the most loving of God's gifts to us; we are better for always having them about us."

After Ann returned from her visit to Lawyer Grace, she took a walk about her house outside several times, studying from all points the most pressing improvements needed. When she went in she found Elizabeth belligerent.

"C'list'an says you mean to build a verandah, cut down these windows to the floor, lay a Brussels carpet, and I don't know what else!" she began.

"Paint the house and fence, lay a walk up to the porch, plant shrubs and flowers, do some inside papering—"

"Aunt Fontaine said she never could make improvements out of what income she had. If you lay out all that money who is to look out for Davy? Of course I can't."

"I don't see why," said Ann, with the utmost coolness. "You should be willing to share with your sister, even to the point of some self-denial."

"Why should I? I'm worse off than she is!"

"You'll be the worst off possible, if you cultivate selfishness," said Ann, "for selfishness is a fearful

distortion of the moral nature. We should all make constant endeavor to cultivate graces. I do not mind telling you, however, that Davy will be provided for as she has been, and that the cost of the improvements will be met by a few hundreds of my own, that I have in reserve. I have for years been obliged to make the most out of every dollar I spent, and I think these improvements will be had for the least money possible. As the house is mine, improvements are an investment."

"Of course they are. I don't see as you're doing anything remarkably unselfish!" said Elizabeth.

"'Lizabeth Tracy!" broke in C'list'an, "be ashamed of yourself, for I'm plumb ashamed of you! Here's Miss Bradford give you her white curtings and picters, an' not one left for her room."

Elizabeth had the grace to look a trifle ashamed, as suggested.

"If I had no more of these things, Elizabeth," said Ann, "I should put these in your room, because you being shut out from the beauty of the out-of-doors world, need them more than I do. These are not all I have, however, and I mean also to buy more. I shall have nice things in my room, because I think every one is healthier, happier, and so better-tempered, for having a quiet, comfortable, attractive place all their own, where they can withdraw a while, escape from others, and be alone with themselves and God. This quiets the nerves, gives opportunity to arrange our lives, and commune with heaven. Christ himself gives us example of this withdrawing. He

often went into the mountains alone. What he needed, we need much more."

"Did Mr. Grace give you my month's income?" snapped Elizabeth, changing the subject promptly.

"Yes: will you tell me how Aunt Fontaine arranged it?"

"She gave me five dollars for spending-money: paid C'list'an, the druggist's bill, and the laundress for me, Davy and C'list'an. But you've no right to my money; you're only a strange girl. You are to give me the whole of it."

"I know," said Ann, imperturbably, "that I am a stranger now, but I shall be less so every day I live with you. I am, as you say, a girl, but being twenty-three the law sees fit to entrust me with your person and property, and the proper formalities have been attended to. You are also a girl, but being less than sixteen, and left in ward by your grandfather, the law does not hold you capable of attending to your own finances. Here are your five dollars; C'list'an, here are your ten dollars for the current month, and I shall be obliged to you if you will go and pay the laundress to-day. As for the druggist, after this I shall see to his bills. I do not intend to have Elizabeth drugged. She needs air and fresh interests more than medicine. Elizabeth, I know you hate those brown and gray wrappers, and you have had them a long time. Will you not like it, if I go out and get pretty colored materials, fine and nice, and pretty embroideries and ribbons for you? I think your things should not be

so plain, they should be made attractive and in the new styles."

Well," said C'list'an, "I've thought of that, but Mis' Fontaine, she said it was easier for sick folks to wear dark or plain things."

"We will not consider Miss Elizabeth 'sick folks,' but just a 'shut in', to be made as pretty and happy as possible. I consider myself well practised in the art of making garments, so I will cut out and show you; and I see you are a nice needlewoman, C'list'an, so we'll have things improved promptly."

Elizabeth felt the risings of gratitude: they were yoked with self-condemnation. This irritated her, and she poured out her irritation on Ann.

"You needn't think you can bribe me! I fairly hate you!"

Ann went up to her room. For a week she had been in a state of nervous strain and exaltation: she had been planning and hoping overmuch, and was just at the point of reaction. Elizabeth's ill-temper was the touch to give the moral pendulum its rebound: Ann threw herself on the bed and cried heartily. Then she washed her face and sat down by the window. There was no very pretty prospect to divert her thoughts, simply a dull village, in the dull tints of departing summer. Ann just waited. She had had such seasons before, and she knew the value of waiting. Neither joy nor sorrow stand long at their highest levels. It is good to wait; reaction will come bitterly, unless we forestall it by a period of calm of soul. Wait, not one dip only makes a

Damascus blade. This good, this ill, alternately elevating and depressing soul temperature, creates heavenly temper, we learn that all has its mission, all passes and is ended; out of alternate high and low comes the strong, elastic mean. This is a truth that moderates both our pride and our self-abasement. Ann read a few verses, beginning, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations—"

"This is a very good book to live by," said Ann, as the bell rang for dinner.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SUMMER AND THE SUN.

“The trivial round, the common task
Would give us all we ought to ask;
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God.”

THE little shadow and the consequent shower that had fallen over Ann Bradford's new life passed away quickly. Ann was courageous, and she had the great advantage that her position was independent; she was in her right; she administered her own. If the Tracy girls opposed her, the servants speedily adored her; she brought a cheery life and freshness into the house that had long been lacking; they took pride in promised improvements, and there was a pleasant courtesy in Ann's dignity which easily won them to second her innovations.

“C'list'an,” she said, “we must try in all ways to cheer Miss Elizabeth, and make her brighter and more hopeful. We must try and help her self-respect and dignity. You came here when she was a child, and naturally enough you called her by her first name, and reproved her when you thought her wrong. But such things in our relationships to

people must change, as the years change us all. Miss Tracy is growing up: you may live with her until she is a middle-aged woman: it would not do then to go on calling her, 'Elizabeth,' and reprehending her. I want you to acquire the habit of saying 'Miss Elizabeth,' and do not undertake any reproofs. Also, I think she needs to be alone a little, to get better acquainted with herself; and you need a rest from her, too. I want you to take an hour, regularly, every day—to leave her and go off and do what you like—and once in a month to go for the entire afternoon."

"She'd want a thousand things, soon as I was gone."

"I'll be on hand—to give her fifty," said Ann.

"Elizabeth," said Ann, one day when she was directing C'list'an in making and trimming Elizabeth's new garments, and the girl was evidently trying to think of the thousand demands for attention, "suppose, my dear, that you try and think how many little attentions you can do without. When you have thought of that for a while, think of the Chinese, or the Esquimaux or the South Sea Islanders, or the planet Jupiter, of anything except yourself. To limit one's doing and thinking to the five or six feet of dust, which make up our corporate being, does not encourage any great altitude of soul."

Such remarks from Ann could not fail to set Elizabeth to thinking. Elizabeth was not always

in a bad humor : there were times when she was sweet and sunny, other times when she was penitent for her irritability and ingratitude. In one such hour, watching Ann, who was carefully instructing C'list'an in the making of a lovely wrapper for Elizabeth, the girl said,—

“Cousin Ann, I thought perhaps you'd never come near me again, when I said I hated you.”

“I have to come near you,” said Ann, “you and I are obliged to live together, and we might as well live on good terms with each other. It would be very foolish of me to take umbrage at every little irritable remark you make. If we bear and forbear we may come to love each other well. As for me, if I took offence easily, I should not be following my Master. ‘Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not.’ Think how he must have had to endure and to forgive every hour, surrounded as he was by sinful humanity. Think how he hourly bears with us. Are you a Christian, Elizabeth?”

“Of course I'm a Christian,” cried the easily-provoked Elizabeth. “Do you think that I'm an infidel or an idiot because I have spinal trouble?”

“I don't suppose,” said Ann, calmly, “that your spine is bound to interfere with your moral nature one way or the other. I only asked, because it does not seem to me that you are living up to the fine possibilities of spiritual life. You could reach the highest heights of spiritual living, and yet I know that you have more hindrances and less helps than

others. It is true, as a French writer says, 'Our body is a beast, and when the beast is vexed the soul within it is vexed.' Then too, you are shut out of all church privileges: the house of God is a grand school of instruction, to build us up in spiritual life: the assembling ourselves together with other Christians is helpful, as well as the sermon. I have been thinking Elizabeth, that you must have some Sabbath help: I hope soon to invite six or eight girls of your and Davy's age, to meet here Sunday afternoons to sing, and to study the Pilgrim's Progress, looking out all the texts referred to, and reading notes upon the work: I have several good editions with copious, helpful notes; that has always been a favorite book of mine."

"I shouldn't like that at all! I can't bear girls," cried Elizabeth.

"You'll like it after we begin: you will like the girls after you come to know them," said Ann, with a quietness that denoted that she was not to be turned from her purpose.

"There is another thing, Elizabeth: tell me, did aunt have prayers?"

"Yes: she did."

"I thought so: every Christian household should have its altar. Well, we'll begin to-morrow, Sunday morning, and have prayers immediately before breakfast in the dining room. I knew it was my duty, but I have been shrinking from doing it. You may not think it, but there is in me a deal of shyness and backwardness about doing such duties—I

have hated to call Maggie, and C'list'an, and Mr. Black in, especially Mr. Black."

"Leave him out, then," said Elizabeth, with some sympathy. Her way was, if a thing was unpleasant, not to do it.

"That will not do," said Ann, "he is one of the family: he eats our bread, he has a right to share with us the bread of life."

"How desperately humdrum you are here!" cried Davy, who had come in swinging her hat, and stood looking at the sewing and hearing the talk. All seemed to be for Elizabeth, nothing for her; it had always been so. "Of course," went on Davy, passionately, "Elizabeth has to be humdrum, tied up to a chair and one room, but I'm surprised at you, Ann Bradford—you've been to college, you've lived in the city: if I had been in your place I wouldn't have bound myself to live in this horrid village for all the money Aunt Fontaine left."

"I did not come for the money, Davy," said Ann, "I wanted to fill some place in life, to do some work, and I should have come if there had been no money, only just my living. Some one was needed here, and God sent me."

"I wish he'd send me away, then! I'd rather sweep streets in the city than rust out here! I want to learn things, to be somebody. I could do something great, if I had half of a chance. I want to study and go to college!"

"Well, Davy, if you behave yourself, maybe I'll send you," said Elizabeth, patronizingly.

"Yes, you say that one day and unsay it the next. You've said you would and you wouldn't a hundred times! Oh, I can't bear all this. I often think I'll run away."

"To the city?" said Ann. "Why run, when you can get there without? I want you to go to the city, to be educated in the city; I think that is the place for you."

"Send Davy to the city!" cried Elizabeth. "What for? What good would she get there? What would she learn that she can't here?"

"Oh," said Ann, speaking cheerily, to relieve the tension of everybody's feelings, "she could learn to glide through a crowd without elbowing her neighbor; to go quickly without treading on men's toes or women's trains, to dodge horses trotting at full speed, and electric cars sweeping about curves; she could learn neither to crush nor to be crushed; in fine, all the gifts and graces that could be cultivated by civilization and asphalt pavements."

"Perhaps you mean to send her to clerk in a store or be a cash girl," sneered Elizabeth, whom this conversation did not suit.

"No, I do not. I mean to send her to be educated in my own university, in the city. I expect her to do better than I did, to stand at the head, to lead her class, to be valedictorian; it is in you, Davy, I know it is."

Davy's eyes glowed with ecstasy.

"Where's the money coming from?" said Elizabeth.

Ann ignored Elizabeth, and looked at Davy. "If I had known, Davy, that you were breaking your heart, I should have explained matters before. I have been very dull. You are fourteen. This year you can study with me and with Mr. Gillespie. Then next year you must go to the university. You must have a tutor, and spend a year in getting a first-rate fit, then four years in the College of Liberal Arts. Then you will be twenty, graduated, and able to make your way in the world. No doubt you'll have to economize; I did. We can find enough but not a superfluity. This college training is not to be conditioned on Elizabeth's whims, nor on your pleasing Elizabeth. I shall send you to college. It is not to be conditioned on your pleasing or liking *me*. You are to go all the same: Aunt Fontaine left particular request that you should be educated. The only thing that will cut your career at college short, so far as I am concerned, will be your neglecting your work, or wasting your time. If, when I send you to attend the university in an independent life, under your own control, as I did, I find that you are not doing well that way, I shall transfer you to a girl's college. I think, if you set yourself to grow in sense and womanliness this year, you will do very well, with some of the girls I know there to advise you a bit. I have dreamed, Davy, of sending you there next year, to my own old rooms, to take up life as I lived it, and I can live the college days I loved over again in you!"

Davy stood dazed, rejoicing, yet suspicious.

"You mean it? You won't go back on it?"

"Certainly I mean it, and shall not alter my intentions."

"Well, if Aunt Fontaine left money for my education, it is mine by right, and no thanks to any one, and I ought to have been told of it before!" cried Davy, stamping her foot.

"It was not *bequest*, Davy, but *request*," said Ann, quietly.

"Oh," said Davy, blankly. "Well, I'm much obliged to you."

"I don't want you to be much obliged. I want the time to come when you will lovingly take it for love's sake. There, C'list'an, ruffle that lace all around the yoke so, and it will be very pretty." Ann went to the kitchen to interview Maggie.

Elizabeth and Davy looked at each other.

"Isn't she queer?"

"I should say so!"

"Anyway, Davy, if it's college education makes her so, I only hope it will have the same effect on you, you need it."

"College education!" burst forth C'list'an wrathfully, biting off a thread and proceeding to ruffle lace. "College education! Air you two girls born dunces? *Can't* you see it's her religion that does it? Hers is a kind of religion that works out. I wish you two Tracy girls had it, I'm sure!"

The work on the house began. Ann Bradford was not fond of delays. Elizabeth was, for a few days, removed to the back parlor, and when she

returned to her room, new paper, carpet, and long windows, bore witness to Ann's zeal in her invalid's behalf. Elizabeth did not consider it good policy to seem too much pleased. "The room," she said, "is all very well, but you needn't expect me to use that verandah. Do you think I'll go out there for everyone to stare at?"

"As soon as the porch is built," said Ann, "I shall plant roses, honeysuckle, wistaria and moon-flowers to climb upon it; you will not be exposed to the public, you will sit in a little green bower."

"I shan't like it," said Elizabeth. "What have you put that little bookcase here for, with its empty, staring shelves?"

"To be filled," said Ann, promptly. "I have a box of my father's books in the attic, and a box of my own books, that are coming from college, and there will be a box of Arthur Douglas's books sent here with his things. I like books in every room. I have a case full, upstairs, in my room. I will have some in the parlor. I mean to call the parlor the library. I don't care for a parlor in the modern sense of a room for stray company. In the old French idea of a conversation or talking room it does very well. I shall put some books in this case, Elizabeth, and you will like to buy some for yourself, perhaps."

"Why should Arthur Douglas's things come here?" cried Elizabeth.

"Because Arthur himself is coming here, to live, for two or three years at least. Aunt left him to me, and if I am to bring him up I must have him

where I can know what he is like, poor little motherless, homeless man ! ”

“ I won’t have him here ! So I won’t ! ” cried Elizabeth.

“ He shall not be allowed to annoy you, he shall not intrude upon your room,” said Ann, firmly, “ but you cannot control the whole house, Elizabeth. I must consider what is good for each one. This little boy will grow up to manhood, and if his boyhood is ill-directed, the world will miss one good man which it needs, and have one more bad man, when bad men are over plenty.”

“ Aunt Fontaine was better than you,” stormed Elizabeth, “ and she did not have Arthur here.”

“ She was old and had a fatal disease ; she was unused to boys. I am young, strong, and a lover of boys. I hope we shall find this little boy a pleasant member of our household. As a matter of economy, I should have him here. The school here will be a good one for him for three years. In that time a hundred a year will maintain him, making a saving of two hundred and fifty each year on what he has cost aunt. That seven hundred and fifty dollars will pay all his expenses for two years at a fitting-school for college. If I have Arthur and Davy both to send to college, I must be as good a manager as possible, or my income will not hold out. When Davy goes, next year, I shall sell the horse and surrey and save that expense. Aunt needed a vehicle. I do not. This year I shall keep it as a luxury.”

“ Well, I don’t care what you do with that for I

can't use it, but it is horrid of you to fill up the house with boys."

"Elizabeth, do you remember who said, 'Whoso receiveth one such little child in my name receiveth me'? Try to look at it that way. Welcome Arthur entirely for Christ's sake, and a blessing will come into your heart for it."

"I don't believe it," said Elizabeth; "and here I am so helpless! I have to stay and be imposed on every way! If you starved me I'd have to stand it;" and the poor nervous child's tears began to roll down upon the beautiful, lace-trimmed, blue wrapper, with which Ann had delighted to make her fine.

"Cheer up, dear, it will be better than you think," said Ann. "I am glad you like your room, and we'll try to fill the bookcase to suit you. What do you study, Elizabeth?"

"I study? Nothing. Why should I study? What good would it do me? I read a great deal."

"Are your eyes weak?"

"No; very strong."

"Then why not study? The good it would do you would be to strengthen and refine your mind, elevate your thoughts, make you good company for yourself and for other people, and also useful to others. I heard of a person, room-bound as you are, who was the intellectual leader of the town where she lived. You might become highly cultivated. You have time, good eyes, money for books, why not fit yourself to be a thought-leader here?"

It is always pleasant to have influence. In a few years you could organize reading and study clubs, and have them meet with you, and you could direct their work. This would afford you considerable occupation, and he that is occupied is happy."

"What should I study?" asked Elizabeth, somewhat attracted by these suggestions. "Do you mean me to tie myself down to arithmetic or chemistry, and all that stuff?" she added fretfully.

"I should say study history, literature and French. When you can read French well, study Italian. It is worth while to study Italian to be able to read Silvio Pellico's *Mie Prigione* in his own words. You will be able to gather up a deal of scientific knowledge from your general reading; biography is a branch of historic reading."

"I had a lot of paper books here," said Elizabeth, looking about; "what did you do with them?"

"C'list'an put them on the top shelf of the closet. Some of them were good and worth reading, some of them—most of them—are trash, serving only to make you morbid, unrestful, weak-minded. It is open to you, dear Elizabeth, to be strong-minded if you are bodily weak."

"There are old Mrs. Gates and Mrs. Percy coming out of their door, Ann, and I believe they are coming to see you. It will take them fifteen minutes to get across their yard and the street. How Mrs. Gates hobbles! She'd better stay in, as I do! C'list'an, do you know how old Mrs. Gates is?"

"How old Mis' Gates is? Of course I do.

She's just as old as she can be. How do I know that? Well, she was right smart of a woman when me an Mis' Fontaine first came here, and that's years and years ago. Mr. Gates was alive then; he was one of the kind of men that are so good he wa'n't good for anything. Folks do say that he wa'n't half so good as he pretended, and cheated his neighbors terribly."

"C'list'an," said Ann Bradford, sternly, "that is gossip, and gossip is indecent and unchristian. The Bible says that he only shall dwell in God's holy hill 'that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor.' Go to the door, please;—shall they be asked in here, Elizabeth, or in the parlor?" Elizabeth glanced at her new wrapper and her freshly ornamented room. "In here," she said, and Ann was glad. Ann did not believe that a well-rounded Christian character could be built up in a surly withdrawal from humanity. "The Son of man came eating and drinking," and was not ashamed to be called "the friend of publicans and sinners."

Elizabeth noted that Ann's cordial welcome of her callers had not the stiffness usual in Dillburg society. She met them with extended hands, saying, "I am so glad to meet the aunts of my friend, Dorothy Camp! Now you shall be the very first to sit in these chairs, which C'list'an and I have just finished upholstering, and you were the first to come over the new walk which Mr. Black finished about fifteen minutes ago."

"Yes, we waited," said Mrs. Gates. "I'm not very firm on my feet, and I was afraid I'd stumble on the bits of board."

"You're in no danger now. Mr. Black is skillful with tools and proud of it; he has made us a first-rate walk. We waited to get the pieces left from the verandah. I have to be very economical in my improvements."

"That big verandah, all across the house front, and eight feet wide, *is* an improvement," said Mrs. Percy, "and these long windows from Elizabeth's room! Elizabeth, how nice and bright you look here! You can use the verandah, if you can't the walk."

"I am not hopeless of seeing Elizabeth marching down to the gate some day. I've seen stranger things happen. Who knows?" said Ann.

" 'Never give up, it is wiser and better
Always to hope than once to despair,' "

quoted Mrs. Gates, who was old-fashioned, and held Tupper to be the chief of poets. "Are you going to do anything else?"

"We mean to have the house and fence painted at once," said Ann, who fairly revelled in her improvements.

"What color?" asked Mrs. Gates, eagerly.

"White with green blinds," said Ann, "I think that looks best in a village, and it wears better than any other paint. After I use up the money I have now for improvements I don't know when I

shall ever put on paint again, so I want a lasting kind."

"Sister Percy," said Mrs. Gates, "I don't know but we'd better put on our house two coats of paint, come spring. It needs it, but I didn't care to have ours the only house in staring new paint."

"As soon as the painting is done," said Ann, "I want to plant vines about the verandah. There's a fine white honeysuckle on the back fence that I can transplant; do you know of any one here who can let me have a climbing rose? I warn you, I'm going to beg vines, seeds and shrubs, if there are any, for while they cost much to buy, it does one no harm to give them; they grow better for division, a practical example of the text, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth."

"We've got a fine running rose over our well lattice, and you shall have a good root of it. People in this place don't do much with flowers and lawns, *We* have about the best and we'll be glad to share with you. The view from both houses will be prettier if we both cultivate our yards. We look to get many new notions from you, Miss Bradford."

"Yes," said Mrs. Gates. "Our niece Dorothy is a college girl too, and Dorothy comes here full of new ideas. It is most like having a foreign tour to have her here. We're looking for great things from you!"

"Oh, but I'm not like Dorothy," said Ann, "she writes; she is literary; a genius, she is going to be famous. I am very proud to be her friend. She

has been a great help to me. I am very commonplace, I have no talents at all, but some common sense, if you call that a talent; and I think I have a natural gift for economizing, and for keeping a place in order. At least I'm very much enjoying renovating this place."

"If you set a good example a good many may follow it. This is the only nice big verandah in Dillburg, for instance; but when the neighbors see how pleasant it is, they may copy it. There haven't many called yet on you; they'll be slow about it on account of your being from the city and college. When they find you are friendly they will come, and you'll like them, if they are only village people," said Mrs. Gates.

"I expect to find them the very best kind," said Ann, "and now I am numbered among village people myself it won't do for me to run them down."

Then the month's magazines, which Dorothy always sent to her aunts, came under discussion. Then Ann asked about the church work. Was there a Christian Temperance Union? a Missionary Society? a Ladies' Prayer Meeting?

"Dear knows there *was*," said Mrs. Gates, "but they've all petered out. Mrs. Gillespie is trying hard to revive the Missionary Society, but it is in a dreadful dead state; and Mrs. Fontaine was a great loss to us."

"We must all take hold of the church work, and make it *go*," said Ann. "Dorothy was telling me

about a Missionary Reading Club which she started somewhere, and found a fine help. Of course we are not greatly interested in subjects of which we know very little. Now I have Aunt Fontaine's heathen girl on my hands, I expect to be very much interested in Missions."

The callers remained for nearly an hour, and Elizabeth seemed really interested in the conversation. As soon as they were gone Mr. Black brought round the surrey for Ann to go to the station to meet little Arthur Douglas.

"Mrs. Fontaine was timid of the horse, and always wanted me to drive," said Mr. Black.

Ann laughed as she glanced at the staid-looking roan.

"I fancy I can manage that animal," she said. "Tell Maggie I will not be back until tea-time."

Ann meant to get acquainted with "her boy" before she came home. When the few passengers left the train, it was not hard to sort out Arthur Douglas, as he was the only boy who arrived.

"You're my boy, evidently," Ann said, "how are you, Arthur?"

He was a stout, freckled little lad, with hair cut in no particular fashion, and of no particular color, but he had big, laughing, blue eyes, and looked frankly in one's face.

"Ho! you Miss Bradford! Ain't I glad you ain't old!"

"So! Don't you like old folks? That's a pity. I expect to be old sometime."

"Oh, but I'm tired of being brought up by old folks! Prex and all the teachers at the school were old."

"Pitiful that," said Ann; "well, we're all young here. I want to go out driving. Can you drive?"

"Yes!" shouted Arthur, who had never driven two miles in his life, "course I can. All boys can."

"I think I'll sit on the front seat with you, we'll get acquainted faster," said Ann, with an eye to watching the reins. "Give that man your checks; turn up this street. There now."

"How many folks are there at your house?" asked Arthur.

"Three, and three servants. Davida, whom we call Davy, is about fourteen, and I think if she has some one to frolic with, you may find her lively. I'm Miss Bradford, and I expect to be minded, but I'm a reasonable person and not hard to get on with. Elizabeth is a sick cripple. You must never go to her room unless she invites you, and when there, do just as she wants you to. As she is so unfortunate we all humor her somewhat. Of course a gentleman of your age never goes into any one's room without knocking, and always treats servants with perfect politeness."

"Whoop!" said Arthur, "at school, we just tore in and out rooms, and we fairly *bawled* at the servants, and made them jump."

"You'll turn over a new leaf at my house," said Ann, calmly. "Did you like school?"

"Oh, sorter—they were too strict. Wouldn't let you climb trees."

"Not? I hope that here you'll climb all you want to, trees, fences, houses; have you a football?"

"Yes, Prex never let me use it hardly. It's new."

"I hope you and Davy will use it every day. Baseball?"

"No. They wouldn't let us have it, said we'd break windows."

"Pitiful that. Suppose you and Davy go out after tea, and you buy a ball and two bats, and she buys a croquet set?"

"Now you're talking!" cried Arthur, nearly driving into a ditch. "Say, do you believe in picnics an' 'lasses candy?"

"Doat on them," said Ann, as the horse rambled into a fence.

"Look closely at the horse and keep the reins straight, Arthur. Do you like books? Do you like to study?"

"Well, yes, when it's school hours I do, and I just *love* to read."

"Ever read your Bible?"

"They made us read it 'n hour every Sunday. I think it's dull."

"You do? Why, as your father and mother are in heaven, I should think you'd enjoy knowing how and in what kind of a place they live; the Bible is the only book that can tell you that."

"Why, I didn't know it told about *that*," said Arthur.

CHAPTER V.

THE SHADOWS ON THE WAY.

“The path of Sorrow and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrows are unknown.”

THIS was the first ride Ann Bradford had taken about Dillburg; as she was not nervous, her pleasure was but little disturbed by the erratic fashion of Arthur's driving. They were in a state of high good-fellowship when they reached the home-gate, and Arthur at once repaired to the barn, to “help” Mr. Black unharness. He was much more interested in the horse and barn, than in the yet unknown members of the family, though he informed Mr. Black that he thought Miss Bradford pretty jolly, and not the scary kind.

The fresh air and the sweet country scenes had brought light to Ann's eyes, and a flush to her cheeks. The waysides and pasture lands had broken into the splendor of late-summer bloom; the golden-rod and asters stood gorgeous as the “blue and purple from the isles of Elishah.” The long narrow valleys were brilliant with the tangles of blackberry vines, the leaves and stems crimson in the transfiguring light; the sturdy white masses of

boneset, the tall lobelias, and the dashing colors of the black-eyed Susan. The eye, content, followed the windings of this river of flowers, while even the rolling, closely nipped hillside pastures took soft shades of bronze, green, and brown under the sunset."

"We had such a lovely ride," said Ann, as she took off her hat, "I did not know the country about here was so beautiful!"

"Well, who admires things round Dillburg must have admiration for sale," said Calista Ann, preparing to roll Elizabeth's chair into the dining room.

At tea Arthur and Davy eyed one another like a pair of little pug-dogs who did not know whether to snarl and bite, or make friends. Ann intervened: "As soon as tea is over I want you to run down town, and Davy will buy a croquet set, and Arthur baseball and bats. You must have something to amuse yourselves and your friends with."

"H'm," said Davy, "I'd much rather have tennis!"

"So had I!" cried Arthur.

"I can't afford tennis," said Ann. "I have to get what I have money to pay for. Perhaps by next spring you can get your friends interested, and can form a tennis club, and buy in partnership the net and rackets, and I'll have Mr. Black make you a court. Tennis is a nice game."

"Aunt Fontaine would have thought spending money on games about sacrilegious," said Elizabeth, curling her lips.

"It was only that Aunt Fontaine was in feeble health, and long past the age of play, and I am not," said Ann.

When Arthur and Davy had returned with their purchases and laid them on the verandah, they sat down on the steps. Ann opened the windows of Elizabeth's room, and sat outside near them. C'lis-t'an had started down the road with a man, a big fellow, with slouching shoulders, and a careless gait.

"That's her brother," said Davy, "he's no account, but she thinks her eyes of him. He gives her no end of trouble."

"I tell you what I want," said Arthur, "I want it more than anything—that's a violin."

"Have you ever had any pocket-money allowance?" asked Ann.

"Nary!" cried Arthur. "Prex said boys only got in mischief if they had money. Once I wrote Aunt Fontaine why she didn't give me a little now and then, an' she wrote, there was none to spare, and I didn't need it, s'long as I was provided for."

"Just so with me!" said Davy, finding a common grievance.

"Now an' then I had a nickel or a dime, an' once a boy's father, where I visited, gave us each a quarter," said Arthur.

"I think you should both have some regular pocket money. You will learn, in using it, how to save, how to spend, how to give. I can afford you very little, but something is better than nothing. I

will give you each sixty cents, on the first of every month."

Arthur made a rapid calculation. "It would take nearly two years saving up, to buy a violin out of that," he said.

"Probably you would not want to save every penny so long as that. Then what would you give away? One pleasure of having money is to give of our own," replied Ann.

"Much a body could give out of sixty cents!" cried Davy.

"One could give the tithe, according to the Scriptures—that would be six cents," suggested Ann.

"That would be a big share out of sixty cents," said Davy.

"One should never give grudgingly. If you did not feel even glad to give that much of your own, then you had better think of it, and pray over it, until you 'offered willingly.'"

"Pray over six cents! The idea!" cried Davy.

"Do you suppose a sparrow in Jerusalem, in Christ's time, was worth six cents? In fact two were worth only a farthing. Yet Christ said that God took thought for them. Besides, Davy, it is not 'only six cents' that is involved, it is a moral principle. It is not only giving, but consecration of ourselves, and what is ours, to God. Of course it is worth praying over. We need to pray over everything, great and small. To God nothing is small, nothing is great, all our soul affairs are priceless."

"Do you pray over—everything?" asked Davy, curiously.

"Yes. I hope I do. I wish to," replied Ann.

"S'pose I wouldn't be good, or mind you," Arthur put it bluntly, "would you pray over me?"

"Certainly! I should pray for wisdom and grace to manage you; and for you that better sense and rightness of mind might be given to you."

"Well, I wouldn't like to be prayed over," said Arthur, uneasily.

"Nor I," said Davy, with conviction.

"Why, you poor, dear children! Don't you suppose you have ever been prayed for?"

"No, no," they said in chorus.

"Surely you have. Aunt Fontaine no doubt prayed for you every day. Your parents, while they lived, prayed for you. More than that, Jesus Christ prays for you. Christ is no partial Master; do you not remember how he said to Peter, 'I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not!' If he prayed for Peter, he prays for you. Then, too, after the last supper in his prayer, our Lord said: 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for all them also which shall believe on me through their word.' Jesus is always bearing you in his heart."

There was a silence. When it had lasted long enough, Ann said, "Arthur, if you love a violin, you must have a musical ear, and can sing?"

"Oh, I can sing," said Arthur. "Some one said if I was in the city, I could get my teaching and some

money, for being a choir boy. Then I could earn enough for a violin."

"There is no opportunity for being a choir boy here," said Ann; "but no doubt there will be ways in which you can earn money. I like to see boys earn money; it teaches them how many cents there are in a dollar; and they learn, by earning, to spend money more judiciously. I don't like to see boys grasping after every cent they can see or hear of, but I do like to see them industrious and ready to earn."

"Will you pay me for doing things?" demanded Arthur.

"No," said Ann, "your allowance will be all the money I can afford you; and I think, as a member of the family, you should be glad to do what you can to help affairs move on well. In fact, we are all pretty industrious here, and I think you should do something in the way of work every day. I was just thinking of asking you and Davy to build me two rockeries, one on each side of the gate. There are plenty of stones and such material, in a corner, way at the back of the lot; you can bring them around in the wheelbarrow. It may take you, what time you want to spend on work during a week to build two nice rockeries. I don't want them laid up like walls. I will show you my idea when you begin. A great many plants grow best in rockeries, especially wild plants. Some day in late September we will spend in the woods, getting all kinds of roots and ferns for the rockeries, and early in the spring we'll go again."

"Aunt Fontaine never would let me go to the woods," said Davy; "she said they were damp, and that there were snakes there."

"I'm not afraid of snakes, very few of them are poisonous," said Ann. "We'll go to the woods often. In the frosty days we will go nutting, and have nuts for winter evenings. I like to make nut candy. Do you?"

"Yes, and popcorn balls," said Davy. "Mr. Black planted me some popcorn."

"Now I know how you can earn some money, both of you," said Ann, "for yourselves, for Sunday-school, and missionary money too, if you like. You can make popcorn balls, and nut candy, and pulled molasses candy, and sell it in little boxes at the grocery."

"Why y-y-y!" screamed Davy, "Maggie would *never* let us make candy in her clean kitchen, in the world!"

Ann was about to respond that she would settle Maggie as to the kitchen, when she prudently considered that it is well to hasten slowly, that she herself was a new-comer, and Maggie an old servant; also that domestic peace is worth a deal, and servants have their rights as well as other people; therefore she said calmly: "The kitchen! It will be a deal more fun to build a brick fireplace, under that big tree at the back of the garden, and do your cooking out there."

"S'pose it rains?" said Arthur.

"Build a shed over it," said Ann, indefinitely.

"Ain't you jolly! I always wanted to build a shed," said Arthur, and he turned handsprings down to the gate and back.

There was a sigh from within the room. "What can *I* do?" said Elizabeth, bitterly. "There's never anything good for me!"

"Dear Elizabeth," said Ann, "you can joy in their joy; you can make suggestions, you can buy their candy. It is often hard to begin to live in others, but lovely when you're used to it."

"I suppose I'll have to get used to it," sighed Elizabeth.

"You, more than the rest of us, can reach the mind of Christ, in being fully in harmony with the Father's will, as you are given to drink this bitter cup," said Ann. "'The cup that my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?'"

When she was alone in her room, Ann looked out into the moonlight night, that subdued in its soft splendor the baldness of the unbeautiful village. Much indeed there was for her to learn, to do, to teach, but Jesus "began to do and to teach" also, and there was the continual privilege of prayer. She whispered to herself: "Surely as Tabor is among the mountains and Carmel by the sea, my Lord ever liveth to intercede for me, and he hath known my soul in adversity!" And the prayer arose: "Despite my ignorance, dulness, and inexperience, Lord, let a true gospel message, clear, sweet and strong, go forth from my soul to these others."

Ann Bradford was young, strong, of an elastic

enterprising temper. As she said, she was commonplace, and she found pleasure in the daily common affairs of life. This was fortunate for the family to which she had fallen heir; ability to enjoy the administration of the commonplace secures order, comfort and economy in homes, creates abundance out of small supplies. Ann felt a certain glow and joy of possession, in knowing that this plain home and all in it was her own, and she gave herself heartily to improving and making the best of things. Mrs. Fontaine had cared little for beauty or variety in her home, the loss of friends, the crime of a brother, the long insanity of her sister, had shadowed her life, and made her older even than her years. Of song, laughter, amusements, little recreations and indulgences, she knew nothing. Duty and high principles had filled her days, but tenderness and concessions were out of her range. With Elizabeth's sufferings she could sympathize, and she exhibited her sympathy by spoiling the girl in a way that damaged her both morally and physically. With a boy, like Arthur, she had no sympathy at all; she supposed that all a boy needed was food, clothes and shelter, with education enough to enable him to earn his living. So with Davy, Mrs. Fontaine had no comprehension of Davy's needs outside of bed and bread. Ann experienced the advantage of some of Mrs. Fontaine's repressive training. There was a deal that Davy did not expect. Ann also experienced the evil of her aunt's system, for Davy was ungrateful, ill-tempered, suspicious.

One morning, while Davy and Arthur were busy building the proposed rockeries, one of the little girls of the village came to the gate, saying: "I have come to ask you to my party—to-morrow at three; my birthday party. I want you both."

"Jolly!" cried Arthur.

"We can't come," said Davy, "at least I can't."

Ann had come out to speak to Letty, and said: "Why, Davy! of course you can go, it will be real pleasant for you."

"I say I can't go, and that ends it," said Davy, turning away.

"Davy," asked Ann, when Letty had gone on, "why do you say you can't go to the party?"

"Because I do, and I can't and I won't; "and upstairs marched Davy, evidently striving not to cry.

Ann went to Elizabeth. Elizabeth was under a fresh air regimen; her windows were open, and she sat near them. Of course she had heard all that passed.

"Why won't Davy go to the party?" asked Ann. "Her life is too dull."

"It's because she hasn't proper clothes," said Elizabeth. "The others will have thin dresses, white, pink or blue, and ribbons and lace. Aunt Fontaine never would get such things for Davy. A brown sateen, a check gray gingham, some dull-colored wool gown is all Davy has. Aunt got what would wear, and not foster Davy's vanity. She scolded Davy like everything once, for asking for a

strip of velvet across the bottom of a black alpaca apron. She nearly made her out a heathen, for asking for edging on a white apron ; and once, when Davy put a rose in her hair when she was going out to a little party, aunt told her she was wickedly vain, and made her take it out."

"The poor child!" cried Ann, "why didn't you get her something, Elizabeth, and not let her be distressed that way?"

"What did I have myself?" asked Elizabeth. "Aunt would not have let Davy have 'frivolous things,' it was against her principles. She was not too stingy—but too good."

"Intending to be good, but much mistaken," said Ann, quietly. She went upstairs to Davy's room. Davy lay on her face on the bed, crying stormily. Ann sat on the bed beside her. "Dear little lassie, Elizabeth says you won't go to the party, because you have no pretty dress."

"Of course I haven't; and of course I won't go. Let me alone, can't you, Ann Bradford! Do you think I'll go in that dull brown sateen, that's been washed twice? I won't!"

"I wouldn't if I were you. It's not fit," said Ann; "you must have a pretty embroidered white dress, and a wide pink sash. Have you any pretty slippers?"

"Of course not—nor dress, nor sash—go away, I say."

"See here, Davy, I ought to have looked after your dress before now; but you are always so neat,

and you are so pretty you look well in anything, and really it did not occur to me that you had not all that a girl needs—pretty as well as useful. You see the house looked so dull, and Elizabeth did so need things to brighten her up, that I gave my attention to them and forgot you. Do excuse me, Davy. Your turn has now come, and we'll have you ready for that party. The sash and slippers you can buy this afternoon; we'll have real nice ones. There's not much time for a dress to be made, but I have in my trunk a very pretty white dress that I outgrew some years ago. It is the prettiest white dress I ever had. I can make it fit you easily; I'll work at it this afternoon and evening. I was looking over some of Aunt Fontaine's things yesterday, and there was a real handsome gold neck-chain and a worked handkerchief; you can have these, Davy, to keep, and wear them to-morrow."

"Aunt Fontaine's gold chain and best handkerchief!" cried Davy, electrified, sitting straight up. "Why, Ann Bradford, if you give me those to wear to a party it will be enough to make aunt come right out of her grave, to protest against fostering my vanity."

"No, Davy," said Ann, seriously, "it will not. If aunt does know of it now she will be glad. She always desired to do right, and what was for your good; now that she is where she has larger outlooks, and a wider way of thinking, she will know that God loves beauty for beauty's sake, and we are right to love and have what is dainty and attractive,

if we get it and use it in kindly, unselfish ways. Letty will be much happier in her party, if you are there, looking pretty, and feeling bright, and ready to lead her sports. Arthur could hardly go alone, and he wants to go. Elizabeth and I will much enjoy seeing you go off, all nicely dressed, and looking charming. You come and see me get out that beloved white gown, and try it on. It is in that big trunk at the end of the hall. I shall give you that trunk when you go to college, Davy; it will save some money if I give you my trunk and my textbooks—all that are now used,—and we can make over for you Aunt Fontaine's changeable brown silk, and her black Henrietta cloth; that will be two nice dresses to begin on. We can't be extravagant for you, Davy, but we can have you becomingly and well dressed, for all that, if we use all we have to the very best advantage."

That afternoon, after two or three hours of diligent sewing on her machine, Ann took the famous white dress down to Elizabeth's room, while she sewed lace in the neck and sleeves. Elizabeth watched her curiously, then said—

"Davy isn't so fond of you, you need do all that for her."

"It is without any consideration whether she is fond or not," said Ann. "Fondness doesn't grow in three or four weeks. It is my duty to do my best for Davy, to make her happy; not to let her nature be warped by idle repression."

"You are a funny kind of a Christian," said

Elizabeth. "Aunt Fontaine would have thought such decorating of Davy positively sinful—a pampering of 'high looks' and a 'proud heart.'"

"I have not so learned Christ," said Ann. "Christ went to a marriage feast, and helped to make it happier; he went to feasts and banquets; he says that some found fault with him for sharing the social pleasures of people. He did not blame Solomon for having been 'arrayed in all his glory'; that young ruler that came to him was rich, very rich, and, no doubt, as was the fashion of the day, he was richly arrayed; men in that age wore many ornaments and costly materials, yet 'Jesus looking on him, loved him.' He tested him as to his willingness to give up all for heaven, but he found nothing displeasing in his dress or manners. I should not wish Davy to be absorbed in dress and in her good looks, and there is no fear that she will, for above all things she loves books and study. I know Aunt Fontaine was a very good woman, yet there may have been something of the Christian life which her great troubles had shut her out from learning. Do you not know, Elizabeth, that God found fault with Israel, saying, 'Because thou servedst not thy God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart for the abundance of all things.' I think the heavenly Father loves to see his children happy-faced, to hear them laugh and sing. A cheery, laughing, buoyant child is a great pleasure in a home; why are not such acceptable children in the larger family of grace?"

"If that is the style of favorite children of God," cried poor Elizabeth, "then I must be a step-child, a cast-away! How can I be cheerful, laughing, happy, unable to walk, to lift myself, to do anything but lie in my bed or chair!"

"Dear Elizabeth, it is written, 'Now tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope.' Being cheerful, hopeful, contented, cannot make you less happy, nor can it make you physically worse. On the contrary, buoyant spirits may really help you to a physical improvement. Every year sees new discoveries in medicine and surgery; to-day are wrought by scientific skill, what would have been called miracles in other ages. I do not give up the idea of seeing you better, Elizabeth, even well. It is better to trust so, than to despair. We have always the Great Physician to apply to, to bless the means and open new methods. Then, too, if it is not God's way that you should be cured, it is yet open to you to lead a noble, blessed, spiritual life; a very helpful intellectual life. I remember Silvio Pellico, one of the world's greatest and most patient sufferers, writes, 'Blessed be the prison, since it has made me know the mercy and compassion of God.' Also he says, 'Sufferings add worth to a man.' Some one else writes,

"The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown."

Your trouble, dear Elizabeth, is a great one, but it

can be true of you, as of Israel, 'In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them.' Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

"It is easy for you to talk," cried Elizabeth, "you have everything your own way! What trouble did you ever have? None!"

Ann Bradford's face contracted a little. There is no human heart beyond childish years, that has not been torn by the ploughshare of sorrow. She answered quietly, "Elizabeth, the heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with its joy. What you say reminds me more than ever that it was necessary for our great High Priest and Head to lead a life of suffering here below, open and manifest sorrow, or we children of earth might never realize that he could sympathize with us. I know that whatever I say to you about your trouble, must seem futile. 'As vinegar upon nitre so is he that singeth songs to an heavy heart.'"

"Have you memorized *all* the Bible?" asked Elizabeth.

"No! I only wish I had, by head and by heart, much more of it; for just in proportion as we are thoroughly acquainted with the Scripture, are we happy, helpful, and spiritually strong. Spiritually as well as physically, Elizabeth, we are as what we feed upon," here Ann's eyes fell upon some of the many trifling novels which Elizabeth read, and she was silent.

"Oh, I know," said Elizabeth, "you think I should not read those books."

"Decidedly I do," said Ann, "they are weak and trashy, they are not even respectable English. They tend to make you morbid and miserable. Don't think I want to abolish fiction; many noble monumental works are fiction, so why not read them, and not mere *stuff*? Besides, you should read history, and natural science, and biography. Nothing can be more fascinating than Motley, Prescott, Macaulay, Irving, Green, Guizot, in history. Try for three months, Elizabeth, the reading which I shall help you to select, and see if you are not happier, if your whole mental tone is not raised."

Elizabeth yawned and did not answer. Ann privately considered that she might be forced to administer Elizabeth's reading as she had her druggist's account. C'list'an simply bought what Elizabeth sent her for.

Ann had finished the white dress when C'list'an came in. One of her chief joys was to go to funerals, and she had just come from one.

"You got there in time?" queried Elizabeth.

"Oh, yes, indeed, an' I wouldn't have missed it for money. Poor Mis' Nancy! Well, she did have a fine fun'ral, an' the biggest coffin ever you see. It took eight men to pack her in it, an' they jest *scrooched* under it. Poor Eddy Banks, he seems to have all his troubles come on him to onct! In four weeks time, here he's been burned out, an' got married, an' lost his Aunt Nancy."

As Ann hung away Davy's new gown, she thought that while C'list'an was patient, faithful and skillful, as Elizabeth's attendant, she was less than the most elevating society for her, and that evil must be counteracted by suitable reading, more outside society, and some literary interest; to all of which Elizabeth was hostile.

After breakfast next day, Ann said: "Now Davy is all ready for her party, I must see to Arthur's dressing."

"Dress up a boy!" cried Elizabeth; "who ever heard of such a thing? If he has a decent suit and shoes, that's enough."

"Oh, a boy nicely got up," said Ann, "is a delightful spectacle. I believe in taking great pains with a boy."

"Make a little silly dandy of him!"

"No, but a clean little gentleman. Now, the suit Arthur had on Sunday is good, and his shoes do very well. His necktie was wretched, and his handkerchief did not please me at all. His hair is just sawed off. I mean to take him to the barber. A boy feels just as nice when he knows he looks well, as a girl does.

"C'list'an says you are fixing his room, that small room over the back hall, all up with white curtains and pictures, and fancy things. I didn't know boys cared for nice rooms. I supposed they'd tear things up."

"Boys are human beings, my dear girl! They like nice and pretty things, and it helps to refine

them to have neat, refined surroundings. I think everything should be done to make home attractive to boys. Now, Arthur has lived in a kind of juvenile barracks, without any real home, and I am particularly anxious to cultivate home feelings in him as fast as I can. A man who has not home ties and affections is, to a large extent, a lost man."

When Davy and Arthur were ready for their party, Ann brought them to Elizabeth for inspection. Ann had curled Davy's hair, and Davy's eyes and cheeks shone in the delight of being, finally, prettily dressed; the gold chain made a little shining, rippling rivulet about her plump throat, and the wide pink sash was just the shade for her clear, dark complexion. She, full of joy, pirouetted on the toes of her new patent leather slippers before poor Elizabeth, and Elizabeth eyed her with jealous wrath.

Arthur had a handsome blue tie, a fine kerchief with a blue border, and in his buttonhole a bunch of blue violets, which Ann had begged from Mrs. Percy, who had them the year round.

"Cutting your hair has made you better looking," vouchsafed Elizabeth. "I hope you know how to behave yourself at a party. I suppose you don't. Davy will be so full of herself, that every one will see that she never had on anything nice before."

Having thus planted thorns in both their bosoms, Elizabeth said she "wished they'd start off, she was sick of looking at them." They went, something crestfallen, to Ann's sorrow, but recovered before

they had gone a block, for "it was only Elizabeth; no one minds her," said Davy, indifferently.

"There comes Susan Stryker," said Elizabeth, a few minutes after the children were gone. "I always see her, *she* is some fun."

C'list'an introduced Susan, a girl of eighteen, with thin, straight lips, and little black, gimlet eyes.

"Glad to see you!" said Miss Susan, in a flighty way to Ann, "most folks here are afraid of you, but I said I meant to come see what you were like. I met Davy and that boy flourishing off to Letty's party. The idea of Letty having a party! They'd better pay the grocery-bill than give parties; those folks just live by getting in debt. Heard the news, Elizabeth? Mrs. Lee's Sara in the city, *they say*, has run off with a circus actor. Just as like as not he's a married man! I never had any notion of Sara Lee. They say Mr. Teal, the member of the legislature, was in town Monday, drunk, drunk as he could be. Nice man that to legislate."

"You're mistaken about that, I'm sure, Miss Stryker," said Ann. "I happened to see Mr. Teal twice Monday, in the office of Mr. Grace, and at Mr. Gillespie's, and he certainly was sober, and seemed an intelligent gentleman."

"Oh, well," said Miss Susan, "Tom Coan told me, and Tom never thinks of speaking the truth!"

Susan Stryker stayed an hour, pouring out venom. In vain Ann tried to turn the conversation to safe and pleasant channels, or to cut the visit short. Susan reminded her of the "vain fellow," in the

Ninth Satire of Horace, and poor Ann felt herself like the dapper little Roman poet, who could not rid himself of his unwelcome company. When, finally, Ann succeeded in freezing Susan out, Elizabeth remarked, "Susan is always some fun; she's full of talk."

"Full of slander and falsehood, I'm afraid," said Ann. "She reminded me of Tennyson's Vivien:

"Defaming and defacing, till she left
Not even Launcelot brave, nor Galahad clean.'"

Something must be done for Elizabeth, else she would be morally as unfortunate as she was physically. Ann went across the street to call upon Mrs. Gates and Mrs. Percy.

"I want to talk to you about some plans I have been making," she said. "I had thought it better to wait, and be more acquainted with the people here, before I tried to bring in new ways. I don't want to put myself forward as a leader, especially now, while I am a stranger. I find I cannot put these things off. Elizabeth needs some help at once, if her mind is not to be as disabled as her body. Elizabeth is injuring herself mentally and morally by the books she reads, and the themes she dwells upon. On Monday Arthur will begin school and Davy will get at her studies. I have urged Elizabeth to study, but she is out of the habit of anything of the kind, and she feels restive about my controlling her in any way. I want to draw her pleasantly into some useful ways of spending her time, and I want you to help me."

CHAPTER VI.

“THIS IS MY FRIEND, O DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM !”

“Enough for me in dreams to see
And touch thy garment's hem,
Thy feet have trod so near to God
I may not follow them.”

WHEN Ann Bradford said, “I want you to help me to help Elizabeth,” Mrs. Gates and Mrs. Percy fell into meditation. Mrs. Gates wondered whether she was to be asked to teach Elizabeth knitting and embroidery; and Mrs. Percy whether she was to be requested to go and remonstrate with Elizabeth. Ann relieved their minds by explaining her plans. “I have been thinking of forming some clubs, reading clubs, and having them meet at my house, in Elizabeth's room, and then Elizabeth must have the benefit of hearing what is said and read, and she would become interested in spite of herself. Mere pride would lead her to read up, and be able to take some part in the work. I want to start with two clubs, just gatherings for reading, on some set subject. No fees, no officers, no rules, except to have a regular time of meeting, begin promptly on the hour, and give full attention to the work while

it goes on. I want to get up a Missionary Reading Club, to meet for two hours, once in two weeks, and read some of the lovely books that are now written about the countries where missionary work is done, and the people who are doing it. Once we begin, I am sure we should all be full of enthusiasm about the books read, and our Missionary Society would get the benefit of the new interest. I remember I sat up late of nights to read 'Cyrus Coan's Adventures in Patagonia,' and 'An English Governess at the Court of Siam.' The story of the Judsons in Burmah 'held my eyes waking so that I could not sleep,' and there are dozens more of books just as good. Now will you two belong to such a club? If I can tell Mrs. Gillespie that you will, I am sure she will be encouraged to go out and gather other members."

"Well, indeed we will belong!" said Mrs. Percy, heartily.

"How shall we get our books?" asked Mrs. Gates.

"I have a friend in a large library; she will send me lists of the best books on our subject, and some of them we can get, at very low rates, at the large second-hand stores. The others we can buy, those purchasing who are willing to do so. I will provide a book to start with, and I know Mrs. Gillespie will do the same. Probably Mr. Gillespie has a book or two in his library that will suit us. Whatever we do, we will not select a dull book; that would kill our club at the start."

"You're a fine planner, just like Dorothy," said Mrs. Gates.

"I believe this will help Elizabeth," said Mrs. Percy.

"I want to come yet nearer Elizabeth's needs," said Ann, "I want to start a study-reading club of girls. I want five girls of about sixteen, and one girl of fourteen, on Davy's account. I will provide a course of historical reading, and take charge of the club, and help it on. Their only expense will be a notebook for each, except as they wish to buy books on the subject, and then I will help them to get those as cheaply as I can. I do not know the girls that should come into this class. I wish them to meet for two hours one afternoon in a week in Elizabeth's room, and I must have nice girls, who have a desire to study, willingness to work, and time to come. You, Mrs. Percy, know all the people in Dillburg; you know the girls and their families. Perhaps the principal of the school here could suggest some girls to you. As I am an entire stranger, I want you to be so good and helpful as to go and see these girls for me, explain the plan and make up the number. If you will do that I know we shall succeed."

"Certainly, I will do it for you, Miss Ann, for Elizabeth, and for the sake of the girls themselves. It will be a great help to them. Dorothy always said this town needed waking up, and may be you'll wake it up."

"Please don't mention what I said about Eliza-

beth's need of study, and a new direction for her thinking," said Ann. "Of course I spoke to you in confidence. I would not, for anything, have remarks made that would come round to Elizabeth, and anger the poor child. She has enough to bear."

Ann went home feeling more cheerful ; surely by degrees she could bring about the changes that were so much needed. On the previous Sunday she had brought together four girls, with Davy, Elizabeth and Arthur, for the study of *Pilgrim's Progress*. She had succeeded in finding in the village copies enough of the wonderful dream for them all to use, and all had seemed greatly pleased. True to the usual experience, she had found it a work of time for these youth to find Scripture references. Their Bibles did not open readily at desired places. Some of them, whatever book was called for, began regularly at Genesis, and went over each title until the one needed happily rewarded search. Revelation was sought for in the Old Testament, and the Book of Kings was evidently supposed to be a shining ornament of the New. But Ann had been a Sunday-school teacher, and had had similar experiences. She had patience to help and to wait, and though the affair moved slowly, she told herself the speed would improve, and grimly assured herself that these young folks would know more about the Bible before she was done with them.

Ann and Elizabeth were alone at the tea-table. Elizabeth's appetite was fickle ; she leaned back in her chair and talked while Ann ate.

"You didn't like Sue Stryker, Cousin Ann, but what harm is there in talking as she does? She never lacks something to say. She can tell everything that has happened in this town since long before she was born, for she never forgets a thing that she hears. She has stories about everybody."

"The *harm* would depend upon what kind of stories they are. Do you remember many pleasant stories among them all: stories that make you think better of individuals, and of human nature at large?"

Elizabeth was silent. Ann continued, presently: "Did you ever find that the stories were not true? For instance, is it not very possible that the story of some one running away with a circus actor may be quite untrue?"

Elizabeth laughed. "More than half Sue's stories turn out to be false!"

"It seems very cruel to fabricate unkind stories about people, or to spread what we know may be fabrications. Even when the unpleasant reports are true, why spread them? A very ancient book, called The Shepherd of Hermas, has this thought—'For the remembrance of evils worketh death: but the forgetting of them life eternal.'

"When people have done the wrong things, they may also have repented. God says that when sins are repented of they are for Christ's sake forgiven, and also that being forgiven 'they are cast behind his back,' 'no more remembered,' 'blotted out,' and 'shall not be so much as mentioned' to the doer

for evermore. Now if this is God's way with sinners, why should not we humans follow in that gracious way?"

"O Cousin Ann!" cried Elizabeth, "you expect too much of one. You ought to consider that I have so much suffering and trouble, that much must not be asked of me!"

"Elizabeth," said Ann, "be royal; reign over suffering, do not let it tyrannize over you."

Undoubtedly such words fell into Elizabeth's mind to bear fruit in after days; they seemed, however to fall only to be carried off by birds of the air, or to die, and Ann was too apt to be discouraged, and to forget that unless a seed die it cannot spring up and bear fruit. Elizabeth was very vexing that evening, and when Davy and Arthur came home late, she tried to poison all their joy until they quarreled with her, and went angry to bed.

"Elizabeth, dear," said Ann, "you should promote and not spoil happiness."

"What do you pet those disagreeable creatures so for? Do you suppose they'll ever thank you for it? What will you ever be to them any way? Just somebody who was forced to look after them for a few years! They'll hate you for trying to govern them, and then finally forget you."

Ann felt downhearted enough, as she sat by her window, after she went upstairs. She loved to look out into the night and think; but to-night her thoughts were sad. Perhaps, as Carlyle said, "The sacred air-castles of her hope were doomed to shrink

into the mean clay hamlets of reality." But no, nothing is mean, nothing is finally disappointing which is built upon the love and promise of God.

She heard words. There was a great apple-tree near the window, and a bench under it. She heard C'list'an's voice and that of a man. C'list'an was at last, for the day, done with Elizabeth, and now had come out to her renegade brother. Not a very exhilarating change for C'list'an. C'list'an spoke—

"I smell liquor on your breath, Bill."

"C'list'an, you're always smelling liquor. You've got water on the brain."

"I wish you had. It's your good I'm looking out for."

"I'm all right. See this new suit you bought me! How do I look, honey? Fine?"

"Fine enough, if you don't fall into the gutter before the week's over."

"Well, I got through last Sunday. I think you might trust me a bit."

"Trust you! No, my dear boy. I don't trust you for an hour. You keep me in perpetual excitement. When you're sober, I wonder when you'll get drunk; when you're drunk, when you'll get sober."

"I reckon you'll get tired of me," whimpered the man, "and go and marry Mr. Black."

"You need not fear," said C'list'an. "I can't marry him nor anybody so long as I've got you to look out for. Single, I earn my own money, and lay most of it out on you; no brother-in-law would

have patience with you. I've done for you since you were three years old, and I reckon I will till you die. May the Lord send I live as long as you do, or you'll go to the county-house; you've never let me lay up a penny."

C'list'an uttered facts in a calm, uncomplaining tone. As Ann closed the window and turned away, she thought how heavy a burden C'list'an was daily bearing, cheerfully and kindly, putting all her wages into that "bag with holes" a drunkard's spending, working hard and not laying up anything for age or illness. Poor C'list'an! Miss Bradford felt a new sympathy for this other sharer of the lot below, which "for no whole day escaped care." She would try to help C'list'an to a deeper knowledge of the fellowship of Christ which sheds such comfortable light over the darkest paths of earth. When those two walked toward Emmaus, bowed and sorry under the shadows of death, when One came and walked with them, the night and the way and the sorrow were beguiled; there was shining and comfort all around; they hardly realized its sweetness, they knew nothing of whence it came, until "they knew him in the breaking of the bread."

Within a few days Mrs. Gillespie and Mrs. Percy had succeeded in collecting members for the two clubs which Ann Bradford proposed to form. The time of meeting was set, and it only remained to reckon with Elizabeth. If Elizabeth positively refused to permit the clubs to meet in her room, or to have anything to do with them, then they must

meet in the parlor, which Ann had transformed into a very cheery little library; and for a long time at least, Elizabeth would receive no benefit. Ann meditated on the most tactful way of proposing the affair. An express parcel came to her aid. It was sent by a college classmate, as a memento for Ann's birthday, but Ann took it, as she loved to take all things, as a gift direct from the tenderly caring Lord. The present was a very beautiful, soft, dainty afghan. Ann opened the parcel in Elizabeth's room; she uniformly tried to bring all the interest which she could into that room. Elizabeth allowed herself to admire the afghan greatly. Ann threw it over Elizabeth's lap.

"It just suits your complexion," she said, "I will bring it in for you, to throw across your lap and feet, every time our clubs meet." Then she re-arranged the draping a little, so that Elizabeth's two slender feet showed. "Elizabeth, as you so seldom wear out shoes, I am sure you can afford the very prettiest in the market! Suppose I write to a firm that deals in fine fancy shoes, and get you pink, blue and white kid slippers, with rosettes, to wear to match your new wrappers?"

This delighted Elizabeth. She had been secretly envying Davy's new patent leather ties; but it was not one of Elizabeth's ways to state what she wanted, she preferred to go without, and be aggrieved by her deprivations. However, she heartily accorded with the slipper plan, and Ann said she would write by the afternoon mail.

Then—"What clubs?" asked Elizabeth.

"Oh, two delightful clubs that I have been getting up; I know you will enjoy them so much;" and Ann launched into eager description of the delights of reading clubs.

Elizabeth could not avoid being pleased with the idea, but it was so hard for her to agree cheerfully to any one's plans.

"Suppose I should be sick, folks couldn't be in here," she said.

"Oh, then, of course we should meet in the library. But I know you will not be sick, Elizabeth. You look better every day, now that you have more out-of-doors air, more pretty things, more life about you. Who knows how well you will be some time! When those slippers come, let us match them exactly in silk or crêpe ties. I do like matched things."

"You are so different from Aunt Fontaine! She never thought of my having fancy things or bright colors. She thought such indulgences almost wicked."

"Perhaps she had no taste for them, and did not think about them at all. I think it right, very right for you to have all that you can to make you look and feel brighter. I think invalids should have all the cheerfulness, and encouragement, all the attractive things they can get, to take their minds from themselves. These things help them to bear their various privations. God has seen fit to send on you a trouble which deprives you of many means

of enjoyment. I believe he is pleased, glad, to see you having all the pleasures and comforts that you can. God might have made all flowers dust color, or made no flowers at all; he gave us flowers and butterflies, and lovely painted birds, for beauty's sake, to enrich our lives. I believe he is pleased that you can have pretty slippers, wrappers and ties."

"Ann, you speak just as if Christ was a real person, near us, somewhere about here—just as he was once, with John, Mary, Martha, the others, here on earth, an every-day friend."

"So I believe he is," said Ann. "Don't he say, 'Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world'? I should be very lonesome if I did not believe that."

"Lonesome! Ann, what a strange thing for you to say."

"Why is it strange? Christ offers to be, not 'a stranger and a wayfaring man in the midst of the land to tarry but a night,' as a guest at a hotel, and go his way. He says rather he will abide with us, always hearing, sympathizing, ready to seek help, save. 'This is my companion, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem!'"

"Now," said C'list'an, laying down her sewing, "I don't know how a body can get right up to that mark, but it sounds right, and I know it is right. Most people's religion don't seem of much practical use to 'em; not much more use than a pin 'thout a head!"

"Don't say most people, C'list'an, in saying that you slander the church of God. There are more, more, more Christians living in this fellowship than you think. Perhaps, C'list'an, you think it is unusual, merely because you have not reached to such living yourself," said Ann.

"Me live that way!" cried C'list'an, picking up the white school apron which she was trimming with edging for Davy. "Why! I'd be clean scared of myself, if I felt like that."

"I tell you, Cousin Ann," said Elizabeth, "it is all well enough for *you* to talk like that, and feel like that, for you have had no troubles at all. Every thing goes just right for you."

"Do you think I'm one of the people exhausted by too much money, and too little trouble?" said Ann, smiling.

"I shouldn't say exhausted, in regards to you," said C'list'an, glancing at Ann's fine, strong, erect figure.

"Dr. Helen Train tells me most of her nervous patients are of that over-pampered description," said Ann.

"Any way, Ann, you never have a bit of trouble," urged Elizabeth.

"An old writer," said Ann, "has this sentence—'If God putteth no grievous cross upon you, let your brother's cross be your cross, which is a certain token of true brotherly love.' I think that is in the first Epistle of St. Clement of Rome."

"Then you can take your share in mine," said

Elizabeth ; "perhaps that makes you rather patient with me."

"Rather!" cried C'list'an, "why she's just made of patience with you two Tracys, an' that Arthur. I think that mebbly Miss Bradford's the kind that the Lord didn't need to *drive* into being good. Some folks on the road to heaven is as balky as half-broke mules, or as all-abroad as a passel of pigs. 'Minds me of an uncle I lived with when I was a little girl. That man wouldn't never look up. You couldn't make him see a sky above him nor a God behind the sky. Land sakes, he was just bent over, like the rakin' man in that Progress book on your table. Just naturally he wouldn't look up, that man wouldn't, till God just took him and laid him flat on his back, then, reasonably he couldn't look no other way!"

C'list'an shook out the three white aprons, remarked absently, "Them's pretty," and carried them up to Davy's room. Elizabeth looked at Ann, they both smiled.

"C'list'an is *so* funny," said Elizabeth. "Sometimes I think she is a Christian, and then again I think she isn't."

"As Browning says of one of his characters," said Ann. "'He at least believed in soul, and was very sure of God.'"

"Is that enough?" asked Elizabeth.

"Indeed no; but it is a good foundation to build upon."

Ann Bradford, in her anxieties about Elizabeth's

mental development, was unaware that she herself was daily doing something to educate this girl, leading her into higher thinking.

School had opened for Arthur; Davy had set herself sedulously to work with the promise of going the next year to the city, and having a tutor to complete her preparation for the university. Davy was a passionate lover of books, full of ambition. There had been nothing to hinder her devoting her time to Elizabeth's light literature, and so frittering away her mind. Instead, she had aspired to what was higher, and read standard literature. She was willing to be guided by Ann in affairs literary, for she greatly respected Ann's college education. Was not such an education, at present, almost the acme of her own hopes?

"Should I never read novels?" she asked Ann.

"If you wish to be thoroughly well educated you should read but few novels before you are eighteen. There are some great monumental works of fiction which you should read before that time. Don't be afraid of reading standard literature, which is supposed to be out of fashion. Your speech and your writing will be more elegant, your thinking cleaner and clearer, if you do not neglect Addison and Irving. Their works are for reading not once, but several times."

There was nothing to complain of in Davy's method of study and reading, unless that she devoted herself to these too exclusively. Ann believed in building up a strong body for a robust

mind to inhabit, and Davy wanted to sit up too late, and take too little exercise.

When October came, every Saturday was spent in the woods, nutting or bringing home young trees and plants. A fern bed was made in a moist, shady corner, a bed of arum, crane's bill, and other wood-plants was made at the north end of the verandah; vines were planted, trees and flowering shrubs set out. Davy really enjoyed some of this work, and Ann made it more agreeable, by giving her a fund of botanical information that Davy saw would come in helpfully in future studies in botany. Ann Bradford had a good memory, and she had been a diligent, painstaking, if not a brilliant, student. She was exactly the teacher Davy needed.

Excursions to the woods were a new feature of life in this household.

"Aunt Fontaine never left me for a whole day!" cried Elizabeth, who greatly resented these diversions. "She thought it looked mean and unkind to make the difference between me and other people plainer and plainer, by taking Davy off to picnics and rides, and leaving me alone."

"You are not alone, Elizabeth; there are three servants left at the house, so that you can want for nothing. If Davy and Arthur and I remained at home, because you cannot go, it would be no physical betterment to you, and a direct disadvantage to us. We need the exercise and change, and are every way better for having it. Of course, if you were with us we should enjoy it more, but because

you cannot go is no good reason for our remaining at home," said Ann, firmly.

"You are so selfish, Ann Bradford! I never saw anything like it."

"Why, Elizabeth, I do all that I can for you, and for every one."

"Oh, do, do! You run doing into the ground, but you're selfish, you think of yourself, you want to be liked and appreciated. There's Miss Nevins; I'd like *her* to live in the house with me. She never knows that she is doing things for people; *she* don't know that she exists. I like that kind of a person. Aunt Fontaine never thought of herself at all. She didn't know there was such a person as herself. That's what I like."

Ann's eyes grew wide with wonder.

"Well," she said, emphatically, "I have heard of people who were selfish, wanted to absorb time and attention; but I never before saw one who was so superlatively selfish as to demand the absolute self-obliteration of others as the price of living with her."

"I never was so talked to in my life!" cried Elizabeth.

"It is a pity you had not been; it might have done you good."

On the one side there were the exactions of Elizabeth to contend with, and her intense jealousy of Davy and Arthur. On the other side was Davy, for Davy, on her part, was not less trying. She drew a line where she would cease to obey Ann, and that

line was soon reached. Ann thought it right and reasonable that Davy should keep her own room in order. Maggie did the regular biennial housecleaning and weekly polished the windows, but the daily care of the room and its weekly sweeping Ann charged to Davy. Davy seemed to consider it a mark of genius to have about her disorder. Her bureau drawers were in dire confusion; the closet door hung open; towels lay on the floor, shoes and garments where they happened to drop.

"What did Aunt Fontaine do about it?" Ann asked Maggie.

"Oh, she told Davy to do it, and then did it herself."

Going one day into Davy's room, when Davy was at Mrs. Gillespie's reciting her algebra, Ann stood dismayed at the unmade bed, the carelessly-left wash bowl, the general dust and disorder. She crayoned, "O DAVY," on a large card, and fastened it on the looking-glass. For several days thereafter Davy locked her room door when she went out.

"Why don't you take away her key?" said Elizabeth, highly delighted at the strife.

"I would not do such a thing," said Ann, "persons have a right to keys to their room doors, and to be able to fasten themselves in and the public out, if they choose. Why should I demean myself to tyranny, because Davy is a little rebel?"

Another point with Davy was, that she would not mend any of her clothing; stockings were left undarned, buttons off, gloves ragged. Davy thought

it became a literary person to be thus neglectful. Ann advised her that here she was immensely mistaken and behind the day, that both as a lady and a scholar, it behooved her to be in perfect order, with all her belongings scrupulously nice. However, in regard to the mending, as C'list'an had time and did it well, and Davy really was too sedentary in her habits, Ann did not greatly object to turning the needle-work over to the maid. But the room cleaning was another pair of gloves, it was excellent exercise. How often in these little contentions must Ann lift up the cry,

“Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,
Let thine outstretched wing
Be like the shade of Elim's palm,
Beside her desert spring.”

CHAPTER VII.

“THEY GO FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH.”

“And strong in him whose cause is ours,
We grasp the weapons he has given:
The light, the truth, the love, of heaven.”

“How do you get on with that boy?” asked Mrs. Percy of Ann. “I know I never could handle a boy. Girls are different.”

“I don’t know but Arthur is quite as easy to deal with as Davy or Elizabeth,” said Ann.

“That may be, those Tracy girls are so spoiled.”

“Oh, they do very well, on the whole; much better than ever I expected,” said Ann, who was Napoleonic in her ideas as to the household linen. “But Arthur is really a very good boy, a pleasant little man, and easily managed.”

“If you got into trouble with him, I suppose you could get Mr. Grace or Mr. Gillespie to help look after him.”

“If I get where I have to ask outside help, to manage my household,” said Ann, “I’ll consider myself a dead failure, and give up the household.”

“But you might need advice.”

"So I might. Still, in domestic affairs, it is better to work out one's own salvation. Every boy is an individual, and needs methods suited to his individuality. So far as I can see, it is best to study the boy, and then look up the methods the case indicates. Fortunately, Arthur's is not a difficult case to diagnose or remedy. The fact is, Mrs. Percy, I think I naturally take to little boys. I like them and sympathize with them. Arthur is so glad to be individually liked and mothered and petted for the first time in his life, that he really is very good indeed."

Arthur, on his part, was getting on very well for the present, but, as frequently happens with older people, he was made miserable by fears for the future. His anxiety about what *might be* would have kept him awake of nights, had he not always been so exceedingly sleepy when he went to bed! His disturbance reached such a height that he took his best comrades into his confidence. "Oh, if she should, and if she did, what ever would he do!"

"Pooh," cried the comrades, "do you have to mind *her*; she ain't a relation! Is she your boss? What would she do if you didn't mind?"

Arthur admitted that maybe she would not do anything.

"Only somehow it seems like I'd *have* to mind her, more'n I did the Prex, where I went to school. He'd keep you in holidays or send you to bed 'thout supper, or even whack you, but somehow it's harder 'bout not minding Cousin Ann, 'cause she just looks

kind of quiet, like she never 'spected you'd think of not mindin' her. Oh, dear me! Wish't I was grown up!"

Late October gave a brief revival of summer warmth. One moonlit evening was so balmy that Ann sat swinging in a hammock stretched on the new verandah. Arthur gathered up all his courage to know his fate at one fell swoop. He went and sat down beside her. Ann gave his close-cut hair a friendly rub. "How do you come on, Arthur, these dâys?"

"Oh-a-a, pretty well. But, its comin' winter pretty soon."

"So it is. May be cold enough in a month," replied Ann.

"Freezing. Boys say it freezes hard ice here; an' the pond slick as glass."

"I expect so."

"I say, Cousin Ann, *do* you believe in skating?" desperately.

"Skating! Certainly I do. I'm fond of skating; I thought it would be good for my health, and I learned. I've got lovely club skates. I can cut a star in the ice. Can you skate? Of course you can."

"No, I can't. Prex wouldn't let us, 'fraid we 'd break through, or fall on our heads, or hurt our backs."

"What nonsense. I'm going to teach you to skate. Before the winter's over, I'll have you the best skater of your age in Dillburg."

What rapture! Arthur was breathless with joy.
“But I’ve no skates.”

“We’ll buy some: clubs. We must stretch income to cover skates; they’re necessary articles.”

“When’ll you buy ’em?”

“Just as soon as some good ones are brought here.”

“Great Scott! ain’t you a tip-topper! I say, I wish I could do something for you, Cousin Ann.”

“So you can, there was something I meant to talk to you about. I don’t see why boys should be more helpless than girls. There is no reason that they should depend on women and girls for things that they might learn to do themselves. I think every boy should learn to keep his room neat, make his bed, and sew on his buttons. I want you to learn all those things. I want you to begin at once. I see you are careful to hang up your clothes, and your nightshirt; and keep your brushes clean.”

“They made us do *that* at school, or we’d get black marks. But, Cousin Ann—if—I make bed and sew buttons—an’ keep my room tidy, the fellows will all call me ‘Miss Nancy,’ an’ ‘molly-coddle,’ an’ ‘apron-string,’ an’ all that.”

“Indeed they won’t; if they see that you are a manly boy; if you can skate, swim, ride horseback, hit the bull’s-eye in the middle when you fire at a mark; if you can ‘skin the cat’ and turn summersaults on a trapeze-bar, you can sew and make beds all you like, and no one will peep against it.”

As this vista of manly glories opened before him,

Arthur's eyes glowed at the beauteous vision. He fairly caught his breath. "O Cousin Ann, can I do all those things! I am practising on the trapeze every day at Billy Baker's, but I didn't let you know, 'cause I thought you wouldn't like it."

"Come, come, that's not the way to do—always be fair and above board, and you'll find me reasonable. Can you ride a horse?"

"Well, once or twice, when I went to visit Hal Kite for a few days, there was an old horse in his pasture; we rode bareback."

"I'd like you to ride well. This morning when I was looking over the things in the attic, to see what I had to make good use of, I found in a trunk a nice saddle. It must have belonged to Aunt Fontaine's husband or brother. If you'll bring it down to-morrow morning you can begin to ride every day. The first few days, until you get acquainted with Dandy and the saddle, you had better keep inside the gates, and have Mr. Black help you a little. After that you can ride in the street. You must learn all you can about riding this year, for when Davy goes off next year, I think I must sell Dandy and the surrey. My expenses will be so heavy that I cannot afford luxuries. You and I must make our excursions on foot, and it won't hurt us."

"And the swimming and shooting?" demanded Arthur.

"I shall ask Mr. Black to teach you to swim next summer, and before you go away to school, I'll have you taught to handle a rifle."

"Well, I just tell you I *will* learn to make my bed and do up my room. I'll begin to-morrow, and I'll do it well, too; so I will."

"I'll show you how, and the first button that comes off, I'll show you how to put it on."

"Oh, I know. I've watched Miss Pringle sew 'em on times an' times, when my clothes was on me. I know how, you'll see. I wish there was something else I could do for you, Cousin Ann, I truly do."

"There is," said Ann, promptly. "Davy is giving me a deal of trouble, keeping her room disorderly, and going about with buttons off her shoes, and glove fingers ragged. I am so orderly that disorder half kills me, it makes me nearly sick. I wish you'd keep your room and buttons so nice that you would be an example to Davy, and I think when you are doing these things for yourself, you might shame her into doing better."

What small amount of chivalry inheres in the soul of a twelve-year-old boy awaked by these confidences. Davy was not behaving, and Ann was distressed thereby.

"You bet, I'll just nag that Davy till she does better," said Arthur.

"Davy is a great comfort to me about her studies, she works splendidly," said Ann; "but in some other things she is a cross."

"I wish I could be a great comfort to you in my studies," said Arthur; "I b'lieve I'll study harder."

"I went to see your teacher yesterday, about how you get on, and he said, 'Pretty well in most

things,' but that there was much to be desired in your ways with your arithmetic."

"I know," said Arthur, "but there's so little sense in arithmetic."

"Phew! You'll find it's full of good sense, if you once understand it. Nothing more so. Arithmetic is like a boy in that. You see arithmetic is one of the indispensable affairs. If you go through college, you will have to take many mathematical studies, at the base of which lies arithmetic; if you don't go to college, and choose a business life, then a thorough knowledge of arithmetic and bookkeeping are equally indispensable. So long as you surely must know arithmetic, you might as well tackle it heartily to begin with. There is no sense in fighting the inevitable. While you work at it, work honestly. There are two good texts for students. 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do; do it with thy might,' and 'Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.' I used to brace myself up with those texts over studies that I did not like."

"Well," said Arthur, "teacher told me to bring my arithmetic home to-night and study, and I meant to skip the study, but I s'pose I'd better go do it."

"Indeed you had. Study arithmetic every evening at home. Davy is studying in the back parlor. Go there and get to work, and ask Davy to help you over the hard places. She can. I believe in the tutor system of study; the more you are helped

over hard places, the more time you have for work, and the pleasanter the work is. All that is required is that you understand the help, and learn the principles, and try to apply them for yourself."

Arthur went off, and Ann lay back in the hammock smiling to herself. She had known all about the neglected arithmetic, the private gymnastics at Billy Baker's, the yearnings after skating ; all she wanted of the boy was to be honest and open, conscience-guided in his doings.

Ann's heart was full of cares and plans, her days were full of occupation. All the improvements that she could afford to make on her new home were finished; the house was changed and brightened, and the grounds gave promise of spring loveliness. Maggie had finished house-cleaning, the former shut-up, untasteful parlor, was a bright cheery library, the room that had been Aunt Fontaine's was a study-room of evenings, and had a folding-bed and screen-concealed washstand so that it could be used as a bedroom for transients. An air of cheerfulness, brightness, enterprise pervaded the house. Aunt Fontaine's old-time notions of a richly loaded table, dull, shut-up rooms, no amusements, unbeautiful raiment were passing out of sight.

Ann Bradford applied not only her economic instincts but her physiological and chemical knowledge to her table. Plenty of good plain food, well cooked, appetizing, she demanded, but little pampering of the palate on high seasoning and sweetmeats.

"You're right down stingy," cried Elizabeth. "Aunt Fontaine always had rich cake or mince pie for me, if I wanted it between meals, and we had cake, pie, preserves, and pickles on the table three times a day."

"All of which spoiled your appetite, ruined your digestion, tended to the destruction of complexion, prevented your building up muscle. I want to give you a foundation for physical improvement. I don't despair of seeing you able to leave your chair and bed some day, Elizabeth, and to secure that, you must live hygienically. Have a lunch when you wish it; there will always be beef tea, graham crackers, bread and butter, lemonade, raw egg, whipped with lemon and sugar. That will be wholesome."

Davy entered her complaints. "I like hot bread. Why don't we have soda biscuits? My coffee isn't half strong enough. Why isn't there coffee at noon? Why don't you have mince and lemon pies? There hasn't been a slice of fruit cake on the table since you came here."

"Go look in the glass Davy, and see how much clearer your complexion is since I came, and how clear your eyes are," said Ann, laughing. "I'm building you up for the future, not merely pampering your appetite for the present. You haven't said headache for two months, and you haven't skipped a meal for a month. You used to say you were not hungry at meal time."

"Well, now there's nothing of any account to get

between meals, and what pickles, preserves and common cake is in the storeroom I can't have, for Maggie's set up a key."

"You will always find plenty of apples, graham crackers and bread and butter," said Ann, who knew all about that key.

"Well, who wants to eat that kind of stuff?"

"Hungry people," said Ann, very calmly, "and if one is not hungry one certainly should not eat. The Scripture, 'Do thyself no harm,' may go a good way. We should remember that we are here for loving, joyous service of our Lord, and when we lower our vitality and weaken health, we rob our God. There is a good French saying, 'Quand la bête est gênée, elle gêne l'âme.' That is, when the body is irritated, it irritates the indwelling soul. Let us keep sound bodies and calm, strong souls. Then the soul will always be ready to see and pursue the right, and the body will be its willing instrument."

Maggie had her queries about the housekeeping. "Miss Bradford, when are we going to do the fall preserving?"

"What preserving, Maggie? I see many jars of preserves in the store-closet now."

"Yes, ma'am. Mis' Fontaine an' me, we put up the strawberries, the early cherries, an' the currant jelly, 'fore she was took. She always put up late pears in pickle, an' preserves, apple an' quince jelly, an' quince preserve, about this season."

"There are none of these fruits on the place?"

"Land no. We bought 'em," said Maggie.

"And there was the sugar, and the time," said Ann, "that made them pretty expensive. Now, I have no time nor inclination to make preserves; and I'm sure you have enough to do, without crowding that work in, Maggie. Such things are not needful, nor are they healthful; and they are costly. As I have these two children to see through college, and some other heavy expenses to meet for the next four years, I must be economical. I don't want to set a poor table, nor am I stingy, but I cannot be wasteful, and I want you to help me run the kitchen department as comfortably and economically as possible."

"Why, of course," said Maggie, "and as for stingy, you spend full as much as Miss Fontaine, only in a different way. The house looks much prettier and pleasanter, and the girls are much better dressed. 'Pears to me your money tells better, Miss Bradford."

"Aunt Fontaine did the very best, according to the way she was brought up," said Ann, "but I've come up a different way. I suppose the world moves on, Maggie, but I never expect to be a better Christian than my aunt, nor a nobler woman."

"Yes, that's sure, she was a good woman; and she's gone to her reward. But so long as you're here, speaking of kitchen affairs, Miss Bradford, *there's the pig*. You know we've raised the pig to kill—and it's a big one, and come cold weather, along Thanksgiving time, why, Mis' Fontaine she

had the pig killed, and we put up lard and sausage, and I made headcheese, and we smoked the hams and shoulders, and a strip or two of bacon."

Ann Bradford looked thoroughly disgusted. She had kept well away from the pig-pen in its distant corner of the lot, and she had not contemplated its grunting occupant in the light of future provisions. However, Ann was prompt in her thinking.

"Since the pig is there, and must be killed," she said, "and you and Mr. Black understand the matter, you must see to it whenever it seems proper to do it. I know nothing about it, and shall have nothing to do with it. I have better use for my time, in teaching these girls, doing the sewing that C'list'an cannot do, keeping the house in order, and trying to do some social and church work. Hereafter, we will not keep a pig. I don't believe much in pork eating. A pig is a noisy, unhealthful animal to have about, and I think there should be a town ordinance against keeping pigs. Pigs in town bring fevers and sore throats. If Dillburg is behind the times, there's no reason why I should be. When you've executed that unhappy animal, Maggie, I shall have the pen chopped into kindling-wood, and that end of the lot turned into an asparagus bed." And Ann, not fully in harmony with village domesticity, went to give Davy her Latin lesson.

The lessons were usually recited in Elizabeth's room. Ann thought they might prove help and incentive to Elizabeth. Indeed, they did set Elizabeth thinking.

"Ann," she said, "why are you so thorough about all that you do?"

"Because, as a servant of God, I am in all things working for God, and it is written, 'Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully.' Better reason than fear of a curse is to follow the example of the Lord I love, who does well all that he does; and again, I cannot feel that anything done for him can be too well done."

"You have a deal of patience with Davy," said Elizabeth, "and she really interferes with your just rights very often."

"George MacDonald says, that 'one of the grandest things about having rights is, that being your rights you can give them up, for love and peace sake,'" said Ann, smiling.

"Ann," said Elizabeth, "things don't seem to worry or ruffle you much; I've watched you. Things fret me—how do you do it?"

"Naturally, as you are less well and strong, dear child, you are more nervous and easily fretted than I am. But there is a place of calm for you, too, dear Elizabeth, I have found it, 'Dwell in the rock, and be like the dove, that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth.'"

"I don't understand such things as you do," said Elizabeth, forlornly, "but I ought to get some where or do something, for Davy is always ahead of me. She has everything, and I have nothing."

Elizabeth's jealousy of Davy distressed Ann ex-

ceedingly, she looked at the fretting girl with sympathy, saying, "Elizabeth, there is no reason why Davy should surpass you in a noble spiritual living, nor in a well-ordered mind, filled with general information. You have been taking hold of the work of our Pilgrim's Progress Class, and of our two clubs, very nicely, and I know you enjoy it. I wish I could persuade you to really study some each day. It will be as easy for me to teach you French, as to teach Davy Latin; and if you would begin now, to study two hours in the morning and one in the afternoon, taking up French and literature, you could put in a good winter's work. Try it, Elizabeth, for three months, and if after that trial you find that you do not enjoy it, or it is not good for your health, I will say no more about it. If you have real mental occupation you will not be worrying so much over yourself or Davy."

"Well," said Elizabeth, slowly, "I will try it. I hate so to be the last and least of everything! By the time I've spent all my money on books, I expect I'll give the whole thing up."

"You can have books of mine, until Davy needs them for her Freshman year. That will give them to you for a year and a half, and by then you'll need others for yourself," and Ann hastened away to bring down French grammar and dictionary, English literature, and other books. "There," she said, as she placed them all, with tablets and pencils, on a round table near Elizabeth's chair, "you look quite literary already. Why should you not go on in your

studies, until you write lovely stories, as Dorothy Camp does?"

"No," said Elizabeth, sadly, "no; Davy means to write the stories."

"More than one in a family can write—the family of Guizot the historian, were all writers: himself, his first and second wife, his son, and his two daughters. A family of such similar tastes must be delightful."

"Unless they were jealous, and hated each other for it."

"O Elizabeth! do not think such things. 'He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.' Where love of Jesus dwells in a home, there jealous rivalry and envy die away."

Ann found another way of helping on Elizabeth. One day a pleasant, delicate-looking woman came to her, with a note of introduction from Doctor Helen Train. "I live," she said, "by teaching embroidery; I have been very ill, and Doctor Train has been so good to me. She thought it would benefit my health to have a change and travel a little; and so I am going from town to town, staying for a week in each, teaching all kinds of fancy work. I want a quiet home in each town, a room where the ladies, who wish to learn of me, can come, and I should so like to pay for it in giving lessons in the family." She glanced about. "You look so kind, and it is so pleasant here, is there no one I could teach? Might I stay here? I'll be so little trouble."

Ann felt a longing to help this struggling sister,

and there was Elizabeth. She had greatly wished to beguile Elizabeth into more use of her hands. Mrs. Percy had said to her, and she had felt herself, that Elizabeth was allowing her hands and arms to weaken by disuse, and that her whole system would be helped, if she could be brought to use her muscles more. She explained the case to little Miss Adams. "If you could interest Elizabeth in your talk and pretty work; tell her stories of the city, and of your experiences! You could be a help to her and to me, if you could rouse her to a little enthusiasm over this work."

Miss Adams's face brightened. This was such a pleasant way of putting it: it made her feel independent. "I believe I could," she said, "for I am enthusiastic myself. Doctor Train calls me a 'needle artist.'"

"At noon, Arthur can take your advertisement down to the newspaper office, and after dinner you had better go and see Mrs. Percy, and Mrs. Gillespie, and some other ladies who may be interested in what you have to show. In the meantime, take your box of specimens, and come see Elizabeth."

The embroidery appeared very attractive. Davy went quite wild over it, but Davy was not to take lessons.

"Your studies are enough, and I cannot afford it for you, dear, the material is expensive. Some time Elizabeth may be able to teach you, when she is proficient," said Ann.

"You never do anything for me!" cried Davy, angrily, but in fact this learning embroidery was but the whim of a moment, because the patterns and material were exquisite, and Davy loved beauty. On the whole, she hated a needle more than she loved wrought roses.

Davy's petulant "You never do anything for me," did not hinder Ann from saying to her next day at dinner,—

"Davy, why is it that you never ask one of your young friends to take tea with you? Wouldn't you like to do it?"

"Ask a body to tea!" cried Davy; "Aunt Fontaine would have *fainted* at the idea!"

"I shan't faint," said Ann, "people ought to cultivate social and friendly ways, and know how to entertain company. I think it would be nice, if you had some one of the girls to tea with you at least once a week. I'd like to know when one is coming, so as to have some little treat for tea. You could have your friend in the library, or up in your room, and there are plenty of books to look at, and I could lend you my portfolio of mounted pictures."

"In your room." The words revealed to Davy a sudden vision of great disorder. Yet the room was large, sunny, provided with nice, comfortable things. Ann had done away with Aunt Fontaine's patchwork outer quilt, and furnished a white counterpane and worked pillow-shams, which often lay on the floor. There were pictures on the wall, books

on the shelves, and pots of ferns on the window-seat. It would be nice to sit there, laughing and chatting with a friend!

"I'll ask Louise Crane to-morrow!" cried Davy, and next morning Ann smiled to herself, as she heard a vigorous cleaning up going on in Davy's room. It seemed that she had struck a way of getting that room in order once a week at least!

"Is it only girls that go out to take tea?" asked Arthur, pensively.

"Certainly not, boys, too," said Ann. "Tell me what boy you wish to ask each week. Choose the nicest, so the rest of us can enjoy the visits."

"What is there to amuse them?" asked Arthur.

"Buy a box of dominoes out of your allowance, and I will show you how to make jack-straws, a fox-and-geese board, and a sliced map and picture," said Ann. "If you haven't things that you want, go to work and make them."

"Do you really like all this?" queried Elizabeth.

"Yes, really," said Ann, heartily, "and I cultivate the liking. I want, as Paul said, 'to be all things to all, if I may save some.'"

Ann did not miss the little opportunities of giving pleasure. One day she happened to say, "I never looked over Aunt Fontaine's things, except those in one bureau, when I gave Davy the beads and the handkerchief, and said I would make up the brown silk and the best black, when she went to college.

There are two trunks full in the attic, that I must look over."

"I always so wanted to look into those trunks," cried Elizabeth.

"Then they shall be brought down right here and opened in your room," said Ann. "I think we may find things that would be useful to Maggie and C'list'an; also things to help me out with Davy's wardrobe. I don't believe in keeping a quantity of goods locked up. Set them in circulation. In fact, Elizabeth, here's a secret. I'm hoping I may find things in these trunks that will help out with Christmas gifts. I'm terribly short of money, and I won't overstep my due allowance."

* * * * *

It was the last night of the year. Dorothy Camp was reading a letter from Ann Bradford. "The year is ending; this year of events has closed my college days, and has set me in such different scenes, and given me my life work. You ask me, Dorothy, if my three charges are 'broken into harness.' I do not know, but I do know about myself. I am the one that is being broken into harness, I think. I am less intolerant of other people's faults. In a life like mine one needs to learn so much of self-control and self-forgetting, and of helping others. I think I can see myself grow. I know that all this discipline of a crowded and often irritating environment shows me more and more the value and helpfulness of that religion which can lift us out of the

commonplace, and set us instead in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. I am glad that I am forced to live not for myself, but for others, and that for Christ's dear sake."

"O crowned soul!" said Dorothy, as she read.

CHAPTER VIII.

FELLOW TRAVELLERS.

“The greatest truths are simplest,
And so are the greatest men.”

WHEN, on the first of December, Ann Bradford had announced to her family that Christmas was to be kept, and that preparations for that festival were in order, great was the astonishment.

“Aunt Fontaine never kept it,” said Elizabeth. “She said it made her melancholy to think of the holidays, and she wished that they never came. The only thing she did extra was, on the third of January she invited the minister and his wife, Mrs. Percy and Mrs. Gage, old Miss Nunn, widow Bodwin, and that old *colporteur*, Mr. Lett, and his wife, to spend the afternoon and take tea. They came at four and left at nine, and Aunt Fontaine had a great supper. They enjoyed it no end. The third of January was her birthday; she said she ought to keep it, whether she was happy or not, for life was a gift to be thankful for, as it was the gate through which we get to heaven.”

“That is a good thought, and helpful to us when we begin to complain and wonder why and for what we ever were made. I have done that sometimes, though I always repent of it. We will not let these

good people be disappointed this year. We will invite them on the third, and keep on doing so, if we live, as long as one of them is left to come."

"Aunt said," cried Davy, returning to the first proposition, "that keeping Christmas was all superstition; she said that we do not know the true date of Christ's birth, that anyway he was not born at the season we call Christmas."

"Aunt Fontaine was 'a woman of a sorrowful spirit;' she was 'as one that had a long time mourned for the dead,'" said Ann. "She had had heavy trials, but now that her trials are over, and she and all she loved and mourned are happy in heaven, it is not necessary for us to let the shadow of her troubles fall over our lives. The Bible gives us warrant for keeping such joyous feasts as Christmas. God says to Israel: 'Go your ways, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send a portion to him that hath none.' As for the day, it is true that there is a difference of opinion as to the date of our Lord's birth, but it is certain that he was sometime born in human flesh, to be our Saviour, and Brother of our blood, the Gift of gifts, giving his ownself for our sakes. When we celebrate a day in honor of his birth, and try to do it in the kindly, sympathetic spirit of our Lord, then it makes no difference whether it is exactly the date of his birth or not, we honor and remember him all the same. Suppose, by some accident, while we observe the twenty-second of February as the birthday of Washington, he had really been born some other day?

We should recall, venerate, and exalt him just the same on the day we named his anniversary."

"We kept Christmas always at school," said Arthur. "We had a tree trimmed, and we all got candy-bags with nuts and raisins, and an orange and a little frosted cake. We played games, had tableaux; it was real nice! We were all so good and pleasant for a month after it."

"All my life I have kept Christmas," said Ann. "My parents kept it, and while I was at school and college some kind person was sure to ask me for the holidays."

Ann was delighted to see that Elizabeth entered into the Christmas-keeping idea heartily. She sent C'list'an for samples of wool plaids and for fashion books, and bought for Davy a beautiful plaid dress, choosing the style of making, and sending it with one of Davy's frocks to a dressmaker.

"Davy has always been longing for a plaid gown," said Elizabeth, "but Aunt Fontaine said it was 'too gaudy.' I think she'll look real pretty in it."

So Davy did, and when she put it on, admiring the effect, she felt more lovingly toward the sister, "who had all the money, while she had none." Elizabeth, on her part, had kindlier emotions toward Davy, "who had everything, while she had nothing."

When Aunt Fontaine's big trunks were looked over in Elizabeth's room, Ann deftly secreted a little box bearing the name of the insane sister; it contained a gold thimble and a crimson vinaigrette,

which made Christmas gifts for Elizabeth ; and a small ruby ring that went to Davy ; all with no burdensome tales or memories of their first unfortunate owner. They found also a jointed fishing-rod, and a travelling-cup in a leather case, no doubt once the property of the brother whose debt Ann was yet paying. "They'll just suit for Arthur," said Elizabeth, who, in spite of her prejudices, really liked the little lad.

"And we will not tell him who had them before him," said Ann. The three girls also gave Arthur a big sled. There were presents for C'list'an, Maggie, Mr. Black. Elizabeth put her new skill in embroidery to use in working a bureau-scarf for Ann. The day before Christmas, Maggie cooked good things all the day long, while Davy and Arthur were allowed to pop corn, crack nuts, and make molasses and peanut candy in the evening. Elizabeth had prepared six big, pink tarlatan bags, which were filled with the trophies of Maggie's and the children's skill, and next day were distributed to six poor children, who otherwise would have had no Christmas. With the bags Ann sent various scrap-books, full of pictures, boxes of paper-dolls, little, dressed china dolls, and other toys, which for a week she had been manufacturing.

There were very few really poor people in Dillburg, the town was on a quiet level of moderate means. What few poor there were, Ann seemed to have discovered, and to each family went a pumpkin pie, a loaf of gingerbread, a pan of milk, and some

of Maggie's new sausage. All this largess, Davy and Arthur carried off in baskets Christmas morning, their joyful faces, as they dragged the laden sled, making the gifts still a brighter benediction.

"There's a fair procession going out of this gate," said C'list'an, who was happy enough, having been told she could invite her brother to dine with her.

To Mrs. Percy went mince pie and seed cakes, on a server daintily trimmed in vines and evergreens; to the parsonage a similar token of remembrance. Ann had been to the woods with Davy and Arthur, bringing back trimming for the house, prince's pine, juniper, holly, and cedar. The rooms looked gay enough and the house was full of laughter.

On New Year's Eve, Davy and Arthur had a party, the first party either of them had ever had. Davy wore the new plaid, the gold chain, and ruby ring, and felt sure that she never could be cross and stubborn again. Ann had said nothing about Davy's room except: "The girls will lay off their wraps in your room, Davy."

"Whoop! won't it have to look nice?" cried Arthur. "I'll help you, Davy. We'll rub the windows and wipe the walls, as C'list'an does Elizabeth's; and we'll trim the bureau and the windows with green things."

"One would think we were millionaires here," said Elizabeth, on the day after Aunt Fontaine's regular birthday party had been kept, and so concluded the festivities of the holiday season,

"It has cost very little money indeed. I have kept strict account," said Ann. "We all put a deal of time into it; your and my sewing, Maggie's cooking went a long way. The material has been inexpensive. Ten dollars would cover gifts, parties, and all. The largest basketful went to old Mr. Lett, but as we raised the chicken that went into it roasted, and Maggie made the bread, cake and pies, the jelly and pickles were from our own store-room, and the shawl was one of Aunt Fontaine's, there was not much real cost to that even. This year there was so much of Aunt Fontaine's to give away, we came out nicely. Next year we'll have to begin earlier, and let our work tell more. I fancy, as I am such a slow knitter, it will take me the entire year to knit mittens for Davy, Arthur and the servants."

Elizabeth laughed. "You are planning a long way ahead."

"That saves time and money. But really, Elizabeth, does not this Christmas keeping draw people nearer together, and call out the good that is in them? An old writer says, 'Ye Chrystmas is a great breeder of good feelyngs.'"

"I believe that is so," laughed Elizabeth. "Davy and I have been much civiler to each other for a month past."

"You and Davy only need to have the real sisterly lovingness that is in you called out," said Ann, quietly.

"No one but you ever discerned that sisterly lovingness," said Elizabeth, and added after a pause, "Ann

I read lately somewhere, 'He had such a gentle manner of reproving their faults, that they were not so much afraid as ashamed to repeat them.' It made me think of you."

There were hours when Ann Bradford had her compensations.

Arthur had learned to ride; Ann was teaching him and Davy to skate. These expeditions to the pond, when the three set forth joyful, swinging skates, and came home rosy, warm, hungry, delighted, did not fail to fill Elizabeth with wrath. She was sure to say fierce, ugly things. Knowing this, Davy and Arthur absented themselves from her society, except at the tea-table, betaking themselves to the back-parlor for lessons, and a game of dominoes before they went to bed. Ann would not so leave Elizabeth alone in the evening; it was enough that she had been left while they went skating. Ann therefore sat and chatted or read to her, ignoring her tart speeches. Very often Elizabeth repented the next morning. She said as much once, when Ann was patiently helping her with her French, having just spent an hour in mounting several pictures for her.

"I declare now, Miss Elizabeth," said C'list'an, "the way Miss Bradford is working for you, and the way you carried on last night for nothing at all, except that the Lord saw fit to make her and the children strong enough to skate, and you not. It's clean fighting of the Lord, that's what it is."

"I know," said Elizabeth, looking covertly at

Ann, "and I usually am sorry next day, so that settles it."

"I don't know as that settles it," said C'list'an.

"Elizabeth," said Ann, looking up from her work of knitting Elizabeth some wool slippers, "I do not speak for my own part, but for yours. I wish you would remember a saying of Thackeray's. 'You cannot order remembrance out of the mind: a wrong that was a wrong yesterday must be a wrong to-morrow.'"

Elizabeth became tearful. "Ann Bradford, you ought to have more patience with me! I can't be like other folks, and other folks are worse than I am. You've told Davy that she must not go to the post-office and the station, for those are not places for nice girls, and she goes. There is that Arthur, he plays with Tim Dixon, when you forbid him, and Tim swore right at our house, yesterday.

"I know it, Elizabeth, it is all very wrong; but I can safely say that it will not happen again, after I talk with those two culprits to-night," replied Ann, still calmly.

What Ann said to her culprits no one knew, but the evils mentioned were not repeated, indeed she kept the frisky pair pretty well in hand. Said Mr. Black to Maggie, "It beats all how quiet-like Miss Bradford manages them two children! There's Mis' Nixon is hollerin' an' threatenin' after her boys, most of the time, but don't do much good. Miss Bradford fetches about what she wants, most generally pretty prompt. Wal, Maggie, it's this

way—hail on a tin roof makes a sight of noise, but none of it goes through. Mind what I say, it's shot that tells!"

One day in March, Mrs. Prentice, one of the young married women of Dillburg, came to see Ann. "I have been deputed to ask a favor of you," she said. "There are ten or a dozen of us young dames here in town, who either graduated at the high school, or went away to school for a year or so. Since we married, we have let all our studies drop; have done very little reading; we are losing all we ever knew, and we feel ashamed of ourselves. Some of us have sisters in your young girls' club, and we find they are away beyond us in general information, knowledge of books, and interest in really useful subjects. We have little children growing up about us, and if we go on as we have, we shall be very unhelpful mothers to them, when we send them to school. I, for one, have been much benefited in many ways by the Missionary Reading Club. Now we want to form a club, to meet for two hours, on one afternoon each week, the time and place to suit you, and we want you to take charge of the club, and give us the benefit of your better education, and make really honest workers of us."

"I should be delighted to do it," said Ann, "for I am very fond of these study clubs, and find them so helpful to myself that I must always try and make room in my life for them. I will stipulate that you choose the place and day of meeting, and the subject

of study, for you know better than I do, your tastes and opportunities."

"We had talked it over a little," said Mrs. Prentice, "and one of our number said that a friend of hers, a club member somewhere, wrote her that they were studying 'The Victorian Era.' She said that brought in a deal of general history, church history, biography, scientific discoveries, great inventions. She said too, it had been a world of work for the leader to prepare the studies."

"I should not mind that," said Ann, "I need a world of work to keep me from rusting, and from losing what it took a slow mortal like me so long to gain."

As they went to the door Mrs. Prentice said, "Your place and Mrs. Percy's are ornaments to Dillburg! How well their house looks, all nicely painted. They always kept a pretty yard, and yours will be beautiful. Your example will be followed. Mrs. Spencer is going to have a verandah like this on the house they are building, and I told Mr. Prentice to-day, that we must paint our house, it would look too slovenly for anything, close beside Mrs. Spencer's bright new one. Next week I am going to build me a rockery. I have taken such a fancy to yours. Where did you get your ferns, and such things?"

"In the woods. Suppose you go out with us the first pleasant Saturday, and we will all get some."

"Indeed, I should be delighted to. It would do

me good to see this dull town trying to put on garments of praise."

"Oh!" cried Ann, joyfully, "I have thought of something so nice, something for you to inaugurate! I read lately in a magazine, of a 'Village Improvement Society.' People in a little, dismal, sleepy village woke up, and went to work to create beauty in some simple, common-sense, inexpensive way. Nearly every one joined the society, ladies and gentlemen, each one contributed of his own taste, new ideas, labor; the enthusiasm spread, the yards and houses were improved, then the streets, and the sanitary condition of the town were taken in hand, then the churches were renovated, and the public buildings, until the place became a model of beauty, refinement, healthfulness. We may not gain all that here in Dillburg, but we might do much, and you and Mr. Prentice as born here, and among the leading people, are the very ones to inaugurate the movement."

"I'll talk to Mr. Prentice about it this very evening."

"Yes, it is time to begin, one should plant trees at once. I am going to have four set out along my sidewalk, next week."

"The cows and pigs running loose, will ruin them."

"I'll box them. Some day we may secure an ordinance for keeping animals shut up, and not turn our village streets into filthy pastures."

"I don't believe we ever can. The cows and

pigs are the household gods in Dillburg, it seems to me," laughed Mrs. Prentice.

"Wait and see to what extent your 'Village Improvement Society' will cultivate good taste, and hygienic notions."

When Ann told Elizabeth about the new club, Elizabeth exclaimed, "Why didn't you say it must meet here? You know how much I like a club to meet in my room; and here you'll deprive me of that, and go off regularly every week for an afternoon and leave me alone. You are so selfish."

Now Ann had never before heard Elizabeth so much as hint that she liked her society, or a club. She had seen that Elizabeth seemed to take interest in the clubs, and their work, but she had never spoken of it. This was all good news, though petulantly uttered, and Ann rejoiced.

"I will write to Mrs. Prentice, and send Arthur with the note this evening, asking if they will meet here," she said.

"Don't say I asked it!" cried Elizabeth. "I hate to ask favors."

When later Elizabeth heard Ann tell Davy and Arthur that they soon should go to the woods, root and plant seeking with Mrs. Prentice, Elizabeth became angry. "You are going to begin that again! You are as selfish as you can be! You just do it to get away from me, and tantalize me! If you need exercise, you can work here in the yard, and if you want ferns and other woods-trash, send Mr. Black,

he can spare the time ; he is always pottering about, doing nothing."

" Elizabeth, you do yourself great injury by such talk ; you are saying what you do not believe. You assign to us motives which you *know* are all your own imaginations. It is wrong and most dangerous to try to cheat ourselves."

" Why is it? Whose business is it if I choose to cheat myself?"

" ' Friends, if we be honest with ourselves, we shall be honest with one another,' George MacDonald says," said Ann, "and Plato says, that 'nothing is more corrupting to the mind than the lie cherished in the soul.' " When Ann had said this, she went out of the room, and left Elizabeth to think it over. This was her method of dealing with Elizabeth. Much of her irritability and selfishness must be passed over ; Ann pleasantly ignored all that she could. Then sometimes she seized an occasion which covered a deal of ground, and made some remarks which went deep down into the roots of things, and left Elizabeth to think it out. Usually the effect of such a lesson was very good. Elizabeth began to understand that there were limits set to her encroachments, limits which she must not overpass, and she had too much intelligence to fail of receiving a benefit from frank talk and steady thinking.

" I think, Miss Bradford," said Lawyer Grace, when Ann paid him her usual once-a-month visit, to talk over finances, " that you are getting on pretty

well with your affairs. The property is very much improved, and so are the Tracy girls. It is a pleasure to meet Davy, she looks so bright and happy. You did a good thing for the boy, too, when you brought him here."

"I think so. The little man is every way better off, and my pocket is much relieved. I have been able, by careful management, to save a good slice of income this year, and hope to do so next, though when I have Davy away expenses will be greater. Still, I must save pretty well now, if I am to have two of them in college at once," said Ann.

"So you will, so you will, and that before you are relieved of that four hundred a year encumbrance," said Mr. Grace. "I don't quite see how you'll make it out."

"Well, on one thing I'm resolved,—not to worry about it—care kills, and then why need I have cares to worry me? It is written: "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

"Can you do that, Miss Ann?"

"Why I *have* to do it, if I am to get along at all. *All* the cares, the little cares especially, for they are the ones that sting and fret, and wear out life. Great trials we can get up heroism to meet, pride and emulation may stir us to conquer them, the little cares would gnaw into our souls daily, so I am glad that it is written, 'casting *all* your care.'"

"Child," said the old man, "you have learned the true secret of living."

"Of course," said Ann, "I look forward, and I

plan this and that, that I may do, but not in an anxious way. For instance, I think if I am in a tight place, after Davy and Arthur are gone, I may take two or three boarders, for a year. I should not enjoy it, but I might have to do it; and then I suppose the Lord would send me pleasant, paying boarders. I think if ever we are really called to do anything, then the Lord makes the doing of it possible. It is written: 'If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land.' "

"Can you always live on this high spiritual plane, Miss Ann?"

"Indeed, no; but when I am down in the depths, I know that the reason of it is in me. I change, the Christ never changes. Spurgeon says, 'There is no way out of the depths but up.' When I get into darkness, it is mostly, as I told you, because of the little, vexing pin-pricking troubles. When Davy sets off to school with two buttons hanging loose on her boots, every finger of her gloves needing repair; when Arthur has, I am sure, been reading travels, and neglecting his lesson in arithmetic, or when he slides off out of the back-door and gate, to conceal from me the fact that he has not polished his shoes; when Mr. Black tells me that the neighbors' boys have broken a pane in the barn-window, or broken palings from my back fence; when Mrs. Stone's festive goat leaps the fence, nibbles my shrubs, and when I remonstrate, she replies that her goat is none of my business; when Mr. Dibbs keeps a calf, that bawls

night and day for three months—then I often feel so desperate, that my religion seems to me a sham and my faith a fiction, and I appear to myself to be one of Bunyan's 'fair-weather Christians,' or one of those swift-sprung seeds of the parable, that when tribulation cometh vanish away."

Such experiences as these were no myths, they came again and again to Ann Bradford, taking her unawares, as usually do those temptations which disturb the serenity of a Christian.

In May, Dorothy Camp came to visit her aunts for a few days: this was an oasis in Ann's life. She and Dorothy were together constantly. They were sitting on the verandah one morning, when Ann asked Dorothy to go with her to a favorite flower-bed, where some young plants were doing very well. Lo, while Ann's chickens were secured behind the tall palings of the hen-yard, Mrs. Stone's feathered marauders had made great wallows in the pet flower-bed, and the young plants were uprooted!

"It does seem an outrage," said Ann, "to be obliged to disfigure one's flower-garden with brush, on account of the neighbors' fowls." Returned to the porch, presently an errant pig of the street put his nose under the front gate, gave it a scientific twist, opened it, and came in. Ann ran to drive him out. "There, I know now how that beast gets in—he is constantly making raids on my lawn. Mr. Black must put a better fastening on that gate."

As the friends talked, the monotonous *ding-ling*,

ding-ling, of the cow-bells constantly echoed along the street, as their wearers grazed the fresh grass by the sidewalks.

"How wearisome that continuous ding, ding, ding is," said Dorothy. "It seems as if I have heard it every hour since I came here! How glad I am that I live in the city, where at least the sounds are those of civilized life! Why do village people make their streets unendurable by turning them into cow-pastures?"

This completed Ann's exasperation. "Yes," she said, "I am obliged to hear those abominable bells the year round, and for a change the howling of Mr. Dibbs' dog, which, being of a vagrant turn of mind, is kept tied up in the wood-shed. O Dorothy, sometimes I wonder why I ever came here, why I have to stay here! I feel as if I must fly Dillburg. I repeat:

'Better fifty years of Europe, than a cycle of Cathay!'

It is not merely 'that which cometh upon me daily,' the care of the children, the house, the finances; it is not merely that by birth and breeding I am urban, and have no strong affinities with rural life; not merely that when I go to the city, my feet feel as if glued to the pavements so that I cannot tear them away; it is not merely that I hate chickens in my flower-beds, pigs in my lawn, and cows on my sidewalks, and howling dogs tied under my window; not merely that Mrs. Stone, at my back fence, feels that she was sent into the

world to encroach on her neighbors, and Mr. Dibbs was created without any sense of decency in his composition. What is far worse is the lack of library privileges, the reading-rooms, the museums, the galleries, the picture exhibitions, the lectures, the intellectual life of the city. I am not like Mrs. Baron, or Mrs. Waldeck, or Sara Fordyce, a fund of information to myself; I am too immature, I am not intellectual enough for that; I feel myself rusting out mentally, getting thought-shallower daily. I am not one who should lead, I am made rather to follow, and here I must lead, if I do anything. I have had more opportunities than the others, except Mrs. Gillespie, and she has five young children, and her cares in the congregation; so leading, planning, helping, come on me, and I am rather such an one as should learn than teach. O Dorothy Camp! I get sick to death of all these people! I long for my helpful college friends, for my teachers; I want to see some one to lift me up, large souls to encourage me to rise. To whichever one I turn here, it is all the same story, all are on the same dead, low level!"

"My child," said Dorothy Camp, replying to this passionate breakdown of Ann's courage, "dear child, you pursue the horizon. To-day, if you want to converse with great men, you need only carry them in your trunk, bound in calfskin. Wherever you may go, now that college purlieus are passed, and you have fallen into the line of the world's workers, you must look to help rather than to be helped;

to teach, rather than to be taught of human teachers; circumstances and soul-experiences must be your teachers, and if you want to rise it must be on the ashes of your own mistakes, the fallen corpses of your own errors :

‘I hold it truth with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years,
And find in loss a gain to match,
Or reach a hand through time to catch
The far-off interest of tears ? ”

“God can,” said Ann, faith coming to the rescue, after her momentary discouragement.

“Hold on to that, then,” said Dorothy, “and you’ll always be on vantage ground, with your spiritual foes beneath your feet.”

“I know,” said Ann, half smiling, half crying, “that you think me ridiculous and miserably weak, after that outburst.”

“I do not,” said Dorothy, “I have just such times myself: everybody has. There is always some joint in the armor, where the arrows of ‘outrageous fortune’ can enter.”

“You know,” said Ann, “there is no one here to whom I can speak out my thoughts, as I can to you. I must keep all to myself, and when the opportunity of expression came, it was the opening of the flood-gates.”

"I want to warn you of one thing," said Dorothy, "and that is of allowing your wider nature to be dwarfed by the smaller minds about you. There is Elizabeth, for instance: she is most desperately selfish and encroaching, and will want you entirely pledged to herself, and to think only for her. Any one human being is a circle too narrow for another soul to do all its turning in. We cannot live in one person alone, no matter how dear that one may be. Dr. Train was telling me lately of a friend and patient of hers, who had a very exacting husband; he was a good man, but his jealous possessiveness demanded that his wife should live, move, and breathe only in him and for him. She found herself being dwarfed and narrowed even by her altruistic catering to his selfishness. The expansiveness of her spirit would have girdled the globe; he was binding it to plough in a single furrow."

CHAPTER IX.

THE MANNERS OF THE UPWARD WAY.

“For ’tis sweet to stammer one letter
Of the Eternal’s language—on earth ’tis called forgiveness.”

“I HAVE been here just a year, to-day,” said Ann to Mrs. Percy. They were sitting on Ann’s verandah. The morning-glories and moon-flowers had made rapid growth, and draped the wire lattices with green: the roses and wistaria were as yet but promises of beauty to come, while the transplanted white honeysuckle, yielded from several clusters of dainty tubes, rich perfume to the hot August air.

“You have made great changes here, in this year,” said Mrs. Percy. “You should feel well satisfied: this does not look like the same place. Paint, the verandah and walk, the shrubs, and the beds of geraniums, asters and cannas, have made such a change, your dear aunt would not know the place.”

“I seem to have done so little of the all I wanted to do. Each day seems exactly like the day before, and no progress made.”

“We cannot measure our progress by days: we must take it by years, and give our sowing time to

grow. Take a little baby, you scarcely note difference from day to day, yet the year makes of the tiny helpless bundle of life, a child, walking, playing, trying to talk. It is year by year that tells. I have found it so in the growth of the soul. From day to day, except in seasons of large and singular experiences, that do not come often to us, we do not see that we make any progress toward glory ; but when we look over larger periods, then we can see some evident enlarging of our souls. When I feel really discouraged, as if I were the most dull, sleepy Christian in existence, then I look back by the years, and I see that God has helped me to travel on towards the 'rest that remaineth.' "

" I think that may be so, and it is one way of encouraging ourselves in the Lord our God, to note what he has done for and in us, and that he has led us on ; that leading is a sure token that we are his children," replied Ann.

" Certainly," said Mrs. Percy, "*you* have every reason to feel thankful for a blessing on your efforts. Think how Elizabeth is."

" Yes, Elizabeth has really improved. She is trying, I think, to reach a higher Christian life, to serve God, and not be so self-centered. She is less jealous of Davy, more generous. She has taken real interest in helping me get Davy ready for college. She bought her a gray serge traveling dress, a hat, and her winter coat ; you've no idea what a help it was, and better than the money help was the pleasantness of the thing. Elizabeth

is better physically; she has spent so many hours a day out on this verandah, and she can bear to be wheeled gently up and down here in her chair. We lay a breadth of carpet over the floor, so as to reduce the jar.

"She is taking real interest in her history, literature and French. She takes a share in the Club work, and now she likes to see people, instead of hiding gloomily from sight. She has more sources of happiness within herself, she has more to think about, and talk about. She uses her hands so much better in embroidering and writing. We also have succeeded in getting her up a little straighter."

"Yes, sister Gates and I have noticed all that. Seems to me she might pay part of Davy's College bills, if you asked it."

"I don't know as I care to ask it. Elizabeth has fifty dollars a month. C'list'an, the laundress, and her pin-money out leave thirty, out of that her clothing—it does her real *good* to be nicely dressed—her books, embroidery materials, gifts, extras, take more than half of that. Mrs. Grace says there used to be always a druggist's and doctor's bill. I thought she used too much drugs and rich food, and that that brought about need for the doctor, so I cut them off, and she has not had a doctor this year. I save up any little surplus for her; she may have extra needs. I don't fear but what I can carry Davy's expenses nicely now, the tug will be in two years, when Arthur must go also. Still, I don't worry, for the Lord seems so plainly to help and

provide for all the little needs as they come. Davy has such a nice outfit, and it has cost so little ; then Dorothy is coming for a visit, and going back just at the right time to take Davy, and that saves my going with her. I have found a purchaser for the horse and surrey, and at fully as much as I expected, which provides all the first funds Davy will need. To-day, just as I was trying to find out the best plan about Mr. Black, feeling that I needed him, yet not for quite all his time, and so on, here you have made a bargain with him, for three hours daily and half his wages, and I have only the other half and his board, so I am all right about keeping him. Do you know, I take more comfort in watching the Lord's care for me in the small matters like these, than even in great affairs ? In the small matters he is so *fatherly*. Any friend, even a stranger, would pull a child back from a precipice, or out of danger of drowning, or strike a poison out of his hand, but it is the father that thinks to give the pennies for marbles, to buy the top, to whittle out the little boat, to make the new arrows, and mend the broken toy. Strangers would not think of these trifles, it is the love, the *father heart* that sees the child's desire and rejoices to gratify it."

"That is a beautiful and comforting thought," said Mrs. Percy.

"I often wonder why I fall into gloom and discouragement with such a Father and Friend. Why should I ever walk in darkness, or live in a kind of spiritual twilight ?"

“Why is not the Christian always upon the mountains of privilege?” added Mrs. Percy.

Mr. Gillespie had entered the gate, and stepped upon the piazza just in time to hear this.

“It was not always,” he said, “that Ezekiel beheld ‘the heavens opened, and saw visions of God.’ Such do not come to us daily. It is partly because of our earthly frame and estate, and partly by our fault. There are some rapt souls, like McCheyne, who dwell perpetually in the beatitudes. I think of Bonar also, forever on the heights, singing songs of glory; the light from about the sapphire throne falls ever on their faces, the Glory Gate is always wide open before them, and the light from within blazes all along their way. Those of us who are more obtuse in spirit, and of more difficult conditions, must not think that there is no Glory Gate because we lose sight of it now and again; we must not doubt of the way because there are thorns and thistles, rocks and caves along it. There is a needs be, even for these.”

“You encourage me,” said Ann. “This morning, as I was reading my Bible, it seemed as if the words came straight to me, ‘Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, unless thou repent.’”

Here C’list’an unclosed the shutters, opened the long windows and gently wheeled out Elizabeth’s chair. Elizabeth looked fresh and happy; she had just had her nap.

"I came to see you Elizabeth," said Mr. Gillespie. "Have you thought over what I said to you about uniting with the church?"

"Yes; but I'm such a poor kind of Christian," said Elizabeth. "I used to think I was a good enough one. Not of the kind that Aunt Fontaine was, but she was so much older, and sadder, and graver. I thought that made the difference. But Ann is young and cheerful, and likes fun, and pretty things and all that; and when I see what kind of a Christian Ann is, and how she takes God into all her plans, and tries to fit all her actions by Bible law then I feel as if I am no kind of a Christian at all."

Ann flushed crimson at Elizabeth's words.

"Your church membership might be a source of strength and comfort to you, Elizabeth, help you to grow spiritually, and be a check on going wrong. Church membership does not save us, but it is a suitable thing to be united to the body of believers, and in fellowship with them and Christ. I think, Elizabeth, that you are making some progress in the Christian life, and trying to be patient, generous and helpful for Christ's sake. Can you say

" 'Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth thee,
Thou art my God, in whom I live and move;
Oh, let thy Holy Spirit lead me forth
Into the land of righteousness and love!'"

"Yes," said Elizabeth, after a little pause, "I hope I do feel that."

"From a great deal that others have you are shut

out by your physical affliction. You should seize upon what comforts and helps you can have, and union with the visible body of Christ might be a chief one of these. When the five or six of your young friends, who are now waiting to unite with the Church, come to pay their vows in the house of God, you can be with them in heart, and in the afternoon some few of us can come together here, and you can make profession of your faith. Yesterday evening, Davy came to me——”

“Davy!” cried Elizabeth, Ann and Mrs. Percy, in a breath.

“Yes, Davy. She said before she went away, she wanted to join the church. She said she knew she was so crooked and perverse, and cantankerous, that she wasn’t fit, but all the same, she wanted something to hold on to. I have no doubt that Davy is something as she said, a freaky, hard-to-manage child sometimes, and always thoroughly original, as she was in her talk with me. Also, I have no doubt that Davy has the root of the matter in her, and sincerely desires to serve God. I asked her if she trusted in Christ to keep her, and she said, ‘Of course, whom else could she trust to? not to such a queer-acting girl as herself.’”

“I have seen a change in Davy for three months,” said Ann.

“I thought she was thinking of something like this,” said Elizabeth, “from several things she said. She said once she thought ‘Ann’s example would make a Christian out of a cannibal.’”

Ann sprang up and ran upstairs to her room, tears falling over her cheeks. What! Elizabeth, Davy, really helped toward heaven by her? Oh, how could she ever fail or be discouraged again, if her gracious Master gave her rewards so rich for such poor, small and feeble doing?

Meanwhile, on the verandah, Mr. Gillespie said to Elizabeth, "Davy says she would like to unite here at the house with you, so that you would not be alone. Not that she fears to come forward at the church with the others, but she does not want you to be left alone."

"Does Davy think all that of cross me?" cried Elizabeth. Elizabeth was slowly conquering her jealousy of Davy, and taking more interest in her; her latent affection was springing into action, and now that Davy was going away to be absent most of the time, for several years, Elizabeth felt that she should miss her.

Now this thoughtfulness of Davy and the new tie of their union with the church brought the long sundered hearts nearer still. When that Sabbath, sacred as the day of entering into visible communion with the church came and passed, it left a blessed imprint on the lives of Elizabeth and Davy,—they were something more to each other than they had been before.

"I suppose if Davy stayed," said Elizabeth to Ann, "that soon we would be picking at each other again, but as we both grow in grace and in knowledge, I suppose there will be less and less of what

has worried you so, and I know I shall miss Davy when she goes."

Davy's trunk was packed in Elizabeth's room, so that Elizabeth could have the pleasure of seeing all that was put into it, and Davy delightedly tried on all her dresses, for her sister's inspection. The Christmas plaid, and the white gown given by Ann, were as fresh as new. Aunt Fontaine's brown silk and the black dress, trimmed with narrow velvet, had been made over.

"I declare," said Elizabeth, "it all looks just as nice as new, and is very becoming. Ann; you are a genius in planning clothes. Even that old brown wrapper of mine, done up with that blue, is really very pretty."

"It is in commonplace things like garments, that I come out at my strongest," laughed Ann; then she ran upstairs and came back with "a surprise" hanging over her arm.

"Davy, this pink veiling I had in my Sophomore year, it was trimmed with white lace and white ribbon, and was the pride of my heart. I outgrew it two years ago; so I have altered it and trimmed it with black lace from an ancient mantilla of Aunt Fontaine's, and I think it will be lovely for you, and no one that ever saw it as I had it would recognize it. It will be just the affair to change with your white one for college parties and such other functions."

"Recognize it!" cried Davy, her breath quite taken away by this gorgeous piece of raiment.

"Ann Bradford, you are the dearest, kindest girl that ever lived!" and Davy cast the pink gown on Elizabeth's lap, and hugged Ann with all her might. Elizabeth could not resist the temptation to play the mentor. She spoke up sharply, "Davy Tracy, there would be some pleasure in fixing things for you, if one did not feel *sure* that you would never clean off a spot, and that if gathers came loose, or there was a rip, or a slit, you would simply pin it up or let it alone."

But this was too joyful an occasion for Davy to enter into strife with Elizabeth, or even be dashed by her reflections: she seized the beautiful gown and rushed upstairs to try it on before the glass and then return to exhibit it.

"Ann," said Elizabeth, as Davy disappeared, "I *don't* see how you have so much patience with that child. How you have labored over her outfit, when you know that she will never darn a stocking nor mend a glove, nor brush a gown nor a hat!"

"I don't know any such thing," said Ann, merrily, seating herself on the edge of Davy's trunk, and casting into its depths an admiring gaze. "Davy may turn over a new leaf. Young folks of her age are often better tutored by their equals than by their elders. I am trusting much to the girls to prune and straighten up Miss Davy. There is much *esprit de corps* among those university girls. One may be as plainly and cheaply dressed as one is compelled to be so long as one is absolutely neat and in order; but they will not stand seeing

Davy or any other in class-rooms with buttonless boots and soiled dress, or out in the street with ragged gloves and dusty garments. They will tease and jibe and remonstrate. They will obey the Scripture to 'reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine,' they will let her know that she may not disgrace their fraternity, so between precept and example you'll see Davy much improved."

Down came Davy, her cheeks as pink as her frock, and her eyes as black as Aunt Fontaine's mantilla lace. She paraded about the room for the admiration of her sister and Ann. "O Ann! you have been so nice to me. I am bound to be a credit to you. See if I am not."

"See that you are," said Elizabeth, dryly, "be a credit in the ways you like, and the ways you do *not* like."

Davy made up a little mouth—she understood. Then she took off the pink dress, gave it an admiring look, and watched Ann dispose it in the trunk tray. Ann beamed: Davy's delight was as keen to her as if it were her own. Ann had that deeply sympathetic nature which is an eminent mark of the Christian, who has occupied his opportunities of soul-growth. Some of this capacity to joy in other's joy, and weep with their tears, was hers by nature, but more of it was hers by grace, by earnest cultivation, as a desired childlike spirit. The natural outgo of sympathy may be, by carelessness, restrained in its spring; by bountiful employment it may ever be fuller, clearer, more refreshing.

As Ann packed Davy's trunk giving her little suggestions about the affairs of the new life she was to enter, Elizabeth said, "She'll forget all that, Ann Bradford."

"You wait and see," said Davy, with a defiant glance.

"I'll trust you," said Ann, "I know you are going to do well, and be a shining light in the college. Now, Davy, I want you to keep a careful and orderly account of all your expenses, and let me have the account regularly, the first of every month. This year I will settle the bills for you myself, but I want to have you educate yourself up to such a business standard, that very soon I can put in bank the year's expenses, and have you draw your checks, and run your own affairs. I do hate to see a woman who cannot draw up a check, or make out a bill, and keep a bank account, and look out for a margin. There is no sense in being brought up to such helplessness as that."

"Ann," said Elizabeth, when Davy had gone out on some errands, "I suppose you have an ideal of what kind of a woman you want Davy to be, and you are praying that she may reach it, and expect that she will."

"Certainly, I have," said Ann.

"Well, Ann, you must be a person of great faith."

"Oh, no," said Ann, "I am not a person of great faith. I often think I must belong to poor, feeble, tottering Mr. Little Faith's family; but, such faith

as it is, I would not give it up for a kingdom. My ancestor, Little Faith, you know, clung to his jewels. The fact is, Elizabeth, it is not the great faith, but the great God that does it. Faith, as a grain of mustard seed, can remove mountains, because it takes hold on the God that builded the mountains. It can say to the seas 'thus far,' because it is resting on him who holds the seas in his hollowed hand. We need not moan and be discouraged because of little faith, so long as it is fixed on a great God."

When Davy came back and sat on the verandah to rest and fan herself, for the day was hot, she said: "I've been talking to Joseph Race about college. Joseph is in the polytechnic, you know. He says college life is worth living and full of pleasant things and pays; only sometimes, he says, the professors and tutors crowd the lessons, so you are half dead. He says, that more than once, he just *had* to put in all Sunday afternoon on his lessons."

"Don't you ever do that, Davy. 'Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's.' For the lessons, the week; for God, the Sabbath."

"Well, I told Joseph that Sunday study did not look right to me, and he said it was according to the way I looked at it. He said the Lord commanded people to work, and he studies to be fitted for work. When one works, one earns money, and he always expected to give part of his money to church causes: he said he reckoned he'd give to the

Lord as much as all the time he studied Sunday was worth."

Ann could not refrain from smiling. This spirit of barter with God is so frequent in youth. Ann had had it herself in one way and another. "Davy," she said, "do you remember, when God sent Saul to destroy Amalek and not leave a living creature behind, and Saul said to Samuel that he had brought back the best of all the cattle to *offer as sacrifices* to God, Samuel replied, that 'to obey was better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.' God does not stoop to trade with man; he gives his law, and he demands obedience. All the beasts of the forest are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills; if we bring him offerings, they must be clean offerings, the joyful gifts of a loving and grateful heart, not barter, so much for so much. 'There thou hast that is thine,' did not do very well; the wrath of the Lord leaped forth against that servant."

"I suppose that is so," said Davy, "I know it is. Still the Lord wants good work from us."

"Oh, yes: the best that we honestly can, but not more than we can. God is not an unreasonable taskmaster. The spirit of Joab was right when he said, 'Be of good courage, and let us play the man for our people, and for the cities of our God; and the Lord do that which seemeth him good.' C'list'an told me the other day that she stood by the text, 'Do your best, and leave the rest.' Now there is no such text, yet all the same, it is the spirit of

much of Scripture. The Lord wants us to desire to work well and to make all suitable efforts, but we may be over ambitious, and work in a furor that is to our spiritual and physical disadvantage. A young man of my friends in the university, in the class ahead of me, was resolved to make the finest record that ever had been made. He studied furiously, to the ruin of his health, for he was not of a strong constitution; he took the highest marks ever taken, had the valedictory, was cheered to the echo when he took his diploma; was carried back to his boarding-place unconscious; lay ill for weeks nursed by his widowed mother, who was heartbroken at his condition; and has never yet been able to do anything that he had marked out for himself. If he ever recovers it will be after lost years."

"Aunt Fontaine said a cousin of hers studied so hard, day and night, that he lost the sight of one eye, and nearly that of the other," said Elizabeth, "and after that he loathed the sight of a book, and went to farming."

"'One curses the sun, when one is grilled by the sun,' is an old Spanish proverb," said Ann. "Our judgment should be our guide in study; I think if students reserve to themselves the rest of the Sabbath, give their bodies due care in exercise daily, plenty of sleep, proper diet, then nearly any one will be able, unharmed, to study all that is needful, to a proper scholastic record. Some learn easily, are very bright and can make brilliant acquirements. Others are simply honest plodders, they can never

make the display of genius, never dazzle any one ; but they can acquire all that is needed for doing good honest work in the world. The Lord ' expects every man to do his duty,' as was said of England."

Davy was gone : she departed under escort of Dorothy Camp. Davy was missed, so was Dorothy. Ann deeply enjoyed Dorothy's visits to Dillburg ; they brought her in touch again with that larger, richer world, from which she was severed. With Dorothy she renewed the themes of interest opened in college days ; they talked of the new books, the articles of interest in the magazines ; new enterprises and new discoveries, the leading thoughts of the hour. Dorothy led and Ann followed, as she liked best to do. Ann and Dorothy had spent hours driving about the country, rambling in the woods. Dorothy planned literary work and Ann listened in rapt enjoyment, glad if she could add to Dorothy's store of incident, or quaint phrase, or pathetic fact.

Now Dorothy was gone ; the horse and sully were gone also. Maggie was cleaning Davy's room—to be so long deserted.

"We must fill our lives up, as full as we can, Elizabeth," said Ann, "and then we shall not be lonely. You will make more progress than ever. Dorothy is going to the foreign bookstore to select you several good things in French books. She thinks you are getting on surprisingly. She will send us *Souvestre's Housetop Philosopher*, you'll enjoy that."

Ann broke off her remarks and dashed out of doors. The festive goat of neighbor Stone had leaped the fence and was browsing on Ann's best monthly rosebushes; a bevy of little pigs were grunting their content, as they rooted in the lawn, and Mr. Black, oblivious of these, was busy driving the neighbors' chickens from the bed where he had sown late beet and turnip seeds for winter greens. Ann banished the goat, and Mr. Black came to her rescue in dealing with the pigs.

"There's no use in expecting Mrs. Stone to do what is fair by us, Mr. Black," said Ann. "You'll have to buy high posts and barbed wire, and build our fence higher, and as for those pigs, they've nosed their way under the fence, and I think you'll have to get stone and line it. It will cost time and money, but there is no other way. How I hate living in a stock yard!"

Ann went into the house, panting from her run after her neighbors' wild beasts. Elizabeth's temper was up in arms.

"It is a perfect shame!" she cried, "those Stone and Dibbs people are animals, just *animals*."

"That's true, Elizabeth," said Ann, "Class *Mammalia*: branch *b.*, *placentalia*: order, *primates*. But in stating our neighbors to be animals, Elizabeth, allow me to call your attention to the fact that you are not enunciating any new or abstruse truth."

"O Ann!" cried Elizabeth, laughing in spite of her indignation, "can't you get angry?"

"Indeed I can. I warn you I am furious at this present instant."

"Then why don't you say something? Why don't you call those horrid, disobliging people names? You have begged them to keep their stock up, or to make their share of the fences better, and they won't. They know how much pains you take to keep this place in handsome order.

"They think it's all nonsense," cried Elizabeth. "Mrs. Stone says, it is real extravagant not to graze the horse in the front yard; that Aunt Fontaine always did, and Mr. Dibbs says that a nice bunch of red calves feeding in the lawn is handsomer than any shrubs or flowers.

"They're beasts," continued Elizabeth, "regular brute beasts; after all the example you've set them, they are as mean as they were a year ago!"

"As mean!" cried Ann, with energy, "they're *twice as mean* as they were last year!"

"So they are. I'd go tell them what I thought of them. I'd sue them for trespass. They're breaking the laws."

"You're in error there, Elizabeth, this is a village, and there is no charter law about keeping stock up. The only law is of decency, and neighborly courtesy, and that they don't recognize."

"Well, why don't you anathematize them, at least?"

"I might, Elizabeth, but I remember that a certain heathen prayed, 'O God, show compassion to the wicked! the virtuous have already been blessed

by thee, in being virtuous. Don't let us be worse than heathen, Elizabeth," and the two burst into a hearty laugh. C'list'an broke into the talk.

"You'd need do a power of prayin', Miss Ann, to fetch that Jim Dibbs into anything of a likely position. I never did see such a do-less man. He's too lazy to live, and seems to kinder find it too much trouble to die. Why, that Jim Dibbs, 'pears like he always has suspicioned that the world had something lying round loose for him somewhere, and he's always been kind of strollin' round, in a lazy-like way, to find it; but he ain't never come up with it, yet, Jim Dibbs ain't, and it's not my opinion that he ever will."

"Hear that now, Elizabeth," said Ann, "and let us be content, glad, that we don't live on Jim Dibbs' side of the fence, if we are obliged to wrestle with his pigs and chickens. There is nothing that keeps one so uneasy as feeling angry at neighbors; when we can't be happy in their well-behaving, let us be happy forgiving their ill-behaving."

CHAPTER X.

LITTLE ERRANDS DONE FOR GOD.

“A sweet attractive kind of grace,
A full assurance given by lookes,
Continual comfort in a face,
The lineaments of Gospell bookes.”

ARTHUR and Davy had had their little tiffs and miffs; Davy had “put on airs,” Arthur thought: she had often been selfish about helping Arthur with his lessons; Arthur had loved to tease Davy and play little provoking tricks upon her. Now that Davy was gone, Arthur was lonely and inconsolable.

C’list’an found him on a Saturday morning, sitting forlorn on a low tree-limb, swinging his feet, and looking miserable.

“Why don’t you do something?” asked C’list’an. “What do you sit round that way for? I like folks that git up an’ git.”

“I can’t do what I *want* to do,” said Arthur.

“Why, then, don’t you *want* to do something else, that you can do?”

“Nothing is worth doing now Davy’s gone,” said Arthur.

"What is it you want to do?" asked C'list'an, sympathizingly.

"Why, I want to fix up the carriage room, in the barn, to have for a club room for boys. Davy'd known just how to do it. I wanted Mr. Black to help me, and he won't."

"He can't, you mean," said C'list'an. "Now he gives three hours a day 'cross the street, he can't do so much for you. 'Tisn't well, Arthur, to bear false witness against your neighbors, like that. Mr. Black's particular accommodating. Stir round and do things for yourself. 'Pears to me, if you want suthin' out o' this world, the way is to stir round an' get it; that's the way it 'pears to me. If you mope, you'll soon be as foolish an' feckless as Mr. Dibbs."

However, in her secret heart C'list'an felt very sorry for Arthur, and remarked to Ann, when she went into the house, that "that poor little Arthur was moping and maunderin' round, for all the world as if he had lost all his friends."

Ann went out to investigate this psychological curiosity. "Here, laddie, I believe I'm neglecting you. Let me be your comrade, now Davy's gone. What is it you want to do?"

"Don't you think," said Arthur, "that boys have a right to have clubs as well as girls? You've been and set up clubs for girls and clubs for grown ladies, and a missionary club, and not one thing for boys. That shows to me that you don't truly care for boys, as much as you say you do." There was a triumph-

ant ring in Arthur's voice; he was decidedly cross, and he felt that he had scored a good point against Ann.

Ann recognized her errors, and felt penitent. She had neglected that ubiquitous and very important element in social life—the boy. However, custom bringing reinforcements to her failing spirit, she took the road of common sense. “That was a bad piece of negligence, Arthur, and we must revise our methods at once. Let us constitute boys’ clubs to-day. I’ll work for you like a Trojan, until I’ve made up for past carelessness.”

“How did Trojans work?” demanded Arthur.

“Pretty hard, I think, from the proverb I just quoted. The general impression seems to be that they bestirred themselves thoroughly; in fact, as they were always building cities, or instituting contests, or wrestling with great stones, or fighting battles, I think they were very energetic folk, indeed. What did you think of in the line of a club, Arthur?”

“Well, I thought the surrey-room in the barn could be cleared out, and benches made, and the walls trimmed up with pictures or things the boys brought, and have six boys in the club, and no more to come in, unless we voted them in, unanimous.”

“That’s a good plan, only I’d start with seven.”

“Why?”

“So you could not be evenly divided or tied on

a vote. Still, as a president does not vote, except on a tie, you might get on with six."

"We'll have seven; but how'll we get a president? Every boy will vote for himself, so there'll be one vote apiece," said Arthur.

Ann laughed: "I don't think they'd do that. Some of them might be sharp enough to see that it was better to be the power behind the throne than the throne. The palace-master is sometimes more powerful than the king. Why not cast lots for a president, one black bean to six white ones? Or why not take it in rotation, a month at a time, beginning with the name that has the highest letter in the alphabet, A, or B, or C? Whatever you do, don't begin with a squabble for the presidency. Don't you think there's a text or two that comes in well there? 'Sit not down in the highest room' (or place). 'Go and sit down in the lowest room.' 'For he that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.' 'Before honor is humility.' The Bible is a most excellent business guide, Arthur. And what is to be the object of this club, Arthur? What will you do?"

"I don't know," said Arthur, "that's just it. I wanted Davy for that. Davy was so smart to think up things. But as Davy isn't here, you may do as well; *perhaps*," he added, condescendingly.

"I'll try ever so hard to fill her place," said Ann. "Suppose you have a debating club, to make speeches and argue questions: or suppose you have a band club, to practise music, and be a village concert

band. You could use your new violin"—for Arthur had that desire of his heart, a violin. For three months that summer he had worked faithfully with the grocer, running errands, driving cart, sweeping the shop, tying up parcels, measuring potatoes, and Ann had sent his money to a former college class-mate, junior partner in a music store in the city, and Arthur at last owned a violin.

"If," continued Ann, "you don't care for either of these, you might have a 'Do Good Club,' to look after boys, and see what good you could do, and what evil prevent; or you might mix up the objects, having both music and debates, and requiring that every club member should do a helpful act for some one every day; home folks first."

"I could see what the boys liked best," said Arthur.

"Suppose that you go and ask your two best friends to come and spend the day with you, and help you arrange the room, and plan the club, and select the other boys? While you are gone, I'll see if I can find something up in the attic to begin the decorations of your room. I think I have seen there a small pair of deer's horns, a couple of flags, a map and a big advertisement picture or two of fruit, chickens, and prize pigs. Aunt Fontaine never threw anything away, and you see we reap the benefit of her saving."

"There's one thing sure," said Arthur, "I won't have Hall Chase. I'm as mad as mad at him! He rubbed out all my sums, when I had done 'em nice

on my slate, and I had to do 'em over, and he drew with chalk a skull and cross-bones on the back of my jacket, and made the boys laugh before I knew it, and he called me grocer's kiddy."

"I'm surprised he should act that way! What had you done to him?"

"Not one thing, only he spelled so funny in class, I laughed right out, twice. I couldn't help it. He's smart at 'rithmetic, but spelling he's nowhere; spells core of an apple *koar*, and league *leeage*!"

"I suppose your laughter hurt him, as much as his tricks hurt you."

"He said he was sorry about the sums, but that didn't make me friends; for it didn't put the sums back," remarked Arthur.

"But the Bible says, if people sin against us and repent, we must forgive them, not once, but seven times, not seven times, but seventy times seven. We must forgive as we would be forgiven. Have you said the Lord's Prayer since you wouldn't forgive Hall?"

"O Cousin Ann! you do tackle a fellow so with the Bible!"

"So? Well, I'll tackle you with Shakespeare, if you prefer it.

" 'How should you be,
If he who is the top of judgment, should
But judge you as you are? O, think of that! "

I think one good of your club would be to make you boys more friendly, give you common interests, and

check quarrels. Suppose you get up this club you are planning, and meet as often as you please, and I'll have another club of ten boys, to meet every Thursday evening, or say Saturday or Friday evening when there are no home lessons on hand. That club can be as you boys vote, a Temperance Club, or a Missionary Club, or a Reading of Travels Club, something to help you along in some line you'll select. We'll call that 'The Round Table Club,' because the table in the back parlor is round, and because of King Arthur's Round Table. I will furnish some plain refreshments each time, as nuts and apples, or lemonade and seed cakes ; or something like that."

"Good for you, *you* know that boys can't get on without eating."

"Well, be off and ask two boys for the day."

"Say—I'm a mind to ask Hall Chase, for one of 'em. He and I were the tip-toppest friends till we took to fighting."

Ann laughed and nodded. Then as Arthur dashed off to find his boys, and expound clubs to them. Ann went to the attic to find club-room trimmings, and then went with her arms full to exhibit them to Elizabeth, and tell her the tale of clubs.

"I'll work them some badges," said Elizabeth, "when they decide on the names and objects of their clubs. They can choose what color of ribbon I shall work them on."

Ann went to meet Arthur and his friends, smiling to herself as she thought how strenuously Elizabeth

had objected to Arthur's presence in the family, and how she had vowed she would never look at him if he came.

The boys had not yet arrived, and Ann, with her lap full of trophies, sat down on an overturned box in the empty surrey-room, to wait their appearance. She was happy, thinking how much more cheery and pleasant Elizabeth was. Elizabeth's face was brighter, her health better, she was not spiteful and taunting now, but interested and generous. How well Davy was doing with her tutor! What an easy boy Arthur was to manage! How comfortable was this home! How happy she herself was. "Surely the lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places. I have a goodly heritage," thought Ann. Her soul was as a watered garden. She leaned her head back against the wall, and sang softly as she waited:—

"Look up, for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing;
Come, rest beside the weary road
And hear the angels sing."

Soon Arthur and his friends bounded in, their hands full, and Ann's contributions being duly admired, she left them.

She soon inferred from the sounds in the surrey-room that there was a state of high good fellowship among the boys, and that the plan of clubs was received with enthusiasm. As Mr. and Mrs. Gillespie knew the village boys and their parents so much

better than she did, Ann concluded to go and ask them what ten lads should be included in her club, and what subject should be made the centre of interest.

Mrs. Gillespie was sitting with her sewing in the little study, and Mr. Gillespie had turned his back upon his writing-table.

"I believe you find us sailing in the doldrums," said the pastor.

"So I thought," said Ann, "but I did not like to be the first to speak of it."

"Dillburg has its advantages and excellencies," said Mrs. Gillespie, "but in many respects it is a desperately hard field. One cannot say to the majority of our church-people, 'Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.' The town is so healthy that nearly every one is physically thriving, but the coldness and deadness of the church are enough to break one's heart."

"My church in the city was a very active working church," said Mr. Gillespie. "We had many members of an unusually high spiritual life and many who had leisure, ability and willingness to devote themselves to the work of building up Zion. My congregation often reminded me of the Hebrews who labored on the wall of Jerusalem under Nehemiah, all busy, all furnished with both tools and weapons, and ready to use either. I considered myself happy to expect to spend my life among such a people. The Lord planned other-

wise for me. I found the city inimical to my health, my throat failed so that I could not be heard through that great auditorium. I was thankful to find a vineyard corner here to work in, but sometimes I sigh heavily after more fruitful vines. It is a hard matter when the people leave, without hesitation, all the work to the minister, while they, with one consent, go 'their ways, the one to his farm, the other to his merchandise.' A pastor is like Moses in the conflict with Amalek; he needs to have his hands stayed up by the love, sympathy, labor, prayers of his people, if the battle with the world, the flesh and the devil is to go well for the host of God."

"Yes," said Ann, "we need organization for Christian work."

"Dear Miss Bradford!" cried Mrs. Gillespie, "there is no organization for work here, the people scarcely know what it means; they seem to be all at loose ends, except for our little Missionary Society, which has revived, thanks to the Missionary Reading Club; but just think, in that we have only four, including our two selves, that will lead in prayer! When we speak of organizing for Christian work every one is 'too busy,' or 'don't know how,' or 'don't see the need,' or 'will leave that to some one else.' If we call a meeting to try and inaugurate new work for church, or Sunday-school, or missions, who come? Only the faithful half dozen!"

"Let us be thankful for them. Four more than a

half-dozen would have saved Sodom," said Mr. Gillespie.

"Last week," said Ann, "I had a letter from Mrs. Baron, Junior, such a dear lovely creature as she is! She told me all about a PAROCHIAL AID SOCIETY that they have in their church, and how useful and delightful it is. In fact, I think her letter, as we are not regular correspondents, was especially directed to inquiring if we had such a society here, and if not, whether we should not establish one."

"It will be hard work in Dillburg," sighed Mrs. Gillespie, "but at least tell us about it."

"It is a Society for the Women of the Church," said Ann; "and once it is organized in a church, every woman in the church is supposed to belong to it, in virtue of her church membership. Of course it is evident that many of the members will be dead heads, but that number lessens each year, as they learn to work, and something is found for each one to do. The society has three officers: president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. It is divided into four committees; Visiting and Strangers' Committees; Deacons' Aid Committee; Pastor's Aid Committee, Church Improvement Committee. This last Committee is the largest in numbers, the Pastor's Aid is the smallest. Each Committee has a Chairman or presiding officer, and these four officers, together with the three officers of the whole society—for the secretary and treasurer are one—form the Executive of the whole. The Parochial

Aid as a whole has a meeting one afternoon in a month, to discuss work that has been done, or should be ; the various committees meet when they are notified by their officer, never less than once a month. The day before the general meeting there is an executive meeting. The officers must be popular, experienced, diligent women ; the Visiting Committee calls on all strangers, speaks to and welcomes all strangers who appear in church. Whenever any one in this congregation hears of a stranger in the church bounds, the Visiting Committee must be informed. The Deacons' Aid directs its work to the poor and sick ; the Pastor's Aid is chosen of experienced Christians, who try to do especially spiritual work ; make and keep peace in the church, and so on. Their work is private mostly, not publicly discussed ; and they especially try to check strifes and gossip. The Church Improvement Committee sees to keeping the Church in nice order, tries to raise money for repairs, attends to the proper beautifying of the house of God.

"Such a committee here," groaned Mrs. Gillespie, "*might* stop that leak in the church roof."

"A Pastor's Aid Committee," sighed Mr. Gillespie, "might put a check on Sue Stryker's venomous tongue, which does so much mischief ; it might also calm the strife between the Rands and the Blakes !"

"A pity it would not," said Mrs. Gillespie, "for you have tried your best to heal that breach, and cannot. They consider that you came here after it began, and don't realize its true inwardness ; 'but

where envying and strife are, there is confusion and every evil work.' ”

“ I like that Parochial Aid plan, immensely,” said Mr. Gillespie. “ Will you let me have Mrs. Baron’s letter to study it up? I will then talk with Mrs. Spencer, Mrs. Gates, Mrs. Percy, and the church officers, and we’ll go to work to inaugurate this scheme. I feel inclined to say I’ll make it my last ditch, but I’ll say better, ‘ If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this and that.’ ”

Ann had forgotten all about the boys’ club. She recalled it now, but concluded enough had been designed for the present, and there would be time enough to plan further for the club, when she had heard from the boys. Also a storm was rising and she must hasten home. The morning had been hot, now black clouds massed themselves, and the rumble of thunder, coming nearer and nearer, with lightning increasing in vivid splendor, showed a heavy tempest about to break. Arrived at home, and finding C’list’an had closed the windows properly, Ann stood on the verandah to watch the magnificence of the gathering storm. The window of Elizabeth’s room, opening on the verandah, was still ajar, on account of the heat. Elizabeth called, “ Ann! do come in! Why do you stand there? This is going to be terrible!” Elizabeth was pale and evidently alarmed. Ann pushed the window wider open, and stood nearer it and Elizabeth, repeating: “ He rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made

darkness his secret place ; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness that was before him, his thick clouds passed, hailstones and coals of fire. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice."

"Aren't you *afraid*?" said Elizabeth. "I'm so afraid of storms."

"I am not," said Ann. "That great fear in storms, Elizabeth, is often constitutional and hereditary ; happily, I am very strong, and I had very strong parents ; the fear is also often the outcome of a delicate nervous organism such as yours. Sometimes, it is the product of injudicious training of a child, or the cultivation of a whim. Whatever its source, it is uncomfortable, and if it can be gotten rid of, it is advisable to away with it."

"I don't see how one can," said Elizabeth.

"First and foremost, see that God is in the storm : 'He holds the winds in his hands, he utters his voice in the thunder.'"

"But, Ann, that is only poetry ; there are natural manifestations, natural causes and effects."

"I know it," said Ann, "yet everywhere God stands back of Nature ; his power presents the limits, his voice says, 'thus far.' From God all this Nature-fabric came, we can see him in and over all."

"But still, Ann, storms do terrible work, lightning and wind do kill people, Christian people, too."

"I know it," said Ann, "and rain wets us to the skin, and we take cold, so it is well to shelter if we can. I should not stand out in the rain, nor take a position especially exposed to lightning, nor go abroad needlessly when bricks and branches are flying about; the Lord expects common sense of us. But storms must come, Elizabeth, they have their usefulness, as well as being natural results of unpreventable causes. What I mean is, given the shelter, known the fact that no human effort can prevent the tempest, and assured that a God who loves and cares for me is in and over all, there is no need for fear or excitement on my part. Suppose even that I am killed in a storm. Why so greatly fear death? I must die sometime. I am sure that in that world to come are all the elements of beauty and happiness that are here, and very many beside, greater than our minds can now compass. If I am killed by a storm, would it not be a death very like the translation of Enoch, or the going up to heaven in a whirlwind accompanied by horses and chariots of fire as was given to Elijah? Why, if we are Christians, need we so cling to life and fear death? As long as God bids us to live, as long as he gives us work to do for him, as long as we can benefit others, we should be glad to live; when he says 'Come,' we should be glad to go. The child enjoys its play at a neighbor's with its little friends, but it hears a voice at the gate calling, 'Come, darling,' it sees its father's open arms and hears his voice, knows his loving smile; the playmates and friends are abandoned;

with a laugh and a joyish rush of feet it is going to love and home ! ”

“ O Ann,” cried Elizabeth, “ do teach me and help me to be less afraid of death ! I have always felt that I could not live to be old, could not live very long, and I am so afraid of dying.”

“ Dear child, let me say in the first place that there is no evident reason why you should expect to die sooner or younger than other people. In the midst of life we are all surrounded with death. Persons in your condition are so well cared for, and so apart from accident or contagion, that they are often long-lived. Your health makes a very marked improvement, and I expect to see you out of your chair some day. Now that I have answered that part of what you have said, let me turn to the other. Why are you afraid of dying ? Do you not rest on the promise of Christ, that he will not cast out any who come unto him, but will save them with an eternal salvation ? ”

“ Yes, Ann, but that world to come seems so far away, and I don't know anything much about it, and I don't feel as if I knew anybody there very well. I don't know much of my parents, I hardly remember them, and Aunt Fontaine was real kind, but so shut up from other people in her ways that I don't *long* after her.”

“ Elizabeth, when you were born into this world you came to a place and people all new to you, yet entire, tender love at once enfolded you ; your comfort was studied, your happiness secured. Have

you not felt at home and among kin in this world?
Wordsworth says:

‘Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises in us, our life’s star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar.’

“Now, why cannot this be doubly true of death? Why will not dying be the setting here, the rising there, of the star of life-immortal? We, being born into that nobler life, shall find a blissful home, loving welcome, and the faces that greet us there will be soon as well known and as dear as those that met the opening of our eyes when we came to earth. Perhaps they will be those very ones glorified and dowered with immortality. Elizabeth, do you fear dying, lest dying itself may be painful? I do not believe that. The soul did not come into the body with a wrench or a cataclysm, why should it go out with one? Why should it not part as gently as it came? I do not leave a house with a bounce and a bang, and a general tearing up of affairs; why should my soul be less decorous in its going? The reports of many on the very verge of life, half across the border-lands of death, tell us ‘if this be dying it is bliss to die.’ How many die in sleep, the going out of spirit not stirring the lightest slumber, nor ruffling a feature. How almost invariable is that restful, contented look on dead faces. Even those who die by sudden accidents may not suffer. Death may be too instantaneous for even the injured body to feel a pang. Livingstone in the clutch

of a lion, within a second of death, felt neither fright nor pain, simply as if drifting into deep sleep. Drowning is universally agreed to be painless, so no doubt is suffocation, as by smoke or gases, creeping on gently. A disease or an injury may be painful to our physical nerves, but I do not believe that dying is painful. In fact, Elizabeth, death is one of the inevitable things, we know not when or how it will come, we do know that there is a promise of bliss beyond; that our Lord has said, '*I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,*' that many 'who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage,' have, when death came, been peaceful or blissful. Therefore, cease, my child, to fear that which really is not fearful. We grope dimly here after a personal Christ, we shall know him there."

The storm had roared and flamed and wheeled away as Ann spoke, and Elizabeth, stretched on her chair, listened intent. A brief deluge of rain had fallen, water dashed from the eaves, and along the streets ran turbid streams; the air felt clean and washed, the turf renewed its beauty under the cleansing waters. Maggie vigorously rung the "five-minute bell" at the back-door, and three jolly vociferous boys raced from the barn to the back-porch, and began to wash and brush for dinner. Ann had provided for Arthur and his friends a little toilette apparatus, on the rear verandah, and presently three clean and subdued little lads marched into the dining-room. "Mutton and tomato-sauce

and oyster patties, whoop!" whispered Arthur to one friend, and then impartially confided to the other, "Apple dumplings for dessert, saw Maggie makin' em, they're prime."

Elizabeth looked unusually cheery, and talked clubs to the boys very pleasantly. "I say, 'Lizabeth," said Arthur, "if you could get about on your legs, you know, you'd be as much fun as Davy, maybe more; 'cause you're prettier'n Davy, don't you know? Least I think so; I like fair people like you."

When C'list'an had made Elizabeth ready for her afternoon nap, and Ann was about to leave her, Elizabeth said: "You have done me so much good to-day, Ann, I wish you could do me more, by telling me how to live *at peace*. I feel always in a state of strife with myself over something."

"Elizabeth dear, the converse of self-conflict is self-surrender. The secret of being at peace with circumstances is—laying down our arms. God arranges our lives, and leads us as and where he will. Better run along cheerily than try to get loose from his guidance. Self-surrender, then no self-conflict."

CHAPTER XI.

THE TOOLS NEAR AT HAND.

“Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll,
Leave thy low-vaulted past,
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven, with a dome more vast;
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea.”

“THERE comes Sue Stryker in at the gate,” said Elizabeth. There was no gratulation in her tone: Elizabeth had outgrown any yearning for the acrid conversation of Sue Stryker. Elizabeth's chair back was a few inches more elevated than it had been the year before; she was embroidering silk roses on a piece of linen; Ann, near by, was busy with the more prosaic occupation of darning her own and Arthur's stockings. C'list'an went to the door and ushered in Sue.

“Every one here owes me a visit,” cried Sue, in high tones; “of course I don't expect anything of Elizabeth, and I don't seem to be on *your* calling list, Miss Bradford.”

“I supposed you always came to call on Eliza-

beth," said Ann, "and also I am always very busy."

"Oh, yes, I suppose so, any one would be, who undertook to run a town, even such a little town as Dillburg. Mrs. Stokes said the other day, because we were not city or college people here, you thought all we needed was to sit round while you showed us what to do."

Ann darned on placidly, without reply, but the motion of Elizabeth's needle was something vicious.

"What do you hear from Davy? I'm anxious to know if she keeps her frock as ragged as her gloves, now she's out of C'list'an's reach. Davy was bad enough about sewing always; her Aunt Fontaine used almost to shed tears over her abhorrence of a needle, and now you're going to make a literary woman of her, what *will* she be? Every one knows that literary women can't take time to mend their clothes or do their hair, but are always down at the heel," continued Sue, ignoring Ann's shining braids and the pile of mended stockings on her lap. Perhaps she did not consider Ann a literary woman.

"That idea," said Ann, calmly, "is all behind the age. The literary woman of to-day is a model of neatness and accuracy. Thoroughness in one direction has assured thoroughness all along the line. Education has balanced her mind, and refined her taste. If I went to a town where there were two literary women, I'd at once bank on them as among the most elegant and accurate housekeepers

in the place. The close air, dust, and grease spots would not be found in *their* homes. Why should they? Chemistry and physiology have enlightened them."

"Speaking of housekeeping," said Sue, "Mrs. Nimes made us laugh so the other day. She said, of course you couldn't keep house, and it was a true providence that Maggie and C'list'an were willing to stay, or poor Elizabeth would starve."

Elizabeth looked on the verge of going into a passion, but Ann gave her a restraining glance.

"Miss Webster was in there, talking about this new Parochial Aid Society you've been getting up," continued Sue.

"Mr. and Mrs. Gillespie got that up," said Ann.

"Oh, pooh, we know well enough where it came from, and you're chairman of the Improvement Committee."

"Only until Mrs. Danvers is well enough to take it."

"Mrs. Nimes said she thought you were putting yourself forward pretty well for a stranger; here in fifteen months you've got up a Pilgrim's Progress Class, a Boys' Club, a Girls' Study Class, a Missionary Reading Club, and a Ladies' Study Club, besides this Parochial Aid. Mrs. Nimes said she thought strangers in a town ought to lie low, and let the old settlers go ahead. I told her I didn't *quite* think that. Then Miss Webster struck in, and said, let you alone, and you'd be sure to peter out before long. Miss Webster said you'd soon turn

all the town into blue stockings, and she hoped the merchants would bring in a stock of blue hose and spectacles, to be ready for your pupils. Miss Webster is *so funny*, she don't care a mite what she says. I suppose you don't mind her talk, anyway?"

"No," said Ann, folding up another pair of stockings, "I do not know that I am disturbed by *any* kind of talk."

"Oh, dear me! Why not? I couldn't say that. I think if everybody was saying hateful things about me, I'd feel dreadfully. Why don't you?"

"Why should I? The Lord has promised: 'Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man; thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.' 'He shall hide me in his pavilion, in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me.'"

"Isn't there a tremendous lot of pride in appropriating all such promises to yourself, as if one was so extra good?" asked Sue.

"Not the self, but the God is good," said Ann. "Do you think that it would be over-weening pride to believe your father would do for you what he had promised, even if he had promised much more than you deserved?"

But here Elizabeth, no longer to be restrained by looks, broke forth, "Sue Stryker, you know very well that all people are *not* saying ugly things about Ann. Mr. Gillespie was telling me the other day how popular she is, and how much good she does."

"Oh, yes," said Sue, "Mrs. Dibbs was saying that Mr. Gillespie made a great pet of her, but there *were* other folks in the congregation, though he didn't seem to know it."

"I don't believe she said it at all!" cried Elizabeth, "if she did, she had no business to talk so. Every one likes Ann, unless it is that Webster-Nimes-Stokes tribe, that almost no one goes with. I should think, Sue, you'd be ashamed of such company."

"Why, I can't help their coming to our house, or stopping to talk to me as we pass each other's gates. They like to hear the funny things I can say. Miss Ann, why are you so silent? Elizabeth, does she never speak?"

"We *converse*, we do not gossip," said Elizabeth, with aplomb.

"Pshaw, set yourself up for a model, do you, child? Miss Ann, what harm is there in a little gossip, that hurts no one?"

"I think we cannot say gossip hurts no one, as at least it hurts the one who indulges in it. For my own part, I avoid it, as I am sure it would tend to make me untruthful."

"Why would it? I don't see that point," said Sue.

"In my eagerness to have something to tell, or to tell it in a brilliant way, I should be in danger of overstating facts, or even of inventing things to tell, in so freely repeating my neighbor's talk, I might add to their remarks, or give them in a tone and

manner that did not belong to them originally. Perhaps, for instance, if the ladies you have quoted this morning were asked if they had said these things, they might put a different face upon them, or disclaim them entirely; and yet, I think you would not deliberately invent and disseminate ugly remarks."

Sue blushed a little. "Oh, you're too particular! You are as strict as a Puritan. Why didn't you go to the Hall the other night? Miss Martin said she reckoned it was not good enough for you! Tell me, why didn't you go?"

"Because it suited neither my taste, nor my conscience."

"Why, what was there so bad in it?"

"Nothing that I know of, but it simply did not seem right for me to go. I think it a good plan to avoid all over which conscience hesitates."

"What's your rule to decide about the right and wrong of amusements?"

"If it is something Christ cannot be conceived of as liking, I should not like it, for, as a Christian, it is my privilege to have the mind of Christ," replied Ann.

"Why, Miss Ann! Then you'd cut off everything but going to church, or sitting singing psalms, or reading the Bible!"

"I have not so learned Christ," said Ann, smiling at Sue's appalled look. "I think if Christ reappeared upon earth, we should find him full of human sympathies. Why not? We know he went to feasts

and weddings, and had that cheerfulness that drew little children; and the Pharisees complained that he was too much in harmony with the multitude and common life. Don't you suppose, as a child and lad, he played the games, and sang the songs, and heard the favorite tales of children and youth?"

"Why, Miss Ann! The very idea! You can't think of the Lord as—as playing lawn tennis, or ball, or croquet."

"I cannot think of him as frowning on any innocent and healthful amusement, or genial, honest, social gathering. He is the brother of our flesh."

"Well, I suppose you think all the folks that went to the show at the Hall are completely wrong."

"Certainly not; to a large degree I refrain from thinking of the matter at all, except as it strictly concerns myself. The Scripture warns me 'Judge not,' and I feel myself too fallible to wish to get upon the judgment-seat. I think many who went the other night had no such feeling of question or hesitation about it, as I had. If it was contrary to my Christian consciousness, then I should not go; my neighbor may have had no such consciousness. Paul says, 'Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind.' Perhaps my conscience is 'weak,' but even if that is so, I shall not make it stronger by disobeying it. It may be that I am tithing mint and anise and cummin; even if I am, if I consider it my duty, I remember, Christ said, 'These ought ye to have done.' Others may not consider such tithing imperative, and every one must answer for

himself to God. 'To his own master he standeth or falleth.' "

"Dear me," said Sue, "what a lot of things you think of. I have heard and said more sense here, this afternoon than I have for a year! But if I always talked of such things as these, I should be *so* stupid! *I like wit.*"

"So do I," said Ann, "I believe with Young that wit is precious as the vehicle of sense."

"Oh, but if you bring sense in, it will be dull," screamed Sue.

"If wit has no sense, it is nonsense. Now, nonsense may be amusing from its very absurdity, provided it has in it nothing cruel nor malicious. The trouble is, that most people who devote themselves to being funny, and raising a laugh, become reckless in what they say. The tongue, at best, is a poorly broken steed that is always on the verge of running away with its owner. 'Wise,' says the proverb, 'is he who bridles his tongue.' "

"For my part," said Sue, rising and hooking her fur cape, "I prefer something new and bright, not common stuff."

"In that case," said Elizabeth, "you had better cultivate some wisdom. 'Wisdom is rare, Lorenzo; wit abounds.' "

"Oh, what humbug you talk here!" cried Sue.

"You won't be offended at us, will you," said Elizabeth, sarcastically, "if we dare to have sense ourselves, so long as we do not require it of you?"

"I don't see how I ever thought that girl's com-

pany agreeable," said Elizabeth, when Sue had gone her way.

"As milestones serve to tell us how far on a journey we have come," said Ann, "so certain foolish or evil persons and things, which once we liked, grown wearisome or disgusting to us, serve to show us how far we have made mental and moral progress. It is a pity Sue had not had a better training, she might have made a useful and pleasant woman; naturally she has a quick mind. What a terrible thing it is for a child to have a mother lacking in religiousness, in real piety! Religion can confer on us an instinctive good sense, even if we are by nature weak and silly-minded. No Christian mother could have allowed a girl to grow up by her side such a scandal-monger, so bitter of tongue, as poor Sue. I think, Elizabeth, that religion is the mother of good-sense.

'Good-sense, which only is the gift of heaven,
And, though no science, fairly worth the seven.'

"That seemed a very clear and simple rule which you gave, for judging of the right and wrong of things, Ann; just to consider what Christ would think of them, if he were here among us. I like that."

"Some one has said that a personal relation to a personal being comprises all that is necessary for conduct and character. That meets every possibility of the soul, Christ the man, Christ the human, Christ the brother, Christ the friend, Christ the

daily example. He covers all the needs of our journey toward the Glory Gate."

"Miss Bradford," said Maggie, coming in, "here's a telegraph I got this minute, telling me my Cousin Emma can't live beyond a day or so, and wants to see me at the last. Poor Emma! we've been like sisters."

"You must go at once," said Ann. "Pack your valise, and go for a week if you like." She looked at the clock. "It is too late for the through train. If you go by the cars now, you will have so many delays, you'll be all night on the road. Ask Mr. Black to get a horse and cutter and take you, and you can reach there by nine to-night. C'list'an will get you some coffee and bread and meat, before you start, and put you up something to eat on the way."

"It would be such a good way for me," said Maggie, "but how can you get on with Mr. Black and me both gone?"

"C'list'an will take your work, I'll attend to Miss Elizabeth, and Arthur can certainly do Mr. Black's work here and at Mrs. Percy's for one twenty-four hours. Mr. Black can be back by to-morrow noon. That will be all right, Maggie; go speak to Mr. Black and get ready at once," said Ann.

"How quickly you think, Ann!" cried Elizabeth, as Maggie went off. "It never seems to take you any time to think up a plan."

"I think quickly about common affairs, cutting out sewing, arranging housework, and so on, but you have no idea how slow I always was about my

lessons. I used to think it took me twice as long as other people to acquire knowledge. If Davy and I had been in classes together, she would have laughed at me as a slow scholar. If you and I were in classes, Elizabeth, you would learn the lessons in half the time I should need to take for them."

"I don't half believe it," said Elizabeth, laughing. "There is Mr. Black going for Mrs. Gimbel's horse and cutter! This will be a regular picnic for Mr. Black. Maggie's sorrows will afford him an outing; and as for Maggie, the long sleigh-ride, the trip, a week's vacation, will be such fun, that she'll forget to weep any more tears for Emma, until she reaches her house," said Elizabeth, in her cynical way.

"Isn't it a blessed thing that human nature is so constructed that it *can* find amelioration for sorrows in the small affairs of life? If we could not forget for a little, if in the on-look, the present, and the retrospect, we must continue on the same level of suffering, the dark waters standing always at flood over our hearts, we should be neither long-lived nor efficient while alive," said Ann.

"But there is a great difference in people, in regard to the intensity with which they feel physical or mental pain. I was reading yesterday in my history that Sir Robert Peel was so peculiarly sensitive to all impressions, moral and physical, that he died from an accident from which many would have recovered. Well, Mr. Black has made his bargain

with Widow Gimbel, and has gone into the stable to harness up," and Elizabeth, who found relief to the monotony of her life in watching all that passed within sight of her windows, was interested in the preparations for the departure, until Maggie, lunch basket in hand, finally climbed into the cutter, and C'list'an, her face red from exertions in hastening Maggie's exodus, concluded her labors, by putting three well-wrapped hot bricks into the bottom of the vehicle.

The afternoon was doomed to be one of events. Arthur had just returned from school, and had been informed that the responsibilities of Mr. Black's evening and morning work at home and at Mrs. Percy's rested upon him, when a man drove up furiously and presently C'list'an rushed in, pale with excitement. "Miss Ann! here's Mike Deal, saying that my brother has fallen out of the loft of Nicholson's big barn, and is hurt, they don't know how much, only he's not himself—poor boy, he is very often not himself—lying dead-like, and Mike has come for me and the doctor!"

"Go with him at once," said Ann. "Here, let me get your big cloak and your hood. Put on your fur-top overshoes, you have a three-miles' ride and it's growing colder. Be quick, don't be so frightened; you may find him in no danger."

C'list'an was hurriedly making ready. "What will you do?" she cried. "I must go, and I oughtn't to go, whatever! You can't lift Elizabeth in and out of bed."

“Arthur and I can, and if we can’t, we’ll send for Mrs. Percy. Don’t worry about us. You’ll get back to-morrow, I’m sure.”

“Dear knows,—to leave you like this, Maggie and Mr. Black gone. It never rains but it pours cats and dogs. And it is a true word, troubles never come singly but in couples, same as the animals walked into the ark.”

Ann went out to make some inquiries, and to hurry off C’list’an. Elizabeth picked up Edwin Arnold’s poems and read :

“ Good it is helping kindred : good to dwell
Blameless and just to all ;
Good to give alms with good will in the heart,
Albeit the store be small ;
Good to speak sweet and gentle words, to be
Merciful ! patient, mild :
To hear the law and keep it, leading days
Innocent, undefiled.”

“That’s Ann,” said Elizabeth.

After tea, Arthur went into the kitchen to see that coal and kindling were ready for morning. He felt unusually manly: he was doing Mr. Black’s work, was the only man in the house, and Mrs. Percy had heartily thanked him for his attentions to her establishment. Ann was standing by the table, fishing up little fortunes in silver with a dish-mop from the depths of her dish-pan. Arthur’s work was done, and he looked on. “Cousin Ann,” he demanded, “what do you wish me to be when I’m a man?”

"What made you think of that just now?" asked Ann.

"Well, when I was feeding the chickens, and getting water, coal, and kindling, locking up, seeing to all Mr. Black's work, I got to thinking that Mr. Black had done that all his life, and there were plenty of boys growing up now, doing such things, and meaning to keep on at it always, or bound to, even if they don't mean it, and I thought I wouldn't like that for myself, and I began to think what would I be. What do you say?"

"I say I want you to be just what, after careful, honest thinking, you are sure you could be best, and most usefully. Be what will make the best man of you, and the most helpful man to other people. You cannot consider merely yourself alone, you must think of others. No man liveth and no man dieth to himself; we are bound up in bundles, like a sheaf of wheat, or a big fagot, in this world."

"Now, Cousin Ann, most *pious* folks, if I asked what I should be, would say, 'I want you to be a minister.'"

"As to that," said Ann, "the ministry is not the only calling in which man can serve God acceptably. If every good man felt compelled to be a minister, in the sense you use the word, the church would be as badly off as a regiment, all officers and no privates. Good laymen are in as great demand, and as honored of God, as great preachers. I think too, Arthur, that when God really wants a man in the

ministry, he calls him so loudly that he is obliged to follow the voice. He can do nothing else. There are men who follow a false call to the ministry, the mistake of their own hearts, or the misguided voices of friends. After a time, they find they had no fitness for the office. Fitness, not merely in education, but in disposition, manners, voice, tact, health, is as much required in the ministry as in any other calling; perhaps more, because the work is more important."

"I like to talk with you about things, Cousin Ann," said Arthur, condescendingly, "because you put so much good sense into them. Something, of course, I must be, and one time I think I'd like to be one thing, and one time another. I made up my mind last summer that I didn't mean to keep a grocery. I don't like that. Of course I want to be something great."

"Everybody does—some succeed by striving, some find themselves great by what seems an accident. If there had been no Civil War, I think General Grant would never have been heard of; he had left the army, and his greatness consisted in being able to direct to victory great armies. If there had been no great war he would never have found his field. However, Arthur, to reach any real lasting greatness, there is one gate through which one must pass, the gate of goodness."

"O Cousin Ann! Alexander and Cæsar and Napoleon, and a lot more of them, were *very* great; but I don't think they were very desperately good.

Think how Alexander killed people, just *viciously*, and how drunk he got ! ”

“ Those were *famous* men, but were they really great? I think all the records of the world have not yet been finished, and one day we may have some grand surprises in the matter of character. As for greatness, Hampden, Washington, William the Silent, Cromwell, Cavour, were men truly great, even in the judgment of people who don't count piety for much in a man's make-up; and Howard, Judson, Egede, Luther, Knox, Wesley, and hundreds more, who have spent their lives only to do good, will one day shine like stars on the roll of the world's great ones.”

“ Do you think I have to make up my mind right now what I'll be when I'm a man ? ”

“ Not at all. If you set yourself heartily to being the best that you can as a boy, doing all you ought to do thoroughly, then there is no doubt that your way will be made clear when the time really comes for choice. You know in any business or profession, you need good general knowledge, energy, honesty, manly purpose, generosity. You can cultivate these, which will help you in any line of life.”

Ann had finished her dishes, washed her dish-towels, wiped the table and dish-pan, and taken a casual survey of the kitchen to see that all was in order.

“ Come, boy, we must go to Elizabeth; I think that she will be lonesome pretty soon.”

But Elizabeth was lonesome already ; and when she was lonesome she was cross. She now felt deeply injured by having been abandoned so long.

"You know, dear child, I had the tea-dishes to do up, the buckwheat cakes to set for breakfast, and other things to do," explained Ann, as Elizabeth complained of neglect.

"You might have hurried. I know if I were strong like you, I'd be faster, and not leave a sick person so. Why need you do all that anyway? Besides, you might have sent Arthur in here. I heard you talk, talk, talking, there, and no one near me! No one cares for me. You are all so selfish." Just at this minute, Elizabeth had changed her mind about Ann, and did not think her good at all!

"I'd like to know what you call yourself," growled Arthur.

"Arthur, get at your lessons," said Ann ; "doing the work has made you later than usual ; how about that arithmetic?"

"Hard as rocks."

"Then all the more need to study hard. Go with your books into the other room ; I'm going to read to Elizabeth, and that would take your attention. Elizabeth, here is a lovely book that Dr. Helen Train spoke of in one of her letters, 'Sister Dora.' I know you will enjoy it."

But Elizabeth was uneasy, very small things annoyed her. C'list'an's absence made her nervous and irritable. She broke out, "How am I to get to bed?"

"All right, dearie, I'll manage it."

"Are you going to sleep down here?"

"Certainly. I would not think of leaving you alone."

"Oh, wouldn't you *hate* to be helpless like me?"

"I hope God would give me grace for whatever he called me to do or to suffer, just as he will and does you, Elizabeth. Suppose the time comes when you can leave that chair, when you can stand upon your feet! not to be very active, perhaps, but even to walk on crutches would be a great improvement. Let us hope for good things to come."

"I'm so tired of everything, and so dull, and so shut in, and so—lonesome," reiterated Elizabeth.

"I forgot to tell you there would be something new to interest you. This morning I saw Mr. Grace, and he said that house of yours, that the Hares have lived in, is to be rented to Mr. Spring at a better price, but it must be papered and painted now before they go in. They can do it now, by keeping the fires going. Mr. Grace wants you to select the paper and paint. He will send you a list of the rooms, and the amounts of paper needed. Then you can write to the shop for a sample sheet of paint colors, and write to Mr. Keep to send up to you the sample strips of wall paper. He can take the trouble to send a boy up to exhibit them to you, as you are to buy for a whole house! Then you can have a fine time choosing. Mr. Grace said he would let you know what priced papers it would be well to buy. In fact, Elizabeth, more and more

you must begin to attend to your own business; it will be pleasant to you, and it is only right that you should do what you can."

Ann herself had suggested this little plan for Elizabeth to Mr. Grace, and insisted upon having it carried through. But of that she said nothing. Elizabeth allowed herself to be beguiled, and ceased to mourn over being neglected. After a while Ann made her ready for bed, and, aided by Arthur, lifted her from chair to bed. "See here, young woman," she said, cheerily, "I believe if you had a strap to take hold of you'd do a deal of lifting for yourself. I mean to try fixing one for you." Then she turned the light low, and, swaying in her rocking-chair in the gloom, sang Elizabeth to sleep to the words:

"For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind,
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind."

CHAPTER XII.

DIVINE MANNERS.

“Cruel and cold is the judgment of man,
Cruel as winter and cold as the snow;
By and by will the deed and the plan,
Be judged by the motive that lies below.”

ANN raised her head to offer a correction to Elizabeth's reading of a passage of French: as she did so, she saw a most aggravating spectacle on her lawn. It was late March, mild, the snows were gone, the earth teeming with moisture, and what Ann saw was three round black bulks, furnished with little wriggling handles, prying into the ground, obtaining leverage by bracing themselves at an angle of forty-five degrees; these black things seemed to be alive, but headless; in fact, they were neighbor Dibbs' pigs, buried to their ears in the soft lawn.

With a cry of vexation Ann started up. “*I won't* try to stand this any longer! I shall go and tell those Dibbs people that if they will not keep their pigs shut up, I shall sue them for damages. I'll have those pigs indicted as public nuisances.” She caught her hat from the rack, had opened the front door—then—slowly closed the door, hung up the hat, and went to the rear door to call Mr. Black;

but he had already gone against the depredators with a long pole, and the pigs were fleeing with wild squeals. Ann took her place and reopened the French book.

"Ann," said Elizabeth, "why did you change your mind and hang up your hat? I'm sure what you proposed was quite right—patience with the Dibbs faction has ceased to be a virtue."

"Perhaps so," said Ann, hesitating, and adding with a half-embarrassed laugh, "the fact is, Elizabeth, I thought of some texts; really, all at once, my mind seemed to be a big open book, written all over with texts."

"And what were the texts, please?" demanded Elizabeth."

"Oh, so many! 'Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath,' 'The servant of God should not strive,' 'Slow to wrath,' 'Leave off contention before it be meddled with,' and so on—dozens of them."

"I suppose," said Elizabeth, astutely, "that when the mind is stored with Scripture it *is* like a book, and when we need guiding, our angel turns the leaves, and shows us what is written."

"Better than that," said Ann, "I think it is this that is meant when it is said of the Holy Spirit, he shall take of the things of Christ and show them unto us," and they returned to the lesson. In a few minutes it was finished.

Elizabeth, closing the book on her lap, turned to look out of the window. "There is the doctor's buggy

going into the Dibbs'," she exclaimed. "I wonder if any one is sick there! Why! There are two doctors in the buggy, and they seem to be in a hurry, I wonder what has happened?"

"C'list'an," said Ann, "you go over and inquire if we can do anything for them, if they are in any trouble."

C'list'an went quickly.

"Now," said Elizabeth, "your mind-book of texts can show you the place about heaping coals of fire on their heads! I didn't know but you would quote that, too, just now, and at once put it in practice, by telling Maggie to make a frosted lemon pie or a loaf of angel food to send to Mrs. Dibbs, as pay for her pigs' work in our yard. The angel food would be especially appropriate."

C'list'an returned highly excited by her budget of news.

"The horse scared at a machine they were dragging along the street and turned over the wagon on Mr. Dibbs and Jerry. Mr. Dibbs has an arm broken and a leg broken, and Jerry has a long cut they have to sew up, and Mrs. Dibbs has gone into hysterics fearful, and is making more noise than Mr. Dibbs or Jerry, and the doctors say she's more trouble than the hurt men."

"C'list'an, come over there with me at once. Here, take this clean white apron. I'll bring Mrs. Dibbs over here, and you stay and help the doctors, as you are a good nurse."

"The house," said C'list'an, "is all in an uproar,

beds not made, dishes not washed, Mrs. Dibbs' ironing all lying out on the chairs."

"Maggie!" cried Ann, "leave our work for a little, and come set Mrs. Dibbs' house in order; you can do as much work as two, when you try."

Away the three ran, and soon Elizabeth saw Ann returning, leading Mrs. Dibbs, who was weeping and wringing her hands in a wild state. They disappeared in the kitchen, and Elizabeth sat wondering what they were doing. She still heard spasmodic outcries from Mrs. Dibbs, varied by voluble remarks. Then Ann came in.

"May Mrs. Dibbs lie down here on the lounge, Elizabeth, while I finish Maggie's work? The work over at the Dibbs' will take her all the morning. I told her to stay and get things into shape, and iron some sheets, pillowcases and towels for them."

"Yes, indeed, bring her in here," replied Elizabeth.

Ann led in their guest. Elizabeth saw that Ann had bathed the excited woman's face and hands, combed her hair, put upon her C'list'an's slippers, and a clean white apron, and otherwise tried the soothing effects of arranging her toilette. She placed her on the lounge, put a fresh pillow under her head, and gave her a handkerchief wet with cologne. Then she fanned her for a little, talking quietly. "Keep calm and rest yourself now, when Maggie comes back she will tell us that the injuries are much less than you fear. Do not worry, C'list'an is a fine nurse, and she can stay all day; they have plenty of help. Mr. Black went over,

and Mrs. Percy. Don't think of your work; Maggie is a fine worker, and so willing; she will put your house in order, do that ironing, keep plenty of hot water for the doctors, and cook what is needed; she, too, can stay all day."

Mrs. Dibbs sobbed a while, then some shade of sense appeared. "Oh, if I could get Jimmy, and send him out after my sister Catherine; Catherine is such a nurse, she'd come and stay weeks with me. I'm no kind of a nurse, but Catherine just takes to it."

"And Jimmy is in school?" said Ann.

"Oh, yes, dear! dear! I wish he was here, he won't come before two hours."

"Yes he will; if you'll keep very quiet, and not disturb Elizabeth, and will go to either of the doors if any one comes, I'll go to the school and tell Jimmy to go for his Aunt Catherine. I'll tell him what has happened."

"How will he get there? Our horse is hurt, and I wouldn't dare to let Jimmy ride him, after he has nigh killed poppy and Jerry, oh dear, oh dear! Oh!!!"

"Hush, now, or I can't leave you," said Ann. "Listen: I will ask Mr. Gillespie to lend Jimmy his horse and buggy. That horse is safe, and Jimmie can bring his aunt back with him." Then, seeing Mrs. Gates at her door, Ann beckoned her from the verandah, and asked her to come stay with Elizabeth and Mrs. Dibbs, while she sent Jimmy for help for his family.

Mrs. Gates came, with a very intricate specimen of patchwork in her hand, which did more to soothe Mrs. Dibbs than either the advice, cologne or lavender, which Ann had administered. Ann went off content, leaving Mrs. Gates to explain the true inwardness of the new pattern of patchwork, and Mrs. Dibbs to detail the events of the accident, dwelling especially on the home-bringing of the injured, the "topsy-turvy condition of the house," and her own "awful feelings."

"There now," said Ann, when, in less than an hour, she came back, "Jimmy has started for his Aunt Catherine. I have been at the house, Mrs. Dibbs; Jerry's cut has been sewed up, and he is in bed, resting quietly; he is in your spare room, and it looks very neat and nice, and C'list'an has made up a fire there in the Franklin, and has made Jerry clean and comfortable in a fresh nightshirt. They think Jerry will be all right in a week, if he is kept very quiet, so that no fever comes on. Maggie is getting on fine with the work; Mr. Dibbs is in your room, and Maggie has put it in order, and they are about to set the arm, and after that the leg. The doctor says Mr. Dibbs has no internal injuries, and his head is not hurt. C'list'an and Mr. Black are helping the doctors, Mrs. Percy is doing up your sitting room, and Maggie will see to the rest, and finish the ironing; so all you need to do, Mrs. Dibbs, is to keep calm and rest yourself; when all is in order, the patients are quiet, and your sister Catherine has come, you can go home comfortably."

"I'll stay here, a little while, Miss Ann," said Mrs. Gates, "as you have Maggie's work to do and dinner to get; by the time I'm ready to go home, Mrs. Dibbs can go with me and take dinner, and stay until her sister comes."

Ann was thankful enough for this suggestion, as she did not wish to have Elizabeth worn out with Mrs. Dibbs' futile ohs and ahs, and sudden relapses into hysterics.

Finally the work was done, the dinner was cooking on the stove, Mrs. Gates took Mrs. Dibbs away with her, and Ann, with a sigh of relief, dropped into a big rocking-chair to rest.

"How thankful I am, Elizabeth, that some angel stood in the way of my rushing over to Mrs. Dibbs with threats this morning. How horrible it would have been to go in there with an angry expostulation, just as all this trouble had fallen upon them! This reminds me of the day I came down from Mount Merion Cottage. The cars were crowded, we stood in the aisles. On one seat a plump, rosy girl of eighteen sat, leaning against the window, her right foot drawn up along the seat, in easy fashion, so that she occupied the whole of it; she was reading, and did not offer to relinquish her hold of the second place. I felt like saying, 'Miss, have you paid for two?' or 'What pleasure would there be in traveling if all behaved selfishly?' or 'How can you keep your foot up like this, while ladies with gray hair stand?' However, I said nothing, but rested as comfortably as I could upon the arm

of the seat. No one asked her to give up the double place, but many glanced at it. As we went on, she closed her book, and said in a gentle voice, 'I look very selfish, but—I can't ticket myself, can I? I wish I *could* give you this seat. I wish I could give it all and stand. But this right leg is in plaster, and I cannot move until I am carried off the car, as I was carried on!' Then we had a very pleasant talk until we reached the city. Oh, how glad I was that I had considered silence golden, and not made any uncalled-for remarks. 'Slow to speak,' that text comes in so well, often, Elizabeth."

"That reminds me of a verse I saw the other day. Angels speak:

"O mortal man, be wary how you judge,
For we, who see the Maker, know not yet."

"Yes, dear Elizabeth, and I have often heard Dr. Helen Train quote, 'Make not thyself the judge of any man.' She says she often sees much of stupidity, carelessness, selfishness; so many unpleasant developments of the human heart, that she is tempted to as wide generalizations in condemnation as that literary bear, Carlyle, and then she calls the '*judge not*' to mind, and makes the widest allowances for heredity and environment, and finds that the more lenient she is to others the more readily, easily, successfully she gets on with her own work."

"I should think that physicians would see enough to fully disgust them with humanity; they see hu-

man nature so unveiled in the abandonment of trouble. What can those doctors over at the Dibbs' think of Mrs. Dibbs, but as a loud, helpless, slatternly woman, most useless when most needed?"

Ann laughed and shook her head at Elizabeth, who was judging her neighbor with a vengeance. Then she said: "A physician who carries about the thought of the generous, sympathetic, much-forgiving Christ, the ideal physician, will have that to help in the fight against irritation and condemnation of our fellows. Christ life-long shows us what are the manners of the upward way; divine manners, the manners we should have here below, and that with a very little further polishing will fit us in heaven. The summing up of such manners is 'long-suffering and forbearing one another in love.' Many people strive after good manners, and speak as if they were of the unattainable, when in truth 'good manners are made up of petty sacrifices.' Christ is the finest model and the Bible the best book of etiquette."

"I think," said Elizabeth, "that even among the few people that I have seen I have noticed that real Christians often had a refinement much above their station in life. Aunt Fontaine used to have an old man come here to do a little repairing work about the house; he could hang paper, mend plaster, paint. He was a simple old fellow, and could scarcely read; he often brought his Bible along to get aunt to tell him some of the hard words, or to explain the meaning of texts. His whole life seemed

bound up in his religion. Poor and ignorant as he was, he had such fine manners! It never troubled me to have him working in my room; I used to like to hear him talk—always about religion; other workmen always made me nervous. I was so sorry when the old man died, yet that was very selfish of me, for I am sure he went straight to heaven, where all his thoughts were. Once, when he was here, I picked up a hymn-book, and, because I thought a verse was pretty, I read it aloud to aunt. He stopped to listen, then begged me to read it again, and finally asked me to print it out clearly on a card for him to take home. It was:

“O Jesus, Lord, once crucified
To take our load of guilt away,
Thine be the hymn that rolls its tide
Along those shores of upper day.”

“The Evangelist says, ‘All . . . wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth,’” said Ann. “No doubt ‘the gracious Galilean,’ as Holland calls him, ‘the first true gentleman that ever breathed,’ as some other poet says, excelled in that most subtle and beautiful quality of graciousness, which is the very sum and substance of good manners. Yet, for all that, we have this ‘light divine and searching’ cast upon our daily ways in this world. How often we forget the pattern of the divine manners, and are so unkindly!

Ann spoke from her own experiences in this matter. She came into Elizabeth’s room one afternoon, looking rather downcast, and after taking up her

work and proceeding with it for a time, she broke out. "I am so ashamed of myself, I don't know what to do! I fairly hate myself. I am worse than those Hebrews to whom the apostle says, that when they ought to be teachers they have need that some one teach them again."

"Dear me, Ann! What has happened?" asked Elizabeth.

"You had just been settled for your nap, and Maggie and C'list'an had started on their shopping expedition, all the house being so nice and quiet, when I went into the library to try and get a nap on the lounge there. I felt so tired, for Arthur had a dreadful toothache in the night, and I was up about three hours trying to do something for him. As I laid down I wished so much that you, Elizabeth, would have a good sleep, as you have not felt well to-day. And I so much wanted a sleep too! I was just in a nice nap, when our front door-bell was pulled and jerked in the most furious fashion. I jumped up, my heart going like a trip-hammer. I was sure Arthur had been half killed by some accident, or that a telegram had come with news of Davy being dead. I opened the door; all in a tremble I was—and there stood a big, muddy countryman, with a pipe in his mouth, which he did not take out, when he said: 'Want fresh beef, missus?' I flew angry at once. 'No, I do not,' I said 'and I wish you knew how to ring a door-bell properly, and not raise such an uproar' and so I shut the door—*with decision*." Elizabeth burst into a laugh.

"You did just right," cried the irrepressible C'list'an, who had now returned, and was untying her bundles, "only I wish you'd slammed the door right in his face, he needed it."

"Well, I didn't need *that* exhibition of bad manners to make me any more ashamed of myself than I am."

"What *was* there wrong in it?" demanded Elizabeth, "the man was rude enough."

"Yes: no doubt, but when I went back to lie down, I thought that, probably, in all his life, he had had no instructions in good manners: he may never see any, unless the people where he deals see fit to give him a sample, which surely I was very far from doing. I considered that Christ never gave rough nor unkind replies, under any provocation. When Peter went so far as to deny him, he only 'turned and looked upon Peter.' The man, you see, probably knew no better than he did, and had no intention of offending. Then too, I felt sure that his life was much harder and less pleasant than mine, and I ought to have been ready to brighten it what little I could. How did I know how much anxiety he had centered in his sales to-day? A debt, a mortgage may be burdening him so that he cannot draw an easy breath. My words cannot fail to be a dark spot, a bitter thought in this day, always. I could not buy his meat, because I did not need it, but I might have said pleasantly, 'I don't need any meat, thank you: probably it is very nice, and some other time I may be glad to buy.' Then he would have

felt pleased and cheered, and even the house where he sold nothing would remain a bright spot in his memory."

"Well, that would have been better," assented Elizabeth, "but perhaps he is not a man to care for such things after all."

"Everybody cares more or less," said Ann. "Suppose, too, he ever heard me spoken of as a Christian, surely he would think such a swift-to-take-offence person was a very poor Christian. When I went back to the library, I could not sleep. I lay there taking myself to task."

"The jingling of the bell woke me up, but I soon fell asleep again," said Elizabeth.

"That was because you did not have an uneasy conscience," said Ann. "Now I did not deserve to get asleep."

"Oh, it was but a little thing," said Elizabeth, "why worry over it?"

"Because I am terribly afraid that it is not an unusual occurrence, but the exhibition of a very evil habit in me. Do you know that when Maggie was away, when her cousin died, and Maggie stayed two weeks instead of one, and I needed a washerwoman just such another thing occurred. One day I was making bread in the kitchen, when there was a knock at the back door. It is a trouble to take your hands out of bread dough; I don't like bread-making anyway; I was worried because Maggie did not come back; on the whole I felt unreasonably cross. So I opened the door, and there stood a big, dull, dirty

woman, who said, 'Missus, I hearn tell you wanted a *lady to wash*.' What do you think I did? I blush now to recall it. I snapped out, 'No : I don't want any *lady* to wash, I'm looking for a woman who knows how to work,' and then I shut the door, feeling humiliated beyond words over having said the silliest thing I ever uttered ; for how did I know that in good feeling and honorable intentions the proposed washerwoman was not really a lady? and is not *woman* a far finer title than *lady*? Who ever thought of calling Eve, our mother, a lady, rather than a woman? Woman, was the term Christ used to his mother. In fact, Elizabeth, I wonder my bread that day was not heavy with the heavy thoughts I put into it. I felt that I was very far from the Glory Gate, that my manners were not the manners of that upward way that leads to the City of God. If my mind is measured by my words, it shows a pretty poor, weakly sort of mind."

"O Miss Ann, you mind these little things too much," said C'list'an, "you set too high notions before you. I shouldn't know myself if I didn't say a great many things that I oughtn't to say every day."

"It is love that is lacking in me," said Ann to Elizabeth. "I am convinced of it. I picked up a commentary in the library this morning, and read this : 'Love is not only an eternal grace, but the highest grace. Other graces contribute to heaven ; love constitutes heaven, for a heart of love, in a world of love, is heaven. If a spark of God's love

now beams in our hearts, it is of the nature of heaven.' Now if I had love enough in my make-up, my conduct would be much more heavenly."

"O Cousin Ann," cried Arthur from outside the window, "I want to show you something!" Ann went out. Arthur had a big, well-scoured, hard clam-shell in his hand, white as snow up to the purple eye, and a semi-lune on one edge. "Come along, see what I'm going to put in this. Our strawberries have begun to get ripe; there are six big, red ones in the bed there, so early. I'm going to pick them, with nice long stems on, and a little green leaf, and set them by Elizabeth's plate in this shell, for a surprise, for supper."

"That's right," said Ann, "we must always think for Elizabeth," but she reflected that Arthur's action showed very right indeed, for Elizabeth had been most snappish and tantalizing to Arthur at dinner. Elizabeth had not felt well that day, and when she felt less well than usual, she was irritable, and must vent her irritability on some one. Poor Arthur had happened to serve as the conducting-rod for the lightning of her wrath that day, and Arthur himself, after a night of toothache, had been in no condition to have his rights infringed upon. Ann had admired the nonchalant manner in which he had received the assaults of Elizabeth. She said now, "I'm so glad, Arthur, that you bear Elizabeth no grudge for her cross words, and that you did not quarrel with her at dinner."

"Pooh," said Arthur, "I'd grow up into a pretty

man, wouldn't I, if I set out to quarrel with a girl, and a sick one at that?"

Perhaps it was because Elizabeth had been sinning with her tongue, and sowing dragon's teeth, to spring up into armed strife, that Ann had so freely expounded her own faults, and spoken of the more excellent way. No doubt the "silver arrow let gently into the heart," did its work, for Elizabeth seemed to be meditating on what had been said. As Ann sat with her, according to her custom, for the half hour before bed-time, Elizabeth said: "Ann, why did you say that love was the highest grace? Is not faith? We are saved through faith."

"I said love was the greatest, because I have Scripture warrant for it, 'The greatest of these is charity,' meaning love."

"But, Ann, it seems to me that in most books that I have read, and in most religious talk I have heard, Aunt Fontaine's, Mrs. Gates, old Dr. Prynne's, faith was made the all and in all. I heard little but about faith."

"Yes," said Ann, "we could not do without faith, that is the heroic grace of the soul, a kind of spiritual Great Heart, going sword in hand to conduct us toward the Glory Gate. 'This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.' But many people seem to make faith their object. They worry about their faith, the kind of faith, the amount of faith, the vitality of their faith, as if that were the main thing. Christ is the main thing. The all-sufficiency, the sole sufficiency, of Christ, that is what

fills John's Gospel to overflow, and Christ is embodied love. Christ came, Example, Leader, Saviour. Faith rests on him for our salvation, love follows closely at his side, marking the shining steps he trod, looking for his smile, hearkening for his voice, seeking to walk in his shadow with great delight, putting out the hand to feel the touch of his. Faith lays hold of his garment's hem, love lies like John against his breast. If we all felt more of the potency of this love, we should cease to measure the world with the letter *I*."

"Ann," said Arthur's voice from the verandah, "are you going to spend all night talking there with Elizabeth? I have put up the hammock; this is the first night it has been warm enough to sit out when it was moonlight; come out here, I like to hear you talk about the stars."

"Yes, go to Arthur," said Elizabeth, "maybe the boy is lonely."

Even this little concession was much from Elizabeth, it showed that she was thinking for others, coming to realize that she did not walk in a solitary way toward the Glory Gate, but had fellow-travelers to consider. For such thinking Elizabeth was not only healthier but happier. Nothing is more disastrous than to be self-centered, self does not give one sufficient breathing-room!

"Let us talk about the stars," said Arthur. "I wonder if people far up there are looking down at us, and talking about us? Where do they find us in their sky?"

"There is no up nor down in space," said Ann, "and if another world's people are looking toward our world, they can only find us where we are, and that is in the Milky Way, that ribbon of pale light that stretches across the sky. People on other worlds would have hard work to find us, for our earth is so tiny that it could not be seen by dwellers on other constellations."

"Perhaps they are made different from us," said Arthur.

"They would need be made *very* different," said Ann, "if they are to live even on the other planets of our system, to say nothing of those far-off stars."

"Perhaps they have eyes stronger than any of our telescopes," said Arthur. "Now, I saw a crab once, and his eyes were set on pegs; he could shoot them up half an inch or more from his head, and pull them clear down to his shell! Perhaps people in the other worlds have eyes which they can adjust to suit themselves, so that they are like prodigiously strong telescopes, when they want to see far, far off, and like the strongest kind of microscopes when they want to see little, little things, like the feathers on butterflies' wings, or the way beetles' wing-cases are chiseled. Perhaps some fellow up there is putting on his long-view eyes, and taking a look way here to see us sitting in this hammock. What if his ears are so keen that he can hear little sounds billions and trillions of miles off, and hears all we are saying?"

"He stands a chance of being as disgusted as

angels must be by some human remarks," said Ann, and then she and Arthur giggled at the idea of the strong-eyed, keen-eared man—but softly, so as not to disturb Elizabeth.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN TIME OF FAMINE—SATISFIED.

“Break thou the Bread of Life,
Dear Lord, to me,
As thou didst break the loaves,
Beyond the sea.”

JUNE had come. June was nearly half gone. Davy was at home. Ann and Arthur met her at the station. There was a little whirlwind of greetings, exclamations, hugs and kisses. It was all very joyful, and, as Davy said to herself, “so real homey.” Then Davy privately recalled the day of Ann’s coming to Dillburg, when not only she herself had not gone to meet her, but had sedulously refrained from refusing to go, so as the better to insure no one being at the train, and the intruding successor of Aunt Fontaine being left to find her way alone to her new abode. Davy felt rabid against herself when she thought of this, and she took a sidewise, private glance at Ann, to see if she remembered it. No, Ann’s strong, plain face had only a serene joy in the safe return of Davy. Ann never laid up grievances; by refraining from dwelling even on the cruellest injuries they, after a time, became dim and

drifted into misty forgetfulness. Other people remembered her wrongs much longer than she did. There was an evidence of this now. As they turned from the station, lo! a "Chester white," rooting for her six piggies, near a fence.

"Oh!" cried Davy, "the first pig I've seen since I left! Are they as bad as ever? What does Ann do about them?"

"We had to lay out a lot of work and money, keeping the Dibbs' pigs out. I worked three whole Saturdays," said Arthur, "helping Mr. Black fix the fences—the Dibbs' half and ours, too. Don't you think Mr. Dibbs and Jerry got half-killed, and Ann did so many things for them, lent 'em Maggie and C'list'an, and sent 'em beef tea and all kinds of nice things to eat; and lent 'em things, and made up on her machine five pair of sheets, 'cause Mrs. Dibbs is always out of things, and so slow doing anything. Well, *then*, after all *that*, mind you, C'list'an said to her one day: 'Mrs. Dibbs, can't you keep your pigs in a strong pen? they do worry Miss Bradford so;' and Mrs. Dibbs said: 'Well, Miss Bradford didn't come here to meddle with my affairs, as I know of; and I won't have it, I can tell her. If my pigs bother her, let her sell her place and move. I can get along without *her* for a neighbor.'"

"O Arthur, Arthur!" cried Ann, "what are you telling that for? C'list'an should never have repeated it to us. Who expects sense from Mrs. Dibbs? The more I see of her, the less I expect."

"But, Cousin Ann, the ingratitude, the horrid

ingratitude!" cried Davy. "What can she be made of!"

"Professor Peck said one day, when we were talking of noble acts, in 'general discussion hour,' " said Arthur, "that there were many more noble and generous acts performed than there were instances of gratitude; he said there were very few cases of real gratitude—gratitude was scarcer than diamonds. I asked him why there were so many stories about 'grateful this and grateful that,' and he said that because gratitude was so scarce and so pleasing, people liked to depict it, and to try in this way to encourage it, and that the lower animals were much readier to exhibit it than human beings."

"Oh, I see our house, and Elizabeth's chair on the verandah!" cried Davy, setting off on a run to get to her sister.

When Davy's trunk came, "Shall I unpack it in your room, Elizabeth?" said Davy.

"Yes, of course, I'd like to see if there is one single thing in it that does not need mending," said Elizabeth.

Elizabeth, improved as she undoubtedly was, was far from perfect, and the rejoicings of the family over Davy's arrival, the prompt coming over of Mrs. Percy and Mrs. Gates to join in the welcome had aroused some spleen. Davy was, however, too happy just then to take offence. She said gayly, "If you find *one thing* that needs mending, it will be more than I think. Bring the trunk in here, please, Mr. Black."

The soft answer that turneth away wrath had its effect. Elizabeth returned to good humor, and said, "Well, Davy, as soon as you came in, I thought how nice you looked, and how well you had kept that travelling-dress. I'll give you another this fall, so you can use that for common now."

Davy made haste to unpack. She had managed some presents for them all, including a necktie for Mr. Black, and nice handkerchiefs for Maggie and C'list'an.

"I don't see how you got so much for the little money you have, Davy," said Elizabeth.

"Oh, things are cheap in the city, and I've been real saving, so I could have something for presents. I do love to give presents! I'd like that best, if I were rich."

"You've showed real good taste in your buying, too."

"Miss Dorothy Camp helped me in that. I spent the day with her last Saturday, and we shopped in the afternoon. Ann, Miss Dorothy said to tell you she was coming here for five weeks this summer, and Doctor Helen Train would be here for two. Doctor Helen is great, I can tell you. She had a surgical case that all the folks are talking about, and she has had two papers in the medical journal that have made a great stir."

"Why don't you be a doctor, Davy?" demanded Arthur, who was sitting astride a chair, looking on.

"No, indeed, I don't take to it. I mean to be a professor, like Miss Sara Fordyce. That's what I

mean to be. I saw Miss Fordyce, Cousin Ann, at the college party, the big reception, Tuesday night. I wore my pink dress. I've been to four college parties this year, and I wore my white dress twice, and my pink dress twice, and they're as good as new, not a spot on them. They'll do next year, if we make them longer. See," and Davy shook out the cherished gowns. "I went to two 'Teas,' one was the College Literary Society Tea, and one was the Greek Letter Tea, and they asked me. I wore my brown silk. Next year, when I'm Freshman, I shall join the Greek Letter society one, you know."

Elizabeth burst into a laugh. "At the rate you are telling your news, Davy, we shall know your whole budget before bedtime. Then what will there be to talk about?"

"I'll find plenty," said Davy; "the city isn't like this place, where nothing goes on; it is crammed full of things to see and learn and talk about. There is always somewheres to go. Oh, it's fine!"

A cloud came over Elizabeth's fair face, and she turned away, looking wearily out of the window. The prospect was much more attractive than it had been two years before. Ann kept her fences and grounds in perfect order. Bushes of roses and weigelia were in bloom, the air was sweet with the odor of honeysuckles; over the way the Percy house had been renovated and the yard was beautiful; each place had jewel-bright flower-beds, but all this was simple and well known; this was not the variety, the activity, of the city. Elizabeth was weary

of what she had, and longed after the "had not." Davy saw the look, and her heart smote her. "What a fool I am," she thought, "to talk like that when Elizabeth can *never* have anything but this!"

Then Davy showed considerable tact; she glanced at the table and caught up a book. "Why, Elizabeth! Are you reading *Fior d'Aliza* in French! How far you have got on! I wish I knew French; but I have to wait until next year to begin. You'll be reading French as easily as English, and begin Italian, maybe, before I'm out of First French Lessons."

"Why don't you begin this year?" said Elizabeth, coming back to interest in life. "I like it ever so much."

"They make us take German next year," said Davy, "so as to have a longer course at it."

The next day Sue Stryker arrived to interview Davy.

"Like college as much as you expected to, Davy?"

"More!" cried Davy, with enthusiasm. "This last year, you know, I had only a tutor, and finished up my preparatory. Now, next year I'll be in the regular course, Fresh! Oh, I'm so glad I have four years of it; I like it so! If I had to graduate in one year more, wouldn't I be sorry!"

"Miss Fisher says your Cousin Ann will get sick of her bargain long before you're through, and will make you come home. There's Arthur to go, you know."

“Miss Fisher is giving herself too much trouble, trying to think of my affairs as well as her own,” said Davy, flushing.

“Oh, it’s her way, you know. Mrs. Stone said—she’s such a funny woman to talk—that much more likely you’d run off with some dry-goods clerk, than get a diploma. She said she wouldn’t trust such a wild piece as you any farther than she could see you. But I told her I wouldn’t go *quite* as far as that, you have *some* sense.”

“Thank you,” said Davy, curtly.

“Sue Stryker,” spoke up Elizabeth, “how can you be such a gossip?”

“Call *me* a gossip!” cried Sue, in surprise, “what then do you call Mrs. Stone and Laura Howell? Why, Laura has come near being sued for slander twice! And nobody believes what Mrs. Stone says, unless they know it from other sources. Why those people *make* things, I only tell what I hear.”

“I read this to-day,” said Elizabeth, “‘The just man does not need to expose the faults of others to prove his own virtue.’ I’m glad Davy is going to be well educated, if for nothing else because it will keep her from making her whole conversation a ‘they say’ of mean remarks. You ought to be above that, Sue.”

Davy was not accustomed to being defended by Elizabeth, and she gave her a grateful glance.

“After all,” said Sue, shrugging her shoulders, “what’s the use of trying to be better than other folks? Suppose I took such pains with myself that

I was fairly perfect, what good would it do? The world in general wouldn't know anything about it; one person can't make a wonderful difference among so many; and I'd be lonesome enough, for I'd find nobody good enough to be friends with me."

Here C'list'an the irrepressible, who, from being constantly with Elizabeth, gave herself leave to enter into whatever was going on, broke forth: "Well, there's one good, to my mind, of trying to make the best of yourself, if you're honest through and through with yourself, then at least you'll have the satisfaction of knowing there's one rascal less in the world. I often tell my brother that, but he never makes much account of it, nor of anything else that I say. That boy's terrible set on himself, an' his opinions."

After Sue had gone, Davy sat near Elizabeth's chair telling tales of college life, as she had already had glimpses of it, and asking questions about Dillburg affairs. Ann was apparently reading a magazine.

"What are you smiling at, Ann?" asked Davy, after observing her for a while. "Is your magazine so very delightful?"

"Smiling?" said Ann with a start, "I didn't know that I was smiling."

"At least," said Davy, "you looked *very* well pleased."

"Oh, as to that, I am pleased: it does me no end of good to see you two girls enjoying each other so well."

"That is all your doings, Ann," said Elizabeth.

"Mine? Why, how?"

"We used to enjoy each other about as much as a cat and a dog, before you came," said Davy.

"But, girls, I think I never said one single word to you about your ways to one another," said Ann.

"No," said Elizabeth, "you don't often say much personally about any ill behavior. You lay down general principles that fit, and any person with the least sense can see how they apply."

"Oh, there's more than that," said Davy, "there's a sort of evangelical influence about you, Ann, which, like music, soothes the savage breast; and as neither Elizabeth nor I are worse than 'rocks,' or 'knotted oaks,' or 'things inanimate,' we have been duly influenced by the sweet harmonies of your presence, Miss Bradford."

Every day Davy seemed to find in Elizabeth more and more of a friend and a counsellor, and Elizabeth found in Davy a companion and source of fresh interest in life.

Davy came back from doing some errands one day, and rushing at once to her sister began to detail her grievances. Her face was flushed, and her dark eyes flamed with anger. "Elizabeth, I'm so furious at Sue Stryker! I met her in a store, right in a store, mind you, with people about, and that talker of a Miss Adams was with her, too! What do you think Sue said? 'Well, Davy, I told Mrs. Stone how glad you were to have four college years before you, and she said—she's so funny—Davy'll never make me believe that it's all books she's

after. I'll warrant she spends her time parading the street, and flirting with boys—first thing Miss Bradford will hear is, Davy's gone and got married.' O Elizabeth, was there ever such a mean talker! They'll gossip such stuff all over the town. Next thing I'll hear is that I *am* married! And Elizabeth, it's so mean to talk so of *me*, for I hate boys. At college I don't think the young men students are to be compared with the girls; they're not nearly so smart in the classes, and they are not so good-looking. Then they are so vain of their new ties, and their little silly bits of moustaches, and if one of them gets a new watch, he parades it out to look at fifty times a day! I don't like them at all, compared to the girls; and I don't even talk to them, indeed I don't!"

"Well," said C'list'an, "I'd like to box that Sue Stryker's ears for her, that I would; don't you mind her, Davy, it is all meanness and jealousy that makes her talk."

Elizabeth began to laugh. "If you mind Sue's talk, Davy, you'll have on your hands a large contract of worrying to do. What harm would it be if you did like the boy students, and have friends among them, and talk to them, if they are well-mannered and well-behaved? Of course you have to talk to them, Davy, or seem very gloomy and awkward. What do you do at the college parties?"

"I don't talk much to those *boys*, I can tell you," said Davy, with scorn. "I like men to talk to; men that know something. At the last party I

talked ever so much to a gentleman named Mr. Rolf. I can tell you he is fine! He's travelled over half the world. He is one of the trustees; he is not old, not very old; his hair is just a little gray, and he has a daughter, he told me, nearly as old as I am."

"What *did* you find to talk about to a man like that, Davy?"

"Oh, plenty of things; about what I had studied, and what studies I liked best, and what I meant to make of myself, when my college course was finished, and what I had heard or seen this year in the city. Then we talked a great deal about Ann."

"About Ann! How did you bring her in?" cried Elizabeth.

"Easily; he asked how I happened to come to that special college, and I told him Ann graduated here, and did not seem to think of my going to any other college. Then I told him how I had longed to be educated, and how Ann was arranging it, and what an elegant teacher she had been to me last year, making things so clear. I told him how Aunt Fontaine left Ann the money, and a whole family, and how mad I was, and meant to hate Ann, and when she came, I forgot it," and Davy laughed merrily.

"I suppose," said Elizabeth, in a vexed tone, "you told him all about me too, and you know, Dave Tracy, I hate being talked about," and Elizabeth looked much disturbed. Davy, however, was developing that valuable quality—tact. She said:

“Of course, Elizabeth, I could hardly mention the family and not speak of you, when you are such a large part of all we have to care for. I did tell him how pretty you are and what a picture Ann makes of you, in your blue, pink and lavender and lace : I told him how quickly you learn, and all about your French, history, literature, and the clubs you and Ann have—he seemed so much interested, and wished he knew you.” Thus Elizabeth was propitiated : but soon after forgot all about Mr. Rolf and his interest.

August came and completed two years of Ann’s life in her Dillburg home. The anniversary of her coming was far from pleasant. Mr. Grace sent for her to come to his office. “I have bad news for you, Miss Bradford. That Excelsior Company, that your money’s in, has failed, and gone into a receiver’s hands, and is not likely to pay five cents on a dollar. It has pulled down the affairs of two whole counties, and more besides. No one had any idea of that company failing ; it seemed solid as a rock. You won’t get the hundred dollars that would be due presently. I’m very sorry about this, for I know that with all the engagements you have upon your hands, the loss of two hundred a year is a very serious matter. I think you were sailing as near the wind as you could get before.”

“It *is* a serious matter,” said Ann ; “that two hundred dollars a year was my dependence for clothing for Davy and myself. I hope, Mr. Grace, I shall not hear such news about Elizabeth’s fortune,

or Aunt Fontaine's money, or poor little Arthur's all."

"No, you will not, unless the state and the general government go to pieces. I thought it better to tell you myself. I found it out last night through a business letter, and of course it will speedily be in all the papers."

"Yes, but no one here knows I had any money in the Excelsior, and I think, as talking will not repair my loss, I will not worry any one by speaking of it."

So Ann went home feeling very mournful. When she reached home, she took a walk all around her little territory, looking at house, barn, fences, garden; then she went upstairs, opened her two closets, took out her clothes and spread them over bed and chairs, and, seated in the midst, contemplated them fixedly. After a time she put them away, and went downstairs as if nothing had happened. This was the time of the visit of Dorothy Camp and Dr. Helen Train at Mrs. Percy's, and when Ann went downstairs she found Dr. Helen talking with Elizabeth.

That evening Ann and Dr. Helen sat alone on the verandah, talking until late, their subject Elizabeth.

"You've seen Elizabeth every day for two weeks, Doctor Helen; tell me, have I any foundation for my hope that she may recover, at least so far as to leave her chair and walk a little, perhaps on crutches?"

"A few cures, a very few such, have been known."

"Elizabeth has improved wonderfully in these two years."

"That is in your favor."

"I'd do anything for her, pay anything, get any advice I could hope to be helpful. To tell you the truth, I had a little capital which I meant to use for that purpose, if the time to require it came. I know such skilled treatment as she might need is costly. Unfortunately, I have lost the little capital on which that plan rested, and Elizabeth's own money is completely tied up; still, there is other money, and I should secure the wherewithal, if the end were in view."

"I meant to study Elizabeth carefully," said Dr. Helen, "and then, in the course of my reading and practice, gather what knowledge of cures of such cases I could. The method, and the man and the means may all arrive together some day, Ann. Let us hope so, but do not say much of it to Elizabeth; 'Hope deferred, maketh the heart sick,' and who can bear the wound to the spirit that disappointment brings?"

A day or two later, Elizabeth had sent C'list'an out on some errands. "Bring me a paper when you come back," she said.

Thus it happened that the detailed account of the bankruptcy of the *Excelsior Company*, with its accompaniment of ruined fortunes and broken banks, fell into Elizabeth's hands. As she read, she exclaimed, "Why, Ann, I am sure that you told me last spring that the last of your money from your

father, the money that brought you two hundred a year, was in this Excelsior Company !”

“ Yes, it was,” said Ann.

“ And it is gone ! All lost ? ”

“ I think there is no doubt of it,” said Ann slowly. Davy, who was reading, dropped her book, became pale, caught her breath, and turned a look of appealing terror on Ann. Ann understood.

“ Don’t be frightened, Davy dear,” she said, calmly, “ it will not make any difference to you. Your education money did not come out of that, you’ll go through college all the same. Nothing but your own loss of health, or ceasing to care to study, will stop your college course.”

“ But, Ann, last year, when I started in, you had to retrench about the money, and Mr. Black, and here, with two hundred more gone——” said Davy.

“ Never fear, we’ll manage it fine. Perhaps I cannot make as much change in your wardrobe.”

“ Never mind that, I’ll get on without another thing.”

“ Oh, not so bad as that, child,” said Ann.

Elizabeth was thoughtful. Elizabeth’s mind had matured very rapidly, and Ann had made a confidential friend of her, explaining all her plans and affairs. This was partly to afford fresh interests to Elizabeth, and partly to help train her in business management. Elizabeth understood the case better than Davy, who brightened up, and went away satisfied, to dine with one of her girl friends.

“ How do you mean to do it, Ann ? ” asked Eliza-

beth, when they were alone. "I knew you were trying to economize closely, and two hundred makes quite a hole in the income." Elizabeth knew all about the four hundred a year on that unhappy debt, yet to be paid for two years. Neither she nor Ann felt the money for the church and the little Hindoo girl any burden—that was cheerfully given to the Lord ; as much as that would have been given anyway, besides helping with the regular contributions. Elizabeth now kept these contributions in mind, and regularly sent her envelope of donation as they came around.

"Well," said Ann, slowly, in answer to Elizabeth, "I have not fully made up my mind how I can stretch out the rest that we have, to cover the hole made by this deficiency. As I said, Davy will perhaps have less dress, and what I had proposed was little enough for the child. For myself, I have taken stock of my goods on hand, and will not get a thing but a pair of shoes for myself for a year to come. I may have to dispense with Mr. Black entirely, and have Arthur do what he can of his work. I hate to think of that, Mr. Black is such a reliance ! Probably Arthur will have to wait another year before he goes to fitting school. I had hoped to send him a year from now, but he is young, and if I can get really fine instruction for him here, he will do as well. How do I know but the Lord will send to me so accomplished a teacher here, that I should not care to send Arthur elsewhere this year, nor next?"

“Still, the beginning of losses alarms one about everything!”

“Do not feel that way, Elizabeth, nor allow yourself to be anxious. You remember that the fullness of the earth is the Lord’s, and he has said, Trust in the Lord and do good, and dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. And again, ‘Bread shall be given thee, and water shall be sure.’ ‘In the time of famine thou shalt be satisfied.’ You and I, Elizabeth, have received too much kind care from God, to doubt his love or ability to provide. You were frail in health, and your grandfather was enabled to lay up an assured competence for you. As for me, I have had bread to eat that my fathers knew not of. No one expected that *I* should have Aunt Fontaine’s property. I was only a grand-niece by a half-brother, you and Davy were grand-nieces by a full sister. Arthur was nearer than any of us to Uncle Fontaine. It so happened that my age, robust health, and my education, made Aunt Fontaine consider me the proper trustee of her property, her business, and her family claims. It had never been among my expectations. There is always plenty for us, dear Elizabeth, in the fullness of God. If God sees fit to take away property, it may be only to draw us closer in dependence upon himself. We can be sure of one thing, that the richness of the word of God will never be less to us, nor denied to us; we can feast upon that in its fullness, the water of life is ours for taking: the word and prayer are always ours; plenty for our pilgrim way. Then,

we are journeying on to that land where there shall be no lack of any good thing to those who love the Lord.

“ ‘ O Christ, he is the fountain,
The deep sweet well of love ;
The streams on earth I’ve tasted,
More deep I’ll drink above.
There to an ocean fullness
His goodness doth expand,
Where glory, glory, dwelleth,
In Immanuel’s land.’ ”

“ You can really feel all that, Ann ? ” asked Elizabeth.

“ Yes, now : I have had a day or two to get accustomed to this, to find out where I am, to remember what my God is, and I have at last behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother. You see, Elizabeth, that this little loss is so small compared to what might have been. Suppose you had been taken very ill ; or the house burned up ; or Arthur had gone far astray into some evil ; or Davy had met with some terrible accident. Suppose a hundred things that might have happened, all so much worse than what *has* happened ! ”

“ Well, that is a good way to look at it. Meanwhile, Ann, I mean to provide all Davy’s books and clothes this year. So let that be off your mind. Maybe we can retrench some other way too. Give me my tablets, please ; I mean to run over our expenses and see what I make of them. There’s wages—and fuel—and——”

“Don’t forget the taxes, and the insurance, with the rest,” said Ann, smiling, as Elizabeth, her pretty forehead wrinkled in her earnestness, began to marshal the array of household outlays, in firm figures upon her tablet.

CHAPTER XIV.

CLOTHED UPON.

“ And they who with their Leader
Have conquered in the fight,
Forever and forever,
Are clad in robes of white.”

AGAIN Davy was made ready for college; this time Elizabeth provided the outfit, taking great interest in it, and denying herself several gratifications, in order to have the more money for Davy. Ann said nothing, but observed closely, and considered that as the spiritual is of far higher price than the temporal, the loss of two hundred a year, was not to be regretted, if it had run its ploughshare through the selfish soil of Elizabeth's nature, and made it ready to bring forth fruits of righteousness.

Davy went valiantly off alone. Ann had meant to go with her, treating herself to a visit to her *Alma Mater*, where were yet lingering those who had been Freshmen and Sophomores when she graduated. However, retrenchment was the order of the day, and with Ann retrenchments began very closely at home; the matter of Mr. Black was yet in abeyance, at least he was needed until fall work was done.

"What are you pondering over, Elizabeth?" asked Ann. "Lonely without our Davy?"

"Yes, I miss Davy, she is real good company, but I was not thinking of her—I'm so sorry, Ann, that you could not go with her. You wanted to, I know, you have been here for two years, without going anywhere."

"Bless your heart, Elizabeth, I'm not pining over it," said Ann, "as soon as I made up my mind that it was better not to go, that ended it. Why resolve on a thing and then fret over it?"

"But it was such a sacrifice."

"Oh, not at all," said Ann, speaking truthfully. Ann's was a thoroughly maternal nature, she needed those about her to love and care for; this maternal lovingness she had fixed on Elizabeth, Davy and Arthur—and mother-fashion whatever was done for them was no burden. As says Thomas á Kempis, "He that loveth is free, not bound. Love feels no burden, thinks nothing a trouble."

"Elizabeth," said Ann, "don't fret yourself over this little financial disaster. You know last year and year before, I was laying up a little income, a reserve for the more expensive time, when Davy and Arthur would both be away in college. Now if I cannot have a margin, you and I must not fret: when more is needed more may come. 'The Lord will provide.' 'The Lord knoweth what things we have need of, before we ask him.' What he takes away with one hand, he gives with the other. That

is a good word : ' God which fed me all my life long, unto this day.' "

" It is not comfortable to be pinched and worried, Ann."

" Oh, that depends upon ourselves, let us ignore the pinching and refuse to be worried ! There are elements of good in our loss. I have felt very happy to see how you were developing in unselfishness, and in thought for others. It did me good to see you so pleasantly managing and striving in Davy's behalf, never once making her feel burdensome."

" I took a leaf out of your book, Ann ; I thought if I had put myself in your place, I would try to fill it as graciously as you do," said Elizabeth, with a little flush of pleasure.

" Thank you, my dear," and now it was Ann's turn to be pleased.

" At least, Elizabeth, let us try to get all the good we can out of small disasters. That was a sorry bemoaning over Israel, that the east wind had dried up her fruit ! If the east wind of trial dries up the fruitage of our lives, then they are but frail summer fruits at best, and not of a good keeping variety. When losses make people stingy, sour, faithless, moody, then surely ' this is a lamentation and shall be for a lamentation '."

" All the same," said Elizabeth, " I would really be glad if troubles never came, they don't seem to agree with me, somehow !"

" Dear child," said Ann, pitifully, " that is probably because you have a heavy enough trouble all

the time ; but take courage, Elizabeth, this is the atmosphere God's children need sometimes to make them grow. Egypt is a soft south land, but the hills of Palestine lie to the northward, and Hermon is white with snow. In the 'Shepherd of Hermas' it is written :—' For this world is as winter to righteous men ; but the world to come is as summer to the righteous.' "

The household had just fallen into its old routine, after the going out of Davy, when one afternoon Maggie came up to Ann's room with a card, and a letter of introduction.

" I did not hear any one at the door," said Ann.

" He's a very *gentle* gentleman, and he pulled the bell as judgmatically, and spoke as soft, as if he knew all about Miss Elizabeth and her afternoon nap. He's in the lib'ry."

" Tell him I will come down, in a minute," said Ann, opening the note of introduction. It was from her honored college gresident, introducing Mr. Rolf, one of the board of trustees. Ann went downstairs, wondering where she had heard of Mr. Rolf. The " fine looking man, with a little gray in his hair," of whom Davy had told Elizabeth, rose to greet Ann. " I may claim acquaintance with Miss Davy Tracy as well as with our good President," he said. " I feel as if I knew you very well, Miss Bradford, not only through Miss Davy, but from Dr. Helen Train, and the professors."

" Any one who knows my dear college people is doubly welcome," said Ann.

"I come in haste, to ask a great favor, to have it, I hope, granted, and then be gone. I have a daughter of fourteen, whom I wish to place in your care. Let me tell my story—I have now but two children, a son in Yale, Rufus, nineteen years old, and this Emily, fourteen. I had four others, a girl between these two, and three younger. I lost those four within a month, of scarlet fever. My wife has never recovered from the shock; she has been, for over a year, in a sanitarium for nervous patients. I had Emily in a boarding school last year, and it did not agree with her. She became nervous and depressed, she needs more quiet, more genial personal attention, *a home*, home friendship; she cannot keep up with classes, she needs instruction as she can bear it, instruction mingled with pleasure, with out-of-door life—I have been up in the Adirondacks this summer with Rufus and Emily. Now Emily is still unfit for school, I am called abroad by my business. Doctor Helen Train suggested that yours would be the very home for Emily; she wants some one to be to her, friend, older sister, companion, skilled guardian, rather than schoolmistress. Miss Davy told me last June how 'apt' you are to teach, and how people thrive under your charge; and what a happy home you have made for other homeless strays."

"Oh, perhaps Davy is too partial," said Ann, overcome.

"I'll risk it, willingly. I should want Emily here the year round—I can pay five hundred a year for her. Will that be a fair equivalent for what I ask?"

Can you decide at once? I need to return this afternoon, and I must sail in a week. Will you consent?"

Ann thought—"The train back will not be here for two hours and a half. Give me two hours to think. I want to talk to Elizabeth—I never spring things on Elizabeth, we talk them over together," she said.

"I will return punctually in two hours," said Mr. Rolf.

Ann accompanied him to the door. As she closed it after him, C'list'an opened Elizabeth's door: "*She* thinks she heard a strange voice," said C'list'an, "and it made her fidgety. She wants to know all about it."

"As she is awake I'll come in; I have something to talk over with her," said Ann.

It was not hard to recall Mr. Rolf to Elizabeth's mind, as Davy had mentioned him to her more than once.

"Five hundred dollars,—whooh!" said Elizabeth, "that will add a big slice to your income."

"It seems a true providence—so utterly unexpected."

"One sick person seems to be enough in a house," said Elizabeth.

"I fancy she is not really sick, Elizabeth."

"She may be a real terror, cross, nervous, fretty, worse than I am, by a great deal. She may half kill you, Ann."

"Let us hope not. Think how unfortunate she is."

"And you could keep Mr. Black, and not economize as closely as we thought of. She will not be much expense, extra, but much care."

"She might need a deal of my time, and make things less pleasant for you, Elizabeth."

"I might hate her—that's a fact."

"Oh my, no! If she proved uncongenial, at least, on her behalf, you could cultivate the lovely plant of charity in your heart."

"She could have Davy's room," said Elizabeth. "Yes; and she might be far enough advanced to share in your studies, and that might be pleasant for you."

"I don't think it would. I hate sharing," said Elizabeth.

"Oh, as Christians, we must be willing to distribute. Christ gave himself; we must give as we can. On our way toward the Glory Gate, Elizabeth, we must be clothed upon with all graces, so we shall 'be meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.' If you truly hate sharing, Emily may help you to overcome an evil."

"Some folks like to hug their evil to their hearts, Ann."

"Not you, dear Elizabeth, I see you constantly growing in grace."

"And what will you do about Emily?"

"Take her, I think. The responsibility will be great; but I have not sought it. It seems to be of the Lord's sending. Will you see Mr. Rolf, when he comes back, Elizabeth?"

"Did he ask to see me?"

"No; and I think he would not. All the same, I feel sure that he would *like* to see you, and you would enjoy seeing him."

"Well, I'll see him."

"Miss Bradford, if you take that girl," spoke up C'list'an, "I'll keep her room in order, and do her mending. I have time; I'd just as lief as not."

"Thank you, C'list'an, you are very kind to help us out with our new burdens."

"Odd, isn't it, how things help out all around, circle after circle," said Elizabeth; "there was my washerwoman wishing so much for just one more person's washing; now she can have it."

"I'm always so glad, Elizabeth, to see you remembering and planning for other people, it makes one's life so much fuller and larger."

"There comes Mr. Rolf back, and it is not nearly the two hours yet," said Elizabeth, who, as her windows afforded most of the small variety of her life, seldom allowed anything to escape her notice. Ann went to the door.

"I should be glad for you to see Elizabeth, Mr. Rolf; as your time is so limited, will you come to her room at once."

"And what have you two decided?" asked Mr. Rolf.

"Ann has decided to say 'yes,'" said Elizabeth.

"That is good. Now, Miss Bradford, there are but few minutes for the final arrangements. Emily needs to drive much, she must have much exercise,

and cannot walk far. I see you have a barn. Is there room there for a horse and surrey? I should like to send mine here. Send me the fodder bill. Can I find a man to see to the horse?"

"I keep a man, who will take the charge as part of his work—I have had a conveyance until lately," said Ann.

"Good. Dr. Helen Train is Emily's physician; if you need any medical advice write to her, or even take Emily to her. I must leave a week from to-day. Can you come to the city for Emily? I should like you to see her and Doctor Helen, and I have not time to come here again."

"Now, Ann, you *can* get that trip!" cried Elizabeth, joyfully.

"What is that?" asked Mr. Rolf.

"Ann wanted so much to go to the city for a few days, but could not afford it; she saves on herself, so as to have plenty for Davy and Arthur. Now she can go."

"When I see you in the city, Miss Bradford, I will settle the half-year's bill, and the travelling expenses. I want Emily to write every week, and should be glad of a report from you once a month. Good-bye to you both now; and, Miss Elizabeth, I hope you'll find my little girl congenial."

"How nice it was," cried Elizabeth, when Mr. Rolf had gone, "that Davy thought to talk about you at the commencement party!"

"Yes, though only a child so little used to society would have done it."

"And what a good thing that Dr. Train is this girl's doctor, and spoke of this place for her!"

"Yes-s-s," said Ann, slowly, "and how much pleasanter still it is, Elizabeth, to look beyond all these secondary causes, and see that First Cause of all, who plans every good thing for me, in the heart of his fatherly love."

"Yes, that is so, of course," said Elizabeth, "but naturally, I think people refer their comforts or their troubles to the causes seen and nearest, rather than at once to God."

"Then we should cultivate the fine habit of seeing always the Great Source of all."

"I think, Ann, it is because you cultivate such habits of thinking, that you seem always to live on a higher level than most folks."

"O Elizabeth! I *hope* I don't seem to be distant and selfish!"

"Not at all; but your method of thinking keeps you in a position to inspire respect, and that is very good for people. I read this morning that Madame de Swetchine said, 'Respect is a serious thing to him who feels it, and the height of honor to him who inspires it.'"

"All the same," said Ann, "I am humiliated to realize that I do not inspire as much respect as I should wish to do in some quarters. For instance, I cannot keep C'list'an in proper bounds of speech, and Sue Stryker has no more regard for me than for a dandelion or a sparrow."

"Those two are incorrigible," laughed Elizabeth.

At this moment Arthur, just returned from school, came into the hall. Ann having fixed her eyes on him, rather by accident than intention, perceived a certain sudden and curious change in his configuration, and being quick of thought, instantly made up her mind that an unusual protuberance under the laddie's arm meant a dime novel on its way up to his room. Devious are the ways of the natural boy; but over this Ann did not repine, she considered that he is very well worth bringing up. The novel certainly must not be read until Ann had looked it over, and to look it over undoubtedly meant to condemn. To challenge the secreting of the work in the presence of Elizabeth and C'list'an would never do: in fact, to bring Arthur to self-conquest, to freely report the matter himself, that was the way to make him strong. Evidently, the first affair was to delay the hiding of the new literature in Arthur's room or the attic.

"Come in here, Arthur, here is some family news for you!"

"Arthur, we're going to have one more in our family," said Elizabeth.

"Arthur, what do you think of having a horse and a surrey again, and being able to go to the woods Saturdays?" said Ann.

At these words Elizabeth gloomed a little, for the surrey was a something that she could not enjoy, and she could never reconcile herself to the days in the woods, pleasures which she was unable to share. At hearing Ann's words Arthur wanted much to in-

dulge in a handspring or two, but was withheld by—circumstances.

“Ann is going to the city, day after to-morrow, to stay for four days,” said Elizabeth, rallying.

“And I am going to have Elizabeth make out a list of things that she wants, and pay her back fifteen of the forty-five dollars she laid out on Davy, and spend them for her.”

“But what’s up? What has happened? Where’s the money coming from? I thought money was scarce here,” cried Arthur.

“Ann’s got a boarding-pupil for five hundred a year, she is to get her in the city—pay in advance—about your age, Arthur.”

“O, jimminy crickets, why couldn’t it have been a boy? I’d like a boy. Why are there so many more girls than boys always?”

“A boy,” said Ann, “might have done very well, if he was sure to be kind, helpful and obedient, as you are, Arthur. Your influence on a boy would be, I hope, very good. You have never deceived me, you don’t sneak off to do things I would not like. If you could help a boy to be honest, straightforward, and manly, such as you have always showed yourself, it would be very nice to have another boy in our house, and good for the boy.” Here Arthur blushed furiously, so that his ears were scarlet. “However, it isn’t a boy, and you must be satisfied with a girl.”

“If she turns out a nice girl, I’ll be glad she’s not a boy,” said Elizabeth.

"And I hope you'll get her to play out-of-door games with you, Arthur, she may be as good company as Davy," added Ann.

"And you're going to be gone four or five days, Ann?" asked Arthur.

"Yes: you'll have to take part of my place, Arthur, in helping Elizabeth, and keeping her from being lonesome. I am so glad that I have always been able to trust you, Arthur; I can go away feeling quite at ease. Arthur, what would you like to get from the city? Perhaps you want something to amuse you, a game or an interesting book. You may find dull times that you want to fill up with something entertaining."

"I haven't any money, my allowance has all gone. I got that set of pencils and so on, when school began."

"Oh, I feel so uncommonly rich I can allow you two dollars, Arthur; so think up what you want most."

"I will, thank you, Cousin Ann. There, I must go wash my hands, it's nearly tea-time." Arthur disappeared, and the secreted book was no longer dimly in evidence when he came back. That evening, swinging in the hammock with Arthur, Ann led the way to talk of what he wanted her to bring him; of some few new books she hoped to buy, and so on of books and reading and their effect, their potency in building up or tearing down character.

"There are many insects and various creeping things, Arthur, which take the color of the plants

they live upon. The mind takes the color of the books which we habitually read: books sceptical, or profane, false, cruel or filthy, or simply silly and frivolous, produce such characteristics in our minds. Books good, true, noble, wise, elevate our minds and make us capable of high deeds. Ruskin said he owed all that was worthy in his mind, all his ability to help and instruct others, to the good reading provided for him by his mother, beginning with the Bible. No nation is more famous than the Scotch for industry, integrity, skill in labor, business faithfulness, power to accumulate fortune. Simply to be a Scot is in itself a certain recommendation: there are great firms and companies which employ only Scotchmen, feeling that thus they are better served. A deep thinker has said, that much of this fine helpful character is due to the early and constant study of the Bible, especially the book of Proverbs and the Gospel of John. These were long used as reading books in Scotch schools. I hope, Arthur, that whenever you think of reading a book, you will ask yourself if you would *dare read it aloud*, even by yourself, and if you would like to have your life moulded by that book."

"Ann," said Arthur, hesitating a little. "I got a book from a boy to-day, that I guess you'd not think much of."

"Why, I haven't seen such a book, where is it?"

"Oh, well—I—didn't parade it, you know. I knew you'd be down on it."

"Oh," said Ann, blankly.

"You see that fellow I got it of, he *bragged* so of it."

"How much have you read of it?"

"Well, none. Only the cover shows *Boomerang Dick*—that's the hero it's named for—firing a pistol, and carrying off a girl on horseback, and the first page begins how he ran off with the girl and shot her uncle and cousin, and they called him the "Terror of Long County," and at the wind-up he is in a bar-room where he wiped out five or six men."

"Oh," said Ann, in the same blank tone as before. Then—"It seems to me such a wretch is fit only for hanging. How would you like him for a friend or companion?"

"Not a bit!" exclaimed Arthur.

"Then why go as far as you can toward companionship, by reading a book about him? A degraded mind must have produced that book, and your mind will be more or less degraded, when you make it a part of your memories."

"You see, that boy wanted three elegant alley taws of mine, and he wanted to trade the book for them, and at last I did, he bragged so of it."

"Oh, then you own the book? Elizabeth had a shelf full of books that were simply silly, and we concluded to burn them up. I can see a great improvement in Elizabeth's mind, since she gave up such reading. I don't object to stories, stories with fine quality in them. You know I provide them for you, and I had hoped to give you such a taste for

high-toned reading, that you would not seek any other. Now, Arthur, if this is the first trash book or vile book that has come in your way, you stand in a critical place. If you read it, you may begin your mental ruin; if you reject it, *on principle*, you may make sure of a mind apt for great affairs. That is a good old proverb, 'Let every man sweep his own door stone if he wants a clean world.' We are here to build up character, and our first duty to ourselves is, to admit no elements of demoralization. What are you going to do about it?"

"Well, Ann, I mean to—burn that book up."

"Let's have a little bonfire to celebrate your victory. Get the book, and there are four or five empty paint kegs behind the barn, and, as a special favor, you may have that quart of tar in the tar-keg."

"Goody for you. Where'll we have it?"

"Out in the road—but let us wait half an hour, to be pretty sure that driving by is about done."

"Well," said Arthur with a long breath, "I feel sort of relieved about that book, I wasn't real settled over it. I'm glad we talked it over, Cousin Ann."

"There is nothing safer for a boy than to have some good woman who cares for him, to talk over all his affairs with confidentially, a mother or older sister first of all. As you have no mother, or grandmother, or sister, Arthur, and I am the only woman-friend God has provided for you, it would really be

for your highest good to talk over your affairs freely with me. I'll do the best I can for you."

"I'm sure your best is plenty good enough, Cousin Ann," said Arthur, gallantly. "I think you have that high kind of character you talk of. Now where does one get it?"

"The method is plain enough, laddie. Every one has an example and a rule for attaining that high, fine character, which, like gold, will stand the test of fire. The example is—our Lord and Redeemer; our rule, the Bible."

When Arthur had prepared the kegs and tar for his bonfire, he brought his book and matches for lighting it. "Don't you look at it at all, Cousin Ann," he said, with an embarrassed laugh. "I'm already as ashamed of it as I can be."

He and Ann stood to watch the blaze. "We are told," said Ann, "that the new Christians of Ephesus gave evidence of their righteous intentions, by bringing their books of magic and idolatry, and burning them in the market-place. Many bonfires have been made of Bibles, by Bible haters, many good books have been set ablaze. If purity and the love of goodness reigned everywhere, every town would have bonfires of such books as this, and worse books, until all print was purified, and only the worthy remained."

Arthur slept well that night, but Ann lay long awake, pondering that as eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, so is it the price of bringing up a boy, to be a worthy man. She was tempted to con-

sider it a miracle, that there were any good men extant !

A day of preparation, and then a day when Ann set off for her college home, unseen for two years. Ann was a girl easily satisfied ; glad and thankful for small favors ; she took as much pleasure in this short trip, as some girls would find in a trip to Europe. Dorothy, Dr. Helen, lovely Clotilde Arblay, and charming Grace Dare were seen. Sara Fordyce had come to the city to hear a famous Englishman lecture, and at the lecture Ann met her. The few days were filled to the full with happiness, and then with her new charge, a fair, delicate, silent girl, who, while still on the verge of childhood, had evidently dwelt with sorrow, sharing sorrow's cup ; but she was still so young that Ann felt sure that sorrow would prove no " bosom friend and half of life," but as the shadow of a cloud, that slowly drifts away. Ann had expected that parting with her father, for a long trip, would renew Emily's grief, but she took that as a matter of course—he had often gone before. As for Ann, Emily accepted her calmly, and sat silently beside her on the ride to Dillburg. Ann never took people by storm, she was too commonplace—she grew upon them like the dawning day—which is also commonplace.

With Elizabeth it was a very different affair : Elizabeth's chair was turned so that she could see down the road, she was watching eagerly and had been arrayed in her prettiest ; the soft pink wrapper

lent a dainty glow to her face, the little golden ripples of her hair lay on brow and pillow, her throat shone white as pearl from the lace ruffles about it. Emily looked at her in pensive silence for a while, then she knelt on an ottoman by Elizabeth's side.—

“Oh, you are *so sweet*, just like my sister Belle, who died; and she would have been just your age now! I am so glad I am going to live where you are! I loved Belle so much, I cannot tell you how much—more than all the rest of the world! Do you know, I wish so that I knew about her now, where she is, what she looks like, what she is doing, Does she change? Oh, if I only knew!”

Elizabeth's Longfellow lay near her chair, she opened it, and read,—

“Not as a child shall we again behold her,
But when with rapture wild
In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a child;
But a fair maiden in her Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace,
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face.”

CHAPTER XV.

THE KING'S HIGHWAY.

“And the sunlit land that recks not
Of tempest or of fight;
Shall fold within its bosom
Each happy Israelite.”

ONE of Ann Bradford's strong points was her ability to let well enough alone. There was a certain calmness about her which did not hasten, but, quietly observing all, made sure of the need and safety of each step before she took it. “I will wait to hear.” Ann had often made that her motto in days of carefulness. Now when she had brought Emily Rolf to her home, knowing that the charge might become heavy, she simply left Emily to adjust herself to her new surroundings, and as the way Emily spontaneously elected was to devote herself to Elizabeth, Ann was well suited with that, and waited before inaugurating anything on her part; it was probably best, in Emily's case, not to seem to expect anything of her.

Therefore Ann unpacked Emily's trunk, set her bureau and closet in order, and summoned her to supper, as quietly as if she had always been a part of their life. Elizabeth also was to be considered,

and must not tax and excite herself in behalf of her new ally.

"Away to bed with you, girly," said Ann to Emily, at eight o'clock, "our Elizabeth goes to bed with the chickens, and it takes half an hour to get her there. Sleep well."

Elizabeth had been accustomed always to rest upon others; to be comforted, not to comfort. Now a new rôle was thrust upon her; Emily looked to her as a comforter.

Next morning, as soon as breakfast was over, Emily was hanging about Elizabeth's chair, and Ann kept out of the way, ignoring the usual readings in French and literature.

"Show me the verses you read to me last night Elizabeth, they kept ringing in my head before I went to sleep, in broken words and meanings, you know, I couldn't get them right."

"There's the whole poem," said Elizabeth,—
" 'Resignation.' "

Emily drew a hassock near Elizabeth, and read. "I love poetry," she said, "and flowers and pictures and beautiful things. So did my Belle. Belle and I lived in a little world of beauty, all to ourselves. It seems to me, now that I look back, that we were in a fairyland, all full of golden light, and when Belle was gone, all was gone; there was no joy, no beauty any more. Don't you wish there was no dying? Then this world would be a happy one."

Elizabeth shook her head. "Wouldn't it be over-

crowded? It would be a terrible crush and fight for standing-room, or leave to move, such as I have read of in a burning theatre, where hundreds were crushed to death, or trampled down. You wouldn't think this a nice world, if all the Neros and Robespierres and Philips the II., had lived forever. Where could you and I hide from them?"

"But—I shouldn't have lost Belle."

"It is, after all, like a going away to school, or off on a long trip, isn't it? She might have gone to Europe for a journey, only then you might fear to hear bad news of her, that she was sick or unhappy; now you know she is where nothing can mar her happiness."

"I should think—she'd want me—I want her."

"Very likely she is surprised that you do not understand it all better, how happy and well off she is, and how short the years will seem until you join her, 'as a dream when one awaketh.' I read in our missionary club of two sisters, nearly of an age, who on the same day married, each a missionary. They had hoped to go to the same field, but could not, one went to India, the other to Africa, and so years went on, thirty years and more, before they met again. Of course they wrote to each other; you cannot write to Belle; but, on the other hand, each knew that the other was exposed to sickness, death, sorrows, you know that is not so about Belle. Did you ever read Tennyson's 'Grandmother'? When she is told her son is dead, she says—

“ So Willie has gone, my beauty, my eldest born, my flower, But how can I weep for Willie? he has but gone for an hour. Gone for a minute, my son, from this room into the next, I, too, shall go in a minute, what time have I to be vexed?”

“ I never heard any one speak of these things in this way before,” said Emily. “ Aren’t you afraid of dying, Elizabeth?”

“ Not now; I was, and I told Ann about it, and since then we have talked of it so much, that it does not seem any terrible, unnatural thing, but just easy, right, and beautiful. Ann says people live longer and more comfortably, if they have no quarrel with death; and we have read together all that the Bible has to say about the world to come. After we finished ‘Pilgrim’s Progress,’ on Sunday afternoons, our ‘Pilgrim Class’ took up that study about the world to come, ‘The Paradise of God.’ We have also read together some poems and other writings about it; that poem ‘Jerusalem the Golden,’ or ‘The Celestial Country,’ and ‘The Sands of Time are Sinking.’ You must read those, Emily, and the last pages of the first and second parts of ‘Pilgrim’s Progress.’ Mrs. Percy told me something that I liked much. She said once when she was very young, she was going home from Sunday-school, and walked along through the graveyard that lay around the church. It had first been laid out by Germans, and over the gate was an arch, and on it, ‘GOD’S ACRE,’ the German name for a burial-place. All was still and green there, violets and dandelions and buttercups bloomed in the grass;

birds flew about singing; she sat down on a grave and looked around. A piece of paper was slipped into a crack in a white stone near her; she pulled it out and read: 'Then they are glad because they are quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.' She thought it meant dead people, and it gave her a new view of death, that never left her, and though some years after she found the text referred especially to sailors on the sea, she never failed to associate it with going out of this world."

"If I could only feel that Belle, and the three dear, cunning little ones that we lost would be ours again, Elizabeth!"

"Did you ever read this, Emily?"

"I stand amid the eternal ways
And what is mine shall know my face.

"Asleep, awake, by night or day,
The friends I seek are seeking me;
No wind can drive my bark astray,
Nor change the tide of destiny.

"The stars come nightly to the sky,
The tidal waves unto the sea,
Nor time, nor space, nor deep, nor high,
Can keep my own away from me.'"

"You know so many lovely, comfortable things," said Emily, with a sigh of content, "you make me feel better."

Ann, from the library, or the verandah, or elsewhere, heard the two talking, and perceived that they were helping each other. Emily would will-

ingly have remained indoors all the time, talking retrospectively, reading poetry, and yielding to the current of her emotions, but that was not Ann's method of bringing up a girl to useful womanhood. The horse and surrey had come, and over the hills, and out into the woods, Emily must go. Elizabeth yielded to the inevitable more graciously than Ann had feared that she would.

"I am bound to do my best for Emily," Ann said to Elizabeth, "she needs out-of-door life to build her up in physical strength."

"I never have out of doors," sighed Elizabeth.

"I know it, except for your hours on the verandah, and those are helping you. Providence, for some reason, has debarred you the lovely out-of-door life he has left it open to Emily to enjoy. You will be as glad as I shall be to see her rosy and happy, and in a state of normal thought and energy. We often say, Elizabeth, that we must have health wherewith to serve God, but I say more than that, I say we want health to enjoy what God gives us. I want Emily to have health for service *and for happiness*. We will all do our best to get as much health for you as is possible, for the same ends. As for service, you are doing good service now, I am sure, in cheering Emily and leading her into healthier thinking."

Arthur also was called upon by Ann to aid her with her new pupil. Arthur frankly remarked that Emily was "too mournful, and wasn't worth looking at, as compared with Davy." However, like all

boys, he had sympathies, if one went down deep enough into his nature to find them, and Ann proceeded to enlist these. Arthur must persuade Emily to out-of-door sports and frolics; a picnic or two for Saturdays inaugurated this. By the end of three weeks, Emily was much more cheerful and talkative, health and strength improved, and she began to take some interest in life. "I ought to study," she said, "my father will be so disappointed if I know nothing."

"Very well, I think you are able to study some, suppose you join Elizabeth in her French, history, and literature?"

"I don't think I'm as far on as Elizabeth in French."

"Then we'll both help you a little more. Those studies and the Reading Club work will be quite enough for you to undertake this year."

"I don't think I cared about any study before," said Emily, "but here you seem to make all things easy and pleasant. For two years there has been such a dark cloud over us all—a shadow—I felt all the time as that verse says, 'The valley of the shadow of death.'"

"Many people," said Ann, "think that means the time of our dying. I don't think so. I think it means the time of our greatest trouble and temptation, just what you have been passing through, Emily. But God does mean you to *pass through*, not to *live there*. I am sure you have had a wrong idea of what dying is. Let us think of it as a home-

going, one is always glad to get to a good home, you know. Let us see the Glory Gate, the gate of our home, rising at the end of our journey here. I often think of the lines—

“ ‘ As when the weary traveller gains
The height of some o’erlooking hill,
His heart revives, if o’er the plains,
He views his home, though distant still.’ ”

Ann, as she spoke, was forming a cluster of wild purple asters. When she finished it, she fastened it upon Emily’s dress. “It is very becoming,” she said.

“Belle and I used to dress up in flowers,” said Emily, “but I have not worn any since——”

“Wear them now, and perhaps Belle will know, and be happier, even in heaven, for it. We must take Elizabeth a big bunch, she likes wild flowers.”

Returned home from her drive, Emily began decking Elizabeth with asters. “You look a tiny bit like Miss Clotilde Arblay,” she said. “Miss Ann, do you know her?”

“Indeed I do.”

“Isn’t she the most beautiful creature that ever was made?”

“She is at least the loveliest creature I ever saw,” said Ann.

“I saw her once in full dress,” said Emily. “She and Dr. Helen were going to a party at the governor’s, and Miss Arblay drove over for Dr. Helen, and then she came into the house because Dr. Helen

thought the private patients, three or four that were at her house, would enjoy seeing her. I was staying with Dr. Helen for a week. Miss Arblay wore a brocade of a pale sea-green color; it was embroidered on the waist, and the edge of the skirt, in olive-green sea-weeds; there was a fluff of lace about the arms and shoulders like foam, and she wore pearls, many pearls; her mother and grandmother and she have splendid pearls. Her father is one of the richest manufacturers in the country. Miss Clotilde was just a dream of beauty! I thought if only my Belle had lived to grow up, she might have looked just so beautiful."

"Your Belle looks more beautiful now, all the time, if you will only be brought to believe it," said Elizabeth. "She wears white robes that shine through and through like woven light, and she has the crown and the flowers of heaven."

"Clotilde Arblay has the sweetest disposition of any one I ever met," said Ann, "and she is not vain."

"And she is brave, brave as a lion," said Emily, with enthusiasm. "What do you suppose she did? Her cousin had three children sick of varioloid. The servants all left, and the house was in quarantine. The cousin was not strong, and her husband was in South America on a business trip. Clotilde Arblay just went to that house and nursed those children; she was not one bit afraid; she was not afraid of spoiling her beauty, nor of dying! She is a splendid nurse. Dr. Helen told me that when

old Mrs. Arblay broke her hip, Clotilde nursed her for six weeks, and was one of the best nurses she ever saw; she was like a sunbeam or a bunch of flowers in the sick room!"

"I wish I could know all those nice people," said Elizabeth.

"Already you know Dorothy and Doctor Helen, you may see the rest of them by-and-by," said Ann. "I think I will ask Clotilde to make us a little visit sometime."

"Always a prisoner in a chair," said Elizabeth, sadly, tears of self-pity rising in her blue eyes.

"Don't be sorrowful, darling," cried Emily, throwing her arms about her, "we must have you happy anyway."

"It is not impossible to be happy even as a prisoner in a chair," said Ann. "It is not where we are, but what we are, that creates our heaven."

"Miss Ann," said Emily, when they were alone, "tell me, is Elizabeth going to get worse and worse, and die?"

"She is more likely to get better and better, and get well," said Ann. "Other people are not as hopeful of that as I am, but I cannot get that event out of my mind."

"This is such a *rest* place," said Emily, "all goes so quietly, and all seem to feel so—so cared for—as if God was right near, and looking after every one all the time! I've been where religious people were, and where religion was talked about, but here it seems to be *lived*, and to be as natural and com-

fortable as breathing. Miss Ann, I believe my mother would get well if she lived here, for a year, with you."

"She is improving," said Ann, "you know Dr. Helen went to see her, and says she is better."

"Yes," said Emily. A scheme was developing in her head, a scheme which she thought it premature to speak of, but toward which set the current of her thoughts, to have her mother there in Ann's house in Dillburg, enjoying the *heart content* which she herself found in her present life.

* * * * *

"You look so happy, Ann," said Mrs. Percy to Ann, one day.

"I *am* happy. I think any one should be happy who has found the right niche in life, or, rather, when God has taken one from uncertainties, and placed one exactly where it is possible to be useful. I am so commonplace, and so unequal to high affairs of this world, and God has given me just the daily, hourly round of duties, that I can fulfill—

"O what am I that God should stoop
From heaven to choose a place for me?"

"You changed a word in that quotation to make it fit, Ann," said Elizabeth, laughing.

"So I did; but it is a very good quotation, all the same."

"Is Ann commonplace, as she firmly believes she is?" said Mrs. Percy to herself. "Is any one commonplace, who serves God heartily and his neighbor

self-forgettingly? If that temper were commonplace, we should be living in the millennium."

"Elizabeth," asked Mrs. Percy, when she and Elizabeth were alone, "what is the secret of life here? the home is changed, you are changed. What is it?"

"Well," said Elizabeth, slowly, "I think the whole thing is simply living each day with God, just easily, and quietly. We begin it at prayer time. Ann reads a few verses, and then she says some quiet, simple thing, about one of them, such as anyone might think of, but it sets the keynote of the day somehow. This morning she finished up reading on the verse, 'If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me;' and as she shut the book, she said, in such a matter-of-fact way, 'And it's a blessed thing too. If we could fall out of God's hand, we should be lost for sure. If we look back upon our life-path, all the way he has led us; if we look forward, there he stands, to welcome us at the Glory Gate.' I've *felt* that, all day. Yesterday she was reading from Job, 'Oh, that I knew where I might find him.' There she stopped—"I think Job did not have to make that cry very long, for God is so near to all that call upon him, he is even found by those who have not sought him, as if one stooped to look for a pin, and found a diamond, or a pearl. To the longing soul God is always near: 'Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after right-

eousness, for they shall be filled.' It makes our little morning worship so pleasant to close it in that way, Mrs. Percy."

Meanwhile Ann was guiding her little realm of home as best she could, and especially striving to help Emily. Davy had been careless, Elizabeth exceedingly selfish, Arthur inclined toward idleness and mischief; Emily offered new traits for Ann to war against; Emily was indolent and exceedingly emotional, a creature ruled by sensibilities rather than by judgment or principle. Ann remembered that her professor of philosophy had frequently remarked, "I have greatly desired to find a purely sentimental type of character, and to know its marks." Ann often thought that Emily would exactly fill this bill. Emily needed physical and mental tonic, and Ann was on the alert to supply stimulus to her morbid, dreamy mind.

"Come," she said one evening, "singing is good for people, it wakes them up, and raises the spirits. Elizabeth, you like to sing; Arthur, your voice is improving nicely; Emily, surely you sing?"

"I used to, with my Belle; but I have never sung any since——" she caught her breath.

"Come, let us sing now; join your voice with hers once more; the songs of God's children on earth meet and mingle with those of saints and angels near the throne. Where are the books? Let us sing, 'Lift up the voice, bring forth oblations,' and 'Come let us join our cheerful songs, with angels round the throne.'"

When once an advantage of this kind was gained over Emily's morbidness, Ann made sure to keep it ; so week after week marked some improvement. Ann measured her pupil mentally as people measure babies' bodies, to note each week of growth, and she had fair reports to send to Mr. Rolf.

When Christmas came, Emily's brother Rufus was invited to visit his sister for a week. Ann liked him well, he was goodly to look at, grave and touched with silence from that scathing of sorrow which he had suffered with his family ; but courageous, quietly cheerful, strong, sympathetic, manly. Ann was more than ever anxious to make of Emily such a sister as Rufus Rolf would be glad to have. The day before the visit ended, Rufus suggested that it might be pleasant for Davy to receive news and souvenirs, direct from her family, by him, and if Ann so choose, he would call on Davy. At once a great activity reigned in the house, preparing a second edition of Davy's Christmas presents. Arthur very masterfully ordered Emily into the kitchen, where, by grace of Maggie, she could make candy under his directions. After a while, Rufus gently opened the kitchen door and peeped in. At the baking-table Maggie was diligently preparing seed cakes, little mince pies, cheese sticks, various dainties wherein Davy's soul delighted, as did Isaac's in his son's venison. Arthur and Emily, furnished with aprons, and with their sleeves rolled up, were at a side table grating chocolate, preparing cocoanut, picking out nuts, measuring sugar and

molasses. Each wore a white paper cap, and each was plentifully besprinkled with flour.

"I tell you what, Emily, you *must* put in more butter, if you want those caramels good. I say, girl—look out and don't let that sugar burn. Stop! Whatever are you doing! Don't you know that if you stir that boiling syrup, it will grain, and won't make candy? I believe you'll never learn how!"

"I can tell you what, Arthur, I can butter plates without leaving bare spots, and I don't drop sugar on Maggie's floor, and I don't waste chocolate and cocoanut, letting them fly all around the table," retorted Emily, with spirit.

"So you don't," said Maggie, "let a boy like Arthur alone for thinking he knows it all. It's the way of boys."

Rufus retreated smiling. "Emily is more natural, more like a little girl than she has been since our misfortunes," he said to Elizabeth. "If only she can get strong and bright, and mother could be so we could have a home once more! I have hoped mother would improve so that she could travel for a year with father, and then re-open our house. Miss Elizabeth, I wish my mother could be here. There is a peaceful, strengthening atmosphere in this house, that it seems to me must cure a faint, sick heart!"

"Yes," said Elizabeth, "it is something that Ann manages, and I don't exactly know what it is, but I feel the effect of it."

Ann came in with a little box she had been filling for Davy.

"Miss Ann," said Rufus, "I was just saying to Miss Tracy here, that I thought you all had the secret of the happy life. She says you have it, and she does not know exactly what it is. I think I know, you have learned to live by the day."

"I don't need to know how to live more than that; to-day is all that we ever have to live," said Ann, cheerily, "for to-morrow becomes to-day before it reaches us."

"Why, that's so," cried Elizabeth, "though I had never thought of it before. I am always reaching out after to-morrow, after 'some day,' a some day when I shall be better, and so like Cowper, I have been 'dupe of to-morrow even from a child.'"

Rufus Rolf went away carrying a pleasant memory; the singular beauty of that blameless home-life that Ann Bradford had created had grown upon him each hour of his stay. So it had grown upon Emily, even before she had become an integral part of it. It was a fearless life—even death was no threatening spectre there: it was a frank outspoken life, no one, because of some cherished false standard of things, had opinions to conceal: it was a generous life, a constant stream of benediction seemed to flow from that home, by deed, by word, by giving, advising or working for; each day the one or the many were helped.

"It's a regular House of Refuge," said Maggie, with but the vaguest of ideas what the institution

referred to was. "They come, and they come, whether it's to borrow a steeping of tea, or a cup of salt, or a making of coffee, and Miss Bradford says, 'Always let 'em have it, Maggie,' says she, 'the Scripture is, Give to him that asketh thee; and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.' That may be all right, but there's no Scripture against my asking back what some folks forget to pay. So when Mrs. Stone or that Mrs. Dibbs wades too deep in our debt, I just speak over the fence, 'You don't happen to have the coffee you borrowed on hand to pay back?' I says, 'for if you have, it's easier for me to trouble you for it, than to run to the store for it,' says I. So, by hook and by crook, I gets it back. Trust me for that. Why people runs here—'Will Miss Ann let Mr. Black give 'em a hand for a while to lift?' or, 'May C'list'an come and show 'em how to make a poultice or a cough syrup?' or, 'Will Arthur be let go an errand for 'em across the village?' or, 'Can Miss Ann lend 'em a book or a pattern, or cut them out a *fisher* or a *vandik*?' Dear knows, it's come here for something from morning till night."

So the life of this home was helpful to others, and was care-free, resting for all things on the fatherly love of God.

June came and Arthur was feeling very manly and trying to hold himself at his best, for in the autumn he was to go to a fitting-school for a two years' preparation for college. Davy came home. The advent of the girl was as if one had tossed into the

house a whole armful of Chatenay roses. "You'd make it summer by coming, Dave Tracy," said Arthur, without in the least intending to be gallant.

"That Emily needs shaking out, and waking up," said Davy to Ann, "and I mean to do it."

"You've no idea how much she has waked up, already," said Ann.

Dorothy Camp for a while shone on Dillburg, and Doctor Helen Train came as Ann's guest, and many were the conferences she and Ann had over Elizabeth's case.

Emily had been pressing the question of having her mother come to Dillburg to stay with Ann, and, at Mr. Rolf's request, Doctor Helen had visited Mrs. Rolf and spoken favorably of the plan. "Six months here, having Emily with her, and so much improved, will restore Mrs. Rolf, so that she can travel for six months with her husband, and then have their home again. You'd better do it, Ann, it is a great work to help to reconstitute a broken home. Is your house elastic enough to receive one more?" said Dr. Helen.

"That large upper northwest room has never been fitted up. I could have it papered, painted, furnished. It should be all fresh and attractive," said the practical Ann. "It is sunny, too."

The fitting up was hastened, and Mrs. Rolf came. September came also, and Davy and Arthur were gone, the summer visitors drifted away from Dillburg. Mrs. Rolf shared Emily's affection for

Elizabeth, and Mrs. Percy and Mrs. Gates were congenial.

One evening Mrs. Rolf sat by Elizabeth and Emily, while Mrs. Percy and Ann were near them on the verandah. Mrs. Rolf had sighed much that day, it was the anniversary of the birth of one of her children that she had lost.

Elizabeth spoke out in the twilight, "Ann, repeat something for us. Repeat 'The Alpine Sheep.'"

Ann's voice was rich and harmonious, partaking of the sweetness and fullness of her earnest sympathetic nature. She began softly and clearly, her voice stealing through the fragrant evening air, and still twilight, like music to that mother's wounded heart,—

"And I was fain to bear to you
A portion of its mild relief,
That it might be as healing dew
To steal some fever from your grief."

Softly the words flowed on—the Good Shepherd carrying the lambs to high pastures "more dewy soft than lowland mead."

"This parable by nature breathed,
Blew on me as the south wind free,
O'er frozen brooks that flow unsheathed
From icy thralldom to the sea.

A blissful vision through the night
Would all my happy senses sway,
Of the Good Shepherd on the height,
Or climbing up the starry way,

Holding our little lamb asleep—

While, like the murmur of the sea,
Sounded that voice along the deep,
Saying—‘ Arise, and follow me.’ ”

When she ended, Mrs. Rolf's tears fell in a gentle healing rain, and faith suddenly comforted her with the thought that the dear babes were not dust, but glad in the “star-paved dwelling ” of the incarnate Son of God, sharers of his flesh, and of his redemption.

CHAPTER XVI.

SANTA FILOMENA.

“ Lo, in that home of misery
A lady with a lamp I see
Pass through the glimmering gloom,
And flit from room to room.

On England's annals, through the long
Hereafter of her speech and song,
That lamp its rays shall cast
From portals of the past.

A lady with a lamp shall stand
In the great history of the land,
A noble type of good,
Heroic womanhood.”

GRACE DARE wrote to Ann Bradford: “Dr. Helen tells me that you do not find Dillburg dull. I remember Mrs. Baron once said to me, ‘No place need be dull to any of us, for it is open to us always to create vital interests about us.’ Such interests help us to live with enthusiasm. Dorothy Camp tells us that you have in these few years created a new home out of the home your Aunt Fontaine left you, and made a new Dillburg out of that sleepy place! What do I hear—three or four study

clubs, a parochial aid society, and a village improvement society! I hear also of houses and fences painted, trees planted, flowers cultivated, a better style of house building; churches renovated, and by grace of Mr. Prentice, war proclaimed on vagrant pigs and peripatetic cows! Behind all this, quiet and very commonplace Ann Bradford, working in her own still way. Are you so very commonplace, Ann? I doubt it! Two of our Mount Merion band, who have never been accused of commonplaceness, are Clotilde Arblay and Mrs. Baron, Junior. They are both in Washington. Mr. Baron is U. S. Senator, and Clotilde is to help make Mrs. Baron's home shine. I don't believe it is in Washington or any other place, or even of very much pomps and vanities, to spoil those two, or turn them one whit aside from their paths of daily goodness."

It was in this way that ever and again, from here and there, news of the dazzling Clotilde floated to her friends, but always as if a bird most beautiful of plumage, was also ravishingly sweet of song. Meanwhile Ann's being seemed to lie in quieter and calmer ways, as if, far from the thoroughfares of life, she wandered in shady violet-bordered lanes, into deeper depths of stillness and rest. The going out of Arthur and Davy took much of joyous turmoil from the house. Emily and her mother were of the plaintive, sensitive, shrinking people. For these two, Ann seemed to see the pleasure of the Lord prospering in her hands, for each week they progressed toward health and cheerfulness.

"They are different people," said Mrs. Percy. "I never saw such a change in any other one, as has come to them, Ann."

With Christmas came a visit from Davy, Arthur, and from Rufus Rolf, making cheery holidays. February had just opened, when Ann was roused to considerable excitement by a letter from Dr. Helen Train :

"You know, Ann, I told you that if help was to be found in any one for Elizabeth, it was in that wonderfully skillful and famous Dr. F——. I had written to him of Elizabeth's case, and his answer encouraged me. But how to get the two together? Elizabeth could not be moved, and then he was so far away. He has been three months in London, called to two great cases. Next week he will be here for two millionaire patients, he will remain a fortnight or more. Ann, a thousand dollar fee might secure him to go to Elizabeth. Would it be worth that to know for certain that nothing can be done for her? Would you set up a thousand dollars as a tombstone to your hope? Would it not be more than worth it, to know that the poor child could be at least partly cured, able to go out into the sunshine for herself? A thousand dollars may seem to you a very large fee, it is very small in comparison with what Dr. F.—— constantly receives. It is the least I dare suggest for time of the value of his, if, he goes to Dillburg. Do what you see to be best. only it must be done quickly."

Almost before she had finished reading this letter, Ann was putting on hat and jacket to go to Lawyer Grace. She gave him the letter to read. The old lawyer shook his head. "Miss Ann, don't deceive yourself, Elizabeth is incurable."

"I am not sure of that. If I were in her place, I should wish to be given every chance, even for partial restoration," said Ann.

"Miss Ann, this would be money thrown away, worse than thrown away, for it would perhaps expose the poor girl to suffering and disappointment. Let well enough alone."

"I'm not sure that the case of Elizabeth *is* well enough. I have prayed earnestly for her recovery, perhaps this is the golden sceptre now held out to us," replied Ann.

Mr. Grace shook his head. "Don't be reckless when you are usually so level-headed, Miss Ann. You are the guardian of Elizabeth's person, and I cannot hinder your calling in what advice you choose. But I am the guardian of Elizabeth's property, and I shall not let a penny of her money be wasted on this affair."

"Oh, Mr. Grace, wouldn't it be well used if she were cured?"

"Yes, *if*—but there is no *if* about it. She cannot be cured. She is nineteen and past, and she has been as she is for over fourteen years. Miss Ann, Elizabeth's grandfather, as I happen to know, left her money so tied up, just to avoid such waste as this. In her desire, and the desire of her friends,

for her cure, she would have been the prey of charlatans and quacks, until every penny of her property was gone, and she left heartbroken with disappointment and destitution."

"But, Mr. Grace, Dr. F.— is no charlatan, no quack, he is one of the most distinguished practitioners of the world, at the very top of the regular medical and surgical profession."

"Oh, I know, I know, but he can be mistaken, and also he has not seen Elizabeth, nor expressed any opinion of her."

"If only I had not lost that last little money of mine!" cried Ann, "I could have used that for my poor girl!"

"I know, I know," said Mr. Grace, stubbornly, "as well lose it one way as another, and I could not hinder you. However, it is gone. Remember, also, all your aunt's legacies to be paid by you are not yet paid. Arthur has five years of school and college life before him; Davy over two; there is a year yet to pay out four hundred on the debt—of dishonor."

"I know, I know," said Ann, her brows knit, thinking vigorously.

If Mr. Grace had known Ann more intimately, he would have understood that that straightening of the lines of her lips and chin, that tightening of her brows, meant that she was irrevocably bent on some certain thing. She said: "Mr. Grace, that little fund of savings out of Elizabeth's income begun by Aunt Fontaine, has grown by my saving

for her, to something over five hundred dollars, I think. Have I a right to use that for Elizabeth, as I see fit?"

Mr. Grace, sure that Ann proposed to put the savings "into a bag with holes" wished much to say, "You cannot touch it." But, like George Washington, he could not tell a lie. He replied, "That money is a reserve of what has been paid over to the guardian of Elizabeth's person, as income, and—the said guardian *has* a right to use it for Elizabeth, according to Elizabeth's need. I have no mandatory position with regard to that little savings fund, but I have earned, I think, an advisory position in all affairs that concern Elizabeth. I strongly advise you not to use that money in the way you now propose."

"You have every right, as an adviser and friend, to express yourself about Elizabeth's affairs, Mr. Grace," said Ann, earnestly, "and I hope you will not feel that I am stubborn and ungrateful if I cannot take the view you do now. I feel as if I *must* try this plan."

"It will be like the beginning of strife, and the letting out of water," said the lawyer. "The rabies of quack help will seize you and the poor girl, and you will go 'from mountain to hill,' and know no resting-place. Let me remind you that Mrs. Fontaine fully agreed with old Mr. Tracy, that Elizabeth should not be handed over to charlatans to be experimented upon."

"Yes, but Aunt Fontaine is not here now to ad-

minister, and I am," said Ann, with what Davy called her "Rock of Gibraltar expression."

Mr. Grace was vexed, so vexed that he quoted poetry:

"But if they came who passed away,
Behold their brides in other hands;
The *hard heir* strides about their lands,
And will not yield them for a day."

"I'm obliged to act the 'hard heir' part this time, Mr. Grace," said Ann. "If it turns out that this fee is thrown away, I shall still think that I did what I ought to have done; as I should wish to have had done to me. If it is not thrown away, you will be as glad as I." Ann pulled her feather boa closer about her throat, Mr. Grace gave a dissatisfied grunt, and returned to his briefs. Ann paused a moment at the top of the stairs for a final consideration. Yes, surely she *must* do this, there was no other way, this is what she would have done for herself, if she were Elizabeth, and Elizabeth were Ann. Then she returned into the office and taking up a sheet of paper began to write.

Mr. Grace watched her furtively. "Well?" he said, finally.

"My teacher in ethics," said Ann, "told us that when we were uncertain about the advisability of any action, it would be well to set down in parallel columns all reasons for and all against a course of action. Then proceed as far as possible in cancella-

tion, as if one were working out a problem, and the side which had the majority of uncanceled items won. I'm doing that with this question."

"Well?" urged Mr. Grace.

"The affirmative gets it," said Ann, "Elizabeth must have the chance."

"Woman's stubbornness," said Mr. Grace.

"Even that comes into play well, sometimes."

Ann went to the bank. Mr. Prentice seeing her enter, hastened to the cashier's window, to shake hands with her.

"Mr. Prentice," said Ann, "I want to borrow five hundred dollars."

"A thousand, if you wish," said Mr. Prentice.

"I shall want it in about three weeks, possibly two. That little fund I have in my charge, to credit of Elizabeth Tracy, amounts to five hundred, does it not?"

"Yes, five hundred and twenty."

"When I borrow the five hundred, I shall also draw all of that. The odd twenty will pay the interest on the loan for six months. I think I shall only need it for six months."

"For six years if you like, Miss Bradford."

Ann, however, had hastily estimated her assets, including Mr. Rolf's next payment for Emily and Mrs. Rolf, and thought that she could pay her debt in six months. Then she went home and wrote hastily to Dr. Helen. "The thousand-dollar fee is ready. Let me know when Doctor F—— will come, and all that I need to do in preparing for him."

After that there was nothing more to do until she heard from Doctor Helen as to the probable treatment, when she must lay the case before Elizabeth. Until then Elizabeth should not be disturbed, and so Ann must keep the whole affair to herself. She was able to do it, and to go quietly on her way, for as says the Shepherd of Hermas, "Equanimity is strong and forcible, and of great power, and sitteth in much enlargement; is cheerful, rejoicing in peace, and glorifies God at all times, with meekness. And this long-suffering dwells with those that are full of faith."

Dr. Helen's letter came promptly.

"I think you are taking the right course. If it does not secure healing, it will, at least, give peace to your mind. I will come with Doctor F——, we shall stay from Monday evening to Saturday morning. I will be at your house, and look after Elizabeth. I have written to ask Mrs. Percy to entertain the Doctor. Her quiet, agreeable home will just suit him. We will be there on the tenth. Doctor F—— will then be able to leave the patients here for five days, if all goes well."

The critical moment had come. Ann's first measure was to take Mrs. Rolf into her confidence. This might be a good opportunity to draw Mrs. Rolf out of herself, and throw some little responsibility upon her. She went to Mrs. Rolf's room while Elizabeth was taking her afternoon rest. To Ann's delight, Mrs. Rolf showed complete calmness and self-possession, and helpfully discussed

the case and the plans for it. Ann had not realized how nearly recovered Mrs. Rolf was. When she heard C'list'an open Elizabeth's room door, she rose and said, "I must go talk to Elizabeth. Come down in half an hour, please, Mrs. Rolf, and speak to her as you have to me." Then suddenly turning she kissed Mrs. Rolf, saying: "Doctor Helen will say you are entirely well. I shall soon lose you, Mrs. Rolf. You don't know how happy I have been to have you here, and how happy I am that you are here *now*."

She went to Elizabeth. "Have you had a nice nap? Are you real well, dear?"

"As *real well* as I ever am, Ann."

"My hopes grow of having you, oh, so much better. Have you courage to get better?"

"That would not require much courage; the courage is needed to stay as I am," said Elizabeth, with a little sigh.

"Elizabeth, I see a possibility of getting you upon your feet, on crutches maybe at first—perhaps always crutches, and perhaps not. But think—think of being able to walk over to Mrs. Percy's, to walk about the garden! Think of being able to get into a little low phaeton and riding to church. Think of going out into the woods with us—yes, for all day."

"Don't, Ann, I've thought of all this, until I'm heart-sick."

"We'll think of all this to some purpose now, dear, I hope, until you are heart glad, and full of

thankfulness! See, I want to show you a letter from Doctor Helen Train." She gave her the first letter.

"Well, the money is all right!" cried Elizabeth, eagerly.

"Oh, yes," said Ann, not mentioning how it was come by, and she gave Elizabeth the other letter. Elizabeth read it.

"It must be tried," she said. Then, catching her breath, and turning pale: "I'm so afraid of suffering!"

"This will not be half as much as you have suffered already, dear, perhaps no pain at all," said Ann, and just then Mr. Black knocked on the door, bringing mail. There was a letter from Dr. Helen to Elizabeth. While she was reading it, Mrs. Rolf came in. "We don't want to raise your hopes too high, dear, but really I feel as if I must offer congratulations even now; I feel so sure of help for you."

"Doctor Helen says Doctor F—— may think nothing can be done," said Elizabeth, "or it may be that what he tries will not succeed, but then she says it may succeed, and she thinks it will. Oh, to think that next year I may be out of this chair, be able to walk through these rooms, be going down that walk."

"Yes, let us expect that by God's blessing," said Mrs. Rolf.

"Ann, I don't want it talked about. If I am cured, we will give it to Davy and Arthur as a sur-

prise. I don't want people talking or coming to inquire," burst forth Elizabeth.

"No ; nor do I. I mean to have a lock put on that front gate ! Not a foot shall step on the walk, not a hand pull the bell. You shall burst upon the neighborhood as a surprise, Elizabeth. What will people think to see you calmly walking over to call on Mrs. Gates, and Mrs. Percy ! They only need know, and on pledge of secrecy."

In spite of all this effort after good cheer, there was more or less of care and trepidation, the days seemed long until the two doctors arrived, and that was a critical hour when they appeared, and the dread adventure was really begun.

"I wish I could bear it all for Elizabeth," said Ann, with a burst of tears, to Doctor Helen, "Elizabeth looks to me so frail and sensitive, and she has borne so much." However, tears were not usual to Ann Bradford, and she had put them away, before with Doctor F—— and Dr. Helen she went to Elizabeth.

"It is not often," said Doctor F—— "that I find a patient of this class in so fine a physical condition as Miss Tracy," and then Elizabeth gave a grateful look to Ann, who had made her health such a study for three years.

"We work in these matters more or less in the dark," said Doctor F——, "we cannot be sure of recovery. Sometimes we fail to secure even an improvement, complications arise ; but I have very strong hopes, Miss Tracy, that you will not rec-

ognize the young lady who will meet you in the looking-glass in a few months from now."

"O Helen," said Ann, next morning, "what would I do, what would my Elizabeth do this morning, if we could not hold fast by the hand of the dear Lord, to-day?"

"Lean hard," said Helen, "he will carry you both through, and turn your fear into joy, for the love that he bears to his people."

When, on Saturday morning, Doctor F—— and Dr. Helen departed, leaving their patient in the hands of Ann, Dr. Helen promising to return in a week to stay for a few days, Ann Bradford felt twenty years older; she had lived through so many alternating emotions. But joy and thankfulness were uppermost, for fear had turned to hope, and hope was growing to assurance, of how much, none could yet tell, but certainly of better things.

Mrs. Rolf was sitting by the bed of Elizabeth, when Ann came back from the station.

"Let not him that putteth on the armor boast as he that taketh it off," said Mrs. Rolf. "Indeed, I felt much happier saying 'Good-bye' to those blessed doctors, than I did when I said, 'How do you do,' and all was uncertainty. Now we have clear sailing before us. This past week is a week well ended."

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," said Ann, and Elizabeth, lying peacefully on her pillow, looked up with happy eyes.

"The very first day that Elizabeth can walk into the dining room, I mean to have Mr. Grace here to tea," said Ann.

At college, when any of her girl mates were sick, Ann had been the nurse, she "took to nursing naturally," she said.

Now Elizabeth suffered nothing from the absence of Dr. Helen. Ann had carefully studied Dr. Helen's methods, and been a docile pupil of the famous Doctor F——. Her patient did justice to her cares.

Such pleasant surprises came to Elizabeth. Letters from Dorothy, Madame Baron, and the fair Clotilde; baskets of fruit and flowers from Rufus Rolf. Grace Dare sent her a picture, a water color of spring woodlands, that now could wake in Elizabeth, not a sick longing for what she could never see, but a confident expectation of going out among the budding flowers and leaves herself! From the Gillespies, Mrs. Gates and Mrs. Percy, came notes and books, and so, by degrees, the waiting time was whiled away. Ann saw that this time was helpful to Emily, calling her out of herself into practical usefulness; helpful to Mrs. Rolf, as it brought her back to her motherly place and to womanly cares. Day by day her wounded heart was healed, not merely by the touch of time, but by the Great Physician and the "Balm of Gilead." After the waiting came the time when Elizabeth rose from her bed, and upheld by Ann and Mrs. Rolf, began to stand; then supported by C'list'an and some

others, she took the first steps she had made for fourteen years. What a day of joy!

Then came the day of Ann's threatened tea-party. Mr. and Mrs. Gillespie, Mrs. Percy, Mrs. Gates, and Mr. Grace were invited. When all were in the library, Elizabeth took the strong, light, beautiful crutches, made for her under Dr. Helen's direction, and slowly, proud as a baby-child over its first pilgrimage, she left her room, crossed the hall, and stood, shining and smiling, in the library door! There was a deep breath of glad surprise. Then Mr. Grace came forward, his face full of emotion, his voice husky, he laid his hand upon the golden head and said, "God bless you, my little girl!"

What an hour of happiness! Even Emily was ecstatic, Mrs. Rolf was all smiles, and C'list'an and Maggie fairly contended for the post of waiting on the table. This was late in May, when Elizabeth could walk out on the verandah, and see the lines of color peeping through the calyxes of the buds of climbing-rose clusters. In truth, Elizabeth wanted to walk too much, until Ann threatened to sequester the crutches.

"I was wrong, and you were right, Miss Ann," said Mr. Grace. "I am so glad that you were persistent, I feel that I should pay that other five hundred."

"No, that is provided for," said Ann, merrily. "I mean to have all the glory of that transaction. However, I will tell you what you can do. When Mrs. Rolf's horse and surrey are taken away, Eliza-

beth will need a low-hung, two-seated phaeton, and safe horse, and I hope you will provide them. For a while Elizabeth will have no savings, for now she will need dresses, gloves, hats, wraps, all the paraphernalia of *people*, you see!" In those days Ann was very cheery.

That latter part of May, one morning, when they were on the piazza, there was a deep far-off roar and rumble, and the ground quivered so that the gates rattled on their catches, the vines trembled along the trellis, the water welled over from a full glass.

"Is it an earthquake?" cried Elizabeth.

"No: I have been in two—it is not an earthquake," said Mrs. Rolf. Then, after a little, Ann said, "I fear it is some accident at the 'Strother Mine.'"

"Why, that is ten miles away," said Emily.

"All the more I fear that it is some terrible disaster there."

Mr. Black came from the garden, going down to the telegraph office to make inquiries. In an hour he came back. "A dreadful explosion and falling in, Miss Bradford, at the Strother Mine. Many are said to be killed, many hurt. Our two doctors, Mr. Gillespie and another minister, and Mr. Prentice are going there to help. A car will be sent in half an hour." Ann put away her work. "I must go! there is where I am needed; I am a good nurse and have strong nerves. Mrs. Rolf, will you be house-mother and mistress, while I am gone? C'list'an, pack in my telescope, everything that is on the bot-

tom shelf of the medicine closet. See that the sweet oil, and carbolic acid, and ammonia bottle are firmly corked; put in six towels, six pillow-cases, and three pairs of sheets—those soft old ones, from the lowest shelf in the linen-closet. Emily dear, please put my slippers and some aprons and a wrapper together, and call Mr. Black to take the telescope to the station. Then run down there yourself, and buy a dozen each of lemons and oranges, and have them ready for some of us to carry, as we go.”

Issuing all these directions, Ann was preparing herself with speed, and with a final, “Call in Mrs. Percy if you need help,” she was away. Mrs. Rolf stood as if transfixed, gazing after Ann’s rapid pace down the street.

“Did ever any one think so quickly before!” she exclaimed. “Did any one before ever have every item and article in her house in such exact order and place, and know where to put hands on everything so promptly? She will be a host of helpers in one, down at Strothers.”

“On that shelf,” said C’list’an, “she had bandages, and a pile of old linen handkerchiefs, all nicely ironed, carbolized cotton, a roll of flannel, and half a dozen poultice-bags, all ready to use. The shelf’s empty, and if I know what is good for me, I’ll fill it up before Miss Bradford comes back. I must make bandages and bags, and hunt up flannel and handkerchiefs, and have the bismuth-box filled, and the vaseline, oil, and ammonia replaced. When Mrs. Stone’s little boy got burned badly, Miss Ann was

over there with cloths and bismuth and vaseline, and glycerine, and had him all done up and comfortable before his mother was done shrieking in the back yard, or his father had found the doctor. Oh, Miss Ann's great—but she don't think it—and she's afraid of nothing. Don't know, for my part, where they raise such people as Miss Ann. Well, he's lucky that she tends this night."

The reinforcement from Dillburg was a godsend to "Strothers." The dead were being taken to an improvized morgue in an empty store; the school-house and two little churches standing near to each other had been turned into hospitals; helpers from other places began to arrive; cots and mattresses were spread, and the moans and groans of suffering humanity filled the air; wounds, fractures, burns, bruises, and internal injuries claimed attention. The various doctors and the self-offered nurses began to bring order out of this terrible confusion. Ann, steady of nerve and deft of hand, not without knowledge and experience, dressed various burns and bound up wounds, administered anodynes, and when her patient could be sent to some private house near, saw to it that he was taken there, and put to bed. Then she helped the doctors as they treated severer cases.

"Here's a bed all ready," she said quietly, when one severe operation was finished. She had made up a cot, clean and fresh with the sheets she had brought, found some one to get her a pillow, and the sufferer was laid to rest as neatly as if in a hos-

pital. "Here's a towel," just as one was wanted ; a roll of bandage slipped into a surgeon's hand, just as he came into need of it.

"I wish we had forty like you here, Miss," said a doctor.

Not the least of Ann's help was given in freeing the hospitals of weeping and helpless women, who could be of service in going home to prepare beef-tea, gruel, hot milk and refreshments for patients ; for nurses and doctors, rolls of bandages. She made suggestions so clearly, and was so quick to sort those who ought to go from those who could be useful if they stayed, that here she was especially serviceable. About four o'clock in the morning, when the first cares needed had been given to all, Ann found a cushion and a corner between two cots where patients might need attention, and took a nap, until half-past five. Then some one brought her a cup of coffee, and she began to pass among the beds, bathing fevered faces and hands with cologne or bay-rum and water. When she crossed the street to see what was needed in the other church, the day was bright, and the sunshine fell from the window over the cots, sufferers and a new nurse. The golden glory lit up a figure of the utmost grace, in a gray gown, white cap, sleeves and apron ; the lightest possible tread went from cot to cot, daintily soft hands ministered, a voice of low music soothed, the light illumined the matchless beauty of a face, and there Clotilde Arblay stood tirelessly between life and death, the face of an

angel bent over aching heads and dulling eyes. Ann stood to watch her for an instant, then took up her own task, and so as they went from one to another, they at last met by the same bed. "Ann!" "Clotilde!" it was all they said; their hands clasped across a broken form, and then ministered to bring it ease from pain. Later they were taken by a good woman to get a breakfast and a little rest.

"I heard the explosion, and our Dillburg detachment was of the first that came;" said Ann, "but how did you get here, Clotilde?"

"I have been visiting at General Seymour's. Last night we were at a party, about eleven o'clock, when I heard of this terrible accident. Several were speaking of coming here to help, on the midnight train. One of my hostesses had had this nurse's dress (so sensible and comfortable) to wear in a tableau. I ran upstairs, hurried off my full dress, put on this, and reached the station with the rest of them. I know, Ann, that I am a good nurse, and here I stay as long as these poor sufferers need me."

"Sick and ye visited me," said Ann, looking with eyes full of admiration at the lovely Clotilde, forgetting that she herself had come from being served to serve. But God never forgets; in his records it was written of them both, "Ye did it unto me."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE JOY OF ELIZABETH.

“Nor ever shall be wanting here
The palm, the lily and the spear,
The symbols that of yore,
Saint Filomena bore.”

CLOTILDE ARBLAY and Ann Bradford were two weeks at Strothers, nursing the injured. When Ann saw Clotilde going tirelessly and patiently from bed to bed, always cheerful, tactful, apt to help; when she heard her musical voice through the gloom of night, repeating Scripture or hymns, or praying by the suffering and dying, then she could not but marvel that the indulgences and temptations of wealth had left this girl unharmed in physique, and unspoiled in spirit. The beauty of Clotilde's character grew upon Ann daily, it was as rarely lovely as her person. “I should have had a hard time of it here, without you, Clotilde,” said Ann. “You have been so encouraging, so brave, so sympathetic; the quiet times when we could sit and talk with each other have been so restful.”

“I'm glad it has been so,” said Clotilde, “and *your* being here has not only been delightful to me,

but it has calmed the fears of father and mother upon my account."

"Why, what did they ever know of *me*?"

"Evidently, Ann, you never have heard Doctor Helen talk about you," said Clotilde, laughing. "She makes you a heroine."

C'list'an came two or three times to Strothers, bringing clothes for Ann, comforts for the sick, news of the family, and doing part of a day's nursing each time that she came. Finally, to the especial joy of Emily and Elizabeth, the Strothers cases were disposed of; some were cured; some able to go home to complete recovery; some were taken to hospitals in large towns, and Clotilde went with Ann to Dillburg and remained three days. At the station, carefully "pillowed up" in the phaeton, sat Elizabeth, taking her first ride for nearly fifteen years.

All this delightful news of the improvement of Elizabeth had been concealed from Davy and Arthur. Elizabeth wished to surprise them. When the day of their return came, Ann went to meet them in the surrey. The little lad, Arthur, whom she had brought to Dillburg and allowed for the first time in his life to drive a horse, now towered above her head, and valiantly grasped the reins.

"Do look what a great fellow Arthur is," said Davy, "I did not know him when he came aboard the cars."

"I don't wonder, my lad, that you've had such bills for shoes and clothes," said Ann, "you've

simply grown right out of all the garments you have possessed." Then she laid a hand on each of Arthur's shoulders, and said, "Look me in the eyes," and he looked her full in the eyes; a gaze as simple, honest, and good, as the frank gaze of the little lad who had come to her to find his first home. "All right," said Ann, "drive on." And the heart of Ann was glad that, by the goodness of God, this Davy and this Arthur had not been taken out of the world, but kept from the evil that is in the world.

As they came within sight of the house, said Davy, "What girl is that by our gate? Not Emily? The hair is just like Elizabeth's."

A girl in a white gown stood there, but her back was turned to them, as she looked the other way.

"Poor Elizabeth," said Arthur, with sentiment, "*she'll* never have the good luck to stand by that gate, or any other—and it's not Emily, either."

"No," said Ann, coolly, "not Emily."

"Whoa!" cried Arthur, with unnecessary energy—they were at home. The girl by the gate turned her face calmly, it was the face of Elizabeth. Davy and Arthur very nearly fell out of the surrey. Arthur was so excited that he vaulted the fence, and Ann was obliged to cry out, "Take care!" as Davy dashed wildly to her sister, and seized her in her arms.

"Look out, Davy! Don't upset her crutches," shrieked Emily, running to the rescue. However, Elizabeth could not have fallen, if the crutches had entirely disappeared, for Arthur had thrown his

arms around her on one side, and Davy on the other ; one gave her a hug and said, " O Elizabeth ! Walking, oh ! " and the other gave a hug and cried, " Oh, jolly for you, Elizabeth ! On your feet, out of doors ! Whoo ! Won't we have larks ! "

Then both were seized with a longing " to see Elizabeth walk," and they stood on one side, and viewed Elizabeth as a procession, as she went slowly to the verandah where Mrs. Rolf stood ready to receive her, and C'list'an was waiting to steady her motion up the three steps.

Then Mrs. Rolf and C'list'an established Elizabeth in the hammock.

" That hammock act isn't quite so new," said Arthur. " Last summer C'list'an and Maggie carried you out to the hammock, and laid you in it to swing for hours, and we thought that was wonderful doings : but this walking is simply fine ! Have you been to the woods yet, Elizabeth ? "

" Not yet, I must hasten slowly. I took my first ride ten days ago, when Ann came home from Strothers, and I have been out for three little rides since. I have to be very careful, and not strain or tire myself. I walk a little each day, and each day I find it easier. I have been to the gate now, four times. While you and Davy are home I hope to get to the woods for a ride, two or three times, and perhaps to church, if Ann can contrive some carpentry in our church pew, so that I can sit there without being strained or tired."

" Pooh, pooh ! " said Arthur, airily. " It takes *me*

to contrive things : I can manage that in a minute. We'll have all kinds of cushioned chairs sent up from the shop, and when you find one that exactly suits you, in every way, I'll take it to the church, and have the end of the pew cut out, and the chair put in just turned enough, so that you can sit down without twisting about. Of course, I'd have to trench a little on Mrs. Percy's pew, and on Mr. Prentice's, but *they* won't care ; anybody 'd do anything for *you*, Elizabeth." And Arthur stood with his shoulders thrown back, his feet planted wide apart, and an air of "knowing it all," which made Ann and Mrs. Rolf smile covertly. Then he seated himself near Elizabeth, and began to talk about athletics ; what "tall running" he could do, what "standing high jumps," what "running high jumps," how he had won a hurdle race, and "knocked spots into a potato race,"—all this for the benefit of Davy and Emily, who, instead of attending to his boasting, were deep in the beauties of a gown which Clotilde Arblay had worn at the commencement banquet.

Ann had looked a little worn and saddened by her experiences at Strothers. She had seen for those two weeks a very tragic side of life ; it needed all Clotilde Arblay's buoyant vitality to live such experiences down. Now that Arthur and Davy were back, with their joyous youth, their planning, boasting, caressing, their high imaginings, their golden spectacles, their exuberant vitality, their endless schemes for entertainment, Ann revived, as a plant

brought from the cellar revives in the sun. As for Emily, one would hardly have known the girl. Absolutely, Emily's laugh rung out with the rest, and Emily's interest in hay-wagon rides, picnics, and watermelon parties by moonlight, was as warm as any one's.

Doctor Davy and Doctor Arthur had well nigh completed the cure of Mrs. Rolf, when her son Rufus arrived, took the case out of their hands, and finished it with much credit.

"Little mother," he said one day, "you absolutely have dimples in your cheeks again; they are round pink cheeks, as they were when I was a little laddie, and thought you the prettiest lady in the world. Won't father be happy when he gets here, and how good it was of you to get gray and lavender dresses, and not use black all the time. The dress does not alter our heart feelings, you know, but it can sadden and dull other people sometimes. I think Emily began to get better, when I came here and told Miss Ann to put her into Scotch plaid and crimson merino.

Elizabeth, resting in her hammock, laughed merrily. "You young men think you are wise enough to dictate everything, even to girls' gowns," she said. "But I do think that when God dressed flowers and birds and fishes, even stones so brightly, he meant to hint to us that this brightness conduced to health and good cheer, and we must not go mourning all our days, because he has done what seemeth him good."

"There, now," said Ann to Mr. Grace, as she gave him a check for four hundred dollars, "Aunt Fontaine's expiation of another's sin is complete. Truly she might write: 'Then I restored that which I took not away.'"

"Yes, she was a good woman," said Mr. Grace, "and if now, from the world where she is, she can know what is done here, I am sure she will feel that she left her affairs in the best possible hands. I don't know but you have done better than she would have done, for I am sure she would not have given Arthur home life. She would not have ventured on the course you took for Elizabeth. Really, Miss Ann, I'm glad this burden of the debt is off your hands; those two young folks at college will tax you to the utmost, and I suppose now you will lose the Rolfs. They've been a help to you, and you have been a wonderful help to them. I think, Miss Ann, you are one of those sent into the world to help everybody with whom you come in contact."

"Are we not all so sent?" said Ann. "As to the Rolfs, Mrs. Rolf will leave early in September, and spend the winter in the West Indies and Brazil with Mr. Rolf. Emily will be with me another year, and will take more studies. Emily is not so brainy as Davy, she needs more pushing."

"I suppose so; Davy is rather an uncommon girl. Left without education or piety, she would have been a terror to the community, a desperate mischief-maker; now, she is to be a blessing, 'thoroughly

"You're a real comfortable person to live with," said Elizabeth, gratefully. "I'm afraid I shall always be a despondent person that you will need to cheer up."

As birds scatter from nests and lawn, when autumn winds begin to whistle shrilly, in September, Ann Bradford's happy summer-family broke up. Davy, Rufus, and Arthur were off to their studies, and Mrs. Rolf went with her husband to the Windward Islands. Then Elizabeth and Emily went to their winter lessons as vigorously as Ann thought good for girls of their constitution; each day they had a drive in the phaeton, and Emily, in addition, a ride on horseback. At Christmas, Emily went to the city to spend the holidays with Davy, Dorothy, and Dr. Helen Train. She took with her gifts for Davy, and a box was sent to Arthur; thus Christmas was provided for early.

"Elizabeth," said Ann, "let us have a good time."

"How?" asked Elizabeth, with doubting.

"We'll give Aunt Fontaine's 'old folks' party,' as usual; but, before we have that, let us have a children's party, a party for children that never went to a party before. We'll have our table trimmed gayly, and they shall have turkey, and sweet pickles, doughnuts, cake and ice cream, and plenty of other fixings; and when they go home each shall have a popcorn ball, and a big piece of nut-candy. We will make up a box of presents to send to the Children's Hospital; also, I have the names of two 'shut

in ' children ; we'll send presents to each of them They are poor children, and something pretty will, come good to them."

Elizabeth brightened considerably at hearing of these plans. As they worked for the little ones at the Children's Hospital they had a letter from Dorothy to talk of—Dorothy's letter said little of Davy or Emily, for Dorothy's thoughts were all with Clotilde.

"Mr. Arblay's great manufactory has failed—a most terrible crash. I do not quite understand what brought it on, but nothing dishonorable in him : every one speaks in the highest terms of him. The anxiety and loss brought on an attack of apoplexy ; he died two weeks ago. I saw Clotilde yesterday ; she bears up wonderfully, but evidently the entire loss of property has passed out of sight, in the sadder loss of her father. Those Arblays were always such a loving family ! Clotilde has to keep up the courage of her mother and grandmother : people also say that Clotilde is showing wonderful business talent in her efforts to secure a little competence for those two. Mrs. Arblay senior has a little house prettily situated in the suburbs, and they will go there, with one servant, whom they have had for ten years, and a little boy Clotilde picked up on the street two years ago, and was bringing up as a general utility boy, on the place. There will be enough for the widow and her mother-in-law to live upon quietly, and as soon as they are

settled, Clotilde is going to the hospital for six months' training, then is intending to be a nurse; she says nursing is her one talent. Dear, lovely Clotilde, she is more charming than ever in her sorrow, her simple mourning, her courage, and earnest thinking for others. The longer she lives, the better she grows. 'Peaceable fruits of righteousness,' that was all I could think of, as we talked together, and she told me her plans. All the splendors of her life have vanished, except those costly pearls of three generations. She has put them in the vault of a Security Trust Company. No one has any shadow of claim upon them, and she told me they were her reliance, in case of any extra need, sickness, or accident, arising for her mother or grandmother. She seems to care no more for resigning those jewels than a child for the faded wreath it drops at the end of its play. I went with her to deposit the pearls, and as we came away I thought of Paul's words—'Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only; but unto all them also that love his appearing.'"

This news of Clotilde occupied much of the thoughts of Ann and Elizabeth, as they worked together.

Grace Dare's wedding-cards came shortly after New Year's, and then the news that Sara Fordyce had been chosen to go to a foreign land, to open a

school for the daughters of certain princes of a nation coming out of heathenism and semi-civilization.

"How can she bear to go!" cried Elizabeth. But Ann made answer, "How could she bear to refuse? This is work that will tell on the ages; she is going to build up a country, by educating for it wives and mothers. How the little party of us that had gathered at Mount Merion Cottage is scattering, and finding diverse ways in life, God calling each one to labor as it pleases him—the only real affair for us is to stand ready to answer, 'here I am,' when he calls us."

"Even though I am so much stronger than I was," said Elizabeth, "it seems that I am fit to do very little. You need not think, Ann, that I do not notice how careful you are that I should not be tired or startled. It is like having a perpetual child in the house! What of God's work can *I* do?"

"'God has his plan for every man,' and, at least, Elizabeth, you can cherish the child-spirit, for that is the spirit required of those who would enter the Glory Gate."

As winter passed away, the thoughts of Ann and her girls turned toward the summer, its vacation, and the re-uniting of the family.

"I can go out more this summer than I did last," said Elizabeth. "How lovely it will be to spend whole days in the woods! And Ann, let us give the girls a lawn party with plenty of Chinese lanterns, and two or three pavilions for taking the re-

freshments in. Davy, Emily, and Arthur can do the work, and I'll provide the entertainment."

The first interference of these charming plans came from Arthur. His professor had been asked to join the state geologist in his summer work, and two lads were to go with the party, pay small, but all expenses provided.

"It will be very pleasant to make such a trip," wrote Arthur, "and good for health, and a great help in my studies, as it will push me right along in my natural sciences. Then, too, I ought to be earning a little something toward my expenses, and the sixty dollars will be of use. I hope, Cousin Ann, you'll not object to my going. I can be home for a week in the fall. I'll hate not to be there more, but I ought to take hold and do what I can."

Ann handed the letter to Elizabeth. "We'll miss the boy, but I suppose he'll have to go," said Elizabeth.

"Yes, certainly, and with such a party, with his professor to be responsible for him, I shall feel less anxious about him, I'm always anxious because he is not a Christian; he is a nice boy, but he needs more than niceness to stay him against the tempters that lie in wait for souls at every step."

"Casting *all* your care, Ann," said Elizabeth. "You have that privilege."

"Yes, and if I didn't use my privilege, I don't know what would become of me. How do people get on who don't realize that there is a Burden-bearer, a Helper, ever present?"

Scarcely had Ann and Elizabeth adjusted themselves to the idea of doing without Arthur for the summer, when a letter came from Mr. Rolf proposing very great changes.

Mr. Rolf and his wife were going to Europe for the vacation months : this might be the last of these trips for Mr. Rolf, and he thought it well to take Emily. Rufus also was going for the advantage of travel immediately after his graduation, and Mr. Rolf invited Davy to accompany them, entirely at his own expense.

"Such a wonderful opportunity for Davy," said Ann, "it will be good for her health. Dorothy writes me that the child has studied hard this year, and looks a little pale and worn. A trip to Europe will help Davy through her senior year wonderfully, and it will also have weight when she is looking for a position as teacher, a year from now. Clearly we must give Davy up for the summer, and Emily, too. How delighted they will be ! Mr. Rolf says if I agree to the plan on Davy's behalf, I may tell them both of it."

"Yes, it is splendid for Davy," said Elizabeth, cheerfully, and Ann noted with delight, that there was none of the old-time jealousy in voice and expression. "Fine, for Davy ; and she owes it all to you, Ann. If you had not sent her to college, if you had not been the efficient, thoroughgoing Ann that you are, Mr. Rolf would never have sent Emily here, and Mrs. Rolf would not have come here. It is because they feel indebted to you for more than

money's worth, that they are giving Davy this treat."

"I'm so glad, Elizabeth, that you feel so well satisfied with me," said Ann, "even when I know you are overpaying me in credit and appreciation, it is yet very pleasant. As we are praising each other, and are a fashion of mutual admiration society, let me ask you if you cannot feel thankful, that you have grown God-ward, now that you can be unenviably glad of Davy's opportunities for enjoyment? Four or five years ago, your first thoughts would have been of self-pity, and of vexation against Davy."

"Yes, silly thing that I was, but I am older now, Ann."

"True, but growing older and growing better, do not always run in couples, my dear; you have grown in grace, Elizabeth."

Elizabeth thought for a little. "Yes, Ann, I think that I have, and I remember that you once said it was well to look back and measure our progress; to count the milestones by which we had come; to notice where our tempers, desires and views differ from our past phases."

"These, I think, are the real golden milestones on our way home," said Ann. "Now we must be very practical; Davy's expenses will be paid for the trip, but Davy must have some money to spend, and Davy must have her outfit. Sara Fordyce has been abroad several times; she will tell me what is needed. I have heard her say that for real enjoyment of a short trip, one should go encumbered with very

little baggage. She says her little steamer-trunk suffices for a three months' stay, if she has a good new travelling-dress, and one pretty good silk for extra occasions. Then, whatever is needed beyond that can be bought on the spot. Elizabeth, you and I will have a real good time getting Davy ready for her trip, and we will have to oversee Emily's preparations, too."

"Yes," said Elizabeth, "each will need some knit slippers, and a linen case lined with oil-silk for brushes, combs and so on, and I shall make them. I was reading about those conveniences for travellers the other day, never thinking I should personally need to have anything to do with them! Ann, Davy will not get home at all this summer, they will sail the very day after commencement. We'll have to send her things to her."

"Suppose, Elizabeth," said Ann, "that you write to Davy about it, and tell her that we have decided that she can go. There comes Emily, we'll give her her father's letter, and see how she will look when she realizes what it means; and we can imagine how Davy will behave when she reads your letter."

"Emily will turn red and white, and then red, and will catch her breath, and say: 'O Miss Ann!' and will then sit and smile for an hour; but Davy will turn herself into a teetotum, and whirl about, and show her letter to this one and that one, and then do the dancing-dervish act over again," cried Elizabeth, laughing.

"What are you two laughing at?" demanded Emily, coming in.

"At you and Davy," said Elizabeth, "here's a letter from your father; stand right there, please, to read it."

Emily read, and fulfilled Elizabeth's predictions; then she read the letter again, and when she sat down to smile for the hour which Elizabeth had foretold, there was, in addition to the smile, an astute expression on her face that suggested that she saw deeper into affairs than any one else did.

The news that Emily and Davy were to go abroad roused quite a commotion in Dillburg. Sue Stryker came up to see about it. "Where do you folks get all the money you spend, Miss Ann? Your Aunt Fontaine never could go into such expenditures. Miss Adams says you'll make ducks and drakes of all you have before long, and have to sell the place here. Mrs. Dibbs says you have borrowed no end of money at the bank, all that Mr. Prentice dare let you have, but I don't know how Mrs. Dibbs knows everything. Mrs. Moss is so funny! she said you'd have to be like the Queen of Denmark, getting rich by marrying your girls to great fortunes. Dear me, you and Elizabeth will be alone all summer. Mrs. Stone said that was a pity, you'd have time to manage the town more than ever. Whatever is done now, seems to have you back of it."

"The other day," said Ann, "I read something like this—that in the morning when a cock crowed and roused his distant neighbor, and that one the

next, and so on, for all we know, in close succession, those calls might go on from Maine to Patagonia. It reminded me of the saying that the world would be clean enough if every man would clean up his own premises. If some of you people were busy about that, you would have less time to watch what I am doing."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE GOLDEN MILESTONE.

“Each man’s chimney is his golden milestone,
Is the central point from which he measures
Every distance,
Through the gateways of the world around him.”

MR. GILLESPIE looked in through the open long window that, in pleasant weather, made the verandah seem part of Elizabeth’s room. Ann and Elizabeth were sitting together; Ann working, and Elizabeth reading aloud.

“And how did you find our Davy, Miss Ann, when you went to welcome her back?”

“Well and happy, and every way improved; I am more than ever glad that she had that trip. Arthur stayed in the city with us six hours, and went on to his college. Emily is well, and at last the Rolfs are all settled in their own home. They invited Davy to spend Christmas holidays with them, but she says she must come and see Elizabeth.”

“You saw Miss Dorothy and Miss Arblay?”

“Dorothy was away on a trip, writing up something for a magazine; Clotilde has been nursing rich patients for several months, but an epidemic of a severe and dangerous form of measles, and also

scarlet fever, has broken out in the poorer districts of the city, and Clotilde has left her rich patients, who gladly pay her from fifteen to twenty dollars a week, and has gone down to care for those who cannot pay anything. As I was visiting Emily, Davy, and other college girls, I dared not go down to see Clotilde, lest I might carry infection to them. What do you think Clotilde and Doctor Helen have done? They have prepared some simply worded, clear rules for disinfecting houses, for sanitation, and hygienic living; explaining clearly why foul air, dirty drains, ill-kept beds and clothes, and carelessly cooked food are dangerous; they have also a sheet of directions for the care of the sick and the especial care of measles, and scarlet fever patients. These sheets are printed in clear, large type. Clotilde collected from friends of her father money to print hundreds of these leaflets, and they are scattered all through those parts of the city where the poor and ignorant are crowded together. Doctor Helen says she already sees the good results; people begin to understand something of hygiene, and there is an evident improvement in the housekeeping, especially the cleanliness of stairs, halls and walks. I felt just as if I must go right there and help Helen and Clotilde; but my duty lay here in Dillburg, so back I came."

"I was much pleased with Arthur," said Mr. Gillespie, "I saw him several times while he was here, week before last; he is an earnest-minded, manly fellow. I think he is thinking deeply on the subject of religion. I hope so; he will be a useful

worker in the church, and in the community generally; he has plenty of vim in him, and jolly, popular ways. I have not long to stay here this morning. I am out canvassing my congregation, and *you* don't need to be canvassed. I greatly feel the need of having my people better informed and more interested in church work; they need weekly education given by our church papers, and the missionary magazines. They subscribe, and in a year or two let the subscription drop: new households are set up and do not consider this religious literature a part of their necessary furnishings. If I could bring my flock to consider that two or three Bibles, a hymn-book, Pilgrim's Progress, their church paper, their missionary magazine, and if possible some other great religious papers, made as needful a part of household and personal belongings, as cook-stove, bedstead, and umbrella, I should have a congregation interested in church work, responsive to all appeals in behalf of the world's Christianization, built up at home because they were also striving to build up abroad."

"I could not afford to miss the interest and pleasure to be derived from their religious journals; it seems a poor commentary on our religion that we do not care to be as well informed as to its interests, as in the affairs of the nations, and the gossip of the day," said Ann.

"Ann says these papers help so much in fragment-gathering and using, and Ann is great on using the fragments."

"And how is that, Elizabeth?" asked the pastor.

"You see Ann cannot endure to have anything wasted, and the church papers and magazines tell us where we can use so many little things that other people might throw away. The missionaries tell us where we can send scraps of silk, velvet, or calico to the sewing-schools, or larger remnants for clothes. They ask for cards with texts or pictures of Scripture scenes, they tell where clothes, second-hand clothes, are needed for the negro or Indian schools; or some missionary tells how he needs books, magazines, or papers. Then, as soon as we have read the papers and magazines, we send them off to some home missionary, who cannot otherwise get them. Sometimes we see appeals for big things, for the missionary Society or the clubs to be interested in. We found in the missionary magazine where to send those last three boxes, all nice, new, good things. Then we may read of a schoolhouse that has blown down, or a little chapel burned, or a colporteur's horse that has died, we feel real interested in it all, and we write to the people who have suffered, and become acquainted with them. While our own giving has to be very moderate, we can ask richer people to help. O Mr. Gillespie, these church papers and magazines make our lives so much *wider*."

"They do, indeed, Elizabeth, and all this encourages me to keep right on with this not very agreeable work of canvassing. It will be a means of grace to my own people and do them as much good

as a half dozen or more of sermons ! Our temptations without and temptations within make it hard enough for us to lead godly lives, and make swift progress toward heaven, and we should not let slip such helps along the way, as religious publications afford us." Mr. Gillespie rose to go :

"I was just thinking of going to your house, to ask you and Mrs. Gillespie to tea to-morrow," said Ann ; " Dorothy will be here for a few days, she will come to-day, on her way back to the city from her trip. You will enjoy seeing her."

"We shall indeed, and we always enjoy the way you try to widen and brighten our Dillburg lives, by asking us to share the pleasure of your friends' society, when they come from the larger world outside. The seeing them is delightful, and your thoughtfulness is just as delightful."

"I don't see," said Elizabeth, when Mr. Gillespie had gone, " what earthly pleasure people can find in picking and carping at their ministers—some seem to be always on the watch to find fault ; they call too much, or don't call enough, they are too grave, or too gay, too idle or too studious. Such folks make me think of Browning's story of Disraeli. He made a little speech on some pictures exhibited—what amazed him most was ' the variety, the freshness of thought, the splendor of color, the delicacy of handling.' In fifteen minutes after he remarked to Browning, what amazed him most was ' the *lack* of variety, of freshness of thought, the dullness of color, and the careless handling.' Gladstone said

he thought 'such double-mindedness simply devilish'—how many people are just as carping and as double-minded about their ministers: they grumble at the men themselves, and at their sermons, just as if the sole errand of the ministers in a community was to be a mark for envious tongues? How are we ever to get to the Glory Gate, if we pelt Mr. Greatheart with stones, and fling mud at the Shepherds?"

"There are some texts too often forgotten, because the ministers themselves seem to have some hesitation about pressing them home. 'Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm,' 'For they watch for souls, as they that must give account.'"

"Yes, I quoted those texts to Sue Stryker one day, when she was here on a general fault-finding expedition, and she said, well, she needed first of all to be *sure* that they were prophets and anointed; it didn't look quite like it to her."

"What did you say to that?" asked Ann.

"I told her, as she seemed not able to be quite sure either way, it might be safer for her to give them the benefit of the doubt."

"That was good common-sense, anyhow," said Ann, laughing.

That afternoon Dorothy came over to see them. "I had such a budget of news written me by one of the girls, that I had to come right over and unfold it," she said.

"That was good. I was in the city only four days, and saw Doctor Helen once for a few minutes, and

the others not at all. Let us hear all you have to tell," said Ann.

"Sara Fordyce has a *carte blanche* from his semi-civilized princeship, Len Sin Din, whatever he is, to provide all the appliances of learning for the school of tan-colored royalty. Isn't Sara in a way to do a world of good? Grace Dare and her husband have opened an evening free school for the higher education of clerk-girls, and the people of their church are going wild over it; so typewriting, French, drawing, bookkeeping, stenography, and all that, will be had free, from the best teachers. Madame Baron, Mrs. Waldeck and Mrs. Baron have opened a BOYS' OWN HOUSE with lunch-rooms, class-rooms, gymnasiums, labor-bureau, Sunday Bible Classes, daily medical advice, and I don't know what all; but it's bound to make men instead of scalawags of a crowd of boys just at the turning point, up, to the Glory Gate, or—down, down, down. And Clotilde!——"

"Yes, what about dear Clotilde? When I was there she had gone into an illimitable nursing-for-nothing, having, in several previous months, earned what she thought would last her for a year," cried Ann.

"A year!" cried Dorothy, with a merry laugh, "Providence has not smiled on Clotilde's efforts at being poor. When she has seen that epidemic to its successful end, Clotilde is to marry a millionaire."

"What!" cried Ann and Elizabeth.

"Just what I say. She knew him long ago, nearly

always, and I fancy too, they cared for each other. He was in India when her father died, had gone on some silk and tea errand, and when he came back last week, he simply would not take no for an answer; thought no too short a word to sound well. Therefore, Clotilde had to be more liberal of letters and make it yes. Won't Clotilde make her money do good!"

That evening, as Ann and Elizabeth sat on the verandah together, Elizabeth said, "Ann, I have so often heard you talking about Clotilde, Grace, Miss Fordyce, and your other Mount Merion Cottage friends, that it has seemed as if I knew them all. Of course it was foolish of me, but I never realized that, as the years went by, you would all change, grow old, some would marry and some might die, leaving the others to travel on alone to old age. It is the way of the world, but somehow one does not think it, concerning oneself or nearest friends. You know what the Scripture says—'Gray hairs are here and there upon him, and he knoweth it not.' It seemed to me, as I thought of you all, that you were a party of strong, happy, useful women, moving along the road to the Glory Gate, doing good as you went, always in your mental and physical prime, all, at last, to come together to the end of the journey!"

"A pleasant dream, Elizabeth, but not in accord with the facts of this earthly life; and no doubt God's way is best."

"You and I were, foolishly enough, surprised, Ann, at hearing that Clotilde Arblay was about to

marry. Some day we shall be even more surprised to hear that our Davy is to marry. The years will make a man of Arthur, and he will be away from Dillburg, in business; and he will also marry and have a home of his own; their interests will not center here. I have been thinking, Ann, that as the old ties change, we must make some new ones. I do not wish to be so alone that I shall always keep you from having the rest, change, or pleasure, that you need and have a right to. You are very kind and self-sacrificing, dear Ann, I don't think any one ever realizes how much so; but you ought not to be so bound to me that you have no larger scope than my life. No one life, I think, is large enough to furnish the entire field and possibilities of some other life, unless it should be such as William the Silent, or Cromwell, or Cavour, or Washington, in whose wide lives nations lived. You'll wonder what I am saying all this for; it is just the roundabout way in which I reached the conclusion, that I want to adopt a little girl, a tiny baby girl, so I can have her the longer—a little child to love and train and educate, and make good and happy. If I do that, I shall do a good work. If I am just lame, delicate Elizabeth, I shall find occupation and company in the child."

"It is a lovely plan, dear Elizabeth," said Ann, tenderly.

"I have thought of it for some time, and one night when I could not get asleep, I spoke of it to C'list'an, who was sitting with me, and she said it

was a fine plan, and she would love to nurse a little child for me that way. To-day, in our church paper, I saw a note from a missionary's wife out West, telling of a missionary who had been killed by an accident while travelling, and his wife is very ill, and can live for only two or three weeks. There is an only child, a girl three months old. The question is asked, 'Who will take this little child?' and it seemed to me the Lord said, 'Elizabeth, take this child, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages.' I have thought of it all this afternoon, wanting to talk to you of it, as soon as people left us alone. I feel as if I want to send a telegram to say I will take the child."

"That is right," said Ann. "'The King's business requireth haste.' 'What thou doest, do quickly.' In the morning I will go and ask Mr. Gillespie to send the despatch, for they will recognize his name on the roll of ministers, and will feel certain of the good faith of the offer."

"And you'll like it too, Ann?"

"Indeed I will. I have thought that when the education of Davy and Arthur should be off my hands, I would like to take a little child or two, to bring up for useful, happy life."

"Before you do that, there is another plan for you to carry out, a plan Dorothy and I have talked over. We spoke of it to-day."

"What is that?"

"You two, you and Dorothy, are to have a six months' trip to Europe! Oh, how you will enjoy

that! I shall see Europe through your eyes. You will be able to afford it nicely, then, Ann; and we can invite some missionary lady, or minister's widow, who needs a home and a rest, to come here and be house-mistress while you are gone, and relieve your mind about me. We have it all planned, Dorothy and I; and in two years, or at the most three from this next May, you can go. O Ann, it is so lovely to plan pleasant things for other people! I used not to think that, I thought it would be far nicer to plan pleasant things for myself. I don't feel that way now."

"You grow, my Elizabeth, you grow," said Ann.

Ann and Elizabeth had many such talks as this, happy talks, when they planned good things for others, 'took sweet counsel together,' and helped build each other up in spiritual life.

One evening in January, they were chatting in the library when the lights were low. Davy had spent her Christmas vacation with them, and had gone back for her last months of college work. Davy had been bright as a sunbeam while at home, had found much to interest her in Elizabeth's adopted baby, and had been in all so delightful, that Elizabeth had said, "O Davy, I hate to think of your ever being away from us again."

Then Davy had looked down and smiled.

"Ann," said Elizabeth, "I often have heard you say that the good earthly parent is a daily parable of the divine Parent. I constantly find it more true.

Parents are fond of giving pleasant surprises and daily treats to their children ; always some fresh kindness shown ; it is so God acts toward us. Some pleasure is always opening for us. How much we have enjoyed Davy's visit ! How much I enjoy this dear little sister ! She might have been a cross, sickly, homely, or dull child, and, of course, we should have kept her just the same. Instead, she is good, pretty, merry, bright, healthy, just a darling of a girl-baby."

"Yes, indeed ; he crowneth my life with good things, he daily loadeth me with benefits. As for myself, I have 'felt like singing all the time,' since Arthur's letter came, with his good news. How many hindrances Satan puts in our way of coming to Christ ! Arthur said he had not wanted to be a religious idler, one of the dead-heads of the church, and he had been waiting and waiting, to find in himself the will and the power to lead an active Christian life. He might have waited forever to find that in himself ! Then that verse, which he heard a woman singing in a garden, singing again and again, with pleasant iteration :

" ' Then I thought I heard him say
As he passed along his way,
O silly sheep keep near me,
My sheep should never fear me,
I am the Shepherd true,'

suddenly opened his eyes ; he saw that all his affair was to follow the "Shepherd true," keep close at

his steps, and go wherever he saw it good to lead, and the Shepherd would arrange the rest. Then he 'sat down under his shadow with great delight.' That is the true secret of Christian living, Elizabeth, keeping so near to Christ, so constantly in his company, that he is reflected in us, and we grow into his likeness. Intercourse with God made the face of Moses to shine when he came down from the mount, and it will make our light shine, too, to commune much with God."

"And how easily we are wiled away, and grow dull and forgetful, lag far out of sight, behind our Shepherd!"

"Then he goeth forth into the wilderness of our foolish wanderings, and does not turn back, until he brings us upon his shoulder rejoicing. Surely, he *is* the 'Shepherd True.'"

When spring came, the matter of Davy's graduation was a subject of constant discussion. Arthur, that young sophomore, arrogant as sophomores usually are, announced that he should meet Ann in the city, and see that Davy did the thing properly. Elizabeth took the greatest interest in the making of Davy's dark-blue silk graduating dress, and then fell into some despondency considering that she could not attend commencement. The longing for change, for a sight of the great city, for a share in the festivities of the commencement week, allied themselves in Elizabeth's mind and made a hostile and vigorous attack upon her peace. "I *do* think," she exclaimed with tears, to Mr. Gillespie, "that my

lot is a hard one, and that I have always had great trials, bitter things to bear."

"You have, indeed, Elizabeth, and if there were any one who could remove all your disabilities, it would seem more in order to do it, than to remind you that these light afflictions which endure but for a moment, work out for you an exceeding weight of glory, the peaceable fruits of righteousness, that you may profit thereby. As you have received all the healing that human science can bring to your case, your friends can only apply their aid and comfort to your mind. I thought of you to-day, when I read these passages in a book I have brought to lend to Ann. 'After these terrible trials his soul succeeded in breaking the bonds which held it to earthly passions. He learned, once and forever, that sublime truth which ever broods above all human science, and will be the final compendium of all truth, *the sacrifice of self*. Here then he entered the sacred ground of liberty, and his existence, expanded serenely in the midst of a sweet repose. To pursue self and self's ends is to live afar from God. To be united to him, to rest trustfully in his love and his allotments for us, as a child rests in the cares of its mother, this should be the constant aspiration of redeemed humanity. He who feels most imperiously this desire of harmony with God, and helpfulness toward man is the most good and just. What is the meaning of self-abnegation, of self-surrender? Is it not the expression of that secret voice in the soul, that tells us that to love

self is to love the finite, the ephemeral, the imperfect; but to love God and our neighbor, and lose our personal complainings in love and thanksgiving, this is to unite oneself in anticipation with the loftiest joys of eternity!"

Elizabeth's face became serene. She said: "To think high thoughts helps one over the hard places of life."

When Ann returned to her Alma Mater to see Davy graduate, when she met the professors and the classmates of her college years, the six years of life at Dillburg seemed, for the hour, to fade away, and she was the girl again, looking out upon practical life with curiosity and doubt. Would she be glad to go back? No; the present with its burdens, its responsibilities, its graver situations was after all better than untried youth. No doubt this is so, in all the advancing stages of our lives. Does the gold in the crucible think the purging away of the dross worth while?

On the evening of the president's reception, Mr. Rolf and Ann were together talking, when Rufus and Davy passed them.

"That is an interesting and charming young couple," said Mr. Rolf, laughing. "Miss Ann, my son intended this evening to ask Davy to enter our family *en permanence*, and he looks so extremely happy just now, that I fancy he has made his little speech and it has been favorably considered. Davy will be abundantly welcomed in our household."

"Davy! Little Davy!" exclaimed Ann. "I had

scarcely thought of any such change for Davy, she seems to me so very young." From her some ten years of seniority, Ann felt herself very old, and Davy but a child. Also she was now unexpectedly reaping the usual harvest of mothers—we bring up daughters and—other homes call them! It was a little shock at first; but if this was well, was best for Davy, Ann must presently be glad for her. Tears were in her eyes for a minute, then she said: "I have still Elizabeth. The household that my Aunt Fontaine left me will not all be scattered."

"Your Aunt Fontaine was a wise woman when she left you heir of her fortune, her family, her liabilities," said Mr. Rolf. "You have administered well. Mr. Grace said to me one day that he always thought of you, Miss Ann, in connection with that verse of Scripture, 'Many daughters have done virtuously; but thou excellest them all.' Not for brilliant achievement, but for persistent, earnest doing of duty."

"I knew," said Ann, "that I was like that servant to whom his lord gave but one talent, and I was terribly afraid lest I should bury it in a napkin. I am commonplace, and have only common-sense——"

"Sanctified common-sense," interposed Mr. Rolf.

"Let us hope so—only that to administer, and I have daily prayed that my Lord, when he cometh, might receive his own with usury."

"Well done, good and faithful servant," said Mr. Rolf in his heart.

AFTER WORD.

I have a vision of a plain, quiet, steadfast woman, moving along an upward way, which leads between the gate of human birth and the Gate of Glory. Whatever she finds in that way she accepts, for the greater glory of God. She cannot wander far from her path, for it has been marked by Feet that left footprints of gold across the world. However long that way may be, it is short, being filled with activities; however short it may be, it is long enough, because it reaches to the Gate of Light.