

"And a Little Child Shall Lead Them"

One page of the April issue of a Chicago periodical edited by one of the ablest newspaper men is devoted to the following:

In Memoriam

Born March 20. Died March 24. His coming was a joy to his mother and me. His going has helped us to understand some things we did not know.

To some this language may need translation; but it will be understood by the loving parents of living children and it will be self-interpreting as it strikes a holy and sympathetic chord in the hearts of those who have loved and lost.

"Language grows out of life—out of its agonies and ecstasies, its wastes and its weariness. Every language is a temple in which the soul of those who speak it is enshrined." How many, many, fathers and mothers whose souls are enshrined in the temple where was spoken this eloquent memorial to a little one, whose coming revealed the very heights of love and whose going showed what death really is!

The boy in his teens thinks he loves when for the first time he makes bold to go "gathering the myrtle with Mary, Mary whose heart he knows;" the youth thinks he loves when he presses the engagement ring upon the finger of his sweetheart and seals it with a kiss; the young man thinks he loves

when he leads his bride to the altar. And they all do love—in their own way and in the way of the moment.

But wait until the baby comes! There is love! There the love for the bride is increased a thousandfold and consecrated in the love for the mother, while in the new-found affection for a little child portals seem to have opened upon new and strange yet holy ground. How the world laughs at the antics of a man who for the first time finds himself to be a father! But who cares for the good-natured laughter of the world? Certainly not the man who, after hours and perhaps days of keen anxiety for the fate of his sweetheart, who has gone into the valley of death's dark shadow in response to love's stern call, has been assured that "all's well." He has obtained a glimpse of real life; in his horizon there is not one single cloud, the birds are singing, there is music everywhere. He breaks from his work and finds himself hurrying to the bedside of the old love and to the cradle-side of the new love. As a rule he is undignified in his haste; but what does a new-made father care for dignity? He knows there'll be ample time for that when he is dead. He rather enjoys the jests of his associates; for just as the young lover likes to talk about his sweetheart, the older lover likes to talk about his babe. It is a striking fact that although history may repeat itself, as it has in many homes, though child after child may be born, it is the same old story. The same birds are singing, the same music everywhere for the father who finds himself hastening to his home to greet one of those who have been likened to God's apostles sent forth day by day to preach of love and hope and peace. Wait until the baby comes and that is love! Wait until more and more babies come and that is more and more of love!

But if you would learn even more than that of love, wait until the baby goes! There is the voiceless grief that "whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break." But there is the grief that makes the tie that binds two hearts closer than any marriage words yet spoken by a priest; the thing that "knits two hearts in closer bonds than happiness ever can," for "common sufferings are far stronger links than common joys."

Do we not know that a grave can not be so small that it fails to find in the parents' hearts the place which in God's infinite wisdom has been set aside for the memorial to every child of love? The parent obtains new interest in every day's development of the child from birth to the limits of babyhood; he obtains new interest in every year's development of the boy, whether it be from kilts to knee pants, from knee pants to long trousers, or from smooth face to the first touch of downy beard; and every turn carries a new sensation to the parent's heart. How often, also, has the sentence passed between father and

mother as they anxiously bent over the sick child's bed: "He's just at the age when it will be hardest to lose him." But it is because the parents love best the child that is sick that they think that death at that age would be the "hardest." At any age and at all ages, from babyhood even unto manhood, the death of a child calls into the parent's heart and the parent's heart, always on guard in the child's interest, makes prompt and grief-stricken response.

Let those whose hearts do not yet wear these scars imagine what they would do if asked to choose one of their children whom they could best spare. There is an old story, told in homely verse, that illustrates this point well. A father and a mother had been offered a house and land in return from out their seven children one child should be given to the donor. Poverty seems to have pressed heavily upon that home and seven mouths to feed brought great responsibilities. The mother suggested that they choose among the little ones as they slept; so walking hand in hand they surveyed the inmates of their household. First to the cradle where the baby slept; then "beside the trundle bed, where one long ray of lamp-light shed athwart the boyish faces there, in sleep so pitiful and fair;" and then from one to the other, from the first-born to the "Benjamin" of the flock, the father and mother went, declaring beside each sleeping form: "Not this one, no, not this one." Then turning even to where "poor Dick, bad Dick, the wayward son, turbulent, rockless, idle one," slept in spite of a conscience bad, they asked: "Could he be spared?" and answered "Nay, he who gave, bade us befriend him to his grave; only a mother's heart can be patient enough for such as he." The homely verse tells us that when the tour of inspection had been concluded: "They wrote in courteous way they could not drive one child away."

There is, indeed, not one to spare, until there comes the command to which all mortals must in sorrow bow. Even though that sorrow, large though the responsibilities which the child brought, great though the sacrifices it required, we would not, if we could, part with the sorrows, if by doing so we must blot out the great fact that a little child came into our lives to teach us the way to love, to show us the way to live and to tell us the way to die.

And there a little child shall lead them! There many a little child has led them. There the boasted know-nothingism of the agnostic or the proud declamations of the infidel leave men helpless and hopeless where the faith of the mothers points unerringly to the stars. There, "as the disciples found angels at the grave of him they loved, we could find them, too, but that our eyes are too full of tears for seeing." There—even in the darkest night of death—"hope sees a star and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing."—Richard L. Metcalfe in Omaha World-Herald.

Rhode Island's Debasement

Robert Grieve, private secretary to Governor Garvin of Rhode Island, has written for the New York Independent an interesting and instructive article entitled: "Rhode Island's Political Debasement." Through the courtesy of Mr. Grieve The Commoner is able to present this article to its readers. It is as follows:

The so-called republican landslide in the nation and the concurrent election at the same time of democratic governors in Massachusetts, Missouri, Minnesota, Montana and Colorado, with pluralities for Roosevelt in those states, have so engrossed public attention that the peculiar conditions existing politically in Rhode Island have

not received the notice their importance warrants. For two years Dr. Lucius F. C. Garvin has been the democratic governor of Rhode Island, and at the election of November 8, 1904, he only failed of an election by 856 votes out of a total of 74,640. He had 8,126 more votes than were cast for Parker, while his republican opponent had 7,784 less than Roosevelt. This result is as surprising as any other happening of this phenomenal election, and has elements in it which make it of much more than local interest.

Dr. Garvin has been the democratic candidate for governor four times. In 1901 he was defeated by a vote of 25,

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